Effective Time Management

Unfortunately, there is no one foolproof formula to help us make more effective use of our time. Any plan we devise will have to be based on our own individual responsibilities and changing circumstances and priorities. However, there are several strategies each of us can adopt to spend the time we have on what is most important to us. This One Page Coach® explains these strategies in a four-stage continuous-improvement learning model. The four stages are: SCHEDULE, PRIORITIZE, ADJUST, and REVIEW. The circles to the right and the information below describe each stage of the process. A system that can be copied and used every day to help you manage your time is provided on the reverse side.

1. SCHEDULE



schedule events.

2. PRIORITIZE



and delegate. flexibility.

3. ADJUST 4. REVIEW



Constantly monitor your time



1.

S C Н Ε D U

Ε

PRIORI I Z E

A D U S

3.

4. R E V Ε W

Plan the use of your time.

- Keep a daily time log for a typical week, noting each activity and how much time is consumed.
- Analyze your current use of
- Identify activities and tasks that appear to be trivial or unimportant.



Design a "to-do" list.

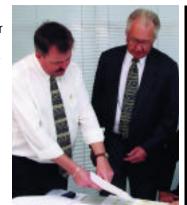
- Focus on what is really important to achieve.
- Carefully assess "urgent" issues and confirm their importance.
- Write out a "to-do" list of the important items in an action-oriented or outcomes-focused way.

HIGH



Pay attention to priorities.

- On your list of urgent tasks, note the important or priority items (A = Must do, B = Should do. C = Nice-ifthere's-time)
- Determine the highest priorities, regardless of when they need to be completed.
- Think about how priorities can best be dealt with.



Prioritize daily and weekly activities.

- Create a final list of "to-do" items in an overall rank order.
- Assign deadlines or target-completion times
- Re-order the list to include immediate. daily, and weekly activities (I, D, W).



Do something with every issue.



- Recognize that prioritization is a constant exercise best done from a "clear" desk.
- Make sure that every task, piece of paper, call, or event is handled only once.
- Every issue should be immediately logged. filed, delegated, or disregarded (i.e., avoid in-trays, piles of paper, wads of phone messages, etc.).

Crises ✓ Reactive problem-solving✓ Some meetings Some meetings High-level demands



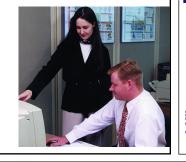


Delegate wherever possible.

- Avoid handling important or urgent issues that are best or better handled by someone else.
- 2. Where delegation is appropriate and possible, make sure you first get the full commitment of the individual you want to deal with the issue.
- Keep a written record of your delegations and schedule time to follow up and ensure completion.

Eliminate distractions.

- Determine the type and frequency of the distractions that occur in your daily schedule.
- 2. Plan times when you will accept distractions or interruptions (when they are necessary).
- If interruptions are inevitable, set time boundaries at the outset, and firmly stick to them.





Deal with "time wasters."

Trivia Junk mail/calls Idle gossip Escape activities





Make room for unexpected events.

- Unexpected events will always occur. Schedule time on a regular basis (e.g., an hour after lunch) to deal with
- Avoid using natural breaks to catch up. Set aside personal time.
- Make sure that unexpected events are assessed formally in the light of other "to-do" items on your list.



Discontinue unnecessary activities.



As you begin to manage your time more effectively, look at the unnecessary activities that add up little

- Where possible, discontinue activities that appear to be unimportant (e.g., reports or meetings) and
- Constantly ask the question, "To whom is this activity useful, and why?"



Focus on specific time-wasters, such as:

- poor organization
- unnecessary delays
- drop-in visitors
- unnecessary phone calls
- unproductive meetings
- waiting

URGENCY

· junk mail

Constantly review optimal use of your time.

- Ask yourself regularly, "Is there a better way to do this job or task?"
- Take advantage of external systems and technology to optimize the use of your
- Ultimately recognize that there is only so much time in a day. Don't forget to relax!

Time Management: Checklist

