

13 Simple Steps to Time Management

1. What are your beliefs about time?

Are you saying?

I don't have enough time.

There is too much to do.

I'll never get it all done.

What ever you believe, you are right.

This reminds me of a quote from John Kehoe, author of Mind Power. "Thoughts are real forces".

What if you were to adopt the belief of;

I have an abundance of time for anything that I am committed to doing!

In your journal, draw two columns on a page, make a list of all of the limiting beliefs that you have about time in the left column.

In the right column, write down the antithesis or opposite positive belief to the negative belief.

Practice focusing on the positive beliefs on a regular basis.

You can do the same process with your goals also.

2. Plan Your Day

Make a list of everything you have to do every day

Prioritize the list into A's, B's, and C's

Do the most important things first, the second most important things second, the third things third

3. Do Your ABC's

A's are the things that you must do today

B's are the things that you would like to do today

C's are the things that are not essential for you to do today

4. Check in every 15 minutes

To make sure that you are on track, every 15 minutes ask yourself; "Is what I am doing right now taking action towards the intended outcome of my goal?"

Some people go so far as to setting an alarm on their watch or computer to keep them on track. If the answer to the question is no then;

Stop doing it
Find someone else to do it
Record it on a list to schedule for future action
Forget it

5. Form The Habit Of Allowing 5 to 15 Minutes To Review Your To-Do List

They say it takes 21 days to break a bad habit. What if, for the next 21 days, you formed the habit of allowing yourself 5 to 15 minutes at the beginning of your day, every single day, to review your list - add to it, subtract from it, and re-prioritize it?

Dedicate 5 to 15 minutes to;

Make your to-do list
Prioritize it into A's, B's, and C's
Estimate the time to complete each to-do
Schedule the to-do in your diary
Complete the to-do

6. Use A Week At A Glance 24/7 Diary

For me personally, I find that I like to be able to view my schedule for the entire week. All I have to do is review my to-do list, prioritize it, estimate the time and schedule the time into my Week At A Glance 24/7 Diary. I have attached an example page for you to look at; Week At A Glance 24/7 Worksheet.

7. Eliminate Busy Work

People are often too busy with busy work and this creates a huge distraction from paying attention and focusing on goal achieving actions.

Instead of taking action on their specific goal at a specified time they fill their time with what they justify as things that are routine versus what is important.

What they are saying is "I haven't created the discipline of stopping myself periodically throughout the day and asking if this is the most effective way to spend my time."

This is the time to get one of those alarms on your watch or computer to keep you on track when you have made a decision to work on a specific goal at a certain time.

If you get distracted;

Stop doing it
Find someone else to do it
Record it on a list to schedule for future action
Forget it

8. Schedule Time In Advance and Ask What Is Going To Distract Me?

It is that time of the week again and it is coming time to write my newsletter. In fact the time is scheduled. Well in advance I ask myself, "Is there anything that I need to do that is going to distract me from writing the e-newsletter?"

A variation of the above is;

Record it on a list to schedule for future action
Find someone else to do it
Stop doing it
Forget it

You will find that as you get more and more into the habit of focusing on action steps towards your goals, the minor things will not be that important anymore. I think that it was Tony Robbins that said, "People major in minor things".

9. Form Time Boundaries

As a business owner, I am fortunate enough to be in charge of my own time and it is not that often that I must accommodate the schedule of others.

There are many of us that are not totally in charge of our own time and we are accountable to; partners, associates, employers, family members and friends.

We are often interrupted by other people's priorities.

The next time that you are interrupted by someone making a request for you to do something; Ask yourself (not them), is this life and death? If the answer is Yes then take action. If the answer is No then I suggest the following.

Person Requesting You To Do Something: I want your help to do _____.

Your Reply: I am happy to help you, right now I'm in the middle of a project and need 100% concentration to complete it. Would you like me to stop what I am doing? What is the deadline that you need your task done by?

(You may find that by forming a boundary on your time the person that is making a request may realize that you are busy with something that is more important than what it is they are asking you to do. If the person replies with the deadline, then let's assume that they still want your help.)

Person Requesting You To Do Something: I need it by 10 am tomorrow.

Your Reply: Great I'll schedule it in for tomorrow morning and I'll have it ready for you.

(This simple system leaves you with time boundaries and gives you the feeling that you are in charge of your own time versus being a victim. I will expand on time boundaries in forthcoming issues.)

10. You Say You Have No Time; Then Where Is Your Time Going?

To answer the question of where is your time going, start tracking and logging your time daily for a least a week. Track your time by writing down the exact time that you begin each activity, write a few words about what the activity is about and write down the exact time that you end each activity. I suggest that you write down everything. If you begin an activity and in the middle of it, you decide to answer e-mails or the telephone, then write down the exact time that you began and ended the e-mails or the telephone calls. This requires you to be 100% honest about what you are spending your time on. If you take 8 minutes to make a cup of coffee then write down 8 minutes. Forget about being perfect writing down your time in 15 minute increments.

11. Review and Summarize Your Time

At the end of the week, review your time records and summarize your activities and the amount of time spent on each. Create your activity categories and you can have from anywhere from 6 - 20 categories. They should be meaningful to you. Examples of Business categories are; Planning, Administration, Clients, Computer, Financing, Marketing, Office, Product Development, Sales, Team & Training. Examples of Personal categories are; Planning, Auto, Clothing, Home, Storage, Financial, Health, Hobby, Intellectual, Family, Friends, Spouse, Spirit & Travel. Next summarize how much time you spent on each activity on a daily and weekly basis and determine the percentage of time that you are spending on each activity. The key is to become aware about where you are spending your time.

12. Start Time Blocking

With your newfound time awareness in mind and taking your priority activities into consideration, start to schedule your major activities into the highest energy, productive parts of your day. For me, early mornings are my best and that is when I write my e-newsletter. Take a look at all the similar activities that you do and group them into time blocks. For me the e-newsletter falls into the category of writing so this includes; web site edits and additions, e-newsletters, blog and product development. You can start to time block your e-mails and phone time together. What about errands? How about meetings so that you block them into time when you are out of the office. What about e-mailing people that you have to have a meeting with and requesting a telephone meeting and letting them know that you can talk with them on the phone at either 3pm or 5pm? The key here is that you will be empowered because you will be in charge of your time.

Block Your Time for the week / month allowing time for important things like rest, planning, planning debriefing, team meetings, interruptions, client appointments and client paperwork; please see attached examples of our time blocking for the 2015 year for focus, buffer, free and product development days, a blank 2017 calendar and a 24/7 week at a glance spreadsheet.

13. Your Daily Calendar / To Do List

I believe in writing out my daily calendar so that it is a page at a glance. There is something powerful about the power of the written word. The power of the written word causes me to commit.

On an 8 1/2 by 11 sheet of paper I divide the page into 3 equal columns.

The first column is my daily schedule from 5 am - 10 pm to schedule the live and telephone appointments that I have committed to.

The second column is for what I must do that day. I group the activities into similar activities, estimate the time required and then schedule.

The third column is for what I would want to do that day. These are misc. items that are still a priority that will only take a few minutes to follow up on. I often do these while traveling or waiting for appointments.

One thing to remember. Do not block out 100% of your time. Leave 1 - 2 hours of buffer time so that you can still handle those inevitable interruptions.

Leading Advisor / Simon Reilly © 2017 All Rights Reserved.
For individual use only. Any further distribution of matter requires permission.
1-877-250-248-6012 www.leadingadvisor.com