

# Help For Your Time Management and Organizational Issues

By Chuck And Sue DeFiore

Help For Your Time Management and Organizational Issues

Chuck And Sue DeFiore  
coaches@homebusinesssolutions.com

Home Business Solutions <http://www.homebusinesssolutions.com>

Many home-based businesses find they have a greater sense of control over how they use time. Working from home affords them fewer interruptions and more flexible ways to work, which makes them even more productive than if they worked in a corporate environment. On the other hand, others have a hard time getting started, sticking to business, and some become workaholics.

Let's start with a self diagnosis of what might be your time management problems.

1. Do you have a hard time getting started and sticking to business?
2. Do you have a hard time organizing your workday?
3. Do you procrastinate?
4. Are you constantly being interrupted?
5. Do you have a hard time getting away from work?
6. Do you find yourself overworking?

If you have any of the above problems you need help with managing your time.

The following will help you to deal with these issues.

Time management and organization of your office are very much tied together. An unorganized office will cost you a lot of time. Time getting started for the day, time finding phone numbers, letters or materials you need.

Some of the basics elements of Time Management are as follows:

1. Setting up a Work Schedule - Some of the ways to set up a workable schedule are to:
  - a) establish your schedule around the demands of your work.
  - b) establish your schedule around those times of the day you work best. For Chuck and I, our high energy hours are in the morning.

c) establish your work schedule around the other priorities of your life. For example, some single dads and moms with children might need to work before the kids get up, stop working, and get them off to school, work during the school day, pick up the kids, and spend some quality time with your family, and then do some additional work in the evening. Others work hard for 3-4 days a week and take long weekends.

d) Organize your schedule around a particular work task. This won't work for everyone, but if your business allows you to break off certain aspects of jobs into different days and time periods, do so.

e) Set up an arbitrary schedule. For some of you, any kind of schedule is better than nothing in the beginning. Eventually you will find your high and low points during the day, which will allow you to eventually establish a schedule for yourself that works best for you and one you can stick to.

2. Getting Started - Chuck and I start working after we walk the dogs. This is our trigger to start our day. When we come back in from walking them we immediately head for the office. For others, it might simply be to walk into your office, or set a timer to go off, or once you drop the kids off.

3. Staying With Business Matters - Once you do get started, don't let yourself be distracted by household items or anything else. Don't procrastinate. You want to be efficient. To do so, plan your day, set reasonable goals, praise yourself for the work you're doing. You no longer have the water cooler or coffee klatch around to give you that praise, so you must give it to yourself. In fact, reward yourself for a job well done with something you enjoy doing.

The following are some everyday time-savers to build into your daily routine to help you work more efficiently.

a) Be sure you have organized your contacts, and files.

b) Use time saving technology - a touch tone phone, with re-dial button, your computer, printer, copy machine, e-mail. Prioritize your To do List. Use your mail folders.

c) Learn to say no.

d) Make use of down time. File while you're printing something or back up your data during lunch.

e) Build a time cushion into your day. It is much better to overestimate the time it takes to do something than to underestimate.

f) Don't make a big deal over little decisions. For example, supplies.

g) Plan to do two things at once. Read after business hours; or get audiocassettes and listen while doing household chores; proof items while printing or backing up.

h) If you prioritize your To Do list, you will have a bunch of little items that will take you 3-5 minutes to complete; filing, update tickle, proofreading are some of these short tasks.

Some of the best ways to maximize your efficiency are to: plan your workday; safeguard your work from unwanted distraction and interruptions; recognize and sidetrack procrastination; set reasonable work goals, praise yourself for your work and reward yourself for a job well done; take frequent regular breaks; schedule your work so it won't conflict with your favorite activities; and arrange for a change of scenery. By doing all this you keep yourself fresh and able to work at your best.

Some of your most time consuming tasks will be: keeping up to date in your area of expertise by reading. Read only pertinent material. For many items you receive just highlighting or skimming the article will suffice.

Meetings are another area that take up a lot of time. Be sure before you schedule the meeting to ask yourself, is it necessary? Can I do this by telephone, mail or teleconference? If you do have to schedule a meeting, be sure you are organized with an outline of what you need to cover, and a specific time limit. If the meeting does run over, see if you can finish it by phone or mail, if possible, rather than rescheduling.

For those of you in lease purchasing, remember your telephone script. You don't leave the office until you get all the information on the script, check out that information, finalize your numbers, then call the seller to schedule a meeting. When you go to your meeting with the seller, be sure to take your flyers and signs to place after you and the seller sign the contract. Don't waste time having to make a second trip.

Correspondence, projects, phone calls and errands are other areas that take up a lot of time. For your correspondence, set up an efficient routine for processing your mail (See the Articles: Organizing Your Office For The Year 2000, Part 1 & 2).

Keep your errands to a minimum, or schedule a specific day when you do them in a morning or afternoon. To expedite your phone calls, have names and numbers handy, use your egg timer to set a time limit for each call. Ask them to send written material to review, or if they need information from you, you do the same.

For your large projects, break them down into smaller manageable tasks. Give each of these tasks a deadline, and be sure to place all of the information in your project file on a sheet stapled to the inside of the file.

Stress is a part of our lives. When you become overwhelmed or something upsets your day, don't let it ruin the remainder of the day or carry over to the next. Take a deep breath; count to 10, take a break; sing a song that comforts you; take a walk around the block; play with the dogs. When you do get back to your desk - remember - nothing lasts forever, and tomorrow is a new day.

4. Interruptions, Distractions and Procrastinating - To safeguard yourself from the interruptions and distractions of household responsibilities: interruptions from family, friends or neighbors; remind yourself and them that even though you are at home **YOU ARE AT WORK**. If you were at an office outside the home you wouldn't be able to solve their problems or take a break to spend time with them.

Work out a plan with your family of what your hours are, when you can and can't be disturbed. You need to keep focused on your work. The ability to maintain a deep concentration can prevent you from being distracted.

Procrastination is one of the biggest problems with many home-based businesses. It is very easy to put off or never get to something you want to avoid. One way to avoid this is to think performance not perfection. If you set small manageable goals to be accomplished you won't fear not being able to accomplish them. You need to recognize and side step procrastination.

Procrastination is one of the hardest things to overcome for so many people. However, if you start by doing the one thing you like to do, this could help you to move on to do the other things you don't like. For those of you that have a extremely difficult time with procrastination, start with your favorite thing to do, and then the next and so on down the line. At least this is a start. Eventually you will be

able to put all of these items in priority order, not procrastinate and move on to a normal work day..

## 5. How Not To Become A Workaholic

a) Close the door on work.

b) Set up a end of day ritual. Some people take an exercise class, others will walk around the block. Chuck and I feed the dogs.

c) Set A Firm Schedule - Set firm beginning and ending times. Yes, these will fluctuate on some days if you have early morning meetings or evening meetings. However, for the most part your day begins at a certain time and ends around the same time each day. Take a day off a week, or two if that is what you need. Be sure to put your off time on your calendar.

d) Take time to get out of the house- You want to schedule time away from home. Whether it is a shopping trip with a friend, lunch with a friend, a weekend away with your family.

Make the above mentioned ideas and tips a part of your business and life. They will keep you on track and help you manage your time so you can run a successful home-based business, without sacrificing your personal life.

Copyright 2002 DeFiore Enterprises

Interested in having your own successful, home based creative real estate investing business? Chuck and Sue have been helping folks start successful home based businesses for over 17 years, and we can help you too! To see how, visit <http://www.homebusinesssolutions.com> for the latest FREE tips and tricks, educational products and coaching in creative real estate investing and home based businesses. No time to visit the site? Subscribe to our FREE "how to" Home Business Solutions Digest, it's like having your own personal coach:  
<mailto:subscribeHBS@homebusinesssolutions.com>

[Get-Articles.com : 1000's of reprintable business and internet marketing-related articles.](#)

[Submit your article for reprint.](#)