

How To Make the Most of Your Time

By Craig Lock

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"We share what we know, so that others may grow".

HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR TIME

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"Live your life, don't spend it."
- A. Lakein

"Know the true value of time -
snatch, seize and enjoy every moment of it."
- Lord Chesterfield (1694-1733)

GET MORE FROM LIFE EACH DAY

- * Focus on one day at a time.
- * Live the moment.
- * Forget yesterday and look forward to tomorrow. If you are guilty about what happened yesterday, or are anxious about what might happen tomorrow, your energy will be dissipated.
- * Plan your work, then work your plan.
- * What good and bad habits have you developed? Reinforce the good daily patterns and break the bad.
- * Be an "early bird".

Habits start as consciously made decisions, eg.. what time to get up. Once established, good habits become second nature.

Success is the result of habit. It depends not so much on doing the unusual, but on doing the commonplace unusually well.

DON'T PROCRASTINATE - DO IT NOW

Don't confuse being busy with working efficiently - activities can be tension-relieving, not goal achieving. By concentrating on fewer, priorities regularly on a fixed schedule, you can achieve a lot more in less time.

IS TIME THE PROBLEM OR ARE YOU?

Draw up a daily "to do" list. Rank priority tasks (the important few), as well as the trivial many. This allows you to focus on fewer things and achieve more. Sort into A, B & C's

A's are important and urgent. Must do today.

B's are important and not urgent. Want to do today.
Is a ringing telephone urgent or important?

C's are not important. Today, if possible or delegate.

Use this system to cover work, personal and family items. This allows you to strike a balance in your daily living. In addition, you can schedule the daily activities required to achieve your objectives. By giving high visibility to your major goal, you can keep your mental energies concentrated.

Remember the 20/80 principle: 20% of your key activities will give you 80% of your results or payoff and 80% of your work (or clients) will produce 20% of your profits.

Don't hog all the work. Delegate what you can as this encourages a sense of responsibility and a sense of teamwork in others. It frees up your time for more important activities. Handle each piece of paper only once. Rather than shuffling paper, make a decision to deal with it NOW (if important). destroy, or diarise for later action.

Use the concept of time blocks to do similar tasks at one time...rather than when they arise, otherwise trivia will swamp what is important.

Look at your body rhythms for which times suit you best. When do you work best (or when is your concentration at it's maximum)? Are you most alert in the morning, afternoon or evening? Plan your day by your energy cycle. You can schedule the most important or mentally demanding activities when you are at your peak.

"Next time you say, 'I'm wasting time', change that to say, 'I'm wasting myself' ".

- Paul J. Meyer, Success Motivation Institute

TIME MANAGEMENT TIPS:

1. LIST YOUR GOALS AND SET PRIORITIES:

- * Life Goals
- * Work Goals
- * Identify Short Term A's.

2. MAKE A DAILY "TO DO" LIST

- * Set A B C's
- * Don't schedule every minute of the day.

3. Start with A's - NOT WITH C's

A's are 80% of everything.

Make inroads into A's every chance you get.

Use the 'Swiss Cheese' approach, ie. Identify small tasks that will poke a hole in a big one. Do these in your odd moments.

Do anything that moves A along.

4. ASK YOURSELF: WHAT IS THE BEST USE OF MY TIME RIGHT NOW?

Why waste time on C's if you've an A to do?

Fight habits and just filling in time.

5. HANDLE EACH PIECE OF PAPER ONLY ONCE

Have a C drawer

6. DO IT NOW!

Decide you can do it right away.

Itemise (write it down)

Categorise

Prioritise

Crystallise

However, remember work is not everything...

IT IS VITALLY IMPORTANT TO TAKE TIME TO SMELL THE ROSES.

Craig Lock

This extract is from Craig's first published book HANDBOOK TO SURVIVE - a collection of writings on various subjects to help every man or woman survive in a rapidly changing, uncertain world. The various books that Craig "felt inspired to

write are available at:

<http://www.nzenterprise.com/writer/books.html> and
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