

The Truth About Time Management

By Ramona Creel

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Ramona Creel
ramona@onlineorganizing.com

OnlineOrganizing.com <http://www.onlineorganizing.com>

Everyone today is talking about "time management." If you walk into any bookstore, you can find literally hundreds of discussions on the subject. But quite often, the term "time management" is being misused. Many people believe that time management techniques are designed to help you fit 80 hours worth of work into a 40-hour week. But really, time management should mean fitting 40 hours worth of work into a 30-hour week, and having 10 hours left over to spend as you please.

THE HEART OF THE MATTER

You see, the real reason to employ time management techniques in your daily life is to have more time for those things that are truly IMPORTANT. Did you know that the average person in our society loses at least an hour a day due to disorganization? That's nearly an entire work day every week! What would you do with that day if you could recapture it -- play golf? spend time with your friends and family? take up a new hobby? meditate on the meaning of life?

Time management SHOULD be all about streamlining your current activities to make them as efficient as possible, so you can spend time on other things besides daily chores and routines. But in order to do that, you must be cognizant of the WAY you do things. Ask yourself a few questions about each activity you are regularly involved in:

IS IT NECESSARY THAT THIS TASK BE DONE?

Quite often we fill our days with busywork without getting anything of real significance accomplished. Always be sure that an activity is going to help you achieve a desired goal before starting it. Don't be afraid to say "no" if a task looks like it will take up your time without providing a measurable benefit.

IS IT NECESSARY THAT I DO THIS TASK?

Many of us have difficulty delegating work to other people, even when it is clear that the other person would do the job better or faster. And many of us take on tasks that we really don't have time for, just because we think there is no one else to do the job. Don't be afraid to ask for help from others, when appropriate -- the worst thing that would happen is they say "no."

AM I WORKING IN THE MOST EFFICIENT WAY POSSIBLE?

Once you have determined that this job needs to be done, and done by you, you need to

continually re-evaluate the systems you use to complete each task. Look for a faster, easier, more systematic way to take care of routine tasks. You would be amazed by the amount of time saved in the long run!

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