

Prioritizing Your Day To Accomplish More

By Carol Halsey

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Carol Halsey
chalsey@easystreet.com

Business Organizing Solutions <http://www.pilestofiles.com>

Prioritizing is a very important function of being organized. It is another method that puts you in control of your work responsibilities. In order to effectively prioritize, learn to recognize the difference between the important, the urgent and the unnecessary. It may seem that everything is urgent, and must be acted on first. This is not necessarily so. With good planning and prioritizing, urgent situations will become less and less frequent.

Your first step to prioritizing is to select those tasks you need to take action on tomorrow. These will come from your master list, along with new tasks generated during the day, which most likely are a result of phone calls, new assignments and mail. This list will be your daily "to do" list.

I suggest taking 15 minutes at the end of each day to prepare a "to do" list for the next day. There is no better time to be aware of what to accomplish tomorrow. Evaluate each item on your list as to its importance and urgency, and eliminate the unnecessary.

Next, prioritize your daily "to do" list. Select the top three most important tasks which must be completed, no matter what else happens that day. Number them 1, 2 and 3. It is essential to identify them in order of importance. During the day, an unexpected crises may erupt, or any number of things can happen that you did not plan on that will take time you hadn't counted on. But you will know that those top three tasks must be taken care of no matter what!

After identifying the top three, select, in order of importance, the second three most important tasks and number them 4, 5, and 6. However, these three may not be acted on until the top three are completed. This is because you have already determined they are not as high a priority. Following this process puts you in control of your "to do" list.

Keep your "to do list" small - no more than eight items. After all, it is a daily "to do" list. As you tick off completed tasks, you will have the feeling of accomplishment.

Accept the fact that you cannot do everything in one day. What may not be on the top of today's priority list, may very well be #1 on tomorrow's list. If you accomplish five or six items on your "to do" list each day, consider it a very productive day.

This, I have found to be a pretty comfortable standard, because so many other events take place each day that cannot be planned for, but take time. And remember, 5 or 6 a day adds up to 25 to 30 tasks completed each week.

By prioritizing, you will know, every day, the top three most important tasks to be tackled before hitting your desk in the morning.

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Carol Halsey is Founder and President of Business Organizing Solutions. She is a professional organizer, consultant, speaker, and author of "93 Organizing Tips to Simplify Your Business Life." You can get this booklet and articles, ideas and a free Idea Kit, all to help you get 14 hours work out of an 8 hour day, simply by visiting her web site: <http://www.PilesToFiles.com> . Subscribe to her free organizing newsletter, "Organizing Ideas," sent twice a month.

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