



Tyme Management™

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Have a Rewarding Team Experience

Teams have been around for some time now, but the in's and out's of teamwork continue to be the topic of discussion. **Check these recommendations and you may find your team experience more rewarding:**

- ▲ Compete with yourself, not with your team members. Set your own personal standards and see if you can meet or exceed them.
- ▲ Place a high value on your contribution. You are an expert in what you do. Be open for suggestions from others but remember that you play a valuable role.
- ▲ Do your part in a timely manner. Try your best to get your work done so no one has to wait for it.
- ▲ Be polite. "Please" and "Thank you" are not just old-hat expressions. Grease the wheels of cooperation with courtesy and consideration.
- ▲ Don't take people for granted. Your team members intend to do their part. Remember, without them, the job wouldn't get done. Place as high a value on the contributions of others as you do on your own.

Are You "Addicted" to Work?

Working "all the time" doesn't mean you'll reach success any faster than others. Surprisingly, workaholics are usually underachievers due to their common obsessive tendencies. **If you think you have workaholic tendencies, answer the following questions:**

- ◆ Are you compulsive about your work? Do you have to be the first one to arrive in the morning and the last to leave at night? Does the resulting fatigue and stress of your longer work days cause you to be ineffective for a large chunk of your day?
- ◆ Do you waste time and energy on insignificant matters? Is delegation never considered since only you can do things right? Do you value doing things in high quantity more than doing things in high quality?
- ◆ Is it hard for you to define specific goals for yourself? Do you find yourself reacting to things rather than acting upon things? Do you never have time to work on self-improvement because you're too busy with remaining active?
- ◆ Is having a personal life inconceivable to you? Do you often cancel social



occasions and disappoint your children and spouse? Has work become the "religion" in your life as it now ranks above all other aspects of your life?

If the questions above describe you, it's time to reevaluate your life. **Begin with these measures:**

- ◆ Think effectively instead of efficiently. Concern yourself with getting things done correctly more than with getting things done on a strict time schedule that causes you to work over-time often.
- ◆ Remember to find time for your family and friends. They're the ones who love and respect you most. Return that love and respect by spending time with them and showing them you care.
- ◆ Take time out for yourself. Find hobbies and activities that relax you or that you enjoy. Look for those that don't involve work at all.
- ◆ Plan ahead. Instead of continuing to react to things, start to take action before you're required to do so.
- ◆ Write down short- and long-term goals. And, plan the steps you must take each day to achieve these goals.
- ◆ Follow your plans as your guide out of the realm of workaholism.

Organize Your Desk

“People waste almost an hour a day looking for papers lost on the tops of their desks,” says Jeffrey Mayer, author of *Time Management for Dummies* (IDG Books). **He says:**

- Go through everything on your desk, one item at a time.
- Make a list of everything that has to be done.
- File papers that you will have to deal with soon.
- Discard anything that doesn't have to be done, routed or filed.
- Keep your list of tasks up to date.
- The next time you can spare an hour or two, do the same with your desk drawers.

Call Early for Success

Start each of your working days by making important phone calls first thing in the morning. Ask colleagues, clients, and vendors for action or information early in the day so you'll be on the top of their list of things to do for that day.

Set Aside "Guilt-Free" Personal Time Each Day

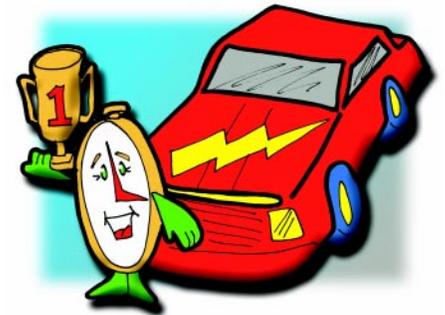
Time-managing business people frequently focus on the goal of saving time but, when they're faced with some free time, they're usually at a loss of what they'll do with it. It's important for you as a busy, success-oriented, hard-working person to remind yourself that it's your right to relax and enjoy personal and family pursuits on a regular basis. So, brainstorm some ideas you could pursue with your free time and start today to set aside some “guilt-free” personal time each day, just for your enjoyment.

"Soup Up" Your Effectiveness

Auto racers often win races by driving cars that have been “souped-up” by their pit crew for optimum speed capabilities. You can soup-up your effectiveness in a much simpler way. All you have to do is learn the skill of concentration.

Many people don't realize there are two parts to proper concentration. First, concentration must have depth, which is how deeply focused your mind can be on a single subject. Second, concentration must have time, which involves how long your mind can concentrate without taking a break.

The average person takes 10 minutes to deeply focus on a task and then can sustain this concentration level for only about 20 minutes. After this time period, the average person must take about a 10 minute mental break. By doing the math on this, one sees that during forty minutes of concentrated work time, only half of the time is productive. The first 10 minutes you're getting concentrated and the last 10 minutes you're resting.



Achievers who have built their concentration time up to 40 minutes or so get direct rewards from their efforts. As you learn to concentrate longer, you'll start focusing in much more quickly and you'll feel less tired when you're finished concentrating. This, mathematically, means you'll cut your unproductive time to 25 percent or less.

To reach this concentration level, start slowly. Stick with intense concentration one minute longer each time you concentrate. Eventually, you'll be able to concentrate for as long as three hours or more at one time but only if you're patient enough to add only one minute to your concentration time each day.

Take Note of Management Style

Managers basically fit into one of two styles. Both are equally effective but you would profit by using the one that is closest to your natural and comfortable method of management. **Consider these:**

Diffusion style. A diffusion manager always has a project starting, a project in midstream and a project coming to a close. When these managers are stifled or bored by one project, they can usually turn to another project and make progress on it. If you're a diffuser, make a detailed plan for each project and delegate as much of the detail work as possible. Set a schedule for monitoring your progress on each project you're pursuing and follow your plans. Continue to add new projects as you come across them.

Focused style. These managers work more effectively when concentrating all their time, thought and energy on a single, tightly focused project. The intensity of targeting one project and staying with it excites and satisfies them. If you're a focuser, set your sights on projects that most appeal to you and promise the highest return on your invested time. Make your plans and stick to them.

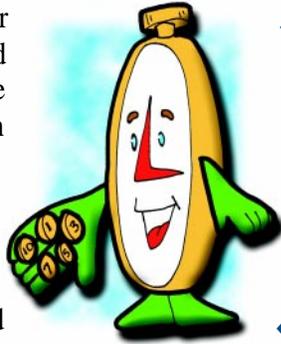


Accomplish Tasks a Little at a Time

Time managers know that every loose minute in their day can add up as valuable when used effectively with other loose minutes just as every loose nickel in your pocket can add up when used together with other loose change. What can you do with a short amount of loose or free time?

With only one minute, you can...

- ◆ jot down a note to remind you of a new idea.
- ◆ prioritize your remaining tasks for the day.
- ◆ concentrate on your breathing to prepare your mind for thinking.



With two to five minutes, you can...

- ◆ make a phone call.
- ◆ jot a memo.
- ◆ reply to correspondence.
- ◆ revise your daily plan.
- ◆ file loose papers in your office.

With five to ten minutes, you can...

- ◆ come to a decision on a matter you've been putting off.
- ◆ peruse a report for your next meeting.
- ◆ compose a new letter or two.
- ◆ analyze a chart.
- ◆ relax and refresh yourself by doing nothing.

Take Time for Time Management

When it comes to managing time, the supervisor has a true balancing act to contend with.

Still, the basics of time management do apply, like making a list and working first on the highest priority item. But most days are a series of interruptions, ad hoc meetings and phone calls with crisis control thrown in for good measure.

Impromptu conversations are not all bad. According to Dr. Ken Blanchard, it may be the best strategy to take advantage of them whenever you can, even if it means delaying other tasks you wanted to work on. You learn a lot by talking to your people.

Having conversations turns out to be one of the best ways a supervisor has to influence others and, ultimately, to impact the organization. Blanchard, the author of *The One Minute Manager* and

other business books, gives this advice on how to handle interruptions and still get things done. **For example:**

- ▲ Create focus time. If you can get your most important paperwork and calls done in a specific time period, decide when that time will be. Others do best in the early morning, some like an uninterrupted hour in the evening.
- ▲ Consider your weekly time management plan. Systems are necessary, but some weeks take a priority-first plan while others can be more flexible. Sometimes an entire day must be set aside for a project.



- ▲ Who else could do it? The most time-conserving way to get something done is to have someone else do it. Be on the lookout for jobs on your list that could be done by others.

Format for Attention

People read materials that are most appealing first. Short and eye-catching material appeals to most people. Your reports and letters should include plenty of spaces, bold type, short paragraphs and short sentences. For longer material, you should attach a cover page with a short introduction to your material. And, fold your letters and other material with the text side facing out. This way, no one will have to unfold your letter to read your ideas.

Looking for Bits of Knowledge Quickly

If you're looking for a fast overview of any subject, you should visit the children's section of your local library. Children's books contain almost as much researched material as those for adults but they tend to stay short and to the point while the more "mature" books fall into long-winded verbiage. This can save you minutes.

Ask Others to Drive When Traveling

Try to get others to drive when several people are traveling on business together. You'll arrive at your destination fresher and you'll be able to read or do other business tasks on the way. If you carpool daily, pay someone else to do the driving when it's your turn for the same reasons.

File Projects Efficiently

Keep your current project files in a special file rack that holds about eight to 10 of them neatly and in plain sight. Place the rack near enough for easy access but not on your desk. This will save you from having to open file drawers dozens of times daily for the files you use most.

Always Accomplish Your ABC's

Whatever project or problem you're facing, you can accomplish it if you remember your ABC's. This could be the best alphabet you've learned since primary school.

You may be wondering what the alphabet has to do with accomplishing tasks. This isn't the whole alphabet; just an acronym that uses the first three letters. **Here it is:**

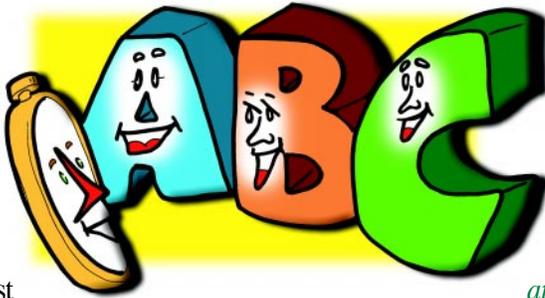
▲ *Anticipate your needs.* In other words, prepare in advance for whatever you

may face. Have all necessary tools, supplies and materials on hand.

▲ *Bar the door.* Avoid leaving your work area until you complete the task at hand. Pretend you've been locked into your work area until you complete your assignment.

▲ *Concentrate your mind on the task at hand.* Work only

on what you've focused on. If you get distracted by anything, try to avoid the distraction in the future.



"When planning for a year, plant corn. When planning for a decade, plant trees. When planning for life, train and educate people."

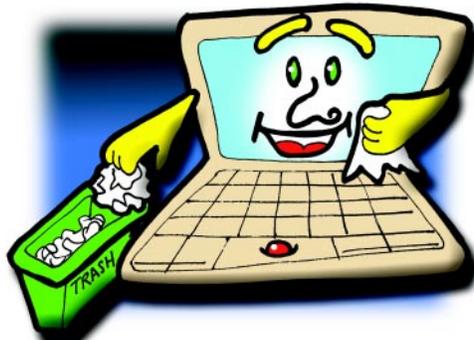
– Chinese proverb

Spring Clean Your Computers

Although computer files rarely collect dust or take up much actual space, it's a good idea to periodically peruse them and rid yourself of outdated and/or unnecessary files. Spring is the time of year when people get spring fever and want to clean out their garage, house, and car. Why not use that same fever to clean out your computer files?

Consider these tips to clean up your computer system:

- ❖ Delete files that contain documents you know you won't need again. Be careful not to remove program-type files as this could wreak havoc with your computer.
- ❖ Erase files that contain working drafts of documents that you've since corrected or completed elsewhere.
- ❖ Empty out files that you created but never did anything with. (This also includes those folders you created and moved all the material out of to another location.)
- ❖ Delete duplicate files that contain the same material but under different names.
- ❖ Erase files that are too old and outdated to ever be reused.
- ❖ If you so choose, instead of completely deleting the files, you could move the files from your computer system to a removable disk that you can store elsewhere.
- ❖ Divide the remaining files into logical folders for more ease of use later.



Pat Answers

Dear Pat: *I work in a large department with an incompetent manager. I'm not being mean. He's just way over his head. He's very good at the technical side of his job, but when it comes to managing people, he's clueless. He tends to have "favorites" who get special treatment and can do no wrong. It leads to a lot of resentment among the rest of us. Something needs to be done about the tension and low morale, but the manager doesn't even seem to notice there's a problem. How can we get him to see the problem and then fix it?*

Pat Answers: You've described one of the most common problems in the business world. Too often technical experts are promoted, not only out of their realm of expertise but out of their comfort zone as well. And like most of us when we're out of our depth, they try to make sure no one finds out. They do this in a variety of ways. They may try to intimidate or deny access to information, or do what your boss is doing: recruiting allies. When your boss picks these "favorites" he's trying to make friends. Friends who will stick up for him and support him when he screws up. He seems unaware of the tension and low morale probably because he's so focused on keeping up the appearance of leadership. Why not help him out? No one can be a good manager alone. Offer your own expertise in ways that will help him be successful as manager. Become a true ally. Help him gain the support of the rest of the department. When he no longer feels threatened by his staff, he will be able to see the unique value of everyone in the department.



Are co-workers driving you crazy? Is your boss out of touch? Complex personnel problems demand Pat Answers! Send questions to: pat@patgrigadean.com. Pat

Grigadean is a professional mediator, trainer, and employee-relations specialist. She writes Pat Answers in consultation with Haven Street-Allen, SPHR. © 2007 Pat Grigadean.

Rescue Yourself from Recipe Clutter

If you're like many household "chefs," you probably collect recipes when you see ones that catch your eye. But, how you collect them makes all the difference.

For many people, new recipes are items that will be tested one night on the family and then perhaps served to special guests after you master the recipe's special techniques. If this describes you, you probably have many recipes that have never seen the light of day.

You procrastinate trying the recipe with your family and then are afraid to use it for guests. The recipe then ends up joining other recipes in the recipe graveyard better known as a "junk" drawer.

To make better use of the recipes you collect, you need a game plan. You can start taking action on collected recipes today. **Try these steps:**

- ▲ Choose up to three recipes you want to try *this* week.
- ▲ Throw out the recipes that don't turn out right or that your family doesn't like.
- ▲ Copy the surviving recipes individually onto three-by-five inch cards and place them into a recipe box with appropriately labelled dividers.
- ▲ For recipes that are already on full sheets of paper, hole-punch these and place into a loose-leaf binder, into which you've inserted divider pages with tabs for each type of recipe included.
- ▲ Continue to follow this method until your drawer or box full of randomly collected recipes has been completely emptied.
- ▲ Finally, enjoy all the delicious new meals you, your family and your guests can enjoy now that you've organized your recipe collection.

Shop For a Home More Quickly

Along with choosing the type of house you and your family want to live in, you also have to consider the neighborhood and schools in which you and your family will live, a mortgage with which you can live comfortably, and a structure that's safe and sound. Buying a home isn't easy but, with a little advanced planning and a lot of luck, you can move into your new home more quickly. **Consider these tips:**

- ◆ *Figure out what you can afford.* This allows you to set your sights on houses you can afford. Financial experts recommend spending no more than 28 to 33 percent of your income on housing. Using this method, determine the monthly house payment you could afford.
- ◆ *Choose a real estate agent.* Talk to friends, relatives and financial advisors. Allow your agent to be creative in finding the right home at the right price. Your agent may help you plan for future family growth and other concerns.
- ◆ *Remember, location is everything.* Neighborhoods tend to rise or fall in value collectively. Schools, parks, proximity to your work and access to shopping and entertainment are some items to consider when selecting a neighborhood. Ask your agent to do a market analysis of a neighborhood before buying a house there.
- ◆ *Try to prequalify for a loan.* This will allow you to not worry about going through loan approval after you find the home you want, you may also be able to make an offer sooner than other buyers who have yet to qualify for their loans, and you'll have more negotiating power as a cash buyer.
- ◆ *Make a list of "must-have's" and "hope-to-have's" you'd like in your home.* Remember to include the size of the kitchen, number of bedrooms, number of baths and the size and location of the garage.
- ◆ *Have the house you're considering professionally inspected before you close the deal.* A clean bill of health will allow you to proceed with an eased mind while a less than par report may cause you to walk away from the deal.



Race Against the Clock to Finish Cleaning

If you have trouble sticking to finishing a cleaning task you begin, make a game out of doing your chores. Try dividing your work into your time. If you have four hours to clean your house, divide the number of rooms into your time. If the house has eight rooms needing cleaning, divide the four hours (240 minutes) by eight (the number of rooms). This formula shows that you can spend a maximum of 30 minutes in each room and completely finish in your allotted time. This concept can help you in cleaning your office, making sales calls, or completing reports. Break large tasks down and you can then see how much time to spend on each step.



PERSONAL TIME

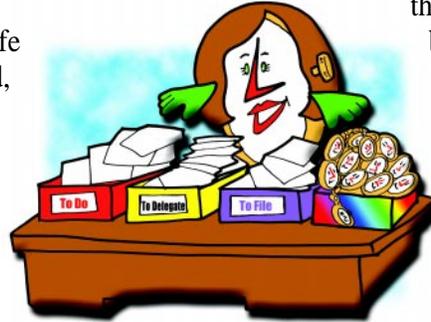
Get Organized and Make More Time For YOU!

What would you say your biggest stress producer is in your life? Most people would name a wide variety of things before naming *disorganization*, but really, disorganization may be the most likely culprit of causing stress in your life.

Being disorganized throws your whole life into disarray. When you lose things you need, stress results. When you arrive for meetings late or in a frenzied rush, your abilities suffer. Dealing with other people, driving in commuter traffic, communicating with your loved ones and budgeting your money are all things that cannot be avoided. Being disorganized is a stressor that you *can* change, and wouldn't life be better with a little less stress? But, what will being organized bring you?

Consider the following benefits of being organized:

❖ *Increased productivity.* Disorganized people can't be as productive as they potentially could be. You care about how you dress and look. In the same way, you should care about your work and home surroundings. Being organized allows you to be in control and confident. Being organized means you can find items and get things done in less time.



❖ *Control of your time.* Chronic disorganization runs, and ruins, your quality of life. Organization gives you control over your time, space and life. Taking time *now* to organize your home and work areas will save you time and hassle in the future. You'll thank yourself once you're back at the master control of your life.

❖ *Heightened awareness and perspective of life.* Once organized, you can schedule your time to best suit your needs and desires. With planned goals and dreams, you'll know what you want to do with your life. Disorganized people merely handle the emergencies that appear each day. Organized people can look forward to the future

and take advantage of opportunities as they present themselves each day.

❖ *More time for YOU!* Whatever you'd like to achieve, you can pursue it with the extra time being organized will grant you. Being disorganized doesn't allow you to schedule time for future planning or for working toward long-term goals – you do good to get everything done that will help you survive today. As an added stress reliever, you'll have more time to relax and sit back to enjoy the fruits of life.

Include Healthy Pleasure in Your Daily Life

Scientists have made a connection between enjoying healthy pleasures and increasing work productivity. Studies consistently show that a person who includes simple pleasures in daily life can handle difficulties and responsibilities much more evenly and productively.

Stop now and think about today.

Where can you add pleasure in your life? **You might want to schedule some pleasurable activities into your daily plans:**

- Go on a long bicycle ride.
- Watch a classic, or popular, movie.
- Play a game with your children or grandchildren.
- Call a close relative or friend.
- Take a nap on the sofa or string up a hammock in your backyard.
- Play a musical instrument.
- Practice dance moves.
- Work in your garden.
- Go for a walk at a local park.
- Sip lemonade while sitting under an oak tree.
- Gaze at the stars on a clear night.
- Get outdoors. Shoot some baskets, go roller blading, or hit golf balls.
- Test new recipes.
- Listen to your favorite music.
- Get artistic. Read a book, paint a scene, or write a book.
- Watch the sun set and rise.
- Bake some fresh bread.
- Have coffee with a new friend.
- Do whatever brings you pleasure.



Improve Your Productivity Today

Every organization strives to improve employee productivity. Executives expect the maximum contribution from each team member every day. Your challenge is to show ways you're helping the organization improve productivity, make money and reduce costs.

Here's how you can do so:

- ❑ Get as much done as possible each day.
- ❑ Start by tackling high priority projects in the morning to get your day off to a fast start.
- ❑ Be certain Monday and Tuesday are productive. The others will follow suit.
- ❑ Think of your role as that of a player on a winning team.

Tap Into the Plentiful Goldmine of Feedback

As a busy professional constantly balancing schedules, deadlines and priorities while dealing with a vast variety of personalities, there's an often-neglected resource that can make the difference between success and failure and between conducting business with relative strangers or trusted partners.

This resource is *feedback* and it's a marketing tool worth its weight in gold if mined consistently and effectively.

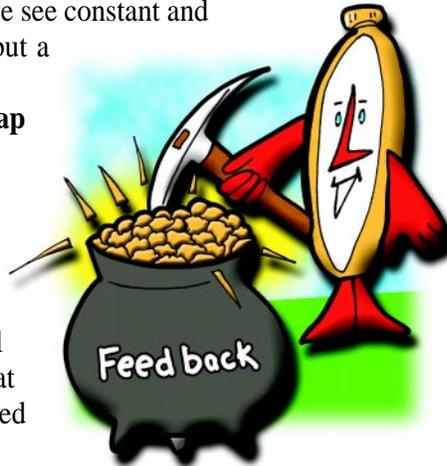
While many professionals spend time assimilating, assessing and acting upon information after a project or event, relatively little time is spent reviewing, reevaluating and reorganizing information during the project or event. Those who want to stay ahead in this ever-changing information age see constant and comprehensive feedback not as a luxury but a necessity.

Following are tips on how you can tap into the goldmine of feedback:

- **Take the initiative.** Most people mistakenly assume that feedback automatically appears on their desk, in their E-mail box, or in person. While they sit on their hands waiting and wondering, more insightful and opportunistic professionals know that most feedback must be extracted, digested and analyzed.
- **Take responsibility for feedback.** This is your job, so take the initiative. You have too much to lose if you don't get feedback but much to gain if you do.
- **Ask the right people.** Many times, it's not that you don't ask for feedback, it's that you ask the wrong person. And, you end up with gossip or guesswork. Many people ask associates for information only clients would know, clients about things only vendors would know, and vendors about things only associates would know. To get the right response, you have to ask the right person.
- **Ask the right question.** It's your responsibility to phrase your questions so others understand the content and scope of your request. Do you want general or specific information? Personal opinion or survey data? Selected input or overall consensus? The more focused your requests, the more precise, comprehensive and helpful responses will be.
- **Queue up smart questions.** After you've initiated the feedback and asked the right people the right questions, interpret and analyze what they've said. Does their feedback need your feedback? "I was expecting more help from your

support staff," or "I didn't follow all the points of your presentation" are potentially helpful comments but they need further explanation. Was your staff unavailable? Unwilling to help? Or unaware they were needed? Did you need to provide additional information in your presentation? Define things more clearly? Bring demos? Provide specs from the manufacturer? If you don't probe deeper into unclear feedback, you'll be left with mere complaints.

- **Draw on the expertise of those with whom you work.** Most of the professionals you work with are just that, professionals (experts in their fields of finance, public relations, travel coordination, meeting planning, etc.). Of the myriad of decisions you face daily, few of them haven't been heard of and successfully dealt with by someone before you. Instead of insisting on a 5:30 p.m. start for your downtown mixer, ask the shuttle company the preferable times and routes. Though you used a particular design for your brochures last year, see if the printer has creative alternatives. Get suggestions from hotel staff as to the most effective way to set up a room. Be careful not to have your mind set so firmly that you can't entertain newer, better suggestions.



- **With feedback, as with medicine, apply liberally to the affected areas.** After you solicit and understand specific feedback, evaluate it in light of your personal goals and methods. Is it an accurate assessment or a subjective opinion? Is the person in a position to know what he or she is talking about? Is a change in your style or method worth the effort? Will this change contribute to your long-term personal or professional growth?

Granted, not all feedback is created equal. But, avoid the tendency to just stand there. Do something. Evaluate. Reconsider. Modify. Reaffirm. Just do something. Whether you're dealing with caterers or clients, entertainers or executives, accountants or advertisers, or all of them at once, feedback is a great barometer for not only knowing where you are and where you're heading but also for where your efforts should be focused the next time.



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TIMESAVERS

Save Time By Driving Yourself There

While car pooling works well for the environment and cuts down on congestion on roadways, it may also cause you to lose time. Riding with someone else may mean you have to stay longer at a particular function than you normally would. Even if you only want to leave early to run a quick errand before your next scheduled meeting or before going home, you'll have that choice available if you drive yourself or use public transportation.

Stay in Touch... With Your Luggage

Although airlines limit the amount and size of carry-on luggage you can take with you, with a little creativity, you can work with them.

Try these techniques to avoid checking your bags:

- ◆ Pack fewer items. Many hotels can supply toiletries. Ask them.
- ◆ Use soft-sided luggage within your airline's size limitations. These will expand to fit many clothes yet can be squeezed into almost any space.
- ◆ Arrive early and be among the first boarders so there's plenty of storage space available to you.

Better Posture = A Better Life

Good posture can help to improve the quality of your life. Posture is usually a good reflection of the way you're feeling and, likewise, good posture can positively affect your feelings and mood.

According to a recent study, those who slumped or slouched tended to have helpless and frustrated feelings and felt like they were under more stress than those who practiced correct posture. Other studies have revealed that mental alertness can wane and work errors can increase more quickly when body posture is poor.

What is good posture? And how can you begin to practice good posture in your life? **Take into consideration these tips:**

- Align your keyboard and monitor to keep your back and neck straight.
- Ease strain in your spine by lengthening your neck, moving your head slightly upward, pulling your chin slightly in, broadening your shoulders and flattening your lower back.
- Adjust the height of your chair, workstation, or keyboard so you can keep your wrists straight while typing.
- Loosen your collar. Two-thirds of business people recently surveyed wore their collars or ties too tightly. When the neck is constricted, blood flow to the back of the eyes is slowed and can affect physical response time.
- Make sure the height of your keyboard allows you to relax your shoulders, keep your elbows at your sides and keep your forearms level with the floor.
- Get up to walk around once every 15 to 30 minutes to minimize back strain.
- Avoid bending your head and neck to read or talk on a phone. Hold the book or phone handset at eye level.
- When typing, use light touches, avoid resting your wrists on your wrist pad and avoid arching your wrists.
- Always stand in a relaxed manner with your feet shoulder-width apart. Place one foot slightly in front of the other and shift weight from side to side occasionally to reduce fatigue.
- When turning, bending, or reaching, always first take a step in the direction you intend to go.

