



Tyme Management™

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Using Air Time

Just because you have to travel doesn't mean that you must forfeit a productive day at the office. **Here's how to make your flight time more productive:**

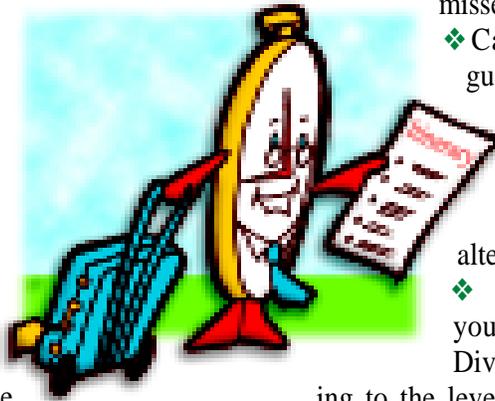
- ❖ Schedule a streamlined flight. Try to book a direct route that has as few layovers and flight changes as possible.
- ❖ Do low-concentration tasks while waiting for your flight. Sort mail, scan trade journals, or do routine paperwork.
- ❖ Work until the final boarding call to get on the plane. You'll have more time to work and won't waste time in line.
- ❖ Choose one main task to tackle during your flight. Make sure it's a high-priority item suited to the length of the flight.
- ❖ Give your brain some downtime. Once you've tackled your main task, do less intensive tasks, relax, or take a nap.
- ❖ Stay focused on your task even after the plane lands. You can squeeze in a few more minutes of work time while everyone else waits in line.
- ❖ Continue working on the plane during layovers. If you don't have to change planes, take advantage of the time to work in a quiet environment.

Take Off with Productive Travel

Business trips can be an opportune time to meet prospects, strengthen client ties and stay abreast of company activities at other sites. On the other hand, business trips also demand a lot of time and energy and can set you behind schedule on your other tasks and projects.

Here are ways to make the most of your time on the road:

- ❖ Make sure that travel is your best option. Before you get on a plane or train, investigate other less time-consuming options that could achieve the same results. A letter, phone call, or video or web conference may suffice. Or, you may want to send someone in your place, pay for the other party to come to your location, or combine the visit with a later trip.
- ❖ Streamline your travel preparations. Compile a standard list of items you regularly take on trips, and keep a small carry-on packed at all times with travel essentials. Add to your list the additional things you'll need for a particular trip as they come to mind. The more detailed your list is, the less likely you'll be to forget something important.



- ❖ Schedule your itinerary for maximum efficiency. When planning your route and making appointments, factor in the time required to travel from location to location depending on geography, weather, traffic, construction and speed limits. Call ahead to confirm each of your meetings to cut down on late or missed appointments.

- ❖ Carry a pocket flight guide. In the event of mechanical or weather delays, stay on schedule by consulting your guide for an alternate flight.

- ❖ Prepare work that you can take with you. Divide your tasks accord-

ing to the level of concentration required to do them, and make use of time spent traveling and waiting to tackle these tasks. Low-concentration tasks are best for noisy airports and when commuting on public transportation, while reading, writing and planning can be done in flight or at the hotel.

- ❖ Make arrangements for work to be done in your absence. Decide which tasks you can delegate to others and how much authority you need to grant people to make decisions for you. Tell your staff the items you want to stay informed on via E-mail, fax, or phone while you're gone.

Consider a Consultant

The next time you embark on an enterprise requiring additional expertise, you may want to consider hiring a consultant. In many cases, a consultant can save your organization both the time and money it would take to train your own staff to do the job. **To hire and work with a consultant:**

- *Get referrals.* Ask friends, colleagues and business associates for references, or contact the association of the specialty you're seeking.
- *Interview several prospects.* Look for measurable results that the firm has obtained for its other clients, and avoid being impressed solely by academic degrees or a sharp presentation. Have consultants outline a proposal of exactly what they will do and how much it will cost.
- *Establish a written agreement.* Create a contract that details the work and fees entailed. Devise an action plan



that breaks the project into parts, and use these stages to monitor progress so that problems can be detected before they become costly.

- *Communicate to your staff.* Outsiders may be considered a threat by your employees, who may interpret a consultant as a sign of future layoffs. Explain the reason why you've hired a consultant, and tell employees how they can assist this person.
- *Arrange for a fluid working relationship.* Review your objectives and action plan for the project thoroughly to ensure everyone understands. Clarify to whom the consultant should report and go to with questions.
- *Take action once the consultant gives a report.* Share the consultant's assessment with the decision-makers in your organization, and decide promptly what action you'll take as a result. You may decide to go forward, modify the plans, do additional research, or discard the project.

Components of Effective Teams



Each member of a team plays a different role in helping the team to achieve its goals. **Components of an effective team include:** ♦ Leadership – One team member must act as the head, taking the authority and responsibility for the group. This person serves

in envisioning and directing the team to where it needs to go. ♦ Creativity – Team members with a creative bent can aid the team in the design phase of planning. They can also kindle enthusiasm and offer much-needed comic relief. ♦ Organization – Team members who are administratively oriented can help in practically implementing the group's plan. These people are natural planners who are attentive to method and detail. ♦ Communication – Team members who are sensitive to people's feelings can be good at understanding and keeping everyone informed. ♦ Goal-directed – Team members who are goal-directed focus the group on setting and working toward deadlines and enable the group to remain on target.

Pat Answers

Dear Pat: *I work hard, do a good job, and get a lot of compliments from customers and from my supervisor. But my co-worker is constantly criticizing my work, saying that I'm not as qualified as he is because he has more education than I do. He has outright told my supervisor – and anyone else who will listen – that I should never have been hired since I don't have a college degree like he does. I say, if a degree wasn't part of the requirement to get the job, I shouldn't be criticized for not having one. I'm really fed up with his put-downs and I'm afraid one of these days I'm going to say something I'll regret. What can I do?*

Pat Answers: It doesn't take an advanced degree in psychology to see that your co-worker has low self-esteem and feels the need to make himself feel better by putting down others – you, in this case. What he wants is recognition and respect. So why not give him what he wants, but on your terms rather than at your expense? Ask his advice. Ask what it took to get that degree he's so proud of. Let him tell you how much it's worth to him. My bet is he'll let up on you if he feels you respect him. And if he doesn't, ignore him! The opinions of your customers and supervisor are more important than his.



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.

Reclaiming Lost Business

Pursuing your former customers makes business sense. In fact, salespeople are more likely to make a sale to a customer who has since stopped doing business with them than they are to a new prospect. The time you invest in actively seeking out lost customers can yield a return that's worth the extra effort. **Here are some tips on re-establishing your connection with previous customers:**



- ▲ Research the reasons why you lost customers. Examine customers' account histories for indications of why they may have left. Did they send a letter of complaint about the quality of service or have a disagreement about a bill? Ask the person who previously handled the account what may have gone wrong.
- ▲ Solicit customer feedback. You may want to call customers directly to inquire about the reasons you lost their business. Did they try to inform the company of problems they were having? How did the company respond? In addition, ask if there is any way you can remedy the problem to regain their business.
- ▲ Decide which customers you want to pursue. Identify ones that will be worth your time. You may find that some customers were too difficult to work with or too much of a liability. Others may have moved or no longer have need of your product, or they may simply have been won over by a competitor.
- ▲ Stay sensitive to customers' needs. Find out the current needs of your former customers and how to appeal to them. Although they may have stopped patronizing your business because their needs changed, you may be able to serve them with another product or service.
- ▲ Offer an incentive. Write former customers to let them know you're aware they haven't done business with you in a while. Ask them to call or E-mail you if your company has been unsatisfactory, and share about new products or services they may be interested in. Include a gift certificate toward their next purchase.
- ▲ Follow up. To improve the potential for a response, call customers after they receive your letter, or send an E-mail. Start with a small sample of customers, and monitor your success rate. After you analyze the results, make improvements and then try reaching a larger group of people.

Super Sales Calls

When making a number-one call, decide on a specific objective or inquiry for the call. You may want to ask people if they would like to receive a free sample of your product or to compare your prices with what they currently pay for the service you offer.

Then return to this initial point when making your follow-up call. Remind prospects of the topic of your initial call, and provide additional information about your product or service that will whet their interest. For example, tell how your company has successfully met similar needs for other customers.



Acquiring Additional Sales

The next time your customers make a purchase, use this as an opportunity to sell them something else. Many times people will be open to buying a related item when they've already taken the initiative to buy. **To make an additional sale:**

- ◆ Choose a product or service that's easily associated with what people have just agreed to buy.
- ◆ Propose an item that they are already familiar with rather than something new that will require an explanation.
- ◆ Without any pressure, ask if they would be interested in this item, and be agreeable if they decline.

Increase Callbacks

Voice mail doesn't always have to be a dead end to communication. **To increase the likelihood that your sales call will be returned:**

- ◆ Repeat your phone number or contact information a second time at the close of your message.
- ◆ Include the exact times you can be reached to assign a kind of deadline to the person.
- ◆ Mention that you have an answer to something you discussed with the person earlier.

Grab Their Attention

P.S.: You might not realize how substantial the postscript is in reaching potential prospects. Next to the opening line, the P.S. at the bottom of your sales letters is the most important element. People tend to read the first line of a letter and then jump down to the signature and what's below without reading the rest. By putting your main message or incentive in the postscript, you'll be sure to capture your readers' attention.

Fun with the Family

Here are several fun summer-time activities you can do with your family:

- ◆ Use a timer or stopwatch to time races and chart the results.
- ◆ Visit a fire station for a tour.
- ◆ Go on a walk to collect rocks, leaves, flowers, or shells.
- ◆ Host a volleyball tournament using balloons or water balloons.
- ◆ Put bugs in a container and examine them with a magnifying glass.
- ◆ Make a fort out of couch cushions and a bedsheet.
- ◆ Use sidewalk chalk to play hopscotch or draw pictures.
- ◆ Play beauty shop with hair styling items and makeup.
- ◆ Make a scrapbook or memory box.
- ◆ Learn how to cook, bake, or make something new.
- ◆ Tour the historical sites in your area or go to the park for a picnic.
- ◆ Start a summer business selling lemonade or mowing lawns.
- ◆ Play dress up with old hats, purses, shoes, clothes and uniforms.
- ◆ Work on putting a large puzzle together and frame it.
- ◆ Do a home improvement project and give kids their own tool set.
- ◆ Go to a free outdoor concert or play in your community.
- ◆ Get a map of the stars and try to identify the constellations.
- ◆ Play board games or learn how to play a new game like chess.
- ◆ Designate a quiet reading hour during the day and read to each other before bedtime.
- ◆ Convert a used refrigerator box into a playhouse by cutting out doors and windows.
- ◆ Take pictures around town with a disposable camera.
- ◆ Listen to a storyteller or watch a magician at the local library.
- ◆ Take a nature walk conducted by a local park ranger.

Curing a Case of Boredom

As a busy parent, boredom may not even be a word that's in your vocabulary. For kids, on the other hand, "I'm bored!" can be a common complaint, especially during the summertime. Free time, however, provides the perfect opportunity for stimulating children's creativity and developing intrinsic motivation. **Here are things you can do to cure a case of boredom:**

- ▲ Ask questions that will help them decide what they want to do. Help kids determine what kind of mood they're in and what kinds of activities are suited to that particular mood. Remind them of the things they like to do, or ask them what they could do with various items around the house.
- ▲ Create an activity list. The next time your kids are bored, have them make up a list of all the things they could do with their time. Have them write each activity on a separate piece of paper and put them in a jar. When they're bored, they can then draw two or



three ideas from the jar and pick the one they want to do.

- ▲ Get them jump-started on a new activity. If kids continue to complain that they have nothing to do, help them get started on an activity, but tell them that you'll go back to what you were doing once they get started.
- ▲ Provide an environment that encourages creativity. Have supplies available, including paper, markers, scissors, tape, glue, building blocks, boxes, and other odds and ends. Designate an area of your home where kids can play and be messy to their heart's content.
- ▲ Teach kids to appreciate downtime. Enjoy free time with your kids on a regular basis. When kids see that their parents are always frazzled, busy and pressed for time, they learn that life is a stressful drag. By taking time to slow down and enjoy simple pleasures yourself, you'll teach your kids how to enjoy free time.

Maintaining the Work/Home Balance

Life is a balancing act. Making time for your career, your family and yourself is an important part of staying happy and healthy. **To keep your life in balance:**

- *Make time for each area of your life.* Check your schedule regularly to ensure that you're devoting sufficient time to all areas of life.
- *Keep your schedule flexible.* While it's good to set goals for how you want to use your time, there will be times when circumstances require you to spend more time on one area of your life and less on another.
- *Pursue activities and interests outside your career.* By doing so, you'll continue to grow as an individual and avoid basing your self-worth on your career.
- *Stay aware of potential problems.* The longer you put off facing problems, the more severe the consequences will be.
- *Evaluate how you're doing on a regular basis.* When you're always on the go, it can be hard to assess how you're truly feeling. Take time to think about what you're doing and how meaningful and fulfilling it is. What changes will you need to make?



Reach Your Goals with Discipline

Do you set goals with earnest enthusiasm, but find yourself unable to accomplish them? Do you make big plans, but never seem to follow through with them? Then, you may be in need of a good dose of discipline. Not in the sense of punishment, but discipline that trains you to develop the consistency and persistence you need to reach your goals.

The American Heritage College Dictionary defines discipline as “training expected to produce a specific character or pattern of behavior, especially training that produces moral or mental improvement.” It’s the deliberate practice of doing what you aim for long enough until your intentions become a reality. Simply put, discipline is a matter of forming and maintaining a habit.

Many people consider discipline an admirable, but virtually unattainable quality reserved for Olympic athletes and highly driven businesspeople. But the truth is that anyone can develop discipline with a little effort. **To develop the discipline to reach your goals:**

- Establish worthwhile goals. Make them specific and measurable. For example, you may want to read 30 books that will improve your mental faculties, increase your income by a certain amount this year, take your

wife out on a date once a week, or attend a seminar on time management or financial planning.

- Make a plan. The major reason you’ll need a plan is that you’re most likely looking at changing some well-established habits. Outline the specific steps you’ll take to meet your goal. Your written plan will help you track your progress until the new habit is established.



- Desire change.

If you really don’t want to make the changes necessary to meet your goal, you won’t. You must desire to change your present behavior in order to improve mentally and morally. Change begins with a conscious choice of the will.

- Commit and

believe. You will need to have discipline to carry out your plan daily. This requires commitment. Visualize the benefits you’ll obtain by making these changes. Move from hope to belief in yourself to change “nice” habits into “great” habits.

- Use repetition. Repeat the new behavior until it becomes an established habit. If you slip up once, don’t let it discourage you. Just pick up where you left off. Continue practicing the desired behavior until it becomes as comfortable as an old pair of slippers.

Break Out of Your Comfort Zone

Often, people’s first reaction to something new is to resist. They’re settled in their “comfort zone” – that state of security and familiarity of an established routine – and don’t want to be disturbed.

However comfortable staying “as is” may be, in the long run it can be deadly. Without the challenge and opportunity of being thrust into new and different situations, you won’t grow. You’ll only limit yourself to the narrow range of what you know and miss the broad expanse of all you could be. Stepping out of your comfort zone will involve risk and feel unnerving, but it will also allow you to advance into a wider range of experience and personal development. When you take the risk of doing something new, you’re guaranteed to learn and develop more strength and self-confidence.

To help you break out of your comfort zone:

- ✓ *Challenge yourself.* What steps can you take to actively get out of your comfort zone today?
- ✓ *Make a list.* Write down the new things you could do that would stretch and improve you as a person. It may be as simple as taking a public speaking class or applying for a new job.
- ✓ *Devise a plan.* Choose the top three things from your list that you want to try, and decide how to implement them.

Boost Your Success with Self-Esteem

To give your self-esteem a boost: • Set realistic goals that challenge you rather than set you up for failure. • Stop focusing on your mistakes and imperfections. • Praise yourself for your efforts, not the results. • Give and receive compliments.

“The will to persevere is often the difference between failure and success.”

– David Sarnoff

Warning: Sleep Is Not a Luxury

According to the National Sleep Foundation, only 35 percent of American adults get the recommended amount of sleep during a typical workweek. “*I just don’t have time to get enough sleep*” is the common refrain of many people. Regardless of the hectic pace of modern society, however, sleep remains a basic human need. In fact, sleep is so important that people spend roughly one-third of their lives asleep. **Sleep deprivation can:**

- ◆ Weaken your immune system, which normally restores itself while you sleep.
- ◆ Diminish your ability to exercise mental functions involving learning, memory, mathematical calculation and logical reasoning.
- ◆ Hinder your motor skills, including driving and operating machinery.
- ◆ Increase irritability and moodiness, causing strain on your relationships.
- ◆ Impair your concentration and job performance.
- ◆ Make you more vulnerable to fatigue-related car accidents.
- ◆ Reduce your peace of mind and sense of well-being.

What changes in your habits can you make to get the sleep you need? Set aside adequate sleep time each day, and your body will thank you for it!



Relax with a New Hobby

Hobbies are a great way to relax. They provide a refreshing change of pace and can encourage your growth as an individual. **Here are some ideas to get you started on finding a new hobby:**

- ▲ *Do you like to be active?* Or does your job leave you mostly sedentary during the day? Then, choose a physically oriented hobby, such as cycling, dancing, golfing, or another recreational sport that interests you.
- ▲ *Do you like to work with your hands?* Try your hand at sewing, quilting, craft making, woodworking, building, furniture refinishing, toy making, car repair, or other handy activities.
- ▲ *Do you like being in the great outdoors?* Consider taking up camping, hiking, sailing, canoeing, fishing, skiing, snowshoeing, bird-watching, or other outdoor activities.



- ▲ *Do you have an artistic bent?* Or have you always wanted to? Why not take a class in painting, drawing, ceramics, creative writing, poetry, foreign language, drama, singing, or playing a musical instrument?
- ▲ *Do you enjoy interacting with people?* A hobby involving volunteer work may be just right for you. You might try tutoring, coaching, or volunteering at a local charity or community organization.

Sleep Stealers

Sleep deprivation results not only from failing to get *quality* sleep, but also from not getting enough *quantity* of sleep. Even if you sleep deeply for a little bit, it still won’t substitute for the full amount of rest that your body needs. **Common sleep stealers include the following:**

- ▲ *Stimulants*—consuming food, caffeine, nicotine, or alcohol or exercising too close to bedtime.
- ▲ *Television*—because of the lights and sounds, watching TV before bedtime actually stimulates rather than relaxes your mind and body.
- ▲ *Worry, anxiety and stress*—failing to allow yourself time to unwind and think through your day before going to bed.
- ▲ *An unhealthy attitude toward sleep*—thinking that sleep is only for lazy nonachievers or that you don’t need sleep like other people do.
- ▲ *Working too many hours*—believing that by working more instead of sleeping you’ll be more productive and successful.
- ▲ *Attempting to do too much*—assuming that you must do everything even when there aren’t enough hours in the day to do so.

“Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going.”

— Jim Ryun

Five Communication Skills Every Businessperson Needs

Skill #1: Speaking

No longer is effective speaking a plus in the business world – it’s now expected. And the higher one goes in a company, the more crucial this skill becomes. Today, public speaking is the norm for senior executives.

However, even if you’re not a senior executive explaining a crisis to a group of line managers or investors, you’ll often find yourself speaking before peers in your day-to-day responsibilities. And as a small-business owner, you may speak for a living; that is, you may talk to people daily to sell your products or services. Your speaking success relates directly to your bottom line.

We all know that it’s not necessarily the brightest or most capable who get ahead. Often it’s those who make a strong impact on people who end up being successful. People who speak well are generally considered more intelligent, forceful and respectable than their quieter counterparts.

Outside the business world, you’ll continue to find opportunities to put your speaking skills to use – at club fund-raisers, on political issues, at farewell gatherings for departing colleagues and friends and on behalf of nonprofit organizations and causes. Speaking well is no longer just a nice-to-have skill – it’s a must for the successful individual and business owner.

Skill #2: Listening

Listening means the difference between making or losing a sale, gaining or losing a client, motivating or discouraging a team, or mending or destroying an employee relationship. Not a passive state of mind, listening is the precursor to all successful business activity for an owner and manager. As Plutarch observed: “Know how to listen, and you will profit even from those who talk badly.”

Skill #3: Writing

Everything official sooner or later gets written down. Unfortunately for the small-business owner, most of the difficult writing – or at least reviewing of others’ drafts – ends up on your desk: large customer proposals, important supplier agreements, strategic partnerships, policy statements, press releases and letters to investors. What you say is what you get. It has to be clear, concise and correct.

Skill #4: Leading a Meeting

Meetings can bring the world to peace – or kill 15 hours a week for even the best time manager. In addition to leading staff meetings to tackle day-to-day issues, business owners meet with clients to sign contracts, negotiate better terms, and brainstorm and set strategies. How well they lead determines what they achieve – wasted time or valuable outcomes.

Skill #5: Resolving Conflict

Business owners, unfortunately, have plenty of conflict. If not with clients, then among internal teams. If not with internal teams, then with governmental agencies and regulators. If not with agencies and regulators, then with warring divisions and stakeholders about expectations and means for desired outcomes. As a business owner, you serve as the referee, replete with all the “boos” and minus the benefits.

Finding your tool kit short of any of these skills can hinder your overall effectiveness in achieving results and reaching your business goals. To improve results on all fronts, sharpen these skills in your own tool chest and enjoy more success.



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www.booher.com.

Planning an Effective Press Conference

Depending on the occasion, a press conference can be an efficient means for distributing information. **When planning a press conference, remember to:**

- Verify that it’s your best option. Avoid wasting reporters’ time. Don’t hold a press conference if you can communicate the same information by making a few phone calls or drafting a press release.
- Schedule your press conference for a time that suits reporters’ schedules. Hold it at a location that will make it convenient for media to attend.
- Double-check equipment in advance. Ensure that microphones, speakers and audiovisual equipment will be up and running smoothly.
- Be available to greet people and arrange interviews with personnel. Make sure your top managers and experts will be present to answer questions.
- Provide information on handouts that reporters can take with them. Send copies of this information to the people who don’t attend your press conference.
- Follow up with reporters after the press conference. Answer any additional questions they may have and ask for feedback on how the press conference went.

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TIMESAVERS

Categorize Your "To Do" List

To knock out the tasks on your "to do" list, rank them using one of the following categories:

- ❖ *Deadlines* – tasks that have a time-sensitive nature. Accomplishing your urgent, important tasks can get you into a groove that will keep you going on the rest.
- ❖ *Location* – tasks in the same area of your home or errands that can be run in the same area of town. By arranging your tasks this way, you'll conserve energy.
- ❖ *Length* – tasks that will take the same amount of time to do. In some cases, it's better to knock out several short tasks first, so you'll limit the amount of time left over for the ones you tend to drag out.
- ❖ *Interest level* – tasks that you just don't like to do. Getting boring or otherwise unpleasant tasks out of the way first will leave you more motivated to finish your fun and interesting ones.
- ❖ *Difficulty level* – tasks that require more energy or concentration. By doing difficult tasks first, you'll be able to work on the easier ones even if you're tired.

Manage Your Magazine Pile

Magazines take time and space. And the more of them you have, the more time and space they take. Whether you want to stay up-to-date on your industry or simply be entertained, reading magazines can be beneficial as long as you keep your reading list pared to the essentials. **To manage your magazine pile:**

- Skim magazines for the articles of interest to you. Highlight these articles in the table of contents and then tear out or copy the pages they're on. File these articles in a "to read" folder that you can take with you to read in spare moments, and recycle the rest of the magazine.
- Consider an online alternative. Online services allow you to peruse articles from several magazines and then choose the ones you want to download to read. The advantage of this method



is that it eliminates the extra paper clutter.

- Wait before renewing your subscriptions. If after a few months you don't miss receiving the magazine, you'll know that you can live without it and will save yourself the time and money. If, however, you do notice a loss, simply resubscribe to it.

Memory Tip: Use Your Keys

Your keys might just be the key to your memory. The next time you want to remember to take something with you when you leave, place it next to your keys. That way, when you're ready to go – whether you're in a hurry or not – you'll be sure to grab it and take it with you.