



Tyme Management™

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Follow Through on Your Schedule

It's one thing to write down what to do on your planner, but it's quite another to actually accomplish it. **To complete what you have planned:**

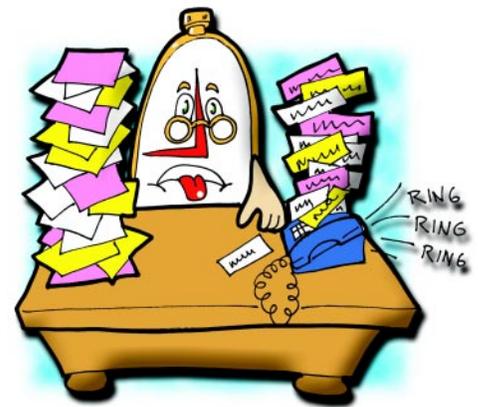
- ◆ Plan in advance. Schedule your upcoming week before it gets the better of you. The more you're aware of what needs to be done, the more prepared you'll be.
- ◆ Avoid interruptions. Stay focused on the job at hand. When a new task presents itself, weigh its importance, and postpone it if possible. Designate certain times of the day for meeting with the people who need to talk with you.
- ◆ Identify internal distractions. Feelings of boredom, fatigue, or stress can make it difficult to concentrate. Resolve any underlying issues, so you can focus on what you'd planned to work on.
- ◆ Be consistent. Stick with what you've scheduled instead of changing plans at the last minute. With practice, your schedule will no longer seem a rigid device, but a helpful tool for organizing your life.

Tackling Overwhelming Tasks

Sometimes the tasks before you seem so difficult that you don't even know where to begin. When this happens, it may seem easier to not start at all. But giving up won't help you reach your goals.

The secret to tackling difficult tasks is to find ways to simplify them and make them more manageable. By simplifying, you turn overwhelming tasks into successful achievements. **The following are techniques for approaching difficult tasks:**

- ▲ Make your mood work with you. Stop letting "I'm not in the mood" be your excuse for not getting started. No matter how you feel, there's probably some part of the job that you wouldn't mind doing. Even if it's minor, you'll be one step closer to completion.
- ▲ Get more informed about the subject. The more you know about something, the less intimidated and the more interested you'll probably be about it. When you're confident and enthusiastic about what you're doing, you'll be more prepared and motivated to do it.
- ▲ Choose a preparatory task. Avoid thinking that you need to "warm up" to the job before you can do it. Starting is the best way of warming up. Find something easy and active you can do to begin the task. It may be as simple as sharpening your pencil or picking up the phone.
- ▲ Reduce the task into smaller, quicker tasks. List the parts of the job that can be done in 10 minutes or less. Rank these tasks in order of importance, and do one every time you have a few spare moments. You'll not only save wasted time, but you'll also be moving closer to your goal.
- ▲ Plan backwards. When you know what the desired result is, you can then decide what needs to be done to get this result. Visualize the end result, and figure out the step immediately preceding it. Keep working backwards to the beginning, and then start with the first step.
- ▲ Adjust your attitude. No matter how much planning and preparation you do, your attitude plays a vital role in how much you'll accomplish. Identify the negative thoughts that are holding you back, and charge forward to the goal line.



Selling Against the Competition

Your company doesn't exist in a vacuum. Alongside your organization are many other companies that are vying for your customers' business. In order to sell successfully, you must know your competitors' products and services as well as you do your own. **The following is a list of important questions to consider about your competition:**

- ❑ How many competing companies are there in your industry? Are there several or only a few?
- ❑ How large are these other companies? Are they small or large firms?
- ❑ How do your competitors distinguish their products or services from the others on the market?
- ❑ Do competitors have similar or varied strategies in appealing to customers?
- ❑ How do these companies limit costs to make their product or service less expensive?
- ❑ How do your competitors strive to meet the time and convenience needs

of their customers?

- ❑ How extensively do these other companies invest in product research, design and development?
- ❑ How good is the quality of customer service, support and warranties that these companies provide?
- ❑ How diverse are the products or services that your competitors offer?
- ❑ Do these companies have a substitute product or service? Do these substitutes cost less and work better?

Once you've studied the competition thoroughly, begin looking for ways to set your company apart from the rest. By knowing how to differentiate your product or service from the others, you can create a winning sales strategy. **Here are common methods for making your company stand out from the others:**

- ◆ **Uniqueness.** This approach emphasizes how your company offers a one-of-a-kind product or service. Salespeople focus on how quality, features, appearance, customer service and other



- aspects are unique to your company.
- ◆ **Price.** This approach highlights how your company guarantees the lowest price for your product or service. Salespeople stress the price comparison with other products and the value of your product.
- ◆ **Niche.** This approach targets a particular audience and shows how your company can meet the specific needs of this group. Salespeople appeal to the wants, needs and desires that these customers have.

Planning Your Sales Schedule

Good planning skills and sales techniques go hand in hand. **To maximize your potential for sales this month, plan for the following:**

- ▲ Wrap up loose ends. Look over your list of customers who placed orders in the previous month. Double-check to make sure that these orders were fulfilled satisfactorily.
- ▲ Make appointments. Call to schedule appointments with customers at the beginning of the month. This will allow you enough time to make the subsequent calls necessary to close a deal by the end of the month.
- ▲ Schedule client care calls. Set aside time to call customers and ask if they're satisfied with your product or service. Listen to them, and let them know that their comments are important to you.
- ▲ Pursue referrals. Ask clients who are happy with how your company is serving them to give you a referral. Also consider other products or services that might be beneficial to them.
- ▲ Look ahead. In addition to maintaining your current customer base, plan time for contacting new prospects and securing new leads to ensure future success.



Stay Motivated

To encourage yourself to keep up the good work:

- ◆ Keep your goals in sight. Stay focused by reminding yourself of what you want to accomplish.
- ◆ Focus on the benefits. Remind yourself of the benefits of achieving your goals and objectives.
- ◆ Reaffirm your mission. When you know why you believe in what you are selling, you'll be more convincing to others.
- ◆ Look for the little things. Relish in your small achievements and steps of progress each day.
- ◆ Pinpoint the source of your successes. Find ways to maximize these things and apply them to the other areas of your work.

Keep It Neat

To help keep your family room neat and tidy:

- ❖ Leave a basket in the corner for toys. Take this basket to your children's rooms once or twice a week to return misplaced items where they belong.
- ❖ Designate a game center. Store board games in a cabinet or on a shelf that's easy to reach along with a container for holding stray game pieces.
- ❖ Make a home for half-read materials. Place a magazine rack or basket next to each reading chair for books, magazines, newspapers, pens and pencils.
- ❖ Take care of dusty spots right away. Keep a can of furniture polish and some cleaning rags in a nearby drawer, so you won't put dusting off until later.
- ❖ Hide your handy projects. If you knit, sew, buff shoes, or work on other projects while you watch TV, put these items under a skirted table or chair.

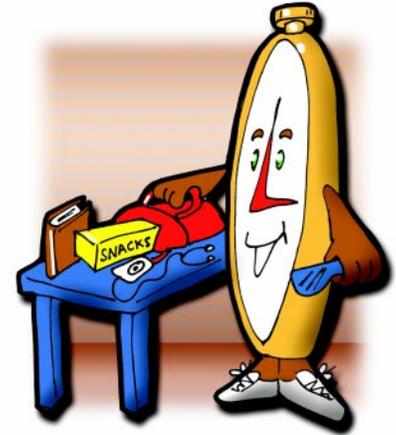
“Things which matter most must never be at the mercy of things which matter least.”

– Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Pack a Travel Kit for Your Trip

Long road trips, plane rides and time spent waiting in airports and train stations can seem even longer to children. To help them pass these times enjoyably, prepare a travel kit of items that they can take with them. For each child, select a small, sturdy bag that's easy to carry, and let them decorate their bags themselves. **Then, fill your children's travel kits with any of the following items:**

- ▲ *Art supplies* – pens, pencils, crayons, colored pencils, paper, coloring books, stickers, tape, glue sticks, scissors and stencils.
- ▲ *Favorite toys* – limit these to one or two special belongings that will fit the size of their bags.
- ▲ *Books* – check out books from the library before you go, or buy a new book and save it for the trip.
- ▲ *Games* – crossword puzzles, mazes, playing cards, trivia questions and electronic games with batteries.
- ▲ *Music* – song books, electronic music



devices. Don't forget to pack the chargers.

- ▲ *Journal* – have kids collect clippings of things they find and glue them in a special notebook to help them remember their trip.
- ▲ *Snacks* – choose foods that won't make crumbs or spill, such as apples, grapes, raisins, carrots, celery sticks and boxed juices.
- ▲ *Surprises* – wrap a few entertaining trinkets, and put them in their bags as a surprise.

When There's No Time to Get Away

Sometimes there just isn't time for a traditional family vacation. **Here are some things you can do with your family when you can't take much time off work:**

- Schedule a long weekend. Take one or two days off work, and go with your family on a road trip to someplace special nearby.
- Plan a weekend getaway. Spend a weekend visiting the various tourist attractions and historical sites in your hometown.
- Get off work early for a day. Go to an afternoon movie or out to a favorite restaurant, and enjoy an extended evening together.
- Celebrate a family day. Dedicate every Saturday, Sunday, or other day you have off regularly to spend exclusively with your family.
- Take a minivacation in your own backyard. A hammock, swimming pool, or tree house can be a fun place to retreat to when you have a few spare moments.



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.

Curbing Consumption

Consumption is time-consuming. In the quest for convenience, many people rush to buy the latest gizmos and gadgets that promise to save them time. In exchange, these items often require even more time to shop for, learn how to use and maintain. The result is more hassle and less time for what's really important in life.

To save yourself both time and money, get rid of the nonessential possessions that demand too much of your time, and learn to live with less. The fewer things you have to maintain, the more time you'll have to enjoy yourself. **To simplify your life, consider the following before you make a purchase:**

- ▲ How much time will the item cost me? Determine how much time will be needed to shop for, purchase and set up the item, as well as read operating manuals and service it.
- ▲ Is speed necessary for the task involved? Many gadgets may help you perform minor tasks faster, but they may not be worth the expense.
- ▲ Is there a comparable "low-tech" alternative? Many times, simple tools like pencil and paper will work more efficiently than electronic equipment.
- ▲ Is the item really worth the trouble? Decide whether it will truly make your life more convenient or only complicate it further.
- ▲ Will coupons and other special offers truly benefit me? Often, the trade-off of time for money when using coupons, rebates and bonuses is expensive.
- ▲ How much travel time do I spend going from store to store? If hunting for bargains or running errands eats up too much of your time, find ways to eliminate or consolidate these trips.



How to Unwind

By the end of the day, you're probably wound up from all of the stress and stimulus of the day. **To help you "unwind" after work:**

- ❖ Engage in a relaxing activity. Take a walk, or sit awhile in a favorite chair. If you won't have time to yourself once you get home, listen to soothing music on the way home from work.
- ❖ Think about your day. Define what you're feeling, and try to identify what happened in the day that contributed to these feelings. Let the negative feelings and mistakes of the day go.
- ❖ Put work behind you. Your work and its problems will still be waiting for you when you return to the office. Resolve to give yourself a break from thinking about them until tomorrow.
- ❖ Do something fun. At some point in your evening routine, take time to do something enjoyable. Play with your children, read a book, or talk with a friend.



Time-Efficient Strategies

To get the most out of life, you need to know how to apply sound time-management principles. **To manage your time better:**

- ❖ Be assertive. Say "no" to doing additional projects that aren't a high priority or that someone else could do better. Explain that the new project would hinder your ability to accomplish your priorities.
- ❖ Exercise self-discipline. Stay focused on your priorities, and stick to your deadlines. Realize that there will be times when you must keep on working even though you don't feel like it.
- ❖ Kick the procrastination habit. Break big projects down into smaller, more manageable pieces. Put your goals and deadlines in writing, and aim to complete them on or ahead of schedule.
- ❖ Do no more than you can handle. Recognize the distinction between cooperating with others and doing their work for them. Set realistic deadlines that you can reasonably accomplish.

“Keep in mind that you are always saying “no” to something. If it isn't to the apparent, urgent things in your life, it is probably to the most fundamental, highly important things. Even when the urgent is good, the good can keep you from your best, keep you from your unique contribution, if you let it.”

– Helen Keller



Get Into the Habit of Positive Thinking

Every day, the internal conversation you keep with yourself can determine your success or failure, your happiness or despair. Too often, the negative thoughts you think can be your own worst enemy. One way to unlearn these negative thoughts is to get into the habit of positive thinking. The more you begin to fill your mind with positive affirmations about yourself, the more you'll notice the difference in your outlook on life.

Here are some tips for using positive affirmations:

- ◆ Use "I am" statements. Make a list of the truths about yourself and your goals, desires and beliefs. State these affirmations in the first person to make them more active and personal.
- ◆ State them positively. When you state things in the negative, it shifts your attention to what you don't want to do. Avoid using "don't," "not," or "stop," and say what you want to be or do instead.
- ◆ Express ideas in short, specific sentences. Shorter phrases are easier to remember and tend to have more impact. Try saying them in the present tense to help you act on them now instead of later.
- ◆ Create realistic statements. Make your affirmations realistic so that you can really believe them when you say them. Start by stating small, attainable goals, and gradually build up to bigger ones.
- ◆ Review daily. Post your affirmations list in a place where you can refer to it easily. Spend a few minutes each day reading your list and speaking them out loud.
- ◆ Catch your doubts. Say "no" to negative thoughts that come back to question, cast doubt on, or make fun of your affirmations. Then, repeat the affirmation with renewed confidence, picturing yourself this way.

"The thing you set your mind on is the thing you ultimately become."
– Nathaniel Hawthorne

Give Respect to Others

First impressions may count, but it's how you treat people on a consistent basis that can make or break a relationship. **To treat people with respect:**

- Be sensitive to feelings. Consider how your words or actions might hurt people before you say or do anything.
- Encourage generously. Say what you can to build other people up.
- Avoid put-downs. Even critical remarks said in jest can leave lasting scars on a person's self-esteem.
- Listen attentively. Let people say what they want to, and ask questions that show you care and are interested.



- Put yourself in someone else's shoes. Be willing to look at a situation from the other person's perspective.
- Practice self-control. Deal with negative feelings constructively and without taking them out on others.
- Avoid gossiping. Never talk about people behind their backs, and don't listen to people who do.
- Share a smile. Spread a little sunshine to people's day by giving them a bright, cheery smile.

Using Intrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivation uses something external, such as money, tokens, grades, or praise, as a reward for doing a task. When you're extrinsically motivated to do something, the activity is a means to an end. An extrinsically motivated employee, for example, would work for a promotion or a paycheck.

Intrinsic motivation, on the other hand, comes from within the person. It's not the external rewards that drive you, but the pleasure of doing the actual activity itself. An intrinsically motivated student, for example, would study for the joy of learning the subject, not for the grade on the exam.

The key to developing intrinsic motivation is to focus on short-term goals that help you concentrate on the task at hand. If you're learning to play the piano, for example, concentrate on your form, and enjoy the sensation of your fingers striking the keys. Or, if you're a cyclist, pay attention to your breathing technique, and relish in the feeling of the breeze rushing past you. The difference is within you!

A Better Time Equation: Handle Less = Do More

Welcome to the Information Age where facts and figures bombard us at increasing speed, frequency and sophistication... where each year about 55,000 books are published in the United States... where each week, it's not uncommon to get 49 faxes at five pages each in length... where each day, you can easily receive 75 to 100 E-mails and 25 to 30 voice mails...

Let's face it. If you're not in constant control while navigating down the information highway, you're likely to get run over by others passing you by. And one of the major by-products of this proliferation of information is the mountainous paperwork that it produces.

The reasons for wanting to reduce your paperwork load are painfully obvious. Paperwork costs time, energy and money. Surprisingly enough, people tend to miss the equally obvious when it comes to their own paperwork-generating habits. The most effective way to reduce your paperwork load is to produce, send and request less paperwork yourself.

The following tips will help you to identify and eliminate unnecessary paperwork and to handle "must-do" paperwork more efficiently and effectively:

- ◆ *Use response cards and lines.* The piece of paper you send to others often requires them to generate a piece of paper in return, which may mean a lengthy wait while they compose their response. Instead, make it quick and easy for others to answer your memos, letters, or reports. Type the response you want, along with a space for a check mark and/or signature, on a separate mail-back card or at the bottom of an in-house memo.

Upon receiving their response, note it in your records, and file the response card. Less time. Less paperwork. Less hassle. More effective business communications.

- ◆ *Learn when to talk and when to write.* In many situations, talking will better achieve your objectives than writing. Not everything has to be in writing to be formal, understood, or meaningful.

Giving mild reprimands, negotiating small details, getting immediate feedback, receiving reactions to your messages, and conveying tone are all better done in person than by pen.

- ◆ *Use – don't abuse – electronic message systems.* E-mail

makes it easy and convenient to send your messages to the whole world by pressing a key. Avoid doing this. You'll only irritate people by sending them unnecessary information. Continue doing this, and they won't pay attention to the truly important messages you send.

And avoid letting the informality of E-mail lull you into composing careless, disorganized and unclear messages. Think before you write, not as you write.

- ◆ *Eliminate most cover letters.* Most cover letters communicate only the obvious: "I'm sending you something. You now have it." If you must have a record of submission, simply put "Submitted to..." and "Submitted by..." along with the date on the title page.

Simply send the information. Anything else is either understood or unnecessary.

- ◆ *Be informal in your response.* Every memo or letter you receive doesn't merit a formal response. Picking up the phone may be quicker than writing. Or, you may be able to simply

add your comments in a margin or on a sticky note and pass the document on, saving everyone time.

People aren't nearly as impressed by formality as they are by accuracy, speed and thoroughness.

- ◆ *Forget the idea that "more is better."* More is not always better. There's little correlation between quantity and quality. Try not to get trapped into thinking that the more money you want customers to spend, the more detail you should give them to justify the price, or that the more serious the problem, the more detail you should give to support your decision.

Consider the importance of your message, and tailor your comments accordingly. Less can mean more – more readers, more insight and more impact.

Although minimizing paperwork will require revamping old habits, the end justifies the means. You'll find yourself pushing less paper and spending more time focused on the important paperwork you do need to handle.



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TIMESAVERS

Putting Your Files in Order

To organize and label your files more effectively:

- ◆ Make labels visible. Write the name of the file at the top of the label, so you'll be able to see it easily when you open the file drawer.
- ◆ Use all capital letters. If the label doesn't have to be typed, write it with a felt-tipped pen. If it must be typed, label a sticky note, and use it as a tab until you have time to make printed labels.
- ◆ Stagger filing tabs. This allows you to see all of the file names without moving anything. When adding a new file, just make sure that the new tab isn't blocked by the one in front of or behind it.
- ◆ Place tabs on the front of hanging files. This will enable you to read the label even when the file gets full. When filing something away, you can simply pull the tab and place the paper inside.
- ◆ Take advantage of colored files and labels. Use different colors to designate different types of files, such as client files, project files, or administrative files.

Organize an Office Clean-up Day

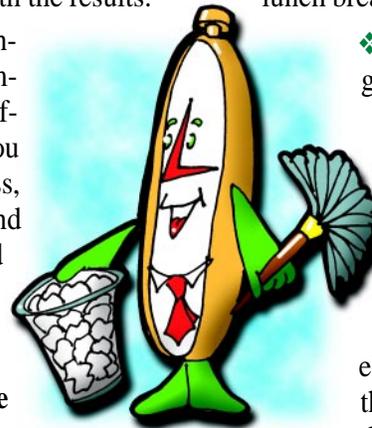
Your office won't stay organized by itself. Without a concentrated effort, your file cabinets and credenzas are likely to accumulate masses of outdated and unnecessary material. It may require time and effort, but making the choice to periodically clean out your office can be well worth the results.

By getting your entire department or company involved in an office clean-up day, you can help reduce stress, improve efficiency and promote an organized working environment.

The following are suggestions for organizing your office clean-up day:

- ◆ Designate a day. Choose a time when demands and deadlines are at a minimum. Encourage everyone to participate in the clean-up day. You may even want to hire a temporary worker to answer the phones so that people can work undistracted and still receive the important calls that they may be expecting.
- ◆ Make necessary arrangements. In-

form your building maintenance workers that there will be more trash than usual on this day. Contact an organization that you can donate old equipment to, and leave a supply of trash bags, pens and labels on hand. Reward everyone's efforts with a tasty lunch break.



- ◆ Establish throw-out guidelines. Create a list of criteria for helping people to decide whether or not to keep items in their files. Is the paper useful? Is it necessary for legal or tax records? Is there a duplicate copy somewhere else? What is the worst thing that could happen if it were thrown away?

- ◆ Aim for comfort. Wear comfortable shoes and clothing. Instead of standing at the file cabinet to weed out your files, bring a stack over to your desk to sort through, and fill your trash can completely before emptying it into a larger one. To prevent back strain, remember to lift with your legs and not your back.