



Tyme Management™

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Finding Time During Your Day

One secret to managing your time more effectively is to carve out “chunks” of time in which you can focus on your work without interruption. **Here are tips for finding extra time:**

- ◆ Designate phone time. Schedule a time at both the beginning and end of the day for returning people’s phone calls. Plan tasks requiring concentration for the remaining parts of your day, and take unexpected phone calls only when you’re not working on one of these tasks.
- ◆ Reserve meeting time. Set aside time for one-on-one meetings that will guarantee people your full attention. Make sure others know not to interrupt your meetings except under certain circumstances. This not only communicates that the person you’re meeting with is important to you, but it also provides you with the necessary time to work together productively.
- ◆ Keep out of the office. Try working at home one day. Create a home office environment that’s devoted strictly to work.

Stay on Top While You Get Away

Imagine yourself on your dream vacation... lounging in the tropics far from the demands of your job may come to mind. But for many people, “getting away from it all” is becoming harder to do as work responsibilities increase and technology makes people accessible wherever they are.

So how can you enjoy your vacation and still stay on top of things at the office? **Here are several suggestions:**

- ▲ Prepare for your vacation beforehand. Once your vacation time is on your planner, outline the details of what needs be accomplished before you go. Plan small steps you can complete gradually rather than in a mad rush right before you leave.
- ▲ Plan for catch-up time afterwards. Reserve the first day or two after your vacation for handling everything that will pile up while you’re gone.
- ▲ Communicate how you can be reached. Give a phone number or E-mail address that you can be reached at in an emergency, and make sure everyone knows exactly what signifies an emergency. Put someone in charge of your mail and

phone calls, and specify what should be responded to immediately.

- ▲ Let go of control. Some people feel compelled to constantly check up on the office while they’re away. If this is your tendency, give yourself permission to take a complete break. Pursue the other areas of your life, and learn who you are apart from your work.
- ▲ Aim for no distractions. If you can’t stop thinking about a certain work-related matter, check up on it so you can enjoy the rest of the day undistracted. Recognize the balance between necessary calls and compulsive ones, however.
- ▲ Be open for work-related insights. People often get fresh insights when they’re doing something completely unrelated. Keep a small notepad handy for any thoughts or ideas that you have while you’re away.
- ▲ Examine your motivations. Your vacation should be a time to gain fresh perspective on your life – not a temporary escape. If you’re desperate to leave your job, you may need to change your job or your approach to dealing with stress in general.



Take Time for Family Meals

Skipping family dinnertime may mean that your children are skipping important physical and emotional nutrients as well. According to research in the Archives of Family Medicine, children who ate dinner with their family frequently ate more dietary fiber, calcium, iron, vitamins, fruits and vegetables than those who didn't. They also consumed less saturated fat, trans fats, fried foods and soft drinks. In addition, a study conducted at the University of Nebraska confirmed that spending time together as a family, including regular meals together, was an important component of strong, emotionally healthy families.

So what can you do if your family doesn't eat dinner together?

You can:

- ▲ Squeeze in time for a quick meal. If lack of time is what keeps you from eating together, make something healthy that doesn't take long to prepare, such as sandwiches with fresh fruit and cut-up vegetables.
- ▲ Plan for a late dinner, and snack beforehand. If dinners are delayed because of busy schedules, wait to have dinner together, and have people munch on fruit, cereal, yogurt, or peanut butter sandwiches until then.
- ▲ When a family meal isn't possible, avoid relying on ready-made meals. If you use frozen or prepared meals, choose ones without a lot of fat, and teach kids to round out their meals with fruit and raw vegetables.
- ▲ Schedule regular, consistent time to be with each other. Nourish your children's emotional health with interactive play by doing sports, hobbies, games, or other activities together.
- ▲ Enjoy your dinner. When the family does sit down to eat, don't answer the phone, and tape television shows instead of eating in front of the TV. Eat slowly, and enjoy visiting with each other.



Source: The American Institute for Cancer Research, www.aicr.org

“Lord, give me the determination and tenacity of a weed.”
– Mrs. Leon R. Walters

Giving Kids Free Time

These days many children have schedules that rival that of a busy executive. Their time is booked with lessons, practices and homework, and they often rush straight from school to extracurricular activities without a break. For these kids, “down time” is an unfamiliar part of their vocabulary.

No matter how talented or well-rounded these busy kids may be, they're actually missing the free time that's vital to their health, wholeness and development. Free time gives the body much needed time to rest and allows the mind quiet time for self-awareness, reflection and daydreaming. Free time also gives the mind a break so that it can focus and concentrate better, and it provides kids the opportunity to learn social skills by spending unstructured time with family and friends.

So how do you know if your child is doing too much? Irritability and constant fatigue in the mornings and evenings can be obvious signs. If the family is in a perpetual rush to get things done at the last minute, the family schedule may be too tight as well. **To protect your children's free time:**



- ◆ Permit them to choose one extracurricular activity during the school year. Eliminate all other obligations.
- ◆ Encourage an after-school break. Let them eat a snack, socialize and relax before starting homework.
- ◆ Eat dinner together as a family. Avoid allowing anything else to be scheduled during this time.
- ◆ Plan duty-free weekends. Let everyone sleep in, and don't have anything planned for the entire day.
- ◆ Skip a lesson or practice sometimes. If your kids are noticeably tired or have a test the next day, don't go.

The Family Message Center

Create a family message center for your messages. Choose a central location, such as the kitchen, hallway, or den, and post an erasable marker board, bulletin board, or notepad for recording messages. Family members can then leave phone messages, reminders and notes there so that everyone will know where to find them.

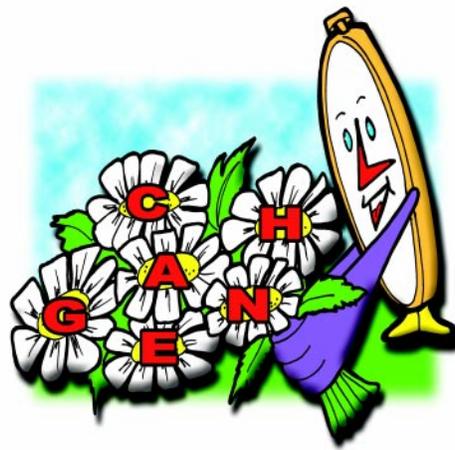
Let Change Inspire Personal Growth in Life

Change. Does this word scare or inspire you? Herbert Spencer said, “A living thing is distinguished from a dead thing by the multiplicity of the changes at any moment taking place in it.” Change is evidence of life. It’s impossible to grow without change. Those who can’t change their minds can’t change anything. The truth is, life is always at some turning point.

What people want is progress – if they can have it without change. Impossible! You must change and recognize that change is your greatest ally. People who never change their opinions never correct their mistakes. The fact is, the road to success is always under construction.

Yesterday’s formula for success is often tomorrow’s recipe for failure. The man who uses yesterday’s methods in today’s world probably won’t be in business tomorrow. Consider what Thomas Watson, the founder of the IBM Corporation, once said: “There is a world market for about five computers.” Where would IBM be today if Mr. Watson hadn’t been willing to change?

You can’t become what you’re des-



igned to be by remaining what you are. John Patterson said, “Only fools and dead men don’t change their minds. Fools won’t. Dead men can’t.” The same kind of thinking that’s brought you to where you are today won’t necessarily take you to where you want to go. Sante Boeve discovered this truth: “There are people whose watch stops at a certain hour and who remain permanently at that age.”

Overcome your fear of change. It’s the unchangeable law of progress. Avoid being the person whose mind is always open to new ideas – provided they’re the same old ones. Defending your faults and er-

rors only proves that you have no intentions of quitting them.

You can’t stand still. You must go forward and be open to adjustments that improve you. The most unhappy people are those who fear change.

It’s been said many times: “You can’t make an omelet without breaking eggs.” Accomplishment automatically results in change. One change makes way for the next, giving you the opportunity to grow. You must change to master change.

Change, but don’t stop. Happy are the people who can adjust to a set of circumstances without surrendering their convictions. Open your arms to change without letting go of your values.

You are custom-built for change. You’re not a rock. At any point, at any age, anyone can change. Avoid letting the “way you’ve always done it” keep you from today’s opportunity.

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Handling Criticism

When you find yourself being criticized, turn a pain into an advantage by learning from it.

You don’t have to defend yourself. Instead, use it as an opportunity for self-improvement.

Ask the person to explain the problem, and look for ways that you can change or eliminate misunderstandings in the future.

Even if the person is mistaken, you still have the chance to learn more about people and to develop more kindness, patience and forgiveness in your life.

Putting It in Words

The next time you’re emotionally overloaded, try writing it out. Writing is a great way to help calm and process your emotions until they’re under control. Once you’ve acknowledged and worked through your feelings, you can then move on to deciding a constructive course of action. **Writing can help you:**

- ◆ Control anger. A lot of fighting and violent behavior is the result of not being able to communicate feelings. Writing allows you to voice the hurt and frustration that provokes anger without hurting yourself or others in the process.
- ◆ Express sadness. Articulating feelings can help lift the sense of being overwhelmed and confused. The next time you feel sad, write a letter or poem to someone about it. Much anguish can be soothed by expressing it to someone.
- ◆ Process a difficult situation. Try writing down a detailed account of exactly what happened. Write it as a newspaper report or as a chapter in the novel of your life story. Then, put the record away somewhere, and leave it behind you.



Smart Shopping Tips

If you're not careful, a trip to the store can add more to your closet without giving you anything more to wear. **Here's how to shop for a wardrobe that you can actually use:**

- ▲ **Establish a convenient shopping routine.** Many people plan for two or three major shopping trips each year. By planning in advance for your clothing needs, you can limit the tendency to buy more than you need.
- ▲ **Make a list of your needs.** Write down the outfits and items that you must add or replace. Think about any upcoming events requiring something special that you don't already have. Note the styles and fabrics that fit your lifestyle. Then, stick to your list, so you can avoid the expensive consequences of impulse buying.
- ▲ **Remember your budget.** Set a limit to the amount of money you'll spend *before* you go. Your budget will help you further clarify what you really need versus what you want. For example, you may have to postpone buying casual clothes so that you can buy the fall and winter outfits you need for work.
- ▲ **Aim for coordination.** Choose two colors that look good on you that also go well together. Build your wardrobe around this color scheme, selecting the majority of items in these colors. In addition, before buying anything, be sure you have at least two or three other pieces of clothing that you can wear with it.
- ▲ **Get the perfect match.** When looking for something to match an item that you already have, cut a small piece of fabric from its inner seam, tape it to an index card and take it with you. Always compare fabric colors in natural light to guarantee that it's a good match.
- ▲ **Create a fashion notebook.** Look through magazines for colors, styles and outfits you like. Collect these pictures to help you know what to look for.
- ▲ **Schedule sufficient time.** Avoid underestimating the amount of time it will take to find what you need. Allow yourself plenty of time to look around, try things on and compare prices. On the other hand, stop before you get too worn out to make a good decision.



Pat Answers

Dear Pat: *My boss takes credit for my work. I recently spent hundreds of hours on a big project, but when the senior managers singled him out as the "hero" for getting it done, he just smiled and said "Thanks", without one word about my efforts. How do I get the recognition I deserve without getting my boss angry?*

Pat Answers: The best way to get what you want is to ask for it. Arrange to meet with your boss and tell him that you were disappointed not to hear him acknowledge your hard work and contributions to the project. Let him know that being acknowledged in that way is important to you. Oddly enough, some managers don't understand that recognition for their efforts is one of the main reasons employees stay at their jobs. It may have been that he was so hungry for recognition from his own bosses that he simply forgot to include you in the glory. If so, or if he just didn't understand that it mattered to you – and he's a good manager – you should expect to get the credit you deserve. However, if he is actively "stealing" your work for his own advancement, you might consider that the number one reason people leave their jobs is bad managers.



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.

Moderate Exercise Is Best

Many people think that they must exercise longer, harder and faster to be healthy. Contrary to popular opinion, however, moderate exercise is more often the way to go. Although strenuous exercise does improve aerobic capacity better and build stronger muscles, **moderate exercise offers more overall health benefits, which include:**

- ◆ Controlling weight (just as effectively as strenuous exercise)
- ◆ Moderating blood pressure (just as effectively as strenuous exercise)
- ◆ Lowering stress and anxiety (even better than strenuous exercise does)
- ◆ Maintaining exercise as a long-term lifestyle (since it's more workable in the long run)

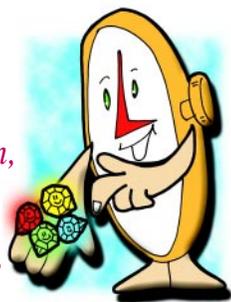
Learning from Pain

No one lives a life immune from pain. Since it's inevitable, the one choice you do have when pain comes your way is how you respond to it. You can either believe that you're unfairly fated to a miserable existence, or you can choose to learn from it and change for the better. **The next time you experience pain, consider its benefits. Pain:**

- ✓ Provides an opportunity to grow in character in a way that you otherwise wouldn't.
- ✓ Convinces you to change an area of your life that you need to.
- ✓ Reveals both your strengths and weaknesses to you.
- ✓ Smooths out the "rough spots" in your personality.
- ✓ Humbles you from pride and stubbornness to see your need.
- ✓ Awakens your creative potential.
- ✓ Softens your heart to more fully understand and care about the pain of others.
- ✓ Develops your strength and patience so you can withstand even greater hardships.
- ✓ Shows you what really matters in your life.
- ✓ Points you to hope in and focus on a greater purpose and future for your life.

"The gem cannot be polished without friction, nor men perfected without trials."

– Chinese proverb



Making Ethical Decisions

Unfortunately, doing the right thing isn't always easy in the business world. When ethics and self-advancement collide, you must make a decision. **The following are guidelines for ethical decision-making:**

- ▲ Follow a moral standard. The core of ethics is believing in and acting by a set of principles. This involves not only agreeing with a moral code, but also obeying it at all costs – even when it's at your own expense. Time and profit don't justify exceptions.
- ▲ Recognize the spirit behind a law. Ethics is more than merely conforming to a list of rules. Many actions that are unethical are technically legal. Know the intent and reason behind a law, and apply it to cases beyond the external requirement.
- ▲ Aim for objectivity. As much as possible, look at the situation objectively. Imagine yourself as an outsider, and consider what this person would think about it. It's much harder to rationalize an action when you're detached from your own personal interests.
- ▲ Strive to be a person of character and



integrity. Ethics comes from the Greek word "ethos," meaning "character." Character means having enough respect for yourself to do what's right and to consistently act like the kind of person you want to be.

- ▲ Take others into consideration. When in doubt, remember the Golden Rule: treat other people the way that you want to be treated. Always try to promote the well-being of others and to avoid decisions whose consequences would hurt them.
- ▲ Accommodate, but don't compromise. In some situations, you may work with people who have different customs and practices. As much as possible, respect their way of doing things, but never to the point of violating your own principles.
- ▲ See yourself as a part of a community. Your business is both a part of the business community and of society as a whole. To bite the hand of the one who feeds you is to put your own existence in jeopardy. Business flourishes when it meets rather than exploits the needs of society.

Time-Management Principles

Here are some time-management principles to practice:

- ◆ Remember that good intentions aren't good enough.
- ◆ Complete at least one important objective each day.
- ◆ Cut down on at least one time waster each week.
- ◆ At the end of each day, plan your schedule for the next day.
- ◆ On Friday, plan your schedule for the upcoming week.
- ◆ Reserve a little personal time for yourself each day.
- ◆ Live for what's important, not just to get things done.
- ◆ Spend your time as if it were precious jewels.

Building a Good Team

Strengthening teamwork is one of the most effective and inexpensive ways to improve your organization. Good teams counterbalance individual weaknesses and create a climate of creativity and productivity that fosters both individual and corporate growth. **The following are the components of a good team:**

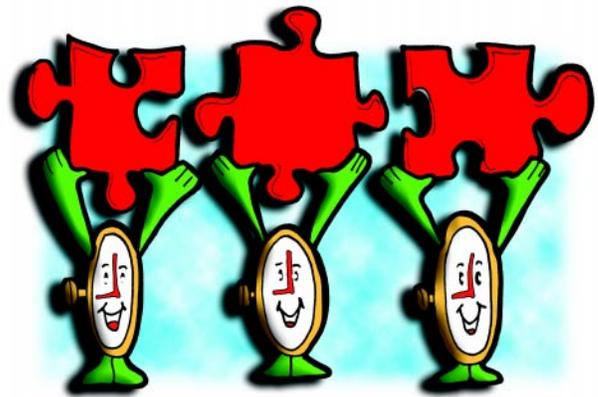
- ❖ Identity and vision. A good team has a well-defined identity and purpose. It knows where it's going both today and tomorrow, and it communicates this direction to its members clearly. Members believe that the team will be successful and recognize their personal responsibility in making it a success.
- ❖ Communication. Members express their opinions and reservations freely and go to a designated person to suggest overall improvements for the team. New ideas are encouraged and considered. News is spread quickly – without gossip – so that each member feels informed and an important part of the team.
- ❖ Fairness. In a good team, jobs are distributed in a hierarchy that everyone can accept. People never feel slighted or like they must carry the brunt of the workload. The team has a clear set of standards and promptly corrects those who deviate from them.
- ❖ Efficiency. Team members work consistently most of the time instead of in periods of busyness and inactivity that create stress and boredom. Members use equipment, resources and people's skills to their best advantage and know how to make the most of the budget.
- ❖ Organization. The team has procedures for handling problems and emergencies and uses an outlined process for resolving conflicts and disagreements. The team is resourceful at rallying after unforeseen losses.
- ❖ Emotional stability. Team members generally work with a sense of optimism and rarely complain. There isn't an atmosphere of fear or despondency caused by frequent scolding, arguments, or misunderstandings.
- ❖ Appreciation. Members are recognized and praised for their contributions to the team and its success. Members are commended in both individual and group contexts, and the team expresses its appreciation in ways that suit members' individual personalities.



Capitalize on Group Learning

A team is greater than the sum of its parts. When team members combine their individual talents, the results multiply. Likewise, when people share their insights and knowledge with the group, the group's resulting knowledge base is greater than what any one person in it knows. This process of collaborative learning can benefit workers in everything from group projects to planning meetings. **The primary steps to the group learning process are as follows:**

- Make a team goal. Decide what objectives the team wants to accomplish. Determine the skills and information members will need to acquire in order to complete these objectives.



- Identify the talents and needs of group members. What individual talents and skills do members possess? What contributions can members make to the group? What areas are people lacking in?
- Assign tasks according to ability. Put employees in charge of teaching the group about the areas they're knowledgeable in. This may take the form of a formal presentation, handouts, or an informal discussion.
- Exchange. Include a question and answer period after each teaching. Give feedback about the presentation and its material so that both the teacher and the group will learn from it.

“The player who puts the ball through the hoop has 10 hands.”

– John Wooden

Taking the Leading Role at Company Meetings

You've attended scores of them. Probably even a few this week. And for some reason, the thought of sitting in another one leaves you nauseated. They're called meetings, and they're an integral part of business life.

Actually, they're a pretty good idea. Gather a group of talented people, pool their resources and expertise, hash out some issues, devise a game plan, and everyone is the better for it. Unfortunately, not all meetings follow this agenda. Instead, busy people with complicated schedules reluctantly congregate to vent their frustrations, complicate matters and pontificate pet peeves. And everyone ends up with more work.

Meetings are here to stay, and sooner or later, you'll probably be asked to lead one. Understand the basics of how to conduct a meeting, and you'll be known as one who gets things done. **To lead an efficient and successful meeting:**

- Meet for the right reasons. When you call a meeting, know the reason. Skip it if you have nothing special to discuss, if you don't need others' input, if you've already made up your mind about a course of action, or if getting others involved would only complicate your plan. Do call a meeting if you need to present information to a lot of people quickly and don't want to write it, if you want input from others on your idea, if you want to gain "buy in" from the team, or if you want to motivate and energize them about an idea.
- Set an agenda. Some people think that agendas lend too much structure to a meeting, that people can't be spontaneous, or that the atmosphere will be too formal. That's like saying if you plan for a vacation by packing the right clothes, arranging for transportation and deciding on a destination, that you can't relax and be spontaneous along the way. Agendas are merely road maps that lead to your destination. Use them or get lost. When leading a meeting, set an agenda, and stick to it. Use active verbs, summarize in a sentence the issue at hand, and let the group know what you expect on each issue – "for discussion only," "to collect data," or "for decision." Whether you follow the agenda or take an occasional detour, having an agenda will give others the peace of mind that the meeting is going somewhere.



- Stay out in front if you intend to lead. Nothing frustrates and turns off meeting attendees more than having a leader who doesn't take control. State your role at the beginning and what authority the group will have. Do you simply intend to facilitate the discussion or tell them how you'll discuss each idea and come to decisions? Are you going to keep the discussion moving or abdicate that responsibility to others randomly? Are you going to be a silent observer, or do you plan to throw in your two cents worth as well? You don't have to have all the answers, do all the talking, or make all the decisions, but you should be out in front. Either lead or give the responsibility to someone else and get out of the way.

- Select attendees carefully. Selecting your list of attendees is as important as the issues you discuss. Ask the right people, and you have a good chance of a lively, informed and useful exchange of ideas. Ask the wrong people, and you establish a war zone. Use the following checklist: Who can provide necessary expert advice? Who has experience with this issue? Who will support your cause? Who will oppose your cause? Whose commitment do you need to "make it happen"? Don't seek popular people, persuasive people, or positioned people – seek the right people for your purpose.

- Own the setting. Just as an athlete has a distinct advantage when competing on his home field, so can a meeting facilitator. Know the turf, and you control the meeting. If you want authority and a no-nonsense atmosphere, schedule the boardroom. If you want an energized group, go for a well-lit conference room. For an informal chitchat session, try someone's office. If you want to play host, provide coffee or snacks in a parlor, or schedule the meeting for a nice restaurant. Your guests will feel obligated to be civil and even compliant.

Meetings don't have to be another "necessary evil." They can be the most efficient and effective way of getting quality work done quickly, completely and on time.



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TIMESAVERS

Disaster Supplies

A disaster supplies kit can be a lifesaver in an emergency. **Keep the following supplies on hand:**

- ◆ Three-day supply of water (one gallon per person per day)
- ◆ Nonperishable food items
- ◆ First-aid kit
- ◆ Clothes, socks and shoes (one set for each person)
- ◆ Blankets or sleeping bags (one for each person)
- ◆ Flashlight
- ◆ Radio (battery powered)
- ◆ Batteries
- ◆ Sanitation supplies
- ◆ Cash
- ◆ Credit card or traveler's checks
- ◆ Extra set of car keys
- ◆ Important family documents (in a waterproof container)
- ◆ Prescription medications
- ◆ Extra pairs of glasses
- ◆ Special items for babies, older adults, or people with disabilities

Store these and other necessary items in sturdy containers that are easy to carry, such as duffle bags, backpacks, or covered trash cans.

Preparing for a Natural Disaster

Nothing can be more unexpected than a natural disaster. While you may not know when one is coming, it pays to be prepared for one ahead of time. **Here's how you can prepare your home for a disaster:**

- ◆ Find out the kinds of disasters that may affect your area. Obtain information on how to prepare for each kind, and discuss with your family what to do in case one occurs.
- ◆ Learn how to recognize the warning signals in your community. Everyone should be able to recognize what these signals sound like and should know what to do when they hear them.
- ◆ Decide on the best ways to stay in or escape from your home. Know the places that are safe to stay in your home, and find at least two ways to escape from each room.
- ◆ Designate a meeting place. Choose one place directly outside your home to meet at after a disaster. Also select a location outside your neighborhood in case you can't go back home.
- ◆ Meet with neighbors. Plan how people in the neighborhood can work together until help arrives. Identify the special



skills and needs of your neighbors, and arrange for childcare in the event that parents can't get home.

- ◆ Ask an out-of-state friend or family member to be your contact person. Long distance numbers are often easier to call after a disaster. People can then call your contact person to say where they are in case you get separated.
- ◆ Conduct practice drills regularly. Do practice fire and emergency drills in your home. Quiz family members every six months on what they should do if a disaster were to happen.

Source: *The American Red Cross*. For more information, visit www.redcross.org.