City of Helena

MAKING LIFESTYLE CHANGES..... THAT CHANGE LIVES

Tyme Management™

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Dealing with an Impatient Mindset

Picture this: You're meeting a prospective client. You arrive at the restaurant and wait 10 minutes for your lunch date and then another 10 minutes for your table. When you factor in the amount of time it takes to cook and bring your food to the table, you've wasted almost a full 30 minutes doing nothing.

If you're able to cope with waiting, this scenario probably wouldn't bother you too much. But, if you fall into the "I can't wait" category, **consider these ways to prevent long waits:**

- Reconfirm appointments *before* leaving. This will keep you from being the only one to show for a postponed or canceled meeting.
- Defend your time. When a restaurant is "packed," suggest another location that may be able to provide faster service.
- Schedule appointments at odd times like 12:11 p.m. or 8:53 a.m. These times are so unusual that those you're meeting are sure to remember them.
- Answer honestly. When someone asks you, "Would you mind waiting?" Tell them, "Yes," and explain why you're on a tight schedule.

Invest Your Time in a Daily Plan

Do you make a daily plan each day? About 60 to 70 percent of business people surveyed said a plan was an advantage to reaching set goals. However, most of these people surveyed said they rarely take the trouble to make a plan!

Planning your days isn't as hard as you may think. The minutes you invest in your daily plan will come back to you multiplied many times (usually an extra hour or more per day!).

Here are several suggestions that may help you in your planning:

- Set aside two to three hours at the end of each month to plan the upcoming month. Record your mission/purpose and identify your most important personal and professional goals by writing them down on paper. Then, prioritize your goals and identify high payoff activities which will help you reach your goals.
- Take five to 10 minutes each day to plan and prioritize each day. Write down what you honestly expect to do in one day. It doesn't help to write down your wishes and dreams, be realistic on your daily plan. Schedule specific blocks of time for your goals and high payoff activities.
- Schedule your highest priority work first. Give this material a two to three hour block in the first part of your day and another large block in your afternoon. Do your less important work in the breaks in between major tasks as "mental breaks."
- Grant yourself some "leeway" time. You'll probably need 10 percent more time than you think on many tasks. When you don't need this time, start early on your next high priority task.
- Establish a tracking method to measure your goals and progress toward their achievement. Post your progress charts where you can see them. This will motivate you to higher achievement.
- Close out each day. Plan and decide when to handle unfinished business. Decide to dump it, do it, delegate it, or delay it.
- Give consideration to the following factors when making your plan: 1) Schedule steps of a major project only when each must be done and complete them in proper order. 2) Get the most important task of the day done early. 3) Fit the difficulty of the work to your activity "peak" levels.

Motivate Employees by Showing Your Appreciation

What employees really want is appreciation. More than money or benefits, people want to feel valued for what they do and want their jobs to be a part of making something meaningful happen.

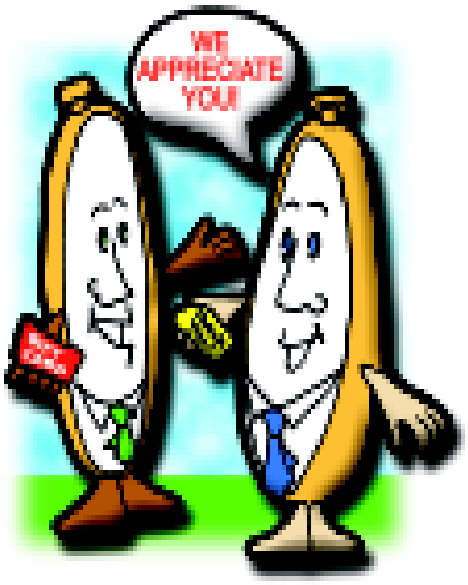
Employees desire respect and appreciation from colleagues and want to be in on what's going on in their organization. They need their managers to recognize them when they do a good job. In an increasingly technical work environment where computer terminals replace personal interaction, the need for human contact is even greater.

Strangely, managers often don't realize this need for appreciation in their employees or are "too busy" to offer it. In a study conducted by Lawrence Lindahl, employees ranked "appreciation for a job well done" as their number-one motivator, while managers thought wages, job security and promotional opportunities were the prime motivations of their employees. Too often managers neglect to address the need for employee appreciation until it's too late – after morale has sunk and employees are leaving. Doing little things each day to show appreciation to existing employees, however, is much easier than trying to find new ones.

So how can you make sure your employees get the recognition they need? **Here are several suggestions:**

"Creativity is so delicate a flower that praise tends to make it bloom, while discouragement often nips it in the bud. Any of us will put out more and better ideas if our efforts are truly appreciated."

– Alexander Osborn



- *Verbal or written affirmation.* According to a study by Dr. Gerald Graham, professor of management at Wichita State University, three of the top five motivators ranked by employees were free, but were rarely practiced by their managers. The top three were: a spoken thank you from the manager, a written thank you from the manager and public praise. Take time to visit with your employees, and share with them specific things that they do well. Leave a voice mail, or have the president or higher manager call to personally say thank you. Write notes on paycheck envelopes to praise accomplishments, or send encouraging E-mails. You can also feature employees in the company newsletter and make formal letters of appreciation a part of an employee's permanent record. In staff meetings, recognize a job well done, and read positive letters from clients or customers.
- *Fun and original informal awards.* Simple, fun things can make recognition an unforgettable experience. To make a company tradition, start a pass-around award of a unique object, or give clothing or trinkets with the company name or logo. Supply employees with memo pads or stickers to encourage them to commend one another more often.
- *Sincere and symbolic formal awards.* A formal award presented in a public forum can both honor employees and communicate to others the company's standards for good performance. When presenting the award, give context as to how the accomplishment contributes to the organization's overall objectives, and share your genuine personal feelings about the person. Beware of emphasizing the award rather than the achievement, making sure to applaud quality job performance and character. Cash and merchandise awards may be counterproductive if they tempt people to pursue their own financial gain at the expense of teamwork.
- *Relational recognition.* A time of celebrating is great for boosting employee morale. Host appreciation lunches with upper management expressing thanks and encouragement as they serve employees food. Give a team-of-the-month award that includes treats, a banner in the work area and special parking spots. Reserve a table in the cafeteria each week with free refreshments at break time for a special employee. Or, take an employee and guest of his or her choice out for dinner to celebrate a noteworthy accomplishment.
- *Survey.* What your employees want may be different than what you would want or what you think they would want. Ask employees to write down on an index card three things that would motivate them. The next time they do an outstanding job, reward them with one of their answers. It may be as simple as a gift certificate to a favorite store or an afternoon off.

Planning Your Family Reunion

When's the last time you got to connect with the rest of your family tree? If your family is like many, you may feel like it's been one season too many. **Here are some tips for organizing a family reunion this summer:**

- *Compile a master guest list.* It may take longer than you think to gather and update everyone's addresses and phone numbers.
- *Take a random sample.* Ask around to find out when a good time for the event would be. Determine which date would allow the most family members to attend.
- *Stick to the same date.* Set a time even if it means some people won't be able to make it. If you adjust the date to accommodate to one person, then someone else will inevitably be unable to come.
- *Select a location.* If you'd like to celebrate in a place that requires reservations, do so as soon as possible.

These places can be booked far in advance, especially in the summer.

- *Cater to all ages.* Make sure to include activities that everyone can enjoy. Adults may be content to talk, but children will get frustrated and restless unless they have something fun to do, too.
- *Document it.* Take pictures or videotape the event to capture the growth and changes in your family as a whole. Consider recording the stories of older family members to preserve them for future generations.

Save Money on Your Vacation

How can you have fun with your family on vacation without it burning a hole in your wallet? **Here are some suggestions for making a fun trip a frugal one:** • Do your homework. Investigate the accommodations and activities available before buying any special "discount" packages. Check out travel books from the public library, or conduct your own research on the Internet. • Contact your local chamber of commerce. They can provide you with free maps, brochures and coupons from the chamber in the city of your destination. • Leave a meal in your freezer for your return home. A homecooked meal will be a welcome sight after a long day of travel and having to eat out for so long. • Limit your restaurant meals. When you're on the road, pack a picnic lunch. Eat out twice a day, and buy some nutritious snack foods for in-between. • Cut the nonessentials. Even little things like ordering water instead of soda with meals can add up to big savings. • Ration spending money. Give your children a certain allowance for snacks and souvenirs. Tell them they won't be able to buy anything else once they've spent it. .

Prepare for Family Emergencies

Taking a few minutes to assemble a first-aid kit can save you precious time in an emergency. **The following are items to include in your family's first-aid kit:**

- List of emergency phone numbers
- First-aid manual
- Tweezers
- Scissors (with rounded tips)
- Safety pins
- Band-Aids
- Triangular bandages (for arm slings)
- Elastic wraps (for ankles, wrists, knees and elbows)
- Gauze and pads
- Gauze tape
- Bandage closing strips
- Antibiotic ointment
- Aloe cream or gel
- Ice pack
- Rubber gloves
- Pain relievers (aspirin, acetaminophen, ibuprofen)
- Ipecac syrup and activated charcoal (use only when directed by the poison control center)

Dirt-Busting Techniques

Some grungy places are expert at dodging the grasp of conventional cleaning supplies. **Here are some strategies for cleaning those hard-to-reach places:**

- A soft paintbrush – is just right for dusting picture frames, shutters, louvered doors and lamp shades.
- A sock – when fastened with a rubber band on a broom handle or yardstick, this potent tool can intercept cobwebs and get to the dirt under your refrigerator that may be obstructing the cooling system.

It's Not Easy...

- To admit when you're wrong
- To love unconditionally
- To not make excuses
- To stay out of a rut
- To bite your tongue
- To ask for forgiveness
- To confront people when they need it
- To embrace change
- To keep on trying
- To wait
- To learn from your mistakes
- To take responsibility for your actions
- To start over
- To act like you think
- To face ridicule
- To put other's interests before your own
- To see your faults
- To receive correction
- To put things in perspective
- To trust
- To forgive and move on
- To rest and not worry
- To make the most of what you have
- To choose right when others don't
- To not dwell in self-pity
- To live in the present
- To celebrate when others get what you want
- To quiet your temper
- To keep your eyes off yourself
- To believe the truth and not your feelings
- To see the silver lining to every cloud
- To hope for the best

...but it's always worth it!

Learning from Your Regrets

Regrets are one thing that everyone has, but no one wants. There are several regrets common to people, according to research conducted at Arizona State University. The most widespread regret voiced in the study was wishing to have studied more and been a better student. Other regrets included not spending quality time with family, not taking more risks, not being more assertive and not having had more self-discipline. Interestingly, money was found to have mattered little.

So you know you have regrets, but what do you do with them? **Here are some simple suggestions for coping with regret:**

- Realize that everyone makes mistakes. Keep in mind that part of growing as a person is to make mistakes and learn from them. Once you've identified the lesson to be learned, make a change for the better.
- Recognize that regrets come with retrospect. Many regrets are a result of changing values. As you grow older, what you value usually changes. You then wish you could apply the knowledge you've gained with age to your younger years, living them over again with what you know now.
- Differentiate between reversible and irreversible regrets. Some regrets can't be reversed. For example, you can't go back and spend more time with your children once they've grown up. Other regrets are at least partially reversible, however. You can still go back to college to study what you wanted to, but you'll do so at the expense of the other choices and commitments you've made since then.
- Make a list of your regrets. Next to each one, consider what you can do about it. For many of them, there may be nothing you can do. Let these things go. For those that have some opportunity for change, write down what you can do to make amends.
- Look straight ahead. Resolve not to dwell on your past and its mistakes. You aren't trapped by your past when you realize that you have the freedom to choose your path for the future. Let the lessons learned from your regrets be a springboard into the life that you want to live.
- Identify your priorities. From the vantage point of today, decide what's really important to you. Devote your remaining time to these things. You may have a nagging regret you can put to rest once you realize that what you have now makes up for what you don't.

A Quick Fix for Indecision

The next time you're wasting time in indecision, flip a coin. You don't have to choose what the coin says, but it will usually reveal which choice you really want more. If you're disappointed in the side that turns up, you'll know that you really wanted the other choice.

Learn to Fly with the Eagles

Every great idea and dream must be established within you and you alone. There will be times when only you will believe it's going to happen. Can you stand alone? Can you believe when it looks as if no one else does?

John Gardner declared, "The cynic says, 'One man can't do anything.' I say, 'Only one man can do anything.'" Nobody can do it for you. No one will do it for you.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow put it this way: "Not in the clamor of the crowded streets, not in the shouts or plaudits of the throng, but in ourselves are triumph and defeat." You can't delegate your thinking, dreaming, or believing to others.

Thomas Edison, who claimed he could think better because of his partial deafness, said, "The best thinking has been done in solitude. The worst has been done in turmoil."

Eagles fly alone; crows fly in groups. Know how to get away and separate yourself. Don't belong so completely to others that you don't belong to yourself. The fact is that we're all in this together – by ourselves.

Alexander Graham Bell made this observation: "Don't keep forever on the public road. Leave the beaten path occasionally and drive into the woods. You'll

be certain to find something that you've never seen before. One discovery will lead to another, and before you know it, you will have something worth thinking about to occupy your mind. All really big discoveries are the results of thought." Most big ideas are discovered when you're by yourself.

Refuse to accept that others know you better than yourself. Great leaders have always encountered noisy opposition from mediocre minds. The biggest mistake that you can make is to believe that others are responsible for your failures and successes.

There's power in the principle of standing alone. More than anyone else, you must be persuaded.

The opportunity to succeed or not is yours. No one can take that away unless you let them. Learn to be alone and stand alone, or nothing worthwhile will catch up with you.

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Begin Change with Thoughts and Feelings

It's true that you need to understand why you feel the way you do. However, if you want to see positive changes in your life, you must go a step beyond dwelling on feelings. Change first starts with your thoughts and actions, and then the feelings will follow. For example, if you don't *feel* like you love someone anymore, continue *doing* loving things for this person anyway, and loving feelings will follow. Or, if you *feel* nervous in a certain situation, *act* confidently, and you'll soon begin to feel more at ease.

Learning to Be Happy

To be happier, you can:

- Change what you can. A healthy sense of discontentment motivates you to grow and prevents you from stagnating where you are.
- Practice contentment. For the things you don't have control over, learn to enjoy life in spite of these situations. Instead of complaining about what you don't have, appreciate what you do have.
- Be assertive. Speak up for yourself and your needs. Believe that your feelings are important enough to be voiced.
- Take responsibility for your attitude. It's easy to blame other things

for your unhappiness, but the fact is that life is difficult for everyone. To be happy, choose to have a good attitude and to keep trying in spite of your problems.
- Avoid the perfection trap. As long as you demand perfection from yourself and the world around you, you will be sorely disappointed. Give yourself and others permission to make mistakes.
- Monitor your thoughts. When your thoughts are negative, critical, angry, or self-defeating, they hinder you from enjoying life. Learn to recognize these thoughts and to replace them with positive ones.
- Take your focus off yourself. The more you focus on your own happiness, the harder it will be to find. When you begin focusing on the needs of the people around you instead, you'll in turn find your own happiness.

Take a Break to Boost Productivity

Did you know that you can actually get more done by taking a break every now and then? Contrary to what you might think, breaks can be productive rather than lazy.

According to one study from the University of Connecticut, workers involved in complex, engrossing projects didn't like to take breaks and considered them a waste of time. However, workers who did take breaks raised their productivity level by as much as 15 percent and reported feeling substantially better.

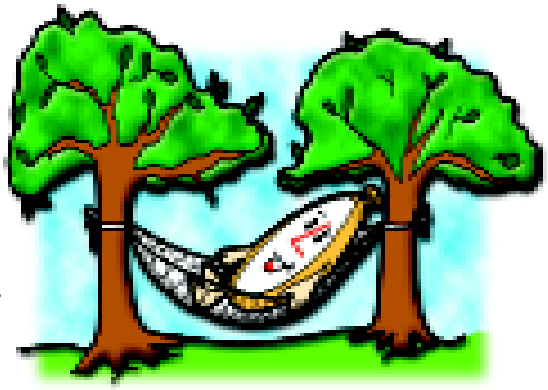
So, the next time you're absorbed in a project, give yourself a break. You'll thank yourself for it later.

Gym Bag Checklist

If you're packed and ready, time won't be an excuse when you find a spot in your schedule to exercise. **Items to keep in your gym bag may include:**

- Towel
- Hand towel
- Extra workout outfit
- Extra pair of socks
- Sweatbands
- Weight-lifting gloves
- Deodorant (not anti-perspirant)
- Soap
- Shampoo
- Sunblock
- Shoe inserts
- Antifungal foot powder
- Pain reliever
- Band-Aids
- Water bottle
- Snack
- Jump Rope

Finding Rest



Life may be hectic, but you can make simple choices every day to build some rest into your schedule. **Here are some suggestions:**

- Designate a dinner hour. Establish a time solely for relaxing, eating and sharing your day with your loved ones.
- Take an evening stroll. A routine walk every night can be a peaceful way to enjoy nature and unwind after a long day.
- Manage your noise level. Turn the TV on only when there's something you really want to watch. Reduce the volume on your telephone.
- Set a telephone curfew. Let the answering machine handle calls after 7 or 8 p.m. Allow uninterrupted time to spend with your family or yourself.
- Appoint a day of rest. Reserve one day each week for restful, non-work activities.
- Realize that less is actually more. Limit the number of commitments you're involved in. Devote yourself to no more than two worthy activities. Require your children to do likewise.

When Life Gets a Little Hectic...

When your life starts getting hectic, it's time to stop and evaluate what's going on. Often, in the mad rush to get things done, your priorities can be left by the wayside.

The following questions are points to consider: • When was the last time you enjoyed a quiet evening at home? You may not even remember it. Think about how your family reacted. Did they seem surprised or not used to your being around? You may be gone so much that they're used to living without you. • When was the last time you enjoyed an evening with your friends? It's easy to get in the habit of seeing people and telling them that you should get together, but then never doing so. It's also easy to invite people over, but be too tired or preoccupied with work to appreciate their company. • Do you keep telling yourself that "some day" you'll be healthier? Promising yourself that you'll get in shape, eat right, or visit the doctor when you have "more time" can be self-deceiving. If you never get around to acting on these promises, you may not be allowing yourself the time you need to stay healthy. • Are you living the life that you want to be living? Busyness can preempt your priorities if you let it. Examine whether you're living out your priorities. Determine what choices you need to make now to get your life back on track to where you want to go.

Crisis Communication: Never More Critical

Today more than ever, crises abound. The nation faces a challenge like none other. And many companies are facing similar trials – those that breed fear into the very fabric of the people and threaten to undermine a once-strong bottom line.

How do you respond? What do you say to rally people around a common cause, quell fears, ease concerns and bring employees together?

In his September 20, 2001, address, President Bush not only understood this challenge, but he also communicated a message that accomplished each of these objectives and more. He communicated a vision and plan of action and effectively motivated a strongly partisan Congress to come together for the common good. He knew what many executives and managers in today's companies need to better understand: The medium is as important as the message.

The words you choose and the way you deliver your message can make the difference between advance and retreat, between motivation and hesitation, and between growth and decline. **The following are three methods for motivating employees in tough times:**

▲ Establish credibility and trustworthiness. Simply put, credibility counts. Have you ever known the "grapevine" in your company to be more accurate than the official word? This phenomenon is generally borne out of a lack of trust. People question the official word and begin digging around for the "real story" circulating among their peers.

Without trust between you and your employees, titles and rank don't matter; friendships and liaisons don't matter. You can't expect that communication – upward or downward – will be effective.

While trust isn't built overnight, there are a few things you can do **to establish credibility immediately and build on it:** • Show concern and compassion. Your employees' apprehensions are real. Let them know that you not only understand their feelings, but that you are also experiencing anxiety as well. People have to feel your concern before they hear your words. • Be complete. Recognize the difference between lies, half-truths, omissions and cover-ups. True but incomplete statements can lead to false conclusions; truths without complete explanations can lead to lies. Tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth! • Admit what you don't know. It's a fact of life: No one knows everything. When you're faced with a question you don't know the answer to, admit it, find the answer and return with a correct response. Nothing makes people believe what you do know like admitting what you don't know. • Accept responsibility for your actions and decisions. If you have control over a decision, own up to it. Tough decisions are tough for a reason – they impact lives, sometimes negatively. When you're faced with such a decision or must take an unpopular course of action, people may be upset about it. But they'll feel more frustration if they perceive that you're shirking responsibility or pointing a finger.

▲ Develop an attitude. Attitudes are contagious – good, bad, or ugly! Yours should consistently show others that you believe in the goals, objectives and strategic plans of your organization. Be positive and resolute. Exhibit firmness, an unambiguous resolve and an unending commitment to your "cause."

▲ Speak in specifics. In an era of self-protection and "purposeful vagueness," speaking in specific terms may seem threatening in and of itself. But, scary or not, using specific language may never be more important than it is right now.

Whether defining a corporate strategy or explaining a necessary budget cut, use facts, numbers, expert opinions and specific calls-to-action, and omit "weasel words" like "might," "possibly" and "should." Doing so will shape the outlook of your employees and motivate them to work together through a difficult time.

But what about times of crisis when you don't know what actions you will undertake? How can you be specific? Be clear about the steps you're taking to determine long- or short-range plans and the investigation of the situation. Your employees can appreciate extraordinary circumstances that don't have clear-cut answers. They won't appreciate ambiguities about the analysis and resulting actions.

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TIMESAVERS

Taking Things Day by Day

Setting goals can be intimidating. Whether you want to get organized or be more time efficient, changing a long-standing habit can seem a formidable task. Why? Often it's because you may try to take on too much at one time. You may say, "For the rest of my life, I'm always going to be on time everywhere I go." This goal is overwhelming because it's not realistic. Instead of motivating you to begin, it dooms you to fail.

A more successful approach is to take on a little bit at a time on a consistent basis. For example, "Today I am going to make an effort to be on time for my appointments," or "For this one day, I'm going to file all of the papers on my desk where they belong." When your goals are realistic, you can take action on them because you know you can attempt them. You don't have to make yourself perfect before you begin. You just begin and do what you can.

So instead of tackling everything for the rest of your life, simply focus on what you can do today. As you do, you'll be guaranteed to succeed!

Knowing When to Quit

Sometimes the best timesaver is simply not finishing what you start. Knowing when to quit can save you needless effort spent on things that aren't worth your time anymore. **The following are some tips for not wasting your time:**

- Limit your information intake. No matter how many websites you find or how many magazines you read, there's always more information out there. Instead of trying to know everything about every subject, select a few quality sources for keeping current on your field and the world in general.
- Discontinue memberships to organizations that you're no longer interested in. Part of growth includes change to new activities and interests. Focus your time and energy on the activities that have meaning and value to you.
- Read only a few books in their entirety. Stop feeling guilty about all of the books that you never finished reading. Read the parts that are beneficial, and skip the parts that are weak or irrelevant.

Take a Break to Celebrate Success

Do you rush to finish one task only to immediately charge on to the next? If so, you might be unintentionally demotivating yourself. When you don't take time to recognize your accomplishments, you can become exhausted and overwhelmed by the tasks that lie before you.

By pausing to see how far you've come, the sense of satisfaction can boost your confidence and renew your resolve to press forward. So the next time you finish that big project you've been toiling on, stop and celebrate your accomplishment. Reward yourself for a job well done.