



Tyme Management™

Volume XVI, Number 1

January 2012

Tips to Manage Your Time Well

- ◆ Use only one planner. Plan your personal and professional events, appointments and schedules here.
- ◆ Keep your planner with you at all times.
- ◆ Set aside two to three hours monthly to plan for the upcoming month.
- ◆ Schedule major priorities at least a month ahead of time.
- ◆ Take five to 10 minutes daily to plan and organize your next day's goals and activities.
- ◆ Prioritize your activities so that you do the important things first.
- ◆ Bring about a closure to each day. Decide what to do with unfinished tasks by dumping, doing, delegating, or delaying them.
- ◆ Record all your commitments and promises in one place. Jot notes in your planner regularly.
- ◆ Organize and group your communication tasks by listing them in one area of your planner.
- ◆ Track your progress toward personal and professional goals by noting achievements in your planner. Remember to reward yourself for your successes.

Organize Your Time Effectively

Time—everyone gets the same allotment each day but it rarely seems enough to get everything done. Ill-planned time use destroys the plans of individuals everywhere.

An executive gets sidetracked and loses track of what she had planned. With a written plan, she could have hung up and gone back to her highest priority task.

A father who wants to be with his family for important events can't finish his work during regular business hours. With proper planning, he could complete his tasks for today and plan for tomorrow as well.

Taking the time to plan and organize will propel you toward success. **Here's how you can plan and organize your time effectively:**

Monthly

- ▲ Block two to three hours at the end of each month to plan the new month.
- ▲ Write out your life's mission or purpose and identify important personal and business goals for the upcoming month.
- ▲ Prioritize top personal and business goals.
- ▲ Break your top personal and professional goals into smaller high-payoff activities.
- ▲ Remember to include goals for each of the six areas of life that together make up

the total person: Family and Home, Mental and Educational, Spiritual and Ethical, Social and Cultural, Financial and Career, and Physical and Health.

- ▲ Set up a tracking method in your planner to measure your goals and high-payoff activities.

- ▲ Schedule blocks of time for your goals and high-payoff activities.

Daily

- ▲ Take five to 10 minutes every day to plan and prioritize your activities.

- ▲ Transfer scheduled appointments and commitments from your monthly plans to your daily "to do" list.

- ▲ Review your scheduled commitments and appointments for the upcoming week.

- ▲ Organize each day beginning with your top personal and professional goals and high-payoff activities. Work in the lower priority items as you can.
- ▲ Prioritize your imperative and important daily tasks and activities.
- ▲ Organize and group your communication for the day into one area.
- ▲ Close every day by recording accomplishments and tracking progress toward your goals.



Helping Your Teen Handle Stress

Being a teenager is a hard job these days. Far from a life of fun and games, teens encounter a complex multitude of changes and challenges that make their everyday lives stressful and difficult. If they become too overwhelmed by these stressors, they can experience anxiety and physical illness as well as resort to aggression, withdrawal, or substance abuse to cope.

The following are common causes of stress for teens:

- ◆ Physical changes in their bodies
- ◆ Negative thoughts and feelings about themselves
- ◆ Family troubles such as divorce, separation, abuse, illness, or financial problems
- ◆ Responsibilities at home
- ◆ Death of a loved one
- ◆ Schoolwork
- ◆ Relationship problems with peers
- ◆ Concerns about friends
- ◆ Moving or changing schools
- ◆ Unsafe environment at home or at school
- ◆ Financial and work responsibilities
- ◆ An overextended schedule with too many activities
- ◆ High expectations imposed by self or others
- ◆ Fears about the future



By spending consistent time with teens, you can reassure them that they don't have to cope alone. **Here are things you can do to help the teens in your life:**

- ◆ Watch for warning signs. Look for any changes in their health or behavior that may indicate that they're under too much pressure.
- ◆ Be there for them. This means not just being physically present or doing activities together, but also being emotionally available to listen and encourage them.
- ◆ Help them learn positive ways to handle stress. Model healthy ways to cope with stress. These include: eating a balanced diet, exercising regularly, getting enough sleep, taking breaks, asserting feelings, challenging negative thoughts and sharing with friends.

Protect Your Home

The best strategy for keeping thieves out of your house when you're gone is to make it look like you never left.

To protect your home while you're away for the holidays:

- ✓ Ask the post office to hold your mail, and have a neighbor pick up your newspapers for you.
- ✓ Arrange for someone to mow your grass or shovel your driveway while you're gone.
- ✓ Have a neighbor park in your driveway overnight, or ask a friend to house-sit.
- ✓ Keep your blinds in their usual positions.
- ✓ Use timers on your lights to make them go on and off at the right times.
- ✓ Leave a TV or radio on, or use a timer with it.
- ✓ Lock all doors and windows.
- ✓ Activate your house alarm if you have one.

Creating Storage Options

Is your home stuffed to the gills and you still need storage space? If so, it takes just a little bit of creativity to come up with new places that you hadn't thought of before. **Here are some suggestions to get you started:**

- ✎ Hang items on a pegboard or on hooks.
- ✎ Store seasonal items in unused suitcases.
- ✎ Add extra shelves between the ones you already have.
- ✎ Build a set of free-standing shelves to fit an open floor space.
- ✎ Hang interesting objects from the ceiling with tension wires.
- ✎ Place a decorative wardrobe along a free wall space to store unattractive items in.
- ✎ Keep items in a crate or trunk that doubles as a small coffee table or end table.
- ✎ Carve out a shelf space between the studs in a wall.
- ✎ Hang or position items behind doors.
- ✎ Display a collection of objects on a windowsill or on the top of a wardrobe or shelf.
- ✎ Hide bulky items under a bed or skirted sofa.



Eliminate Time Wasters at Work

One of the simplest, most productive resolutions that every company can make in the New Year is to cut in-house time wasters. Countless hours of corporate time and energy are wasted each year in inefficient company procedures – time that could be put to better use. **The following are ways managers can help eliminate inefficient company practices:**

- ❖ Be a time monitor. Observe how employees use their time each day. Note how much time they spend in productive and unproductive activities. Brainstorm alternatives that reduce or eliminate the amount of time spent in the unproductive ones.
- ❖ Encourage goal setting. Increased individual productivity contributes to overall productivity. Ask employees to E-mail their supervisors a list of their objectives for the day and what they accomplished the previous day. Not only does this keep them accountable to stay on task, but it also clarifies what these tasks are so they won't get distracted from them.
- ❖ Look for ways to not waste other people's time. If a low-payoff activity is bogging someone down, divide up the responsibility, or delegate it to someone who can handle it better.
- ❖ Get rid of "hurry-up-and-wait" procedures. According to one study, clerical workers are the prime victims of this practice, losing 18 percent of their workday waiting for work. Identify what causes employees to waste their time waiting for information, equipment, or work. Of course, some setbacks will be out of individual control, but others can be redesigned out of the system.



- ❖ Refine your meeting savvy. Reduce the time wasted in aimless meetings. Post the agenda in advance so that people know what to prepare for and focus on. Start on time, keep the pace going and reiterate the main points at the end. The same skills used for group meetings can also improve one-on-one meetings.
- ❖ Eliminate duplicate work. Make sure no one is doing the same job that someone else is already doing.
- ❖ Avoid unrealistic deadlines. When you give people urgent, unexpected deadlines, you not only cause them undue stress and havoc, but you also disrupt the productivity of their regular work cycle since they must put their own work on hold. On the other hand, when you promise results by an unrealistic date, your rush to complete the job results in poor work that will probably have to be corrected or redone.
- ❖ Establish a group schedule. Set a mutual open-door period for people to talk about their work with one another, and allow only important interruptions at other times.

“The future is that time when you’ll wish you’d done what you aren’t doing now.”

Manage the Stress of Faulty Thinking

A good strategy for improving your management skills is to reduce the stress caused by negative, irrational thinking. **The following examples are negative thoughts that plague stress-prone managers:**

- ◆ *“When things at work start going bad, they will only get worse and worse.”*
- ◆ *“The world will fall apart if everything at work isn’t going the way I want it to.”*
- ◆ *“Every significant person in my life, including my superiors and subordinates, must like me.”*
- ◆ *“I have to find the best answer to every problem at work.”*
- ◆ *“I can get rid of stress if I don’t take risks and stay passive and uncommitted.”*
- ◆ *“Every job is boring, stressful and meaningless.”*
- ◆ *“I only have value if I’m completely competent and successful in every aspect of my job.”*
- ◆ *“The stress I feel is from external situations beyond my control to change.”*

Did You Know?

In the age of time management, the amount of time and resources wasted is remarkable.

Did you know that...

- ❑ Executives waste the equivalent of approximately six weeks a year trying to find things?
- ❑ Business people have up to 170 interactions each day in phone calls, E-mails and hallway conversations?
- ❑ Even though the 1990s was the beginning of the “paperless” workplace, office paper use has risen 66 percent?

Are You Becoming a Workaholic?

Everyone knows that overwork isn't good, but you may not realize how damaging it can be to your health and productivity. Continued overwork creates stress in the body, and stress has been clearly linked to coronary heart disease and other health problems.

In a study of young coronary patients, 70 percent of them worked more than 60 hours a week, while 25 percent held two jobs.

Another study found that people who worked more than 48 hours a week were two times more likely to die from coronary heart disease than those who worked under 40 hours.

In addition, overwork is correlated with several psychological conditions including low self-confidence, lack of inventiveness, drinking binges, absenteeism and poor motivation to work.

You may think that you need to work more to get more done, but in fact, the more you work without rest, the more your work rate decreases. When you're overworked, you actually accomplish less than someone working less hard who isn't tired. You also make more mistakes and live in a state of constant crisis where minor setbacks become overwhelming.

There's a critical balance in having your work be a meaningful part of your life without it becoming your sole existence. Many people are prone to have work fill a need in their lives that it can't meet. They can become addicted to work, or in other words, a "workaholic."

It's easy to spot these symptoms in other people, but harder to recognize them in yourself. **Ask yourself the following questions to consider whether you might be workaholic:**

- ◆ Do you find yourself working late after hours most nights?

- ◆ Do you think about work all weekend or during your time off?

- ◆ Do you take little interest in the world outside work?

- ◆ Do you feel like you can't take vacation time off because of work?

- ◆ Do you forget names easily?

- ◆ Do you consider small talk at home boring?

If several of your answers are "yes,"

you may want to examine to what extent your job dominates your life.

For those who are overworked or a workaholic, three main causes

may be contributing to your condition:

- ◆ Time-management trouble. You may be struggling to keep on top of things because you don't know how to realistically assess the amount of time you need to complete tasks. When every minute of your time is scheduled with work, you have no time for mistakes or for a job taking longer than anticipated.

- ◆ Lack of confidence. You may be taking on extra work or working longer and harder to give yourself a sense of importance and self-worth that you're lacking.

- ◆ Problems outside work. You may be happy to stay buried in work at the office because of a problem at home. Or, a feeling of emptiness that you experience may prompt you to distract yourself with work.

When you fill all your time with work, you allow mere busyness and activity to consume you rather than worthwhile achievement. As you identify meaningful goals for your life, you'll be less likely to settle for being a workaholic.



Making Time for Personal Time

Personal time is an essential part of keeping a healthy, balanced life. In order to find time to have it, however, you must be intentional. **Here are suggestions for how to begin making personal time for you:**

- ▲ Determine the best method for arranging it. Some people do better to schedule regular time on their calendar, while others find ways to make time in their existing schedule when they really need a break.

- ▲ Decide what to do during your personal time. Otherwise, you'll probably just waste it. Would you rather spend the time alone or with family or friends? What activity do you want to do?

- ▲ Make it clear to your children that you need some time to yourself. Arrange an activity for them to do, and explain to them that this will be your time to take a break. If they don't understand, tell them you'll come back after they're done playing the game or watching the show.

- ▲ Take advantage of waiting time. When an appointment cancels or you're at the doctor's office, use these stolen moments for a personal retreat.

- ▲ Schedule a babysitter for a regular time. Get away by yourself, or go on a date with your spouse.

- ▲ "Catch the worm" early. Get up a half hour or hour earlier to have some quiet time to yourself before your family wakes up. Adjust to your new routine slowly for your body's sake, gradually setting your alarm earlier by 10-minute increments.

- ▲ Be flexible. Sometimes there will be situations that require putting your personal time on hold.

Pat Answers

Dear Pat: *My company does not have a written dress code. We are told that this is a casual office and to use our best judgment. A woman I work with rarely wears a bra. I find it terribly distracting and unprofessional. I have mentioned it to my superiors and they refuse to say anything because there is no written policy. What can I do?*

Pat Answers: Defining “casual business attire” is a problem for many organizations. It’s nice not to have to dress up every day, but some people’s “best judgment” isn’t that great. Unless “letting it all hang out” is truly the organizational culture, you can be sure it’s embarrassment that’s stopping the managers from talking to her. But if this situation makes you uncomfortable and interferes with your ability to work efficiently, you need to let them know. If you have seen any negative reactions from customers, be sure to mention that as well. If the managers still fail to address the problem, it means they are putting personal comfort (hers and theirs) ahead of good business practices, so you’d better decide if this is a place you want to work. A word of warning: Rather than have an uncomfortable conversation with one employee, many managers resolve problems by making strict rules that include all employees. So don’t be surprised if the result of all this is a return to “business formal”.



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.

Take Charge of Your Time

You may be convinced that time rules you more than you rule your time. While it’s true that you can’t “manage” or control time, you can manage yourself by the choices you make. In turn, smart choices will enable you to use your time more effectively and not be at the mercy of a chaotic and unproductive schedule. **To take charge of your time:**

- ❖ Stop making excuses. No one can live your life for you. You’re the one ultimately responsible for how you choose to spend your time. Decide what you want to do with your time and your life, and resolve to make the changes necessary in your attitude and schedule to do so.
- ❖ Make an action plan. Define your goals and priorities, and create a schedule that reflects these things and allows for a balanced lifestyle. Identify the thoughts, habits and obstacles that would prevent you from carrying out your plan, and decide what you’ll do the next time you encounter them.
- ❖ Keep the long-term in view each day. Although it may feel good to get everything done on your list for the day, you won’t feel fulfilled in the long run unless these activities contribute to your overall goals. Add one thing to your “to do” list each day that’s a part of your long-term goals.
- ❖ Invest time in valuable nonurgent activities. Some things you do won’t have a direct or immediate effect on accomplishing your goals, but they can still advance you toward them. Set aside time for reading, training, networking, travelling, or other activities that will further equip and enrich you.
- ❖ Reevaluate your goals on an ongoing basis. By keeping your goals in mind daily, you’ll be able to recognize whether or not you’re staying on track. Ask yourself regularly whether the goals you’re pursuing are truly meaningful to you or whether they’re merely someone else’s definition of success.



Activities that Waste Time

In order to spend your time on valuable pursuits, you must rid your schedule of low-payoff activities. What jobs or activities in your day are a waste of time? How can you reduce or eliminate them? **Common time wasters can include:**

- Jobs that have always been done a certain way “just because”
- Answering the phone or E-mails indiscriminately
- Doing low-priority tasks because others want you to
- Tasks you don’t like to do that could be delegated
- Jobs that you don’t do well that someone else could do better
- Things that don’t make a difference whether or not they’re done
- Working with people who are unreliable or incompetent
- Activities that are constantly being interrupted
- Minor jobs that take more time than you planned for
- Paying excessive attention to detail on unimportant tasks

Gain More from Your Time with Concentration Skills

People lose countless minutes each day staring blankly at their paperwork and computer screens, rereading the same lines over and over again. By learning how to concentrate better, you can save the additional time needed to finish tasks that should have already been completed. **Try these tips for improving your concentration:**

- ◆ Identify your thinking style. Do you prefer to focus on and complete one task at a time (narrow-range thinking) or to juggle several pending items at once (broad-range thinking)? When possible, schedule your tasks according to your preferred style.
- ◆ Use the same workspace. Create a familiar environment to work in, since new places tend to offer new distractions. Working in a location that you've worked well at before can help shift you into work mode.
- ◆ Collect your materials. Gather everything you might need to work on your task, and put these items within easy reach.
- ◆ Eliminate distractions. Make sure the area is well-lit and the temperature is comfortable. Let voicemail answer your calls, or ask someone else to handle them for you.

- ◆ Forgo a warm up. Spend five minutes reviewing the project first, and then dive into it. Even working slowly will get more done than telling yourself that you have to get "warmed up" before you can start working on it.
- ◆ Concentrate on the task, not on concentrating itself. When you're focus-



ing on trying to concentrate or on your method of concentration, it distracts your attention and energy from doing the task itself.

- ◆ Forget the consequences. Instead of worrying about what people will think of your results or of what will happen if you don't get the job done, just think about the work you're doing.

- ◆ Take notes and review. To stay focused, underline or write down the main points as you read. Stop periodically and recite to yourself what you've read without looking at your notes.
- ◆ Take breaks. When your mind begins to wander after working for awhile, take a mental break. Rest, meditate, or do something physically active for five to 10 minutes.
- ◆ Take sufficient time. Allow yourself a reasonable amount of time to complete your projects. Your ability to concentrate isn't measured by how fast you can work.
- ◆ Conclude with something memorable. End your work time with an interesting piece of information that will make it easier to resume the task later.
- ◆ Practice. Aim for working in 45-minute segments. Build up your concentration ability by increasing the length of time you work by 10-minute increments each day.
- ◆ Establish a routine quiet time. Make concentration a habit by scheduling a regular time reserved for thinking without interruption. Try working during the noon lunch hour or in the morning before others arrive.

Improve Your Planning Skills

For a successful enterprise, goal setting and planning skills are essential. While setting goals is necessary for knowing what to aim for, planning is instrumental in making this aim a reality. **The following are practical tips for making and implementing a successful plan:**

- ✓ Establish your objectives. Assess the condition of the present situation, and from this vantage point, visualize the results that you desire. Turn this into specific, measurable goals.

- ✓ Outline action steps. List the tasks to be done by order of priority or chronology. Assign deadlines to each task on your list.
- ✓ Remember resources. Consider the people, places, supplies and funding you'll need to carry out your plan. Make sure that you'll have enough resources to both begin and complete the project.
- ✓ Make room for the unexpected. Maintain a flexible attitude when obstacles, crises and other problems surface. Ant-



icipate these as much as possible by formulating a contingency plan.

- ✓ Communicate your plan to others. Explain the "how" and "why" behind your plan to the people who will be involved in implementing it. Point out the benefits of accomplishing it to keep them cooperative and motivated.
- ✓ Examine your progress regularly. Determine improvements and adjustments you can make, and celebrate your accomplishments.

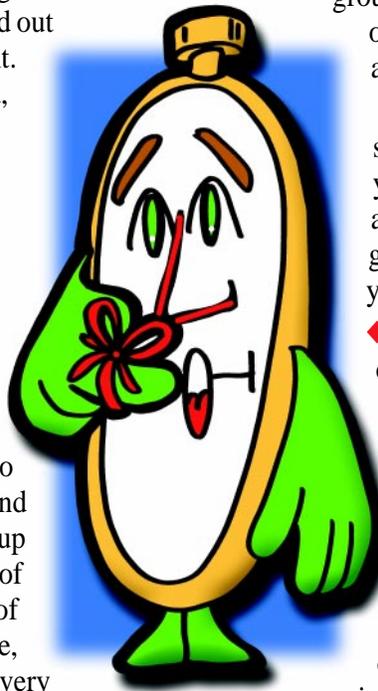
What to Do When You Forget or Get Flustered

Some goofs turn out to be funny – at least to the audience. Before a gathering of gregarious sales reps, I was trying to make the point that business communications are much less formal now than in the past. “For example,” I elaborated, “when you are introduced to someone, you rarely respond, ‘How do you do?’ Instead, you say something like, ‘Hello,’ or ‘Nice to meet you.’” Continuing this line of reasoning, I asked the group, “And when was the last time your family dressed formally to sit down at the dinner table together? Our family doesn’t dress for dinner.” One rep raised his hand and asked excitedly, “May we come?”

The audience roared with laughter, leaving me dumb-founded until someone in the front row pointed out to me what I’d said versus what I’d meant. Needless to say, after turning 10 shades of red, I forgot where I was going with the next point.

Just wait until it’s your turn. If you haven’t experienced your point of embarrassment or memory lapse yet, you will. When it happens, **consider these fail-safe ways to regain your memory and retain your poise:**

- ◆ Build a mnemonic device to help you recall chunks. Memory experts tell us that our brains can only hold about seven chunks of information at once. For this reason, trying to remember 18 key points, six anecdotes and three charts of data can be setting yourself up for disaster unless you devise a better system of recall. Teachers have understood the value of mnemonic devices for ages. For example, piano teachers teach the scale EGBDF as “every good boy does fine.” Think of almost any discipline, and you will find technical concepts conveyed in models, mnemonics and metaphors meant for easy recall. Create the same for yourself as a prevention tool.
- ◆ Jump ahead to a key anecdote that serves as a springboard. Stories stick better than an elaboration – even with the storyteller. In telling a story, you’ll often recall the point you



typically make by the time you get to the end of the story. And with that key point, the whole section of content will return to the forefront of your mind.

- ◆ Fiddle with fodder. Your fodder can be anything that fills a 10-second gap to provide you enough time to collect your thoughts. You may take off or put on your glasses so that you can “verify something.” You may pause to take out your pen and jot a note while you regain your memory. You may stop speaking and move the flipchart back out of your walking space or erase a whiteboard of irrelevant information before turning back to face the group. You might stop to ask the group about the temperature – whether it’s too warm or cool – and then ask someone in the back to adjust the thermostat.

Any of these breaks will allow you 10 to 15 seconds – often all the time you need to recover your thoughts and continue. And often after such a movement, it seems perfectly natural to ask the group, “Now where was I?” and they will help you out.

- ◆ Change locations in the room. A location change to a speaker is like a paragraph change to a writer. It will seem quite natural to your audience for you to pause reflectively and stroll to another spot in the room to move on to your next point. In the time it takes you to get there, you’ll have likely recovered from your memory lapse.
- ◆ Code your visuals to cue you. To keep you oriented, use key words or subtitles to group your visuals into sections that will remind you of the bigger context for an individual slide. When you’re projecting from a laptop, a subtle color bar or icon in the corner or across the side or bottom can cue you about which segment of the presentation your visual belongs to. This highlighted color or icon should then trigger a complete chunk of information to mind. When you go out on a tangent with a detail and can’t find your way back, all you need to do is glance at the blue triangle to remind you that you’re tracking the marketing goals for the second quarter. Likewise, the orange triangle will signal to you that you’re into third-quarter goals.

Make Eye Contact with Your Audience

When giving a speech, look at people for at least five seconds before shifting your gaze elsewhere. If you’re nervous, choose two or three points in the front and back of the room where you can focus your attention. This will make the people in your line of sight think that you’re looking directly at them.



By Dianna Booher, author, speaker, and CEO of Booher Consultants, a Dallas-based communications training firm. Her programs include communication and life balance/productivity. She has published more than 40 books, including *Communicate with Confidence*®, *Speak with Confidence*®, and *Your Signature Work*®. Call (817) 868-1200 or visit www.booher.com.

Tyme Management® is published by Rutherford Communications, P.O. Box 8853, Waco, Texas 76710, 1-800-815-2323, www.rutherfordcommunications.com. Copyright © 2012 Rutherford Communications. All rights reserved. Material may not be reproduced in whole or part in any form without the written permission of the publisher. Printed subscription price (12 issues), \$49.95 per year in U.S. Electronic subscription price (12 issues), \$24.95 per year in U.S.

Publisher: Ronnie Marroquin

Managing Editor: Kimberly Denman

Illustrations by RMS Graphics

ISSN 1074-3006

TIMESAVERS

Read with Speed

In the information age, you need to know what requires careful reading and what can be read quickly or not at all. Speed reading isn't suited to all material, of course, but it can be a very handy tool for managing your reading load. **Here are tips for reading faster and more efficiently:**

- ◆ Learn to read for ideas. Avoid reading every single word. Instead, look for the main thought in a group of words.
- ◆ Zip your mental lip. Slower readers say each word in their minds.
- ◆ Notice eye movements. Speed readers stop their eyes only two or three times per line, while slower readers stop about 10 times. Try to take in more words before each stop, and move your eyes faster between stops.
- ◆ Resist rereading. Look back at a part you've already read only when you're sure that you missed something important.
- ◆ Set a goal. Choose a nonfiction book of average difficulty, and time how many words you can read in a minute. The average reading speed is about 250 words per minute, but the brain is capable of understanding at least 1000 words per minute.

Lost and Found

One of the worst time wasters is looking for things you've misplaced. You know it's around there somewhere, and you're certain you saw it yesterday! Often, the cure for absentmindedness is simply a little organization. **The following are simple methods that you can use to make sure things don't get lost:**



- Designate a permanent spot for important, frequently used items. Always put things like keys or glasses back in the same spot, so you'll know where to find them next time. A special hook, bowl, or drawer near the door works well for keys and wallets.
- Keep objects that are used together in the same place. For example, put all the things that you need to go to the swimming pool in a designated pool bag.
- Similar items should be stored together. Collect all barrettes and hair accessories into a special box, and keep pens and pencils gathered together.
- Look for creative ways to categorize small items. Try using film tubes, egg cartons, or a tool box to partition small objects.
- Label everything clearly. Put things stored out of reach in labeled or color-coded boxes, so you'll know what's in them without having to go through them first.
- Place items near the location where they're used. For example, keep exercise equipment in the room where you use it.
- Outlaw junk drawers. They're a real time and organization trap.
- Make a gift shelf or closet. Keep presents, cards, ribbon and wrapping paper in the same place.
- Set up a system for borrowed items. Keep a notebook or file with the borrower's name, the item and the date it was borrowed. Identify your belongings with labels or stickers, so people will remember who they belong to.