

# Tyme Management™

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## Boost Your Productivity

Making little changes to your daily routine is often all that's needed to improve your overall productivity. **Here are some ways you can boost your productivity level at work:**

- ◆ *Set an early deadline for yourself.* To encourage yourself to work harder and more efficiently, aim to get tasks done before they actually need to be. Set a goal to finish at least one or two of the tasks on your "to do" list before noon.
- ◆ *Adjust your lunch hour.* Choose a time that's slightly earlier or later than when your co-workers go to lunch, so you can work without interruption while they're gone.
- ◆ *Make a list of the best times to call people.* Keep this list with the person's contact information. Schedule calls for these times in order to reduce the number of games of telephone tag you play.
- ◆ *Get a grip on procrastination.* To set yourself in motion, do something physical related to the task. Gather the materials needed, sharpen a pencil, or start typing the first thoughts that come to mind.

## Manage Your Mood and Your Day

**W**hy do some days seem to hum along splendidly while others are an all-out struggle to survive? More often than not, a great day doesn't happen by chance, but by making simple choices that encourage a positive frame of mind. **The following are things you can do to improve your mood and your day:**

- *Relax your morning routine.* When you get up late, you begin your day stressed and already behind. Put your alarm clock out of reach to avoid the temptation to hit the snooze button. Do as many of your morning tasks as you can the night before, so you'll have a little time in the morning for doing something you enjoy, such as taking the dog for a walk, sipping tea while you read the paper, or luxuriating in a long, hot shower.
- *Maintain a "don't sweat it" attitude.* You encounter obstacles, irritations and disappointments every day; it's how you respond to them that can make a good day or a bad one. Instead of focusing on your frustration, think of how you've handled similar setbacks in the past. Do something about it rather than assume yourself doomed to a bad day.



- *Approach your workload decisively.* Set aside all of the little tasks cluttering your inbox and get started on the larger, more important projects right away. By making progress on them first, you'll feel more motivated as you work. Concentrate on important tasks while taking care of urgent ones

along the way. Leave low-priority work for the pockets of downtime between important tasks.

- *Get in the flow.* Tackle the tasks you dread such as routine paperwork or data entry instead of putting them off. Immerse yourself in the task by focusing on executing each part of it as precisely as possible. To make the task more pleasurable, create an environment that facilitates concentration.
- *End your day the right way.* Do something to create an end-of-day refuge from your busy day. Enjoy an unhurried conversation with a loved one, spend time on a hobby, or try a new recipe for dinner. Spend quiet time reflecting on the day, your dreams and goals, and what you're thankful for. What did you learn today that you can use to make tomorrow an even better day? Go to bed early enough to wake up rested and ready to face a new day!

## Interviewing with Insight

**H**iring may be a long and involved process, but it's worth the time to select the right person. Taking the time to conduct several interviews is less costly than hiring the wrong person for the job. **The following are tips for interviewing job candidates:**

- ◆ *Do your homework before the interview.* Carefully review each candidate's resumé. Make note of the things you like and want to know more about as well as any gaps or discrepancies to ask about. Prepare a standard list of questions to ask each candidate.
- ◆ *Enlist the help of your staff.* They can provide valuable feedback and catch things you might miss. Have several people review resúmes, interview candidates and then meet to discuss their impressions. Even if you don't select the person they recommend, they'll feel more a part of the decision.
- ◆ *Conduct two rounds of interviews.* Multiple interviews ensure time to get to know people well enough to make an informed decision. Start off with shorter, 30-minute interviews to narrow your selection down to three or four people. Then do a more in-depth interview that includes a company tour and a chance to meet others.
- ◆ *Make candidates feel comfortable.* Put people at ease by being warm and friendly. Introduce yourself and explain your management style to give them an idea of whether or not they would work well with you. Ask permission to take notes, so they won't worry about what you're writing.
- ◆ *Begin with questions about the resumé.* Watch to see how easily and confidently people can answer these questions. Then move on to situational questions to see how they think under pressure. To find out their goals and motivations, ask about their long-term plans. Listen and give them a chance



to talk. You should spend no more than 20 percent of the time talking.

- ◆ *Consider using assessment tools.* Written personality tests can help you gauge whether people have the qualities necessary to perform the particular job. Administer the test to your current top-performing employees first to identify the attributes that have made them successful at their jobs.
- ◆ *Give candidates a chance to ask questions.* At the end of the interview, provide them the opportunity to ask any questions they have. In the second round of interviews, give candidates a chance to ask other staff members about the company, its management style and their level of job satisfaction.
- ◆ *Close the interview decisively.* Thank people for their time and say that you'll be in touch with them, but don't make any promises about the job. Give a specific date that they can expect to hear from you, so they won't be waiting in suspense.

### Recognize Red Flags

The following are things to look out for on job applications:

- Blanks on areas of the form that must be filled out
- Unexplained gaps in employment history
- An incomplete list of former employers
- Names of former supervisors can't be confirmed
- Vague description of job responsibilities and accomplishments.



## Pat Answers

*Dear Pat: I work directly with the public and when the rules that I'm supposed to go by don't please our clients, they can get pretty rude. That would be okay, but if they ask to speak to the manager, she never backs me up. She gives people whatever they want, showing our consumers that they don't have to play by the rules and making me look like the bad guy.*

**Pat Answers:** First of all, please give up the idea that you can teach consumers how to be polite and play by the rules. If they didn't learn that at home, they're not going to learn it from you. The real issue is that you don't feel supported by your manager when you enforce organizational policies. She's playing good cop/bad cop, and you always have to be the bad cop. If I were you, I'd approach this as a customer service issue, which it is. Ideally, a customer should be able to get what they need from the first person they talk to. If the manager overrules you again, explain that you want to provide the best customer service possible and ask her if there is more flexibility in the policies than you had thought. It might be that you're interpreting the rules more strictly than you need to. However, she may tell you that it's the job of employees like yourself to enforce policies, and only managers are empowered to make exceptions. If that's the way it is, accept it gracefully. But ask that when she does grant an exception, she let the consumer know that you were following the correct procedures, so the client will not see you as incompetent or as an obstacle to good service, but will have confidence all of the organization's employees.



*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.*

## Organize Your Disaster Area

**To tackle your garage, basement, attic, or other disaster area:**

- ▲ *Set it in stone.* Write a specific date on your calendar for cleaning out the dreaded area, and stick to your appointment. If the task is too much to handle in one day, break the project into steps and plan what you'll do each day. For example, set aside four Saturdays in a month for getting the job done.
- ▲ *Keep yourself motivated.* Recruit family and friends to help and offer them a fun dinner afterward to celebrate your success. Play upbeat music to keep you going and assign each person a specific task and time to finish. Give a small prize if they can beat the clock.
- ▲ *When in doubt, toss it out.* If you don't know what an item is or what it belongs to, get rid of it. You may want to designate a box for odds and ends, but set a definite time limit to how long you'll keep them before you throw them away.
- ▲ *Postpone nostalgia.* When you come across items of sentimental value, avoid the urge to stop what you're doing to reminisce. Set them aside to look at after you've finished your goal for the day, so you can enjoy this time without getting behind.
- ▲ *Keep it, toss it, or give it away.* For each item you encounter, make a simple choice. Set up a trash can and a large box for the items you want to give away to friends or goodwill. If you haven't used an item within the last year, there's a good chance you don't need it.
- ▲ *Maximize your storage space.* Use shelves, hooks, or pegboards to take advantage of wall space. Invest in some sturdy containers to store seasonal items out of the way.

## Make the Most of Family Time

**N**o matter how much you try to do, the fact is that you only have 24 hours in a day. So how can you find the time to take care of your responsibilities and still have meaningful relationships with your family? By learning to prioritize. When you prioritize, you are choosing to do some activities and not others. You realize that squeezing more into your day eventually becomes impossible. **Try the following tips to prioritize your time:**

- ◆ *Make a list of the things that are top priority in your life.* Then make a list of the things that normally occupy your time each day and compare it to your list of priorities. You may be surprised at what little time you spend on your top priorities. Since you may not be able to reduce the amount of time some items require, such as sleep, work, or commuting, your challenge is to spend the remainder of time on your priorities.
- ◆ *Reinvent your "to do" list.* Add items to your "to do" list that reflect your true priorities. For example, write down "listen to my spouse," or "spend time playing with the kids." Carry your list with you to stay mindful of your priorities during the day.
- ◆ *Learn to discern true needs.* You'll waste less of your free time on unimportant things when you're able to



identify what your true needs are. While you do need to take care of practical things for your family like paying bills and providing healthy meals and clean clothes, you don't need to have an immaculate house or to have your family involved in a multitude of activities.

- ◆ *Plan ahead to save time.* Find ways to streamline housework to free up more time with your family. Plan all of your meals for the week and shop for them at one time. Clean up while you're preparing dinner.
- ◆ *Combine family and housework time.* For the household activities you must do, do them as a family to keep time with your family top priority. Prepare dinner together and catch up on each other as you cook. Take your kids with you to the grocery store, or pay the bills while you watch them at practice.

## Quick Tricks for Nitty-Gritty Cleaning

**Here are some speedy cleaning solutions for hard-to-clean items:**

- ❖ *Rusty faucet* – Rub lemon juice on it with a sponge and rinse with soap and water.
- ❖ *Dirty pans* – Let them soak in a solution of dishwasher detergent and water before wiping.
- ❖ *Scummy shower curtain* – Put it in the washing machine with two terry-cloth towels to rub off mildew. Add equal amounts of detergent and baking soda and one cup of vinegar. Take it out to dry before the spin cycle.
- ❖ *Dusty louvered doors* – Wrap a cloth around a putty or butter knife and move it between the slats.



## When Considering a Second Job

**W**hen planning your next career move, consider taking a second job after-hours. Whether you need additional money to supplement your income or want to branch out into another profession, moonlighting can be a viable option. **When contemplating a second job:**

- *Define clear goals for your moonlighting venture.* Know what you want to accomplish by taking a second job. Without clear goals, you won't have the motivation or endurance it takes to succeed. What personal or career goals do you intend to achieve? What financial goals do you have for the extra income you'll earn?
- *Estimate the amount of time a second job will require.* How much time can you set aside for moonlighting? Factor in the amount of time your current job takes, the time you want to devote to your family and other commitments, and time for rest and taking care of household responsibilities. What activities will you have to give up to make time for a second job?
- *Explore alternatives that will make a second job more convenient.* Thanks to the Internet, there are now several jobs that you can do from home using



a personal computer. This will not only make the hours you work more flexible, but it will also allow you to stay closer to your family.

- *Take advantage of your current job skills.* How can you apply what you already know to another job requiring similar skills? What talents do you possess that you could put to use to earn money? For example, a financial analyst could provide financial counseling to people on the weekends.
- *Find opportunities to acquire new skills and build your credentials.* If you're thinking of switching to another profession, look into training that will expand your marketability. Work as an intern to gain experience and exposure to the field and to determine if it's right for you.

## How Much Time Do You Work?

In a typical workday, how much of the time do you actually spend working? According to statistics, you may be working only 60 percent of the time or four hours and 48 minutes of an eight hour day. Multiply that by a 2000-hour work year, and the typical employee works a total of 1,200 hours. **Here's how the remaining**

**800 hours can be wasted:**

- *Procrastination.* Many people develop habits to put off work such as going to get another cup of coffee or sharpening all of their pencils.
- *Disorganization.* A messy desk and inconsistent filing system can cause people to squander many precious moments looking for items.
- *Excessive socializing.* Chatting with coworkers and making personal phone calls can occupy too much of employees' time.
- *Fatigue.* Many people are chronically fatigued and don't get the regular sleep their minds and bodies need to perform efficiently.



## Minimize Your Telephone Time

While telephone interruptions may be a part of life, they don't have to monopolize your time. **The following are ways you can keep your telephone time to a minimum:**

- ◆ Schedule specific times for taking calls. Inform your staff of the types of calls you'll receive and the times you'll take them, as well as the situations that warrant interruption. When people call at times other than your designated phone times, reschedule another time to talk, so you can stay focused on finishing your top-priority work.
- ◆ Provide callers options. When you don't have time to take a call, tell people that you're busy at the moment. Ask them if they would rather have you call them back later or be connected to someone else who can help them right now.
- ◆ Encourage callers to be succinct. Tell people that you're taking notes on the important points while they talk. This will encourage them to be as clear and to the point as possible. With your list in hand, you can then discuss what you need to now and plan a time to follow up on the remaining points later.
- ◆ Give cues that the call is coming to a close. Facilitate a fast, courteous close to the conversation by suggesting that you're ready to end it. For example, say, "Well, it's been good talking with you," or, "Before we finish..."
- ◆ When making calls, indicate that you don't intend to talk long. For example, say, "I know you're busy, but I have a quick question for you." Or, make mention of your schedule by saying something like, "Before I go to my next meeting, I wanted to check with you on..."

## How to Sell in a New Market

**A**nytime you're dealing with a new product or kind of customer, you're entering into a new sales territory. By implementing a sound strategy, you can successfully blaze a trail to a new sales frontier. **Before selling in an unknown territory, consider these tips:**

▲ Scout it out first. Have the sales manager meet people in the territory who are selling similar products and services. He or she can identify potential customers, dealers and distributors to target.



▲ Test the market. Enlist a small force from your sales team to begin the initial sales efforts. Their results can then be evaluated to determine what works and what doesn't.

▲ Implement more extensive plans. Once an initial success has been reached, meet with your staff to decide the extent of your long-term efforts in this new area.

▲ Consult outside expertise. Seek the counsel of experienced people who can tell you if they think your sales strategy is a wise one.

## Improve What You Offer Customers

Business is defined by what customers want. **Here are several areas you can improve in order to better cater to the needs of your customers:**

- ◆ *Customer service* – Make customer service the highest priority in your sales department. Everyone on your sales staff should be willing to drop everything else to attend to the needs of a customer.
- ◆ *Demographic preferences* – Find out the ages, occupations and interests of your current customers. How can you serve the needs of these particular groups more specifically?
- ◆ *Convenience* – Decide how you can make it easier for people to do business with you. Examine how current company practices like automated answering services can make it less convenient for customers to work with you.
- ◆ *Options* – Brainstorm ways that you can provide more choices and alternatives to your customers. Consider how you can customize your products and services.
- ◆ *Speed* – How important is speed to your customers? How can you save them more time and deliver your products and services more quickly?

## Asking the Right Questions

Accomplished salespeople are skilled at asking the right questions. **Here are some tips for asking the right ones:**

- Ask questions that identify prospects' needs. Ask open-ended questions that give people room to talk about themselves, their needs and concerns. Then match those needs with the product or service you offer that can help them.
- Avoid vague, pointless questions. If questions are too broad, they make the conversation go nowhere, which is annoying to busy people who don't have time to waste. Avoid questions like "What's new?" "How's business?" or "How can I obtain your business?"



## First Impressions

First impressions count when it comes to potential customers. Even superficial things can tell people a lot about the quality of your company and whether or not they want to do business with you. **Use the following checklist to make sure your company makes a good first impression:**

- ❖ Is it easy to find your way around company grounds? Are places clearly marked with signs?
- ❖ Does the interior and exterior of your building look clean, organized, and attractive?
- ❖ Are company rest rooms clean?
- ❖ Are magazines in waiting areas current or outdated?
- ❖ Are employees dressed professionally and friendly to visitors?
- ❖ Are phone calls answered in a courteous manner?
- ❖ Are customers helped quickly?
- ❖ Are routine questions from customers dealt with appropriately?
- ❖ Are product defects and service complaints handled well?
- ❖ Is your stationery high quality?
- ❖ Is your website sharp looking, up-to-date and easy to use?

## Start Your Relationship Off Right

To extend a warm welcome to new customers, send them a welcome packet that lets them know you look forward to doing business with them. **Insert the following materials in your welcome packet:**

- a personal letter from the company president that expresses appreciation for their business
- a guide to your company and its products and services
- a list of relevant company phone numbers, fax numbers and E-mail addresses

## Managing Workplace Anger

More often than not, anger is unproductive and destructive. People have less tolerance for outbursts of anger in business relationships than they do in personal ones, and those who are unable to control their anger often damage their relationships, reputation and potential for career success. **To control your temper:**

- ◆ *Examine yourself.* Do you have a long-established pattern of anger in your life? Is the short-term gratification worth the long-term damage it can cause? Make a list of the reasons why you need to learn to control your anger.
- ◆ *Identify trouble situations and develop a strategy for handling them.* What people, places, or transactions provoke your anger? Decide what you can do in future encounters to alleviate this tension.
- ◆ *When you get angry, consciously delay your reaction.* Resist the temptation to react before you analyze the situation. Answer the following questions before you respond: What's the source of your anger? Is it stemming from frustration, hurt, or fear? What kind of long-term relationship do you want with this person, and how could expressing your anger damage it? How can you communicate your needs and accomplish your goals without using anger?
- ◆ *Keep an anger journal.* Each time you have an angry outburst, write down when the incident occurred, who you were angry with and why. Did your anger accomplish anything constructive? Did you carry out your anger-management strategy? By recording these episodes, you can make positive changes in your behavior patterns.

## Plant the Seeds for Success

All great achievements require time and tenacity. Practice perseverance because the last key on the ring may be the one that opens the door. Hanging on one second longer than your competition will make you a winner. Become famous for finishing difficult, important tasks.

It's been said that a great oak is only a little nut that held its ground. Too many people take hold of opportunity, but let go of it too soon. Don B. Owens Jr. said it so well: "Many people fail in life because they believe in the adage: 'If you don't succeed, try something else.' But success eludes those who follow such advice. The dreams that came true did so because people stuck to their ambitions. They refused to be discouraged. They never let disappointment get the upper hand. Challenges only spurred them on to greater efforts."

If you're tempted to stop, think of Brahms and how he took seven long years to compose his famous lullaby. Many people who fail don't realize how close they were to success when they gave up. Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote, "When you get into a tight place and everything goes against you until it seems as though you could not hold on a minute longer, never give up then, for that is just the time and place that the tide will turn."

The road to success runs uphill, so don't expect to break speed records. Im-



patience is costly. Most people fail simply because they're impatient and can't connect the beginning to the end.

"The determined soul will do more with a rusty monkey wrench than a loafer will accomplish with all the tools in a mechanic's shop," said Rupert Hughes. The power to hold on in spite of everything and endure is a winner's quality. To endure is greater than to dare. The difference between the impossible and the possible lies simply in personal determination.

When you get right down to the root meaning of the word "succeed," you find that it simply means "to persevere and follow through." If a diamond could talk, it would tell you that it's just a hunk of coal that stuck to its job and made good under pressure. It takes the hammer of persistence to drive the nail of success.

*By John Mason, author, speaker and president of Insight International. For more information, write: John Mason, Insight International, P.O. Box 54996, Tulsa, OK 74155.*

## How to Replace Bad Habits with Good Ones

Establishing new habits takes time. **Here are some tips for making good habits stick:**

- Make a list of bad habits and the good habits you want to start.
- Write down signals to trigger you to replace a bad habit (like anger) with a good one (like patience).
- Add to your list more times and places you can practice your new habits as you think of them.
- Post reminders in your planner to do your new habits and check your progress when you come to them.
- Tell other people about your resolution to change your bad habits and ask them to support you.
- Celebrate your success at sticking to your new habits!



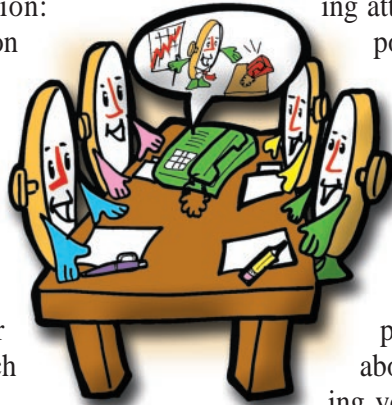
## Enhancing Your Video and Audio Conferencing

**V**ideo and audio conferencing increases productivity, saves travel time and money and contributes to a team-building culture. **To adapt your presentation and speaking style to take full advantage of the medium:**

- *Pay attention to equipment and setup.* Pay particular attention to the seating arrangement. There are two preferred seating arrangements for best interaction:

1) Have participants sit in the arc of an oval on one side of the table. They can then see the monitor and each other (at least better than sitting shoulder to shoulder). 2) Have participants sit at the corner of a rectangular table with two on one side of the corner and two on the other side. In either arrangement, when the participants are on camera, they will all appear to be facing the other sites, yet will still be able to see and hear each other at the local site.

- *Generate audience involvement.* To encourage discussion, have prepared questions to stimulate thought and response and to move the group toward accomplishing the purpose. When discussion digresses, guide with focused questions. Plan change-of-pace activities. For an idea of frequency, watch television to count how many times there's a change of visuals during coverage of a single news broadcast. Consider adding graphics, interactive surveys, discussion questions, site breakout activities, interviews with experts, reports, or video clips to keep participants' interest.
- *Introduce yourself and other participants.* Use a banner at each site during a video conference or by voice during an audio conference. Ask all participants to identify themselves each time they speak, since it's easy to lose the thread of a conversation in large groups when several voices sound alike. For example, "This is Kevin in Miami. I have a question for the New Orleans site . . ." helps to orient everyone quickly. The only exception to these repeated identifications is the primary presenter or host.
- *Review any guidelines or ground rules that will increase productivity.* For example, remind people about the pause before or after speaking. Encourage those who will be speaking for longer periods, such as during your question-and-answer period, to say when they've finished with their remarks so that others will know this quickly.
- *Avoid leading with the top of your head.* If you've been the lone ranger at a remote site, you understand the feeling of staring into a sea of heads when others have forgotten you're on the planet. Don't forget that you're supposed to be "connecting" with another group rather than staring at



your notes. If there are multiple cameras, check the TV monitor to make sure that you're facing the camera that is currently online and that you're completely within the camera's field of vision as you speak.

- *Remember the ever-present camera and open, sensitive microphone.* Be careful that you're not inadvertently calling attention to your movement. Give attention to posture. Just because you can't see your audience doesn't mean they can't see you. Avoid unconscious mannerisms such as rubbing your eyes or twirling your pencil. Because microphones are very sensitive, it's a good idea to mute the audio any time you're not speaking to eliminate extraneous noise such as air conditioners, projectors, rustling papers, coughing, or throat clearing. Be careful about sudden moves toward the camera. Extending your hands, flailing your arms, shifting your weight, or crossing your legs may look aggressive and make hands and arms look much larger. The camera greatly exaggerates wide, sweeping gestures and pointing fingers.
- *Be aware that gestures and facial expressions are exaggerated on camera.* A scowl may seem harsh and disapproving. To lighten your facial expression, think of how you appear when you're slightly amused. That is, raise your eyebrows slightly and keep your gaze and chin turned slightly upward. Visualize the camera as a colleague sitting directly in front of you who's nodding or raising an eyebrow at what you say.
- *Be extra mindful of vocal variety.* Vary your speech patterns and voice – fast and slow rate of speaking, high and low pitch, loud and soft volume, inflection, emphasis and intonation. While important during in-person presentations, vocal variety becomes crucial in video conferencing. A monotonous presentation online puts people to sleep.
- *Break long monologues into shorter chunks.* Unlike face-to-face conversations where others can signal with body language that they want the floor, participants can grow impatient listening to a monologue without the opportunity for comment or question. In general, virtual presentations should be shorter than traditional ones because it's more difficult to hold participants' attention.



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*®.

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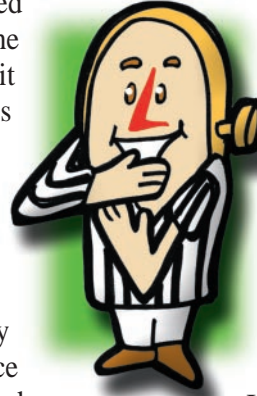
## Take Time Out to Revise Your Time Estimates

**D**o you often get frustrated that you can't stick to the schedule you plan? It may be that you're not estimating the amount of time your activities require accurately. When you only schedule the exact amount of time it takes to do a task, you don't allow time for all of the other steps included in it. **The following are areas to factor in when making time estimates:**

- ❖ *Preparation and cleanup time* – While the task itself may not take long, it may take much longer to gather supplies, set up and clean up afterwards, especially for big projects that will take more than one session to complete. Consider how much time it will take to familiarize yourself with the task, read instructions, change into suitable clothing and mentally prepare for the task.
- ❖ *Thinking time* – Some activities require extra time for meditation and reflection. Sometimes the best thing to do is to let a project “sit” for a little while and then come back to it to gain fresh perspective. When working on creative tasks or problem solving, leave time for some “think time.”
- ❖ *Turnaround time* – Depending on the nature of the task, you may need

time to revise your work and obtain the feedback or approval of others. How much time will you need to proofread and check the facts? How much time will it take to receive other people's input or permission? Make your estimate flexible since you can't always guarantee when other people will get back with you.

- ❖ *Travel time* – Anticipate any delays you might experience depending on the time of day, area of town and weather conditions. Will you be traveling during rush hour or using public transportation? Will you be on the highway or on city streets? Will it be raining or snowing? You should also plan time to park, enter the building and ride the elevator to arrive at your appointment on time.



❖ *Downtime* – While you may be an intensive worker who likes to buckle down and focus on a project until it's done, this can be hard on your mind and body and may not be as productive. Grant yourself time for getting up, stretching and taking a mental break. Also include time for regular meals, snacks and restroom breaks.

❖ *Interruptions and delays* – In most cases, you're likely to encounter setbacks and other unexpected interference before accomplishing your goal. When every second of your day is planned, you won't have time to take care of mistakes or take advantage of the opportunities and surprises that come your way. Try to leave some room in your schedule to accommodate these things.

### Do You Have a Spare Key?

“Where are my keys?!” is a familiar refrain on a hectic day. To prevent wasted time and anxiety ahead of time, get a spare key for your home, office, car and other important items, and hide them somewhere you can access them in a pinch. Not only will this save your sanity, but it can also save you the money you'd have to pay the locksmith or alarm company.

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