

## HOW TO GET MAXIMUM RESULTS



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*Notes*

## **How To Get Maximum Results In Minimum Time**

The typical business owner, manager, or entrepreneur spends a considerable amount of their day handling crisis and putting out fires rather than running, managing and growing their business. As a result, at the end of the day they find they've made very little, if any progress toward achieving their goals.

And, at the end of several years, they find they're no further ahead than they were years ago. In fact, in many cases, they're farther behind, because while their expenses and the cost of doing business continued to rise, their businesses failed to grow at a proportionate rate.

If this sounds like you, and you're frustrated because of it, don't give up. There's a reason for it... and thankfully, a solution. And, the good news is, the solution isn't all that difficult.

The main reason so many business people find themselves in this predicament is very clear to those who understand the simple principle behind it. Unfortunately, most people don't realize, have never been taught, or fail to grasp this one basic and fundamental concept:

**Most people in business spend too much time working IN  
their  
business, and not ON their business.**

In other words, they're working so hard trying to keep the ship afloat, that they don't have enough time (and sometimes energy) to do what it takes to move the ship towards its intended destination.

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And, it's not always the business owner's fault. Sometimes, the business they find themselves in has just grown so fast that they haven't had time to keep up with it.

In other cases, the business might be slow to develop because of insufficient cash flow, inadequate resources, stiff competition, poor location, or an apathetic buying market, and it's all the business owner can do to keep the doors open by running it him or herself. They just can't afford to hire anyone else to help them.

If this sounds like you, like I said earlier, don't give up. In the remaining pages of this manual, you're going to learn how to work more efficiently **ON** your business and controlling it, rather than having your business control you by you having to spend your valuable time working **IN** it.

### **Working Hard On Your Business Can Produce Results, But Working Smart Can Eliminate Your Competition**

You've no doubt heard that to get better results, you need to work smarter, rather than harder in your business. Well, that's a very true statement. And, like the previous statement of working **ON** your business, rather than **ON** it, there are a lot of business owners, managers, and entrepreneurs who just don't understand how to make it happen.

That's exactly what the information in this report is designed to help you accomplish... to get you to work smarter **ON** your business, instead of working harder **IN** your business.

In the course of a day, in any business, job or profession, there are a number of activities or tasks that must be performed. Some of those activities are focused on bringing in new customers, clients or patients. Some have to do with servicing existing customers. And others deal with administrative duties that have to do with paying bills, keeping the business open, and making sure it runs smoothly.

### **It's Not How Much You Do, But What You Choose To Do That Makes The Big Difference**

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How you prioritize and choose the activities you get involved with on a daily basis, as well as how much time, effort and attention you devote to those activities has a tremendous amount to do with determining the impact you have on the growth and direction of your business.

The reality is, that when you work **IN** your business, you're doing the activities that, at best, produce only average results for you.

On the other hand, when you work **ON** your business, you're doing the 20% of activities that have the potential to produce an incredible 80% or more of your results.

### **To Gain The Maximum Effectiveness In Your Business, You Must Wear The Correct Hat**

Earlier, I mentioned that most business owners spend too much time putting out fires and handling crisis, and not enough time running, managing, and growing their business.

And, the reason for that, is that they don't have the correct vision of the role they're supposed to play in the business. Either that, or they are in a crisis situation where time and/or money has gotten away from them, and they have very little other choice but to do much of the work themselves.

But this is a critical mistake. And it can be a deadly (to the business) one, as well.

If you really want your business to realize the success it's capable of, and if you really want to enjoy the money freedom and time freedom having or running your own business can afford you, then, it's critical that you begin viewing your position... your job... your responsibility in the correct and proper manner.

Simply put...

**You Must Begin Thinking Of Yourself As Business  
Manager And Business Builder, And Not The Owner, A  
Producer,  
An Employee, Or A Gap-Filler**

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Management expert, Peter Drucker said, “Because its purpose is to create a customer, the business has two and only two basic functions: marketing and innovation produce results; all the rest are costs.”

With that in mind, the most important function you as a business manager and builder can perform in your business, is to make sure your business is constantly developing and offering new and innovative products and services to your customers, that you’re growing by adding new customers to your client base, and that you’re constantly increasing the quality of those customers.

As Drucker says, those are the things that produce results. Anything else you do or get involved with is just a cost to the business.

Well, knowing that, why in the world would you want to do anything other than be involved with marketing your business or innovation... the only two things that produce results?

As the business owner, manager, or entrepreneur, you’re the one ultimately responsible for your company’s growth, for its stability, for providing security for your employees, and value to your customers and clients.

The fact of the matter is, your business is either moving forward, or it’s going backwards There’s no such thing as stagnation... just staying even.

Even if you have the same number of customers, clients or patients from one year to the next, your business operating expenses, wages, supplies, and the general cost of doing business continues to rise. And without an increase in your customer base, or the monies you derive from sales to your existing customers, your profit margins will deteriorate.

### **Management Personnel At All Levels Have Building And Growth Responsibilities**



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If you're not the owner of the business, but are in a management capacity, the same principles apply to you as they do to the owner of the business. The difference is, that what you manage and build, is the part of the business you have responsibility for, or your job or career.

It's up to you to make sure those areas are running as smoothly, efficiently, and profitably as possible, and that you're providing as much value as possible to your customers (who just may be the people you work for or with, or whom you have responsibility over).

If you've never thought of yourself as a business builder or manager before, or have been involved in nearly every aspect of your business, this may be a major paradigm shift for you. It may not be the easiest thing for you to change your thinking and the activities you engage in on a daily basis. But change them, you must... that is, if you want to reap the maximum rewards from your business.

In order for you to get a firm grasp on your new role as a business manager and builder, it's important to determine what activities you currently find yourself doing, what the monetary value of those activities are, what activities you should be engaged in, and what kind of difference it would make if you were to devote most of your time and effort to those activities.

Once you determine those amounts, the next step is to do more of the highest-payoff activities and delegate as many of the low-payoff activities to your staff as possible. In some cases, you may find it more advantageous to outsource certain activities that can be done cheaper or more efficiently to an outside firm.

For illustration purposes, let's suppose you're a business owner or manager. Let's analyze the top five daily activities of a hypothetical business that you might be involved in, in the following table.

Activity	# of Hours a Day	Revenue per	Amount
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	<b>Spent on Each Activity</b>	<b>Hour</b>	
1. Administrative duties	4	\$20	\$80
2. Paperwork	2.5	20	50
3. Answering the telephone	1	25	25
4. Prospecting	1	75	75
5. Seeing prospects and customers	1	300	300
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>\$530</b>

Notice that you're spending 9.5 hours a day at work. But only 2 of those hours, or about 20% of your time is spent in prospecting and seeing prospects and customers... the two highest payoff activities. Activities that produce \$375 per hour, or about 71% of the results.

And, 7.5 hours, or about 80% of your time is consumed with activities that only produce \$155, or about 29% of the total results.

Now, stop and think for a minute. Doesn't it make sense for you to spend more of your time and effort on the activities that have a higher payoff?

Of course, it does.

But, it's surprising how few business owners or managers actually take the time to sit down and graph out a chart like the one above that clearly and plainly shows them where their time (and money) is going.

And, why not?

Because as I said earlier, most people are too busy working IN their business that they don't have time to work ON their business. It's a common problem, and one that most people usually don't recognize until it's pointed out to them.

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How serious of a problem is it?

Well, using the figures in our example, you'll earn about \$138,000 a year (\$530 a day x 5 days a week x 52 weeks). Not a bad income. But the fact is, you could make this same income with a lot less effort and energy.

### **You Can Double Your Income By Refocusing And Restructuring Your Activities**

Now, if you want to work the same 9.5 hours a day you're currently working, you could make twice as much money just by doing more of the highest-payoff activities.

For instance, if you were to delegate 3 hours of your administrative work and 1.5 hours of your paperwork to your staff, you would then free up 4.5 hours that could be spent working on your two highest-payoff activities - Prospecting and Seeing Prospects and Customers. This would give your income a tremendous boost.

Let's say, that after prioritizing and restructuring your activities, you now spend 3 hours on prospecting, 3.5 hours on seeing prospects and clients, 1 hour on administrative work, 1 hour on paperwork, and 1 hour on telephone calls.

What kind of impact would that have on your income? The next table shows a significant improvement.

<b>Activity</b>	<b># of Hours a Day Spent on Each Activity</b>	<b>Revenue per Hour</b>	<b>Amount</b>
1. Administrative duties	1	\$20	\$20
2. Paperwork	1	20	20
3. Answering the telephone	1	25	25
4. Prospecting	3	75	225
5. Seeing prospects and customers	3.5	300	1,050
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9.5</b>	<b>\$1,340</b>

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As you can see, simply by rearranging your priorities - by working smarter - ON your business instead of IN it - you were able to double your income without having to work a single minute longer.

Even if you hired additional staff to take care of your low-payoff activities, and paid that person \$200 a day (8 hours x \$25 per hour), you still make \$1,140 a day. This is almost 2.2 times more than what you were previously making.

Now, consider how much money you could make if you were to delegate all of your low-payoff tasks, including Prospecting, to your staff and were to just focus on doing only your highest-payoff activity - Seeing Prospects and Customers.

In this case, you would triple or even quadruple your income!

Watch how this works:

If you were to spend 7 hours a day on your highest-payoff activity, Seeing Prospects and Customers, you would earn \$2,100 a day (7 hours x \$300 per hour). And, if you were to spend your full day on this activity - 9.5 hours, your income would shoot up to \$2,850 a day!

### **Delegation Doesn't Happen All At Once, Nor Is It Always A 100% Thing**

Now, it's probably not realistic to think that a person can delegate all of their low-payoff activities to a staff person... at least not right away. But, that's not the important thing.

What is important, is that you become aware of what activities and tasks you're spending your time on, what it's costing you to spend that time on them, and that you delegate or off-load as much and as many of your low-payoff activities to another, lower-paid person.

Suppose, for example, that you can find a person to do your prospecting for you. And, let's say that for every hour this prospector works, he's able to set up one appointment for you.

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Let's do the math. It costs you \$75 for the hour it takes the prospector to set up the appointment, but it also frees up that hour for you to spend in a selling situation, in which you can earn \$300.

Your net gain (supposing you are successful in closing the sale), is \$225 (\$300 minus \$75).

Now, if your prospector is good - as good as, or even better than you are - it may be to your advantage to pay him \$100 or even \$150 an hour to set your appointments - providing they're good, solid appointments that can lead to a sale. Or, you may consider giving him a bonus for the sales you make as a result of the appointments he sets for you.

You see, the more low-payoff activities you can delegate, the more time you'll have to spend doing the higher-payoff activities -activities that can boost your income up several notches very quickly.

**Don't Let The Cost Of Hiring Staff Scare You...  
If Done Right, It Won't Be A Cost At All**

I know what you may be thinking - especially, if you think like most business owners or managers.

*"Come on, get real. There's no way I can pay someone that kind of money to do my prospecting for me. "*

I'll admit, on the surface, it does look like a lot of money. (And, I'll not kid you, it is a lot of money.)

But if I were to give you \$300 for every \$75 you handed me, how many times would you continue handing over \$75? My guess is, that you'd do it as often as you could, right?

Sure, you would.

Now, what if your business isn't the kind of business where you meet with your prospects in a one-on-one selling situation by appointment? What if you operate a retail, or walk-in type of business? How does this concept apply to you?

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Well, to put it quite simply - the very same way.

**All Businesses May Not Operate In The Same Way,  
But Basic Business Principles Apply To All Businesses**

Look, it doesn't matter what type of business you operate, the principles are the same. Sure, you may not have a person who does your prospecting or appointment setting for you. But you do have activities that rank higher as well as activities that rank lower on the priority scale.

The activities listed in the previous tables were merely used as illustrations. It's up to you to determine just what activities you are spending your time on, then place a dollar value on them, and rate them according to their importance.

You are the one who has to determine exactly which activities and tasks are the most profitable for you to undertake each day. The idea is to try and delegate as many of the lower payoff activities and tasks to lower paid employees, associates, or outsourcing vendors as possible, so you can free up your valuable time to spend on those activities that will give you the most return for your investment of time, money, and effort.

Like I said earlier, if you find yourself spending 80% of your time doing the activities that bring you 20% of the results, it may not necessarily be your fault. It could be that you were never taught how to prioritize your tasks and proportion your efforts.

Or, it may be that your business just grew so fast, or that because of market conditions or other circumstances your business is so slow, that out of necessity, you've found yourself wearing all kinds of different hats.

**A New Paradigm... A New Outlook...  
A New Way Of Seeing Your Role In Your Business**

Whatever the reason, you've got to put that behind you, now. You've got to change the way you look at yourself, your business, and the role you play in it. You can no longer think of

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yourself as a chiropractor, an insurance agent, a plumber, a carpenter, or doctor.

Being a carpet cleaner, a real estate agent, an attorney, a restaurant owner, or retailer is no longer enough. Whatever business you are engaged in, and no matter what your primary duties are in it, you must begin to see yourself as a business manager and business builder.

Sure, if you're a doctor or dentist, you're most likely the one who provides the health or dental care. And, it's the same with any of the other businesses or professions.

But, if you want your business to grow and to provide you with the income it's capable of, you've got to begin looking at things differently. You have to begin delegating and off-loading some of the "busy work" or lower-payoff activities to others. And, that means you must have people working with you - either a staff in your employ, or companies or independent contractors you can outsource to.

If you think you can't afford it, I urge you to think again.

Just go back to the previous tables and plug in your own activities, assign dollar amounts to them, and see how much money you're missing out on.

After you've done this exercise, I'm sure you'll be convinced that there's no way you can afford to not be without someone in your employ or at your hire to delegate to.

Once you've discovered that you can double, triple - even quadruple your income without having to work a minute harder or longer, you'll be hooked, and you'll never turn back. It's that powerful.

Remember, the more low-payoff activities you can delegate to others, the more successful you'll become. This is undoubtedly one of the most common sense, but least practiced secrets of success...

**Delegate As Much As Possible,  
As Quickly As Possible!**

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Now that we've walked through the illustration and you have the basic concept down, let's take a minute and identify your five highest-payoff activities and the amount you can earn from each one. Record the information in the following table...

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<b>Activity</b>	<b># of Hours a Day Spent on Each Activity A</b>	<b>Revenue Per Hour B</b>	<b>Amount (AxB) C</b>
1.		\$	\$
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
<b>Total</b>			\$

Well, how'd you do? Have you found yourself like so many other business owners, managers, and entrepreneurs, spending less than 30% of your time on your two highest-payoff activities?

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What did you determine to be your highest-payoff activity? And what is the dollar value of that activity?

Was it as much as \$100? \$250? \$500? Or did it go as high as \$1,000 or more?

What about your lowest-payoff task? What was it? How much time did you determine you spend on it? And, what is its dollar value?



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Were you surprised to find out how much time you've been spending on your lower-payoff activities and how little time on your highest-payoff activity?

Can you see the value of delegating the lower-payoff tasks to someone else so you can spend more time on the high-payoff tasks? Have any ideas come to mind for accomplishing that?

If you divide the amount of money you earn per day (C) by the number of hours you work per day (A), you'll get your average hourly income.

This next statement is critically important, so please pay close attention: Whatever your hourly average income is, with very few exceptions, you should not be doing any activity that produces less than this amount.

Now, take a look at the activities you participate in, in your business. Are there any that generate less than this amount? If so, you must take steps to eliminate them from your agenda, and pass them on to others who are qualified to handle them, and who earn less per hour than you're capable of.

Let me put it another way...

**If You Want To Increase Your Productivity...  
You Must Figure Out Ways To Delegate Your  
Low-Payoff Tasks To Somebody Else!**

Even if you're a one-person operation and think you can't afford to hire a staff to do most or all of the low-payoff tasks for you, *you must hire that person.*

If you find yourself spending most of your time doing low payoff tasks right now, then like most business owners, you're not working ON your business - you're working IN your business.

And, until you've learned how to work ON your business, rather than IN it, you'll never be able to make the kind of income you want, or that your business is capable of earning.

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Remember what I said earlier - you won't be able to download or delegate everything at once. It may take some time to find the right persons to share your load. The best people are those who enjoy and have a desire to do the kind of work you want to delegate to them.

Some people are "numbers-oriented," and really enjoy working with figures, formulas, and facts. Others absolutely despise those tasks, and no matter how hard they try, how much you train, and how well you compensate or reward them, they'll never be able to make a go of it.

So, don't be discouraged in the beginning, if it takes a while to get to the point where you're spending most of your time doing the higher-payoff activities. If you keep at it, eventually, you'll find yourself spending most of your time and effort doing the things that bring the greatest rewards - both financially, and personally.

And, you'll be surprised at the improvement in attitudes and responsibility others around you assume, as you give them more of your trust.

If your business is one in which you engage your prospects and customers in face-to-face selling, and you find that by delegating less important tasks that you have more time to spend in those selling situations, you'll delight as your income takes quantum leaps.

If your business is engaged in other kinds of operations, you be amazed at the increase in productivity you'll realize because you're able to spend more time and effort doing the things that bring an increase in efficiency and effectiveness of the operation of your business.

As the owner or manager of a small or medium-sized business, you have a tremendous advantage. Just by making a few changes in the way you conduct your business, you can turn your business around and double, triple, or even quadruple your effectiveness and your profits.



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## **How To Gain Two Extra Hours A Day!**

Have you ever heard this saying?

**There's Not Enough Time For You To Do Everything You  
Want To Do... But There's Always Enough Time For You  
To Do The Most Important Things In Your Life!**

What do you think about it? Is it true?

Obviously, there's not enough time to do everything you want. That's a given. But what about those important things? Is there really enough time to do all of them?

Well, I don't know about you, but I know there are a lot of people who will challenge that statement, and say that there's no way they have enough time to do all the important things they want to do.

I know the statement says "The Most Important Things," but some people have a lot of "most important" things in their lives. They're involved with raising their children (definitely a "most important" activity; taking care of elderly parents (another "most important"); their jobs or careers (same thing); their church callings, humanitarian work, or community service; and a host of other, things they may be involved in that could, without doubt qualify for "most important."

With such a full plate, I'm sure you'd have no trouble getting agreement from a person who's experiencing even a few of those situations, that they don't have enough time to give them all justice.

**You Must Determine The Priority  
Of All Your Tasks If You Want Any  
Hope Of Accomplishing The Important Ones**

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So, what's the key? How do you juggle all the activities you have in your life that you feel are "most important," so they get accomplished?

Well, the first thing you must do, is come to the realization that there will never be enough time to do all that you want to do, nor will there ever be enough time to do all that you have to do. It's a simple and basic fact of life.

The second thing is to realize that much of what you spend your time on probably doesn't qualify to be considered "most important." In other words, in all likelihood, you probably spend a goodly amount of your time doing things that, at least on the surface appear to be "most important," but on closer examination, don't really qualify.

You've seen them - people who are always busy. They never stop. Going from dusk 'till dawn at breakneck speed. Even when the day is over, they're still going never seeming to catch up with all the things they have (or want) to get done.

Sure, they may get a lot done throughout the course of their day, but when the tally is taken at the end of the day, they still have a lot of important things to do. They always seem to run out of time before those things get done.

So, what's the problem? How and why does this happen? Why can they get so many things accomplished, but are never able to complete those big tasks?

The answer is simple. It lies with their priorities.

Remember, the statement earlier that talked about the "most important" things? Well, that's the key - determining exactly what "most important" means, and then prioritizing those items so the "most important" of the "most important" gets done first.

You see, too many people spend too much of their time (and therefore, their life) working on things they think, or have rationalized to be "most important," when in actuality, they fall somewhat farther down the scale of what really matters.

**Your Most Valuable Asset**

As a business owner, manager, or entrepreneur, you're familiar with the importance of properly managing the assets of your company, and you probably do a pretty good job with those that are under your direct supervision.

You've no doubt set up systems or controls to make sure those assets are protected, managed, and handled properly so you get the most benefit and return from their use.

But, if you're like most others in your position, if you're not managing the most important of those assets - your time - with as much precision, care, and control as you could be.

You're no different than any other person in business, or in life, for that matter. You have the same 24 hours; 1,440 minutes; or 86,400 seconds in your day that everyone else has. There's nothing you can do to get any more time.

You can't buy any more, you can't trade anything to get more of it, you can't borrow it, save it, or change it. In fact, contrary to what most time management "experts" will tell you, you can't even manage your time.

The only thing you can do with time, is let it run. That's it. You have no control over it, whatsoever.

What you can do, however, is manage the activities you perform during any given portion of time. In other words, it's not the management of time that makes the difference, it's how you manage the activities you perform during the time you have that counts.

So, rather than trying to "save" time, you would be much farther ahead focusing on ways to better do the activities and tasks you need to do that can help move you (in your personal life), and your business closer to your goals.

To put it another way, time management is no more than effective activity management. If you can learn to manage your activities effectively and efficiently, you'll find that you can

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accomplish more than you ever dreamed possible. And, as a result, your life and the satisfaction you derive from it will take on a whole new meaning.

### **To Get The Most From Your Business And Life, You Must Determine The Value Of Your Time**

I'm sure you've heard the phrase, "Time is money." And, in a world measured by minutes, hours, and days, time truly is money. We complete our work according to a time line. We receive income or paychecks that compensate us according to some measure of time against money.

If I were to mention the word "competition" to you, what's the first thing that comes to your mind?

Did you think about other businesses who are competing in the same market arena for your customers and prospects?

Did you think about another salesperson or business owner who's prices and/or quality of products and services are giving you fits?

Did you think about other businesses or activities that have absolutely nothing to do with, nor do they compete with the actual products or services your prospects and customers buy from you, but they're competing for the same discretionary dollars your market has to spend?

### **"We Have Met The Enemy, And He Is Us" - Pogo**

What does "competition" mean to you? And who, or what, exactly, is your biggest source of competition?

If you're still of the mindset that it's those who compete against you in the marketplace for your prospects' and customers' dollars, you really ought to do some rethinking.

The reality is, that even though there are other companies, businesses, organizations, or people trying to get your prospects' and customers' business, the real competition you

## How To Get Maximum Results In Minimum Time

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have, is your ability (or inability) to manage your activities effectively and efficiently enough to be able to accomplish the most important things you have to do.

And, in your business, those most important things have to do with marketing and innovation - the two things that produce results, according to Peter Drucker. Remember, that he said everything else was just a cost.

Effectively prioritizing, and then managing your activities within the allotted time you have, can give you a tremendous advantage in business. When you begin spending more and better quality time on the things that matter most - the things that produce the greatest results, or ROI (Return on Investment) of your time, effort and money, great things begin to happen.

If your responsibility involves the acquisition of new customers or clients for your business, or if you directly service them, one of the most important things you can do is to create and cultivate relationships with them of trust, value, and caring.

Consider what could happen if you were to free up some of your time from working on less important tasks and spend more of it on relationship building, prospecting, and selling activities -activities that have the potential of creating new, or long-term customers or clients for your business.

How much time are you spending doing these activities right now? An hour or less each day? Two hours? Half a day? If you're like most other business owners, managers, or entrepreneurs, you're probably spending less than two hours of every day in these, the most important functions of your business.

### **You Can Effectively Eliminate Your Competition By Using Your Time More Efficiently**

Now think... what would your business look like if you could devote even just a few more hours each week to developing better relationships with your customers or clients,



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helping them get better use, value, and enjoyment from the purchases they've made from you?

Do you think they would be predisposed to do additional business with you? How about continuing to do business with you for a longer period of time? What effect do you think it would have on the number of referrals you get from your customer base? And, how about your competition? Do you think your strengthened relationships with your customers would help insulate them from the competition?

Well, I think you'll agree that in every one of those instances, the time you invested would have a positive effect. And the net result will show up as profits on the bottom line of your account ledger, and dollars in your bank account.

And that competition I mentioned a second ago? I think you can pretty safely predict that their impact on your customers or clients will be negated, if not totally eliminated.

A few minutes ago, I mentioned the well-known phrase that we've all heard, "Time is money." It may sound trite, but it's so true. When you waste time, you're letting money slip through your fingers.

But, there's another well-known phrase that you need to be aware of. And that is...

### **"Time Is The Stuff Life Is Made Off"**

You see, when you run out of time, you run out of life. So, when you get right down to it, your time is actually more valuable than money.

Money comes and goes. You make it, and you spend it. You earn it, and you save it. You run out of it, and you go get more of it. But, that doesn't - in fact, it can't happen with your time. When you spend a certain amount of it, it's gone. And, when you're out of it altogether, you're gone.

It's not necessarily how much time you have that counts (although that does play a big part - especially when you don't

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have much left), but it's how you use the time you have available that makes the most difference.

When you've determined which of your activities are the highest priority, and are the ones you should be spending most of your time on, your goals become more clear, you become more focused, your life becomes more meaningful, and your business will reach totally new levels of success and profitability.

Taking charge, that's what it's all about. You must determine to be in charge and control of your life, and not let life or the circumstances it presents be in control of you.

The same with your business. You can't afford to let your business run you. You must step up and take control. And the way you do it is by prioritizing your activities and the tasks you involve yourself in each day.

Now, here are ten questions that can help you determine how effectively you're using your time right now.

Yes No

- 1. In the last twelve months, have you kept track of the way you spend your time for at least two weeks?
- 2. Do you prepare a daily to-do list, prioritizing the tasks in order of importance, and then allocating the time to complete each task?
- 3. Do you usually finish the six most important tasks or projects on your daily to-do list by the end of the day?
- 4. Is your desk, office, or work area, well organized?
- 5. Do you control interruptions and time wasters rather than allowing them to control you and your time?

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- 6. Do you meet all deadlines and finish your work at the office instead of taking it home with you every evening or on the weekends?
- 7. Do you start each project on time without putting it off until the last minute?
- 8. Do you let your employees do their work and solve the challenges that they could solve themselves instead of getting involved in them?
- 9. Do you handle every piece of paper only once?
- 10. Do you feel you have enough quality time for yourself and your family?

If you answered “yes” to all ten questions, congratulations! You’re a master at time management.

If you answered “yes” to between seven and nine questions, you’ve been using your time very effectively.

If you answered “yes” to between four and six questions, you’re using your time like most other business owners, managers, and entrepreneurs, and can use some help in getting better control over the activities you engage yourself in.

If you answered “yes” to three or fewer questions, you’re not using your time effectively at all, are definitely in need of help.

But, no matter how you answered, and no matter how poorly or ineffectively you’re using your time right now, after you’ve gone through the exercises you’re learning here, and have put them into action, you’ll be able to answer “yes” to all ten questions.

As creatures of habit, many of us live day to day unaware, from moment to moment, how we’re spending our time.

One of the best ways to begin uncovering time-wasting habits is to use a time log to record how you spend your time each day for at least two weeks.

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When I've explained this concept to others, I've heard comments like, *"Come on, you've got to be kidding. If I had the time to keep a time log for two weeks, I wouldn't need time management."*

If that sounds like you, I understand. Believe me, I do.

But, once you complete this time log, I think you'll be amazed at just where your time is going and what you need to do to make better use of it.

At the end of the time log, I'll explain how to use it.

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# Daily Time Log - Page 1 of 4

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Your six most important tasks for the day:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_  
 5. \_\_\_\_\_ 6. \_\_\_\_\_

Priority of the activity:    **1.** Important and urgent.                    **2.** Important but not urgent  
    **3.** Urgent but not important                    **4.** Neither important nor urgent

Time	Activity	Priority	Comments
6:00 A.M.			
6:30			
7:00			
7:30			
8:00			
8:30			
9:00			
9:30			

## Daily Time Log - Page 2 of 4

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Comments</b>
10:00 A.M.			
10:30			
11:00			
11:30			
12:00 P.M.			
12:30			
1:00			
1:30			
2:00			
2:30			
3:00			
3:30			

## Daily Time Log - Page 3 of 4

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Comments</b>
4:00 A.M.			
4:30			
5:00			
5:30			
6:00			
6:30			
7:00			
7:30			
8:00			
8:30			
9:00			
9:30			

## Daily Time Log - Page 4 of 4

Time	Activity	Priority	Comments
10:00 P.M.			
10:30			
11:00			
11:30			
12:00 A.M.			

If you didn't finish all of your six most important tasks for today, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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What valuable lessons did you learn about time management from today's activities, which you can use to become more productive tomorrow? \_\_\_\_\_

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**How To Use Your Daily Time Log**

Every half hour, record the activity in which you have been involved in the space provided in the log, as well as the amount of time it has taken you to complete that task.

At the end of each day, go back over your time log and evaluate each activity. Rate it according to the priority it holds relative to the accomplishment of the goals you have for your business.

Be ruthless in your evaluation. Remember, the time you spend doing less productive activities that could be more wisely invested in doing activities that move your business closer to your goals, is actually money lost.

Once you've had the opportunity to go through this exercise for several days, certain patterns will begin to appear. Now, take a good look.

How did you do? Are there any areas that surprise you? Any areas that need more attention? Areas that could be delegated to staff who may be more qualified to handle them, or with a little effort and training, could be taught to do them?

Have you been making the most effective use of your time?

If so, congratulations. You're on the right track.

If not, then it's time to begin doing something about it. It's time to look for solutions for eliminating time wasters and delegating those less-productive tasks to others.

In your evaluation process, look for activities that are in alignment with your goals, and ask yourself these questions...

*"Am I spending enough time on them?"*

*"Are there other, perhaps more important, things I should be doing?"*

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## **How To Shed Old, Unproductive Habits And Adopt New And Better Ones!**

After you've had a chance to review the entries in your time log and determine where your time is being wasted, and which ones are the result of bad habits, you'll begin to take control over your time.

While it's quite challenging for you to get rid of your old and unproductive habits, with a little patience and persistence, you can do it. You now have the opportunity to make some positive changes in your life and accomplish even more with your time.

I realize uprooting an old habit and replacing it with a new one will make you feel uncomfortable at first, and you may be tempted to slip back into your old unproductive pattern.

If so, don't give up. Hang in there. Because, sooner or later, often, it's sooner than later, the new habit will begin to feel more and more comfortable.

And, as you replace more unproductive habits with new and better ones, you'll begin looking at your business and your life with a more empowering perspective.

Planning your time and writing down your action plan helps you make the best and most productive use of your day, because you'll be doing more of the activities that'll get you closer to your goals.

There are many tools available to help you plan your day more effectively, such as electronic organizers, time planners, and computer software.

Organizers or time planners come in a variety of different sizes and shapes. Some have planning and project indexes, address books, business card holders, maps, and various ways of viewing calendars.

*Notes*

Personally, I prefer to use a time planner or daytimer, because, to me, writing things down on paper makes a bigger impact on me than typing them on the computer. When I see the commitments I've written in my own handwriting, I'm more motivated to do whatever it takes to keep them.

As you sit down with your time planner or daytimer...

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**Use These Guidelines To Help You Make  
The  
Best Use Of Your Time And Schedule:**

**1. Schedule time to plan daily.**

It's important for you to set aside quality time to plan. Giving yourself some time to reflect on where you are and where you want to be can be one of the most important exercises that keeps you from spinning your wheels.

Some people like to take time to reflect and plan first thing in the morning. Others like to do it later in the evening, as an activity that concludes the day and prepares them for the next. Still others like to think and plan within a certain environment, such as sitting outside or while lying in bed.

Whatever time and place is best for you, do it every day. Five to ten minutes each day might save you hours of wasted activity that a little forethought and preparation could have solved.

**2. Schedule in your appointments and commitments.**

There's just no getting around some things in our lives, like dentist or doctor appointments, children's activities, work engagements, and a 50th wedding anniversary party for your spouse's parents. By the time you get all these things written on your calendar, you might wonder when you'll ever have time to fit anything else in.

One way to begin to manage a schedule that seems too full of unavoidable commitments is to exercise control over those that have some flexibility to them. For instance, avoid scheduling a doctor's appointment the week of the piano recital, hockey playoffs, and the company picnic.

*Notes*

Time planning gives you the advantage. By scheduling your time weeks or more out, you can be aware of where there's a bottleneck of commitments and avoid any further appointments and conflicts during that period.

**3. Schedule time for recreation and leisure.**

In a world full of corporate ladder-climbing executives and success-driven entrepreneurs, the workaholic has become a dangerous syndrome. Many people are putting in tremendous hours working in the pursuit of wealth or power, and are burning themselves out in the process.

We serve no one by burning the candle at both ends. We fail to be a whole, balanced person when we forego leisure activities for more working time. Truly successful people understand this. There are many examples in the media of the rich and famous who not only work hard, but play hard as well.

Schedule time for your self to pursue a hobby, play a sport, or participate in the arts. What you do isn't so important as long as it's something you enjoy. What is important is that you schedule time on a regular basis to step away from your work and step into that part of yourself that likes to play. It's actually this balance, and not compulsive working, that contributes to productivity and success.

**4. Say No.**

Don't over commit yourself. Although the natural instinct is to want to help, saying yes to everything means saying no to ourselves.

If someone's request interferes with your own ability to accomplish the things you need to accomplish, graciously decline and tell them why. Saying no doesn't have to be personal and the people that care about you will recognize your right to do so.

### *Notes*

Besides, there’s hardly a person out there who hasn’t at some point over committed themselves with other people’s requests while their own goals suffered in the process. Most people will understand. And for those that don’t, well, that’s their problem, not yours.

#### **5. Know your personal productivity curve.**

We all have times of the day when we’re highly productive, while at other times it’s almost like we couldn’t even solve a simple math problem.

Get to know the times of the day in which you are the most productive. Then schedule the most important activities into that time slot. If you work best early in the morning, then get the most mileage out of your day by getting right to work on key tasks upon arising.

If you hit your productivity peak in the late afternoon or early evening, use the time prior to that for tackling less critical or pressing work.

You’ll find tuning into your productivity curve is a powerful way to increase your effectiveness and to make the best use of your time every day.

#### **6. Make idle moments count.**

It would seem to be a contradiction that, if we’ve done our homework, followed the guidelines, and scheduled our time productively, we wouldn’t have any idle time to worry about.

Actually, reservoirs of idle time exist in the activities we are committed to, such as doctor and dental appointments, or children’s practices. There may be moments when you’re waiting for the doctor to see you, or during a sit-down lecture by the coach that you can use in your favor.

You might carry a note pad with you and jot down some new ideas or use the time to do a little extra planning.

*Notes*

Another opportunity for using idle time is while you're getting ready in the morning, or during a commute. These can be perfect times for reviewing and memorizing. Use a tape recorder, and record information you need to remember. Maybe you're taking a class and need to review class notes for an upcoming test. Or maybe you need to learn some important details about a new prospect or client.

One word of common sense: Don't ever let the tape recorder distract you from driving safely. It should take no more of your attention than if you were casually listening to the radio. If you become too engaged and your attention to the road suffers, simply shut off the recorder and resume later.

**7. Stay flexible.**

Nothing discourages a newcomer to time planning more than scheduling yourself too tightly and not keeping up.

In life, things always take longer than we think they will. It may be exciting to fill up the pages in your daytimer with all sorts of productive activities, but you must be realistic.

Rather than aggressively scheduling your time, try a moderate approach that gives you some breathing room. Estimate each activity as taking longer than you imagine.

You might want to use a multiplication factor as a standard that works for you. For example, estimate the amount of time it takes to complete a task and then multiply it by 25 percent.

Building extra time into your schedule is a smart approach to time management, and will save you headaches and discouragement down the road.

**8. Remember, you're only human.**

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## Use A Daily To-Do List!

One of the most effective things you can do to get control of your time, is to use a daily TO-DO list. If you haven't been using such a list before now, then once you start using one, you'll find you can increase your productivity by as much as 25%. Here's how it works...

At the end of each day, write down a list of tasks that you want to get done for the next day.

Since 20% of your activities usually produce about 80% of your results, prioritize the tasks in order of their importance.

Generally, most tasks or activities fall into one of these four categories:

1. Important and urgent
- 2. Important but not urgent**
3. Urgent but not important
- 4. Neither important nor urgent**

What's the difference between urgent and important?

Generally speaking, the urgent activities are seldom important, and the important activities are seldom urgent. Here are some examples of urgent vs. important:

**Urgent:** Preparing a quote or proposal

**Important:** Preparing a business plan

**Urgent:** Working an extra hour

**Important:** Sleeping an extra hour or spending it with your spouse

**Urgent:** Keeping appointments with your golf buddies

**Important:** Keeping appointments with your family

**Urgent:** Answering a ringing telephone

**Important:** Answering a friend's letter

*Notes*

**Urgent:** Getting things done  
**Important:** Enjoying them

**Urgent:** Making a living  
**Important:** Making a life

Of course, circumstances can alter whether a certain item would be considered urgent or important. For instance, working an extra hour may be urgent and spending time with your spouse only important one time.

But on another occasion, it might be the opposite. Spending time with your spouse who's in a crisis situation certainly would take priority over working another hour on a project that doesn't have to be done right away. You must use your judgment to differentiate between urgent and important.

The most pressing tasks on your list, of course, are those that are both urgent and important. They must be done right away, and their completion or non-completion can have a significant consequence on your future, either positive or negative.

**However, the tasks or activities that have the greatest impact on your future are usually the ones that are important but not urgent.**

For instance, preparing a business plan is extremely important. But it's usually not urgent. It may take you several months to create your business plan, and this is OK. As long as you work on your business plan regularly, it can pay you big dividends when it's completed.

To help you decide which activities you should do first, ask yourself these two questions...

*“What are my objectives? “*

*“Will doing this activity help me reach my objective?”*

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If you think about these questions carefully, and have a clear idea of what you want to achieve, you'll be able to decide what's important and what's urgent.

In short, setting priorities is quite easy. First, you decide what goal or goals you want to achieve. Then you determine what activities must be done to reach those goals. These activities are your top priorities. So make sure you do them before you do anything else.

While you're working on your top priorities, if you're tempted to do the easy, enjoyable, quick things first, ask yourself if what you're about to do will help you reach your goal. If the answer is no, then get right back to doing the activities that really count even though they may not be enjoyable.

Unfortunately, because a lot of people in business haven't taken the time to clearly define the goals they want to achieve, they usually end up doing the urgent but not important activities.

On the next page is a sample TO-DO list that you can use to record your daily activities. Once you've written down ten of the most important activities you want to accomplish, rank them below according to the priority you've issued them.

Now you can estimate approximately how much time you think it will take to finish each one. At this time don't be concerned with when you're going to do each task.

On an average day, and depending on the complexity of your tasks, you should be able to finish about six or seven items on your list. Just remember, as long as you're working on your top priorities all the time, you'll make good progress.

## Daily To Do List

Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity # 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity # 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity # 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity # 4: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity # 5: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity # 6: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity # 7: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity # 8: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity # 9: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity # 10: \_\_\_\_\_

Here are the estimated times it'll take me to do each one of my most important tasks, and when I'll do them.

Activity # 1: Time required: \_\_\_\_\_ When: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity # 2: Time required: \_\_\_\_\_ When: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity # 3: Time required: \_\_\_\_\_ When: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity # 4: Time required: \_\_\_\_\_ When: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity # 5: Time required: \_\_\_\_\_ When: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity # 6: Time required: \_\_\_\_\_ When: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity # 7: Time required: \_\_\_\_\_ When: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity # 8: Time required: \_\_\_\_\_ When: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity # 9: Time required: \_\_\_\_\_ When: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity # 10: Time required: \_\_\_\_\_ When: \_\_\_\_\_

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So, it really doesn't matter how many items you can get done in a day.

If the activities you didn't finish are still important to the achievement of your goals, then put them on the next day's list.

Sometimes you may have to work all day long to just finish the first item. And this is OK. Since it's the most important and your top priority, you've made progress toward the achievement of your goals - and that's what you're after.

Some people make the mistake of putting twenty or more items on their to-do list. Then, they begin by doing the easiest ones first. They feel that if they have several items crossed off their list, that it gives them the feeling of accomplishment and progress, and gets them into a "success mode."

Problem is, they're so busy all day doing activities that are unproductive, and that have little or no impact on the achievement of their goals, that they don't have time or the energy to even get started on the bigger, more important activities that can move them quickly and steadily towards their objective.

If you've made the same mistake, now you know better.

Now, after you've allocated the amount of time you think it will take to complete each task, you then decide when you're going to do them.

When you get into your office the next day, take the first item on your to-do list and go to work on it. Stay with it until you complete it. If you can't complete it because you're waiting for information or help from someone else, delay it for now, and be sure to get to it as soon as you have the needed information or help.

As you complete each item, cross it off. Throughout the day, discipline yourself to work only on the items on your list, and in the order they appear on your list unless there's an emergency you must attend to.

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**How To Get Maximum Results In Minimum Time**

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At the end of each day before going home, make a list for the next day. Transfer any items that were not completed to the new list, unless these items are no longer important.

Keep repeating this simple but powerful process, and in most cases, you'll be able to achieve your goals faster than you can possibly imagine.

There are two reasons for writing out your next day's TO-DO list at the end of the previous day. First, is so your subconscious mind can go to work on your plans and goals during the night.

Then, when you get up in the morning or while taking a shower, your mind may give you the answer to the problem or challenge that you've been working on.

The second reason, is so you can begin right in on the most important thing you have to do that day, without any wasted or delayed time. Your work is already planed out for you.

Now, let's discuss the second tip that can help you increase your productivity enormously...

## **Handle Every Piece Of Paper Only Once!**

Research has shown the average person spends around one month year re-reading, re-viewing, or re-examining the same information without taking any action.

They'll pick up a piece of paper, read it, and then put it back in the same place. Sometimes they'll even pick up the same piece of paper several times a day, and never take any action on it.

Now, here's a quick cure for that problem: If you're not ready or willing to take action on the information written on that piece of paper, then don't pick it up. Instead, put it aside until you're ready to act on it.

Sound simple? It is. And so are the next ideas I'll share with you for handling the papers on your desk.

The next time you pick up a piece of paper, do one of these five things with it...

### **1. Discard it.**

One of the best time management tools in your office is the wastebasket. The fastest way to save time from reading anything is to throw it away. Throw away any reading materials that are not relevant to the achievement of your goals.

Ask yourself, "If I *didn't* read this, would there be any negative consequences?" If the answer is no, then throw it away. Don't let your curiosity motivate you to read everything that comes in the mail, fax machine, or e-mail.

### **2. Delegate it.**

Ask yourself, "Is *there* anyone I can delegate or refer this to?" If you have a staff who can do about 75% as well as you can with the information, then delegate the task to him or her.



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It may take a little longer for them to get the job done, but even at that, you'll be freed up to do more productive work, and the extra income you'll generate will more than offset the additional costs.

*If possible, pass the task to your capable staff right at the beginning, rather than doing or hanging on to it for awhile before delegating it to him or her. Because you have a limited amount of time, you must focus your time on your top priorities at all times.*

### 3. Do it.

*If the task is something only you can do, then act on it right away, if possible. Get it done and out of the way. But be careful not to let the task get in the way of your priorities - the list you've created and prioritized.*

### 4. Delay it.

If the task is something that only you can do, but must be delayed until a later time, put it in your "Action" or "To Do" folder, get it on your priority list, and do it at your earliest convenience. By putting the paper - whether it's a proposal, agreement, or contract - into your Action folder, you've moved it one step closer to its final resolution.

### 5. File it.

Before filing anything away, keep in mind 75 to 80% of papers filed are never needed or referred to again. Deciding to file something away creates extra work for you or your staff.

So, before you decide to file it away, ask yourself this question, "*If I couldn't find this piece of paper or information ever again, would there be any negative consequences?*" If the answer is no, then throw it away instead.

By handling every piece of paper only once, you'll save an enormous amount of time. So I suggest you and your staff

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begin using this simple but effective time management technique right away.

Another major time waster is the interruptions you have throughout the day. And the most common of interruption of all, are people - people who want to distract what you're doing and direct your attention to something else.

How many times have you been asked, "Do you *have a minute?*" And how many times did this minute turn into 10, 20, 30 or more minutes?

If you're working in an office with several employees or coworkers, then you'll realize this situation takes place quite often.

While people are important, a lot of the questions or problems they call or walk through your door with simply aren't important. So, to cope with these interruptions, you must learn to separate people from the issues, and then deal with the issues.

It's fine to be gracious with people, but be dead serious about your time. Otherwise, interruptions may take up to 60% of your day.

Now, I understand it may be a normal part of your job to get interrupted. But you don't have to put up with random interruptions that could distract you from getting your work done. You do have some control over them.

Let me give you...

## **Eight Tips To Help You Manage Walk-in Visitors...**

### **1. Determine which visitors are regulars.**

Keep a log for a week or two, recording each person that comes to see you. Also record how much time they spend with you. Once you've got a clear picture of who's coming and for how long, you can begin planning to handle these visitors.

You may choose to ask some of them to call you ahead of time and set an appointment. Others may be brief enough in their time that you hardly remember they were there. You might want to give some visitors a warning when they walk in of how much time you have.

For example, you may say, "Hi, Joe. *I've got only about three minutes to talk to you, because I'm right in the middle of an important project.*"

Or, "Hi, Joe. *Listen, I'm right in the middle of an important project. Could we talk later this afternoon at 2 o'clock?*"

### **2. Close your door when you want to discourage all drop-ins.**

Many management courses talk about maintaining an "open-door policy" with employees. This is a statement in principle, however, not necessarily fact. Employees need to know their managers and supervisors are open and available to discuss their issues and needs. But this doesn't mean at any time of the day that the employee deems convenient.

## How To Get Maximum Results In Minimum Time

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### *Notes*

Respect is in order for both the employee's and supervisor's time. A request to meet should be made and a time to talk should be scheduled in a way that doesn't interfere with either person's work demands.

So, closing the door to minimize interruptions isn't an indication of inaccessibility. But it will do wonders at stopping the traffic from veering into your office. While most people don't think twice about wandering in through an open door; they'll stop and think twice before turning a knob to open one if they don't have something important to discuss.

If someone does knock at your door, go to the door yourself rather than inviting them to walk in. Step out into the hall and talk with them. This will help keep the conversation short. You can determine whether to invite your visitor to come in and sit down depending on how urgent or important the issue is.

### **3. Arrange your office equipment strategically.**

Arrange your desk so you're sitting with your back facing the door. Just as people are less likely to approach a closed door, they're also less likely to approach someone who has their back toward them and who seems busy with their work. People will tend to just walk by rather than step in and run the risk of startling someone who's working diligently.

### **4. Keep the amenities in your office to a bare minimum.**

The room or office in which most people like to gather in is the one with the softest chairs, candy dishes, and the coffeepot or teapot. Although it's nice to have a comfortable atmosphere in your office for both your pleasure and the comfort of those you do see, making the place too attractive for people will only crowd you right out.

**5. Greet unexpected drop-ins by standing up as they come in the door.**

Remain standing as you speak to them; come to the front of your desk if you can and keep them standing, too. This isn't an effort to be mean. It's simply a silent way of using body language to indicate you're busy and don't have time to sit and chat. Most people will get the message quite clearly and will get to business and then go.

For the ones who don't read body signals too well, be honest with them and tell them you're busy and don't have the time to talk right now. If they need more time, ask them to schedule a time with you so you can block it out on your schedule. If, while in your office the discussions seem to be dragging on, politely put them to an end by asking your visitor if you can resume later, when you have some free time.

**6. Meet others in their office.**

When you do this, you can choose to get up and walk away once your business is finished.

**7. Set up a time to accept visitors and get your secretary to set appointments, if you have one. Otherwise you set the appointments yourself.**

Depending on when your peak times are, you can set up an hour or two a day to see visitors. For example, if you work best in the morning, then set up a time to see visitors - whether your employees, managers, and so on - in the afternoon, say, from 3:00 to 4:00. And, if you do your most productive work in the afternoon, then set up a time to see visitors in the morning, say, from 9:30 to 10:30.

If you have a secretary or an office assistant who's quite familiar with your work, then he or she may be able to handle some of your visitors, saving you a lot of time while keeping your visitors happy. Often, what a lot of visitors need are just a few simple answers, which your secretary or assistant may be able to help them with.

*Notes*

**8. Use natural breaks in your day to schedule meetings.**

Lunch meetings are a way of life in corporate America. Coffee breaks can also work well.

These eight strategies for handling walk-in visitors have been very effective for countless people who have found themselves interrupted by well-meaning, but sometimes thoughtless, or even inconsiderate people.

Put as many of these strategies as you can, into action. And do it as soon as possible - you'll be amazed at the enormous amount of time you can save.

On the next page, you'll identify your time wasters...

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# Identifying Your Time Wasters

Many time wasters can negatively affect your productivity each day. Below is a list of fourteen of the most common ones. After you've identified your greatest time wasters, you can start dealing with them. Rank them in order from worst to least, and deal with the worst ones first.

<u>Time Waster</u>	<u>Ranking</u>
<b>1. Trying to do everything yourself.</b>	_____
2. Lack of clearly defined goals and objectives.	_____
<b>3. Telephone interruptions.</b>	_____
4. Drop-in visitors.	_____
<b>5. Managing emergencies, putting out fires.</b>	_____
6. Inability to say NO. (Trying to help everybody.)	_____
<b>7. Lack of self-discipline.</b>	_____
8. Personal disorganization, such as a cluttered desk.	_____
<b>9. Trying to do too much, setting unrealistic deadlines.</b>	_____
10. Procrastination, indecision.	_____
<b>11. Not finishing what you've started.</b>	_____
12. Poor communication skills, such as poor listening.	_____
<b>13. Meetings.</b>	_____
14. Too much socializing.	_____
<b>Other time wasters you can think of:</b>	
15. _____	_____
16. _____	_____
17. _____	_____
18. _____	_____

**Calculating How Much You Make Per Hour**

Earlier, you calculated how much you can earn per hour doing your five highest-payoff activities. Now, we'll figure out your average hourly income.

Let's say you make \$100,000 a year, working 5 days a week, 8 hours a day.

$100,000 / (250 \times 8) = \text{\$50 per hour}$  (250 is the approximate # of working days in a year).

As you can see, if you earn \$100,000 a year, then each working hour is worth \$50 to you. So, if you waste just an hour a day, then you're wasting \$12,500 a year! That's why it's so important to make sure you use each one of your working hours as productively as you possibly can.

In the table below, figure out how much money you made per hour last year. You can get the information from your tax return. If you operate your business as a "C" corporation, then add your income back to your corporation's income to get the total income for the year.

<b>My Gross Income For Last Year</b>	<b>No. of Hours Worked Last Year</b>	<b>My Hourly Rate</b>
\$		\$
<b>My Net Income For Last Year</b>	<b>No. of Hours Worked Last Year</b>	<b>My Hourly Rate</b>
\$		\$

Now that you know how much money you made per hour last year, unless there has been an unusual downturn in the market, or you've done some creative marketing, you can



*Notes*

reasonably assume that's the amount you're making per hour now.

But if you want to make even more money this year, then you've got to learn to use your time more productively and more efficiently than you're now doing.

As I just shared with you a few moments ago, a good way to begin uncovering bad time-wasting habits is to use a time log to record how you spend your time each day, for at least two weeks.

After you've identified your time-wasting habits, you'll be able to change them into more productive ones.

Whenever you find yourself falling back into your old unproductive habits, remind yourself how much money, \$25, \$100, \$200, \$500 or more, you'll lose for each hour you waste. And then visualize how much better your life would be if you had this extra money to spend any way you want.

On the next page, you'll discover...

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## **How To Use The Telephone Effectively!**

Because time spent on the telephone can add up very quickly, the telephone can be a deadly robber of your time. What seems like a few minutes of talk might actually be half an hour or more. And even when calls are brief, several of them throughout the day can eat up a big chunk of your time.

The good news for you is, when used properly, a telephone can be an excellent time management tool. You can use it to call someone immediately to get the information you need or to give information to that person without having to meet face-to-face.

A conversation over the telephone replaces the need to write a letter. And now with technology like teleconferencing or videoconferencing, a long distance meeting can take place right in your own office instead of you traveling half way across the country, saving you not only a lot of time, but also money.

Unfortunately, the tendency might be to let the telephone ring in on us too often during the day. So, to turn your telephone into a powerful time management tool, you must learn how to use it effectively. Let me give you...

### **Seven Tips To Help You Get The Most From Your Telephone...**

#### **1. Keep track of all your phone calls for one or two weeks.**

Note whom they're from, what the nature of the call is, and how long it took. Do the same for all the calls that you make, noting in your log that you originated them. After one or two weeks, evaluate the results to see which kind of calls were wasted calls. (You can use the daily telephone log found in this report to track your telephone calls.)

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## How To Get Maximum Results In Minimum Time

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### *Notes*

Ask yourself these questions...

*“Were some calls simply too long for what the topic was?”*

*“How many calls were personal?”*

*“Could some calls have been made by your secretary or office assistant?”*

Use your own questions and criteria to determine where the opportunities lie for cutting down on the number of calls and time spent on the telephone each day.

### **2. Set a time for taking and making phone calls.**

Once the people you have regular contact with get used to calling you or being called by you during a certain time of day, you’ll be able to reduce phone interruptions significantly.

### **3. Use an assistant to help you screen your calls.**

As with walk-in visitors, a secretary or assistant can supply callers with information they may need, or can take a message for a call back. This way, you can make the calls you need or want to make when the time is convenient for you to do so.

### **4. Challenge yourself to complete each call within three minutes.**

Look at your watch, a clock on the wall, or a three-minute sand hourglass sitting beside your phone, if you have one. When the phone rings, or when you make a call yourself, start timing. Try to get to the heart of what the conversation is about and wrap things up within three minutes, or as soon after that as possible.

While it’s not possible for you to complete every phone conversation in three minutes because some people you talk to may need more time to discuss all the important issues with you, you should be able to apply the

## How To Get Maximum Results In Minimum Time

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### Notes

three-minute technique to most of your calls - both incoming and outgoing.

#### 5. Prepare well before placing a call.

Before dialing the telephone number, make sure you know the main purpose of the call. Identify yourself right off, and then announce the reason for your call. This cuts down on the opportunity for time-wasting small talk and sets the tone for jumping right into the heart of the matter.

Plan your calls for times of the day when people are most likely to be in. Immediately following the phone log at the end of this list is a table showing the best times to call on various prospects, depending on their type of business or occupation.

For example: The best times to contact dentists are in the late afternoon or on their days off; bankers - before 9:30 a.m.; lawyers - before 9:00 a.m. and after 4:30 p.m.; teachers - after 3:00 p.m.; restaurant owners - between 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

I suggest you keep a log for a month of the people whom you called often, noting the times of the day you connect with them most successfully. You then can use this log to plan all your future outgoing calls.

By the way, in many cases, it's not good to open with, "*Hi, how are you doing?*" This greeting can lead to a lengthy discussion that doesn't relate to the purpose of the call.

Instead, say, "*Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ . May I speak with...*"

Or, "*Good afternoon, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I'd like to ask you a few questions that could help your firm make or save...*"

#### 6. Give the discussion your full attention during a phone conversation.

### *Notes*

Distractions like cleaning your desk, filling out a proposal, or doing paperwork while talking on the phone will distract you, causing you to miss important information. Or, you may end up having to ask the other party to repeat himself or herself simply because you weren't listening.

In either case, the conversation drags on longer than it needs to, and frankly, it is rude not to give someone your full attention while he or she is speaking. Also, it could annoy the other party so much that it may cause you to lose the sale or ruin the relationship.

If you do get interrupted by someone who needs your immediate attention, don't try to hold two conversations at the same time. Let the first person know you need to attend to something else immediately and ask him or her to either hold or allow you to call him or her back as soon as possible.

### **7. Use voice mail.**

Almost every office in the modern world now has some type of voice messaging system. A lot can be accomplished by leaving brief messages for each other without the need to engage in a conversation.

If an employee, for instance, needs some information from you before she can go ahead and finalize a policy with a new customer, you can save her a lot of time and hassle trying to reach you by leaving the information she needs on her voice mail. This way, her time can be used to close the sale, not finding you.

Those seven tips will enable you to use your telephone as a time management tool. Let's now discuss how you can use your phone as a powerful sales tool.

Like most business owners, managers, and entrepreneurs, the telephone is your lifeline to your clients, and it has a tremendous potential to generate goodwill and profits for you.

## How To Get Maximum Results In Minimum Time

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### *Notes*

Unfortunately, most of us have received little or no formal training on how to benefit the most from this powerful business tool.

If you're the typical business owner or manager, most likely, one of your top complaints about your employees may be their poor telephone skills.

Perhaps, like some businesses, you've lost a few clients because you or your staff didn't handle the clients' questions or requests properly over the telephone.

Believe it or not, many clients (and prospects) form an image of your business within a few seconds of speaking with someone from your business for the first time.

When calling or answering the phone, you want to convey a positive and professional image to the other party. And the following six tips will help you achieve this objective.

#### **1. Sit up straight and smile before you answer the phone.**

Sitting up straight allows you to project a good tone of voice. And smiling will let the caller know you're a pleasant person to talk with. Although you may not realize it, your smile is conveyed across the phone lines and picked up by the caller loud and clear.

If you haven't been smiling before you answer (or make) a call, I suggest you place a small mirror beside your telephone to remind you to do so before you pick up the phone. Also, remember to smile during the conversation when appropriate.

#### **2. Answer your phone by the end of the second ring.**

Always answer your phone on the second ring, if possible. Some management consultants suggest you should try to answer on the first ring. Well, although this may sound like the ideal time to do so, you often catch the caller off guard because most callers aren't fully prepared before they pick up the phone, and they're using this time to prepare their thoughts.

If you can't answer the phone on the second ring for whatever reason, then you should answer it by the end of the third ring. Because callers don't like to be kept waiting, answering your phone after the third ring will project a negative image about you and your organization.

**3. Answer your phone with an enthusiastic greeting.**

A good way to answer your phone is to thank the caller by saying something like...

*"Thank you for calling ABC Company, this is Lisa, how may I direct your call?" Or...*

*"Thank you for calling ABC Company. It's a great day here. This is Lisa, how may I direct your call." Or...*

*"Thank you for calling ABC Company. This is Lisa. How may I help you?" Or...*

*"Good morning (afternoon), thank you for calling ABC Company. This is Lisa. How may I direct your call?"*

Since most businesses answer their phones in a boring way, by answering your phone in an enthusiastic manner, you'll make a good impression on your clients and prospects.

When you're enthusiastic, the caller will catch your enthusiasm and become enthusiastic as well. And this will make them feel special, knowing you really appreciate their business.

By the way, avoid asking the caller, *"May I help you?"* This question is not professional. When a client calls, he or she assumes you (or someone else from your firm) can help him or her.

After you've found out the caller's name, use it from time to time during your conversation. Since people love to be remembered by name, it'll make them feel special.

## How To Get Maximum Results In Minimum Time

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### Notes

Always use the name the caller prefers to be called, not the name you want to call them. For example, “Hi Stacy, how are you doing this afternoon?” Or, if you’re not sure which name the caller would like to be called, then use their last name, such as “Hi Mrs. Johnson, how are you doing this afternoon?”

To end the conversation, always thank the caller, saying something like...

*“Stacey, once again, thank you for calling ABC Insurance. Goodbye!”* Or...

*“Stacey, once again, thank you for doing business with us. Have a fantastic day!”*

Always let the caller hang up before you do. This way, if he or she has something else to say, then you’ll be able to catch it, saving them the hassle of having to call back.

Please always keep in mind, no matter what your position is, when the telephone rings, it’s NOT an interruption of your work. It’s the reason for your work.

So, if you happen to be having a bad day, never let it show to the caller. Instead, before you pick up the phone, think of a pleasant situation, smile and then give the caller an enthusiastic greeting.

By the way, to check how well your employees are answering the telephone right now, call your agency and pretend to be a prospect. You may be surprised at what you hear or don’t hear.

#### 4. Place a caller on hold properly.

Sometimes you need to put a caller on hold, such as when you’re looking up information or answering a second line.

Before you put a caller on hold, always ask for permission, saying...



*Notes*

*“Charles, may I put you on hold so I can look up the information for you?” Or...*

*“Charles, would you mind holding for a few moments so I can find out who’s looking after your account?” Or...*

*“Mr. Anderson, it’s going to take me a few minutes to look up the information for you. Would you like to hold or would you prefer I call you back?” Or...*

If the caller prefers to be put on hold, make sure you check back with him or her every minute. And, if it’s going to take you longer than the time promised to look up the information, then ask the caller for permission to call him or her back.

**5. Transfer calls properly.**

Before you transfer the caller to someone else, such as a co-worker, tell the caller the reason of the transfer. You can say, *“Charles, I’m going to transfer you to Linda Thomas, she’s looking after your account.”*

Now, make sure you tell Linda that Charles is holding for her. And, if you know what Charles wanted, then let Linda know that as well. This way she won’t have to ask him to repeat his question or request.

After you’ve put Charles on hold, you must make sure he gets to talk to Linda in a timely fashion. Monitor his line and check back with him after 30 seconds and ask him if he still wants to hold or if he prefers Linda to call him back.

If you’re Linda, then make sure you answer your phone using Charles’ name, saying, *“Hi Charles, this is Linda. I understand you want to know if you have flood coverage on your home insurance policy, is that correct?”*

If a caller gets disconnected during the transfer, apologize and give the call special handling.

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**6. Take messages properly.**

For each message, record the first and last name of the caller, his or her company, if appropriate. Record the telephone number (including the area code if you sell nationally), the date and time of the call. And then write, briefly, what is the nature of the call. Read the message back to the caller to make sure the information is correct.

Finally, sign your name or initials so the person receiving the message will know whom to contact if he or she has any questions.

If you follow these 6 tips and the other 7 tips regularly, then you're sure to benefit more from your telephone. If you have employees, please share and discuss the information with them. This way, both you and they may be able to come up with even better ways to use the phone more effectively.

On the next page, you'll find the daily telephone log. Use it (and get your employees to use it) to track your telephone calls. And, if you follow the tips and suggestions I've just shared with you, you'll gain at least two extra hours each day. Use this time to work on your highest-payoff activities, and your business will reach higher levels of success than you ever thought possible.

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# Daily Phone Log

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time	Caller	Nature of Call	Length of Call	Comments

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## **How To Contact Your Clients And Prospects At The Best Times**

One of the greatest time wasters is playing telephone tag with your clients or prospects. So, to save you (and also your clients') time, you want to contact them during their most suitable time. When you do this, they'll react more favorably to you and be more receptive to your requests.

The table below shows the best time for you to contact your clients or prospects, based on their profession. Check to see whether you've been contacting your clients during the time suggested. If you haven't, then, starting today, do so and you'll be able to get hold of them more often.

<b>Profession</b>	<b>Best Time To Call</b>
Advertising & Media Executives	After 3:00 P.M.
Accountants	Before 11:00 A.M., between the 12th and 20th of each month
Architects	Between 3:00 and 5:00 P.M.

Chemists	Between 3:30 and 5:00 P.M.
Clergy	Weekday mornings
Collection Agents	After 3:00 P.M.
Contractors	Before 7:30 A.M. or after 3:30 P.M.
Dentists	After 4:00 P.M. or on days off
Department Store Personnel	Between 8:30 and 10:00 A.M.
Dieticians	Between 1:00 and 3:00 P.M.
Doctors	After 3:00 P.M. or on days off

# Action Guide

Record the ideas that had the biggest impact on you, and how you plan to implement them in your business. Remember, a new idea not used, is no better than no idea at all.

Impactful Idea: \_\_\_\_\_

How I plan to use it in my business: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When I plan to implement it: \_\_\_\_\_

Impactful Idea: \_\_\_\_\_

How I plan to use it in my business: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When I plan to implement it: \_\_\_\_\_

Impactful Idea: \_\_\_\_\_

How I plan to use it in my business: \_\_\_\_\_

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When I plan to implement it: \_\_\_\_\_

Impactful Idea: \_\_\_\_\_

How I plan to use it in my business: \_\_\_\_\_

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When I plan to implement it: \_\_\_\_\_

