



CLEAR YOUR WAY!

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What is Time Management Anyway?

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Time Management isn't mysterious even though a lot of people want to make you think it is. Very simply, it means, managing your time so you get done what you have to do, while ensuring you have enough time to do what you want to do.

To begin with, we must consider the Pareto Principal, otherwise known as the 80:20 Rule. The Pareto Principal argues that 80% of effort generates 20% of the results. The next logical step is that we can conclude that 80% of our results come from 20% of our effort. By knowing where to put our energy we can make smart choices about how to spend our time and how to get the most done.

The first step is to know what's important, to set goals! Quick – stop and jot down the most important BIG 3 things right now. Odds are you've just identified your three short term goals in sixty seconds or less. Goal setting, done in sixty seconds or sixty hours helps you to determine what is important in your life. This becomes your guide when determining how to use your time. Does the task help you achieve your goals? If not, why are you doing it?

Next is to set priorities. Everyone has an opinion about to-do lists. I'd rather call them priorities lists. I find that there are two huge benefits to these lists:

1. If it's on paper it's not on my mind. The simple act of placing the thought somewhere else frees my mind to concentrate on what I've determined is most important.
2. They help me see my priorities.

There are more versions of to-do lists than time management experts. But there is only one really important feature I insist on. List and segregate today's priorities from every thing else. Below you'll find one of my most favorite to-do list models. The categories are defined as follows:

- HOT – a task is hot if not doing it causes you to lose money, miss an opportunity, or be terribly embarrassed. An item is also HOT if you really want to do it. **THESE ARE YOUR PRIORITIES AND THIS SHOULD BE YOUR FOCUS FOR TODAY.**
- Sooner or Later – you decide - do you want to do it sooner or later? That’s where you write it.
- Big Ideas – these are long term items that you want to get to eventually. The purpose of writing them down is so you are free to concentrate on your HOTS.

<p>HOT</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 	<p>SOONER</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8.
<p>LATER</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 	<p>BIG IDEAS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8.

As you go, cross off what you accomplish. I recommend scheduling in time weekly to update your priorities list. If you find yourself working on your “sooner” or “later” before your HOTS are completed you may want to either reassess or question your motives.

Scheduling time to accomplish your priorities is the next step. Scheduling is a process that melds your priorities and the time available. Effective Scheduling:

- Helps to make the best use of your time.
- Shows how much you can realistically achieve with the time you have available.
- Ensures you plan enough time to do the things you have to do and the unexpected.
- Will reduce stress by helping you to not over-commit.

Each client is different, and scheduling depends on many variables such as the type of work they do, the frequency of interruptions, and how much stress they are under. One process I suggest follows:

- Look at the HOTS (and nothing else). You may want to copy the HOTS onto an 8½” x 11” pad for this process.
- Assign a projected time to complete to each item on the HOT list, then double it (this builds in time for interruptions)
- Determine how much time you have available today and where that time is.
- Put the task into the open slots.
- Re-assess the importance of how you are using your time if needed.

Try the process and see how it works. It may be uncomfortable at first to create structure like this in your life, but once you see the results I suspect you’ll do this again, and again, and again.

And one more thing. Did you know you can turn OFF your email! Log out of your internet server or Outlook. If you want to accomplish something today don’t allow your email to derail and side track. This is an entire other subject – but just for today try this: Turn Off your email. Do 3 HOTS – as a reward, check your email, and then, turn it off again. Do 3 more HOTS – as a reward, check your email, and then turn it off again! You get the idea.

Good luck!



Ellen Faye is founder and Principal of Ellen Faye Organization, a Professional Organizing, Coaching, and Consulting firm located in Southern New Jersey since 2001. She is a Certified Professional Organizer and has trained under Denslow Brown in the highly acclaimed Certified Coach Organizer Program. Her passion is helping clients identify their goals and find the balance and skills to reach them through organization.

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