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## 5 Times To Multitask Effectively

By Jim Estill

Time management is not only about how you organize your time, it's also about how you spend your time. Often, you can save time by doing more than one thing at once. Find out how you can optimize your time use, while still getting the job done right.

### 1. Phone Time

When you're on the phone, nobody can see you (except maybe through the windows of your office). Because you don't have to be making eye contact with somebody, you can do simple exercises. This is not a time to do anything that requires brainpower: you want to devote your entire attention to the phone conversation. However, you can do automatic activities. You might not even want to count your repetitions.

I have improved my health by doing minor exercises and stretching while I'm on a conference call, I can easily stretch or do light repetitive weights.

Another thing that I sometimes do on the phone is simple organizational tasks. If my desk is cluttered before a phone call, or if I have a drawer that is cluttered, I will use the phone call time to clear out that drawer. As long as you are doing simple tasks that don't detract from your conversation, using phone time can be key.

### 2. Car Time

What can you do while you're in the car? While I'm in the car, I listen to audiobooks. Even though I live fairly close to work, I find that in a ten minute drive each way I can get through a lot of audio material. I also have an Apple™ Ipod, so that I can listen to audio material while I'm flying. Frequently, there is time that I can cover audio material when I wouldn't be able to cover anything else, because I am doing something else concurrently.

While you're driving, it's important to drive safely. If you are going to talk on a cell phone while you drive, use a hands-free set. You can also use a Dictaphone while you drive: this is another great time

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saver that allows you to remember and organize your thoughts. While dictating, remember to use bullet points while you talk aloud: just because you are speaking it, doesn't mean it has to be a complete sentence.

### 3. Workout Time

While you're exercising, you can often read depending on what kind of exercise you are doing. You can listen to audio material while exercising. I find that listening to audiobooks while I exercise is a valuable tool because I am often distracted and so do not focus on how much longer I have in each run, or how many more sets I have to do.

Another way to optimize your workout time is to spend your exercise time with a friend, so you will be able to catch up while both maintaining a level of fitness. Having a workout friend will not only allow you to stay in touch easily, it will also motivate you to workout at a higher level.

### 4. Television Time

While you're watching TV, you can use your extra time to stretch or exercise. The perfect place for an exercycle or treadmill is in front of the TV. How fit would you be if you never watched TV without exercising. You can even read light material that you need to get through but might not require your complete attention.

You can also use your television time for doing chores around the house. If you need to husk corn or snap peas for dinner, you can do that easily in front of the TV. You can also dust one area of the house while watching a show. Other tasks, such as giftwrapping or filing can be done in front of the TV if you have your set up properly done.

### 5. Wait Times

It is best to always be prepared for wait times. Even if you only have two or three minutes to wait, why not spend that time reading a book or magazine? You'd be surprised at the number of tasks you can accomplish in three or four minute bursts.

The key to multitasking is to choose your times wisely. You want to get each task done well, and so you should avoid multitasking if it will lower the quality of your work. Find out what works best for you: experiment with your time use. You will eventually find a system that improves your time use, and gives you more time for the things you want to do.

Jim Estill is the CEO of SYNEX Canada. To find out how to order his audiobook and ebook on successful time management, *Time Leadership*, or for more information on time management, leadership, and goals, visit his CEO blog

<http://www.jimestill.com>

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## **What does it take to be an Interior Designer?**

**By Marjan Zemljic**

When trying to decide if Interior Design is right for you, it helps to know what that really means. Interior Design is not simply the profession that "makes rooms and places pretty"; it takes a little bit more than that. You need to know how to do some of the technical aspects of design also. Some of these technical things include:

**Designing and reading blueprints:** This is particularly for the projects that require a great change in the area's structure like wall removal etc. This is also required in order to make additional rooms, build gazebos, and adding extra rooms. You will need to draw up blueprints of the entire house or read the originals copies, so that you can do your job without causing much disturbance to the rest of the house or environment.

**Environmental Analysis:** Once you can read blueprints, you will have to analyze the information that is listed so that you can best decide where to go with your ideas. You need the ability to effectively create or remove space in a particular environment so that you can cause little or no disturbance the environment as a whole when making your changes.

**Environmental Lighting:** Many people forget that lighting is included in any space changing project. You must have knowledge of how lighting works, and have a general idea of what is needed to install light fixtures in areas that do not have them already. Many homes are not equipped with lighting fixtures in some rooms. Of course, if you wish to change the lighting fixtures from general lamps to say, track lighting, you may have a problem if you do not understand how to install it.

**Basic Plumbing & pipe structure:** If adding or changing spaces in kitchens and bathrooms, plumbing fixtures are often changed or re-organized. You will need to understand their basic functions in order to effectively plan a change that involves them, or is to be done around them.

Before you consider Interior Design as a profession, you should ask yourself these questions.

Creativity is a subtle, but important quality to have when considering interior design as a profession. Much of your advancement will depend on your ability to be original in your creative efforts to design any space. Clients will always want to keep a designer that can offer them something that nobody else has.

You will also need to be able to turn whatever items that they already have into works of art. Sometimes clients do not want to change everything, or buy new furnishings and draperies; they simply want to make whatever they do have look and feel different. Creative thinking is the only thing that is going to help here.

Colors are your friend, and creativity can help you in setting colors against one another. Many designers love to add color to a room and change things just using this method and perhaps adding accents to existing items.

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Accents in a room can vary. You can create a great space by adding throw pillows, valances, and vases. This is the perfect career choice for a person that likes to be creative, but not idle and/or isolated.

### Am I Organized?

Believe it or not, Interior Designers have to be extremely well organized to be able to handle all of the little details that go into doing a good job. You have to be able to keep track of your entire inventory, while keeping on top of other things also like, materials, tracking orders, employees, and making sure that you stay on or below the budget that your client set out for you.

It is no easy feat to try and keep track of all the things that have to be done; especially when you've got people constantly surrounding you. You must monitor what everyone is doing and still manage to keep up on what you should be doing. Do not forget that you also have to appear calm because your clients will likely be asking you a great deal of questions. If you are scattered and panicked, it will be difficult to answer all the questions and look cool at the same time.

The ability to know where everything is at, and where every person is at is another aspect of organization. It is very hard to keep jobs if you are constantly wondering where things, and employees are.

You will need to be very well organized if your design projects lead you to having to add or remove a room and/or wall. This type of work requires the use of blueprints. You must be able to read them as well as draw them up, you cannot do this without a great sense of organization.

### How Good am I at Problem Solving?

The ability to problem solve is a necessity for an Interior Designer. As an Interior Designer, you will encounter glitches, and it is a must that you can deal with them. Many times, these glitches will need to be solved on the spot.

Your organizational skills will come in handy when you need to solve a problem as well. An organized workplace will help you to have an organized mind. Thoughts have a way of being cluttered when your work space is likewise.

Being able to think quickly and under pressure is a definite asset to problem solving. Your problem is not going to get easier if it takes you too long to come up with a solution for it. Actually, waiting can just give the universe more time to make the problem get bigger.

### Can I Multitask?

Most jobs require a good ability to multitask. None of these jobs requires it as much as Interior Design does. The reason for this is because Interior Designers are often doing more than one thing at a time. You can be giving instructions to your contractors, working with your assistant on the fabrics, all while explaining it your client. This can cause a little bit of stress, but if you are good at multitasking, it is not so bad.

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If you are not particular good at multitasking, you need not worry. Some people have just never been put to the test as far as that's concerned. You may have had a relaxed job setting, or you may have

worked on an assembly line for a few years. Many jobs require you to do regular tasks. They can be quite monotonous. If this sounds like you, I will list a few tips on how to help you learn to multitask.

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What does it take to be an Interior Designer?

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