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Managing the Time You Haven't Got

By C. J. Hayden

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Do the words "time management" rub you the wrong way? For many busy professionals, the real problem seems to be that there isn't any time left to manage. You can sometimes get better at managing your time by prioritizing all your tasks and scheduling carefully. But when you're already using all the time you have efficiently and there's still not enough, there are four strategies you can try.

Make more time. The fastest way to make time can be to buy it. You may think you don't have enough money to pay for help, but think about what your time is worth. If your salary is equivalent to earning \$25 an hour, and you pay someone else \$12 an hour to run errands for you, that's a bargain. And what value would you set on being able to spend an extra hour having fun with your partner or kids?

You can buy time by paying to have your house cleaned, your car taken for servicing, or your laundry done. Pay a professional to prepare your taxes; have your groceries delivered; make routine purchases by phone or Internet.

Another way to make time is to double up on activities. Get a hands-free mike for your cell phone so you can return calls, place orders, or give instructions to staff while driving or walking. When traveling by public transit, bring along backlogged mail or documents to review. Use your waiting time at the prescription counter or dentist to balance your checkbook or plan your day. Having something to do will also make your wait more pleasant.

Make less time do. If this were a perfect world, we could do everything perfectly. Many of us try to do this anyway, and it eats up an enormous amount of time. A good example is writing business or personal letters. If it takes you two hours to write the perfect letter, you've lost an hour you could have used to write to someone else.

Try setting a time limit on routine tasks like this, and stick to it. You may find that you can write a very satisfactory letter in half the time. Embrace the idea of allowing what you do to be "good enough" instead of insisting it must be flawless.

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Give some things away. Is every responsibility something you need to look after personally, or could someone else handle it? If you have employees, look hard at what you're hanging on to. Is there anything else you could delegate, maybe by providing some training first? If there is no one you can delegate to on the job, be sure you ask your boss for help before assuming that it's impossible.

Examine your personal life and volunteer responsibilities in the same way. Ask your family to take on more household chores, or find someone else to help with the community event you're organizing. Asking for help isn't cheating; it's what all successful people do.

Do some things later. Does all of it really have to be done now? Maybe there's just too much on your plate for anyone to realistically handle. Choose only a few places to focus your energies right now, and put some of those other projects on hold. You don't have to give anything up, just defer it to a later

time.

If you find yourself often getting distracted by new ideas, start an idea file. When an exciting new thought occurs to you, put it in the file instead of acting on it right away. Look at your file from time to time for inspiration. Whenever you complete a project you've been working on, you can choose something new from the file.

The most important thing to learn about creating more time in your life is how to say no. Just because you are asked to take something on doesn't mean you have to accept it. Ultimately, your time belongs only to you; make sure you are the one who chooses how to use it.

C.J. Hayden is the author of *Get Hired Now!* and *Get Clients Now!* Since 1992, she has helped thousands of professionals make a better living doing what they love. C.J. is a Master Certified Coach who leads workshops internationally - in person, on the phone, and on the web. Find out more about C.J. and get a free copy of "How to Find a Job in 28 Days or Less" at <http://www.gethirednow.com>.

Developing your management style

By Anthony Harrison

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One thing a lot of us don't do in sales is take time out to analyse things.

How are we doing it?
Why are we doing it?
Can we do it better?

Taking time out to assess your management style is one of the most fundamental tasks a person can do. We are not just talking about managing others here either, it can also be

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how you manage yourself.

One thing we should all do (at least once a week) is take time out to analyse your performance and management style.

Ask yourself;

How effective are you as a manager today?

Have you identified specific areas where improvements in your management style can be achieved.

When you have been managed in the past there may well have been occasions when you were not managed effectively. This may have led to a drop in self confidence or reduced motivation to complete certain tasks.

In extreme cases this can lead to requests for a transfer or even resignation. The cost of managing with an ineffective style can be high from a personal as well as a company point of view.

So, the next time you organise your diary appointments, make sure there is a window in there which says

"Thinking time – what can I do better"

Anthony Harrison is a salesman. He is Head of Sales for the UK division of a US investment bank. He also lectures on sales development and management theory. To find out more visit him at <http://www.managing2success.com>.



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