

PERSONAL TIME MANAGEMENT

Marion E. Haynes



"Want to beat the 'time trap' now and forever? Follow the advice in this book—it's the best I've read on the subject."

Paul P. Mok, Ph.D.

President

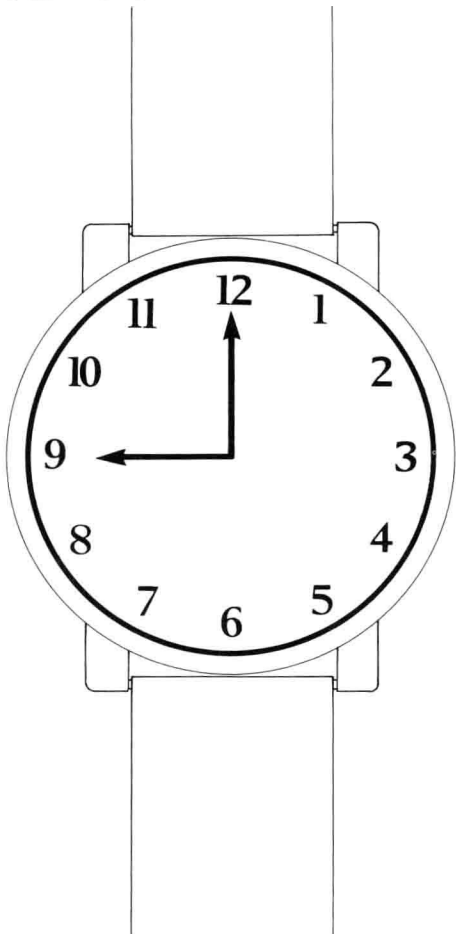
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TYRANNY OF THE URGENT

Have you ever wished for a thirty-hour day? Surely this extra time would relieve the tremendous pressure under which we live. Our lives leave a trail of unfinished tasks. Unanswered letters, unvisited friends, unwritten articles, and unread books haunt quiet moments when we stop to evaluate.

But would a thirty-hour day really solve the problem? Wouldn't we soon be just as frustrated as we are not with our twenty-four allotment? A mother's work is never finished, and neither is that of any manager, student, teacher, or anyone else we know.

When we stop to evaluate, we realize that our dilemma goes deeper than shortage of time; it is basically the problem of priorities. Hard work does not hurt us. We know what it is to go full speed for long hours, and the resulting weariness is matched by a sense of achievement. Not hard work, but doubt and misgiving produce anxiety as we review a month or year and become oppressed by the pile of unfinished tasks. Demands have driven us onto a reef of frustration. We confess, quite apart from our sins, "we have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done."

Several years ago an experienced manager said to me, "Your greatest danger is letting the urgent things crowd out the important." He didn't realize how hard his maxim hit. It often returns to haunt and rebuke me by raising the critical problem of priorities.

We live in constant tension between the urgent and the important. The problem is that the important task rarely must be done today, or even this week. The urgent task calls for instant action—endless demands, pressure every hour and day.

Even a home is no longer a castle; no longer a place away from urgent tasks because the telephone breaches the walls with imperious demands. The momentary appeal of new distractions seems irresistible and important, and they devour our energy. But in the light of time's perspective their deceptive prominence fades; and with a sense of loss we recall important tasks we have pushed aside. We realize we've become slaves to the "tyranny of the urgent."

Edited from: *Tyranny of the Urgent*, by Dr. Charles E. Hummell, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL., © 1967. Used by permission of the publisher.

PREFACE

This self-study book can help you become a better manager of time; however, it won't manage time for you. That is your responsibility. Effective time management is an experience in self-discipline, and you are the key to success. If you make use of the principles and techniques in this book, you will manage your time with less stress and accomplish more.

The objectives of this book are to:

- Help you determine how you presently use time.
- Make you aware of that portion of time over which you have control.
- Teach you how to make the most effective use of the time you control.
- Help you handle time not under your control in a more efficient way.
- Allow you to use time the way you choose (work, play or rest).

Those motivated to complete this book will gain from the experience. I hope you are one of them. Good luck.

Marion E. Haynes

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PART I

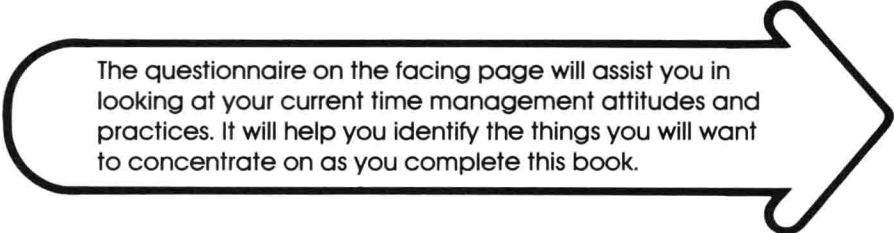
TIME MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

THE BASICS OF TIME MANAGEMENT

Time is a unique resource. Day to day, everyone has the same amount. It cannot be accumulated. You can't turn it on or off. It can't be replaced. It has to be spent at the rate of sixty seconds every minute.

Time management, like other management, benefits from analysis and planning. To understand and apply time management principles, you must know not only how you use time, but also what problems you encounter in using it wisely, and what causes them. From this base you can learn to improve your effectiveness and efficiency through better time management.

Time management is a personal process and must fit your style and circumstances. It takes a strong commitment to change old habits; however, this choice is available and yours for the taking. If you choose to apply the principles in this book, you will obtain the rewards that come from better time investment.



The questionnaire on the facing page will assist you in looking at your current time management attitudes and practices. It will help you identify the things you will want to concentrate on as you complete this book.

WE ALL GET 168 HOURS PER WEEK HOW DO YOU USE YOURS?

Place a check in the column that best describes how you feel or act. Then review your responses and focus on each item to see if it represents an opportunity to improve your management of time.

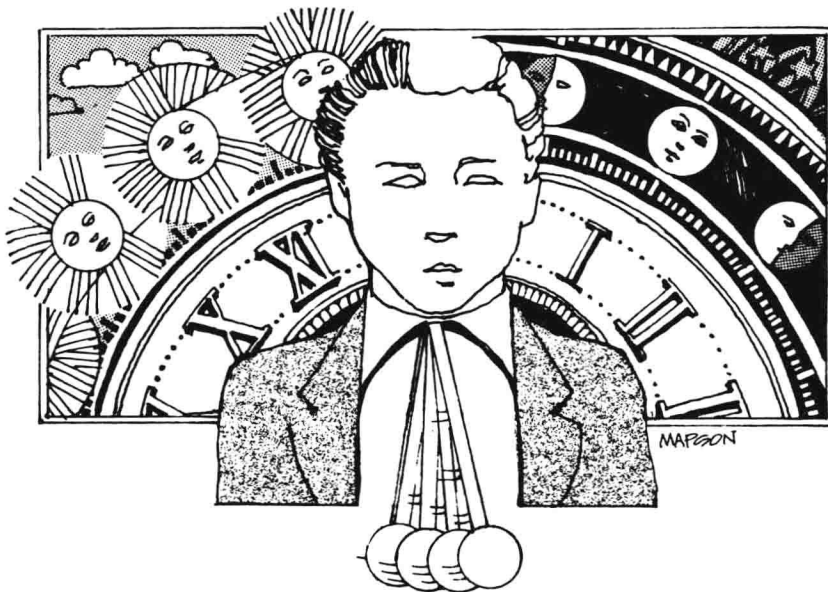
	<u>Usually</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Rarely</u>
1. Do you normally spend time the way you really want to?	_____	_____	_____
2. Do you often feel harried, and obligated to do things you really don't want to do?	_____	_____	_____
3. Do you feel a sense of accomplishment from your work?	_____	_____	_____
4. Do you work longer hours than your colleagues?	_____	_____	_____
5. Do you regularly take work home evenings or weekends?	_____	_____	_____
6. Do you feel stress because of too much work?	_____	_____	_____
7. Do you feel guilty about not doing a better job?	_____	_____	_____
8. Do you consider your job to be fun?	_____	_____	_____
9. Can you find blocks of uninterrupted time when you need to?	_____	_____	_____
10. Do you feel in control about the way you use your time?	_____	_____	_____
11. Do you maintain a regular exercise program?	_____	_____	_____
12. Do you take vacations or long weekends as often as you would like?	_____	_____	_____
13. Do you put off doing the difficult, boring, or unpleasant parts of your job?	_____	_____	_____
14. Do you feel you must always be busy doing something productive?	_____	_____	_____
15. Do you feel guilty when you occasionally goof off?	_____	_____	_____

Adapted from *Successful Time Management*, by Jack D. Ferner, pp. 6-7, New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons. © 1980. Used by permission of the publisher.

WHAT CONTROLS YOUR TIME?

The best starting place to improve your use of time is to determine the extent to which you control the time available to you. No one has total control over a daily schedule. Someone or something will always make demands. However, everyone has some control, and probably more than they realize.

Some time (“working hours” or “school hours”) is regulated and should be used for those activities. Even within this structured time, there are opportunities to select which tasks or activities to handle and what priority to assign to that task. It is the exercise of these discretionary choices that allow you to control your time.



CONTROL OF YOUR TIME

As an employee, your scheduled work hours should be used in pursuit of company objectives. In school, your time should be spent studying and learning. To this extent, the use of your time is often controlled by specific tasks or assignments. However, several degrees of freedom usually exist in any specific time period. Where are you? (Circle one of the numbers below.)

I Have 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0 I Have
Total Control No Control

Tasks or activities which allow personal control of my time.

Tasks or activities which limit my control of time.

THREE TESTS OF TIME

Although the examples described in this book are basically from the business world, similar principles apply to other aspects of your life.

Analyzing how you presently use time is the first step to achieving better control of it. You must have specific, reliable information before you can determine opportunities for improvement. The best way to gather information is to keep a time log. Instructions and forms for such a log are provided on page 55-57.

Once this information has been recorded, you should examine it from three points of view—necessity, appropriateness, and efficiency. This should allow you to discontinue certain tasks; delegate others; and/or find ways to increase efficiency through technology, new procedures, or personal work habits.

A careful analysis, can often earn you another eight to ten hours each week to spend on activities of your choice.

1. The Test of Necessity: First you should scrutinize each activity to be sure it is necessary—not just nice; but necessary. It is common to do things past their usefulness, (i.e., monthly reports where the information is no longer used). This “test of necessity” should help reduce your tasks to the essential elements.

2. The Test of Appropriateness: Once the essential tasks have been identified, the next step should determine who should perform them, (i.e., appropriateness in terms of department and/or skill level). There are probably activities that could be given to others. You may also find you are doing work beneath your skill level which can be easily reassigned.

3. The Test of Efficiency: The third analysis examines tasks that are remaining. Once satisfied you are doing necessary work you should, then ask: “Is there a better way?” This will encourage you to find a faster way using better technology or establish better procedures to handle recurring activities.

ANALYZE FOR EFFECTIVE TIME UTILIZATION

In your own words, and from your own situation, list opportunities for more effective use of your time using the three tests described on page 6.

The Test of Necessity: Following are my opportunities to eliminate some unnecessary tasks or activities:

The Test of Appropriateness: Following are opportunities to make better use of time by reassigning tasks or activities to others:

The Test of Efficiency: Following are opportunities to become more efficient by using technology or developing better procedures:

<p>There Are Only 3 Ways to Make Better Use of Your Time</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discontinue low priority tasks or activities. 2. Find someone else to take some of your work. 3. Be more efficient at what you do.

BENEFITS OF BETTER TIME UTILIZATION

When you are able to make better use of time, you can benefit from completion of longer term activities such as the following:

- Career Planning: Set a course for your future and lay out a plan to achieve it. Move to a proactive mode. Take charge of your own destiny.
- Reading: Staying current is increasingly important in today's complex world. More time will allow you to read job related materials; study new subjects; or learn more about a hobby or activity.
- Communicating: Extra time will allow you to improve and/or initiate interpersonal relationships.
- Relaxing: You need to plan time for relaxation. When you do not take time off from the daily grind your health may suffer, or you may "burn-out".
- Thinking: Improved methods and new opportunities come about as a result of innovation. More time will allow you to develop strategies and think through plans to establish and achieve significant new challenges. (Personal Performance Contracts, by Roger Fritz listed on page 71 is an excellent book on how to improve your job performance.)

CASE STUDY: SHEILA LEARNS THROUGH EXPERIENCE

Three months ago Sheila looked forward to her promotion to supervisor. After four years in the department, she was confident of her abilities, and knew her staff was capable and experienced.

Today, Sheila isn't so sure she was cut out to be a supervisor. There seems to be no end to her workday. During office hours her day is filled assigning work and reviewing results. Also, there is a steady flow of visitors, and the phone rings constantly. In the evening, when she would like to relax, she has to take care of administrative matters such as reading mail, answering letters, preparing budgets and completing performance appraisals.

In frustration, Sheila asked her friend, Carol, to join her for lunch. Sheila said she had something important to talk about. At lunch, she told Carol she was thinking about giving up her supervisor's job. She said she just couldn't face a career of working 60 hours a week. Carol listened and then said there might be another way. If the only issue was the time required to do the job, perhaps a review of how Sheila was using her time might help. After listening to Sheila describe a typical week, Carol asked the following questions:

- Since she described her staff as "capable and experienced" why was Sheila spending so much time assigning work and review results?
- Who were the drop-in visitors? Could some be screened out?
- Could the department secretary take phone calls and refer some to others or have non-urgent calls returned at a more convenient time?
- Could some of Sheila's work be done by someone else?

With those thoughts in mind, Sheila returned to her office with a commitment to take a closer look at her use of time.

Consider Sheila's situation and, answer the following questions:

1. Does she appear to be making effective use of delegation? _____

2. If her visitors are employees, how might she avoid interruptions? _____

3. Should Sheila consider establishing a "quiet time" when she would receive no calls or visitors? If so, when might be the best time of day? _____

4. Sheila feels she should assign all departmental work and review all results. Is there a more efficient way? _____

5. What other ways could Sheila gain more control over her use of time? _____

HOW WOULD YOU HANDLE THESE SITUATIONS?

Listed below are situations where an opportunity exists to improve the use of time. Read each example and then check the choice you feel is the best response.

1. As Jean reviews time cards each week, she spends two hours summarizing the hours of employees who have exceptions such as sick relief or vacation relief. She is aware that the payroll department gathers this same information and provides it to all department heads. What should she do?
 - a. Continue summarizing the information.
 - b. Stop summarizing the information.
 - c. Point out the duplication to her supervisor and request permission to stop doing the work.

2. John likes to interview job candidates. He is excellent at matching candidates with job openings. Now that John is manager, he still spends about five hours a week interviewing even though he has a staff to handle this work. As a result, he often takes work home. What should John do?
 - a. Stay with his present practice. He's the manager and has the right to do as he wishes.
 - b. Delegate some of the administrative work to one of his staff so he can keep interviewing.
 - c. Stop interviewing except when the workload exceeds his staff's capacity.

3. When Gloria assumed her present job she noticed the quality of expense summaries she received from accounting was inadequate. Expenses were incorrectly allocated and often two months passed before accounts were correct. In order to have timely, accurate information, Gloria now spends six hours a week keeping her own records. What should she do?
- a. Continue keeping her own records. It is the only way to know they will be done correctly.
 - b. Stop keeping her own records and use what the accounting department furnishes.
 - c. Meet with the accounting department to work out a way to get the information she needs.
4. George is an assistant in the personnel department. Several times each month employees ask George to work up an estimate of their retirement benefits. He does each estimate by hand. Each estimate takes 45 minutes. What should George do?
- a. Continue his present practice. It seems to work okay.
 - b. Refuse to prepare estimates except for employees planning to retire within one year.
 - c. Develop and produce a computer generated summary sheet which can be personalized.

The author feels the "c" choice is best in all situations.

PRIME TIME

When considering a daily schedule, it's a good idea to keep your energy cycle in mind. Some people are at their best early in the morning. Others peak in the afternoon. Whenever possible, try to plan your daily schedule to match your "prime time." You will not always have control but consider such ideas as reading, responding to mail or returning phone calls after lunch if your "prime time" is in the morning.

On the facing page is an exercise to help you visualize your energy cycle.

Typical Energy Cycle

