



Space and Time, L.L.C.®

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There are only 24 hours in a day.

"I don't have enough time." Sound familiar? The March, 2006 issue of Health Magazine states that 76% of women surveyed wish they had more time. But this is not a problem that is exclusive to women. It seems to be an issue that prevails with any age group and genre. If you work eight hours a day, you have only evenings and weekends to deal with your personal responsibilities. Schedules with too many commitments result in too little time for family and leisure. There are twenty four hours in a day and that cannot be changed. So time management was created as a way to assist people in figuring out how they can make better use of their time. What is time management? A NAPO article states that, "The productive use of time is a personal judgment. We manage ourselves. It is a process of determining how to accomplish your personal and professional goals by setting priorities during the day, month, and year." It is within your power, using basic time management skills and organizational skills, to avoid being constantly rushed and overbooked. So how do you begin to better organize your time?

Use a planner. Pick the one that works for you. The varieties are endless. They can be in book form with the day, week or month all on one page, or a computer software format, or a digital hand held device. Which ever one you choose, use it for both your personal and your professional life.

Create a "time map". Organizer Julie Morgenstern suggests using the planner for a time map, and fill out a schedule of your day beginning with the time you wake up to the time you go to bed. This map allows specific spaces in your schedule for the various core activities of your life. It is the foundation from which to work, forcing you to keep your life in balance. Look for the things that waste your time, such as looking for things or procrastination, and try to change them.

Try color coding your schedule. This gives you a "visual" on how your days play out between your personal and professional life. If work is blue and it is the only color showing on your planner, then you know that you need to make some immediate adjustments. It is not easy to find a balance, but the first step is to find out where changes need to be made.

Make adjustments to allow for "down time". You need to include renewal or "down time" into your schedule. This means that blocks of time are set aside for you, your family, and friends. There should also be time left open for new opportunities to learn and grow. This could be a pre-scheduled family day at least once a month, Making time

for relatives (even if it is just an e-mail), or adding something fun to your schedule to keep yourself energized and increase your ability to stay productive.

Create a “to do” list and set priorities. Include prescheduled activities, little tasks you have to get done, as well as major goals and projects. It is a very positive experience to be able to cross things off of a list. It is also a simple way to keep track of short and long term goals. Anything that did not get completed can be transferred to a new list and in the process its priority changes. Be realistic about the time that each task will take and designate that time appropriately. People forget that if you need to be somewhere at a certain time, then you need to allow the time that it takes to get there in your scheduling. Better to have a few extra minutes than to always be a few minutes behind. Some clients have set their clocks five minutes fast, others get up five minutes earlier, just to avoid always being late.

Re-evaluate your goals and objectives. Include both long term and short term goals in the evaluation, anything from wanting more time to exercise to finding time for a job search. Then you can define the steps necessary to reach your goals and assess your progress periodically.

These are just a few of the many time management skills that can be applied in an attempt to have more time. Learning practical time management skills over the many demands on your time is necessary in order to achieve long term and short term goals. However, if it is just a simple matter of being overextended, nothing works better than simplifying and eliminating some obligations and activities, or in other words, making choices. People who achieve success in their lives have almost always mastered the ability to set goals and plan, thus they have mastered time management techniques. Take time to consider what is truly important in your life, and find time for it.

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About the author:

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