



Space and Time, L.L.C.®

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From, Betsy Peterson, "Getting Organized"  
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### **Give me just a little more time!**

How we use our time is a personal judgment. How we manage our time is a matter of learning how to set realistic goals and priorities for ourselves. As Stephanie Winston explains, "How you use time often reflects long-ingrained habits. ...Many people lose time not so much to externals like interruptions, but to their own brand of self-sabotage, be it procrastination, perfectionism, or an inefficient work style. They get caught up in a pattern because they've always done it that way. The solution involves rethinking your use of time: retraining yourself, unlearning counterproductive habits, developing a personal work style that's comfortable and functional, and finding the simplest, most economical way of doing things."

According to a recent study, the average U.S. executive wastes six weeks annually searching for documents lost in clutter (Wall Street Journal). The average worker spends 3 hours per week sorting piles trying to find the project to work on next ("The Overload Syndrome"). The damage caused to your time management by any given interruption is always twice as long as the actual duration of the interruption itself ("Perfect Time Management"). If you make dozens of calls each day and save 5 minutes on each call, you have just redeemed a full hour to use on something else (Harold Taylor). 60% of Americans feel that they do not have enough time to get everything done (Franklin Covey). Another study reports that getting rid of excess clutter would eliminate 40% of housework in the average home (Nat'l. Soap & Detergent Assoc.). 65% of people described themselves as "very" or "insanely" busy (Vital Stats). A planned call takes 7 minutes, unplanned takes 12 minutes (SBA) Americans waste 9,000,000 hours per day searching for misplaced items (MyOrganizedLife.com).

People want to be better organized and find better use of their time, but they don't have the time and don't know how to start. It isn't the time we need to organize but the tasks that we fill it with. Julie Morgenstern compares a disorganized schedule to a disorganized closet. Both are; limited in space or hours, crammed with more than will comfortably fit, haphazardly arranged and inefficient in their use of organizing tools. If you are overwhelmed, don't know where to start and struggle with the fast pace you are in, the same techniques that you use to organize your closet can be applied to an out of control, cluttered schedule.

Begin by making small changes and be realistic about the tasks that you choose. You can't have complete control overnight, but in ten minutes you can unclutter a counter top, fold a basket of laundry or remove a lot of emails from your in box. There is no "right" way to time management. Your schedule must fit your style, your energy, and your goals. Whatever system helps you to function most effectively is the best one for you. Prioritize and plan your daily and your weekly schedules. Consolidate and categorize your tasks. The key is to start. Finding ways to have the time for the things that are important to you is an on going process. Keep your goals visible and when you want to add an activity to your full schedule make sure that it is a good fit, just like the clothes in your closet and the pants you want to buy...

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About the author

Betsy Peterson is a local professional organizer and owner of Space and Time, LLC. She is a member of the National Association of Professional Organizers (NAPO). In addition to assisting in clearing away the clutter and organizing areas of the home and office, she specializes in downsizing and staging (preparing a home for sale). Betsy can be reached for questions at 207-7295 or by e-mail at [bpeterson@space-and-time.com](mailto:bpeterson@space-and-time.com).