

TIME *management*



Take Time To Make Time

What would you do if you found yourself with an extra seven hours a week? How would this extra time make a difference to your business? Getting through each day with time to spare means improving your time-management skills.

Time-management is about organising yourself, your business and your daily tasks so that you actually get more out of your day in less time. To do this you need to develop a system.

Developing Your Personal Time-Management System

Step 1 - Divide your life into 6 or 7 areas.

If you sit back and really think about your life there are probably only 6 or 7 headings all your goals, activities and ambitions could be grouped under. For example, you might choose family, physical, financial, spiritual, mental

and social as your major headings. Whatever you decide, list your headings across a double page of a note book or one each on a separate page. (This list, after you've completed step two, will become your master-list, so you need to keep it somewhere where it's easy to access and update when necessary.)

Step 2 - List all your tasks and activities.

The secret to time management is organising your whole life, not just those activities that relate to your work or business. So your next step is to list all the tasks and activities you want to achieve under each of the headings on your master-list. Tackle one heading at a time and make your list exhaustive. Include all your regular activities and commitments like Omegatrend functions, exercise, and social activities. Then think about all your irregular activities such as painting the house, preparing your annual business

plan, or attending school P&C meetings. Don't worry if your lists end up being quite long, it just means that you've done this activity thoroughly.

Step 3 - Prioritise your activities.

Once you have listed all tasks imaginable to the running of your life, you've got to prioritise them. This means thinking about each task and deciding which is the most important. Ask yourself, "If I could only do one of these tasks, which one would I do?" When you have found the first priority include that one and ask the same question of the remainder of the list. Do it again and you will have identified your three highest priority tasks.

Step 4 - Creating a workable schedule.

Once you have prioritised your tasks you need to create a schedule by using either a diary or a simple timetable as shown. If you do decide to draw up your own timetable, the times you



choose to begin and end your day should depend on when you usually get up and go to bed. Then depending on what suits you best, divide each day into 30 or 60 minute blocks. (An example of a table is shown on page 28.)

You may like to use a diary instead of a timetable. All good business diaries not only divide your day into convenient time blocks, but they also feature convenient page layouts and other ideas that help keep you organised.

So irrespective of whether you choose to work with a diary, or draw up your own time table, write in all your day to day business and personal commitments. Then refer to your master task list (as you developed in step 2) and block out time for your priority tasks in each area. Keep in mind some of your longer term tasks may only be achievable by tackling them step-by-step over a period of time. For example, you may have set yourself a

goal of showing the plan 15 times a month. This cannot happen without having previously planned who you're going to show the plan to, when and where.

Step 5 - Update your Tasks & Schedule & Review your progress regularly:

The secret to time management is focus, therefore you need to regularly review your tasks to keep yourself on track. Many people find it helpful to review each day's activities, and set the next day's schedule, at the end of the day.

Reviewing your tasks means taking out your master task list, crossing off those tasks you have completed, and prioritising the next three most important tasks. It is at this time you can add new tasks to your master list. Although it may seem like you're creating a never ending list, the reward is an incredible sense of satisfaction and a life that flows along

more smoothly because you're actually accomplishing your major goals.

However, you're likely to find that your business and personal priorities continue to change over time. How frequently they change will depend upon how quickly your business is growing and the demands made on your personal life.

Quick-tips on time-management:

Combine the use of your diary (or timetable) together with these quick-tips and you'll be on your way to using your time effectively and efficiently.

- **High priority tasks.** When dealing with these, arrange for uninterrupted time to work on them.
- **Expect the unexpected.** Nothing will ever go exactly according to plan. So build in a buffer zone and allow extra time for mishaps beyond your control, such as discovering your co-driver has been navigating with the street directory upside down!