

## Get an Early Start!

Have you ever been **early** for work, and completed a major task before deadline? Felt great, didn't it! As a result, you probably went through the day with such a charge that your work output was enormous and you went home with a sense of real positive achievement. Why not make this feeling part of your regular life style?

Punctuality is a virtue that is a prerequisite to success.

## Develop & Defeat the Deadline!

Whenever you decide an activity is important enough to begin, develop a plan of attack to defeat the deadline you have determined for completion.

By establishing a specified time limit, you will greatly expedite completion of the activity. Be sure to allow yourself sufficient time to complete the task, yet not too much to allow procrastination.

For meetings, establishing a deadline for the meeting to end will prove beneficial. If meetings drag on indefinitely, implement deadlines. If you can't cover business quickly, then you are doing too much, spending excessive time discussing insignificant details, or someone is coming to the meetings unprepared. A good idea to help deflate the ever-present "wind-bag" is to establish a deadline for debate on a given topic, then **stick to your deadline!** Committees can also serve as a great time saver by expediting the decision making process.

# TIME MANAGEMENT-

## An Underestimated Skill

Just because we are scheduled to start work at a specific time, doesn't preclude the idea of getting a jump on our activities by being there early. The old saying about the early bird catching the worm has a great deal of merit, and when you balance the slight inconvenience (mostly a matter of attitude) of having to get out of bed a little earlier against the measurable increase in the quality and quantity of our output you will be startled at the benefits in that early start.

You are also in an environment relatively free of interruption and distraction: while you have had an easy run into work and are creating, your other work associates are no doubt snarled up in traffic or rushing around faring their time is going too fast.

What about meetings? Have you ever attended one that started on time? It is a powerful motivational tool to get into the habit of starting all meetings and projects on time, or even ahead of schedule.

## Avoid the Telephone Trap!

Although the telephone often serves as a tremendous time saver, frequently it yields just the opposite effect. This device can be regarded as a faithful servant or a downright pest, and your attitude towards your telephone will probably dictate how you treat it and how you use it.

Your telephone never rings, according to one of Murphy's laws, unless you are:

- waling out of the room with arms full of stuff
- on the way to an urgent call of nature
- reaching the end of a long, complex mental calculation
- hoping it won't ring at that moment

There are two elements to phone calls: those inward, and those outward. To start with, we cover the calls you make, and offer a vaccine in two doses which will help minimise the pain inflicted by the telephone:

- a) get organised before you make calls, and

possesses: consequently freeing more time for other endeavours.

Inward calls are the unpredictable, and as you cannot control when people call you, the examples of Mr. Murphy's law can be referred to again. The rule with these calls however, is to treat the caller as you would have them treat you. It is courting disaster for example, to indulge in social chatter when you're on a deadline. Be concise in what you say, and if you have to hunt for information cut the call and ring back when you have it.

One school of thought that is increasing in popularity, is to have messages taken from your inward callers and you can return the call when you have the information available, and when you are scheduled to make your group of calls.

But how do you handle a caller who just refuses to quit? This sort of person can be a real turn-off who wastes their time and yours. You could cut **yourself** off in mid-sentence and let them think the operator has

pulled the plug, but that's only a respite until they call back and then you'll really get an ear-pounding about telephone services. You can have an associate cut in on an extension and announce a toll call on the line, you can slowly screw up a piece of paper in front of the mouthpiece and shout back about a bad line, but the best way for a lasting effect is to be firm but polite and tell them your time is important to you and you have a conference/appointment/caller/meeting and you'll have to go. If the caller is important enough, they'll understand: if they don't understand they aren't too important.

*Quoted from*

**Manager in You**

*New Zealand JC Corporation*

NEXT ISSUE: MORE HINTS FOR TIME MANAGEMENT

## Eradicating Time Wasters

R. Alex Mackenzie author of "How to Make The Most of Your Time", in an interview for "US News and World Report listed these items as **"the 15 leading time wasters"**.

1. Telephone interruptions.
2. Visitors dropping in without appointments.
3. Meetings both scheduled and unscheduled.
4. Crisis situations for which no plans were possible.
5. Lack of objectives, priorities and deadlines.
6. Cluttered desk and personal disorganisation.
7. **Involvement in routine** and detail that **should be delegated** to others.
8. Attempting too much at once and **underestimating the time it takes to do it**.
9. Failure to set up clear lines of responsibility and authority.
10. Inadequate, inaccurate or delayed information from others.
11. Indecision and procrastination.
12. Lack of or unclear communication and instruction.
13. Inability to say "NO".
14. Lack of standards and progress reports that enable a leader to keep track of developments.
15. Fatigue.

- b) make all your calls within a given time period.

Getting organised before calling is not a difficult task – it simply involves planning. Outline the topics to be covered. Highlight key ideas. Have any necessary reference material within reach. Cover all the topics at the same time – why telephone someone four times a day? Begin your conversation by prefacing it with the fact that your time is important. The time you spend in preparing your calls will be repaid once you become actively engaged in phoning your associates. Making your calls in one or two sessions daily will appreciably save time by keeping you from having to change activities frequently. The mind functions best on one activity at a time. Thus, by grouping calls, you will be able to better use the talents your mind