



Time Management is really about Organizing Ourselves, not Time!

by Paul Mracek

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Are you one of the lucky ones, you know the ones that seem to be able to go through their day and be able to tick off all their daily tasks and be able to deal with any crises or interruption that comes their way? They are able to juggle everything all at the same time, whether it's at work, rest or play and always seem to have a smile for everybody. Surely they must be born with this ability otherwise everybody could do it, don't you think?

Why Do You Seem To Have Less Time Than Others?

We all know that these days the demand on our time is greater than it has ever been. In our rush to use new technology and be able to talk to our family, friends and colleagues, seemingly all at the same time, has made many people *"Time Poor"*. Most of us have to work at what is commonly know as time management skills, training ourselves to be organized , and prioritise to get things done.

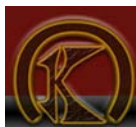
Are you always trying to multitask to get as many things done all at the same time? Do you find that you are always reacting to what is urgent and can never find the time to work on what is important, and everyone else seems to come first before you? Do you feel overwhelmed and constantly under pressure and anxious about all the things that need to be done?

If you are finding yourself nodding your head or saying yes, then the good news is that you are like most people. Have you ever stopped and wonder how you can manage time, it never stops long enough to give you a chance to grab it, so that you can get everything done. What we can do though is Organize Ourselves so that we can accomplish what we both *"Need and Want"* to do at any time and keep in control.

What Causes Bad Time Organization?

Time organization is a bit like Common Sense, in that: "Everybody knows about it, but it is rarely practiced". It's not something that is passed on through your DNA from your parents, it is a skill that can be taught and learnt..and of course needs "Practice, Practice and more Practice" to get good at.

There are two (2) basic behaviours that are at the root cause of bad time ogranziation, that is *"Procrastination"* and *"Over Committing"*.



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Procrastinators will always tell you what the reasons are for not being able to start, to continue or to finish what needs to be done. They are always being effected by someone or something that is stopping them from moving forward. They know that the deadline is looming closer and its important, but its not quite time yet to have to deal with it...just yet!

The problem with procrastination is that, sooner rather than later, the deadline catches up; work ends up being rushed to be completed, and nobody is happy with the outcome and the results.

Over Committers on the other hand always want more to do and keep on taking more work, well past their ability to do it. They are usually easy to recognize as they will be the ones who tend to complain, and some more than most about how much they have to do and that they don't have time to relax, or that they are not appreciated for what they do.

They need to be careful of not being adrenaline junkies who need to be on a high running around from one task to another and taking on more than one person can realistically handle. The challenge for them is that they can jeopardise the outcome and their personal performance and results by taking on things that they are not able to handle both from a time and capability perspective.

How Can You Get Yourself Organized?

So the question is of course, "How do you get yourself organized to be effective and get results?"

The key is to get some "Clarity" on important, urgent and wants!

Now most people like to tell you to write out lists of all the things you need to do; all this does is make you feel more depressed about all the things you are not doing, and taking time to do it! What is needed first is to clearly identify what is Important (5 items), Urgent (3 items), and Wants (2 items). By the way make sure the urgent things are not what other people think are urgent and then put undue pressure on you to meet their deadlines.

Now I know you are saying I have more than 10 things I have to do. I agree and you will find that no matter how many things your have to do you are only effective in working on a small number of things at one time..so don't multi-task..keep it simple! Otherwise you are going to feel overwhelmed again.



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The key here is the old *"80/20 Rule"*, i.e. 20% of the tasks are going to get you 80% of the outcome. Be clear about what is going to give you the biggest return for the smallest amount of effort. The mix or ratio of important (50%), urgent (30%) and wants (20%) is also key, as this will make sure that you are moving forward rather than stuck in fighting fires and feeling that you are not doing anything you like.

Planning – take each item and plan the steps

Now that you have clarity on the top items it is time to plan the steps needed to achieve the outcome that you want. From my experience this is the step few people actually do. The devil is in the details and don't underestimate this step, you need to be sure to have a logical step by step plan or sequence of actions. Make sure you write them down and check them several times to make sure it makes sense.

Focus – on the step that is in front of you

It's amazing the number of times I have seen people develop a plan and then start in the middle and wonder why they are not getting anywhere. Starting where you feel comfortable doesn't get results, that why you need a plan to identify what is the first step needed and keep focused on following each step one at a time.

Purpose – understand the purpose and delegate

Having clarity of what needs to be done and in what sequence provides the understanding and purpose of each step of the plan. This is what helps you see objectively whether you have the skills or experience necessary to complete the task. Don't fall into the trap of thinking that you need to do everything yourself..learn to delegate masterfully!

Make sure you understand what you need to do and do well and what others can do for you; you may be surprised by the response as most people are prepared to help if you just ask.

Priority – stick to the priorities

This is as simple as it sounds, stick to the priorities. Yes you can be guaranteed that day-to-day pressures will be vying for your attention, and you have to stay focused. Remember *"Don't Try, Just Do"* as you go through each step, its Action that gets results and sticking to it until it's completed.



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It's also critical at this stage to follow up and check that each step is on track to the expected outcome and fine tune your plan as you go.

Are You Ready To Take Control..Now!

Time management is really about Organizing Yourself, not time! You can be in control of your time by learning how to be organized, and have the clarity and focus to achieve what is important, urgent and get what you want!

With these simple steps you will get more done in less time, have less last minute surprises; and be less stressed and overwhelmed. You will have more time to focus on what is important at work or at home.

You will be one of the *lucky ones* that is smiling and knowing that you have time, to enjoy work, rest and play!

Resource Box:

Mr. Paul Mracek – The Business Sensei, has over 25 years experience working in Asia, Europe, USA and Australia establishing and building successful businesses. He is an author of several books on Success, Business, Balance and how to apply the “Warrior Mindset”.

Experienced as a Coach, Mentor, Trainer and Consultant supporting both Businesses & Individuals who are looking to be at the Next Level of Performance and Success...Personally or Professionally.

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