



Testimonials

"This briefing has shown me that I actually spend most of my time doing things that are not going to have the desired impact on my business!" - Office Supplies Co

"Fantastic briefing, I can see how putting this into practice will really benefit our business." - Electrical Contractor

"I am going on holiday for the first time in months! Its the first time in a long time I feel relaxed and confident enough to leave the office for a week and its all thanks to Pro-actions!" - MD - Windows and Doors Company

The great dividing line between success and failure can be expressed in five words: "I did not have time."
- Franklin Field



15 Time Management Tips

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Time management is really about managing yourself. It's about making a commitment to be more organised, maintain your focus and use your time to your best advantage. Here are some tips to help you use and manage your time proactively.

Primary Aim

The first step in managing your time effectively is to work out what's important to you and what you want out of life. Understanding your Primary Aim allows you to identify your goals, set clear priorities and make conscious plans for achieving what you want. Start with the end in mind, write it down and get into the detail.

Begin with the end in mind

We all have dreams that we would love to become a reality. Whether they concern our personal or professional life one thing is certain, they will remain dreams unless we take appropriate actions to move towards our desired outcomes. So the key to success is to have a set of well crafted goals which details what you want, what actions you need to take and identify how you will know you've achieved them. Use this frame of reference to make all your day-to-day decisions so that you are working toward your most meaningful life goals.

Using Plans to Achieve Goals

Planning is a crucial activity, for it designs the map that lays the groundwork for what needs to be done in order to achieve your goals. Plans require **SMART** goals. Plans provide the platform to be specific about what's got to be done, they contain the measurable milestones that make your goals achievable, they ensure that you define realistic activities to keep you moving toward your goal and that you set a timeframe for each of your goals.

"Living your life without a plan is like watching television with someone else holding the remote control" - Peter Turla

A good plan today is better than a perfect plan tomorrow....

Planning means setting the direction for where you want to go, so the key is to develop clear goals and establish the results you want to achieve. Setting the result and then working backwards to identify what you need to do to produce that result; should generate a focused, specific plan. By planning, you can be more objective and thoughtful about what you need to do to achieve your goals, ensuring that you do not miss out anything that could make a crucial difference.

"I have learned that written goals programme my subconscious mind like no other tool" - Richard Branson

Write your plan down

Once your plans are written down they become real, tangible and 'do-able'; good weekly written plans provide a framework of direction, ease stress and provide a method of tracking and measuring your progress towards your goals.



Plans should not get dusty

Revisiting and reviewing your life and business plans frequently will help you to understand if you are on track to achieve your goals. This is all about 'do and review'. There are two aspects to this: firstly, plans may change because of unexpected shifts, some events don't turn out as you expected, and secondly, the actions you take don't always work as you hope. Modify your plans to reflect your changing priorities, success and challenges, be prepared to fine-tune and adjust as you go along.

Communicate your plans

Tell someone else about your plans, so that you build up your own commitment and get support from others. Once you've made a 'public statement' you are more likely to take action to ensure that you execute the plans as the other person is more likely to hold you to account for your actions.

"The things that matter most must never be at the mercy of the things that matter least" - Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Plan weeks

When putting your weekly plan together ensure you give consideration to **all the aspects of your life**. Time management is not just about fitting in the work 'stuff', it's also about making sure the balance is right between your private, public and professional lives. Give consideration to all the roles you have and use your weekly plans to provide you with the forward focus to achieve your goals and fulfil your aspirations and potential.

Proactively manage days

Managing our time needs to become a ritual, it requires consistent, and deliberate focus, attention and action. It needs to be an ongoing process we follow **no matter what**, to keep us focused on our priorities throughout the day. Daily management of plans creates efficiency; so timeframe activities in the right order, not for the ease in which they can be done, but for the results that they will bring. Manage your day hour by hour; don't let the hours manage you.

Create a 'TO DO' list

If you don't know what you should be doing, how can you manage your time to do it? Any activity or conversation that's important to your success should have a time assigned to it. Create a 'to do' list, but ensure you keep your daily to do list small and manageable, five items or less. A massive to do list will only serve to overwhelm you. Put the most important tasks on the list and then set out to do them. Check off items as you go, keep track of your daily success. Checking things off your list will keep you motivated to finish the day. Review your to do list every day, days change and so should their tasks. What was important the day before may not be so important today.

First things first

The most important thing; is to keep the most important thing, the most important thing! Start each day with a time management session, prioritising the tasks for that day and setting your performance benchmark. If you have 20 tasks for a given day, how many of them do you truly need to accomplish? Use the "big rocks first" technique of scheduling your three most important tasks into your day and

letting everything else flow around them. Getting your day organised and knowing that you're focused on achieving the business goals you have set for yourself will energise you for the day ahead.

Prioritise ruthlessly

Prioritisation is the cornerstone of good time management. It ensures that the time available to you is being spent on the most essential activities. You have to step out of the torrent of unimportant minutiae, define your top priorities, work steadily on those, and eliminate everything else. When it comes to managing our time, it's crucial to put first things first; those things in our life that matter most.

Delegate, delegate, delegate...

Trying to do everything on your own is a common mistake. Delegation is a key skill, yet one of the commonest causes of time stress for a business leader is the inability to delegate well. Aim to delegate jobs that are routine, require no special skills, those that are time consuming or those jobs that someone is keen to take on. It's important to delegate so that the right things get done the right way, at the right time,

by the right people. Successful delegation will motivate your staff while giving you more time to concentrate on the most important aspects of your role as a business leader.

No person will make a great business who wants to do it all himself... - Andrew Carnegie

The art of saying 'no'

No is one of the shortest and simplest words in the English language, yet it causes stress for even the most confident of people. Doing "stuff" because things are urgent is a common mistake; focus on matters that are **important to you** and say no, without apologising, to matters that are important to other people. Learning to say 'no' may take practice and patience and a willingness to step out of your comfort zone, however you'll quickly see the improvement in your personal effectiveness

Time management tools

A good planner should be portable and be with you most of the time, to be referred to, to be adjusted when the human side of life throws a curve ball at you and to ensure that you are reminded of the details that you wish to action from your detailed thinking...elephants do have good memories but busy humans have much more going on in their lives and will forget! Find and use the simplest tools to get the job done. Fidgeting with ultra-cool applications or gadgets that you're not fully familiar with can actually eat up more time than they save you.

Seize the opportunity to improve results and grow your business now!

If you want to find out more about how effective time management can make a difference to you, your lifestyle, your business results and profitability; call 03333 440517 and book **your free, no obligation consultation** with a Business Improvement Specialist.

It may be your one chance to work **ON**, not **IN** your business

