

Career Management Digest

Time Management Tips

Ironically, time management is what many people struggle with every day. People have a multitude of commitments to work, family, extended family and their community groups. People also have lists; a list of "must dos" and a list of "want to dos". Maybe you're job-seeking and that brings a different twist on your time management priorities. One of the priorities that can easily get pushed to the bottom of the stack is being mindful and finding time for YOU. We hope this month's newsletter will offer you some strategies and tips to put into action.

TIME MANAGEMENT and ACCOUNTABILITY

How committed are you – REALLY – to your job search?

How long should it take you to complete your job search?

It's a great time to start taking action in your job search immediately, which will be in a targeted direction toward activities which will always be GOAL ACHIEVING rather than TENSION RELIEVING.

For the rest of your job search, establish a place to work where no one else will bother your hard work, time, discipline, effort, planning, materials – and eliminate as many distractions as possible. (No television, no games--nothing that breaks your concentration). Set aside the time and establish a routine; a location that allows you to do serious planning that will help you to be successful.

AVOID getting mad or depressed; instead, GET BUSY! Depression is often associated with "dead time." Here are some examples:

- The "dead time" between getting ready for job search and the first interview.
- The "dead time" between Interviews and the time you are told that you don't get the position.
- The "dead time" between applying online or in person for a job and waiting for the decision to get screened in for an interview.
- Other "dead times"- those situations you can think of right now. What are they?

DON'T GIVE IN - acknowledge setbacks and take steps to move on. GET BUSY!



Establish a routine: Everyone gets 168 hours in a week and 24 hours in a day. Everyone gets to choose how to use those hours. Remember to plan your work and work your plan.

What are some things that you can do every day to stay on task?

- Make lists.
- Set priorities and objectives each day.
- Record your efforts daily.
- Count up and quantify your results weekly.
- Set benchmarks or performance standards and expectations for yourself.
- Make commitments that are firm and irreversible.
- Return all calls within 24 hours.
- Get thank you letters into the mail the day after the interview.
- Dig up new information – something unique/something specific everyday.

- Recognize that timing is everything – act on all leads with URGENCY.
- Don't lie to yourself.
- Accept no excuses that will prevent you from reaching YOUR GOALS.

Time management strategies allow you to plan and work your priorities. You are permitted to shift and adjust workloads as appropriate and/or implement another set of time management strategies along the way as you see fit. That is only allowed if it makes you more accountable and more efficient at what you do.

** SOURCES for information and for further reading: "Ready Aim Hired: Survival Tactics For Job and Career Transition" By Fred E. Coon, LEA, JCTC

~ Ed Duda, Career Counselor, Workforce Development, Inc., Olmsted County

We must
use time
as a tool
not as a
crutch.

John F.
Kennedy



The Art of Saying No

There are moments in life when there is so much stuff to be done and completed that it seems nearly impossible.

There are only 24 hours in a day, how can I possibly get all of this done!

With so much to get done in the day, it is hard to believe that you have the time to focus on each individual thing, complete whatever needs to be completed, and do it in a manner that is satisfactory. There are deadlines, qualitative expectations, and numerous other projects to simultaneously work on. With so many suggestions, it is imperative that you find one that fits you best when developing time management systems in your day to day.

One such suggestion is : LEARN TO SAY NO.

"Information overload (on all levels) is exactly WHY you need an "ignore list". It has never been more important to be able to say "No".

— Mani S. Sivasubramanian, **How To Focus - Stop Procrastinating, Improve Your Concentration & Get Things Done - Easily!**

"The difference between successful people and really successful people is that really successful people say no to almost everything."

— Warren Buffett

"Focusing is about saying no."

-Steve Jobs

Simply by utilizing the word NO when another project/committee/whatever it may be is brought to your attention, you could be able to tailor your focus on what you want/need to get done and do it without juggling so much. Productivity will go up and your time management skills will be easier to get a handle on.

Resources:

<http://www.forbes.com/>

<http://www.goodreads.com/>

~Amy Lofquist, Career Counselor, Workforce Development, Inc., Steele County

Tips to Work Smarter

A recent article entitled "New Tools for Working Smarter" found in the October/November AARP magazine offered some tips on how to work smarter by looking at what they called "old school" practices and turning them into ways to work smarter. Here are a few ideas:

EMAIL: Is your email inbox full of marketing messages as well as work-related? Try a new tool called *Unroll.Me*. This puts all the retail/mass marketing emails into a single daily email.

READING LISTS: If you're like me, you get a large number of articles from LinkedIn, CareerBuilder, and other sources. I take a quick skim and think, "I want to read this later..." and mark it as "unread". The problem is, my Inbox is full of these kinds of things. Why not try *Instapaper* (both an app and a browser add-on) to help organize these articles into a folder to read later? Another recommended app was *Pocket*. I'm going to try one of these!

TO DO LISTS: Ah, the hand-written notes syndrome—which may be lost or buried! How about looking into *Wunderlist*, which you can sync to your phone, computer or tablet to store and track your various lists. Many also use the *Evernote* app. No more million Post-It notes!

DAY PLANNING: Since converting to Microsoft Outlook, scheduling meetings has been easier and fairly error-free. This article also mentions an app called *Calendly*, where the basic version is free.

Hopefully we can all work smarter and more efficiently as we embrace new tools and techniques!

~Valerie Kvale, Placement Specialist, Workforce Development, Inc., Freeborn County

First Things First

In a pickle with time management? Catch "The Empty Pickle Jar," by Johnny Pham on YouTube and see how a professor taught his students how to fit in the things that really matter each day. This fun and enlightening presentation is definitely worth the investment of 2:58 minutes.

Following a similar mindset, Stephen Covey, author of "First Things First" and "Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" encouraged readers to journey through life guided by a compass, rather than a clock. Covey directed individuals, families and companies to create a mission statement, so their decisions would be in harmony with that vision and they would stay headed in the right direction.

Covey was well known for these quotes and ideas:

- The key is not to prioritize what's on your schedule, but to schedule your priorities.
- The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing.
- Identify the highly important things in your life, develop a sense of mission, methods to prioritize to create a vision, then live, love, learn and leave a legacy.
- There is synergy in interdependence.

At the end of the day, as Mahatma Gandhi stated, "There is more to life than simply increasing its speed."

"The bad news is time flies. The good news is you're the pilot." – Michael Altshuler. I hope these ideas help the next time you are "in a pickle," perhaps feeling overwhelmed and wondering what in the world to do first.

~ Bonnie Vanecek – Customer Service Specialist, Workforce Development, Inc., Goodhue County

