

Time and Project Management

	<p>Goals: Good time and project management enables us to increase productivity and efficiency. It also strengthens morale by increasing everyone's sense of accomplishment. Every team, and even every person, has their own unique best answers for both good time and project management.</p>
	<p>Time Management is not about watching the clock. It is about prioritizing the most important things to do; and whenever possible, doing them in a focused manner. It requires a strategic mindset for thinking clearly and for the greatest long term good.</p>
	<p>It is crucial to be aware of two competing pressures: Doing what is Urgent vs. doing what is Important. It is easy to fall into the urgency trap of racing to get compelling things done, even if they're not important. We need to engage our Thinker to make sure we do important things as well (planning, relationship building, and even recharging ourselves).</p>
	<p>Using Brain Science, we can consciously decide which brain characters will be most helpful as we determine our priorities and do our work. We need to bring the Thinker forward in all Urgent activities to balance the F-Response energy of the Caveman. We need to bring the passion of the Caveman to the Important but Not Urgent green quadrant.</p>
	<p>Scheduling is rarely simple. Energy levels rise and fall during the day, based on our individual physiology and on how energizing we find certain activities. Important items from Quadrant 2 are best done every day. When we can, limiting email and interruptions to specific times of day can be very helpful.</p>
	<p>The Myth of Multitasking. It's easy to feel like we're more productive when we juggle tasks. In reality, we lose 20-40% of our potential efficiency when we try to do multiple things at the same time. Focus is powerful (as we have seen before). Giving our full attention to one thing at a time improves quality as well as speed of completion. It also lowers stress and improves our sense of accomplishment.</p>

	<p>S.M.A.R.T. Goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound. They give a group a clear, common focus. They reduce doubt and procrastination. They help you measure success, and increase motivation.</p>
	<p>Projects pass through several identifiable Stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoping - stakeholder identification, requirements, issues • Planning - task identification/assignment, milestones, budgets • Executing - tracking, issues, communicating, progress, etc. • Closing - Documenting, admin tasks, lessons, celebrating <p>There are many workable names and variations for these stages, and far more to project management than we are stating here. This list helps you make sure that you have the big stages in place.</p>
	<p>In-depth Scope and Planning Stages can result in a shorter and higher quality execution stage (less rework, far fewer change-orders). If speed-to-market is not critical, taking the time to “get it right the first time” inspires higher levels of employee and customer satisfaction. As the old saw goes, “measure twice, cut once”. Innovation is often the result of deep thinking and brainstorming about how to find a solution in a novel way.</p>

Works Cited

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Covey, Stephen R., A. Roger. Merrill, and Rebecca R. Merrill. *First Things First: To Live, to Love, to Learn, to Leave a Legacy*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994. Print.

Rubinstein, Joshua S., David E. Meyer, and Jeffrey E. Evans. "Executive Control of Cognitive Processes in Task Switching." *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance* 274.(4) (2001): 763-97. Print

5. What is one thing that you KNOW that if you consistently did it superbly well would have positive results in your life? What quadrant does it fall in?

6. What can you do to increase the amount of time you spend in the Important / Not Urgent quadrant ?

7. Of these four items: Prioritizing, Scheduling, Focus, and Delegation, which are you the best at doing?

Which would you most like to improve? What would that be the impact of that change?

8. What is the best time of day for you to plan? Why?

9. What will you do to reduce interruptions in your day?

10. Which of my goals would benefit by being made more SMART?

11. Notes about Scoping

12. Notes about Planning

13. Notes about Executing
Tracking

Communicating

Revising the plan

14. Notes about Closing

15. Notes about the project to identify Little's Best DNA

16. Notes about the project to help people understand the development and growth that you have accomplished in this Leadership University.

17. Notes about _____ project

Twenty Tips On Improving Your Time Management

By Phillip R. Graf

- 1. Don't hold the phone** in your hand, but use a phone holder for your shoulder. Welcome it when the party you are calling says, "Will you hold please?" With the phone resting on your shoulder, it frees both hands to work on the short projects you keep handy, review informational items, sign correspondence and purchase orders, etc.. Some of the best and quietest time you have is while you are "on hold" waiting for your party to answer. I've known managers to put themselves "on hold" even when there is no one on the phone! You can stay "on hold" all day!
- 2. Make appointments to call by phone.** Don't go back and forth trying to call and catch one another in the office. Make an appointment with the secretary to re-call at a specific time. As always, for appointments and meeting, be on time. Reinforce the concept and it will continue to work for you.
- 3. Make today's drop-in your last-** or at least take less time. First, you should stand up when they drop in. That cuts the visit in half. Next, walk around your desk toward the intruder. That will stop them. Then, get the edge on the conversation by saying something akin to "Hi, can I help you?" If they are still there, put them to work, ask them for advice on specific projects, or take the drastic Step #4, which is, "I'm sorry, but I can't talk with you right now.
- 4. Another thought on drop-ins.** Have no chairs in your office. Unless you have continuous meetings (necessary ones, of course) in your office, keep a few chairs close by and bring them in when needed.
- 5. Unless I heard from you by (date), I'll go ahead"** is a great way to end requests for approval or information I you have difficulty getting such responses on time from others. If they don't respond by the date indicated, you can go ahead, assuming you have the authority and know what to do in the first place.
- 6. Cluttered desks** can cause competing responses. Some managers seem to be able to work in offices that look like they were hit by gale force winds, while others should, but don't, keep their desks completely clear. Keep only the current project or tasks on which you are working on your desk. Put everything else behind you, beside you, or in something.
- 7. Your desk position.** Even if you have the ability to concentrate intensively, peripheral vision will take its toll. Can you move your desk, work table, or chair to cut down on the unavoidable peripheral movements your eye will catch.
- 8. Do your meetings start late?** Then start them on time. Plus, don't reinforce the late arriving manager by reviewing what was covered in the first part of the meeting. Cover the important things in the meeting (which you should do even if no one is late) and the late arrival will probably be embarrassed on once, at least without good reason.
- 9. Just one time-** that's it. Handle a piece of paper only once. Not a new idea, but worth repeating. Don't be a paper shuffler.
- 10. Whatchamacallit?** If you have one, or at least you know it's around, you'll be able to find it because it's in your "whatchamacallit" drawer. All the odds and ends (band aids, aspirin, ribbon, pliers, thumbtacks, etc.) go in one drawer, instead of spread throughout the office. The drawer may look like a bomb shelter that didn't work, but at least you'll know where the "whatchamacallit" is when you need it.
- 11. Not in prime time,** unless it's what you do best. If you do your best thinking, planning, writing, or problem-solving in the morning, schedule appointments and meetings in the afternoon (if you have a choice). If vice versa, so be it. Maximize your productivity during your prime time.
- 12. How about quiet time?** Some offices would be best having a day-to-day rule: "everyone stays put" for one-half hour (e.g., 8:00 to 8:30 a.m.) to get their plans for the day ready, rather than doing lower priority tasks. Reminder: Those who fail to plan, plan to fail.
- 13. Meetings.** Eliminate the coffee, water, ash trays, and even provide uncomfortable chairs. Or better yet, no chairs. If you need a one-half hour meeting, start at one-half hour before lunch or before quitting time (i.e., if the attendees are not on diets or are clock punchers.) Plus, a zillion other things. More on meetings some other time.
- 14. Give you systems the KISS test,** i.e., Keep It Simple, Stupid. Don't overdue a system at the expense of overlooking what you want it to do. Make it achieve your objective, and then leave it alone.
- 15. A letter for letter** may not always be necessary, especially on internal correspondence. With the high cost of letters try writing your answer across the bottom or in the margin, e.g., "the cost of widgets per gross is \$211, plus shipping of \$16, and they're available in four weeks." If you need a record of your response, a photocopy is cheaper than a typed response.
- 16. What's your recommendation?** If subordinates tell you that they reached a point in a project or problem at which they're uncertain as to what should be done next, ask them for their recommendation. Don't succumb to saying "I'll look it over and get back to you." Let them own the responsibility and authority you want them to have and grow with.
- 17. Hopping around can be fun,** but it can also be ineffective. Determine your priorities for the day, start with the most important task, finish it or go as far as you can, then go to priority number two. Don't confuse being busy with being effective.
- 18. Unfinished business is your business.** If something is important enough to start, it is important enough to finish.
- 19.** If you can't say "no", learn how.
- 20. You have as much time as I-** no more, no less. Invest it wisely.

Project Management for Everyone: A Manager's Guide to Supporting Participant Learning

A member of your staff recently attended *Project Management for Everyone*, a course that focuses on practical project management skills. Your support is essential for participants to make the learning stick and transfer the knowledge and tools to the workplace. Here's how you can support participants effectively:

- 1. Educate yourself regarding the fundamental concepts taught in the class.** A high-level overview of the concepts presented in *Project Management for Everyone* is provided on the following pages.
- 2. Meet 1:1 with your staff member *within 2 weeks* after the class.** Ask:
 - *What connections do you see between what you learned in class and your work?*
 - *Do you anticipate any challenges in applying the techniques you learned in class to your work?*
 - *If so, what can I do to help support your efforts to use these new skills?*
 - *What ideas, tools, or skills presented in class have you decided to implement? What is your action plan for implementing them?* (Participants should have completed an Action Plan in class.)
- 3. Schedule regular one-on-one discussions to ensure that progress is being made towards applying new skills.** Address any barriers towards applying new skills. Manager support ideas:
 - Review project documents with the Project Manager, such as the Scope Statement, Work Breakdown Structure, and Communication Plan.
 - Discuss the Project Manager's priorities for the week. Be certain to include project tasks that will move the project ahead week by week.
 - Discuss what worked and what didn't for projects. Create a realistic action plan for the next project.
- 4. Continue to look for opportunities and assign tasks to your staff member that call for:**
 - **Initiating projects:** Writing project scope statements, descriptions, and requirements; asking stakeholders about their expectations for the project.
 - **Planning projects:** Mapping out key tasks for projects; creating simple, informal project plans; identifying potential risks.
 - **Executing projects:** Creating issue logs; planning and running meetings; delegating tasks and following up to completion.
 - **Closing projects:** Completing tasks; documenting lessons learned.

A Short Guide to Key Course Concepts & Tools

Phases of Project Management

The four phases of project management include:

1. **Initiate:** During the Initiate phase, stakeholders are identified and project scope statements are prepared. The stakeholders are asked to review the scope statement to ensure they are in agreement with the project objectives as defined in the scope statement. In the scope statement, requirements, objectives, constraints, and issues are identified.
2. **Plan:** During the Plan phase, critical project tasks are identified and assigned. Tasks are sequenced and milestones are estimated. Budgets and resources are approved, if applicable. Potential risks are identified.
3. **Execute & Control:** During the Execute & Control phase, informal (or formal) project plans are followed and progress is tracked. Issues are logged and addressed. Regular communication takes place between project team members, the project sponsor, and project stakeholders.
4. **Close:** During the Close phase, administrative tasks are completed, project plans are updated, and lessons learned are documented. Acknowledgement/celebration takes place to formally end the project.

Project Management Templates

Several useful templates have been provided to course participants, including:

- Change Request Template
- Delegation Scope Statement Template
- Gantt Template
- Meeting Planner Template
- Project Closure Checklist
- Project Communication Plan Template 1
- Project Communication Plan Template 2
- Project Documentation Checklist
- Project Process Lessons Learned Checklist
- Project Scope Statement Template
- Risk Log Template
- Stakeholder Analysis Template

These templates can be downloaded at:

<http://www.butrain.com/MDP254Templates/MDP254Templates.zip>

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	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Crises > Pressing problems > Firefighting > Major scrap and rework > Deadline-driven projects 	II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Prevention > Production capability activities > Relationship building > Recognizing new opportunities > Planning > Re-creation
Not Important	III <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Interruptions > Some calls > Some mail > Some reports > Some meetings > Proximate pressing matters > Popular activities > Some scrap & rework 	IV <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Trivia > Busywork > Some mail > Some phone calls > Time-wasters > Pleasant activities

Time Matrix

The Challenge of Time Management - In order to get a clearer understanding of one's time, it is helpful to look at Stephen Covey's Time Matrix, which he made famous in his book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. All the events that make up our lives fall into one of four quadrants:

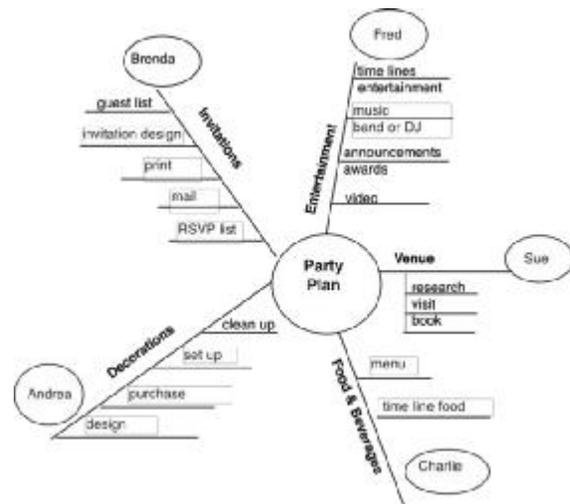
- **Quadrant I:** QI examples include project crisis, working on something just before it is due, and putting out fires at work.
- **Quadrant III:** Much of our workday is filled with QIIIs, such as unproductive meetings, many e-mails, unimportant phone calls, and minor interruptions.
- **Quadrant IV:** QIV is the quadrant of waste and excess. It includes situations such as excessive complaining, excessive socializing at work, procrastination, and busy work.
- **Quadrant II:** Being proactive by taking care of situations in a timely manner is acting in QII. This is the quadrant of leadership. It includes situations such as planning, prioritizing, and preparation.

Project management techniques and processes are QII activities. Many people spend a great deal of time in QI and QIII going from fire to fire with very little time for planning and proactive work in QII. One of the best ways a manager can provide support is to assist in prioritizing so their people can spend time on the appropriate tasks.

Mind Mapping and Project Management - Mind mapping is a brainstorming tool developed by Tony Buzan. Mapping can be used in project management for identifying stakeholders, scoping, planning, risk analysis, and weekly planning. Many participants find mapping to be one of the most valuable techniques they learn in class. It is fast, easy, and can be done by hand or electronically.

Many project managers find it difficult to accurately estimate time frames. Mapping gives them a quick and easy way to look at the details of a project and get an accurate sense of time.

An example of mind mapping for a project to plan a party is shown. The larger lines are sub-pieces of the project, which are then broken into smaller tasks that need to be accomplished for each sub-piece.



Mind Mapping: Plan a Party