

## **Time Management Basics - Workbook**



### **Objectives:**

- a. Analyze how you spend your time**
- b. Recognize and defeat common time wasters**
- c. Set up and monitor your schedule**

For many managers, their schedule feels like their enemy. They run from meeting to meeting. Emergencies consume their attention, and interruptions fragment the blocks of time they've set aside to accomplish their goals and key tasks. They multitask during conference calls so they can answer e-mails piling up in their inboxes. Stress levels rise as the hours pass and they realize the day's task list is not shrinking in fact, it's growing. And tomorrow's task list will be like today's: full of critical tasks that they never quite get to.

If this sounds familiar, there is a solution. You can take control of your schedule. You can find the time every day to complete the critical tasks that have been moving from one day to the next unaccomplished.

You may wonder, is that possible? Trying to manage your schedule may seem like pushing a large boulder up a mountain, no matter how hard you work, you never reach the top. The answer is to work smarter, not harder.

## Analyze how you spend your time

Gaining control over your schedule is much easier if you understand how you currently use your time. Realize that your schedule is a budget for time. There is however a significant difference between budgeting your money compared to budgeting your time. Your potential to earn increases with time and experience. However, there will never be more than 1,440 minutes in a day. So, budgeting time becomes critical to accomplishing your objectives. When you set up a financial budget, you start by analyzing how you are spending your money.

You need to complete the same analysis with your time:

1. Pick three to five typical days - Capture everything you do on those days in an activity log. If you have a meeting for two hours, include that in your log, but also include the ten minutes you spend in the hallway afterward talking with a friend about weekend plans, sports or other interests.
2. Then label each activity in your log with its priority –
  - Activities that support your critical goals are “**Priority A.**”
  - Assign “**Priority B**” to activities that have medium value but a high degree of urgency.
  - Then use “**Priority C**” for the rest.

When you are done, look for patterns in how you use time. Ask questions like:

- What activities are consuming most of my time?
- Do I spend most of my day on priority A, B, or C activities?”

This exercise will help you determine what your top payoff activities are and how much of your time you dedicate to accomplishing those related tasks. Understanding this first principle will enable you to reprioritize your time to accomplish those tasks that put you and keep you on the payroll.

Use the attached worksheet to help with this exercise:

### Daily Activity Log Chart

Complete the activity log below to record your daily activities. Use the first three columns to record the time you started the activity, the name of the activity, and the actual time required to complete the activity. For each activity, check off the corresponding category. Fill out a log every day for one week during a typical week (for example, a week in which you're not traveling or attending a three-day workshop).

Date:

Time	Activity	Time Used (minutes)	Category				
			E-Mail	Meetings	Telephone Calls	Planning	Other (travel, paperwork)

## Recognize and defeat common time wasters

There is a critical concept to understand in order to be an effective time manager. It is the fact that you have only a limited number of hours in any given day. Because this is true, after analyzing how you spend your time you must immediately end or minimize non-essential activities to produce opportunity for greater time benefit. In other words you will only have time for more important tasks when you reduce or stop spending time on less important tasks.

Examples of time wasters:

- Procrastination – Make it a habit to tackle the hardest activities on your prioritized list of goals and activities.
- Extended un-necessary conversations – Social interaction is very important to the atmosphere within any team environment. However, you must be aware of when and how to get back to your top payoff activities as soon as you can do so. This principle will impact your productivity and promote-ability
- Tasks that do not contribute to your goals or the team's goals – It can be tempting to get a task done simply for the feeling of accomplishment. This can become a dangerous practice if not understood. Trivial tasks are normally easier to accomplish, but are not always key factors to success
- Extended break periods – Taking time to rest is necessary and important. But making sure we are back to work in a timely manner assures maximized productivity for you and your team
- Unnecessary or unproductive meetings – Be a part of making sure that meetings are accomplishing their purpose by giving constructive feedback with suggestions to improve how information is communicated
- Checking e-mail too often – Like any other task e-mail should be scheduled and then processed quickly without lingering at the computer

Use the attached worksheet to help identify time wasters:

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### *Worksheet for Identifying and Evaluating Time-Wasters*

Use the following worksheet to identify your time-wasters, possible causes, and possible solutions. After you have tried your solution, assess how well it worked.

Time-Waster	Cause	Solution	How Well Your Solution Worked		
			Not Effective	Effective	Very Effective

# **KELLY PAPER**

## **Set up and monitor your schedule**

Start every day by planning, where you need to be and what you need to do. Kelly Paper has provided you with a Microsoft Outlook® account to assist you with the task of planning and organizing your schedule. You may also have a Franklin Planner to use in your efforts to accomplish the same activity. Whichever planning tools you use, become skillful at that tool or method.

The essential time management tools:

Calendar – Appointment and event management. Record all meetings, Web or teleconferences.

- Your calendar is where you record places you need to be
- Your physical presence is the key to what goes on your calendar
- Record team appointments here as well to stay in sync with team scheduling needs

Prioritized Task List – Use the A, B, C method to determine priorities.

- Your tasks are things that you must do
- Create a master task of all the activities that you want to or need to accomplish
- Break your master task list into weekly task lists

Use the attached worksheet to record your prioritized tasks.

Taking control of your schedule can seem like an impossible task. But if you analyze how you spend your time, recognize and defeat common time wasters, and set up and monitor your schedule, you may be surprised with the results. The trick is to work smarter, not harder.

## Harvard ManageMentor — TIME MANAGEMENT TOOLS

### *To-Do List*

Use the following form to track everyday tasks you need to accomplish. Cross off tasks once they have been completed.

Date	A, B, C	Task	Time Required (hours)	Completion Date
12/2		Follow up on city quote	2.5	12/5

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## Time Management Basics – Quiz

Based on the material circle the correct answer:

1. Your schedule is a budget for time:
  - a. True
  - b. False
2. Which is not one of the basics of time management:
  - a. Analyze how you spend your time
  - b. Recognize and defeat common time wasters
  - c. Set up and monitor your schedule
  - d. Buy a Blackberry or Palm Pilot
3. You will only have time for more important tasks when you reduce or stop spending time on less important tasks:
  - a. True
  - b. False
4. Which are the **essential** time management tools:

✓ Select all that apply

  - a. Cell Phone
  - b. Calendar
  - c. Prioritized Task List