

Managing Your Time More Efficiently

Do You Manage Time Wisely or is Time Always Against You?

Good time management is critical to the effectiveness of a Main Street manager. Information provided here comes from an N.C. Main Street managers' meeting presentation and is a compilation of tips from experienced Main Street managers and several books on the topic of time management.

Recognize Time Drainers

- Phone calls
- Emails
- Drop-in visitors, Internet, Facebook, etc.
- Technology (not knowing how to use it and not using it to your advantage)

Recurring Themes

Research conducted on the topic of time management identified three recurring themes related to becoming more efficient.

- **Focus:** Be sure to focus on the task(s) that relate back to your mission, vision and goals.
- **Purpose:** Identify your purpose or goals each day; this will bring you closer to achieving your vision.
- **Practice:** Put into practice the time management system you create (10 years or 10,000 hours shall make you an expert on time management if you practice putting your system into play!)

Saying "No" and "Yes"

You are allowed to say both "no" and "yes" to projects.

- Say "no" to those items that aren't moving you closer to your purpose.
- Say "yes" to your priorities.
- Tune out distractions.
- Make "lean" or value-added decisions about your time.

Resistor or Conductor – Which Are You?

A conductor is a good leader of electricity and a resistor is damping the electricity. Consider a human analogy:

- A conductor is one who lets the power flow through, thereby empowering others.
- Conducting allows dispersion of energy, allowing for attention to be paid to higher priorities
- Resistors can accomplish, but do they save time (and energy), if you are doing all the tasks rather than conducting and dispersing?
- SWOT (assess strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) yourself and your board and committee members to aid in being a better conductor.

What's Keeping You From Your Most Important Priorities?

- Procrastination: figure out your strategy for getting started.
- Decisions: consider the 10-10-10 rule when making decisions. How will this decision affect me within the next 10 minutes, the next 10 months, the next 10 years?
- Technology: learn it and use it to your advantage.
- Distractions: figure out your strategy for keeping distractions at bay.

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Budgeting Your Time

Create a time management system and use it.

1. To do lists
 - Consider making “To Do” lists for your day, week, month.
 - Develop a Main Street 4-Point Approach™ toward organizing your “To Do” list.;
 - Create an annual time line for internal use such as July 1=new board member orientation, members, August 15=annual meeting preparation, etc.
2. Use S.M.A.R.T. objectives (key performance indicators) as you budget your time:
 - Specific
 - Measurable
 - Attainable/Achievable
 - Relevant/Realistic
 - Timely
3. Strive to budget more time toward the “Not Urgent” (fire prevention) tasks allowing more time to focus on:
 - Work plans
 - Committee meetings and Preparation
 - Planning (with each of the 4-Points in mind)
 - Building better partnerships (including budgeting time for meet and greet and feet on the street, which leads to more buy-in for your program or organization!)

Zooming in on Management and Leadership

- Management is doing things right.
- Leadership is doing the right things.
- Management is efficiency in climbing the ladder of success (personally and organizationally).
- Leadership is determining whether the ladder is leaning against the right wall.

Sources

- *Training Camp*, Jon Gordon

Most Importantly...

Have fun!

Sources

- Training Camp, Jon Gordon
- The Energy Bus, Jon Gordon
- Outliers: the Story of Success, Malcolm Gladwell
- Daniel Pink on “The Surprising Art of Motivation”
- The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, Stephen Covey
- Getting Things Done, Mississippi Main Street, David Allen
- Input from experienced N.C. Main Street managers