

Time Mastery

7 Simple Steps To Your Richest Outcomes

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By: Lynda McNutt Foster, © 2015



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Let's start with a simple self-assessment in regard to how you currently view time.

1. I commit to completing a task or activity by placing it on my calendar for an exact date and time. T or F
2. I track and measure how long each of my activities takes and what result I have gotten from them in relationship to my highest-level outcomes. T or F
3. I, my team and my closest family members are clear about what I want to achieve this year and in the next 3 years. T or F
4. I properly prioritize my activities each day. T or F
5. I have been told I am skilled at delegating to others those tasks and activities that they can do better than I can. T or F
6. I am able to focus on my most important activities and don't allow myself to become distracted from them very often. T or F
7. I rarely procrastinate my highest 2 priorities each day. T or F
8. I rarely feel or think that I have "taken on too much". T or F
9. I rarely feel "overwhelmed". T or F
10. I reach my highest priority goals consistently, and in a way that brings me deeply satisfying accomplishments. T or F

So, how did you do? If you marked more than 2 or 3 as false, this quick ebook can help you begin designing your time for immediate results. It won't take months or even weeks to see that things are improving when you apply these simple steps. It will literally be a matter of days. In fact, you'll feel better and gain more control of your time very quickly. That's not going to be the tough part. The hardest part will be making what you learn and do common practice. I can teach you how to design your time more effectively. You are the one who is going to have to consistently do it.

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It's not complicated. To get what you want you need to use what resources you have effectively. We say that time is something that "escapes us". We say we need "more of it". We don't have "enough". We are the victim, time is the enemy and we are waiting for something or someone to come and rescue us from it's persecution.

If you are already arguing with me, you are not alone. It would appear that the reason most people don't get what they want is that the ego loves time to be the enemy we are helpless to overcome. If the lack of time is at fault we have justification for the results we are getting. "Of course I would eat right if I had time to plan and pack my meals for the day." "Yes, I would be healthier if I had the time to exercise." A good one I hear all the time in class is, "My schedule just doesn't allow me to get everything done I need to." "You have no idea the pressures I have on my time," is another common one.

It doesn't seem to be our view of time, what we focus on, or our behaviors when it comes to time that are causing the failures we are experiencing in business and life. It is time itself that seems to be the culprit.

Interesting.

Steve Jobs didn't get more of it than most of us to build a company, Elon Musk didn't get more to build a rocket ship, Warren Buffet didn't receive more to make his first billion, and Nelson Mandella had to manage his with incredible focus and certainty in order to have the impact he did.

People who have 5 kids get the same allotment as those who have 1 or none. CEO's get no more to manage thousands of employees, customers and problems than managers who have dozens.

So, why do we make it so complicated? Why do we consistently blame time? Time has such a bad reputation and it doesn't have a way of defending itself. Maybe that's why we frequently blame it when something goes wrong. It can't argue back. Time can't stand up and say, "Why are you attacking me for YOUR lack of planning and execution?"

It's time to give time a break and begin realizing that it may not be it's fault. What if it is our lack of designing it properly that is causing the results, good or bad, that we are experiencing? Could it be that time has been getting blamed for our shortcomings in knowing how to use it properly? It's not the hammer's fault when it hits the wall instead of the nail. Oxygen itself isn't to blame when it ignites when a spark gets near it. Is it our bodies "fault" when it responds better to spinach rather than a donut?

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Creating a relationship with time in which you respect and understand it is key. We must stop thinking we can make more of it. We have to have realistic expectation in regard to it. We can't think we can slow it down or speed it up. We don't control time and it doesn't control us. Time is time. It's a fact. Our feelings about it won't change it's rules and principles.

If you want to create a better relationship and understand it better, you need to surrender and accept it's rules and principles. Here they are:

Time is fair. It doesn't matter how unfair it feels sometime, no one on the planet gets any more or less of it in a day than anyone else.

Time does not discriminate. Time could care less about your race, gender, age, ethnicity, income, educational background, or anything else you can think of that creates separation between us humans.

Time is consistent. Yes, it may vary by a fraction of a second each year or a whole minute within centuries, but overall, we get 24 hours in a day 7 days a week.

Time is not effected by how you feel about it. Cursing about it, blaming it, or wishing you had more of it will not effect it's volume.

Albert Einstein once said, "We can not solve our problems with the same thinking that we used when we created them." I haven't met very many people that would argue with that and yet most don't seek input from qualified individuals when they continue to get the same results over and over again. This is a classic example of something that is common sense but is not common practice.

The first step in getting better at designing your time is admitting you might not be doing it optimally. It's okay. Designing your time is a practice. There's no way to get perfect at it. There are too many factors involved in designing it to think that you can "set it and forget it". To master time design you'll need to follow these steps and check in regularly to be sure you are still on track.

To make this process as simple and easy for you as possible let's start with showing you the 7 simple steps to time mastery based on the latest research and information gathered from thousands of clients, books, periodicals, articles, and seminars in the last 10 years.

- Step One. Focus on your richest outcomes.©
- Step Two. Create and commit to your non-negotiables.©
- Step Three. Increase your Time Metabolism.©
- Step Four. Map, measure, and monitor your time.©
- Step Five. Delegate or eliminate what you procrastinate.©
- Step Six. Operate in short sprints.©
- Step Seven: Build in rest and recovery periods.©

Step One

Focus on Your Richest Outcomes

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Step One: Focus on Your Richest Outcomes

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Dr. Stephen R. Covey's second habit in his book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, has long been known as one of the most important in achieving success: "Begin with the end in mind." If you're going to utilize the time you have every day effectively you need to start with a clear understanding and focus on what you want.

So many times we interchange the word and concept of a goal with that of an outcome or even confuse it with a vision. They are not the same. Here's the difference.

A goal is a means to an end, not the end itself. You can reach lots of goals and miss the outcome you were wanting all together. This happens when people want to lose weight. We think that losing weight is the outcome. It's not. It's a goal. A step towards the outcome you might want. We don't spend enough time designing the outcome we want and why we want it so we lose 10 pounds and think we've made it to what we wanted. We start eating the way we used to, stop exercising, and BAM! Here come the 10 pounds marching back across our midsection (at least that's where mine always seems to take up residence when it arrives). Rather than having an outcome of enjoying the benefits of living a healthy lifestyle that brings with it energy, vitality and a higher capacity to deal with stress and unforeseen obstacles, we focus on the goal of losing 10 pounds which in and of itself means very little. Goals are types of mile markers that run towards the outcome we want.

Taking the time and making an effort to define what your richest outcomes will be and then being open to different ways of achieving them is the key. As you measure and monitor progress towards the outcome and vision of what you truly want, adjustments may be required in how you originally thought you would get there. The most important thing is to spend the time to develop the vision/outcome in a way that uses long-term thinking. Now, I know, in today's world, it seems, long-term is next Friday or next year. Meaningful and rich outcomes occur when they are something that will take 3-5 years to achieve. To reach them will require patience, high-level thinking, innovation, flexibility and tenacity. Things that I know are in short supply in today's 140 character world.

It's simple, though. You just need to know what island you are rowing towards, each day, before you start rowing. To master your use of time you will need to think before you do. That's all. Ready, aim, fire.

Here are some questions to ask yourself if you have not defined your richest, long-term outcomes.

What do you want?

What you want needs to be about things that will create deeply satisfying accomplishments. Yes, you want your child to graduate from college, but what do you really want? Is it that you want for them to be independent which will probably lead to your and their long-term happiness? You win an award in your industry, but what you may really want is to gain the respect of industry peers and experts because that will demonstrate that your commitment to what you and your organization have done as an organization has been impactful.



Step One: Focus on Your Richest Outcomes

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You may want to make a profit. Okay. So you make a profit, then what? What you'll do with the profit, who it will effect and how will define the outcome you want.

Try this. Picture yourself and 5 team members being interviewed 5 years from now about your organization. How would each of you answer questions like:

What types of principles and practices have lead to your success?

Who have been the most important people in helping your organization achieve the success you are experiencing right now?

Why were they important?

What advice would you give to others who wanted to achieve the same success you have achieved?

Which behaviors lead you to the most impactful outcomes you were able to accomplish?

Why was achieving this outcome so important to you and your team?

Why do you want it?

The why behind what you want will be what can sustain your motivation for it. You and your team will suffer through some potentially difficult days and circumstances to reach the outcome/vision you want. Without the why, you won't suffer and neither will anyone else that you are leading towards the outcome. This concept came from a book entitled 177 Mental Toughness Secrets of the World Class written by Steve Siebold. Here's an excerpt that might help explain what I mean by "suffer" for your outcome:

When a performer begins to experience physical or emotional pain in the heat of the battle, the brain, whose primary role is self preservation, asks the question: 'Why must I suffer?' The champion will answer the question with the vision they have carefully constructed, and they will continue to fight. Since the masses lack this mental clarity and have no reason to suffer, they quit as soon as the pain kicks in. Developing a world-class vision is the secret to world-class motivation. The masses are primarily motivated by extrinsic motivators, such as material possessions and money. The world class is motivated intrinsically, by their dreams, desires and passions.

Ref:
http://www.amazon.com/Mental-Toughness-Secrets-World-Class/dp/097550035X/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1443977851&sr=8-1&keywords=177+of+the+world+class+book



Step One: Focus on Your Richest Outcomes

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You, and everyone else you are leading needs to know and be a part of the **why**.

The *why*, underneath of the *what*, is what connects the human DOing with the human BEing. I want an independent adult child because I believe that if she is independent she will be happy and achieve a life that she can be proud of.

If I want a sustainable company it may be because the leaders in our organization believe that a profitable company can deliver benefits that will make employees feel valued and supported. Everyone is then motivated to focus on profitability because the result will be that they will be valued and supported. Now, of course, when the profits come the organization must make giving the benefits everyone has seemingly worked so hard for a first priority in order to sustain team member's motivation.

If you want good health, you'll need to define why you want it. My father has not been a very healthy person. He has, however, for the last 20 years, done whatever he really had to do to sustain his health for some deeply important Whys. He wanted to see my daughter graduate from college. My father was educated and believed that the process of receiving an education was much more important than any diploma you could receive. Seeing my daughter, Melody, walk down the aisle to get the piece of paper was not the outcome that was driving him, daily, to do what was necessary to stay healthy. Nope. It was the feeling he had of accomplishment that his granddaughter was becoming an independent adult who valued learning as a foundation for her future. He wanted to see that and he was able to.

You will need to have some conversation to seek others' perspectives during this process. What you want and why you want it needs to be in alignment with your team and your family outcomes as well. The conversations you have, if done with a true sense of curiosity, can reveal things that create paradigm shifts.

I asked my daughter, Melody, when she was 10, what I did that was the most important to her. Up to that point, I thought that cooking dinner, being homeroom mom at school, and doing her homework with her might make the list. Nope. None of what I thought would be having the most impact actually was, according to her. She said to me that the most important thing I did for her was drive her to school every morning. I wondered why. She told me that having that time alone with me gave her time to talk to me about anything that was happening. She also hated riding the bus. The kids on the bus were mean, she explained, and sometimes cruel.

I wanted to be a good mom. Being a good mom, I thought, meant doing all the things a good mom did. What I realized, after that conversation, was that what I really wanted, my richest outcome, was for my daughter to believe I was a good mom and that I was going to have to get feedback from her, consistently, to know what that meant to her, otherwise I was going to waste a ton of time on things she couldn't care less about.



Step One: Focus on Your Richest Outcomes

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If you want to be a good anything to anyone, you'll need to have some conversations with those you are serving to determine what they really want and what you can deliver to them that will have the biggest impact on the outcome you want to achieve. If you want to be a good leader it's going to be important to ask your team members what they believe a good leader is. Aligning their expectations with what you deliver will be key in achieving deeply satisfying outcomes for you and them.

Don't assume you know what other people want. You need to ask. This will save you countless hours and sometimes years of effort and time believing you are delivering something of value when it is not perceived that way. This is true for your family members, team members, bosses, and customers. Ask people what they want and need and use that data to design your time. No sense in staying up all night to design the perfect report when what your boss really wanted was a quick email with themes that occurred in the last month.

The misalignment of the value you THINK you are delivering versus what others believe is the value you are delivering to them is a huge time suck! It saves so much time and effort to simply get clear, up front, on what you want, what they want, why both of you want it, and to set expectations on delivery of those things.

Yep. Knowing what island you're rowing to before you put the oar in the water is key. This is important whether you are talking about a huge, long term outcome or what you need to accomplish this week. Always begin with the outcome in mind.

More resources on this principle:

Anthony Robbins has a program called RPM. It's about setting your results first, knowing your purpose, and then mapping out the path. There's a video on it that could be helpful in understanding the concept of setting the results you want first. 15:00 video
<https://youtu.be/DJNY8jjF7Bs>

FranklinCovey's The 7 Habits Video Preview Begin With the End in Mind. 2:16 video
https://youtu.be/j4_ETXt4kBU

The Power of TED* (The Empowerment Dynamic) by David Emerald. The section I am referring to is the FISBE concept that Focus creates an Inner State that leads to your BEhaviors. With that in mind, the model explains that you have to start with your Vision (richest outcomes), which will tap into your Passion (your why) and that will drive the Baby Steps (your DOing) that will give you the results you want. There's also great stuff in here about the Dreaded Drama Triangle vs. The Empowerment Dynamic the models of which you can use personally or with your team.
http://www.amazon.com/Power-TED-Empowerment-Dynamic-Updated/dp/0977144119/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1441629644&sr=8-1&keywords=The+Power+of+TED

Step Two

Create and Commit to Your Non-Negotiables

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Step Two: Create and Commit to Your Non-Negotiables



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So you now know what you want and why you want it. Next, you want to lay in what I would term your cornerstones. Picture it like this: you've written your richest outcomes on a piece of paper. You lay it down on the ground. To hold it in place you need cornerstones. Those cornerstones are what I call your non-negotiables. These are highly important because difficulties and challenges will come along, like strong winds, that will seemly take you off course. When those winds come you need to have your cornerstones, or non-negotiables, in place to keep your outcomes firmly in place. Without them the challenges will blow your outcomes away.

What's a non-negotiable?

These are principles that have to be in place in order for the outcome to be achieved in a way that will feel deeply satisfying to everyone involved in achieving that outcome. They are values that you and your organization hold to be of the utmost importance.

Let's say your outcome is to be an effective leader for your organization. One of your non-negotiables may be retention of the high potentials on your team. What you need to give some thought to is that non-negotiables are just that. Non-negotiable. No matter what, they must stay in place. It may come to pass that your organization is in a position to need to downsize and all that are left are your high potentials and you need to lay one of them off in order to maintain your standing on the leadership team. If you can envision a reasonable circumstance that would require you to negotiate the terms of a non-negotiable than it's not a non-negotiable. You will soon find that there aren't many things that are non-negotiable.

Non-negotiables are things YOU have control over. You control the consistency of your attitude, how much learning you choose to receive, how and when you choose to listen to others, how supportive you are or aren't, what you focus on, etc.

Credibility with yourself and others is built on knowing what is and is not negotiable. The more things you think are not negotiable that you end up negotiating eat away at your credibility. If I say every team member has to be at their desk at 8:30am and then there is a team member who never gets there by 8:30am and this happens for many months, what do you think that communicates to other team members? It says that rule is negotiable, so they start negotiating it by arriving late themselves, or leaving early when they need to or extending their lunch hours. No one really talks about it until it becomes this massive issue, but slowly but surely that one item that wasn't supposed to be negotiable that everyone suddenly realizes is, creates quite the issue in the office and for the team.

Whatever non-negotiables you set in place need to be just that. You also need to discuss them with your team members and they must agree and make a commitment to them as well. If your outcome has anything to do with anyone else you will need to have conversations around what your non-negotiables are, and what theirs are, so everyone is clear on what each person is committed to.

Step Two: Create and Commit to Your Non-Negotiables



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It goes the other way, too. If someone has a non-negotiable they have not discussed with others on the team, resentment will occur when their actions are demonstrating something as a non-negotiable, but it has not been agreed on. For instance, a team member has a non-negotiable item that they have made major commitments to. Let's say that a team member has set in stone that they don't answer emails until 9am. They have made commitments at home around this practice. As a leader, you send emails out at 8am when you get in the office, many of which need team member's immediate attention before 9am. The team member with the 9am rule constantly misses deadlines or holds the rest of the team up because they don't respond before 9:30am many times. You ask the team member to read the emails before 9am, to avoid these issues, but there is always an excuse as to why they weren't able to on that particular instance.

When you run up against an issue that will not go away, it's possible that there is a non-negotiable in play that you think is negotiable for your team or individual team member.

Start by asking yourself these questions:

What four principles need to be in place in order for you and your team to feel like the outcome you want will result in a satisfying accomplishment?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

(A principle is: a fundamental truth or proposition that serves as the foundation for a system of belief, behavior, or for a chain of reasoning.)

Which practices will you need to execute, consistently, to demonstrate those principles?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

A principle in relationship to being a good leader, for you, may be: Listening to your team members and having them feel heard. One of the practices you would execute to ensure that principle or non-negotiable stays in place is to schedule time, each week, to listen to feedback from your team members, both individually and collectively as a group.

Step Two: **Create and Commit to Your Non-Negotiables**



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Here's the thing. The outcome may still occur even if one of the non-negotiables doesn't stay in place. Even a strong wind may not blow away your paper if one of the cornerstones is removed. What happens, though, is that if you remove another one there is a very good chance that achieving your outcome, in the way that you would feel deeply satisfied about it, will become compromised.

Competing non-negotiables is where you are going to run into roadblocks. If your team has a non-negotiable that is in conflict with an individual team member's non-negotiable it's highly possible the outcome everyone says they want probably won't occur in the way they want it to. For instance, if I want to build a highly profitable organization and one of the non-negotiables is the principle that team members work hard and long hours to reach that, and one of my team members clocks in at 9am and out at 5p, takes all vacation time available, and exhausts their sick leave, they may have agreed to the outcome for the team, but they obviously have another non-negotiable in play that competes with the one the team set.

Once you have agreed upon non-negotiables, lay those into the calendar first, before anything else goes in for the year. You communicate that they are there. Each non-negotiable will require time to execute. Trust me, they all do. If you have a principle that states that team members will maintain good health then they need time to do that. They need time to exercise, eat right, take breaks, etc. If one of your principles is teamwork then you will need to mark time for the team to build relationships, discuss issues that arise, work through conflicts, etc. If you have a cornerstone that team members have "time for their family" then they are going to need to schedule that time in, first, otherwise the urgent and important needs of the day will always take precedence over the long-term outcomes of the future.

What do you need to go ahead and schedule into your calendar for the next few months or year?

STOP right now, and do it. Don't think about it. Don't keep reading. Just stop, right now, and do it! No time like the present to get on the track of mastering your time.

Step Three

Increase Your Time Metabolism

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Step Three: Increase Your Time Metabolism

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My husband gets up on Saturday at 9:30a. I'm up at 6a. He wants to go for a run at 10:30a and that just feels like the middle of the day to me. I am sound asleep at 9 or 9:30p and he's still watching the Dodgers at Midnight some nights. What I call our "time metabolism" is completely different. When he's raring to go I'm ready to shut down.

Your time metabolism has to do with your natural, energy rhythm. By measuring it you can determine when are your most energetic parts of the day and your least. It gets a touch more complicated when you think about what your natural tendencies are and then match those with what is required of you during each of those periods.

Here's a quick assessment that will allow you to determine your time metabolism and how it matches up with what you feel is required of you at those times of the day.

After taking the assessment ask yourself these questions:

During which times of the day am I required or do I want to be more energetic than I actually am? For instance, maybe you showed a low number at 6p for your mental and physical energy level, but what you are required to have for your family or what you want to be for your family is a much higher number. In other words, you are dead tired the moment you walk through the door and your adorable children and amazing significant other want your time and attention to be on them. Or maybe the most important meeting with your team members occurs at 8am and you hate even having any human contact before 9am.

During any misalignments in required versus your natural energetic levels do you do something to adjust them to be in alignment? In other words, are you required or want to have energy at certain times of the day or on certain days, you don't, and so you artificially adjust your metabolism with large doses of coffee to gain the energy you want or need?

You want to know what is happening with your energy levels so that you can determine if they are what you want or need to have happen. Once you know and are aware of what they are you can work to bring them into alignment or modify them.

I can promise you that if you are not eating a good, densely nutritious diet and don't get regular exercise you have not learned to optimize your time metabolism for optimal results. Simply put, if you want to have the most amount of energy possible so that you can reach your highest level and richest outcomes, you are going to need to design your time around the times you are most effective and institute practices and habits that support healthy ways to maintain high focus and energy levels.



Time Metabolism

Aligning your needs and wants with your ability to complete tasks could be the key to effectively designing your time. When you need good results, you need to be at your highest physical and mental level. Your ability to design your most impactful activities, with regards to your time metabolism, will result in your desired outcome and net you the highest level of return.

Time

Energy Level

Mental Level

Required

Actual

Required

Actual

5am-7am

7am-9am

9am-11am

11am-1pm

1pm-3pm

3pm-5pm

5pm-7pm

7pm-9pm

9pm-11pm

11pm-1am



Step Three: Increase Your Time Metabolism

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You want to design your time around knowing what takes away from your energy and what gives you energy.

Introverts are drained with lots of people contact, whereas extroverts get energy from interactions with others. So, if you want to have more energy at a time when you don't naturally, you'll need to keep these things in mind as you schedule your day.

When you love to do something you find the energy to do it. If you love to go to a tailgate at football games, regardless of the week you had or how tired you are, you will probably still load up your car with all the fixin's, drive an hour or much more, and spend all day Saturday with friends and family laughing and enjoying yourself. If you hate tailgating, any excuse you can find to not go to that game will pop into your head so you can stay home with Netflix and a bag of chips.

You can begin to use the fact that you are more motivated and find energy in the things you love doing and will avoid the things you don't. You can use this to your advantage to reach your richest outcomes. If you hate to exercise don't plan it for a time that you are already tired. The chances of you doing it exponentially decrease. Yes, you might be able to do it for a few days or weeks, but the chances of you continuing the practice for years and years becomes very small.

The first thing to do is design your time around the current reality of your time metabolism in places that you can. Stop fighting it and start scheduling things knowing it to be true about you. Once you learn what your time metabolism is, start scheduling according to it. Begin using it to your advantage and you will find that, over time, you will start to have more energy and be able to focus more effectively on the most important things that will impact achieving the richest outcomes you want.

Step Four

Map, Measure, and Monitor Your Time

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Step Four: Map, Measure, and Monitor Your Time

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You can't manage what you don't measure. This is the most common sense of all the steps. For some reason, though, it appears to be the one that many of my clients and participants in my leadership programs have the most trouble making common practice.

It starts with this principle. We suck at being able to tell how much time something will take. If we love it we think it took a short period of time to complete and if we hate it the things took us hours, or will, to get done.

If you haven't had to measure how much time everything takes I can promise you that you are underestimating certain task and overestimating others. The difference between those two things is what is probably causing you to not reach your richest outcomes. Yep. In the end, it's that simple. You probably have no earthly idea of how long things are taking and what impact they are having on the outcomes you want to reach.

The only way to fix this is to start measuring how long things take and equate that will how much time, money, and resources they are costing you.

Start with this.

Take out your calendar. Okay, if you don't use a calendar just stop here. There's too far to go from reading these pages and getting you to your richest outcomes. You won't get there without some serious need or want to, which you probably don't have right now. You'll need extensive coaching and support. This book alone won't do it. I'm actually surprised you are reading this at all. Did someone make you or make you feel like you had to? Send me an email and send that person a note and let them know that reading this is actually a waste of your time. You would be much better served to go back to your daily list and get a task done for someone who is trying to reach their richest outcomes. Those people need people like you to be the task masters which you are probably great at.

Once you have your calendar out, I want you to lay in your time for the non-negotiable items that you created in Chapter Two. If you decided that a principle was meeting with each of your team members for 15 minutes a week then lay that time into your calendar. If you have a non-negotiable that you will sleep for 7 hours a night, lay that in. If you want to be a good father or mother and have discussed what that means to your children, then lay in the time you have committed to them. If you have health as a non-negotiable, lay in the time to prepare your meals and exercise. If you believe in always learning and constant improvement, lay in the time to do something each week to progress in that area.

EVERYTHING goes into the mapping of your time. It's not enough to set an outcome in place and decide on your non-negotiables, they are both only a wish if you don't map out the time that is necessary to get there.



Step Four: Map, Measure, and Monitor Your Time

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I know, this seems absolutely ridiculous to some people. It seems like a complete restriction of freedom. What a horrible way to live. Life dictated by a calendar doesn't seem any fun at all to some.

I need to make something clear at this point. Becoming a master at designing your time will take some work. Work you will not want to suffer through if you haven't developed a truly meaningful outcome that you deeply want to achieve. You just won't do it. You will give up. You will not be able to answer the question, "Why must I suffer?" When you can't answer that question you will stop and head in another direction that is easier and less seemingly painful.

That's okay. I have absolutely no interest in helping those that have no desire to take the time to develop and clearly define their richest outcome. I don't design my time around helping those people. I design every minute of my time around serving those who want to know and experience their highest-level, deeply satisfying richest accomplishments.

If you're still here, great! I'm here for you. Everything I have studied in the last 25 years is about helping myself, my family, and my clients reach the outcomes they want to achieve. I will only pass along the best possible practices, models, tools, and tips to helping you achieve those.

Next, you need to monitor how that time is contributing to the outcome you want to achieve. Each hour needs to be thought about. You have to take 15 minutes, once a week, and go through and check each action you took, measure how long it took, and measure what impact it had on moving you towards your outcome.

You need to ask yourself, once a week, after having done this review of your time, four questions:

What do I need to stop doing that is not moving me towards the outcome I want to achieve?

What do I need to start doing that will have an impact on moving me forward towards the outcome I want to achieve?

What do I need to continue doing that is working right now?

Who do I need to recognize or appreciate for what is working right now?

Step Five

Delegate or Eliminate What Your Procrastinate

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Step Five: Delegate or Eliminate What Your Procrastinate

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The moment you realize that your procrastination is a signal that something is out of alignment you can start the process of designing your time based on your strengths and those of others. You are not great at everything. Other people are better than you at stuff. Really. I'm serious. You suck at certain stuff and until you accept and literally embrace that fact you will continue to get the results you are getting and not be able to move to the next level.

You might relate to someone we'll call Steven.

Steven was an executive that had high standards and seemed to believe that he did everything better than anyone else on his team. He would assign things to team members but it was only because he "just couldn't do everything" he would say. The truth was that he believed that if he could just clone himself his success could skyrocket. Of course, he never said this, but all of his actions reflected that belief.

Steven would assign things and then end up doing the bulk of the work himself always with an excuse that he just needed to be sure it was "right". The problem, of course, was that no one else could ever get any assignment "right". What would occur is that Steven would assign a task, ask to see the progress, determine that he needed to have extensive input on the progress and BAM! The project would then stall out on his desk. Piles of stalled projects lay stacked on his desk with the rest of the team waiting for answers and further instructions.

His team members were not engaged and weren't motivated. The work coming out of the firm was limited by how much Steven could "handle" and "make time for". Steven constantly complained that the firm wasn't growing its client base. The fact was that the employees had no enthusiasm for working there, commitments for getting back to clients by a certain date and time were rarely kept and therefore, referrals were not plentiful. Steven had no idea that the outcome of his behavior was bottle-necking projects, and what that was doing to stifle the growth of the firm.

Steven eventually benefited from starting to recognize what he was procrastinating. By analyzing what was not getting done he could begin to see the bottleneck in the growth process. The biggest question he needed to ask himself was, **"What do I really want and what am I willing to change in order to get it?"**

His answer was to eliminate any efforts that were in place to grow the firm and accentuate, moving forward, those actions that helped him move towards the outcome he wanted, which was to have more freedom and creativity by being a consultant.

Notice what you are procrastinating. Don't force yourself to do them. Pause. Step back. Ask yourself, why is it that I never seem to have the time to do that? Do I not recognize that task as something that will lead to something I really want?



Step Five: Delegate or Eliminate What Your Procrastinate

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What do you need to prune?

It's one thing to determine "what" needs to be "pruned" from your schedule and another is "who" needs to be pruned. Some people are adding to your professional and personal development and others aren't. Determining who is enhancing your experiences and outcomes and which people are actually distractions and deterrents can be the single most important element of designing your time like the masters do. Drama is a total time suck. Drama with others, drama that you get sucked into, drama in your own head - it's all a time suck that will distract you from reaching your richest outcomes.

Take some time to think about which people you need to invest more time with and which ones you need to invest less time with.

How motivated are you and your team?

Remember, motivation is the fuel for our engines and everyone else's, too. If the horse is not moving towards the watering hole, it just isn't thirsty right now. We hunger to be a certain type of person, to achieve certain things. Our thirst for those things is what creates the motivation to complete tasks to get there. Without the thirst we hesitate. We need to note when we hesitate because it is an important sign. As a leader, you need to note when your team as a whole or when certain individuals are hesitating doing something. There's a reason. It could be they are just lazy, but according to Chip and Dan Heath in their book, *Switch*, it could be a sign of several other things including:

1. What looks like a people problem is often a situation problem.
2. What looks like laziness is often exhaustion.
3. What looks like resistance is often lack of clarity.

If you are consistently procrastinating on a task ask yourself these questions:

Do I think this task is important for helping reach the outcome I want?

Do I think this task is important for helping our organization reach the outcome we collectively want?

Okay. If the answer to these questions are both "no" you aren't going to find the time or energy to do this task. If you are in a leadership position you need to find a way to eliminate it. If you aren't in a leadership position, you need to have a conversation about who is in charge of having required the task be done and explore the possibility that another activity may lead to a more effective use of your time. This can be done with a high level of respect when you realize that you may not have all the information in regard to why the task is being required and how it affects other aspects of the workflow or other parts of the organization.



Step Five: Delegate or Eliminate What Your Procrastinate

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How much do I care about the outcomes I am working towards?

Do I believe that someone could do this task better than I can?

Is it possible that I am doing the task at a time of day that is making it harder to complete than it would be at a different time or on another day?

Are there conditions I could create that would help me complete the task more consistently and more effectively?

Here's where the "eat it" if you're procrastinating on it comes in. One of my favorite books on managing your time more effectively is by Brian Tracy. It's a simple book the title of which is Eat That Frog.

http://www.amazon.com/Eat-That-Frog-Great-Procrastinating/dp/1576754227/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1441647711&sr=8-1&keywords=eat+that+frog+brian+tracy

The book is based on the concept of an old saying that, "If the first thing you do each morning is to eat a live frog, you can go through the day with the satisfaction of knowing that that is probably the worst thing that is going to happen to you all day long!" Your "FROG" is the one you are most likely to *procrastinate on if you don't do something about it now!* It is also the one task that can have the *greatest positive impact on your life and results at the moment.*

Once you determine the outcome you want, the non-negotiables you know need to be in place or it won't be satisfying, and layer in the tasks that you have committed to and that need to be completed, you have to eat those puppies. They have to get done. You use the knowledge of your time metabolism to schedule them and commence eating them whether you "feel like doing" them or not when they are scheduled.

Through studying my most successful clients and biographical research of others, it appears evident that high performers don't complete things when they feel like it. They plan when something will get done based on a very thoughtful formula they have devised and they do it when they have it scheduled. The least successful people I have studied do things based on how they feel. If they feel like working out, they do. If they don't feel like it then they don't. If they feel like talking to their team members this week and getting their feedback they do. If they don't feel like calling on a tough customer that needs something then they don't.

Map out your time, measure how you are using it, and monitor it constantly for continuous improvement. Eliminate what isn't working and eat what will, first.

Step Six

Operate In Short Sprints

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Step Six: Operate In Short Sprints

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President Eisenhower doesn't get nearly the press that he deserves when it comes to models he devised and his ability to get really important stuff done. He is the one that created the principle that Stephen Covey's 4-quadrant time management system was based on. Eisenhower's Urgent/Important Principle was this:

Important and Urgent
Important but not Urgent
Not Important but Urgent
Not Important and not Urgent

There's a complete article about the principle you can find in Mindtools at https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newHTE_91.htm. Basically, though, there are two types of important and urgent activities. Ones that you could not have foreseen and others that you have left until the last minute.

Many people live their entire world now in the quadrant of urgent and important. Everything is a crisis and that is the only things that get dealt with in their department or at their organization. Everything that does not fall into this quadrant and is not "on fire" is procrastinated. Simple items become a roaring blaze of hot coals constantly because they are never planned for or dealt with until they are "on fire". This is a dangerous place to operate from personally and professionally. Never taking time to plan, anticipate or deal with things when they are in Quadrant II which is when they are not urgent but important, none the less, will create quite the stress pit to work and live in. That stress will ultimately result in breakdowns at every level.

When you determine the items we discussed previously, your non-negotiables and the tasks that lead to the biggest impact on achieving your richest outcomes, and you fail to plan and schedule them, you will be dealing with the consequences of not having done so when they are in Quadrant I which is the urgent and important and I guarantee you that they will not get done with the thoroughness and necessary focus that they could have been done with. Working most often in the QI space of urgent and important without having planned those activities first means you are constantly in a reactive space rather than a proactive one.

There is a way through this though that I think makes sense. I studied the principles behind something called agile workflows and environments. Many successful IT shops have incorporated this type of workflow. It's based on 4 values that Kelly Walters writes about in an article titled, "What is Agile (10 key principles of Agile)." The agile manifesto is based on 4 values:

Individuals and interactions over processes and tools
Working software over comprehensive documentation
Customer collaboration over contract negotiation
Responding to change over following a plan



Step Six: Operate In Short Sprints

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What's important for anyone in regard to mastering designing their time to reach their richest outcomes, from the research we have conducted, is a process for implementing projects that was derived from Agile which is called, SCRUM.

Scrum is an agile development method, which concentrates particularly on how to manage tasks within a team-based development environment. Scrum is the most popular and widely adopted agile method – I think because it is relatively simple to implement and addresses many of the management issues that have plagued IT development teams for decades. - See more at:

[http://www.allaboutagile.com/what-is-agile-10-key-principles/
#sthash.OZrMoNBd.dpuf](http://www.allaboutagile.com/what-is-agile-10-key-principles/#sthash.OZrMoNBd.dpuf)

"Scrum" refers to a move in Rugby in which a team packs together and they all act together to get the ball from one end of the field to another end of the field.

So what does this have to do with you? Give me just a couple of moments to explain. What the Scrum method teaches its team members to do is plan extensively for a two week Sprint of tasks they will complete to reach a specific outcome. In the software world a team gets together to create a piece of software that they may plan for weeks to run a Sprint on. Every aspect of the process will be discussed and planned for and then, BAM! For two weeks every team member will run like heck to execute that plan. The outcome is a piece of software or a component to a larger piece of software that is deliverable to the customer. For it to have been deemed successful, something has to be delivered to the customer.

There's a lot that goes into the planning of a Sprint. In other words, these teams spend a great deal of time and energy in Quadrant II to get ready to proactively dash into Quadrant I. Make sense?

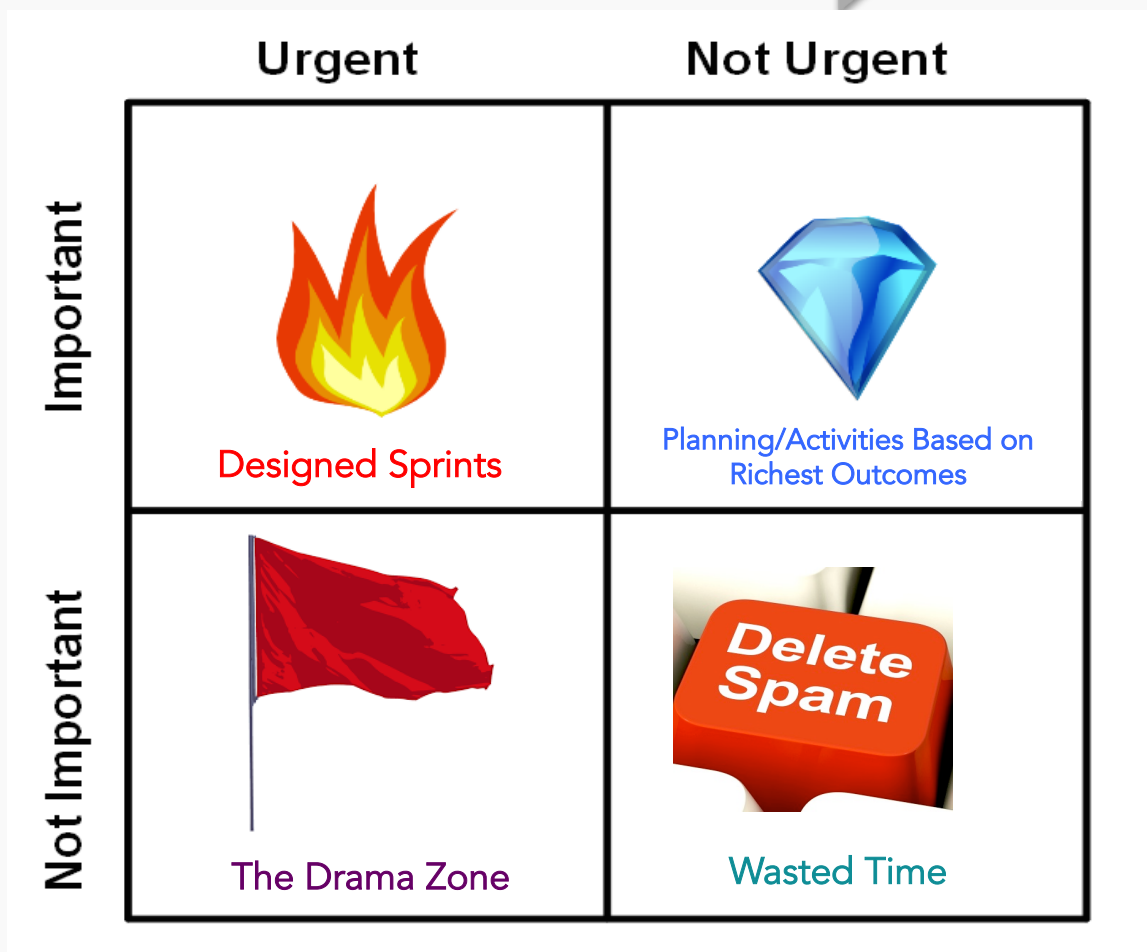
I began using this method myself before I ever starting introducing it to clients. The results were extraordinary. My team and I spent a month planning for releases of things like an ebook or a website, or a component of our software product, goMonti, and BAM! We would enter a Sprint and in two weeks or less deliver the product or service to the client. We used it to research specific prospect lists and then proactively move into a Sprint period to make contact and set appointments that resulted in significant growth for our firm.

Step Six:
Operate In Short Sprints



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Step Six: Operate In Short Sprints



The first client that I saw really take this method and run was one that I had a high level of confidence in because he was very coachable. He never missed a class, a coaching session, used every laser coaching session available to him and focused like a madman when he saw an opportunity for his business to move forward.

We'll call him John. John wanted to open another division of his company in another state. There were tons of components to being able to execute that, the most important of which was deciding whether opening another office was the most effective use of his time and resources at the moment. He not only had a lot to think about, there would be a lot to do if he decided to move forward with his vision/outcome of building a business for himself and his team, not a job.

John planned methodically for a month or even two. He had coaching sessions about defining his vision. Gathering the data necessary to see what it would take, from where his team was financially, with resources, and processes wise to open the new division. He planned every aspect with precision and collaboration with his team. Finally, his team entered the two-week Sprint. Within two weeks things were up and running. They had everything in place to begin their marketing plan to attract customers and man, did they ever!

Within 3 months his second division was generating the revenue on par with his first one that had been operating for more than 2 years!

Which project or task could you and/or your team complete that would have the biggest impact on your most important goal, if you solely focused on it for a short period of time?

What if every excuse you could think of to plan and focus on it was eliminated and you could create a sprint to make it happen?

Come on, you know you want to. If you are the leader, try it. The results will speak for themselves.

Step Seven

Build in Rest and Recovery Periods

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Step Seven: Build in Rest and Recovery Periods

When John and his team were done with their Sprint they each took some time to rest and recover. This is essential to reaching deeply satisfying accomplishments.

Know that as you are able to increase your time metabolism and execute what you've learned in this short book, you will be able to recover much more quickly than you may be able to now.

The fan in my bedroom is always on. I never shut it off. It's been years now and it hasn't stopped working even once. There are not a lot of components in that fan. The engine that runs it is a pretty simple machine. I haven't hung anything on its blades to dry like my bra or underwear. I don't switch its speeds constantly. I keep it going at the same rate and leave it alone. I apply stress to it.

We, as humans, are not my ceiling fan. We're complicated. Way complicated! We have very complex systems within us that make us work. We have emotions that are affected by people in our lives and circumstances. Our brains are the human operating system. In fact, it wasn't until recently that thorough studies on our brains were even possible.

We are subjected to constant stress from situations that we can and cannot control. We are not machines. We are organisms and sensitive to outside stimuli. Most of us don't take care and maintain ourselves as well as we would the machines we own and that we can replace. Leaders tend to put tons of pressure on themselves to operate in a constant sprint and then drive their team members to do the same. It's not even logical, really, to assume that we can run ourselves at top speed, endlessly, and not anticipate that something is going to break.

We're always shocked when it does. We go to the doctor and are told we have high blood pressure or we can't seem to sleep anymore or our sugar levels are through the roof because of our lack of exercise and poor nutritional habits. We pop a pill and press on. Our team members start to get ill from these types of things and we feel sorry for them and make no adjustments in our workflow.

We are living in a 24-7 world. People send emails in the middle of the night, on holidays, and weekends. Everyone is searching for the perfect work-life balance, whatever the heck that is? There is no end to the amount of YouTube videos, books and articles about that topic. Trying to have the perfect work-life balance is killing us! Because so many people are on Facebook posting pictures of their perfect vacations, their perfect kids, their perfect marriages, the awards they are winning, and the weight they are losing, the rest of us are thinking that there's some type of secret to the "perfect" life that we are somehow not getting. We feel cheated!

WARNING: Burn Out is Ugly!

I know. I have experienced it a couple of times in my life and I don't recommend it. I see a lot of leaders that don't even know they are experiencing it or are about to. Here are some signs in case you are curious about what the symptoms are:



Step Seven: Build in Rest and Recovery Periods

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What is burn out at work?

Burnout is a state of chronic stress that leads to:
physical and emotional exhaustion
cynicism and detachment
feelings of ineffectiveness and lack of accomplishment

More information on the signs and symptoms of burn out can be found at:
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/high-octane-women/201311/the-tell-tale-signs-burnout-do-you-have-them>

I have had private coaching sessions with hundreds of leaders and trained thousands through our leadership programs. Let me report out on a few things I have come to discover.

Leaders who get what they want are masters of designing their time to get it. They do spend time, energy and resources on their pursuit and maintenance of the life they want. They don't spend time on things that aren't going to lead to their richest outcomes.

Leaders who get what they want, and are healthy when they do, schedule time for rest and recovery between their sprints. Those who don't end up getting what they want end up dealing with health issues much earlier than the other ones.

Leaders who get what they want do focus on vision and outcomes and don't get bogged down in daily drama and micromanaging other people they've delegated things to.

Leaders who get their richest outcomes don't have time for drama. They can smell it a mile away and avoid it like the plague. If you come near them with your drama they will quickly find a way to remove you from their lives.

Most of the leaders who accomplish things the rest of can only dream about aren't any smarter than me, or you. Steve Jobs was right, the people running things probably aren't any smarter than you are if you at least have a college education or have spent a lifetime learning new stuff. It's highly possible, if you are a lifetime learner that you may be smarter and more innovative than some of the folks who are making most of the decisions for you. The big difference maker turns out to be your behaviors and habits versus theirs.

Master designing your time by creating a non-negotiable of rest and recovery for you and your team if you truly want to reach your richest outcomes in a way that delivers deeply satisfying accomplishments.



SUMMARY

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Step One. Focus on your richest outcomes.

Start with the end in mind as Covey would say. Spend time and energy to determine what you want. Consider the fact that you are a human BEing and not just a human DOing. It doesn't matter how much money you have or influence you build if you end up feeling the same as you do right now.

Step Two. Create your Non-Negotiables.

Determine what principles will need to be in place in order to ensure that when you reach your richest outcomes they are deeply satisfying accomplishments.

Step Three. Increase your Time Metabolism.

Assess what your current time metabolism is. Determine how you can best schedule your tasks based on that knowledge. Begin designing you and your team's time for peak performance using your results.

Step Four. Map, measure, and monitor your time.

Schedule EVERYTHING, laying in time for your non-negotiables first and then your firm commitments for the action items that will lead to the outcomes you want. Measure how much time each action item is taking and how it is moving you and your team forward toward the outcomes you decided on with them. Finally, conduct continual improvement checks weekly to monitor your progress towards your outcome.

Step Five. Delegate or eliminate what you procrastinate.

If you suck at it, stop doing it and let someone who is better at it do it instead. If it has to be done, schedule it, forget how you feel when it comes up on your calendar to do and just eat the frog and move on to more exciting and fun things.

Step Six. Operate in short sprints.

Stop functioning in a reactive, QI mode of urgent and important because you didn't plan for what you thought would probably occur and start planning what you want to see happen in QII then sprint to your outcome.

Step Seven. Build in rest and recovery periods.

Duh. We're not machines. We need to rest periodically and allow our nervous systems and bodies time to recover. As you get better at the systems you learned here you'll recover faster. There will never come a time, though, that you have to take care of your BEingness so you can jump back on the DOing train that we're all so addicted to.

BONUS SECTION: Time Suckers

Here's two sections that are the biggest time sucks for leaders. Emails and meetings.

BONUS SECTION: TIME SUCKERS

How much will unnecessary meetings cost you and your company this week?



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In a recent study it was found that:

Only 53% of scheduled meeting time is actually spent on agenda items

73% did other work (like returning emails) during meetings

47% asserted meetings were the #1 time waster at the office

\$37 billion is the salary cost of unnecessary meetings for US business

The University of Minnesota conducted research by psychologist Kathleen Vohs found that we have a finite amount of “executive” resources, or cognitive ability, to process information and decisions. Vohs found that those are rapidly depleted in meetings. Too many meetings literally drain our brain.

CEO's are the hardest hit with almost 40% of their workweek in meetings.

Calculate the cost of your meetings on this calculator:

<http://meetingking.com/meeting-cost-calculator/>

ASK YOURSELF these 7 questions before scheduling a meeting:

1. What is the desired outcome of the meeting?
2. Do you have to have a meeting to reach that outcome? Is there another way?
3. What contribution will each person make to that outcome during the meeting and do all the people you are inviting really need to be there?
4. Is the meeting being held only as a way to hold people accountable for tasks they are responsible for? (HINT: This is a REALLY bad reason to hold a meeting)
5. Is the meeting the best way for each executive to spend their time and energy?
6. What is on the agenda that doesn't need to be discussed but could be reported out in another way?
7. Could you have a “stand up” meeting in a few minutes rather than scheduling an hour or more for it?

If you determine you need a meeting, according to Al Pittampalli in: Read This Before Our Next Meeting. Here's some suggestions on making them more productive – other than just the standard criteria of having an agenda and distributing it in advance with relevant information:

- Always start the meeting on time, regardless of people who are late;
- Do not review the contents of the meeting with the people who are late for the part they missed;

BONUS SECTION: TIME SUCKERS

How much will unnecessary meetings cost you and your company this week?



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- **Reduce the length of meetings to one hour maximum, and preferably less—try 30 minutes, even try 15 or 10 minutes;**
 - End the meeting on the agreed-upon time, even if the agenda is not finished;
 - Invite fewer people to the meeting _ it has been found that productivity goes down with increasing numbers of participants;
 - Allow the right for employees to decline their attendance, without having to justify themselves and without penalties;
 - Don't let people who are late to the meeting by more than 15 minutes join;
- **Don't allow individuals to hijack or dominate meetings by frequent and endless conversation. It's the responsibility of the meeting leader to control this;**
 - End meetings early. People will be more positive about participating as a result;
- **No laptops or phones are allowed to be active in meetings. Allowing people to be interrupted or diverting their attention lowers the value of the meeting;**
 - Don't tolerate meeting participants working on other things during the meeting. Ask them to leave;
 - The meeting leader should enforce only one person speaking at a time, and to the point;
 - Ask each meeting participant to prepare for the meeting in advance in response to a meeting question that will be dealt with in the future, not a rehash of the past (not just an agenda item);
 - At the beginning of the meeting, ensure that the desired outcome(s) are stated clearly;
- **Limit the action items of your meeting to no more than three;**
 - Interrupt people who either repeat what they have said, or repeat what someone else has already covered. These are time wasters.
 - Whoever calls the meeting should "own" the meeting; don't allow someone in the group to try to take it over;
 - Table any discussion that is not relevant to the agenda.
 - You could reduce the time you spend in meetings by 80% by starting on time and having a detailed agenda according to the Wall Street Journal.
- **If you could only attend 2 meetings this week what would they be for and who would they be with? Answering that question could be a good start to prioritizing your time spent in meetings.**

Reference: <http://www.amazon.com/Read-This-Before-Next-Meeting/dp/1936719169>



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BONUS SECTION: TIME SUCKERS

How much is email costing you?

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I began to be very curious what the use of email was costing organizations. I started taking surveys in each of my leadership classes. In our Meeting Magic Toolkits we have these chalkboards that people can write on and use to give feedback on or vote on things in class.

I asked one simple question: How much time a day do you spend on email?

The average class, with 12 people, usually would come up with a total number time spent on email each day of about 24 hours. Some classes would have a total number of 30-35 hours.

If you take that total number of 24 and multiple it by what payroll of each leader is costing their organizations which I estimate at \$100 per hour, that's \$2,400 a day. Think that's too high a number for the average pay of your leaders? No problem, even if you use \$50 that's \$1,200 a day. \$1,200 a day is \$6,000 a week for a group of 12 leaders. Multiplied out for the year, email is costing the group \$312,000. Yep. That number is a significant one. If a leader is spending 2 of his 10 hours a day on email, that means 20% of his/her time is spent on a system best meant for documentation, not communication.

ANYTHING you and your organization can do to reduce the use of email will have a significant impact your bottom line. Create rules of engagement for email in your company. Refer to this link for more information on this topic:

<http://lyndamcnuddfoster.com/how-will-you-manage-your-email-avalanche-this-week/>

For individual or group coaching on this topic and others related to leadership contact us at:

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