

Optimus Time

An Internet Marketer's Guide to
Optimizing Time and Maximizing Profit

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Introduction: What is Time Management?

Earning a good living from internet marketing has many obvious advantages over the grind of a nine to five normal day job.

No longer will you find yourself rushing through breakfast in order to get out the door on time, fighting your way onto the commuter train, or weaving through the rush hour traffic, only to arrive 10 minutes late. With a stay at home internet marketing job, all these things are a thing of the past.

And, yes, of course, working at home is more relaxed and you get to spend more quality time with your family.

But (and this is one of life's immutable truths) as soon as you get rid of one set of problems, another set always comes along to take its place, and working at home, marketing on the internet is no exception.

It actually doesn't matter whether you have to charge out of the door every morning, or whether you work at home in shorts and a t-shirt.

There is a common problem, regardless of whether you work at home on your computer, or have to go out every day (or, even worse, every night) for your shift in the factory or office.

Getting a grip on time and becoming its master is a daily struggle for each and every one of us.

Do you overstretch yourself?

Most of us have crammed our daily schedule full of all sorts of activities.

Despite cell phones, the internet and every other advantage that technology gives us, it still seems that the vast majority of us never have enough time to take care of business, ourselves, our friends and family.

Whoever you are, wherever you are, I'm sure it seems that you are always busy.

Busy, but the big question is, are you productive with your time?

This question is especially relevant if you work from home, because the only person who can really judge this is you. Unlike working in an office or factory, there is no-one else, no third party, to say whether you are doing a good job or not.

Thus, it is particularly critical, as an internet marketer, that you are aware of, and apply, sound time management tactics at all times. Otherwise, there really is a fair chance that you are just wasting your time.

Why is Time Management important?

It is absolutely vital that you learn and apply sound time management techniques to all of your internet marketing activities if you want to be successful (and you wouldn't be doing it otherwise, would you?).

The first step towards proper time management is realizing that there is nothing else on the face of this planet that offers so many time-wasting opportunities as the World Wide Web!

Whatever activity it is that you are involved in, there will always be times in your life when you are extra busy (finishing off an important project, dealing with finances, getting websites back on line when they go down, and so on). However, learning the skills to manage the time you have wisely and efficiently should help alleviate much of the stress and frustration that can lead to burn out and fatigue.

Time Management is a skill that you MUST acquire!

One advantage that working online has over a desk job is the flexibility of doing what you want, when you want.

This, however, is not always a good thing.

Of course, you know that surfing around the net all day is not particularly productive.

But, have you ever considered just how much time is wasted on the mundane little tasks that you do every day? On those things that you simply HAVE to do?

You will be shocked to find out how much time is wasted just checking your accounts with the likes of PayPal, [Clickbank](#) and AdSense.

The simple act of opening and closing your e-mail inboxes is another activity that is a voracious time-eater as well!

To put this into some kind of context, imagine that you work in a busy office. Would your boss be pleased if you refused an important assignment by saying, "I cannot do it right now because most of my day is being eaten up with checking my email and my online accounts"?

I think you know the answer to that question.

So, why should the proper management of your time when you are working on the internet for the most demanding boss in the world (you) be any different?

Developing the necessary time management skills (and discipline) with the help of this guide will show how to determine what tasks need doing and when you should do them, in harmony with your overall goals in your working life and in your leisure time.

Last minute decisions are not all bad ones!

Having good time management skills means that you must learn to recognize which activities need to be done now and which can wait, so that when a last minute decision needs to be made, you are able to make it with judgment and wisdom.

If such a decision involves making a choice between two options, you will know that the judgmental abilities that follow from good time management will give you the confidence to give your answers (even if it's 'no') without questioning those abilities.

If you do say no to a task you will be able to furnish an explanation as to why you are making that decision if need be.

A new purpose to what you do

While applying good time management is a skill that needs to be used every single minute that you are sitting in front of your PC, it can also help you to reach your long term goals as well.

It is critical as well that you understand that it is an absolutely basic rule that you must have a long term plan as well as one for the here-and-now.

It is only by incorporating these long terms goals into the 'why' of what you do every day that you will manage to accomplish them while actually enjoying what you do.

Even the drudgery of staring at the screen each and every day can be made less tedious if you know that doing it is moving you ever closer to achieving your long term objective.

In fact, knowing the 'why' will make these chores an identifiable part of the overall plan, and thus a choice rather than a burden.

Chapter 1: How Much Is Your Time Worth?

If you work nine to five every day in an office and receive a salary at the end of every month, it's pretty simple to work out what your time is worth. Money earned divided by hours worked, it's a straightforward formula. But, as an employee you also have the luxury of knowing that, as long as you satisfy the requirements of your job, then you will still get paid, no matter how you actually fill your time.

You want to spend 10 minutes by the coffee machine chatting about last night's sports scores? No problem.

As long as you do what you are required to do, you will still get paid the same salary at the end of the month.

So when you don't have a fulltime job, how do you calculate the value of your time?

Well, although most people might not think about it in this manner, there are, in fact, two ways of going about this.

First method is, as suggested above, the value that you put on your time in terms of the salary that you are paid. And, in truth, this is exactly what most employees would assume to be their value.

But, there is a second way, the 'time value formula' that applies to someone like you, working on the net. Simply put, you must know what an hour of your time costs YOU.

What does an hour cost YOU?

As someone who is running your own online business, it is even more imperative that you spend your time wisely and do not waste it by doing things that will not make money for you, your business or your family. Every time you allow yourself to slack off, it will have an immediate impact on your income.

Imagine that you were in a position where you could actually bill your time out to other people, in the way that a lawyer would do, how much would you charge for an hour of your time?

Now, think of and write down (or - better yet - put into a document or spreadsheet on your PC so that you can refer back to it in the future) all the work related activities that you sometimes find yourself involved in, that are not directly creating income.

This is not meant to be an exhaustive list, but these are some activities that never actually make any money in themselves:

- Web surfing
- Opening and closing your web browser

- Opening and closing your e-mail box (boxes?)
- Answering e-mail
- Logging in & checking your accounts (PayPal, Clickbank & AdSense)
- Writing articles, reports and sales pages
- Web page design (unless you are a paid designer)
- Web page creation (with the same proviso as above)
- Fixing problems on your webpages
- Posting to your blog (blogs?)
- Changing previous blog postings.
- Responding to blog post comments.
- Creating new advertising materials – banners, pop-up's, pop-in's and the like.
- Testing new software.
- Working on linking strategies

This is a list that could go on for a VERY long time, as the internet presents each and every one of us with innumerable new ways of using up time every day.

So, take a moment to think about this.

In the last month, have you any idea how many hours you spent doing each of these?

I'm assuming you don't.

Imagine that you were to bill your time at \$30/hour for your service but that, in the last month, you spent 15 hours maintaining your website or opening and closing your mailboxes.

That has just cost you \$450 in fees that you didn't bill to anyone.

It may also have cost you 15 more hours away from your family and friends, and that is time that many folks would consider to be literally priceless.

Time Management – the personal angle

The point here is that time management goes beyond knowing the monetary value of your time – your personal time also has value.

And, you must understand that each hour of your day does not necessarily have the same value. You cannot always use money or profits as the overriding factor when determining how much your time is worth.

Your life is made up of interests and activities that you do for yourself and for others.

Basing your time merely on the amount of money you might have made or saved is missing the big picture.

Have you ever heard someone answer the question "if you had 6 months to live, what would you do" with the answer "make more money"?

No, me neither!

Unless they had serious financial worries about their family, most people would acknowledge that time spent bettering oneself, spent with family and showing interest in others has greater value.

When your child has a school event he wants you to attend or you haven't spent one evening all week to rest up and relax you need to determine the value of your time in the context of living a productive life – not just making money.

Working for yourself – drawing the line

Working at home on your computer has many, many advantages over the traditional drudgery of the nine-to-five, you know that.

But it is equally important to acknowledge that working at home offers the opportunity to work hours that are way too long, to never stop and get away from the slavery of the keyboard.

Thus, it is vitally important to ensure that you ask yourself if the time you spend on certain (non-critical) tasks is worth the sacrifice of time that could be spent doing other things.

While it can be difficult to make decisions about how you use your time when you feel the pressure to perform many tasks, it's not impossible. Take the time to assess your goals and make decisions that reflect them.

In this way, you can find new strategies that make better use of your time.

You should try to identify areas where you should be delegating or outsourcing the work, instead of trying to do everything yourself.

You could try reorganizing your day, centering your schedule only on the most important tasks you need to accomplish while fitting less important tasks around it.

Taking the time to understand the value of your time now is going to save you frustration in the future. The following chapters will help you identify goals, set a schedule and identify habits that may be costing you more than just time.

Chapter 2: Keeping track: Where Does The Time Go?

If you are anything like me, then you've probably tried before to create a 'to-do' list, scheduling some jobs that need to be done and projects that need to be worked on.

You started the day on the right foot, determined to get on top of things right from the go.

Everything goes along great and the morning flies by. All is well, until you make the dreadful mistake of looking at the clock and seeing what time it is! How can that be?

Everything has gone pretty much according to plan and yet you are already hours behind where you should be.

Okay, there were a few phone calls that needed answering, and some bits and pieces that needed tidying up with the websites, but nothing crucial. Oh, and the e-mails that you needed to answer this morning. And, of course, your favorite teams were playing yesterday, so you had to check the scores, of course!

See a pattern emerging here?

But you actually have more time than you think....

Before you blame your scheduling, you need see what other factors affect your day.

You can do this by logging everything you actually do for one week.

Now, this might seem a little counter-productive at first – wasting time writing everything down is just another way of guaranteeing that you fall behind schedule – but do it, because in the long run, it will pay you back a million times over!

It is difficult to appreciate the time you spend on activities that do not contribute to your productivity until you've logged them over a few days.

Creating a log

Create an Excel spreadsheet on your computer and then for the next week, write down exactly what you have done in the last hour, every hour.

Leave nothing out – you will only be cheating yourself if you don't do it correctly!

Also, quickly assess and write down how you feel – energetic, tired, hungry or any other emotion related to productivity that you can identify.

This record does not have to be fantastically detailed but should include every activity, and (particularly) every change of activity, over the course of the week

Listening to your body rhythms

At the end of the week, just a quick glance at your record will enable you to recognize certain patterns.

For example, maybe you often feel tired in the middle of the afternoon? Now that you recognize this fact, you can think about doing something to deal with it.

Almost certainly, you will be amazed at the length of time you spent on menial and pointless tasks than you never really thought about before. How much time did you waste on things that were not really business related at all?

Also, look at how many other people used up your time (phone calls and emails, for example)?

Finding these patterns can help you plan your activities so they fit better with your natural rhythms.

Perhaps you find getting through the afternoon (or getting started in the morning) to be the most draining.

Is it possible to schedule your most challenging projects or meetings when you are most alert and energetic? Block off this time in your schedule – no calls, no meetings – so that you can accomplish the most work.

Should you stop wasting time?

That might sound like a bit of a silly question, but what I am referring to here is something that many internet marketers seem to be extremely wary of.

That is, the fine art of delegation and outsourcing.

Think about this for a moment.

You've heard of John Reese and Mike Filsaime, right?

If not, run a simple Google search on their names and you will see that they are both multi-millionaires purely from their internet marketing activities.

Do you think that these guys do every little job that needs doing in their business themselves? No, of course not!

They delegate and outsource every single task that they can.

How do they or, more importantly, how do you decide what tasks to delegate?

Well, let's go back to our earlier example of your internet marketing business time being worth \$30 per hour.

Say you have a tedious, boring task that will take two hours to complete, which you can delegate or outsource to someone to do for \$50.

Assuming that you have work to do that will make \$60 in that same two hour period, then it makes good sense financially (and mentally) to get someone else to do the boring, menial job for you.

Of course, you want to want to keep on top of things, but sticking with a totally 'hands on' approach in these circumstances is clearly a false economy!

If you identify with this problem (and you are working online, so I know that you do) then the answer is simple:

Delegate and outsource whenever possible, and strive to make it possible as often as you can.

Using the correct tools for the job!

Outsourcing and delegation is effective, but it is actually less than half the answer for an online entrepreneur.

Sure, you can outsource your web page design, your article writing and even your link building.

Heck, you can even get someone to answer your email for you, as long as you know that there is nothing confidential likely to land in your inbox.

Unfortunately, there are some tasks that you just cannot delegate or outsource, at least, not if you want your business to thrive long term.

For example, would you delegate the job of logging into your PayPal, Clickbank and AdSense accounts for you, to check how much money is in there?

Assuming you are a sane, rational person the answer is obviously a resounding NO!

So, that is a job that only you can do.

But that does not mean that you should waste unnecessary time doing it.

Get the right tools for the job, and you can reduce the time wasted dramatically, as you are just about to discover.

Stop wasting time online – a three step plan

There are three specific ways that anyone who works online can waste their time, and by doing so, lose money as well. There are also specific ways that each of these three time wasters can be addressed:

The things that don't need doing.

Although you may want to check the sports results, or read the latest news on Yahoo or MSN, you don't need to do those things during working hours. It's as if you sit and read the morning paper for half an hour after you arrive at the office – enjoyable, but totally unnecessary. Don't do it, or at least, cut it down to a minimum (set yourself a target of gradually 'weaning' yourself off it, bit by bit, each day)

Things that need doing, but you don't have to do them.

Exactly what we were talking about above. Delegate and outsource whenever possible. If you want to be the next John Reese or Mike Filsaime then start acting like them right now – that's the first step!

Chapter 3: Setting Long And Short Term Goals

One of the key ingredients for successfully managing your time is identifying your own personal goals.

Goals and objectives are particularly important when you are making a living online because, without goals and often with no-one else to guide you or push you in the right direction, it is extremely easy to find yourself adrift and aimless.

The easiest way to highlight this is to view your daily business activities as designed to take you on a journey to a place where you want to be, but that place has to be a specific somewhere – it cannot just be anywhere.

It's like driving off in your car with absolutely no idea of where you are headed!

If you don't know where you are going, why are you leaving at all?

Goals and objectives are what will keep you motivated and focused – both essential to being productive.

What do goals have to do with time management?

Once you know where you want your life to be in one year, or in ten years, then it should have an impact on everything that you do today and every day.

With a long term goal in place, you can create a series of short term goals which are the 'stepping stones' that you need to pass, in order to get to the ultimate objective that you have established for yourself.

Not only does this idea of short term objectives leading to long term goals make practical sense (i.e.: getting accepted to University is a shorter term goal than becoming a partner in a law firm) it also helps you from becoming overwhelmed or losing sight of why you do what you do every day.

By beginning to actively manage your time, you accept that there is a limited supply available to every one of us and that, because of the scarcity involved, it is incredibly valuable.

While the responsibilities of making sure that everything you do online makes enough money naturally dictates how you plan your day, you should never lose sight of the 'big picture' that is, the achievement of your ultimate goals.

When you start planning your time with a long term goal in mind, it is easier to appreciate the benefits of what you are doing on a daily basis.

This helps prevent you from getting caught up in time wasters – activities that use up your time but are ultimately unprofitable either in monetary terms or in your personal life.

Setting sensible goals and objectives

If you are currently struggling to reach your first \$100 in your internet marketing efforts, then you cannot realistically expect to make \$1M this year!

Take it one step at a time.

Once you hit the first \$100, you should then aim for \$500.

Achieve that and then aim for \$2,000, then \$5,000 and so on.

Take it one step at a time, but don't aim for purely linear growth.

That is, from \$100 do not aim for \$200, then \$300, and so on.

Aim to grow exponentially, that is from \$100 go to \$500 (a jump of \$400) then \$2,000 (the jump now is \$1,500) and so on. Achieve a bigger improvement every time, and pretty soon your \$1M target should become a reality!

At the same time, realize that there is more to life than work.

Take some time to figure out exactly what you'd like to be doing with your life as an integral part of your long term objective setting scenario.

For example, you might find that your work time is eating into the time you want to spend with your family.

Identifying your goals in both your working and social life will help you make decisions to make better use of your time.

Creating your long term goals

Long term goals don't necessarily have to be boringly realistic, but what does need to be realistic is the plan for your journey that is your attempt to get there.

If you want to have an online business that makes \$10 million a year in five years time, great, as long as you have a reasonable plan as to how you might get to that point.

Long term goals help you see beyond today's often mundane work and remind you that there is a greater purpose for the time you are spending.

Every time you find a task troublesome, long term objectives will allow you to think about how doing the work benefits you in the long term.

This long term planning should help you to turn your daily tasks into choices, and this can ease some of the burden that comes along with boring work.

On the other hand, if you realize that many of the time consuming activities that you do actually have no bearing on reaching your goals, then you have to do everything you can to reduce the time you spend on them.

Your long term goal may be to spend more time with your family.

A logical step towards spending more time with your family would be to plan to spend less time glued to the keyboard.

Think of it like working part time, instead of full time

Think about it in these terms, and then make a concrete, long term plan as to when it will happen. Write down the date this will take effect and put it on your calendar.

It may be that these goals will take two years to achieve, but the important thing is to pick a very specific date. Perhaps put it where you can see it every day, so you are constantly reminded of where you are going!

Setting short term goals

It should now follow that your short terms goals will really be an intrinsic part of the long term goals that you have set for yourself.

For example, continuing with the idea of working less and being with your family more, you should have a plan that is set out step by step.

Especially if you can make more money while working less, cutting down on effort while boosting your income.

Working smarter, not harder, in other words!

But transitioning from the theoretical to the practical might not be so straightforward, and, often times, it can be easy to get too 'tied up' in what you are doing right now.

You might have certain projects that you want to complete before you can even take a small step in the right direction.

For example, let's say that your particular internet niche is software creation and that you are in the process of building a complete suite of software programs that are all interdependent on one another. Thus, it is not a job that you can leave half completed.

Perhaps you might promise yourself that once the whole suite is completed, you will begin to cut down your hours.

You might decide to become far more selective about what new software assignments you can handle or decide to take on an assistant so you can focus on the main business and get help in handling the more minor tasks.

Such short term goals will help you measure your progress towards your long term goal.

They will shape how you plan your time and clarify the VALUE of your time. Make your goals specific and give them a date to be completed.

5 simple steps to having achievable objectives.

Although many of the points highlighted in this report are specific to those earning a living online, the 5 P's of goal setting apply to each and every one of us.

Prioritize: You may have many goals. Prioritize them on your list.

Positive: Be precise. "I will have dinner with my family three nights a week" rather than "I will be home earlier"

Performance: Measure your performance. Set time for starting and completing your goal. "May 1 – I will not work past 8pm any night this week"

Practical: Make sure that your goals are practical. Do you have the control to make this work or do you rely on other people to meet your goal?

Personal: Is this goal a personal goal or something someone else wants you to achieve?

Good time management is considerably easier when you can motivate yourself and thus judge the true value of your time. The 5 P's are designed to make sure that you stay suitably motivated at all times, thus making the task of achieving your goals easier too.

The importance of having an action plan

Now that you have all your goals and objectives clearly established, it is time to work out how you will achieve them. This is where having a clear action plan comes into play.

When you run an online business, the basis of any action plan is more than likely to be very simple.

I'd guess it would be, 'Make the business more profitable!'

Everything that you do should be aimed at achieving this, and thus, your short term goals will be tied in very closely with the overall plan.

Now that you have made yourself conscious of where you are headed (long term goal) and have set up your 'step-by-step' guide posts (short term goals) it will merely mean implementing an action plan to get your time on track.

Use your short term goals to implement your action plan.

If you are not making radical changes but are just trying to take the stress out of your day you will find the time you took to think about your goals may be enough to keep your priorities in order.

If you find that you need to refocus on your goals you will need to give each short term goal a date to start or complete – write it down.

The action plan combined with a focused long and short term goals will help you appreciate the overall effects of valuing your time.

Use the available tools and resources!

Part of your action plan should include a summary of the resources you need to meet your goals.

An assistant is a resource, more education is a resource, and a supportive friend or family member is a resource.

List the resources you need to obtain and include them in your action plan – when will you get them and how will they be obtained?

In fact, working online has one huge ‘bonus’ to offer in terms of resources. That is, whatever job it is that you are doing, there is almost always a ‘tool’ – software, guide books or even instructional videos and audios – that will help you get it done more quickly or efficiently.

In almost every area of your business, it is possible to save additional time by using software and technology to ‘cut corners’ and to automate simple, every day tasks.

For example, many people who are operating their own online business have disorganized computers.

Files are routinely lost, placed in the wrong folders and so on.

Finding them is a clear cut timewaster, so make an effort to get organized now!

If you are using either Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox as your browser, then there is a Google search bar available for both that will considerably speed up your search capabilities.

Just run a search for ‘free Google toolbar’ and you’ll find it.

If you download a lot of file or folders, then you should consider using a download manager (or download accelerator, as they are sometimes called) as a way of speeding the process up.

Even good old Microsoft Outlook has some pretty good organizing tools, so there really is no excuse to be disorganized.

The bottom line is, almost every job that you do on the net can be automated to some extent.

If you are trying to build a mailing list, you must, absolutely must, use an autoresponder to assist you. The best one is called aweber:

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

Even in specific ‘niches’ of internet marketing, there are tools available that will help you cut down dramatically on the time you waste on mundane, trivial tasks. Do a little research and read reviews of the different tools available and make an educated choice--these efforts will do wonders for your overall productivity.

Review and update

Writing goals down is an effective tool for managing your time. But, you will still need to review and update them occasionally.

For example, it's a given that nothing ever goes exactly the way that you plan.

New and unexpected information will always come along to alter your planning.

Use this new information to reassess your objectives.

Are they still attainable 'as is', or do you need to adjust them – either by lengthening the time or changing the outcome – and devising a new action plan?

Chapter 4: Scheduling: making the most of your time

When all is said and done, making money on the internet is a business pretty much like any other.

Running any business requires discipline, and so, before you determine that you can't live by a schedule, just take a moment to consider what happens when you don't.

The 80/20 Rule

The 80/20 rule is a common ratio used to determine performance versus resources.

It is based on the general assumption that you use 80% of your resources (time, money, skill) to achieve 20% of your performance. The opposite is also true – you use 20% of your resources to achieve 80% of your results. Nobody can expect to be 100% productive 100% of the time.

We all have our most productive times of the day, as well as activities and abilities that are the most productive for us, in terms of the money that they generate.

Armed with this information, you must now take those most productive times of the day and schedule your top producing activities into those times. Then, make the completion of those tasks a priority.

In this way, you've already attained one of the 'holy grails' of every internet marketer – that is, working smarter, not harder.

The 'To-Do' list

The 'to-do' list is not just for list making junkies.

If you find that tasks are not being accomplished on time or even forgotten, then you need a 'to-do' list.

How detailed you make your list is up to you, but every task that you need to accomplish should have the following recorded with it:

- When does it need to be completed?
- How long will it take to do?
- How important is it?
- When will I do it?

At the end of every day, sit down and make your list for the following day. Then, prioritize the tasks on that list according to importance.

Be realistic with your objectives, and give each task at least 50% more time to complete than you originally think it will need.

In this way, you will know that as soon as you start your work day you will know exactly what needs doing and when.

If you have booked some uninterrupted time you should have no problem accomplishing your highest priority tasks.

Tasks that do not get completed will be reassigned for another day, delegated to someone else or removed from your list.

Get in the habit of creating a 'To-Do' list each day.

Prioritizing

Not every task can be completed in a day.

Your schedule will just become another 'task' in your day, unless you learn to prioritize.

Prioritizing ensures that what NEEDS to be done is done first.

When you find that something needs doing, add it to the list.

Number the tasks on your list so that number '1' is most important and work down from there.

Take your top three priorities and schedule them into your weekly or monthly planner.

Write down your deadline (always a few days earlier than is actually the case) and block off time to get it done.

If your task requires collaboration with others, schedule that too. You may have to make some appointments and it is important to write those down as well so that you don't overbook your time.

After the top three priorities have been given their spots in your schedule, start adding the others.

Always schedule the most important tasks first.

Make sure that your schedule leaves enough time to manage day-to-day activities like reading email, returning phone calls, moderating blog comments and so on.

Again, allocate 50% more time to finish each task than you think necessary.

Each day will now have a list of scheduled activities that take into account the priority of individual tasks.

Use this to create your daily 'to-do' list.

Keep low priority tasks in their place.

As you see your schedule filling up with high priority tasks, you will need to make some decisions about your low-priority tasks.

If you have scheduled low-priority tasks into your day but have had to move them onto the following day's to-do list they will quickly become bigger and more of a priority, as you continue to put them off.

One way to prevent this is to use the 'one more task' philosophy. Every day, try to do one more task than you planned or scheduled. Just writing one more blog post or creating one more article will keep these tasks from becoming daunting.

You can even decide to outsource the activities that should be delegated. Dealing with and completing these seemingly minor tasks keeps your work moving along. If, on the other hand, they are ignored, it can cause a huge interference.

Minor issues quickly become major ones if not dealt with in a timely fashion. You will be negating the positive effects of time management by not dealing with these issues right away.

Conclusion: More than a schedule...some final thoughts

Goals, action plans, to-do lists and schedules will all combine to help you make the most of your time.

But there is something else you need to do, and only YOU can do this.

You must commit.

What does commitment mean?

It means that you must WANT to take charge of your time.

You must understand the value of the hours in a day and you must want them spent in the most productive way possible.

Handled correctly, this means that you will get your work done early and produce better quality. You will spend your time as YOU decide and your personal life will be spent focusing on your family and friends instead of your work.

Some simple ‘success secrets’...

- Don't waste your time.
- Don't wait around or pursue time consuming activities that give you little benefit. Don't let phone calls, e-mails or online 'chats' interrupt your work flow.
- Save time by getting and using the tools that are available to you-- autoresponders like [Aweber](#), online organizers and to-do list creators, and so on.
- Prepare and Plan.
Nothing wastes time like lack of direction. Plan your goals and activities and prepare others for your expectations. Expect delays and plan to have extra time to accommodate them.
- Know Your Work Habits.
Find out when you work best and work during those hours. What activities affect how productive you are? Watch for and get rid of habits that are unproductive. Delegate or remove tasks whenever possible.
- Be a Problem Solver.
- Complaining wastes time. Find a solution or find help and get it done.
- Get the Hard Work Done First.
- Don't procrastinate. Start with the difficult work first, so you can relax with the easy tasks. Work that remains undone will drain you of energy and slow your progress.
- Review Your Progress.

Compare what you have done with what you planned to do. What worked? What made you feel good? What could have been done better?

- And lastly, remember that busy does not necessarily equal productive. You don't just want to get the work finished, you want it done right. You don't need to complete EVERY task, just arrange for someone to deal with the tasks you don't want to do or decide that they do not need doing. You will be judged on how well and timely your work was done, not by how many hours you worked.

Extras: Time Management worksheets

Use the following worksheets and follow the outlined procedures.

ACTION PLAN:

Write out both your long term goal and your short term goals. List the tasks necessary to complete them both.

Give definite times and dates to start and complete your goals. List the resources you will need to accomplish them.

Use your action plan to schedule the tasks needed to accomplish your goals.

Review it to determine if you are meeting your goals or have allowed other activities and tasks to take over your time.

ACTIVITY LOG:

Use one sheet per day and for one week log the daily activities you do and how you feel. List the START times of each activity and write down a new start time each time you change activities.

While you do not have to state your mood for each activity try to establish a pattern by listing at least every hour how you feel: tired, hungry, excited, stressed etc. The more detailed your log the easier it will be to see patterns emerge.

ACTION PLAN

Long Term Goal: _____

Short Term Goal-A: _____

TASK	DATE START	DATE FINISH	RESOURCES

Short Term Goal-B: _____

TASK	DATE START	DATE FINISH	RESOURCES

