

The Top 10 **Time Wasters**

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Time is a very precious resource. The fact is that regardless of how well you manage time, at the end of a day, you will still only have had 24 hours. In one year there are still only 8,760 hours. The key is using your time efficiently and eliminating time wasters from your day. Your attitudes and behaviors effect how you use your time. Below are some examples of ineffective use of time. By substituting what's not working for you with a more effective behavior and/or attitude you're on the road to managing your time.

1. INTERRUPTIONS/DISTRACTIONS

If you have a constant stream of well-intentioned colleagues, subordinates and/or family members interrupting your concentration and focus, stop them by communicating when it's okay to interrupt and when it's clearly not.

2. POOR PLANNING.

Planning is so critical when you want to accomplish something. Planning in advance provides direction before proceeding toward a goal.

3. PERFECTIONISM

Although perfectionism is a behavior it's also an attitude. By striving toward progress rather than perfection, you will free up a lot of your time and energy.

4. PROCRASTINATION

Like perfectionism, procrastination also is both a behavior and an attitude. Waiting until the last minute or otherwise putting things off tends to create a crisis or problems that may not otherwise exist. In addition, by not doing something you're procrastinating about, you also end up wasting considerable time worrying about how much you're procrastinating. Just do it.

5. TRYING TO DO EVERYTHING YOURSELF

Taking on the world all by yourself will not serve you or the people around you. Learn to say "no" and to delegate tasks others can do for you (even if it's not up to your standards).

6. TAKING ON TOO MUCH.

Biting off more than you can chew is a prime example of taking on too much. Not having strong clearly communicated boundaries is another example. You do not need to volunteer to be on every project, organization, taskforce, association, etc.

7. CRISIS MANAGEMENT

A crisis is an unforeseen emergency. By planning and asking yourself whether or not something is truly urgent, what will happen if it's not handled immediately, you will eliminate a great deal of this fire fighting behavior. Remember the old adage, "haste makes waste".

8. TOO MUCH SOCIALIZING

Although we all love to have friends and enjoy our relationships, by allowing yourself too much freedom in this area you'll wind up spending a large percentage of your 'work' time socializing and will be pressing to meet deadlines.

9. NOT VALUING YOUR OWN TIME.

Others will not respect or value your time if you don't send the message that your time is important. Watch your actions, behaviors and commitments--are they communicating the right message?

10. LACK OF SKILLS

Organizing, prioritizing, decision-making and problem solving skills are all critical in supporting effective use of time. Strengthen these skills and you'll see a remarkable difference in how you use your time.

About the Author:

Natalie Gahrman is a dynamic keynote speaker, workshop/seminar leader, author, trainer and a leadership coach certified through the International Coach Federation. She combines life experiences and extensive training to motivate others to achieve better results, unlock creativity and gain personal fulfillment in their work and personal life. She specializes in working with Executives, Entrepreneurs, Aspiring Leaders, Working Moms, and SuperBusy Parents seeking to have a more satisfying and fulfilling personal, professional and/or family life. She has appeared worldwide in a variety of publications, newspapers, online, radio and TV as an expert in work/life issues. For more tips, advice and resources see "Succeeding as A Super Busy Parent: 75 Practical Tips for Balancing Life, Love, Kids, and Career" (Infinity Publishing, 2002) and visit <http://www.superbusyparent.com>. To subscribe to our free weekly e-newsletter for working parents, send a blank email to superbusyparent-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.