

# 10 STEPS

# TO SUCCESSFUL

# Time

# [Management]

- 
- 1. FORGET THE MYTH - BEING BUSY ISN'T BEING PRO
  - 2. MANAGE YOUR ENERGY  
MANAGE YOUR LIFE

Cyndi Maxey • Kevin E. O'Connor

**1 0   S T E P S   T O**

Successful

Time Management

# 1 0   S T E P S   T O   S U C C E S S

Let's face it: Most people spend their days in chaotic, fast-paced, time- and resource-strained organizations. Finding time for just one more project, assignment, or even learning opportunity—no matter how career enhancing or useful—is difficult to imagine. The *10 Steps* series is designed for today's busy professional who needs advice and guidance on a wide array of topics ranging from project management to people management, from business strategy to decision making and time management, from leading effective meetings to researching and creating a compelling presentation. Each book in this ASTD series promises to take its readers on a journey to solid understanding, with practical application the ultimate destination. This is truly a just-tell-me-what-to-do-now series. You will find action-driven language teamed with examples, worksheets, case studies, and tools to help you quickly implement the right steps and chart a path to your own success. The *10 Steps* series will appeal to a broad business audience from middle managers to upper-level management. Workplace learning and human resource professionals along with other professionals seeking to improve their value proposition in their organizations will find these books a great resource.

1 0   S T E P S   T O

# Successful Time Management



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Alexandria, Virginia

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2009935478 (print edition only)  
Print edition ISBN: 978-1-56286-718-8  
PDF e-book print edition ISBN: 978-1-60728-361-4

2010-1

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# P R E F A C E

*We save minutes with techniques.*

*We save moments with strategies.*

*We save memories with a mindset.*

Our goal as consultants is not to save you time. Rather, it is to save your life—the life you want to live while everything else is getting in your way. Our goal for you in reading this book is not that you will become the master of time but that it will not master you. Our goal for this book is to help you figure out what is most important so you can use your time wisely and productively.

To accomplish these goals, we use what we like to call “an uncommon approach to the common sense of life today,” inspired by our favorite teachers and mentors: Viennese psychiatrist Alfred Adler, Chicago psychiatrist Rudolf Dreikurs, and High Point University president Nido Qubein. We have also asked expert colleagues in the field of human development and other learning development professionals to provide their best time tips for trainers and people developers. You’ll find their practical and unique ideas throughout the book, along with the best ideas from classic time scholars. It is our intent that the masters will be your teachers, as they have been for us.

If you prefer more of an “over-the-shoulder” view of what we as coaches learn from our clients’ challenges with time, you will enjoy the Coach’s Corner throughout the book. These are real questions and answers about time and life management that we’ve encountered. Perhaps you’ll see one of your own among them. Here is an example:

### **Coach’s Corner**

**Q:** My to-do list is never-ending. Each day, my tasks—no matter how much I do—are replaced within 24 hours by more. Should my to-do list follow me to the grave?

**A:** It probably will. Like time poorly used, the list is just a list and ours to use, ignore, or misuse. Here is an idea. Consider using your to-do list as a project blueprint. That way, instead of checking off boxes, you can work from a plan in the same way a building contractor constructs a home.

Group your activities into errands, work, family (and alone) time, study, and so on. Then put each activity into one of those bigger groups. Of course, the details will change from day to day, but your beam, your focus, the “home” you are constructing will remain the same. For some, this grouping helps maintain focus and reduces anxiety.

Another approach is from Qubein. Rather than a to-do list, also have a “to be” list. What do you want most in life? What needs to change? What is your bucket list of things to do before you die (or really start living)? What is your legacy? What do you want it to be?

Finally, the key to time well used will always be organization. Use a daily 3 x 5 card to quickly take notes of situations that occur to you. Later, put the notes in your organizer. A helpful online tool that is also a free application file (app) available for smartphones is [www.rememberthemilk.com](http://www.rememberthemilk.com). Another tool can be found at [www.daytimer.com](http://www.daytimer.com), which is a well-established time management company that produces many useful items both electronic and in print to keep us all at our best. Find one that is simple and easy-to-use and actually works for you. This is a personal decision. Any system works as long as you work it.

The key to the to-do list is organizing toward a goal, not simply checking items off a list each day. While one supports a life well intended and well lived, the other simply shows a calendar with an “X” drawn through each day as if you live in a cell. In the end, what do you want your legacy to be?

As you read this book, we wish you a great adventure—one in which you can live the life you want within the time you have. This book is not meant to be a book of mere techniques and tactics, though you will find plenty. It is not meant solely to save you time, though most certainly you will. Rather, it is a book about what is most important in your life.

And it's about time we all thought differently about that!

Although the 10 steps in the following pages will help you master the complications and the joys of the 168 hours you have every week, we can summarize this entire book for you right now: self-regulation. Bad things happen in anyone's life, including major misfortunes and even occasional disasters, but the fact is that the key to surviving these times is a deep understanding of one's inner authority, inner power, and choice making. Even when faced with a child's (or boss's) temper tantrum, one can take heart with Dr. Dreikurs' famous advice for parents: "Take your sail out of their (children's) wind."

## POINTER

The great French Marshall Lyautey once asked his gardener to plant a tree. The gardener objected that the tree was slow growing and would not reach maturity for 100 years. The Marshall replied, "In that case, there is no time to lose; plant it this afternoon!"

—John F. Kennedy

(1917–1963)

In life, how often do you fall prey to the easy victim mentality of "poor little old me?" When you feel overwhelmed, ambushed, besieged, busy, overwrought, rushed, and stressed, the victim mentality is an easy and seductive mindset to adopt. But successful, happy people enjoy something their less happy counterparts do not; they control the parts of their lives that they can. The famous Alcoholics Anonymous movement advocates control in all but the first of its 12 steps, which states that the alcoholic must admit he or she is "powerless" over the effects of alcohol. Each ensuing step constructs the result of following step one—a life plan based on self-power, self-regulation, self-control, and self-responsibility.

## How Do You “Really” Spend Your Time?

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In the same way that some dieters lose weight simply by keeping a record of what they eat, meticulously recording exactly what they eat, you can do the same with time.

As you begin this book you might find it helpful to keep a very accurate record of how you spend your time. Attorneys do this daily to bill their clients, and they do it in 15-minute segments, looking back and recording how they spent the last quarter hour and for whom.

So...pick some major categories of your life: work, family, children, leisure, TV, friends, and so forth. Keep meticulous records of these categories for one week. Then analyze if that is how you want to spend your time. On week two, notice what is changing, better, different.

As simple as this may sound, you may find what many others have found: when you pay attention you become aware and when you are aware you can change things.

---

Our culture, however, is less enthusiastic about self-regulation. Consider the last time you heard someone blame, bemoan, or judge rather than take responsibility for his or her own actions. How often have you witnessed road rage? How often did you hear about someone who “deserved” special treatment, different and apart from the others? When Kevin’s children attended Montessori School, the teacher warned parents that responsibility was to be taught and practiced daily. “If your child forgets his or her lunch, you as the parent can bring it to school if you wish, but we won’t give it to your child.” Rather, the teacher continued, “We will ask the class to look into their lunches and offer one item to help their classmate.” (Most children only forgot once, because every offering from the other lunches was usually the least desirable item!)

If it is to be, it is up to me. This may be common sense, but in our culture, it is easy wisdom to forget.

May you use the next 168 hours in the way you want.

*Cyndi Maxey, CSP*

*Kevin O’Connor, CSP*

## What You'll Find in This Book

This book is really only about one thing: changing the way you look at time to harness your energy. We often see time as the enemy, as an outside force, as a pressure. We'd like you to look at time differently, and in the pages that follow we hope to help you change your mindset about time!

### **Step 1: Forget the Myth—Being Busy Isn't Being Productive—**

Your mindset is what really counts in time management. Some think “busy” is good, some think it is bad, and others are too busy to think about it. Control the way you think about time and yourself, and you will be far ahead of the clock that races after you.

**Step 2: Manage Your Energy; Manage Your Life—**Although all of us can certainly save minutes and moments with techniques and strategies, what is essential is that we manage our energy and our focus. What you spend time on in the beginning will help you make the most of your time.

**Step 3: Be Useful and Stick to the Purpose—**Have you ever wondered why you do what you do? Ever been caught in a spiral of things you have to do? Ever wondered what it all really added up to? Worse, have you found that you are focused on perfection each and every time? Purpose and usefulness will help a lot!

**Step 4: Maintain Clarity and Move Forward—**Saving time may be a bit of a myth when it comes to knowing what is most important. Many find just how important things are when the tough times

come—sickness, loss of a job, financial issues. Knowing and doing what is important is . . . important!

**Step 5: Manage to Your Advantage**—Identifying your priorities is the key to making the best use of your time. Learn to ask the right questions first.

**Step 6: Pay Attention to Your Key Contacts**—Knowing who your most important contacts are and focusing attention on them is vital to your success. Learn effective ways to communicate and work with your main contacts.

**Step 7: Connect and Get the Most From Your Time**—Connection is far different than communication: yet we work with words all day long, emailing, texting, and talking. How many people truly “connect”?

**Step 8: Understand the Forces That Affect Your Use of Time and Energy**—Instead of managing time, stay focused on energy and engagement.

**Step 9: Focus on What Is Significant**—Selection of your life is a critical element to satisfaction. While some toil for retirement, others know that life is now.

**Step 10: Make Time Your Friend**—Time is inside of you and is under your control. Be wary of placing too much burden on yourself by the measure of others. In this final chapter, we help you contribute to your organization without being dominated by it.

# A C K N O W L E D G M E N T S

For our editor, Mark Morrow, who inspired us to think more closely about time and energy. For our mentor, Nido Qubein, who always helps us think differently about that which is so easy to take for granted. For the great psychiatrists, Alfred Adler and Rudolf Dreikurs, whose groundbreaking work in the field of human relations is felt more than 100 years later. For Julie Kaiser, whose expertise made the words come together. For all the dedicated friends and professionals who allowed us to quote their best tips for successful time management. And for our best teachers—our clients—who let us know every day how precious that day is in terms of how they use their time, unleash their energy, and make a difference to all who come into contact with them—including us!

# D E D I C A T I O N

For all my Chicagoland Chapter ASTD friends and colleagues, who since 1982 have taught me the value of time dedicated to caring professional, volunteer, and family relationships. Thank you especially to Janet Frazer, Darlene Dunmore, Barry Lyerly, Ed Gordon, and Stan Piskorski, who trusted me when I was new to the field, and in memory of Larry Kennedy, who introduced me to ASTD.

—Cyndi Maxey

For my colleague, mentor, and friend, Bob Gilbert.  
Like many of us, Bob is often on time and often not on time; always however giving the gift of focused time, attention, and energy to others with obvious and enduring respect. This is the mark of service, growth, and leadership.

—Kevin E. O'Connor

# Forget the Myth— Being Busy Isn't Being Productive

## OVERVIEW

Avoid “activity addiction”

Master the “meet, met, meat” principle

Get more out of your time through self-reflection

“How are you?”

Do you find when you ask a friend or colleague how she is, she frequently responds, “Busy, really busy!” Sometimes it is hard to tell if she is exasperated, distracted, or proud. Although

our lives can certainly be demanding, fast paced, and hurried, “busy” has become a nondescriptive word similar to the often related nondescriptive answer, “fine.” Both “fine” and “busy” cover up the truth of what is really going on. This step’s goal is to illuminate the truths and dispel the myths of being busy while making sure that the person in charge of your time and life is you.

## “I’m Really Busy”

A friend or colleague’s pained yet often proud expression, “I’m really busy!” leaves us wondering how to respond. If we probe with, “And how’s that working for you?” we set ourselves up for

## POINTER

Some people blame others for their problems or bad moods. There's just one problem with this. Others get the blame; they keep the problem. It is when we take full responsibility for the creation of every single moment and every single thing in our lives that we are truly free.

—Jim Accetta, MA, MCC

*Inspirational Speaker, Author, Personal Life Coach*

a barrage of cities traveled, deadlines, family events, and a panoply of time-consuming issues that amount to “busy-ness”—occupied time that is neither free nor necessarily meaningful.

## POINTER

Do you want your physician to be busy when he or she examines you? How about if your boss was distracted during your performance appraisal? Do you want his complete attention, or is it OK if he “multitasks” in your presence? Or how about when you really want to talk with your parents and they are “busy!”?

Too often, a busy person is an overwhelmed one, on a treadmill, expending energy, and going nowhere. Do you really admire all of this “busy-ness”? Do you really admire busy people? Should you admire them or pity them? Are you, too, among the “really” busy ones? Could it be you have become addicted to activity regardless of the outcome? Did you ever wonder if all the emails, voicemails, and endless to-do lists are necessary?

You've heard many colleagues brag about the 50, 75, 100, 200, or more emails they receive each day. Is this productivity or merely the appearance of productivity? A common example is when you strive to clean out your email inbox—not just to read the emails but to get some subconscious relief. While doing so, you've made your company no money, you've advanced your agenda not one iota further, and you've not really connected with anyone or anything.

## Identify Who's in Charge of Your Life

In the early 1900s, the great Viennese psychiatrist Alfred Adler speculated that all we do is purposeful. We behave the way we do because it suits our purpose—sometimes a purpose that we are unaware of at the time. For example, children sometimes misbehave to annoy us, but their actions are not so much to annoy as to catch and demand our attention. Sometimes adolescents don't complete their homework, not so much out of rebellion or boredom but rather out of fear of failure. “If I don't try, I can't fail!” says their inner thinking. When you are busy and when you multitask, could it be that you are really just procrastinating?

We recently surveyed three groups of high-level managers with a simple question: “What percentage of your meetings are total wastes of your time?” The majority responded that 40–50 percent of their meetings were a complete waste of time; one responded 20 percent but then told us he was new and only had to attend two meetings per month (lucky him!). These managers were probably not the only ones who thought the meetings were a waste of time. And yet, who speaks up? Who breaks the pattern? And why don't they?

How about you? What has your life been like lately? Who is in charge of it?

POINTER

Regret and fear are the twin thieves that rob us of today.

—Unknown

### 10 Important Reminders and Other Life Realities

Here are some reminders and realities to dispel the myth of busyness and to double-check that the person in charge of your life is you.

- ◆ **It is easier to be busy than to be productive.** When is the last time a friend or colleague answered, “Productive!” to your “How are you?” question? Yet it is well known that

the words you use affect your thoughts as much as your thoughts affect your words. Try describing your day as “pleasantly productive,” “a blend of creative and practical stuff,” “best one this week,” “nice,” “beautiful,” or anything other than “busy.” See what kind of response you get. You can begin with a story or an example when you find that the description of your day is becoming boring and routine. For example, when asked how his day was going recently, one of our clients responded, “Organized chaos!” Then he went on with a concise story telling us about the organized part and the part that was chaos. He ended by saying, “And I like it that way.”

- ◆ **Email is addictive.** How much time did you spend staring at your email today? Worse, how many colleagues did you automatically “copy” with everything in your inbox? How satisfied do you feel about just getting through your emails when instead you should be asking the ultimate question: “What did reading my emails accomplish for me today?” You can get through many emails and not make a dime for the cause, not increase membership by a single person, and not really move the enterprise forward one bit. It’s not because you have poor intentions, rather it is because you are using email the wrong way. Like a student

“studying” for a test by staring at a book, you are thinking wrongly from the start. What if you saw emails as a connection or intersection and not as an inbox? Would you treat some of the mail differently? What if your email was your town square? Thinking this way, your job is not to get through with the task, but rather to get through to the person. You save time when you connect with email rather than merely respond to it.

## POINTER

Connection and influence happen when

- I feel listened to
- I feel you are interested in me
- I feel you have helped me focus
- I feel encouraged.

—*American Psychiatric Association*

- ◆ **Returning voicemails is an adult form of “tag, you’re it.”** Have you played that game? Or do you give every voicemail a headline up front, along with a concise, thorough answer to what you want next and the best way to get back to you? Voicemail only works when you prepare for it in advance and use it to move forward, not to play a game of tag. Like email, everyone listening to a voicemail has two questions he or she wants answered before deciding to cooperate with you:

- ◆ What is this?
- ◆ What does it have to do with me?

Answer those questions early and often, and you will certainly be a “connector” . . . and you will have time on your hands.

- ◆ **The cell phone is convenient, but it can undermine your ability to focus.** Depending on the audience and those around you, using your cell phone can be unnecessary, unusually rude, or, in some cases, completely unacceptable. Imagine the times you have used your cell phone when the call could have waited. Were you surrounded by others who are on their cell phones and completely out of touch with the here and now? Was it in a restaurant, in an airline terminal, in heavy traffic, in a meeting, at a school conference, or a child’s little league game perhaps? Have you made calls from a public washroom? Are any of us so important that we need to be that accessible? And must the rest of the world listen to us while we think we are that important? Rather, we need to be aware of the need for privacy, the importance of social grace to others, and the influence we have on those who can make or break our careers. They won’t tell us how it affects them, but they will make a career decision based on this and more. Make a break from technology at meetings, especially when your boss and the boss’s boss are there. Never check your electronic device—never! Save time by being fully present to

those in attendance. The perception others have of those who are tech-free (and fully present) is that *they* feel attended to.

- ◆ **When you are late, regardless of the reason, you are probably kidding yourself as to the real reason.** People learn to trust punctual people. Are you late because what you were supposed to be on time for was simply not important to you? When you're late, the reason has to do with your way of choosing priorities, understanding your feelings toward the person or the appointment, and knowing yourself. Traffic is rarely the reason. You are the reason. What if you made a determination today to never be late, even to be there early to use that time to engage, discuss, or plant ideas? What if you saw the brief time before a meeting begins as your networking time or your influencing time?
- ◆ **The leader's job is never to *look busy* but rather to be inquisitive, interested, calmly competent, and respected.** If you have a busy boss, does that really feel like a good thing? Many of the best bosses use the "meet, met, meat" principle. They know that to accomplish anything of substance, they have to *meet* the other person, gain his or her trust, and engage in a relationship. They know that having this meeting will render a memory for the other person that they have *met*. This also burns an image in the mind of the leader that you are important, unforgettable. Finally, leaders remind us of the *meat* that you can share together. This is the substance of your meeting, the thing you can do together now that you have met. What would your chance and arranged meetings be like if you implemented the meet, met, meat method? Adopted in this way, there will never be another meeting, wedding, funeral, or party that is a waste for you . . . as you meet, met, and threw some meat to others.
- ◆ **If you can't connect with me within 24 hours, you are way too busy . . . or think you are.** There is great satisfaction in being able to respond within 24 hours. This

does not mean you have to meet every deadline within 24 hours but simply that you have responded and that others know they have connected with you. Telecommunications today allow fast connections; people know that and expect timely responses more than ever before. Just a note that says, “I received your email and am working on it. I’ll get back to you with details soon” will suffice.

- ◆ **Your quiet time today at work and at home will probably be your most productive time . . . and truthfully, few of us use it enough.** What if you scheduled some right now? Try something other than a “close the door and work” session. How about a “close the door and reflect” session? Creativity experts have long taught the importance of the incubation step for eliciting and evaluating ideas. Early morning reflection or a walk at the end of the day provides quiet time for busy professionals. But what if you go one step further? Instead of doing something, what if instead you planned, thought through, and decided?
- ◆ **Don’t kid yourself, your family, or even your stockholders.** You are neither irreplaceable, nor are you so important that life won’t go on without you. We are surrounded with meaning and with seeming meaninglessness: People die too soon; lives are cut short, incomplete. It is as if whatever we are doing now is extremely important and yet in an instant it can be altered, changed, even over. Awareness is the key that reminds us we are both important and replaceable. Are you truly aware of this tightrope of meaning and meaninglessness that you walk? You are busy, and yet if a loved one is taken to the emergency room, do you really have to think about it? Or worse: Is what you are doing now so very important to you that it could be seen as falsely urgent, addictive, and misguided by those you work with?

Here is one simple time-saving technique: Monitor your smile and your enjoyment of the moment. Those who believe themselves to be superhuman waste an enormous amount of resources focusing on the *what* rather than the *who*.

- ◆ **The busy part of you is not as important as the productive part.** What are your three or four (maximum) goals in your life? If you have to achieve anything with your life, what is it to be? Alan Lakein, author of the classic book *How to Get Control of Your Time and Your Life*, recommends you always ask the “golden question”: What is the best use of my time right now? Try asking yourself that question often during each day. The answers will be surprising.

## Listen to Your Own Rhythms

Physicians have long suggested that we listen to our own natural circadian rhythm. When are you at your best? Some of us truly are morning people. Others really do wake up after dark. Rather than trying to fit things and people into a schedule, how can you build your activities around your own natural best? One of our colleagues snacks throughout the day and then eats lunch after 3:00 p.m. because he says lunch just makes him sleepy.

### POINTER

Gary Richards, an OhioHealth executive, uses the term *activity addiction* when he wants to remind himself of what is important versus what might be just personally satisfying. Just like addictions to food, drugs, thrill seeking, gambling, and alcohol, we can become addicted to meaningless activities when we use them to excess. This addictive quality makes us turn inward rather than outward toward others and toward productivity.

High Point University president Nido Qubein thinks about time differently. Instead of thinking minutes and hours, he manages time in terms of five-minute units or 15-minute segments. If someone wants an hour of his time, he thinks in terms of 12 units or

four segments. This allows him to better determine what the worth of that invested time really is and helps him think less generically about an hour as one of 24 and more as a precious parcel of time right now.

He also considers how the person requesting time really uses that time. Does he typically wait until the last 10 minutes to ask what he really wants from you? Qubein suggests beginning your conversation with, “What do you most want to talk about today?” rather than the typical and generic “How are you doing?” When you take the reins of the conversation from the beginning, you find time more productive.

## Four Plans of Productivity

Consider the diagram in Figure 1.1. You’ll see a broader version of this later in the book. For now, notice the Four Plans associated with your productivity. The circles represent the dynamic forces that you engage in every day. These are the forces that shape your day and your time.

Circle #1 is about your history; your organization’s structure; your family’s past; and the important legacy that every person, event, and organization has that shapes its present and its future.

Circle #2 is your personal experience of life, how you view it, understand it, and make sense of it for yourself. Although you may encounter history and the traditions of others, you have your own perspective. When a friend returns from Europe with stories of the Eiffel Tower, the Tower of London, or even the special coffee shop in Leuven, his or her eyes and words are full of history. When you ask, “How was that for you?” you get an even deeper insight into the trip—that person’s personal experience.

Circle #3 focuses on your professional and personal skills—the toolbox that you carry each and every day. Some of you are the masters of the interpersonal, others of the financial, and still

# FIGURE 1.1

## Four Plans of Productivity



others of how to swing a hammer or operate a construction crane. These skills help you navigate the world. The better you are at these skills, the more effective you are day to day.

Circle #4 is your ability to enter into the world of the other—to engage and cooperate, negotiate and achieve consensus, and educate and develop. These interpersonal interactions and discussions are the sum total of the other three circles but are distinct unto themselves because so much of your life is wrapped around others. The middle circle represents the fruit of your labors. These five circles are dynamic, constantly changing, moving, and interacting. The closer you allow the circles to overlap, the larger your middle circle is—your influence with and over time.

## Build Your Plan

Each circle combined with one other can prompt you to make the first step in your time journey—the plan. The plan is at the heart of a self-regulated life. When you understand the dynamic forces in your life that lead you to productivity and purpose, you can also go about the important business of creating and following the plan—and this puts you in charge of your own world. Have a personal business plan in addition to the real business plan. It will be a critical guide for you—a time saver, a life saver, and a career saver, too.

**Business Plan:** Your personal business plan will primarily be the combination of your knowledge of the business (goals and traditions) and your interactions with others (discussion and dialogue). Every new employee, and even veteran employees after a major change, must engage in understanding the system, the organization, and the people. Without knowledge of the business and your interactions with others, as well as a studied approach, your time will be chaotic as will your business plan.

**Business Forecasting Plan:** What is coming down the road that you need to know will be a combination of the organizational culture, its “system-ness,” and your personal experience in the profession and on the job. Here is where you will find your own personal wisdom. This is why experienced and engaged veterans of the company can provide you with valuable understanding. Retired politicians earn big incomes becoming advisors because they can finally say what they want rather than say what they think others want them to say. Comedian Jay Leno remarked on *The Tonight Show* during the writers’ strike, when few celebrities would cross the picket line to pitch their latest movies, “Now, I can finally tell everyone what I really think of these movies!”

**Personal Plan:** Your personal plan will be an outgrowth of your personal experiences and your professional skills.

This is your value to the organization and to your team. We often advise clients interviewing for a job that they construct a 90-day plan—what are they going to do when they get the job (not if they get it)? Every employer wants to know more of what you will do, not as much of what you have done.

**Professional Plan:** This plan, too, is personal, but comprises your skills and the skills of others in communication with one another. The others may not always want to communicate. They may want to compete, demand, and bully—all the more reasons to have a plan based on skill.

The point is that successful people have a plan that saves them time, money, and effort, and perhaps influences their careers. This book is about making that plan. Worksheet 1.1, at the end of this chapter, can help you build your plan.

## Here's What to Remember

What keeps you going? What probably should? What do you really want? This is the question asked at the beginning of this book. Instead of seeking tips and techniques to save time, you will save your life when you reflect on yourself, your actions, and especially your attitudes.

### Coach's Corner

**Q:** I find many meetings are not necessary. They drag on and on and on. If it is my meeting, I can easily speed things up. What if my boss is running the meeting?

**A:** Consider becoming even more engaged in these meetings. Lead, even if it isn't your meeting. Be alive, awake, and connected, and make motions that inspire action. Hop up and use the flip chart, ask open-ended questions, and summarize often. When it comes time to schedule the next meeting, make some alternative motions. If nothing else, this approach will keep you awake and alert, which is often impressive to bosses and to their bosses.

# WORKSHEET 1.1

## Getting ready to save some time: A personal initial assessment

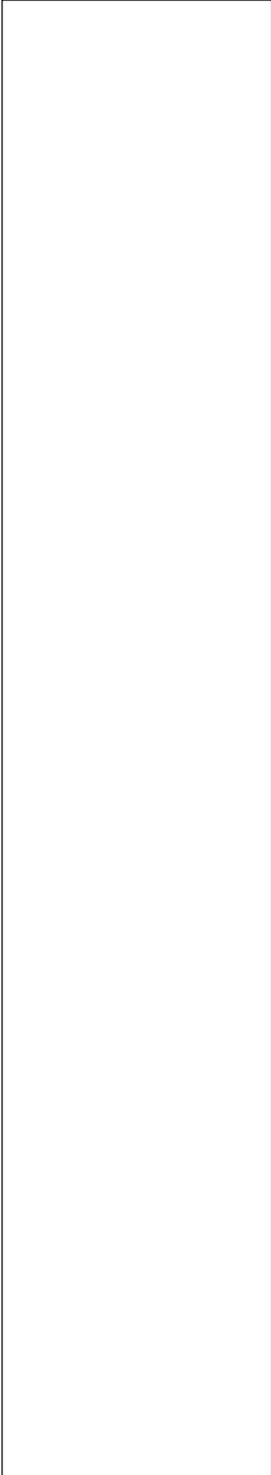
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STEP  
**1**

1. Time saving is like dieting, we do better when we have data. A good dieter knows exactly what he or she ate today and last week because of a food diary. Consider keeping a time/energy diary. For at least one week, note what you did and when, how much time it took, and who else was involved.
  2. Think of the 10 most important people in your personal life and the 25 most important people in your business life and list their names. Over the next month, put a check next to their name each day you personally meet with them, speak to them, or interact with them.
  3. Look at your schedule and your checkbook. Where you spend your time and your money is a keen insight into your future direction in life.
  4. Ask others who know you for three words that describe you in relation to time and energy. Don't argue with them! Simply accept each word and the explanation and move on to the next person. Notice any patterns—especially the surprising ones.
  5. And finally, how do you feel about your use of time? Where do you applaud yourself? Where do you feel you are falling short? Who loses besides you?
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### Mindset Questions for This Chapter:

1. What are you noticing about your thinking about time just since the last chapter?
2. What have you done recently, even in a small way, that made more sense to you time-wise?
3. What else are you aware of that is happening in your life because of questions 1 and 2?



NOTES

