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# Time Management

*Niche Booklets Series*

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**Niche Content Kit**

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If you've been online for a while, then you know that it can be quite time consuming to come up with and write original content to help promote your business -- whether the content is for a niche site, an e-book, an e-report, an e-zine, a free reprint article or an e-mail course.

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And if you use **\*\*Private Label Articles\*\*** to promote your business, then **Niche Content Kit™** is the perfect complement!

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## **Use Planning Tools to Maximize Your Schedule**

Many people laugh at planners as the cast-offs of the eighties but in all honesty, planners are one of the greatest tools ever invented for busy people! Keeping a written record of your schedule can not only assist you in remembering appointments and dates, but it can also increase your productivity both at work and at home.

A planner typically contains information that most people consider important: schedule, contacts list, monthly calendar, to-do lists, and more. Rather than having notes all over the place, a planner offers one central system to track your daily and monthly schedule without being overly complicated.

Paper and pen planners are traditionally the most common type of organizers available and can usually be purchased at most major retail stores, and are fantastic for the people who need to write things down in order to remember. The highest quality planners are made binder-style and can be used for years, simply changing the refill pages as needed.

With ever-advancing technology, though, computer software has begun to offer an intriguing alternative to pen and paper. ACT is the most commonly used planning software and can track all aspects of your day. A unique feature of the ACT software is the ability to set alarms to alert users to prepare for meetings or leave for appointments. Many successful businesspeople use this software to manage busy schedules that may sometimes require juggling.

The best option for people who are on the go is probably the electronic organizer. Only slightly larger than a deck of cards, most electronic organizers can maintain a daily and monthly schedule along with contacts and task lists. Organizers fit neatly into a briefcase, purse, or even a pocket. There are also programs available for installation on personal digital assistants (PDAs) that perform the same duties. If you are struggling with balancing a busy schedule, consider one of these options as a method of managing your time and saving your sanity.

## **Time Management for the Overbooked Life: Developing an Effective and Viable To-do List**

When the history of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century is written, the common theme that is likely to recur time and again will be in reference to how overbooked and overscheduled the typical person was during the early part of that century. In today's world, the typical person finds himself or herself frantically running from meeting to appointment and full circle once again. As a consequence, time management has become a vital element of a person's personal and professional life.

The first step in working towards an effective system of time management is the development of an effective and viable to-do list. There are some pointers that you need to keep in mind as you begin the task of creating a useful and helpful to-do list.

One of the things you need to consider when working on your to-do list is the value of grouping together similar tasks and activities. Specialists in the field of organization and time management have demonstrated that by grouping similar tasks and activities together, a person is in a far better position to efficiently and effectively complete tasks and activities in a timely manner.

In addition to grouping together like and similar activities on your to-do list, you should also set specific time periods during which delineated tasks and activities will be completed and concluded. In the absence of specific deadlines for completing identified tasks or activities, a person can very easily allow a project to drone on uncompleted for an indefinite period of time. Procrastination is extremely prevalent amongst people with even the best of intentions. By setting deadlines in advance and while working out your to-do list, you will be more effective in your efforts to complete necessary tasks in a reasonable and appropriate amount of time.

As you go about establishing deadlines and schedules for your to-do list, make certain that the timeframes that you create are reasonable. Seriously contemplate how much time it reasonably will take you to complete a task. Don't create an arbitrary deadline for completion of a task or activity that is too long or too short or the whole purpose behind your to-do list will be rendered mute.

## **Time Management Solutions: Organize Yourself in a Manner that Works for You**

Chances are that, if you are like most men and women in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, you maintain a very full and hectic schedule each and every day. As a result, time management is a key element in your life. When it comes to time management, there are many different books and videos on the market that provide people information on how they might want to go about scheduling and managing their time. Most of these books and videos offer what might best be called a cookie cutter approach to time management. Simply put, these books and videos provide the same time management solutions for all people in all sets of circumstances.

In reality, each individual has different time management needs, requirements and objectives. What might work for one person when it comes to time management and effective scheduling may not work at all for another. This is because each and every person has different time management and scheduling needs and overall personal and professional responsibilities.

With that in mind, the most effective type of time management system is one in which an individually designed approach to time management and schedule coordination is developed. Organize in a manner most suitable to your style. Be creative and resourceful.

As you go about working on a time management plan, you need to consider what your own, specific goals and objectives are when it comes to scheduling and time coordination. You need to contemplate and consider methods specific to you through which you can trim and refine your schedule to allow for a more productive and efficient use of your time. By developing a creative, individualized time management plan, you will find that you will be able to accomplish your tasks and fulfill your obligations in an expeditious manner throughout the course of the day.

## **Manage Time and Reduce Stress!**

Talking about stress has become one of the new national pastimes – everyone from the mailman to the stay-at-home mom experiences mental and emotional stress in some form every day. So many people are juggling multiple roles in life that it can seem nearly impossible to adequately fulfill responsibilities, creating guilt and frustration over failed duties.

The reality of the situation is that we all face potential opportunities for stress every day, *but it can be avoided*. You do have a choice when it comes to dealing with stress. By making a few changes in your life it is possible to limit the amount of stress you experience on a daily basis.

One of the simplest ways to reduce stress in your day is to prepare for each day *the night before*. This could be as basic as laying out your breakfast dishes before going to bed or as thorough as packing your briefcase, laying out your clothes, and showering before bedtime. Find out what works best for your schedule and then stick to it! You may be surprised at the ease and speed of your morning routine when you are better prepared.

The theme of preparation is one that can carry over into the rest of your life as well. Taking the time to prepare for presentations, parent-teacher conferences and even family gatherings will pay off in a simpler, less stressful event.

Another method of effective time management is to cut the fat out of your schedule. Take a look at your schedule and figure out where you are wasting time – it could be that you make three or four trips to the grocery store every week just to pick up forgotten items. Instead of multiple trips, make one trip during the week using a master list of your family's grocery needs and let that be enough. Rather than running errands throughout the week, pick one afternoon or evening to use for everything.

Working to minimize wasted time can reap a host of benefits by finally freeing up time for rest and relaxation!

## **Time Management in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Set Realistic Goals**

Today, the vast majority of people find themselves living over-scheduled lives. They literally find themselves dashing around from one commitment to another throughout the day. For many people, time management is important. If you are a person who is interested in better managing your time, there are some tips and pointers that you do need to keep in mind.

Set realistic goals that go with the tasks at hand. Too difficult or too easy goals are not realistic and will only give you more unfinished tasks. More often than not, when a person begins a time management program, he or she is either too ambitious or too lax when it comes to setting goals and objectives.

As you go about setting your time management goals, you need to be thoughtful and thorough. Take the time to delineate between what tasks must be done, should be done and do not necessarily have to be done on any given day or within a specified time period.

Once you analyze different tasks and the time frame in which they need to be wrapped up, you need to realistically contemplate how long each of these various tasks and assignments will take to complete. You do not want to allocate too much or too little time to each of the tasks and assignments that you are responsible for undertaking and completing during any particular time period.

After you have taken these two steps, you will be in a position to develop a realistic time frame and schedule for tasks and responsibilities that you need to undertake. By following these steps you will have set realistic goals and will be well on your way to effective and efficient time management.



## **Managing Work and Stress**

Everyone is leading busier lives these days and avoiding stress can sometimes seem downright impossible. Between raising your kids, caring for aging parents, and dealing with work, it can be one enormous juggling act that can leave you with skyrocketing blood pressure and a plate full of stress. Dealing with the everyday grind of life can wear you down but fortunately there are ways to handle your daily responsibilities without losing your mind.

Perhaps the most important thing to remember is to avoid overwhelming yourself with too much work. This counts for both home and office. Don't volunteer to coordinate your child's class bake sale when you're already handling a vital office project! Trying to accomplish two important but totally separate goals at once only decrease the amount of attention you can give to either one and increase your worries about both.

The simplest way to keep up with your schedule is to use a planner to record all your responsibilities and activities. When you are considering taking on another commitment, look through your schedule and identify if and when you have time available. Remember, just because there is open time does not mean that you should fill it up. Everyone should schedule some personal time to relax and exist as a human *being*, not a human *doing*.

Another key component of managing your stress is to know when to delegate your duties. If you have a secretary or assistant, he or she can be an immense help in minimizing work-related stress. Assess your workload and identify the responsibilities that can be delegated to your assistant – you may be surprised at the number of minor but important tasks that can be done by someone other than yourself.

For those who do not have an assistant, identify the vital responsibilities that you must address daily and concentrate on those. Set aside an hour in the morning and thirty minutes in the afternoon to take care of the small duties that aren't so crucial but should still be done. Plan your schedule to take the best advantage possible of the time you have.

## **21 Time Management Tips**

1. Save time when you do bank transactions. On your next visit to the bank, get copies of bank forms that are usually available at the counters. The next time you need to do another transaction, fill out the forms beforehand.
2. Consider your body's "peak time", the time of the day when you are at your best. Use that time to accomplish major priorities and you will find yourself with more time for other activities during the day.
3. Start your day 15 minutes earlier. With this extra time, you will be more efficient and productive at home and at the office.
4. Use your computer to create templates of documents you use on a regular basis, such as letters, reports, and other spreadsheets. You can always modify these templates according to your needs.
5. Locate your files faster by using different colored labels on your file folders. You will easily find the files you need because of the color codes.
6. Create a list of frequently called numbers. You can save a lot of time locating names individually.
7. Create a list of things you can accomplish in five minutes or less, such as writing a letter, clearing your drawers, etc. The next time you find yourself with time to spare, choose items from your list.
8. Set a specific time during the day to do routine filing and ask that you not be interrupted. Allocating this time ensures completion of the task.
9. If you are not really sure where your time goes, try logging your time for a certain period, say a week or two. What you gather can serve as your basis for deciding what changes you have to make.

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10. Take heavy traffic as a given. Don't use it as an excuse for being tardy. Leave early for work or an appointment.
11. Among the items in your to-do list, determine which ones should be finished within the day and work on those tasks first. Move on to the less urgent tasks towards the end of the day.
12. Maintain your focus. Many people may have been praised for being capable of multitasking but you're more likely to finish sooner if you focus your attention on one thing than skipping back and forth between tasks.
13. Observe your work habits. If you often feel restless during work hours and unable to focus, try taking several short breaks throughout the day. You'll feel more refreshed and eager to finish the tasks at hand.
14. Learn to address and put an end to interruptions. If something is not in your schedule of priorities and there's still a lot to do, then it shouldn't take a good amount of your time.
15. Let other people know that you value your time. Don't be afraid to turn down an invitation, reschedule or say no to an assigned task, if you've already scheduled a more important task on the same time.
16. If it helps, set your watch alarm to go off at the time you're supposed to finish a task or start on a new one.
17. At the end of each day, create a list of to-dos for the next day in order of urgency. Include here the tasks from the current day that you were not able to finish.
18. Before nodding off, prepare two to three ensembles where you can choose what to wear the next day. Narrowing down the choices saves you time.
19. Reply to emails promptly. If you don't you might forget about them.
20. Sync your office computer or your mobile PC to your home computer. That way, you can always check on stuff easily wherever you are.
21. Keep calls, even business ones, brief. Go straight to the point and conclude promptly.