

Oh No, I'm Late, I'm Late ... How To Create Better Time Management

Like the Mad Hatter in the book, *Alice in Wonderland*, many people run around in their business always being a little late here and there for an appointment. Today, it is essential to get to your appointments on time because it is a way that people learn to trust you. Time management is also important when you have a project and you must deliver it by a certain time. If you struggle with time management, there are ways to resolve this challenge.

Time management doesn't have to create havoc in your life when you want small business success. Learn to use time more efficiently. Here are a few tips to help you improve your time management skills:

Track Your Time

When you decide to develop effective time management skills, the first step is to get a baseline of how you are working with your time now. Take one work day and write everything down that you do from morning to the end of the business day in 15-minute time blocks. Review this at the end of the day, you may find that you are spending a lot of time on the phone, surfing the Internet, doing errands you do not have to do, and other time-wasting activities.

While reviewing your list of daily activities, consider if there is any consistency in work flow, such as the time for deliveries, the time(s) when you receive the most customer contacts, recurring appointments, etc. You may decide to repeat this activity over 3 to 5 days to create a typical day.

Create Time Management Goals and Implement A Plan

Although you can't change time, you can change your behaviors dealing with it. Look at the list and see where you can alter activities. My clients struggle the most with emails, phone calls, and other interruptions during their peak work time. A simple way that works for many is to schedule 2 to 3 times during the day to look at emails and listen to phone messages, and turn off the notifications in between. If you have an assistant, he or she can also pre-screen these for you, so that you deal with only the important items.

Look at the information you gathered about your typical day and see where it makes sense to do certain activities. As an example, for some business owners, it makes sense to return calls after lunch, and for others, it is best at the beginning. Choose a block of time to do various activities and put it on your daily calendar.

If you are surfing the Internet during business hours make sure you are networking or doing other business. This can quickly get out of control, so I recommend using a timer to keep you on schedule.

Look at your list again for anything that is a potential time waster. Eliminate these as much as you can to free up energy and time within your work day. Set specific goals as much as possible about how you want your day to go.

You might need to reorganize your week so that you keep like projects together. As an example, you may choose to have appointments only on certain days and then use the rest of the week for project time. You might do business errands between appointments. This would put all of your time out of the office in one or two days which would create more time in the office on other days.

If you don't have an office, meet all of your clients at the same place within 15 minutes or so of each other. This also allows you to create space without having travel time.

Spend time at the end of each day to review your progress for the day and to set up for tomorrow's activities for success. Then, at the beginning of your day, take a few moments to review the day's activities. It is also a grand way to see your progress from the previous day, and then build upon it.

What's holding you back from creating the success you desire? We can help! Go to www.successmasteryprogram.com to get started with your complimentary business success strategy consultation.

Barbara Roemer, the Entrepreneur's Success Coach, guides others to create the fulfilling, successful business life they desire. Besides coaching, her background includes 20+ years of practical leadership experience as a trainer, manager, senior executive, and small business owner, and certifications in Success Coaching, DISC, Hypnotherapy, and Senior Level Human Resources.

