

Time Management? We've Lost Control

Sorry I'm late, traffic was horrendous. Sorry I'm late, my last meeting ran over. Sound familiar? It gets really good when you have to listen to the "rest of the story"—some 18-wheeler with hundreds of chickens rolled over on I-76 at 476, and feathers were everywhere, cars were backed up for miles! In our over-scheduled, over-programmed, instant-communication, texting while driving, emailing while eating, stressed out culture, it is far too easy to blame one of a hundred reasons for being late. In fact we've lost control.

The real issue at hand is whatever you were doing at home was more important in that moment than getting to work on time...period. Imagine at your next meeting, your co-worker walks in four minutes late, and she simply says, "Sorry, I failed to leave my home early enough to be here on time." Or, "Sorry I was doing something more important than this, but now you have my full attention." This blunt dose of honesty would be refreshing in today's workplace. We all win for two major reasons, honest communication and greater personal accountability.

Companies would recoup untold millions of dollars in lost productivity if they simply made personal accountability a priority, especially around time management, and focused upon it for more than just a four-hour class or worse the flavor of the month training. Effective time management is a self-leadership skill rooted in values, priorities and choices. How one spends their time directly impacts the results they achieve, on a daily basis.

Today's opportunity is to reflect upon what works for those who are exceptionally successful in living a full, worthwhile, successful life at work and at home. What follows are some of the most powerful personal effectiveness techniques related to time management that work for individuals, teams and entire organizations.

- Do what you hate doing in the first hour of every work day—this leaves the rest of the day clear to work upon what you want to work
- Identify and focus relentlessly upon the three most powerful, productive, profit generating, or progress inducing activities that you should be doing—schedule 3 one-hour appointments every day to focus on these most important activities
- Schedule one 30-minute time period, e.g. 10:00 a.m.—10:30 a.m., for all "Got a Minute Meetings?" eliminating unscheduled "drop-in" distractions throughout the rest of the day
- Say No. Say No Again. Stop, breathe, and take an inventory of your commitments and your schedule for the month. Once a month identify at least two things that you are going to Say No to in order to stay focused upon your real priorities
- Train or Re-train your staff, co-workers, boss and even your Client on how to contact you—if you need a response within 48-72 hours email me; response within 24 hours leave me a voicemail; response right away, pick up the phone and call me or text me

- For 90-days, cancel all meetings except “Mission Critical” meetings in your entire company—only let the most important and worthwhile meetings get put back on the calendar

*Imagine doubling your sales, tripling your net profit and retiring in 3 to 5 years. Steven Rowell, Your IDEA Doctor, helps business owners build their dream business in record time. Formerly with The Walt Disney World Co., Steven provides consulting in organizational culture change, service excellence, leadership effectiveness and business growth. More personal effectiveness tools are available in Steven’s newest book, **Success from the Inside Out**. Receive a complimentary strategy session, 800-268-8170 or steven.rowell@reconnectllc.com*