



TOPIC: TIME MANAGEMENT

TITLE: MAKE THE TIME

February 22, 2001

"You will never "find" time for anything. If you want time you must make it." - Charles Buxton

Have you ever found yourself saying: "I'm going to do it once I find the time?" And then, the time just never appears. I've said this myself, and I hear this often from my clients. It seems that we always have things we want to do, but just don't find the time to do them. And usually the things we want to do are the things that support our goals, visions and dreams. But, since we don't "find " the time, they get put on the backburner so that we can give our time to others: our work, our clients, our friends, etc.

My focus today is to help you make the time for the things you want to do. And, the good news is that it's not that hard to do.

People often tell me they need to get better at time management. Let me dispel this myth: we're not managing time, we're managing ourselves. The amount of time in a day is finite. So, we are managing our behavior and actions within that amount of time. The goal is to be sure we are spending our time on what's important to us, and that we're making the right choices about what we choose to do and when we choose to do it. If we don't, the choices are made for us, and we are often unhappy about the outcome. We have the power to choose.

So, how do we begin to manage ourselves and make better choices? The first place to start is to break our goals down into manageable pieces. Very often, we don't even start them because they are too big and we feel we won't have time to finish them. By breaking the goal into smaller, manageable pieces, we have the chance to take the necessary steps,

What are your top two goals for this year?

- 1.
- 2.

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What are the daily/weekly actions that support each of these goals?

Daily

1.

2.

Weekly

1.

2.

Now that you know what to do, the next task at hand is to choose how you will do it. Here are some suggestions to help you do just that:

1) Do a daily plan.

Before you leave today, plan for doing these activities tomorrow. There is a big difference between a "to do" list and a daily plan. The "to do" list encompasses all the items you have to do (i.e. return client phone calls, submit proposals, respond to requests, etc.). The daily plan is the place for the things you'd like to do but don't necessarily have to do: exercise, take some time for yourself, call a few customers or contacts, and recognize an employee for great performance. The daily plan includes the decisions you've made about the actions you will take to support your goals.

2) Plan when you will do your plan.

Allocate a reasonable amount of time everyday to complete your plan. Make the choice to do these items first thing in the morning, before the days gets ahead of you.

3) Create accountability.

Tell someone what you're going to do, when you're going to do it and ask them to hold you accountable. Who will you let know that you've completed your plan?

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4) Reprioritize and make new choices when necessary.

Understand that you can't control everything in your day. New events will occur that need your attention. Before you automatically shift your focus, however, take a minute and intentionally make the choice for yourself. Does this need my attention right now? Did I have other choices available? If I do choose to shift my plan, when will I complete the remaining items?

5) Debrief your plan.

At the end of your day, take a few minutes to look at what worked well, and what didn't. Then, make different choices for tomorrow: What will you do differently? What successes did you have?

6) Acknowledge mistakes and failures.

And lastly, you will eventually hit a bump in the road and get off track. Don't throw out the concept! Acknowledge that it didn't work today and make a new choice for tomorrow.

My challenge for you this week is to make the choice to manage your behavior, and make the time for what's important in your life!