



ISSUE 01

HOW DO YOU ADD HOURS TO THE DAY? LEADERNOTES

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We've all heard or said a million times, if I could just add hours to the day, I could get so much more done, but is this really the fix we need? There are ways to more effectively utilize time in your day to manufacture those extra hours such as maximizing organization, utilizing to do lists, prioritizing activities, and setting an appropriate tone in your work environment.

Maintaining Your Schedule

- *Write things down.* You can't do something if you don't know or remember that you have to do it. For that reason, it is important to check your email at least once a day, read all of the information in the messages, and note important dates in your calendar.
- *Keep it all in one place.* Keeping information on your wall calendar, in your cell phone, and in a day planner is a good idea in theory, until things get documented in one or two places, but not the one you reference most often.
- *Keep a hard copy.* Technology fails, and it takes your information with it. A hard copy of your calendar is essential to the prevention of your world falling apart.
- *Find what works for you, and utilize it well.* Some people prefer a small, hand-held calendar, while others may need to see their commitments for the month on a wall calendar. Most people prefer to utilize at least two methods in order to keep track of upcoming events. PDAs and cell phones employ calendars and alarms to remind you that you have an upcoming appointment or that you should be studying for your Biology exam on Friday. These alarms may be set minutes or hours before a task is due to remind you of the task at hand.
- *Schedule flex time.* You can always expect the unexpected; so don't book yourself into an incredibly inflexible day. You may need to meet with a professor, a partner for a class project, or have some other unexpected detour.

Strategies for Completing Tasks

- *Set goals.* It is easy to procrastinate when you don't have a clear expectation in mind of what you will accomplish during a block of time.
- *Step 1, Prioritize.* At the beginning of a the day, set goals for what you will accomplish. If you have goals in mind it gives more direction to the project.
- *Break tasks down into more manageable bites.* These chunks should take no more than one or two hours to complete, and you should prioritize them by what will take the longest for you to do and what other people must help you to complete.
- *Utilize a to do list to keep track of tasks that need to be done.* This should be kept in one place, on one document.
- *Start small.* Get started by getting small, quick tasks off your desk. These will get you crossing items off your list and get you motivated.

Strategies for Academic Success

- *Use downtime to accomplish tasks.* You can read over your notes while you're waiting to meet friends, riding the bus, or doing other things.
- *Schedule blocks of study time.* If you don't schedule time, you're less likely to commit it. You should study two hours for every hour of lecture.
- *Prioritize assignments.* You should work on assignments that are due within the week or larger assignments instead of assignments that are small and due over a week away.
- *Know how you study.* Most people need a study environment that is quiet and free of distractions. It is helpful to turn off your cell phone, television, instant message, and other distractions when studying. In some instances, you may need to go to the library. If you need some stimulation to study, turn on the TV or music, but know yourself and stay within your boundaries.
- *Review your material.* The best time to review reading is right before class so that the material is fresh on your brain for connection to lecture, and the best time to review lecture is right after class to fill in the gaps that you may have in your notes. You may not have gotten everything the professor said, or you may be able to add notes to elaborate a point while the ideas are fresh on your mind.

Motivation

- *Set up a reward system for yourself upon completion of a task.* When you have studied for two hours, stop for a snack. After writing half a paper, check your email.
- *Get someone else to check up on you.* Peer pressure truly works for the good in this situation, and sometimes your parent, roommate, or significant other can expect more of you than you do.
- *Think about what will happen if you do don't complete your task.* Will people be uninformed? Will you make a bad grade? What are the repercussions? This can be excellent motivation.

Major Time-Wasters

- Letting things sit on your to do list for an excessive length of time.
- Reading email more than once without doing something with or about it.
- Filling the day with low priority tasks for yourself or others.