

# Effective Time Management for Supervisors!



**A**s a manager, one of your most precious resources is time. Manage it well, and you'll be able to pull off seemingly superhuman feats. Manage it poorly, and you'll spend every weekend getting caught up on unfinished business.

## Keep a log

If it's really true that "time is money," why not handle your time as you would your expenditures by tracking how it's allocated? You can't plug a leak if you don't know where it is.

## Build in planning time

People who struggle with time management often get stuck in a revolving door of demands and obligations because they're "too busy" to take the time to plan. And the less they plan, the more their time slips away.

Escape this Catch 22 by setting aside a few minutes each week to budget your time. Yes, it's hard to break away from so many pressing needs, but the payoff down the road will more than compensate for the sacrifice.

## Prioritize

The world moves fast these days, and it's easy to get sidetracked. The key to staying on track is to keep a written and prioritized list of what you need to accomplish.

Be flexible enough to rework your list when emergencies arise, but otherwise stick to the order you've created, and don't let anyone drag you off task.

## Delegate

Control freaks get killed by the clock. Remember - you can't do it all. Delegate anything and everything that you can pass off—and still be able to sleep at night with someone else doing it.

If no one around you seems qualified or trustworthy to handle what's on your plate, you may need to train them. Start small and build incrementally to handing off work that requires higher levels of responsibility.

## Set goals

Long term goals aren't enough. Effective time management involves breaking down larger tasks into a series of smaller ones.

Daily and weekly goals will help you keep you motivated by providing you with a series of personal accomplishments. It's also an effective way to track progress and improve efficiency.

## Minimize meetings

Meetings can be black holes in consuming time if not productive. Here are some sure ways to minimize wasted time:

1. Make promptness a clear expectation. Discourage tardiness by making it a tradition written in stone for members to state, "Your late" to any member arriving late, regardless of the reason.
2. Create an outline for each meeting and distribute it to participants before getting started. Limit the meeting to 3 or 4 major topics.
3. Do not allow participants to surf their blackberries, take phone calls or type emails while the meeting is in session.
4. Make a second tradition that any member can intervene when overly talkative coworkers meander off task by saying, "Off task."

## Know when to quit

Sometimes maximizing efficiency requires knowing when to take a break.

There's no use pushing on when you're out of energy. Give yourself permission to unwind periodically when you feel your productivity slipping. In the long run, you'll be happier, healthier and able to accomplish more by recognizing when you require some leisure time.