

## MASTER TIME

- Know how you spend your time
- Plan time Effectively and Efficiently
- Beware Time Bandits

One of the comments people commonly make is that there is never enough time to do all the things they need to get done in a day (or week).

Consider that there are 24 hours in a given day; the common mistake made is underestimating the time to dedicate on a task, or not using their time effectively and efficiently. This forms one of the highest costs to business, and stress on you.

Common reasons you may never have enough time or:

- × No Planning
- × Underestimating tasks
- × Overestimating available time
- × Inefficiently using your time
- × Interruptions & distractions
- × Unnecessary waste

If you are working more than 40 hours a week and you know it is not required, start to know where or how your time is being spent. Write down each day's major tasks (e.g. Meetings, calls, emails, orders, marketing and admin) and how much time you work on those tasks.

Then (the best part) see if any of those tasks are things that other people can handle.

Never plan for a whole working day. Most people try planning for every minute. If one task blows out, the rest of their time is shot. Plan to use only 80% of your day, but then have additional tasks waiting in reserve.

Many people manage their plan at the start of your working day. Better still is to manage the next day's plan at the end of the current day. This frees you from thinking about WHAT you have to do, and allows you to think on HOW you will do it.

Break your tasks into their smallest elements so that you know you can achieve them within your working day. A good rule: tasks should be broken into 15 or 30 minute blocks. (Most lawyers charge in six minute blocks).

Make sure you have an 'alarm bell' to stop you from spending longer on a task than you planned.

When I worked as a software developer, I'd often get snagged with problems and spend hours trying to solve it. I quickly learned by sticking to my plan, by working on other tasks, then come back it could be solved quicker, than by staying. My mind would be solving it while I was working on something new. (I also found certain types of music were helpful).

Prioritise your tasks so that the important ones are completed first, and the less important are handled later (or left to another day). But it does not have to mean they can't be slotted in if you have freed up time through your day.

General habits to understand to Master your time:

- ✓ Develop a Weekly Time Planner
- ✓ Organise your space
- ✓ Keep Tasks Simple
- ✓ Update plan at the End of the Day
- ✓ Allow for interruptions and distractions
- ✓ Prioritise and Re-prioritise
- ✓ Reduce & Eliminate Mistakes
- ✓ Delegate tasks where possible

Finally, the internet has been a point of concern in many businesses. Some see it as a necessary way of employees to relax and communicate while others see it as a distraction to getting work done.

Make sure the internet benefits you and your business by maximising positive effects on how time is used within. The internet should not need to be your enemy if managed and used correctly.

**Thanks 4** can help you to identify all your business risks, looking at Time Management, Financial Risks and Waste. Then we can help you turning those Risks into Opportunities for you, and plan the way forward.

Contact **Thanks 4** on 02 8060 0061 or download our inexpensive **Quick Business Assessment** at [www.thanks4.com.au](http://www.thanks4.com.au) to understand how your business is currently situated.