Chapter 9

Time Management

If you are like many people, you probably think that you may not have enough time to read this chapter. Whether or not you should read further can depend on your answers to the following questions:

Do you have a big backlog of things to do?
Have you been unable to meet most of your deadlines?
Do you have more than a handful of incompleted tasks?
Are you working late and/or taking work home?
Do you often feel that you are busy, but not really getting much accomplished?
Can you find an uninterrupted block of time when you need it?
Do you have difficulty saying "no" to people's requests for your time?
Do you often find yourself doing things and making decisions for others?
Do your meetings seem to accomplish little?
Do you find yourself constantly "fighting fires?"
Do you tend to over-respond in crisis situations?
Are you experiencing emotional and physical stress?

If your honest answer to most of these questions was "yes," there are good reasons for you to continue reading.

"I just don't have the time to . . ." is a very common statement. Perhaps the statement is true—sometimes. More often than not, however, it is not as true as we might think. We use time and we waste it. And we probably waste more time than we would like to admit. How do we waste time? Why do we waste time? How could our time be put to better use? Where could our time be put to better use? Reading this chapter will help you answer these and other questions for yourself.

Recommendations

As usual:

1. **Awareness – Think what you're doing** and how
2. **Increase Motivation –** material's importance to you
3. **Seek a conducive learning environment**
4. **Get organized –** get what you'll need together
5. **Preview material –** for gist, key words and ideas
6. **Recall and structure Preview impressions**

This chapter has been one of thirty management training manuals. It has been adapted for this book. Since many references are made to "managers," we ask that students, parents, and teachers think of themselves as managers. After all, many readers began to more effectively **manage their own lives** by doing personal goal setting and planning in Chapter 3. Managing one's time is another way.

Part 1 discusses how and why we waste time. Part 2 presents guidelines for "managing" and making better use of time. Before beginning Part I, let us very briefly introduce several basic concepts concerning time and time management.
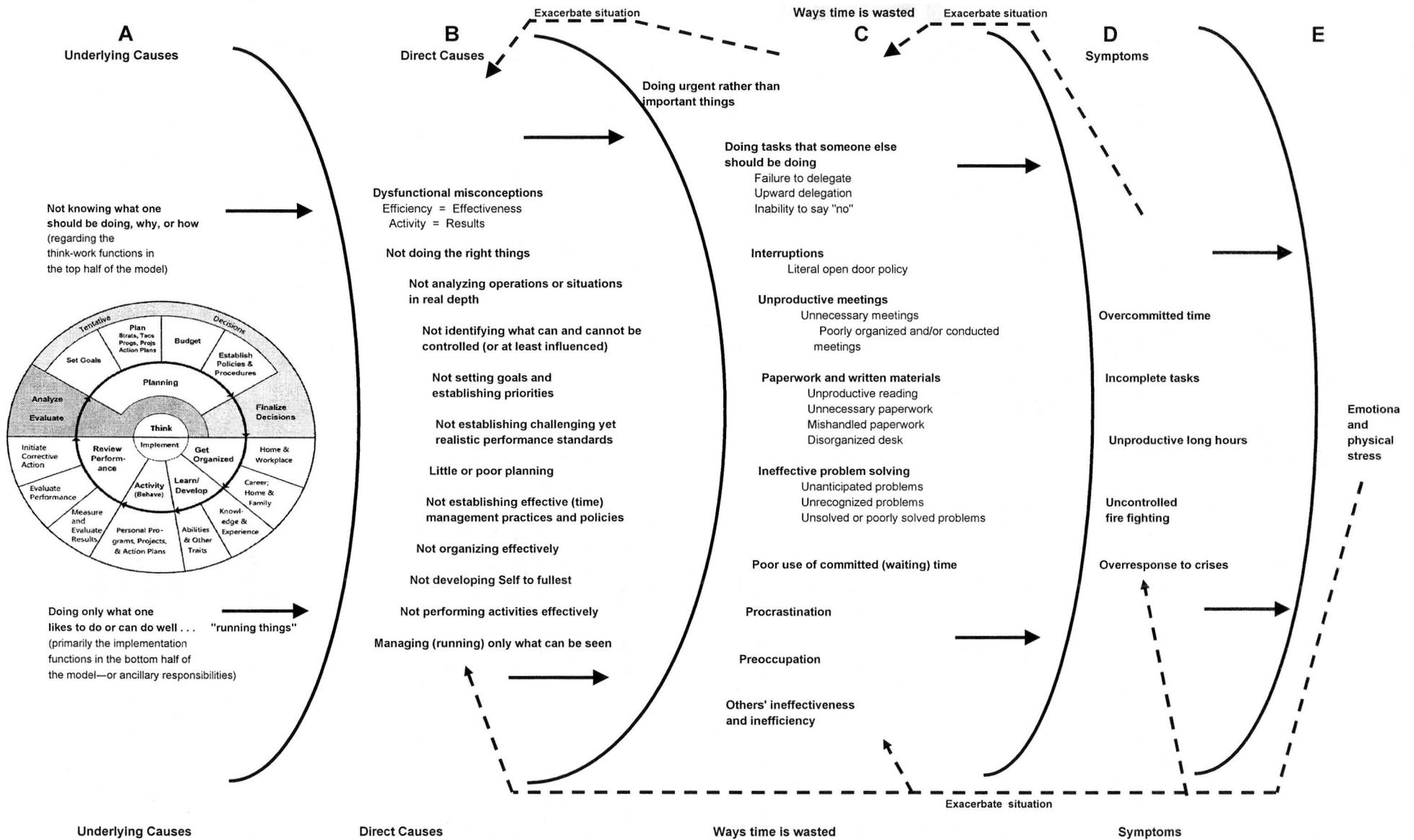
Introductory Definitions and Basic Concepts

Several Characteristics of Time

1. Time is a constant. It cannot be altered, advanced, or backed up.
2. Time is a resource, just as much as a person, a machine, a raw material, or money.
3. Like all resources, time is limited but measurable. There are 24 hours (1440 minutes) every day—no more, no less.
4. No one has enough time, yet everyone has all there is.
5. Unlike other resources, time cannot be bought (in the usual sense).
6. We cannot really "manage time."

What, Then, is "Time Management?"

A. Although we cannot actually manage time, we can manage our use of it.
B. Time management, therefore, is . . .
   1. managing our activities with regard to time;
   2. largely a matter of self-management; and
   3. also a matter of influencing (if not actually controlling) external factors that affect our use of time.
C. Time management is essentially nothing more than performing roles or jobs both effectively and efficiently. Or, as some might say, doing the right things —but also doing them right (well).

A
Underlying Causes

B
Direct Causes

Exacerbate situation

Ways time is wasted

Exacerbate situation

C

D
Symptoms

E

Doing urgent rather than
important things

Not knowing what one
should be doing, why, or how
(regarding the
think-work functions in
the top half of the model)

Dysfunctional misconceptions
Efficiency = Effectiveness
Activity = Results

Not doing the right things

Not analyzing operations or situations
in real depth

Not identifying what can and cannot be
controlled (or at least influenced)

Not setting goals and
establishing priorities

Not establishing challenging yet
realistic performance standards

Little or poor planning

Not establishing effective (time)
management practices and policies

Not organizing effectively

Not developing Self to fullest

Not performing activities effectively

Managing (running) only what can be seen

Doing only what one
likes to do or can do well . . .
(primarily the implementation
functions in the bottom half of
the model—or ancillary responsibilities)

"running things"

**Doing tasks that someone else
should be doing**
Failure to delegate
Upward delegation
Inability to say "no"

Interruptions
Literal open door policy

Unproductive meetings
Unnecessary meetings
Poorly organized and/or conducted
meetings

Paperwork and written materials
Unproductive reading
Unnecessary paperwork
Mishandled paperwork
Disorganized desk

Ineffective problem solving
Unanticipated problems
Unrecognized problems
Unsolved or poorly solved problems

Poor use of committed (waiting) time

Procrastination

Preoccupation

**Others' ineffectiveness
and inefficiency**

Overcommitted time

Incomplete tasks

Unproductive long hours

**Uncontrolled
fire fighting**

Overresponse to crises

Emotional
and
physical
stress

Exacerbate situation

Underlying Causes

Direct Causes

Ways time is wasted

Symptoms

(Central wheel diagram labels: Tentative, Decisions, Plan Strats, Tacs Progs, Projs Action Plans, Budget, Set Goals, Establish Policies & Procedures, Planning, Analyze, Evaluate, Finalize Decisions, Think, Implement, Initiate Corrective Action, Review Performance, Get Organized, Home & Workplace, Evaluate Performance, Activity (Behave), Learn/Develop, Career; Home & Family, Measure and Evaluate Results, Personal Programs, Projects, & Action Plans, Abilities & Other Traits, Knowledge & Experience)

Part 1

Wasting Time: Symptoms, Ways, and Causes

Figure 9.1 shows the following: the many ways that time is wasted (**Ring C**); symptoms or effects (**Rings D and E**); many "superficial" reasons why time is wasted (**Ring B**); and the basic, underlying causes (**Ring A**). Items in Rings A through E are organized from left to right in a sequence of causes and effects. However, in the discussion below we will move from right to left, beginning our discussion with Rings D and E, the symptoms of wasted (mismanaged) time.

Symptoms of Wasted Time (Ring D)

Although the following symptoms may seem somewhat extreme, they are very common. They amount to being in a rut and a ratrace. If you answered "yes" to the questions on page 9-1, these points summarize many of your answers.

Overcommitted Time

Having too much to do is a rut in which many people find themselves. When we become *busy simply being busy*, we (a) cannot concentrate fully on anything, (b) cannot (or will not) take the time to do the really important things, (c) are unable to do very much really well, and (d) leave many tasks incomplete. We usually get in this rut by doing tasks that others should be doing, doing unnecessary and unimportant things, and fighting many little fires. In effect, situations and circumstances are "running us"—we are not "managing them." The consequences are often greatest in large organizations where managers are "running" rather than "managing" things.

Incompleted Tasks

Especially when our time is over-committed and we are busy being too busy, we tend to jump from one task to another without really completing any. If we ever get around to completing a task, we must waste more time finding where we left off and getting back on the track. Even more of our time gets wasted as unmade decisions, unsolved problems, and other incompleted tasks cause increasingly numerous and time-consuming problems.

Unproductive Long Hours

To accomplish more and keep up with the ratrace, many people think that all they need to do is put in longer hours. The longer we work, however, the more fatigued we become. Fatigue causes mistakes that reduce efficiency and effectiveness. In addition, knowing that we can take more time, we tend to take it, but at a slower pace. Both fatigue and a slower pace contribute to a need to put in even more hours—wasted hours.

Uncontrolled Fire-Fighting

To imagine what uncontrolled fire-fighting might look like, picture brush fires breaking out in a dry field on a windy day. Several big fires (big problems) are raging as they are whipped by the wind (outside factors such as family, school, or community problems). The rural fire department (the teachers, parents, or personnel) are fighting these fires with antiquated equipment (old-style teaching, parentng, managing, and problem-solving practices). They have put out some fires (solved some problems); but several fires that they believed they put out are still smoldering (some causes of certain problems were not really remedied). The sparks from the smoldering ashes are being picked up by the wind and are starting little fires nearby. Even as the fire-fighters are trying to quench the big fires, sparks from the little fires are igniting new fires (are contributing to problems that were already close to surfacing). Because of all the smoke (confusion), the firefighters cannot distinguish which are big fires (high priority problems) and which are little fires (low priority problems). More fires are starting or restarting than are being put out. The scene is chaotic—almost futile.

Uncontrolled fire-fighting is symptomatic of people's unsystematic approach to managing their lives and organizations. It eventually occurs when people ....

a. fail to analyze their operations in real depth, looking for key elements of operations and major task, individual, social, organizational, or outside factors that should be improved or corrected;
b. fail to recognize and take advantage of opportunities;
c. fail to establish, or lose sight of, goals and priorities;
d. do not plan well or do not stick to their plans;
e. fail to assign responsibilities and delegate authority appropriately;
f. leave important tasks either unbegun or incompleted;
g. fail to anticipate, recognize, or effectively deal with

the problems created by "a" through "f";

h. take action without fully thinking things out (often because of the urgency of the situation); and

i. actually create even more problems for themselves.

Without doing the right things (the think-work activities), and without recognizing the important things in time to deal with them effectively, situations eventually become urgent. Having too many urgent situations contributes to even more problems, greater confusion, further deterioration of performance and morale, and increasingly greater waste of time.

<u>Over-Response to Crises</u>

Because of the urgency of a crisis, because of the highly emotional state that it can create, and because of the human tendency to take action in these situations without thinking things out fully, <u>many people overreact</u>. More often than not, this makes the crisis worse and usually creates even more time-consuming problems to solve later.

Cycle-Perpetuating Results (Ring E): Emotional and Physical Stress

All the previous phenomena produce tremendous pressure. In turn, <u>pressure produces both emotional and physical stress (confusion, worry, anxiety, tension, and fatigue)</u>. If and when an individual eventually arrives at this mental and/or physical state, that state contributes to, and aggravates, most if not all of the causes and effects shown in *Figure 9.1*. As the entire cycle we are describing perpetuates itself, the situation becomes increasingly worse, the person wastes more and more time—and eventually "burns out."

Ways Many People Waste Time (Ring C)

<u>Doing Urgent Rather Than Important Things</u>

According to time management experts, most people waste 80% of their time on unimportant tasks and activities. Vilfredo Pareto (1916), one such expert, and father of the *Pareto Principle*, said that 80% of worthwhile results come from 20% of what we do. (In other words, two out of ten tasks produce 80% of significant results.) We must grant that some of the urgent things people do *are* important

things. Perhaps these became urgent because, when they first became important, they were not recognized and dealt with effectively. Nevertheless, <u>many of the unimportant things people do are actually urgent things that only *seem* important because of their urgency</u>. Doing urgent, seemingly important things rather than doing really important things is caused by most if not all of the causes discussed shortly. It is particularly caused by not establishing goals and priorities. It creates many time-consuming problems and reduces individuals' effectiveness.

<u>Doing Tasks That Someone Else Should Be Doing</u>

Non-Delegation

Too many people get bogged down doing low priority, routine, time-consuming tasks that others should be doing. *Examples*: A manager's assistant should be screening telephone calls and scheduling appointments. Even young adults should be making routine decisions, solving minor problems, and evaluating their behavior and performance.

Many individuals, leaders, and managers do not delegate responsibility and authority to others or to subordinates because (a) they have not stopped to analyze who should be doing what and why, and/or (b) they lack confidence in the others' skills and experience. One paradox here is that the other people will gain little skill and experience, will win little confidence, and will save little time unless they are given responsibilities and then learn by doing.

Upward Delegation

According to many management specialists, both subordinates and young adults naturally tend to delegate time-consuming work upward. This has been called "putting the monkey on the boss's (or parent's) back." *Examples*: Subordinates often waste their bosses' or parents' time by going to them for (a) information that they could get themselves, (b) a decision that they could make themselves, or (c) a solution that they could formulate and implement themselves. They also waste their bosses' or parents' time by going to them with sketchy ideas rather than well thought-out proposals.

Upward delegation is really the other side of the "non-delegation" coin. Although it is sometimes caused by people's laziness, it mostly occurs under these conditions: (a) when managers and parents have not transferred initiative to their subordinates or children by explicitly assigning re-

sponsibilities and delegating authority, or (b) when leaders and parents have not stuck to their assignment and delegation decisions. Either case can create a sense of risk, feelings of uncertainty and insecurity, and confusion in subordinates and the young. Thus, they tend to go to their bosses or parents instead of "sticking their own necks out."

Inability to Say "No"

Saying "yes" to people's requests for our time and energy may keep people from thinking less of us. It may also indulge our egos by making us feel knowledgeable and important. Even so, it can overcommit us and dilute our effectiveness. <u>Being able to accomplish more instead of less requires two things: (a) that we recognize what we need to be doing, and do it; and (b) that we recognize what we should **not** be doing, and say "no" to those things that will waste our time</u>.

Interruptions

Surveys show that the average manager is interrupted every eight minutes during the day. These interruptions are directly caused by unscreened phone calls and by unscheduled visits of callers, subordinates, colleagues, and superiors. Both types of interruptions are indirectly caused by inappropriate or ineffective management practices and policies. Unscheduled visits, for example, are often caused by the "open door policy."

The open door policy originally meant "being accessible to subordinates and others." Many, however, have misinterpreted the term to mean "a physically open door." Leaving one's door open for the sake of improving communication actually encourages unproductive, time-wasting kinds of communication. These include passing the time, griping, socializing, and dealing with trivial matters. More important, a physically open door actually multiplies these kinds of interruptions. One might say that "opportunity knocks"—that is, when others have the opportunity to waste time, they knock on your door. Discourteous people will not even bother to knock. Especially when the door is open, they will walk right in and interrupt, regardless of what you may be doing.

Interruptions waste time by interfering with the completion of more important tasks. They also waste time by distracting our attention from what we were doing. Following an interruption, we must take the time to find where we left off or to reestablish our train of thought before we can go on with what we were doing.

Unproductive Meetings

Unnecessary Meetings

Many time-consuming meetings are unnecessary—especially those that involve disseminating information, but do not really require two-way communication (to clarify the message or to answer questions). Issuing an organizational policy, for example, might simply require a memo. A brief telephone call might suffice when the subject is not complicated and few questions are anticipated.

Meetings are generally necessary when (a) important information needs to be exchanged among participants, and/or (b) some important matter is to be decided that either involves attendees, requires their input, or will affect them.

Poorly Organized and/or Conducted Meetings

Organizing an effective meeting requires answering these time-honored questions: What? Why? Who? When? Where? How long?

The following are just some of the ways in which time is wasted by poorly organized meetings.

A. When the reason or agenda is either inappropriate or unclear, time is often wasted in these ways: spinning wheels around a central point; discussing unimportant matters; carrying on idle chit-chat (socializing); and/or dealing with attendees' "personal agendas."

B. When the time set for the meeting is either inappropriate, inconvenient, or insufficient, time is wasted in these ways: waiting for latecomers; trying to deal with something too late; not having enough time to deal with a situation effectively; and/or getting little done because important participants (perhaps the real decision-makers) could not attend.

C. When the attendees include the wrong people or not all the right people, time can be wasted in these ways: discussing extraneous personal agendas; getting information that the right people would have brought; and/or not making a decision because the real decision-makers were not present.

D. When meetings are held in an inappropriate place, or in a place that does not have proper facilities, time is often wasted by frequent interruptions—or by spinning wheels because there are inadequate visual aids for handling details.

E. When attendees are not given enough advance notice, time is often wasted by spinning wheels or by

waiting for information because attendees could not come prepared with useful information, preliminary analyses, and/or well thought-out suggestions.

How effectively a meeting is conducted depends mostly on the leader, who may have organized it and is now responsible for guiding attendees' preparation and participation.

The following are just a few of the ways that time gets wasted because (a) the leader does not know how to conduct a meeting properly, or (b) attendees do not know how to participate properly.

A. When a leader does not discuss the objectives, the agenda, and the ground rules with participants at the onset of the meeting, time can be wasted in these ways: (a) trying to clear up confusion due to lack of purpose or direction; (b) trying to cover too many topics to cover any adequately; and (c) trying to get things back on track when people inject their personal agendas.

B. When a leader does not guide the discussion step by step through problem-solving phases (analysis, formulation of alternative solutions, decision making), time tends to be wasted in these ways: (a) trying to resolve the confusion caused by jumping back and forth between the three phases mentioned above; (b) trying to resolve arguments that tend to be generated by not going through each phase one at a time; (c) trying to maintain attendees' attention and elicit their input; and (d) trying to avoid spinning wheels.

Paperwork and Written Materials

Unproductive Reading

One study by a well-known business magazine indicated that the average executive spends about 15 hours per week reading approximately 1,000,000 words. (That's about 3 hours per day—or almost one-half day reading 200,000 words!)

Reading material includes textbooks, manuals, letters, memos, reports, books, and articles in magazines and journals. Many people are easily wasting half of their reading time by doing unnecessary or unproductive reading. This is particularly true if any of the following apply: (a) they are slow, ineffective readers; (b) they read everything in its entirety, rather than skimming it and focusing only on important ideas and information; (c) they do not prioritize all the things that are available for them to read; (d) they have not

delegated responsibilities to assistants and/or subordinates for screening reading materials and providing brief summaries or abstracts; and/or (e) they have not encouraged others to be brief and to the point when writing memos and reports.

Unnecessary Paperwork

"Junk mail" certainly qualifies as time-wasting paperwork. It should be screened and tossed out. Many letters, memos, and reports are undoubtedly necessary, but many are not. We waste time either reading or writing those that are not. Very often a simple phone call would make many letters and memos unnecessary. Reports can be a different matter. Many if not most reports either (a) do not contain the right or really important information, (b) contain much more information than needed, and/or (c) present information in an inappropriate or confusing format. When reading such reports, we waste time looking for the information we want. When writing them, we waste time gathering any unnecessary information they require.

Mishandled Paperwork

Surveys indicate that 80% of average in-basket contents can be disposed of when first confronted, but only 20% are actually handled expeditiously during the first handling. This leaves 60%, which is usually either returned to the in-basket, piled on the desk, or stuffed in a briefcase or cabinet. Not only does this waste time by increasing handling time later, but it also results in a piled-up, disorganized, messy desk.

Disorganized Desk

When paperwork piles up, useful information and important decisions get buried. Disorderliness itself wastes time. One person whose time was logged spent 2 hours and 19 minutes per day just looking for information in the piles of paperwork on his desk. A disorderly desk also interferes with concentration, because one's attention is easily distracted by varied shapes, colors, and sizes of things on a desk.

Ineffective Problem Solving

By failing to anticipate important problems, by failing to recognize them when they first occur, and by "solving"

them ineffectively when they eventually become crises and are recognized, we tend to create even more and larger problems that consume more and more time.

Unanticipated Problem Situations

Particularly when we do not occasionally (at least annually) analyze our lives and/or operations in real depth and look for significant trends, we fail to anticipate many potential problems. When these problems eventually occur, they may be too large or complex to be solved effectively and at least cost. Also, as these problems develop, they can begin causing other problems before they themselves are actually recognized. The result can be a multiplicity of time-consuming and costly problems. However, by remembering that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," by anticipating problems, by formulating preventive solutions, and by implementing various planned solutions or improvements, we can not only improve our situations, but we can also save considerable problem-solving time later. Once an unanticipated problem arises, there are actually two problems to solve: (a) how to *correct* the symptoms or effects; and (b) how to *prevent* the situation from occurring again. (See *Figure 4.4* on page 4-20 of Chapter 4.)

Unrecognized Problems

Particularly when individuals "run" rather than manage their lives and/or operations, and do not occasionally analyze them in real depth, they often fail to recognize subtle but important problems. Unrecognized problems have a way of simmering beneath the surface, growing, becoming more complicated, generating even more problems, and eventually becoming crises (urgent as well as important). More numerous and more complicated problems require more time and effort to solve. Much less time would be wasted if subtle but important problems were identified in a timely manner and "nipped in the bud."

Poorly (Unsystematically) "Solved" Problems

In our culture we are inclined to say, "The problem is _____ ." Usually we are identifying one cause (one causal factor). But there are no problem situations having only one cause. There are generally several obvious, superficial causative factors—and there are also underlying, not-so-obvious causative factors. Most if not all problems are caused by an interacting *system* of various task-related, individual, social, organizational, and outside/external varia-

bles. Therefore, solving problems effectively requires formulating and implementing a *system of solutions* (in which there is a solution or plan for either correcting or improving each of the causal or influential factors involved).

When individuals and groups do not take the time to analyze an important problem situation in real depth, to identify underlying as well as obvious causes, and to formulate a system of solutions or improvements, they can leave important causal factors uncorrected or unimproved. As a result, those factors continue to operate as they did before, eventually causing the same or very similar problems.

Many if not most poorly solved problems are like unrecognized problems. In both cases, the really important, underlying causes are not recognized and dealt with appropriately. In the intermediate to long term, they actually generate more problems and contribute to time-consuming, crisis-oriented "fire-fighting."

Poor Use of Committed Time

When driving, walking or when waiting for an appointment, we can put our time to much better use than by worrying, daydreaming, or chit-chatting. These activities only waste time. Our time would be much better spent on setting goals, planning, reading, and mulling over important problems.

Procrastination

Procrastination means "heedlessly and irrationally postponing something you know you have to do." People put off doing things for various reasons. Some reasons are good, but most are not so good. Of course, there is good reason to put off doing low priority tasks so that we can get high priority tasks done. This generally saves time in the long run. On the other hand, putting off solving important problems or making important decisions is not so good. It can create problems and waste considerable time later.

Why do people procrastinate? There are actually many reasons, many of which amount to protecting a vulnerable sense of self-esteem.

The *"lazies"* tend to put almost everything off—out of plain laziness.

The *"easy-goers"* tend to do things that they like to do and/or can do well, often putting off doing more important things.

The *thought-avoiders"* do not like to think things out fully—or to think at all. They find in-depth, analytic thought too tedious, frustrating, and unpleasant.

The *"helter-skelters"* do not have goals, priorities, and plans. They put off doing things because they don't know what to do next.

The *"risk-avoiders"* tend to put off making important decisions, largely because they fear the possible consequences or risks involved (e.g., an impending change, or a threat to their ego or group status).

The *"indecisives"* put off making important decisions, too. However, they do so because they can't make up their minds what to do. In analyzing their alternatives, for example, they may find that (a) half of their analysis points to "doing" something, while the other half points to "not doing" it, or (b) half of their analysis points to one solution, while the other half points to a different solution.

The *"pressurizers"* believe that they work better under pressure, and, therefore, procrastinate until they are forced to act. These people, however, may simply work faster and less effectively, actually wasting time in the long run.

The *"fire-fighters"* are inclined to put off doing the right things (analyzing, setting goals, prioritizing, and planning) because they are so embroiled in fighting all the fires that are constantly occurring. (They themselves probably contributed to causing the fires by not performing the thought-oriented activities at some earlier point in time).

The *"test-avoiders"* are afraid of failing to meet their own high standards—standards that require outstanding performance every time and demandingly test their competence. By waiting until it is too late to do the best possible job, they can explain away a mediocre job by telling themselves that they "didn't have enough time."

The *"self-defeaters"* actually fear doing well. Procrastination guarantees that they will not excel.

The *"rebels"* do not like adhering to someone else's timetable. To them it means being controlled or dominated. Procrastinating is their way of retaining a sense of power and control.

The *"revengers"* use putting things off and making problems to get back at someone or something they don't like (e.g., a parent, a teacher, the boss, the job, or the organization).

The *"hedonists"* or *"myopics"* put off unpleasant tasks to do things that they find more pleasant, satisfying, or important. They choose immediate, short-sighted gratification over things that can be in their better, long-term self-interest.

The *"masochists"* have low self-esteem and "get their kicks" out of being caught with an uncompleted task. Their "kicks" are being yelled at or abused.

Preoccupation

We often allow ourselves to (a) get too absorbed in everyday matters, and/or (b) concentrate continually on just one activity or facet of operations. When we do, we often fail to (1) "stick our heads above the water," (2) get a perspective on what is actually going on and why, and (3) determine what should be going on. Preoccupation wastes our time by dulling our awareness of problems and opportunities and by reducing our alertness, effectiveness, and productivity.

Others' Ineffectiveness and Inefficiency

When parents, teachers, managers and leaders fail to analyze situations, set and prioritize goals, and plan, they waste their own time through personal ineffectiveness and inefficiency. When they fail to encourage and help their children, students, or subordinates to perform the same activities, they compound ineffectiveness and inefficiency. *Examples*:

Without having prioritized goals and coordinated plans, people may not only channel their efforts in the wrong directions, but they may also find themselves working against each other (especially when their jobs or responsibilities are interdependent and the activities must be coordinated).

Without having challenging but realistic standards of performance, people may tend to perform to lower, more "comfortable" levels. This, in turn, can give them idle time, which they can be tempted to "kill" in various ways: (a) interrupting others' work simply to pass the time, and/or (b) daydreaming or otherwise doing virtually nothing (except lowering performance and increasing costs).

Without having clearly defined responsibilities and authority, they may not only delegate decisions upward, thereby interfering with their parents', teachers', or bosses' effective use of time, but they may also waste time by becoming involved in territorial disputes. All these problems vastly compound the waste of time.

The situation described above can definitely involve a child, parent, student, or manager and his or her immediate subordinates. Think for a moment about the organizational implications. The fact that one person is not doing the "right things" indicates that his or her parents, teachers, superiors and/or colleagues are probably not doing them either. It also indicates that these self-management and man-

agerial or leadership practices are probably not being used throughout the organization. The resulting, mind-boggling amount of ineffectiveness and inefficiency is one of the best cases that can be made for family, school, and organization-wide use of participative or team management/leadership practices.

Major Causes of Wasting Time (Ring B)

<u>Dysfunctional Misconceptions</u>

Efficiency vs. Effectiveness Syndrome

Largely because of their inadequate education and training, <u>many people tend to (a) confuse *efficiency* (doing things right) with *effectiveness* (doing the right things), and/or (b) be more concerned about efficiency than effectiveness. Such people may very well do some things right; but they may also be doing some wrong things</u>. If so, they cannot be fully effective in whatever their role may be. By doing some wrong things, <u>they may be creating as many problems as they are solving</u>.

Activity vs. Results Syndrome

Largely for the same reasons as above, <u>many people also tend to confuse *activity* (motion) with *results* (accomplishment)</u>. These people are inclined to lose sight of performance objectives and to concentrate more and more on staying (or looking) busy. Eventually, their "inner objective" may become "to stay busy." If so, they can easily become "workaholics."

<u>Not Doing The Right Things</u>

Not Analyzing One's Life,. Situation, Role or Job,
Past Performance, and Problem Situations in Depth

<u>Analyzing one's life and work situation in real depth is a key to effective management of one's life and organization—and effective time management</u>. Many people, however, do not take the time to analyze their situation fully and determine the following: (a) the key elements of their situation (parameters around which effective goals can be written); (b) all the task-related, individual, social, organizational, and outside factors that should be improved in order to solve and prevent time-consuming problems; (c) challenging but realistic standards of performance; (d) who

should be making which key decisions; (e) to whom to assign what responsibilities; (f) to whom to delegate how much authority; and many more variables that will affect their efficiency and effectiveness and the future demands on their time.

Not Identifying Which Factors and
Activities Can and Cannot Be Controlled

Too much time gets wasted when people try to control things that they cannot really control—or even influence. If, for example, they have not identified which elements, factors, or activities they cannot control or influence, they may establish goals for themselves and others that either "point everyone in the wrong directions or initiate fruitless activity. In either case, time-consuming performance problems will result.

Not Setting Goals and Establishing Priorities

If point A is where we are now, and if we fail to identify point B (our goal or where we want to be or should be), several time-consuming phenomena tend to occur. First, we cannot plan how to get from A to B in the most effective, efficient, time-saving manner. Second, without a goal there can be no appropriate standard of performance. (A performance standard is one of three parts of a well-written goal). Without having a performance standard, people tend to work less efficiently and effectively than they can, which often causes time-consuming productivity problems. Third, <u>without having a goal, people often behave in a manner that resembles a wind-up toy. They go in one direction one moment, bump into an obstacle, and go off in another direction. Going rather aimlessly in different directions is inefficient, causes performance problems, and wastes time in the long run</u>.

Also, without setting goals, we cannot prioritize our goals (identify which are more important than others). <u>Even if we have set goals, but still fail to prioritize them, we tend to (a) do less important things when we should really be doing more important things, and (b) do urgent things rather than important things</u>. In either case, <u>the really important things often go undone</u>. This causes time-consuming problems and even crises later.

Not Establishing Challenging (Yet Realistic)
Performance Standards

When individuals fail to incorporate challenging but realistic performance standards into performance goals (for

themselves and their children, students, or subordinates), chances are that no one will work to their full potential. This will result in wasted time, lower morale and motivation, productivity problems, and higher costs—all of which will eventually require time-consuming corrective problem solving.

Little or Poor Planning

Planning involves charting an orderly, effective, efficient, coordinated sequence of steps for reaching a goal. Without a good plan for getting from point A to point B, people waste time, energy, and other resources. They also tend to go in different directions, often working against each other instead of with each other. Again, time-consuming coordination and performance problems can easily result.

Planning requires thought and takes time—two reasons why many people either don't do it effectively or don't do it at all. But by planning—and planning well—they can actually "give" themselves more usable time. Studies show that an hour of effective planning can save three to four hours in implementation. It can also help achieve better results and fewer problems.

Not Establishing Effective Management and Time Management Practices and Policies

Many if not most time wasters" in Ring C are also caused by not establishing appropriate practices and policies for various other people to follow. These practices and policies can apply to assistants, subordinates, colleagues, superiors, and even outsiders. They can deal with such matters as (a) goal-setting and planning, (b) assigning responsibilities, (c) delegating authority, (d) holding meetings, and (e) handling telephone calls and appointments. Without effective (time) management practices and policies, people tend to waste each other's time as well as their own.

Not Organizing Effectively

Organization is indeed a key to success—and to making effective use of time. Organizing jobs and people in one's responsibility area is just as important as organizing one's own work. When administrators, managers, and leaders do not establish an appropriate organizational structure (by grouping jobs into appropriate units, outlining working relationships between jobs and units, delineating reporting relationships, and establishing effective spans of control), they do not establish the most effective framework for assigning and coordinating tasks.

By not establishing an appropriate framework, many of those people are unable to formulate effective job descriptions. (Job descriptions outline technical/functional tasks, assign managerial or supervisory responsibilities, delegate decision-making authority, and outline basic work procedures.) Consequently, subordinates are not always certain what to do or how to behave. This, in turn, results in numerous dysfunctional phenomena: confusion; territorial disputes; power struggles; interpersonal conflicts; uncooperativeness; uncoordinated activity; and less than fully successful implementation of operational plans. These and related problems waste the time of both subordinates and their superiors.

Not Staffing Properly and Developing Adequately

How effectively and efficiently individuals do their work largely depends on the job-related inputs they possess: skills; skill levels; motivation; attitudes; and behavioral tendencies.

Many people, especially managers but also parents and teachers, do not do all the following to assure that their children, students, or personnel will perform to their potential: (1) identify the inputs necessary to do each job well; (2) hire or select those who have the necessary inputs (or have developable potentials); (3) adequately orient children or subordinates to their roles, responsibilities, and work environment; and (4) provide the guidance, training, and mentoring that will develop knowledge, skills, and appropriate attitudes and behavior patterns. As a result, these people's children, students, and subordinates can do one or more of the following: (a) make technical/functional mistakes; (b) do their tasks ineffectively and inefficiently; (c) make inappropriate decisions; (d) not do what they should be doing; (e) do what they should not be doing; (f) not work well together; and/or (g) adversely affect others' performance. Each of these problems can directly or indirectly waste the time of everyone involved.

Not Guiding Activities Effectively

Once the thought-oriented management activities have been performed and people have been appropriately organized and adequately developed, they can begin to carry out their assigned roles and responsibilities and to implement action plans. However, regardless of the effectiveness of

plans, and regardless of children's and personnel's skills and motivation, they may still need guidance (advice and information) to help them perform as efficiently and effectively as their potentials will allow. Unfortunately, many parents, teachers, and managers fail to (a) monitor progress, (b) give occasional advice, (c) provide additional information, and (d) help their children or personnel evaluate results and take part in solving problems. The resulting waste of time and effort reduces effectiveness, efficiency, and overall performance or productivity.

Managing Only What Can Be Seen

This general tendency is either caused by, or directly related to, the items already mentioned above. The many parents, teachers, administrators, managers, and leaders who are more action-oriented than thought-oriented tend to *manage only those things they can see*: (a) machines, equipment, and material; (b) their own and others' activities; and (c) tangible outputs or results. What they cannot see, and therefore fail to "manage," is what is going on in people's minds and hearts. And managing what **cannot** be seen as well as what **can** be seen is largely what modern management is all about. What goes on inside people influences their motivation, activities, and performance.

Managing what cannot be seen requires analyzing people and their work situation as a system of interacting, interdependent factors: Task-related factors involve the "mechanics of operations" (factors such as job descriptions, mechanical equipment, technical procedures, work flow, and work load). Individuals' characteristics include basic skills, specialized skills, knowledge factors, needs/drives, values, goals, interests, and personality traits. Organizational variables include factors such as organizational structure, internal systems, policies and procedures, and managerial or leadership styles. Social factors include various social groups and their norms (the attitudes and behavior expected by groups). Outside variables include the attitudes and behavior of families, friends, colleagues, and various educational, financial, and religious institutions.

When people manage only what they can see, they tend only to integrate tasks with tasks. They fail to integrate people with their tasks and people with people. This causes time-consuming motivation, morale, and performance problems—"people problems."

In addition, when people are managing only what they can see, they are essentially operating only in the implementation phase of the managerial or integrative process (scheduling, directing, and controlling people and their activities). When they are managing both what they can and cannot see, they are also performing the think-work functions of management (analyzing, identifying problems, establishing goals and priorities, planning, and decision making). It takes both think-work and implementation activities to be a truly effective manager or leader. The think-work functions are particularly important. How well managers organize, staff, and guide activity depends on how well they analyzed operations, set goals, and planned.

We can summarize what we have said about Ring B as follows: **Time management is mostly a matter of effective management**. It involves doing the "right things" and doing them well: thinking (analyzing, setting goals, and planning) before taking action (organizing, staffing, and guiding activity). Leaders and managers cause time-consuming problems by (a) not performing all the management functions properly, and (b) not thinking about people as well as the mechanical aspects of operations.

Basic, Underlying Causes (Ring A)

The factors shown in Ring B, which in turn cause effects in Rings C, D, and E, largely reflect (a) being busy trying to be busy (or trying to look busy); (b) doing instead of managing; and (c) putting emphasis on trying to *do things right* rather than on *doing the right things*.

Not Doing the Right Things

The *right things to do are the basic management functions*: analyzing situations or operations; goal-setting; planning; making major decisions; organizing; staffing; training and developing; guiding activity; guiding evaluation of results; and identifying and solving important problems.

According to several surveys, however, managers in general—and people in general—do not use much of their time doing the right things.

1. An American Management Association survey showed that most executives spend only 47% of their time performing managerial functions. The rest of their time is spent doing "hands-on work."

2. A survey conducted by the consulting firm, Booz-Allen & Hamilton, generally confirmed the A.M.A. survey. It showed that 25% of managers' time is spent on "less productive work" such as clerical tasks, finding information, traveling, and work scheduling and organizing. The survey also showed

other ways in which managers spend their time: 46% on attending meetings; 13% on composing, dictating, editing, and drawing or designing documents; 8% on reading and analyzing documents; and only 29% on doing what they are supposedly being paid to do—"managerial think-work."

3. According to time management expert, Henry Mintzberg, managers in general (a) spend nine minutes or less thinking about 50% of the problems or decisions confronting them, and (b) spend up to an hour thinking about only 10% of the problems or decisions confronting them.

Even though the different studies yielded slightly different percentages, the conclusions were the same: In general, <u>managers and leaders spend too much time **doing** (performing action-oriented operational activities) and not enough time actually **managing** (performing and guiding thought-oriented managerial functions). That must certainly apply to most other people as well</u>.

We think that there are several very basic, underlying reasons for this. (See Ring A of *Figure 9.1*.)

<u>Not Knowing What One Should Be Doing,</u>
<u>Why, and How To Do It Well</u>

Most people and many managers know relatively little about basic management functions, why they are important, and how to perform them effectively. Thus, they do not always do the right things for the right reasons and do them well. A parent's, school's, or organization's failure to provide adequate training in the managerial think-work and implementation functions is often a major cause. Another major cause, even when education and training have been provided, can be the failure to (a) encourage the use of what has been learned, and (b) reinforce training through the use of improved systems, policies, and procedures.

<u>Doing Only What One Likes To Do</u>
<u>or Can Do Well</u>

For various reasons, giving in-depth analytic thought to goals, plans, decisions, problems, policies, and procedures can be the most difficult, tedious, and frustrating thing that people can do. <u>As Henry Ford said, "Thinking is the hardest work there is, which is the probable reason so few engage in it</u>." Thus, many if not most people are much more comfortable doing the action-oriented, operational, day-to-day tasks that they are more familiar with, are more interested in, can do more easily, and can do better. Such tasks

can also be more satisfying—for two reasons: First, since people can generally do them better, they get better and more satisfying results. Second, because these tasks usually get immediate results, they also provide immediate satisfaction. On the other hand, the results of thought-oriented tasks may not be known for weeks, months, or even years.

Influences of Personal Characteristics

In many cases, "doing what one likes to do or can do well" can be attributed to individual attitudes and predispositions. More specifically, relatively high or low levels of various personal traits can contribute to one's wasting time in the following ways:

(Low) Self-confidence
Doing only what like to do or can do well
Inability to say "no"

(High) Self-confidence
Inability to delegate (especially when coupled with low confidence in others' abilities)

(Low) Self-assertiveness / dominance
Inability to say "no"
Inability to delegate

(Low) Self-control / self-discipline
Doing only what like to do or can do well
Poor use of committed time
Procrastination
Over-response to crises
Incompleted tasks

(Low) Goal-orientedness
Not setting goals and establishing priorities
Little or poor planning
Procrastination
Unproductive meetings
Poor use of committed time

(High) Active / vigor
Not doing right things (analyzing, goal setting, planning, establishing effective policies and practices)
Managing only what can be seen
Unproductive problem solving (not anticipating, recognizing, or effectively solving problems)
Over-response to crises

(Low) Orderliness
Not doing the right things (analyzing, goal setting, planning, policy making)
Not organizing one's own and others' tasks

Non-delegation (leading to upward delegation)
Unnecessary paperwork; mishandled paperwork
Disorganized desk; interruptions

(Low) Original thinking

Not doing right things and/or doing them well
(analyzing, goal setting, planning)
Unproductive problem solving (not anticipating
recognizing, or effectively solving problems)

(Low) Responsibility

Doing only what like to do or can do well
Incompleted tasks
Procrastination
Inefficiency
Below standard productivity

(Low) Emotional stability

Over-response to crises
Emotional and physical stress
Procrastination

Part 2

How to Manage Time and
Make More Effective Use of It

Major Perspective

If you look at *Figure 9.1* on page 9-2, notice that the circular model on the left side is the same as *Figure 3.6* on page 3-24 of Chapter 3. It essentially shows that **you actually began to better manage your time by doing your personal goal setting and planning in Chapter 3**. That is because, as outlined in the preceding pages of this chapter, **the most important, significant, and even powerful personal time management you can do is to perform the "think-work (*self-*)management functions" that you did in Chapter 3**. When you performed those **long-range** personal goals setting and planning phases and steps, you started "**doing the right things" shown at the top of the model in *Figure 9.1***.

The same applies to those organizations that have done strategic/long-range analysis, goal setting and planning, and have then translated those goals and plans into annual (and even semi-annual, quarterly, and monthly) goals and plans.

The tips and tricks mentioned in several sections below are also important, but not quite as important.

Now we can begin to discuss shorter-term time management and time-saving activities. This Part has three sections. The *first* deals with analyzing how you are now using your time and then planning how to manage and use it more effectively and efficiently. The *second* section outlines various time-saving policies, procedures, and tips that can be applied by *anyone* from day to day. The *third* section outlines policies and procedures that can also be followed by people with whom you interact—such as parents, teachers, peers, superiors, subordinates, colleagues, and others in organizations.

Stop, Think, and Plan How You Will Manage (and Save) Your Time From Now On

Table 9.1 on the next page lists the phases and steps of an analytic approach for performing a personal time analysis and management process—another "self management" process. This process basically supplements the self-analysis you did in Chapter 2 and the personal goal setting and planning you did in Chapter 3.

PHASE 1: Preparation Steps 1-6 (Use the steps on page 9-1, which you should know by now.)

PHASE 2: Analyze Your Use of Time

Step 7: Identify (list) the activities in which you engage.

Step 8: Collect Information: Log the amount of time you spend while engaged in Step 7 activities.

Using a form or format of your own design, keep track of the following for at least one week:

a. when you start doing things;
b. where you do them (a classroom, a study hall, your own room, your office, a conference room, another office, another place);
c. what you do (the tasks or activities involved);
d. who initiated each task or activity (a teacher, parent, superior, colleague, subordinate, customer, etc.);
e. subjects or matters involved; and
f. purposes of the tasks or activities.

Step 9: Analyze How You Are Using Time

Based on your time usage log, determine the following:

Table 9.1: Time Management Phases and Steps

A C T I O N S	B E N E F I C I A L E F F E C T S
Phase 1: Preparation	
Step 1: **Awareness / think what you're doing**	Consciously structure process & channel thought.
Step 2: **Describe** situation -- i.e., the need to improve, modify, or further develop personal traits and behavior	Initial conscious recognition of problem-solving and learning situation; perform effective analysis.
Step 3: Increase **motivation**: Determine importance in terms of personal and organizational goals and plans	Focus attention; increase concentration; initiate and sustain effort; take necessary time.
Step 4: Seek a **conducive environment**	Minimize distractions and interruptions.
Step 5: Get **organized** (materials, references, etc.)	Minimize distractions; be organized.
Step 6: **Preview**: do a brief preliminary analysis	Determine real importance and priority of situation; budget time/money, more effort; be organized.
Phase 2: Analyze -- Define and Reduce the Situation	
Step 7: Identify (list) the activities in which you engage.	Describe situation; increase repertoire of knowledge; keep from quickly jumping to solutions phase.
Step 8: Collect information. (Log the amount of time you spend while engaged in Step 7 activities.)	
* use facts and observations (rather than opinions)	Help minimize effects of dysfunctional attitudes.
* add facts or data to a model (diagram) of Self	Maintain/increase objectivity.
* use appropriate diagrams	Increase insight into Self as system.
Step 9: **Analyze** how you are using time.	Enable mind to handle complexity.
a. how much time doing which things	Fully developed/updated "system analysis" of Self.
b. who is initiating most of your tasks or activities	Understand environmental influences.
c. how you are wasting time	
d. what you should be doing, but are not	Inputs to planning.
* use appropriate diagrams	Enable mind to handle complexity.
Step 10: Formulate **criteria** for Phase 4 (Decision Making)	Improve testing/weighing of alternative solutions.
Phase 3: Plan -- Alternatives (Solutions) Formulation	
Step 11: Formulate **goal(s)/objective(s)**: identify the desired end results of implementing well-considered changes.	Assures going in right direction(s) toward some consciously identified target(s).
Step 12: **Plan**: Identify what you must DO to improve, change, correct, or adjust characteristics and their relationships	Achieve a "balanced" system of prioritized changes to system of characteristics.
* Formulate alternative (sets of) plans	
* use appropriate diagrams	Enable mind to handle complexity.
* Budget time and resources	Effective use of time and resources.
* use appropriate diagrams	Enable mind to handle complexity.
Phase 4: Decision Making -- Test and Select Alternatives	
Step 13: Identify possible **outcomes** of alternative solutions (anticipate scenarios/sequences of actions & events)	Anticipate what could occur during implementation. Increase use of propositional ("what if") logic.
Step 14: Assess realistic **probabilites** of possible events	Minimize wishful thinking about what might occur.
Step 15: **Test and compare** alternatives	Mental trial and error (action in rehearsal);
* Identify & compare advantages & disadvantages	Use these inputs for making final decision.
* Weigh each alternative against criteria	
* Also test/weigh combinations of alternatives	
* use appropriate diagrams	Enable mind to handle complexity.
Step 16: **Select** appropriate solution(s) for implementation	Final decision making.
Phase 5: Implement Chosen Solutions	
Step 17: As implement, monitor and evaluate feedback	Check on progress; assure getting desired results.
Step 18: Adjust plans, traits, or behavior	Effective response to obstacles and contingencies.

a. how much time you spend doing which things—and why;

b. who is initiating most of your tasks or activities—and why;

c. what things you are doing that waste time, to what extent you are doing them, and why; and

d. what things you should be doing, but are not—and why.

Step 10: Formulate Decision-Making Criteria (Phase 4)

PHASE 3: Formulate (Alternative) Solutions (or Alternative Sets of Goals and Plans)

Step 11: If you did not already do so while reading Chapter 3, go back and do the personal goal setting and planning steps regarding your life's goals and plans.

Step 12: Identify what you can do to improve your day-to-day use of time.

Take into account (a) through (d) of your analysis above. Also consider the suggestions outlined in the remaining pages of this chapter.

PHASE 4: Make Decision(s). Choose Among Alternative Solutions and/or Plans

Steps 13, 14, 15, and 16

PHASE 5: Implement Solutions and/or Plans

Steps 17 and 18

As you read the next two sections, we suggest that you circle the numbers or letters of any items you might wish to begin using, doing, or emphasizing.

Time Management (Time-Saving) Personal Practices and Policies For the Short Term

For the Beginning of each Month and Week

1. Review goals and plans (especially short-term ones)

    a. Determine results/progress to date.

    b. Identify what remains/needs to get done (and what to do to get it done)

2. Formulate, write down, and prioritize goals for the month or week

3. Formulate and write down guideline (flexible) plans

and schedules for the month or week

a. Take into account possible contingencies.

b. Break down large, complex, high priority projects into a logical group and/or sequence of smaller, more manageable sub-projects.

"Take 10" At the Beginning of Each Day

In everyday life there is a tendency to be hurried, to not want to bother with a little extra thought, and to not want to take the time to think ahead. But knowing what you now do about yourself, your abilities, your limitations, and the concepts and methods you have covered, don't you think that a few minutes a day and a little additional thought would be more than worth it? "Take 10" is a simple device that you can use daily to assure continued personal improvement and development. You can use it, your family can use it, and the people in your organization can use it. It only takes about ten minutes each morning and easily fits into anyone's routine. Think of it as mental preparation for the day. It works! We have provided *Exhibit 9.1* on the next page as a sample fill-in daily schedule.

First: Very quickly review your goals—especially your long-term goals (Chapter 3 formats). The purpose is to reinforce them in memory. It also helps you recall the ends toward which you can improve yourself during the day.

Second: Imagine as vividly as you can the circumstances that will accompany these goals' attainment, and how you will feel upon their attainment. Here there are three significant benefits. The first is to increase a positive attitude (desire) toward goals' attainment. The second is to reinforce the associations between goals and attitudes recorded in memory. The third is to increase your motivation to greet the day with enthusiasm and drive.

Third: Next look at your short-term goals and the activities you planned for reaching them. Focus on the plans, especially noting the problems that must be solved, the knowledge or abilities that you need to acquire, and the behavior (e.g., weaknesses) that you may decide to adjust. Thinking about these things in the morning for a few moments will tend to "keep them on your mind" during the day. As you reinforce this information in memory, you will be programming your mind for greater awareness of learning, thinking, and behavior improvement situations. True, you have done this for the long-term as you filled out the formats in Chapter 3, but here **you are "programming" your mind for this particular day**.

Fourth: Look at your home or desk calendar. Note the activities (e.g., classes, appointments, and meetings) that

Exhibit 9.1: A Sample "Take 10" Daily Scheduling Format

Time	Situation	Type of Situation PS/Lrn/Be Adj	Importance/ Priority (Hi to Lo)	Cues
AM 7:00				
7:30				
8:00				
8:30	**Take 10**	Thnk	Hi	arrive at desk
9:00	Appt with Mr. A	Lrn & B Adj	Med	walks into office
9:30				
10:00	Work on X	PS, Lrn	Med	Mr. A leaves
10:30				
11:00	Place call to Ms. B	Lrn	Lo	pick up phone
11:30				
12:00	Lunch with C	DM & Lrn	Hi	sit down at table
12:30				
PM 1:00	Talk with D	B Adj	Lo	see co-worker
1:30				
2:00	Meeting with E	DM	Hi	walk into meeting
2:30				
3:00				
3:30				
4:00	Work on X (cont'd)	PS, Lrn	Med	sit down at desk
4:30				
5:00				
5:30				
6:00				
6:30				
7:00	Dinner with family	B Adj	Med	sit down at table
7:30				
8:00	Family discussion	Lrn/PS	Med	sit down together
8:30				
9:00	Read trade journal	Lrn	Med	pick up journal
9:00				
10:00	Think about tomorriw	Thnk	Med	get into bed

you have already scheduled for the day. Then, try to anticipate what else might occur during the day that could be important. Make certain that all of these activities (situations) are written down next to the time they are scheduled to occur or are expected to occur.

Fifth: Your day's schedule may not be completely filled with "required" and anticipated activities. With which types of activities can you complete your schedule? How about:

  a. learning (i.e., reading) information you need to know about your classes, job, family, subordinates, etc.;

  b. working on adjusting behavior patterns you consider to be weaknesses (i.e., interpersonal sensitivity or skills, personality traits, attitudes); or

  c. working on solving anticipated problems and beginning to implement solutions

Write in one or more of these possibilities on your schedule where you have an opening.

Writing down the day's schedule has several beneficial effects: (a) it records activities in memory, thus programming your mind for greater awareness of important situations; (b) it helps you commit yourself to a schedule, thereby increasing your self-discipline; and (c) it helps you organize your time and effort. It is also necessary preparation for the next very important step.

Sixth: Assess which of the basic types of situations each scheduled activity will be: (a) learning (e.g., information or abilities); (b) thinking (problem solving or decision making); or (c) adjusting attitudes or behavior. Write down the type next to each situation. If you use a pocket calendar or note book, you can save space by using abbreviations such as "L" for learning, "PS" for problem solving, "DM" for decision making, and "BA" for behavior adjustment. You should also consider whether or not the learning situations will also be problem-solving situations—and vice versa. You can record primary and secondary situations on your calendar as "L/t" or "PS/l," for example.

Seventh: Next consider the importance or priority of each situation and write down "H" for high, "M" for medium, or "L" for low—beside each entry. (You could also use a scale from 1 to 5 or from 1 to 10.) This helps you determine where you will want to put emphasis in terms of time, effort, and perhaps money. It also increases your motivation to deal with more important situations more effectively.

Eighth: Now think ahead to each situation. Ask yourself if you will stop to think what you are doing as you encounter the situation. You can increase the probability of

conscious awareness by writing down a simple cue of your own choosing and recording it in memory. For example, if you have an appointment that will be basically a learning situation, you might write down "walks into office" so that Mr. X's walking into your office will cue conscious awareness of the situation you are entering. Or, you could form a ridiculous picture in your mind that relate something about Mr. X and a learning situation. Whatever cue you choose, write it down. Give yourself the suggestion (an "auto-suggestion") such as, "I want to be aware of the learning situation involving Mr. X, so that I can think about using PAR. I want my unconscious to cue awareness when I perceive him walking into my office." We also recommend that you refer to your calendar during the day to reinforce these cues in memory. Of course, the purpose of this step is to input a specific cue into memory that, when perceived by the unconscious, will select it for conscious awareness and associate the cue with the type of situation.

You will notice that as you practice certain cues for certain situations, they will eventually become habitual. You will get to the point where encountering any new experience will automatically make you stop to think which type of situation you are in and what to do to accomplish it better.

Ninth: Briefly review the tables outlining the PAR and P-DRAFTS-I approaches. By reviewing them for a few moments each day, they will soon become etched into memory. However, just being able to recall them from memory is not quite enough. You must make using them a habit. This means actually using them in important learning and thinking situations. The more that you use them consciously, the sooner their use will become "second nature."

Tenth: You have covered a tremendous amount of territory in reading this book. By now the overall perspective on the systematic use of these techniques is more clear to you. However, the details involved in each technique may be somewhat fuzzy even now, even though they are important to remember. Therefore, we also recommend that, at least once a month, you take a few moments to review the major diagrams and tables presented in these ten chapters. Or, occasionally take the time to skim through a whole chapter to review and reinforce its contents in memory. You might pick out one particular diagram or chapter to review each day for several weeks—until you have reviewed them all. This step need not be accomplished at the beginning of each day, although refreshing your memory could be useful during the day. You might, instead, want to work this review into your schedule at a later time. If so, schedule this review in the fifth step.

Experiment with the **Take 10** device. Develop your own formats or procedures. Whatever works best for you is best to use. But stick to the general idea. It works! And, it is neither very time-consuming nor difficult. Using it for just a few days should easily convince you.

Time Management Tips

General

1. Review short-term goals, plans, and priorities for the month or week

2. Identify and prioritize tasks/activities that should be accomplished during the day (based on short-term goals, plans, and priorities)

3. Schedule the day:

   a. Schedule high priority tasks/activities, especially those requiring concentration or deep thought, for your most alert and effective time of day.

   b. Break down big, complex, high priority tasks into smaller, more manageable sub-tasks that can be performed in several chunks of time (i.e., when you might only have had time to do something of less importance).

   c. As a general guideline, schedule no more than ten tasks for the day.

   d. Schedule time(s) for making, receiving, and returning phone calls.

   e. Schedule handling your in-basket paperwork at a specific time (e.g., after the mail generally arrives and your assistant has screened it).

4. Brief your assistant on your schedule for the day (e.g., a, b, c, d, and e above).

Any Specific Task or Activity

A. If you should not be doing it, don't. Either (a) pass it to the person who is responsible for the matter involved; (b) assign it to the person whose job description calls for doing it; or (c) tactfully decline the other person's request for you to do it.

B. Determine its importance/urgency and assign it a priority.

C. Do those things that are important, not just those things that you can do well, are most interested in doing, or enjoy doing.

D. In general, tackle the most important tasks first, get them done, and then go on to less important tasks.

E. Allow enough lead time for accomplishing a task well.

F. Don't ignore deadlines. Someone else's effective use of time may depend on completion of your part of a task or project.

G. Especially if a task/project is very large, complex, important, and time-consuming, divide and conquer it. Break it up into smaller sub-tasks or sub-projects that you can get done during uninterrupted blocks of time (e.g., when you might otherwise have time only for shorter, lower priority tasks).

H. Do important tasks during your most productive time of day; do low priority tasks during your least productive time of day.

I. Give any task your total attention. (Ask your assistant to hold calls. Close the door. Clear your desk.)

J. Complete a task the first time–unless it is impossible or inadvisable to do so (e.g., if it must be cut up into smaller tasks).

K. Don't stew about having to do something—just do it.

L. If it is a really important task, do it right, even though you may have to move a deadline forward or put off a lower priority task.

M. Don't be as much of a perfectionist when doing low priority work.

N. If the task or activity involves something you must remember, write it down immediately.

O. If it is a task of a personal rather than job-related nature, you should probably do it on your own personal time. Try not to waste someone else's time by asking them to take care of it.

Handling Paperwork

A. Have paperwork priorities

   Priority 1: Very important; high priority; requires important (perhaps immediate) action, but is not necessarily urgent.

   Priority 2: Fairly important, even though it might border on being routine; requires some action, but is not particularly urgent; can be set aside until you have dealt with higher priority matters.

   Priority 3: Relatively unimportant and routine; low priority; is more for your information than action.

B. Screening and prioritizing paperwork

  1. Your assistant's responsibilities

    a. Have your assistant at least screen incoming paperwork and give it to you once (possibly twice) a day (first thing in the morning or after lunch).

    b. If your assistant is well-trained and fully oriented to your priorities, work habits, and operations, also have him or her prioritize paperwork before giving it to you.

    c. Especially in the case of Priority 3 material, have your assistant highlight or underline important information or ideas.

  2. If you do not have a assistant, or if you prefer not to have your assistant prioritize your paperwork, review the contents of your in-basket once (possibly twice) a day, prioritizing each piece in its turn during the first handling.

C. Scheduling prioritized paperwork

After screening prioritized paperwork, schedule doing or taking care of it.

Priority 1: Schedule it into the day's work, taking other priorities into account.

Priority 2: Schedule it into the day's work, but around higher priority tasks to the extent possible. Set it aside (off your desk) until you can get to it.

Priority 3: As you skim the contents when first handling and prioritizing it, you might as well make mental notes of the contents and then immediately file it for future reference, getting it off your desk.

D. Handling paperwork (once it is prioritized)

Priority 1: Work on it once, **completing it the first time** (unless it must be broken down into sub-tasks).

Priority 2: Once you can get to it (after completing higher priority tasks—or between blocks of time set aside for higher priority tasks), complete it the first time (unless it, too, must be broken down into smaller tasks).

Priority 3: If the material is only for your information, do as indicated in paragraph C above. If it is for your action, complete it the first time (when you get to it). If it requires very routine action, assign it to your assistant or a subordinate (if/as appropriate). [Once your "priority 3 file or drawer" is full, review it and dump all but information that must be kept for future reference. Even these items can occasionally be summarized on several sheets of paper for filing.]

E. Keep paperwork off your desk — except the one thing you are presently working on.

Reports

A. Review existing reports, revising them as appropriate. First, analyze the organizational structure, key decision-making points, people's job descriptions, and job interdependencies. Second, determine (a) who needs what information, from whom, and why; (b) when or how often they need it, and why; and (c) in what format they need it. Third, compare these determinations with existing reports and revise them accordingly.

B. Assign a priority to each report, as you would with other paperwork.

C. If a report involves your overall responsibility area and is important or complex enough, write it or fill it out yourself.

D. If a report involves your area, but is routine and simply requires filling in readily available data, have your assistant or a subordinate do it.

E. If it involves one particular subordinate's responsibility area (and no one else's), assign it to that subordinate.

F. Get together all the necessary data, ideas, or recommendations before you start writing a report.

G. Write reports in a brief, concise, accurate, and clear manner.

H. Guidelines for "Any Specific Task or Activity" apply to reports.

Memos and Other Paperwork You Initiate

A. If your memo is issuing a new or revised policy, write it inaclearand concise manner. Briefly andconcisely explain the reason for the policy (or change in policy). Anticipate and answer important questions that your readers might have. Invite further questions and tell readers whom to contact for answers.

B. If your memo requests an answer, clearly indicate the date by which you wish to receive the answer.

C. If you are requesting that someone do something, don't beat around the bush. Be direct but tactful. Explain the reason(s) for your request adequately but concisely.

D. If your memo requests action, clearly specify what action should be taken by whom, when, and how.

E. If you are requesting someone to do something, be cer-

tain that the task or activity lies within their responsibilities and authority. If it does not, they may not be able to carry out your request.

F. Consider making a simple phone call instead of generating paperwork for yourself and others.

Telephone Calls

A. Establish specific period(s) during your day for placing, receiving, and returning telephone calls (e.g., during times of day when other people tend to be in their offices).

B. Have your assistant screen calls, suggesting that people call back (or that you will call them back) during the time(s) of day you have set aside for making, taking, or returning calls.

C. Be prepared. Before making important calls, outline the matters to be covered and have any necessary information available.

D. When calling someone, identify yourself, minimize amenities, and get right to the point of your call.

E. Make appropriate notes as you confer over the phone.

F. Try to conclude the matter, arrive at a decision, or make arrangements before ending the conversation.

G. Time your calls. Try to complete most of them within three minutes.

H. Don't take calls when someone is meeting with you in your office.

I. Use the telephone to get important information that a letter might take days or weeks to get.

J. Make certain that you and the other person both understand what each said (e.g., facts, assumptions, opinions, commitments, date and time of an appointment, etc.).

Appointments

A. Have your assistant screen visitors and schedule appointments to fit into your day's or week's schedule.

B. Ask subordinates to make appointments—unless there is a real (high priority) emergency.

C. Establish specific time(s) of day for keeping scheduled appointments.

D. Schedule appointments back to back, allowing a few minutes between them.

E. Schedule high priority appointments for your best time of day.

F. Set a reasonable time limit for each appointment, taking into account the subject's priority and complexity.

G. Be prepared. Before an appointment, jot down the points to be covered and get together any necessary information.

H. Close the office or conference room door. Ask your assistant to schedule return telephone calls.

I. Before beginning the discussion, take a few minutes to clarify objectives.

J. Begin and end on time (as scheduled).

Meetings

A. Initially: With your superior and colleagues, and also with your subordinates, take time occasionally to (1) identify or anticipate, categorize, and prioritize problems; and (2) identify and prioritize any important goals to be set, plans to be made, or decisions to be made. Next, prioritize the items in (1) and (2). Then, schedule meetings to deal with these important matters in the order of their assigned priorities.

B. Challenge requests for meetings.

C. Hold meetings when . . .
   1. people need to exchange important information or ideas among themselves;
   2. a decision must be made that involves or affects two or more people in important, interrelated ways; and/or
   3. a telephone call or memo will not suffice.

D. Identify and invite appropriate attendees: those who are directly involved in, could be significantly affected by, or have important input to the situation or decision at hand.

E. Identify those who might need or want to be informed of the results.

F. Don't attend a meeting if you don't qualify in one of the three ways mentioned in D above. If you are interested in the outcome, request a memo or the minutes of the meeting.

G. Unless your superior qualifies, don't invite him or her to a meeting scheduled for you and your subordinates. Don't go to meetings being held by your subordinates with their subordinates.

H. Provide attendees with a guideline agenda ahead of time. Request that they come properly prepared with necessary information, preliminary analyses of the situation, alternative plans or solutions (including plans for their implementation), and tentative recommendations.

I. Schedule a reasonable amount of time, taking into account the priority and complexity of the subject(s) under discussion.

J. Hold meetings in a conference room rather than an office, so that there will be few if any interruptions.

K. Arrange ahead of time for any necessary audio-visual equipment, reports, etc. to be available and ready for use when the meeting convenes.

L. Start a meeting on time. Don't wait for late-comers (or they will tend to come even later the next time).

M. At the very outset of a meeting, take a few minutes to clarify objectives, to formulate a firm agenda, and to review the leader's and participants' responsibilities.

N. Lead/guide the meeting effectively. For problem-solving and decision-making sessions, guide discussion through each phase in its turn: first through exploring and analyzing the situation fully; then through formulating alternative solutions or plans; and finally through decision-making steps (analyzing and comparing alternatives, and choosing/deciding which to implement).

O. Use visual aids such as a whiteboard or flipchart to guide the discussion and help keep track of details.

P. Deal with each task or subject effectively the <u>first time</u> it is handled.

Q. <u>Don't spend $100's worth of time on a $5 subject</u>; but be sure that the $5 subject is not actually worth more.

R. End on time. Let anyone stay who wishes to ask a question or discuss something further, but dismiss the others.

Crises

A. Relax a few moments before tackling a crisis situation. Prepare yourself for peak performance.

B. Handle a crisis (or crises) according to priorities; importance is paramount, urgency is secondary.

C. Don't spin your wheels. Think things out fully, exercise your best judgment, and resolve the situation effectively the first time. Then get on with less important and less urgent tasks.

D. Exercise self-control. Be careful not to over-respond and perhaps make things worse.

Reading

A. Identify which books, magazines, and journals you should monitor or read for information and ideas that will help you deal with the important things you have to do.

B. Identify which of these sources you should read yourself and which you might have others read and summarize for you.

C. Subscribe only to essential publications.

D. Read high priority letters, memos, and reports once—carefully—and take appropriate action immediately.

E. If you come across something important to remember, underline it, highlight it, or immediately make a note of it.

F. Read less important material during breaks, travel, or waiting time (unless you have more important things to read during those times).

Committed/Waiting Time

Use this time constructively to, for example, (a) plan, (b) take care of minor or routine matters, (c) read, or (d) listen to audio training media.

Guidelines for an Assistant

A. Have certain time(s) during the day for your assistant to meet with you to (a) discuss current problems, their priorities, their schedules, and each's progress; (b) plan and schedule together; (c) be given assignments; (d) ask and answer questions; and (e) keep each other informed of important things that are happening.

B. Screen mail—especially junk mail.

C. Screen visitors, setting up appointments when possible (based on the week's/day's priorities and schedules).

D. Screen incoming phone calls, arranging (whenever possible) for you to return them during the time(s) of day you have set aside for making and returning calls.

E. Anticipate and notify you of problems.

F. Draft routine letters, memos, or reports for your revision or signature.

G. Develop an efficient office system, including well organized files and a tickler system for staying ahead of and meeting deadlines.

Table 9.2: *Relationships Among the Managerial Process, Personal Goal Setting and Planning, the Analytic Approach to Problem Solving, the Learning Process, the Communication Process, the Behavior Modification Process, and the Time Management Process*

	Managerial / Integrative Process	Personal Motivation (Goal Setting & Planning)	Problem Solving & Conflict Resolution
	Preparation Steps	**Preparation Steps**	**Preparation Steps**
What has happened, or what is going on —and why?	**Analyze Situation** (including evaluation of past results and performance)	**Analyze (SELF)** Analyze personal characteristics and behavior. Analyze (interactions with) the environment.	**Analyze Situation** System of possibly causal of influential factors/variables and their interrelationships
What needs to be done, or what might be done —and how?	**Set Goals and Plan** **Set Goals**: what accomplish **Formulate Plans** (how to): Strategies and tactics, programs and projects, action plans	**Set Goals and Plan** **Set Goals**: what accomplish **Formulate Plans** (how to): alternatives involving: Strategies and Tactics, Programs and Projects, Action Plans	**Formulate Solutions** **Set Goals**: what accomplish **Formulate Plans** for Implmenting Solution(s): Strategies and Tactics, Programs and Projects, Action Plans
	Budget resources	**Budget** resources	**Budget** resources
What course of action should be taken?	**Make Decision(s)** Analytically test, compare, and select among alternative [sets of] goals, plans, budgets, policies, and procedures	**Make Decision(s)** Analytically test, compare, and select among alternative [sets of] goals and plans	**Make Decision(s)** Analytically test, compare, and select among the alternatives
Take action; do something	**Implement Plans to:** **Organize** **Staff** **Guide, coordinate activity** **Guide control processes**	**Implement Plans to:** **Reach life goals** Obtain & evaluate **feedback** **Revise** plans as approp.	**Implement Chosen Solutions** Obtain & evaluate **feedback** **Revise** solutions as approp.

Learning Process	Communication Process	Behavior Modification (Learning) Process	Time Management Process
Preparation Steps	**Preparation Steps**	**Preparation Steps**	**Preparation Steps**
Analyze Situation What should learn/develop; Factors affecting learning; Possible principles, modes, and methods use	**Analyze Situation** What needs communicating? Analyze receivers Analyze oneself Analyze environmental obstacles	**(Re-)Analyze Self** What characteristics should learn, develop, or modify. Possible learning principles, modes, and methods use	**Analyze Situation** Log and analyze one's use of time (what doing, when, and why) Indentify what to do better.
Formulate Plans Set goals: what learn **Formulate** learning **plans**: Strategies, tactics, and action plans that apply appropriate *principles*, *modes, and methods of learning*	**Formulate Plans** **Set goals**: what accomplish **Formulate** communication **plans**: Strategies, tactics, projects, and action plans specifying *audience, ideas & feelings to convey, modes to use, the when and where, and facilities/equipment needed, etc.*	**Formulate Goals/Plans** Set goals: what learn. **Formulate** learning **plans**: strategies and tactics, programs, and action plans that apply appropriate *principles, modes, and meyhods of learning*	**Formulate Solutions** **Set Goals**: what accomplish **Formulate Plans** for Implementing Solution(s): Strategies and Tactics, Programs and Projects, Action Plans (Steps and Procedures)
Budget resources	**Budget** resources	**Budget** resources	**Budget** resources
Make Decision(s) Analytically test, compare, and select among alternative [sets of] goals, plans, budgets, etc.	**Make Decision(s)** Analytically test, compare, and select among alternative [sets of] goals, plans, budgets, etc.	**Make Decision(s)** Analytically test, compare, and select among alternative [sets of] goals, plans, budgets, etc.	**Make Decision(s)** Analytically test, compare, and select among the alternatives
Implement Learning Plan **Learn** information and ideas, develop skills, modify attitudes and behavior **Reinforce** what learned	**Implement Communication Plan** **Communicate** using chosen modes or media Obtain and evaluate **feedback** **Revise** communications	**Implement Adjustment Plans** **Learn** information and ideas; develop skills; modify traits, attitudes, and behavior. **Reach life goals**	**Implement Chosen Plans** Obtain & evaluate **feedback** **Revise** solutions as approp.

H. Gather and organize information/data from internal and external sources.

I. Maintain an information file, so that he or she can (a) readily answer routine inquiries without having to interrupt you, or (b) provide you with information quickly.

J. Make decisions concerning previously specified, routine matters for which he or she keeps the necessary information.

K. Skim reports, magazine articles, and similar materials, and then provide you with summary briefs or abstracts.

L. Prepare facilities and materials for scheduled meetings.

M. Take dictation (when convenient for both of you).

Guidelines for Your Subordinates

A. Make an appointment to see you—unless the situation is a real and important emergency.

B. To the extent possible, save up several topics for discussion during a single appointment.

C. Before requesting an appointment, consider whether or not a brief call or a memo would suffice.

D. Ask for advice when they really need it.

E. Come to you (preferably your assistant) for information that they cannot get elsewhere on their own.

F. Give you reports and send you memos that are brief, to the point, clear, and complete (in terms of providing you with information you might need or want).

G. Answer your memos by the time you have indicated in them.

H. Submit to you completed, well thought-out proposals (containing an analysis, possible alternatives, and recommendations)—instead of sketchy ideas.

I. Provide you with summary briefs or abstracts of specified books, reports, or magazine articles that might contain ideas and information of importance to you (and them).

J. Perform those tasks and make those decisions that (a) are specified in their job descriptions, and (b) you may have assigned or delegated to them.

K. Be considerate of other people's time.

L. Utilize the time-saving practices and policies listed in the section above.

Guidelines for Other Organizational Team Members

Many time management practices and policies will not work effectively if everyone is not playing by the same rules. They work best if everyone (a) is aware of them, (b) applies them, and (c) reinforces and aids others' use of them. Therefore, meet with your superior(s) and colleagues to discuss all of the practices and policies mentioned in the sections above. Arrive at a consensus regarding those that should be established within your various organizational units (and perhaps throughout the entire organization), and then implement them systematically.

Summary

General

As discussed above, effectively managing time and making better use of it both depend on two major processes: first and foremost, personal (and organizational) goal setting and planning outlined in Chapter 3; and second, using the time management processes and usage techniques covered in this chapter. However, the processes (methods) covered in other chapters are also important. You make better use of time and actually save it by (a) more effectively solving problems, resolving interpersonal conflicts, and making decisions as described in Chapters 4 and 6, (b) more effectively learning information and skills and adjusting behavior as described in Chapters 5 and 8, and (c) more effectively interacting and communicating with other people as described in Chapters 6 and 7.

Relationships with Other Processes

What was mentioned above is illustrated in *Table 9.2* on pages 9-22 and 9-23. All of the processes, when performed well, involve using the same approach—the analytic approach. Whenever using that common approach, one thinks before doing. However, each process does involve slight differences, which depend on the context wherein the particular process is performed. (For example, in a problem-solving process, you consider systems of potentially causal or influential factors, but in a learning process, you consider the methods and modes of learning.) Most important, **each process in *Table 9.2* increases the effectiveness of the others and reinforces the use of them all**.