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# The Mathis Group's Messenger

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Vol. 4 No. 2

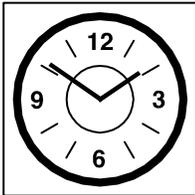
February, 2006

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## Manage Your Time Before It Manages You

Managing time is often one of the most difficult aspects of your job. There are some days where, at the end of it, you didn't accomplish everything that needed to be done, but you have no idea where all your time went. Yet, there are other days that you are so productive that you think someone turned back the clock and you worked an extra three hours. What is the difference between these two days? Time Management.

Time management is organizing your daily activities to accomplish work on priority tasks. It is a myth to think that time can be managed. We can only manage people, not time. One of the main time "stealers" is procrastination. Oftentimes, we don't realize that stopping work to do little things that won't help you reach your end goal add up to several hours of lost work time each week.



The first way to eliminate procrastination is to confront what causes us to waste time when we don't even realize that it's happening. There are two kinds of procrastination: Conscious and Unconscious. Conscious procrastination are personal reasons for putting off doing something or known reasons that you are aware of mentally and emotionally. Unconscious procrastination are internal reasons which influence why we are hesitant to do something. These reasons are not clearly in mind. Within these two types of procrastination are several causes:

- Fear of failure
- Fear of success
- Avoiding judgement
- Feeling of hopelessness

- Lack of urgency
- Avoiding unpleasant work
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Personal control
- The procrastination habit
- Lack of information

How can we stop procrastination from happening? There are 13 easy things you can do to help take control of your time.

### ***Get started***

Once you're in motion, it will be easier to stick with it. Typically, the hardest part of a job is just getting started. As soon as you do, however, the job becomes much easier and more enjoyable than expected.

### ***Work with the time available to you***

Sometimes people estimate that a task will take 10 or 12 hours so they keep waiting for a day where they can devote that amount of time to it. Don't force yourself to complete the task in one day. You will never have a day that you will be able to devote all of your attention on one task. Breaking the task up into several days will help you stay focused and you won't get burned out.

**(continued on page 2 Manage Your Time)**

*Have a time and place for everything, and do everything in its time and place, and you will not only accomplish more, but have far more leisure than those who are always hurrying, as if vainly attempting to overtake time that had been lost.*

*Tryon Edwards (1809-1894)  
Theologian*

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## *You can always get something done*

You can even accomplish something with just five minutes! People think that only having a few minutes isn't enough time to get anything done. That is simply not true. There is always something that can be done even in the shortest amount of time. It may be returning an email or a phone call, filing papers, or any number of small tasks that will need to be done at some point.

## *Create time*

If there really is no time, carve out time from your existing schedule. Cut back somewhere else to make the additional time you need.

## *Work in stages*

You don't always have to start at the beginning. Do the project in stages. If you have a limited amount of time during the day, and there is a short section of the project that can be done in a few minutes, do it. You don't always have to keep everything in order.

## *Set deadlines*

Setting a deadline for yourself will help keep you on track. Knowing what you need to get done each day gives you a goal to strive for and you will have a sense of accomplishment when it is achieved.

## *Reward yourself*

Reward yourself for each small deadline you accomplish. After you reach each goal, take a break or splurge in some other little way. This will keep you motivated to keep going.

## *Ask yourself, "Is there a simpler way to do it?"*

Finding the simplest way to complete a task makes

the job much easier and more enjoyable. It provides you a way to work faster and get more accomplished in a given time period.

## *Ask yourself, "What is the worst thing that will happen if I do it?"*

Many people procrastinate out of fear, insecurity, or simply not knowing what the outcome is going to be. By figuring out the worst possible outcome, fears can be eliminated

or overcome. Usually, the worst possible outcome never comes to pass.



## *Listen to your moods*

When motivated, get the project done. If you know that your mood will be a hindrance to the project, work on something else for the day. There is no need to spend wasted hours on something that you have no desire to do at the moment. After that mood passes, get back to work.

## *Plan an appropriate reason to be motivated*

In order for you to get a task completed, you must have some type of internal motivation. This could be anything from the knowledge that there will be a reward given upon completion to simply wanting to do a good job in your position and be looked upon favorably.

## *Be opportunistic*

If a meeting is canceled, work on a special project. When extra time comes up during the day, don't waste it. Use it productively to catch up or get ahead.

*Keep a definite goal of achievement  
constantly in view. Realize that work  
well and worthily done makes life  
truly worth living.  
Grenville Kleiser (1868-1953)  
Writer*

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## Mark Your Calendars!

St. Louis Spring Conference  
on Project Management



March 20-24, 2006

- ⇒ Proactive Communication and Interview Skills for Gathering Business Requirements
- ⇒ Project Performance Management
- ⇒ Project Quality Management

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### *Expect problems*

You could get sick or delayed in this project, naturally. It is inevitable that things are going to come up that you can do nothing about. Don't fret over these delays. As you're planning how long it will take you to complete the project, schedule in some additional time. This will help when the unavoidable happens.

Knowing how to save time in your everyday tasks will help you to increase your productivity. The following Rapid Time Tips will help you do just that.

1. Time Tips on Using the Telephone--Keep your conversations limited to those absolutely necessary. Say what needs to be said and then hang up.
2. Time Tips on Meetings--Meetings rank as one of the most significant time wasters. Make an agenda and stick with it.
3. Time Tips on the Quiet Hour--A period of uninterrupted concentration provides time for analysis, planning, and organizing.
4. Time Tips on Saying "NO!"--It is easy to say "yes!" When you say "yes" you please other people, avoid conflict and feel needed. But saying "yes" indiscriminately leads to displeasure, interpersonal conflict and rejection. It is important to maintain the

proper balance between yes and no. Here are some ways to say "no" without guilt:

- Sleep on it.
- Don't apologize.
- Look them straight in the eye.
- Thank them for considering you.
- Explain how it will conflict with other commitments.
- Suggest someone else for the job.
- Practice saying no with easy people first.
- Compute the amount of time required if you say yes.
- Ask if the activity relates to your goals.
- Say yes... then delegate it to someone else.

There are a variety of ways that you will be able to save time throughout your day, as well as become more motivated without being overstressed. Find the way that works the best for you and stick with it!



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- ☑ *Time Management:  
Controlling Your Time*
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Projects and Tasks*

Contact The Mathis Group today to receive their catalog of complete course listings or to discuss your customized onsite seminar.

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