



latest word

issue 323 may 2014

It's about time ...

"Sometimes there is, no next time, no time outs, no second chances. Sometimes it's NOW or NEVER."

The famous French writer Victor Hugo once wrote "Short as life is, we make it still shorter by the careless waste of time." There's a powerful perspective in that sentence that just might make you think twice about time.

Time is so hugely important, so hugely valuable and yet our relationship with time is so often casual and deeply careless.

How often have you heard yourself and others say
"I don't have the time"?

The thing is we have all the time there is, and furthermore it's exactly the same for everybody. The trouble is how we think about time and how we choose to use our time.

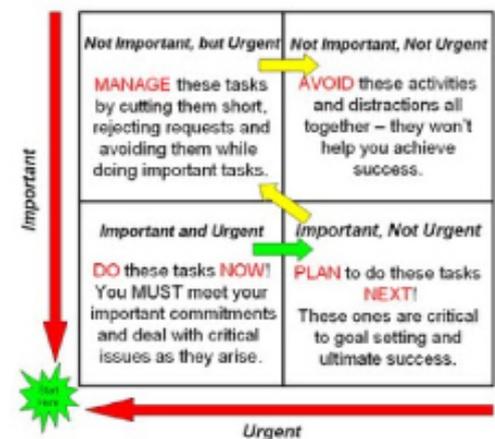
Time is a finite resource yet we very often have unrealistic expectations that we'll get everything done but we don't.

So rule #1 of time management is to understand and accept that we cannot do everything, we must choose something. The time management & productivity expert, David Allen put it beautifully when he said "You can do anything, but not

everything." (Check out his bestselling book - Getting Things Done)

So if you cannot do everything, you must choose something and that's why rule #2 of time management is that you must prioritise.

Stephen Covey in his book "First Things First", outlines a framework for prioritising, where you segment your tasks to help you think about your priorities and determine which of your activities are important and which are essentially distractions.



In fact we live in an age of unprecedented distraction with beeping phones, the internet, emails, TV, social media and so much more vying for our attention.

We need to be effective and not just efficient with our time.

There's a great quote by Brian Tracy (check out his time management book "Eat the frog") that says "One of the very worst uses of our time is to do something very well that need not be done at all." So true.

Managing your time effectively, and achieving the things that you want to achieve, means spending your time on things that are important and not just urgent. The urgent tasks grab your attention but the important tasks help you to achieve the things that you want to achieve.



It's important to remember that in order to prioritise effectively, you must have clear well defined goals. You must also learn to say NO, which is a skill that many people struggle with, but anybody can master with practice. Again by having very clear outcomes and goals for your own life, or you own business, it's easier to say NO when you know what your true priorities are.

So rule #3 of time management is you must plan your tasks. What do you need to do and in what order to achieve the outcomes you want. Without some forward thinking, you risk jumping from task to task without delivering the results you want.

I often ask people how do they manage their time and tasks the day before they go on holidays. Even the most disorganised people tend to write lists of what needs to be done that day, decide what to do and when (aka a *plan*), delegate tasks if possible and focus on action without distraction.

Your ability to achieve your goals will depend on your willingness and ability to be structured and focused not just on the day before you go on holidays but every day.

So you need a plan and a system that works for you, where you have clear outcomes or goals you want to achieve, where you decide what needs to be done, when it needs to be done and in what order. In order to manage your time effectively, you must measure your time. Quite simply, where are you spending your time? We are so fond of phrases like "Time flies" or "Where did the time go?" but guess what it's not rocket science. You can begin with a simple pencil and paper, not to mention the countless phone apps and systems there are available. When you begin to measure anything, you may be surprised with the insights, like where your time goes. There are 24 hours in a day, 7 days in a week and 365 days in a year..... what did you do with them?

That brings us to rule #4 of time management, you must take action. Without action, there cannot be results,

or at least the results you desire. Lack of action will produce an outcome, but I'm pretty sure, not an outcome you'll be happy about.



THE TROUBLE IS THAT
YOU THINK YOU HAVE TIME.

Let me ask you a question, take a task that you don't particularly like doing such as a tax return, cleaning out the garden shed or garage, or spring cleaning your home. Do you feel more motivated before you begin the task or after you've begun the task and started to accomplish it? My guess is that you feel more motivated after you have started the task and are making progress. That motivated feeling often doesn't come before action but after you've actually started.

Let me ask you another question, have you ever added something to your 'to do' list after you have actually completed it, only to immediately cross it off the list? :-)
That feeling, that sense of accomplishment only comes after definite and deliberate action.

Ok finally, let's get big picture. Forget about minutes, hours, days, months and even years and let's think a Lifetime. Just as there is a last day of your holidays, there is a last day of your life. When you are reflecting on that big 'to do' list that was your life. How many things got done and crossed off your list? What did you do with your life? What will you feel? Happy? Accomplished? Regretful?

What you DO today, and what you do the day after that, and the day after that will determine that feeling.

If you're careless with your time, you're careless with your life

You have been warned :-)

Get busy living.



Last word

Thanks for taking the time to read our "latest word"

Feedback on our newsletters is always welcome and gratefully received. joe@fwf.ie.

Contributions to our monthly Framework Financial Newsletter are made from our Business & Professional Development Expert, John Byrne.

(Email : john@mindcoach.ie Phone or Text: 086 8116101)

Disclaimer: This information has been provided by **framework financial** and by third parties for information purposes only. Whilst every care has been taken to ensure that the content is useful and accurate, **framework financial** and any contributing third party shall have no legal liability or responsibility for the content or the accuracy of the information so provided, or, for any loss or damage caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with reliance on the use of such information.

framework financial:

Unit Ab1, Centrepoin House, Rosemount Business Park, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15

Phone: 01 - 8829938 Fax: 01 - 8829772 Email:info@fwf.ie

Joe McGuinness & Company Limited trading as framework financial is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland

