

3 D's – Do, Delegate or Dump

Time or Choice Management may be the single most important way to improve your overall performance, both personally and professionally, and especially in a home environment with children. Wasted time or not properly managed time is irreplaceable.

Working hard and being effective are two entirely different things. Being able to work smarter not harder is the key.

To work smarter and make beneficial choices you need to be both effective and efficient.

- **Effective** – Doing the right things
- **Efficient** – Doing things in the right order

A combination of both and an understanding of the 3 D's will prove to be a successful formula for you.

What are the 3 D's?

- **Do** – These are the tasks you have to do yourself. Once you have identified these things you can then:-
 - ✓ Prioritize tasks in order of importance and urgency.
 - ✓ Group 'like' tasks together, for example all phone calls, appointments, housework, play time, you time etc.
 - ✓ Make the best of your prime time, for example when do you have the most energy during the day or the least interruptions?
 - ✓ Regularly check your to do list and ask yourself 'What is the best use of my time right now'.
 - ✓ Update your diary and/or to do list daily. What you get done tick off, what you do not get done transfer to the next day.
- **Delegate** – Delegating is a skill. Once learnt though, it can be one of the most beneficial 'tools in your tool box'. Delegating does not mean to just off load tasks to others because you couldn't be bothered doing it, or are unsure if you can. Delegating is about helping others as well as yourself.
 - ✓ Helping others – by delegating we are actually telling others that we trust them. We are also allowing them to learn a new skill. This is not only a skill to use in a work situation, but also at home. Your family, like work colleagues, will gain a better understanding of how things are done as well as being part of the 'team'. Delegating gives others responsibility, whilst accountability is still yours.
 - ✓ Helping yourself – Once a task is delegated this frees you up to concentrate on the tasks at hand that you have to do. If you are finding it hard to 'let go' of tasks, for many reasons including the fear of not being noticed as a 'super, important and busy

person', think of the time you could be saving and not depriving others of your time and giving others the opportunity to learn something new and be appreciated for it.

- **Dump** – This is being able to look at your day, the tasks set for you and all incoming requests of your time. Then decide what you really need to do. For example, it can take up to an hour daily to read all the 'wonderful, warm and fuzzy or funny' emails that are sent to you, but is this taking you closer to your goals, do you have the time or is the world going to end if you don't read them? If your prioritized to do list does not allow you to have this time, dump. If an hour being present with your family or friends is more important, dump. This doesn't just go for emails, it can be drop in visitors or clients, unexpected requests on your time from others or a home chore that can be put off.

Coaching suggestions

- Delegate tasks. What are you currently doing every day that you can see may be able to be delegated to another member of your family/team?
- Use the 'Swiss cheese' approach to large tasks. Look at the tasks at hand that may take a lot of time and effort, can you make a series of 'small attacks' to complete this, which will free up more time each day?
- Keep a daily and weekly to do list which shows you the priority of tasks, where you are at and reminds you of achievements. Do you have a diary and/or to do list? Does it incorporate home and family/friends time, alone/you time as well as work time?
- Have a clear work area so you can concentrate on one thing at a time. Are you organized enough that you do not get distracted?
- When creating your to do lists, remember to group like activities together to save on time.
- Learn to say no nicely and be clear with your intentions and what you have planned for day. Remember to be flexible though, as there are times when we can say yes to requests, but only if we do not sell ourselves short on time to get important tasks completed.
- Make the best of your 'prime time' by scheduling tasks which require careful thought and more effort during these high energy times of the day. What is your high energy time?
- Communicate clearly with those around you what you are expecting of yourself and them. Who would you have to inform of your new time

management choices with reference to doing, delegating and dumping?

Being aware of what we have covered, and gaining awareness how you currently use your time as compared to how you could be using your time and possibly making some changes in your day will really make a difference to the quality and enjoyment of your life.

In closing I would like to share with you this quote:

“The bad news is time flies. The good news is you’re the pilot”.
Michael Altshuler



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