

COACHING TIP

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MANAGE YOUR TIME EFFECTIVELY

1. **Spend a lot of time in your primary areas of responsibility** - Resist the temptation to get distracted or drawn into low-payoff activities.
2. **Focus on improving in the areas that you spend a lot of time** - If you are currently spending four hours per week in a given activity, improving your effectiveness by 10 percent will give you an extra 20 hours per year that can be invested in other high-payoff areas.
3. **Invest as much time as possible in areas where you have the greatest strengths** - In addition to optimizing productivity, working in areas of your greatest strengths is more pleasurable and boosts your energy rather than drains it.
4. **Stay in the moment** - Focus on where you are. The mind can only focus on one thing at a time. When you jump back and forth between multiple tasks or thoughts, you do not give either task or thought your full attention. When you do not give something your full attention, you will be less effective.
5. **Use synergy.** - Combine several objectives into one activity.
6. **Cut larger tasks into bite-sized chunks** - Large tasks can be daunting or overwhelming. When you break these tasks into bite-sized chunks – something you can do immediately, within the hour, or this week – you break inertia, overcome procrastination, and create momentum.
7. **Start and finish strong** - Ninety percent of failure can be attributed to not starting or quitting too soon. Likewise, getting off to a fast start gives you momentum, motivation, and the confidence to continue. Finishing strong increases the likelihood of a successful conclusion.
8. **Divide and conquer** - Isolate tasks that need your undivided attention. Set up separate folders, electronic files, or notebooks as needed.
9. **Keep “Could Do” lists** - These are tasks or projects that you could do when you are blocked on your high-priority tasks or in downtime when you are away from your normal work area.
10. **Organize and categorize** - Keep things you use on a regular basis in close proximity to your desk or work area. Set up and use a filing system that insures quick retrieval when you need them. Effective use of categories allows you to group similar tasks.
11. **Simplify** - Look for ways to cut out steps, group similar activities, or otherwise streamline processes. Set up systems that will optimize flow and pave the way for accomplishment.
12. **Manage distractions** - Clear the clutter, both physical and mental. Close your door. Change location. Turn your computer monitor or close your laptop. Turn your phone to silent mode. Some additional techniques for managing distractions include having written goals, setting deadlines and target dates, making and keeping commitments, and maintaining your energy level.