PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT | TRAINING

We All Need A 25 Hour Day!

While we all could use an extra hour every day, the real issue is not more time, it's time better spent.

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1077 words | 5 pages

Why does time management continue to be an ongoing topic? Why have literally hundreds of books and articles been written on the 'how to' of managing one's time? What will it take to finally come up with a working solution to the never ending struggle of getting everything we want to accomplish done in the time allotted?

We all know the scenario – time for family, work, personal space, recreation, spirituality, community and so on. We've all seen the pie graphically divided into pieces and regretfully acknowledged which pieces take up the greatest percentage of our lives and which need improvement.

> ***I suspect that were we to vote collectively, work would win hands down as to which part of the day consumes us the most.***

As for me, there is no good news or revelation. There's nothing I've discovered to insure your success in having a balanced life or that you will stick to your priorities and feel better about the way your time is spent. Of course, I can say to myself, "I'm determined to give more time to my family as they are my #1 priority." Or, "No matter what, I'm exercising every day with no excuses." The truth is, managing time is easy to say and difficult to achieve. If it were easy, we wouldn't need to dwell on finding solutions. Would an extra hour in the day *really* be the answer? Not likely!

What can I possibly share with you to shed light on this topic? Having tried a variety of different approaches over the years, the strategy that helps me the most is being a 'list person'.

> ***In order to complete what I want to accomplish daily, weekly and monthly, I write tasks down and check them off when finished.***

My motto, *"If you want something done, you have to do it or hire someone else!"* Not only does my list include everything related to work, I also identify work-out days, time w/friends and family, time for myself and overnights with our grandchildren! By getting into the routine of writing commitments down, it quickly becomes obvious what is and isn't getting done.

Die hard entrepreneurs seem to take on all tasks related to their business and that's what really can slow them down. I've also learned that managing my time includes learning to delegate.

> ***To increase my business, I focus on money producing activity and pay others to do the tasks required that keep my business afloat.***

For example, consider hiring others to manage your data base – a virtual assistant to prepare and distribute your newsletter, a bookkeeper who can handle accounting issues, and a social media expert. By lightening responsibilities that are better handled by others, you actually increase time. If money is an issue, think of the one or two activities that frustrate or eat up productive time the most and delegate. This one step will free you up to focus where you need to. You have to start somewhere. Otherwise, the circle never stops – no time – out of balance – stress – and everything else that gets in the way from being in control.

It's critical to plan part of your working schedule around networking. You have to get out to share your story, your products and services to those individuals who can benefit from what you have to offer.

It doesn't matter if you are part time or full time. If you're bogged down with tasks and use this as an excuse for poor results, it's time to make a charge! How can you possibly expand business when you're too busy doing activities that don't produce results? And, if you don't take some time – 2 -3 times/week to exercise, have lunch with a friend, share time w/your loved ones – you will literally wear yourself out.

While we all could use an extra hour every day, the real issue is not more time, it's time better spent.

If you think making lists and delegating will help you be more productive, give either or both a try. What have you got to lose when, in fact, you just might find the extra hour you so desperately need?

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Bonnie Ross-Parker, is a multi-dimensional businesswomen/entrepreneur with a background in education, franchise development, publishing, mentorship, network marketing, and community development. She combines vision with a unique set of skills. Formerly the Associate Publisher of *The Gazette Newspaper/Atlanta*, Ms. Ross-Parker now focuses her energies as the Chairwoman of the Cooperative Business Community for TNNWC Group LLC. She is the champion and chief advocate for the establishment of the interconnection of business networks around the world for the purpose of building the Global Interconnected Cooperative Business Community (GICBC).

In 2002, Ms. Ross-Parker created and incorporated The Joy of Connecting® gatherings for women. Nationwide, The Joy of Connecting® is an absolutely unique interpersonal customer acquisition/marketing program serving entrepreneurial, business women and professionals who are serious about growing their businesses. In September of 2009, The Latina Joy of Connecting® was created to bring a strong bond of sisterhood to women multi-ethnically and internationally.

Ms. Ross-Parker is a graduate of George Washington University, and earned a Certification in Network Marketing at the University of Chicago. Several of her articles on owning one's own business and entrepreneurship have appeared in publications including: *Wealth Building, Home Business Magazine, Business to Business and Entrepreneur's Business Start-Ups.*

In 2002, Ms. Ross-Parker received The Athena Award ~ an honor designed to acknowledge women of leadership in cities throughout the United States. In September, 2005 she was honored by the Women's Leadership Exchange, a New York based organization, as an Influential

Woman of Georgia and currently serves on their Atlanta Advisory Board. She is a featured speaker with the Direct Selling Women's Alliance. In May of that same year, Bonnie was honored by The International Toastmaster's Organization of Georgia with their annual Communication & Leadership Award. Most recently, Bonnie Ross-Parker was one of 8 women selected from hundreds of submissions to be recognized as part of the traveling *Princess Di Exhibit's Women's Wall of Achievement:* Celebrating Atlanta Women, 2010.