MANAGEMENT | I PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT | SYSTEMS

How to Make Time Your Friend

Your business is not about managing people. It is about taking control of your business and managing systems... even if you're the only one using the system. Eventually you'll have a team using the system.

by **Jillian Middleton**

2991 words | 10 pages

I have too much to do!

I have too much to do. I don't have enough time. My life is chaotic. 'm dead tired at the end of the day, and everything still isn't done. My kids and my husband (or wife) complain that I'm always at work.

Sound like you?

Time is our most precious commodity. We don't know how much we are going to get. Nor, can we ever get any of it back. Once that second, minute, hour or day has ticked off, it's gone. Forever.

And yet, for all of time's importance in our lives, it is also one of the toughest things to get a handle on.

Whether someone comes to me for coaching to improve their sponsoring, figure out how to improve duplication in their business, find people to talk to, get newbies quickly and successfully out the gate, in the end we also tackle time management.

- Procrastination
- Lack of Productivity
- Too much to do
- Double booked
- Family discord over time worked
- Exhausted at the end of the day

> ***The act of balancing one's family, work and personal time while maintaining sanity is often the toughest thing we do in today's busy world.***

Here's the deal, I know it can be tough to carve out time for our businesses. Carving time out of your schedule is never an easy task. However, tell me this, why, when we "take a job", are we able to carve out the hours we need in order to go to work? What's the difference?

The obvious answer is they would fire you if you don't show up when you say you are going to. The not so obvious one may well be that we take our jobs more seriously (maybe that is more professionally) than we take our businesses!

If you want your business to work, you must plan your day and stick to your plan.

Why Is Time Management So Tough

Why is time management so tough?

> ***Choices and boundaries are the culprits. If we are going to effectively manage our time we make choices... And stick to them.***

I know you think you read and understood that, but take another moment to digest it.

When we make choices to do something in a particular time slot, it also means that we are making choices to NOT do some things. And, if we are going to be successful it means sticking to our guns.

Unfortunately, all too often our plans go out the window. Here are some tools to help.

Make Choices

All of us only have so many hours in a day. And most of us have lots of things competing for our time and attention. Hubbie wants his time with you. The kids want their time. Everyone wants you to make their lives run smoothly (dinner on the table, taxi to after school events, help with homework, the list goes on and on.) But not even you – superwoman you may be -- can be in more than one place at a time.

Real truth be told, you can't do two things at once. Your brain is not wired to do that. It moves back and forth so quickly between tasks that it seems like you are doing two things at once. But in reality, you are switching back and forth in consciousness between the tasks.

Here is the real rub. Depending upon what multiple tasks you are doing, you are losing seconds (sometimes minutes) after each shift in task. In addition to the lost time, you also miss material, open the door to misunderstanding and limit your retention.

Bottom line: Double tasking is exhausting and inefficient.

You may think you are getting everything out of that conference call you're listening to while you make the kids lunch, or make the bed, or fold the laundry. But you are not. Your brain is switching in and out of the conference call keeping both tasks going as best it can.

Decide What Is First?

Because we have so many different things clambering for our time, it is important to think and plan what you want to get done in a given day. If you want a full system to help you do this, we have it at www.SavvySponsoring.com. Here are some pointers:

Like most of us, your day will likely incorporate a myriad of diverse things to do. Some of the things you do will be family oriented, some business, and others may take you out into the community. Hopefully, you also give yourself some personal time.

Grab a piece of paper and pen right now and jot down some things you'd like to accomplish this week in the categories that are important to you; for instance in your business, home or community.

> **TIP!** You have a choice here. You can keep reading, or you can grab the pen. If you keep reading, when you're finished you will have only an idea of how to control your time. If you grab the pen and start writing you will have a great tool to begin to get a real handle on your time.
>
> By the way, if you keep reading you may have uncovered a reason why your business is not as successful as you would like it to be. A good idea of how to do something doesn't get it accomplished. A good working tool that you implement – does get it accomplished. Pick up the pen! :-)

Do you have time committed to run the kids where they need to go? Write them down in your calendar. Even if you know you'll remember, write them down. Give yourself plenty of time to get there and get home. No skimping on the time. Then there is no running late or driving too fast. But most importantly, there is no stress.

What do you want to accomplish at home this week? Again, mark it out in your calendar. You will quickly see if you have been too ambitious. If you start to run out of time, curb the list back.

Do you have community commitments? List them and get them into your calendar.

Under business decide what it is you'd like to get done this week. Write down money making activities first. For example, how much time do you want to put into calling people to set up appointments in your business?

> **TIP!** I suggest to decide how many people you actually want to talk to, and then book what you believe is enough time to accomplish that. For instance, don't say you want to **call** 15 people. Rather, make your goal to **talk** to say 5 people. You might get that done in 5 calls. Maybe it will take 15 or 20 calls to reach 5 people. It prevents leaving voice mail messages and telling ourselves we've done a 'good days work.'

I am assuming for this discussion that you have already determined your business hours. If you want real help with that you can check us out at http://www.savvysponsoring.com/storehours

Store hours are simply the number of hours you work your business each week.

For some people, the number of hours they work and when they work them stays constant each week. For others, it changes from week to week or maybe from day to day. Regardless, if you want sanity, plan what hours you work your business. Plan *all* of them.

> **TIP!** Give everything you want to accomplish in a day an actual time in your calendar to get done. Put one item per delineated time slot. If you say you'll make those calls sometime in the afternoon or just after dinner, they often don't happen. It's not a real deadline. You don't have an appointment with yourself. Make a real time.

No More "To Do" List

You should look pretty good on paper right now. If you have written down everything you want to get done, you have also eliminated your To Do list. If your list was longer than the time you have available, keep it handy at your desk for the next time you plan your day. Or, to fill in time if your calendar changes. I keep my To Do list on my computer in a word document. It has all kinds of things on it; both long term and short term projects that cover everything from business to fun. This way nothing gets lost and I can easily prioritize things I want to do.

> **TIP!** Carrying around your To Do list is like carrying around a ball and chain with you all day. You only have it for one of two reasons. (1) You are not working out of a calendar at all. (2) You don't have time to put these items into your day, so you carry them with you hoping to fit them in. Bad Idea

Hold Your Ground!

Let me ask you this question. When you work from home what do most people really think about what you do? Do they think you are really working? What's the question so many moms are asked? It goes something like this, "Do you work or stay at home with the kids?"

Anyone called "Mom" works, she just doesn't get paid for her work. No one knows this better than a mom. And yet, I've heard moms say, "I don't

work, I'm a stay at home Mom." Culturally we correlate being "at home" with not working. And moms are not the only target of this. If you work at home as a computer programmer, writer or run any other kind of business, most people think you are available because you're home.

> ***This is your opportunity to make a change. You have some big boundaries to draw here. You are going to make yourself "off limits" during your business hours in much the same way you are "off limits" when at a traditional job.***

Lots of people in your home and close circle are going to notice that change. Initially some of them may not find the change particularly convenient either. There will be some pushback. Read on for help to hold your boundaries!

Family Support

In order for your business to peaceably exist along side the rest of your life, everyone needs to be on the same page. Please note, I did not say everyone has to be happy or approve of your business. But they do need to be on the same page as you in terms of how you use your time. No surprises from you. Let them know your hours and what they can expect from you.

I'm not saying that your family shouldn't be your priority. Of course they are. But is it really so impossible to negotiate yourself some time? Often the issue isn't you can't negotiate time, but rather we think we are the only ones who can do the job, (or no one will do it as good as us) and we try to do it all.

It won't work.

If you involve your kids you'll be surprised at how much they'll cooperate with you. Kids love a conspiracy; they'll cooperate if you include them.

Share Your Calendar

Sit down with everyone and let them know what you do for them. If you run kids around make sure they are aware of it. Let everyone in your family see what you do. Just because you do it, doesn't mean they are consciously aware of it!

A great way to do this is to grab a calendar and in a different color ink for each person in the family, lay out just how much of your time goes toward them. This includes running young ones to their activities, making dinner, all the things we do at home that are simply not noticed. (Not noticed, that is, until they're not done.)

Then lay out, in the same calendar, the hours you are going to work your business (a different color ink again is a good thing. Contrast is good.)

If your kids understand when it is their time (no fudging on your part, their time) they will allow you to have the time you need. This does not mean they won't forget (or test.) Try saying something like this to get them on board:

"I'm going to do blah blah. When I'm finished you and I are going to do blah blah. I need your help in a couple of ways. Will you help me? While I'm working I need you to do blah blah. Will you do that please? And I also need you to remind me when it is time to go to work. And, I need you to remind me when it is time to finish. Will you help me?"

> **TIP!** If your kids are young and don't have the time-telling thing together yet, you can buy one of those "We'll be back" cardboard clocks that stores put on their doors when they close. Have your child move the fingers to the correct time to tell you when to go to work and when to stop. When the cardboard clock matches the real clock they'll let you know. They'll love telling you what to do!

When they "forget" and come bursting into your office or work space, turn toward them smiling and put your fingers to your lips and whisper, "Not right now honey, Mom's working remember." Little one's especially respond to this really well. They often will put their finger to their lips, make the same whispering sound, ask one more question (they are kids) and then go.

Boundaries

Kids, like most of us, just need to understand the boundaries. When they know the difference between their time and yours they will, after some practice, respect it.

Typically I've found kids (and partners) are agreeable to your working hours when they know when you are not working.

But remember it is all negotiable. And with good strong Store Hours you have all the tools in place to negotiate.

A quick point about negotiating. If you find that a certain time you want to work is a real problem for a member of the family, get your Store Hours out and negotiate another time with them. Don't just jettison the time, trade it for another spot.

If you take a minute to write down the criterion of what good business hours are for you, it will make it easier to stay on track. For example, it makes no sense for you to have "calling time" exclusively during the day unless you are typically calling people at their place of work. Some evening hours or weekend hours are inevitable. But you don't have to do that on Friday nights if that's your "date night" with your partner.

One more thing here. I am not suggesting that you ignore your kids during business hours. But I do suggest that unless there is 'blood' don't allow them to interrupt you and get what they want. You can't stop the interruptions, but you can stop rewarding them.

It is your choice.

> **TIP!** This is huge. If you respect your business hours, work them when appropriate and leave it alone when appropriate, people will take you and your business much more seriously. Be professional and you earn respect.

Get Started

If there is a tough part to anything it is in the getting started! My challenge to you is to start... now. If you managed to read past my first admonition to actually decide what your Store Hours are going to be this week, then do it now. If you implement your hours this week by the end of this month you will have a schedule you, your family and friends respect.

Plus, you will have a handle on how to coach this to your downline. Because store hours will be how you run your work day. Your business is not about managing people. Rather, it is about taking control of your business and managing systems... even if you're the only one using the system. Eventually you'll have a team using the system.

That's what systems do... they build teams.

TIP! This may be tough to hear but your number one priority should be yourself. You first. I promise at the end of the day you will be less cranky, less tired, less frustrated and will have more quality time with the people in your life.

If you started your new business builders with a great time management system would it eliminate some things like "I don't have enough time." How many people have you lost because they don't manage their time well?

It all begins with you.

Remember people will do what you do, not what you tell them. Create the life and the business you want. Model it for your team. Watch it duplicate.

Till the next time,

Jillian Middleton
http://www.savvysponsoring.com/

Jillian Middleton is a Mentor Coach and Trainer, and author of the courses '5 Steps to Working Less and Making More in MLM'

As creator of the Savvy Sponsoring Strategies programs, Jillian trains network marketers and direct sales consultants the same strategies she used to build two 6-figure network marketing businesses in 5 years.

Get Your Free Report: The "5 Steps to Work Less and Make Money In Network Marketing" at www.SavvySponsoring.com
If you would like to inquire about having Jillian speak at your next event, please send an email to speaking@savvysponsoring.com

---