

Are you disorganized? Do you need help meeting your goals? I recommend these books:

I. Stephen Covey, The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.

p. 60 Get personally involved in all material you read; read as if you are going to teach it within 48 hours. This also helps you avoid wasting time, by actively learning the material.

p.98- Begin with the end (goal) in mind. This helps you focus and manage your time around what is important to you: your goal.

p. 151 Time Management Matrix: Activities fall into one of 4 categories

Urgent and Important: crises, pressing problems, deadline driven projects

Urgent and not important: interruptions, some mail, some meetings...

Not urgent and important: relationships, planning, recreation, building relationships, recognizing new opportunities...

Not urgent and not important: busy work, some phone calls, some mail...

II. Hyrum W. Smith, The 10 Natural Laws of Successful Time and Life Management.

This books helps you to gain control over your life by gaining control of your time. Naturally, there are some things we can't control, but there are significant tips here for how to control what you can. I think the book also helps us see how our behavior may be wasting other people's time, so we may learn how to make the most out of the time we request from other people.

Law 1: You control your life by controlling your time.

Law 2: Your governing values are the foundation of personal success and fulfillment.

Law 3: When your daily activities reflect your governing values, you experience inner peace.

Law 4: To reach any significant goal, you must leave your comfort zone.

Law 5: Consistent daily planning leverages time and increases focus.

(taken, from p. 14)

Time Robbers (pp. 30-45)

I. Those Imposed on us by others:

Interruptions

Waiting for answers

Unclear job definition

Unnecessary meetings

too much work

poor communication

shifting priorities

equipment failure

disorganized boss

red tape

conflicting priorities

low community morale

untrained staff

- peer/staff demands
- lack of authority
- mistakes of others
- revised deadlines
- meetings

II. Self-Inflicted Time Robbers

- failure to delegate
- poor attitude
- personal disorganization
- absentmindedness
- failure to listen
- indecision
- socializing
- fatigue
- lack of self-discipline
- leaving tasks unfinished
- paper shuffling
- procrastination
- outside activities
- cluttered workspace
- unclear personal goals
- perfectionism
- poor planning
- preoccupation
- attempting too much

Of all of these, the most commonly experienced time robbers are:

1. interruptions

Unnecessary Interruptions: “someone drops in unannounced or calls on the phone, mistakenly assuming that you care, that you have the required information, or that you are responsible. If none of these is true, then this is an unnecessary intrusion....This interruptions is to be avoided or terminated quickly.

Necessary Interruptions “are those about which you do care, for which you do have information, or are responsible. A necessary interruption has value, and you should handle it at once, unless it is untimely.”

Untimely Interruptions “are necessary, but come at an inconvenient or inappropriate time. These should be rescheduled to a more suitable time.”

2. procrastination

- set a deadline and stick to it.
- divide large projects into smaller units

3. shifting priorities

4. poor planning: If you fail to plan, you plan to fail”

5. waiting for answers: request a time-frame for an expected answer; call the person if the answer doesn't come in that time-frame and explain your need for getting the answer. Ask what you can do you help out the situation.