

Member's Quarterly

Fall 2019 Edition

Ask the Expert

Time Management

Q. As a former professional CFL Head Coach, what lessons can you provide us regarding time management?

A. Time Management has been a discussion point in business and the home for many years. The concept has mainly been centered on efficiency. Some of the traditional studies and focal points still have relevance today. The "Pareto Principle", declutter, specific journals and multi-tasking are all valid talking points and exercises. However, as a professional that works in an extremely competitive and demanding field, I wanted to dissect the whole paradigm of time management and how it applied on a day to day basis in the workplace.

Let's start with the definition of time management:

Time management is the act or process of planning and *exercising conscious control over the amount of time spent on specific activities*, especially to increase effectiveness, efficiency or productivity...

The definition of time:

The indefinite *continued progress of existence* and events in the past, present and future regarded as a whole.

The underlined parts of these definitions were the driving force in my new paradigm. If productivity ultimately is the desired outcome when considering time, I had to consider the following questions:

- What activities am I spending my time on?
- Are these activities making me more productive?

These questions forced me to be intentional about what activities I was participating in and for how long. As a result, I began looking at time management as a question of productivity and not necessarily scheduling or efficiency. Some activities were effective at organization but had little impact on production. Others managed my schedule and allowed me to accomplish more but did not necessarily create a more productive environment.

Personal Growth = Productivity

After much consideration, I realized that personal growth was the actual driving force in productivity. Earning potential and new opportunities increase with skill development. Therefore our use of time both personally and professionally should reflect that.

4 Areas of Development That Increase Productivity

To become more productive and create new opportunities, we should schedule 3 hours weekly in the following quadrants:

Professional Internal — schedule 3 hours weekly to work on a new skill that can be applied in your current workplace. Make it something that will make you more valuable to your organization.



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Professional External — schedule 3 hours weekly to work on a skill outside your workplace. Focus on a designation or mentoring program that can provide you greater earning potential or build professional relationships outside of your business.

Personal Development — schedule 3 hours weekly to work on a skill that will create some area of personal growth. Focus on passive skills that interest you, but create possible productive skill sets. Language courses, learning how to play instruments or writing a book are excellent examples of this area.

Personal Family — schedule 3 hours weekly to work on a skill that will create increased family relationships and bonds. When we have good stable home lives, we are much more productive in the workplace.

If we are able to schedule 12 hours per week for 52 weeks, that makes 624 hours of growth yearly.

In order to make the most of our intentions, it is important to have some guardrails to keep us on track. There are also some key factors that should drive the decisions we make when deciding how to use our time. The following are some tools to utilize when scheduling the activities that will help you grow and become more productive.

- A) Everything you do must have a start and completion date, regardless of whether it is a professional designation course or writing a book. Scheduling the start and finish date will keep you on track to finish.
- B) Do what you want to do. Find growth opportunities that interest you. Take on projects in the office that create growth for you. It will create a domino effect. You will delegate more often. That will empower your people.
- C) Schedule things that add growth to you or your loved ones. Be certain to identify that in your specific quadrant of growth. If it is a joint activity, find the growth opportunity for those who participate with you.
- D) Try to schedule activities that have a 2/3 value. Each activity you schedule has the opportunity to have multiple growth opportunities. For example, taking a language course with a child can create growth both personally and professionally. One activity meets two separate quadrants.
- E) What is measured is gained. Take the opportunity 12–18 months after completing a growth activity and evaluate how it has created earning potential and growth. It will provide you with the ability to make changes and validate what activities you are currently working on.

In Summary

Time management is a simple process of selecting and scheduling activities that improve productivity. The selection process should fit into one of 4 quadrants of development. These areas will create the balance in your personal and professional growth that will ultimately make you more productive.

When the process has begun, remember to test your selections with the 5 guardrails to ensure your personal success.

Remember, a better you, is a better ...

We all improve with time!

Marcel Bellefeuille has spent over 20 years as a professional/collegiate football coach, speaker and leadership trainer. He is the co-author of "10 Discussions for Effective Leadership: 10 Ways to Exceed Your Expectations as a Leader." Marcel can be reached via email at marcel@coachmb.com.