



## Top Ten Tips

### Managing Time and Reducing Stress

1. Carry a diary and record all your thoughts, conversations and activities for a week. This will help you understand how much you can get done during the course of a day and where your time is used badly. You'll see how much time is being spent producing results and how much time is wasted on unproductive thoughts, conversations and actions.
2. Any activity or conversation that's important to your success should have a time assigned to it. To-do lists get longer and longer to the point where they're unworkable. Appointment books work. Schedule appointments with yourself and create time blocks for high-priority thoughts, conversations, and actions. Schedule when they will begin and end. Then have the discipline to keep these appointments.
3. Plan to spend at least 50 percent of your time engaged in the thoughts, activities and conversations that produce most of your results.
4. Schedule time for interruptions. Give yourself buffers - time before and after each activity when you can be pulled away from what you're doing. Take, for instance, the concept of having "office hours." Isn't "office hours" another way of saying "planned interruptions?"
5. Take the first 30 minutes of every day to plan your day. Don't start your day until you complete your time plan. The most important time of your day is the time you schedule to schedule time.
6. Take five minutes before every call and task to decide what result's you want to accomplish. This will help you know what success looks like before you start. It will also slow down your perception of time. Take five minutes after each call and activity to determine whether your desired result was achieved. If not, what was missing? How do you put what's missing in your next call or activity?
7. Put up a "Do not disturb" sign when you absolutely have to get work done.
8. Practice not answering the phone just because it's ringing and e-mails just because they show up. Disconnect instant messaging. Don't instantly give people your attention unless it's absolutely crucial in your business to offer an immediate human response. Instead, schedule a time to answer email and return phone calls.
9. Block out other distractions like Facebook, Twitter and other forms of social media unless you use these tools to generate business.
10. Remember that it's impossible to get everything done. Also remember that odds are good that 20 percent of your thoughts, conversations and activities produce 80 percent of your results.