



FIRE UP YOUR CAREER



Winning Time Tips

[By Drew Stevens, CPSP]

When a new year has begun and everyone is off to a fresh start, do you ever feel like the issues of the last year never left? Are you frazzled with harrowed days and sleepless nights? Do you react to everything?

Did you know that the average human being in our society loses *an hour* a day due to disorganization? Take just a minute to think about it - that's more than two weeks each year!

Unfortunately, many of us sacrifice our time to disorganized habits - shuffling papers, looking for lost phone numbers, hunting for car keys, even procrastination.

So my question to you is "How would you like some of that precious time back?" I know I would.

When the pressures of work get to you and you need to be in control of your time, use the POD principle:

- First, **prioritize** your tasks using numbers and color coding - red for "urgent," yellow for "important but not urgent," and green for "personal" or "not important or urgent." You can place your list on a piece of paper or simply obtain colored manila folders to organize your work.
- Second, **organize** the list in numerical order according to what comes first. Place a number at the top of the paper, and number your tasks in chronological order and in order of importance. The trick here is to have no more than five items

in each color group or a total of 15 items in one day; this is simply because you will not have the time to complete them otherwise.

- Finally, either **delegate** or **ditch** items that you physically cannot get completed. You can control how much you handle simply by delegating things or throwing them away.

A famous quotation for you to remember is "The effective person does the important things first...and has less urgent battles and crises that arise!"

In addition to POD, here are some more items to make your day go more smoothly:

- **Live in a "day-tight" compartment.** Accomplish only what you can do, and do not carry over issues, tasks, and frustrations from day to day. Once it is done, let it go!
- **Develop a sense of urgency.** Begin doing something - anything. Rather than procrastinating, simply get something on your priority list completed.
- **Know when to say "NO."** This is possibly the hardest concept for most to grasp. Say "no" when you are overwhelmed and cannot meet a

commitment. Peers and colleagues will value your honesty rather than get frustrated over your consistent delays.

- **"TRASH" email and voicemail.** "TRASH" is an acronym for toss, refer, action now, store, and halt. Email and voicemail can be controlled. Make time at the beginning and the end of the day to answer new messages and, if possible, delegate messages to others. Do commit to treating electronic media similarly to other tasks: red for "urgent," yellow for "important but not urgent," and green for "personal" or "not urgent or important."
- **Commit yourself to writing down daily goals.** This is a must. In order to go through your day as smoothly as possible and with a road map, you must have a goal, a purpose, a reason for using the day. Take a few moments each and every day to establish goals and objectives that will get you to the finish line!
- **Turn your "shoulds" into "MUSTS."** Do not say "I should do this" or "I should do that," because you will make excuses for why you should not do it. Rather, be a change agent by using action words and phrases



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such as “I must” or “I am” so that you begin to take action on the tasks and goals that lie ahead.

To feel like a winner and get control of your time, you MUST change today. You have to feel that you can accomplish anything that you set your mind to. When you start to use these simple techniques, you can accomplish anything and have more time to enjoy life.

Several years ago, I heard a song by Brian McKnight from the movie *Men of Honor*. The words of the song “Win” state clearly how you can control your life and can help you to understand how to cope with daily issues so that you always maintain a winning edge:

*Never lose hope,
Never lose faith.
There's much too much at stake.
Upon myself I must depend.
I'm not lookin' for place or show, 'cause I'm gonna win!*

When you get lost in your journey, these lyrics will place you back on the path of success and enable you to realize not only that you can win but that you have already won!

Use POD, say “NO,” turn “shoulds” into “MUSTS,” and you will win!

About the Author

Drew Stevens is all about results. Drew works with organizations that want to realize finish-line results by working to increase profits and productivity. His passionate and personable presence and his easy-to-remember ideas such as ABLE, BE ALERT, and C4 can create immediate results for you! Drew speaks and consults internationally, and he is frequently called upon by the media for his expertise. To obtain instant results, call 877-391-6821, email Drew at drew@gettingtothefinishline.com, or visit his website at www.gettingtothefinishline.com.

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