

Timesaving Tips

Here's a collection of 30 timesaving tips you can apply to many different areas of your life.

1. Do your thinking on paper. You will make quicker and better decisions if you write down the pros and cons of a line of action. This doesn't take time; it saves time!
2. Use a "slush" file -- have a specific place to put all papers that are not important enough to file permanently but that you feel uncomfortable about throwing away just yet.
3. In handling correspondence, consider answering routine letters and memos on the original, running them through the office copier for your own records and returning the original to the sender.
4. If long periods of sitting make you lethargic, arrange two working levels so you can do some of your work standing up.
5. If you find it difficult to get any "quiet time," try to wake up in the morning before anyone else to gain uninterrupted time for planning and other tasks.
6. Get at least 10 minutes of programmed exercise every day, and throughout the day use every opportunity to walk, stand, climb stairs, bend over, etc. This not only promotes health but also increases "prime time" by reducing fatigue.
7. Avoid clutter. Keep everything you are not working on out of your immediate working area and out of sight, if possible. Always tidy up your desk and work area before leaving the office.
8. Set up a desk date file (sometimes called a future file, a suspense file or tickler file) to provide an automatic method of bringing papers to your attention on specific dates in the future.
9. Never do errands on impulse. Plan your route carefully, handling as many errands as possible each time.
10. Make maximum use of catalogs when shopping either for personal items or office supplies.
11. "Let your fingers do the walking." Before running errands, phone or check the internet to compare prices, determine availability, etc.
12. Plan each night what you are going to wear the next day, and lay it out ahead of time.
13. Hire someone else to do yard work, housework and other routine home chores where possible. This can double as an opportunity for your child or neighborhood children to learn responsibility while earning an allowance or "wage." Don't get hung up on the "do it yourself" syndrome.



14. Use window envelopes where appropriate for correspondence, saving the time of a second typing of the name and address.
15. Have your phone and driver's license numbers, as well as your name and address, printed on personal checks.
16. Plan your televiewing a week ahead, so that you will be more selective in what you watch. Never turn on a TV set just "to see what's on."
17. Hire specialists to handle things you could do yourself but probably not as quickly or as well.
18. Learn to read routine material more rapidly. Don't "backtrack," compulsively rereading phrases before going on.
19. Write a memo to yourself for future reference whenever you have completed a difficult task that is going to recur. You will benefit more from an experience if you have made a written record of your mistakes and of the lessons learned.
20. If you are always "putting out fires," ask yourself after each crisis: (a) Why did it occur? (b) What can be done to prevent its recurrence? and (c) If it does recur, how can I handle it better next time?
21. Ask yourself Townsend's question a hundred times a day: "Is what I am doing, or about to do, moving me toward my objectives?"
22. Purchase, rent, download, or borrow from your library recordings on time management, self-motivation and similar subjects, as well as any that are available in your professional field, and listen to them whenever you are traveling in your car.
23. Carry a recorder when traveling or making calls. It is the most convenient way of making detailed notes after a phone conversation.
24. Don't be afraid to give yourself time frequently to relax, to meditate or even to "goof off." But do so as a result of a conscious decision so that you can relax completely. Don't drift into periods of dawdling, when you are half-working, half-resting.
25. Consider moving closer to your place of work. This is a big step, but if you saved only 15 minutes on commuting time each way, you would gain an additional three weeks of working (or playing) time per year!
26. Rewrite and reprioritize your goals and activities at least every three months. The world changes, we change and so must our goals.
27. Work on only one item at a time.
28. Buy paperback books, remove a chapter at a time and read it during your waiting times.
29. Expect others to succeed; it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.
30. Don't over-control others. It is frustrating for them and time-consuming for you.

