Time-Saving Tips for Hyper-Busy Business Leaders

Apr. 13, 2021 | Posted by The Alternative Board

There may be only 24 hours in a day, but with effective time management, business leaders can get a lot done within that limited timeframe. The key is taking steps to eliminate clutter and distractions, improve focus, and be more disciplined in how you put your work and your day together.

Time-management "is both an art and a skill that often requires taking many variables into account," notes TheJobNetwork. In the end, "developing strategies for making the most of your time each day is a wise investment in your productivity and future."

Here are tips to keep in mind:

Tackle email head-on.

Handling the apparently endless stream of emails is a key element in effective time-management. Start the process by chopping away at the volume of emails you receive. Unsubscribe to anything that's not relevant to your business (or to yourself, personally). Any other dubious emails can be flagged as "junk" or "spam" and will also help reduce the number of emails you receive every day.

As for the time involved in creating emails, one time-saving approach is to work on keeping the content short and to the point. Chances are, you can say what's needed to be said and/or direct others to handle specific tasks in just a couple of sentences. And when sending a message to a group of people, instruct them to avoid hitting "Reply all" in their responses. This will cut down on email volume for everyone involved.

Set strategic objectives.

Rather than stumble haphazardly through the day, time-management experts advise setting a short list of strategic goals on a daily, weekly or even monthly schedule. For example, assemble a roster of five achievable objectives for the week ahead and then make sure to complete one of those objectives every day.

Keep delegating.

It's a point TAB members are reminded of at every meeting. You've got a high-performing team, so make the best use of their talents. Here are some valuable guidelines to the most effective approach at delegating:

Write down everything you did today or this week.
Circle the items on this list that only *you* can do.
Determine which of the remaining tasks can be handled by members of your team. Use this second list to make a "delegation plan."
Select one or two high-level activities you're not currently addressing, but that you know would increase your business's profitability. Then post these goals somewhere you see them every day. That should get you moving towards the overall goal of eliminating tasks from your schedule that others can handle.

Set deadlines.

It's easy for business leaders to put things off, when other more supposedly "urgent" matters arise. A more effective approach focuses on setting specific deadlines for certain tasks.

In order to get key tasks completed, "give yourself a specific deadline," advises *Women's Business Daily*. "Write it down and tell people about it, so that you are accountable for it," because deadlines "help to make us all much more efficient."

Download apps to help manage time.

There are plenty of apps out there to help you more efficiently manage your time and productivity. Here's a comprehensive list of high-value apps to investigate and download for maximum effectiveness.

Set time aside for coaching others.

Reducing time spent on less-important tasks doesn't mean neglecting one of your key roles as a business leader—coaching others. As *Forbes* notes, by setting aside time to guide and coaching your direct reports, "it becomes easier for them to create the same environment and expectations for their direct reports." Remember, a strong leader "is empathetic and creates time for guiding and coaching."