Taking Control of Your Time

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The book "Taking Control of Your Time" is part of the "Results Oriented Management" series, published by the Harvard Business School Press.
Divided into 4 parts, the book is composed of 15 articles. They are all from different authors and bring the most varied views and strategies on controlling your time.
In addition, the book brings you practice so you can work out effective plans, make quick accurate decisions and, anticipate events, and avoid problems caused by stress and exhaustion.

Score

8

8 Aplicability
9 Inspiration
7 Innovation
8 Impact on results
8 Structure

Main ideias of the book

- *Avoid excessive information;*
- Lead to obtain fast results;
- Make each meeting an important event;
- Enjoy the power of delegation;
- Priority is the first step to good time management.

For whom is this book suitable?

The book is ideal for you who feel you have lost control of your time, and want to be more productive, but you can never find the time to do anything else day by day.
If you also want to know how to prioritize your activities, have accurate decision making that can bring more value to you, even in difficult times, this book is for you!

Overview of the book

1 - Strategies to manage your time.

Make sure you are investing your time into the right things.

The book starts with tips that have already been proven and that really work. With this, a plan is presented with 3 steps to allocate your time.

- *Subdivide your time of professional responsibility into categories such as administration, daily responsibilities, people management, among others;*
- Ask yourself what time you should devote to each of the categories, if necessary, change this allocation so that it is weekly, monthly, etc;
- Confirm alignment with your directors and co-workers, gathering feedback on how you split the time.

With the accomplished plan, it's time to put it into practice and stay focused. An important tip that the author presents is to say "no" to colleagues who ask for last-minute things.

This way, the author advises us to reserve part of our daily time to be away from the cell phone and other interruptions and thus be able to work on our list of priority activities.

Timeless Insights about how to manage time.

At this stage, the author offers us more tools about time management. It is presented a technique that consists of visualizing the desired results before engaging in an important activity. A considerable step is to consult other people to see what they think of the subject.
People spend much of their time of day performing insignificant activities where their presence is not important, the famous "fire extinguishers."
This way, the author advises us to reserve part of our daily time to be away from the cell phone and other interruptions and thus be able to work on our list of priority activities.
Finally, it is presented that the management of our time also requires space for activities other than work, such as family time, amusements, among others. In addition, the authors reinforce the use of frequent critical analyzes.
In this part of the book are presented 6 tips on how to increase your efficiency:

- *Do not interrupt your work when a correspondence arrives;*
- Do not deal more than once with the same document, if it requires action, act immediately;
- Do a sorting of the phone messages;
- Synchronize the return with the time of the caller;
- At the end of the week, throw out drafts and informational data you collected during the week;
- Avoid meetings with more than 12 people, as they do not result in any effective decision;

Now that you know how time management is important to a company's success, what do you think of taking another step towards your professional success?
Get organized, know your routine and manage your priorities. This will help you not only in your work, but also bring you more quality of life.

2 - Facing the challenges of time management.

How to take advantage of all meetings.

Before actually marking a meeting, we have to analyze if there is a need, so ask yourself if the purpose of the meeting could not be met in another way, such as by email, informal talks and other means.
If the meeting is needed, set out clear goals for people to work on, speak up and decide, and end the meeting only after everyone agrees.

Facing the information mire.

In this step, the author presents 8 tips:

- Prioritize the information that comes to you, as 90% probably is useless;
- Filter sources of information only by crucial ones, those that have critical data for your work;
- Decrease or eliminate smaller fonts such as newspapers and magazines;
- "There is no substitute for face to face." People are interactive, but articles are produced for thousands of people;
- Stop searches after the date you have useful information;
- Make your own analysis;
- Outsource whenever possible;
- Use the internet to tame the internet. Make use of filters in searches and require that you only receive information that fits your profile;
- Know where you want to go to maintain a general direction.

Finally, the author says that trying to deal with multitasking only harms productivity. When you stop an activity, it can cause you valuable hours to reheat again.

3 - Fast and intelligent decision making.

Accelerated Leadership

Most often, leaders make confusing or little-known decisions, so the authors suggest the ALA approach, acronym for "acting," "learning," and "adapting." In this way, you expand what you already know and pay attention to what you do not know.
One of the other ways to speed up the decision making process is to look under more than one perspective, ie analyze your vision, types of clients, ordinary people, subordinates and others. When you put yourself in the position of others, you will generate a state of alertness that will lead you to perceive things you have not seen before.

What should be the priority projects?

The first suggested step is to create a priority list, and consider the specific challenges of each project.
In this prioritization we must also take into account the way the project aligns with the company strategy, the impacts immediately caused and the prioritization is advisable to occur with the presence of the leader.
Also, consider which one can make a difference in your professional success , and which one will have the greatest negative impact if it is not done.

> *Everything has to be quite aligned with where you want to get and planning how to get there.*

4 - Preventing yourself from exhaustion.

Understanding and avoiding the fetters of time.

In order for you to change your time-related stress, the author says that you need to change your habits and behaviors.
These changes can begin with your inner dialogue, making use of positive thoughts and expressions. In addition, it is necessary to recognize that you can not do everything and that is why it is fundamental to narrow your field, paying attention to the things that really deserve attention.
Finally, the author suggests that you eliminate the idea that certain activities have to be postponed so that more demanding ones are done. Saying no is essential.
Everything has to be quite aligned with where you want to get and planning how to get there.

Encouraging the delegation of greater power.

According to the authors, leaders receive too much attention and find it difficult to distribute trust and responsibility to their subordinates.
They suggest that it is necessary to start examining attitudes towards delegation, since it brings great benefits to all, as the author explains:
"Granting more autonomy to people, regarding decisions pertaining to each one's work, generates productivity and elevates morale and involvement. "
One of the ways to overcome this barrier is to cut privileges, allowing the company to have an egalitarian culture, encouraging delegation.

What other authors say about it?

In the book Big Dream, Cristiane Correa reports that the trio of wealthiest entrepreneurs in Brazil had characteristics like to adopt less hierarchy. According to them, the business would become faster and less bureaucratic. So one of the measures was to end the rooms and form a large work area, where people divide the tables.

In 15 Secrets Successful People Know about Time Management, author Kevin Kruse explains that delegating as many tasks as possible allows you to release time for your goals. In addition, Law 9 tells you to say "no" to everything that does not support your immediate goals.

Finally, in Developing the Leader Within You 2.0, John Maxwell addresses the key to leadership as the top priority. To rank your priorities, determine what is extremely necessary, which activities generate the greatest returns, and which ones you like the most. Now, for those that are not among the most important, you can delegate or even neglect.

Okay, but how can I apply this in my life?

Taking control of your time is not at all easy, but the problem has a solution if you deploy the methods presented and coldly observe your attitudes.

Select the tactics that should be prioritized in your professional environment and those that you consider to be the worst, such as excessive information and unproductive meetings.

Also, take a moment to review how you can apply the practices you have learned and get to know each other better! To do this, ask questions like:

- What are my worst time management problems?
- How much does this problem cost in financial terms?
- What techniques can I apply to leverage my situation?
- What changes could I make now, to regain control of time?

Lastly, keep in mind that controlling your time requires training and tolerance for made mistakes. Make good use of it and choose the techniques that will work best in your routine.

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