

CHAPTER 19

Create Large Chunks of Time

*“Nothing can add more power to your life
than concentrating all of your energies on a limited set of targets.”*

Nido Qubein

This strategy requires a commitment from you to work at scheduled times on large tasks. Most of the really important work you do requires large chunks of unbroken time to complete. Your ability to create and carve out these blocks of high value, highly productive time, is central to your ability to make a significant contribution to your work and your life.

Successful salespeople set aside a specific time period each day to phone prospects. Rather than procrastinating or delaying on a task that they don't particularly like, they resolve that they will phone for one solid hour between 10:00 and 11:00 AM. They then discipline themselves to follow through on their resolutions.

Many business executives set aside a specific time each day to call customers directly to get feedback, or to return phone calls, or answer correspondence.

Some people allocate specific 30-60 minute time periods each day for exercise. Many people read in the great books 15 minutes each night before retiring. In this way, over time, they eventually read dozens of the best books ever written.

Schedule Blocks of Time

The key to the success of this method of working in specific time segments is for you to plan your day in advance and specifically schedule a fixed time period for a particular activity or task.

You make work appointments with yourself and then discipline yourself to keep them. You set aside thirty, sixty and ninety minute time segments that you use to work on and complete important tasks.

Many highly productive people schedule specific activities in preplanned time slots all day long. These people build their work lives around accomplishing key tasks one at a time. As a result, they become more and more productive and eventually produce two times, three times and five times as much as the average person.

Use a Time Planner

A time planner, broken down by day, hour and minute, organized in advance, can be one of the most powerful, personal productivity tools of all. It enables you to see where you can consolidate and create blocks of time for concentrated work.

During this working time, you turn off the telephone, eliminate all distractions and work non-stop. One of the best work habits of all is for you to get up early and work at home in the morning for several hours. You can get three times as much work done at home without

interruptions as you ever could in a busy office where you are surrounded by people and bombarded by phone calls.

Make Every Minute Count

When you fly on business, you can create your office in the air by planning your work thoroughly before you depart. When the plane takes off, you can work non-stop for the entire flight. You will be amazed at how much work you can go through when you work steadily in an airplane, without interruptions.

One of the keys to high levels of performance and productivity is for you to make every minute count. Use travel and transition time, what is often called "gifts of time" to complete small chunks of larger tasks.

Remember, the pyramids were built one block at a time. A great life and a great career is built one task, and often, one part of a task, at a time. Your job in time management is to deliberately and creatively organize the concentrated time periods you need to get your key jobs done well, and on schedule.

Eat That Frog!

1. Think continually of different ways that you can save, schedule and consolidate large chunks of time. Use this time to work on important tasks with the most significant long-term consequences.
2. Make every minute count. Work steadily and continuously without diversion or distraction by planning and preparing your work in advance. Most of all, keep focused on the most important results for which you are responsible.