

Time Management Strategies for an ADHD World

Harold L. Taylor



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Time Management Strategies for an ADHD World

Maintaining personal productivity in the digital age of speed



Time Management Strategies for an ADHD World:
Maintaining personal productivity in the digital age of speed
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1 Is technology rewiring our brains?

1.1 Are we paying the price for efficiency?

“ADHD diagnoses skyrocket in the U.S.,” is the headline of an article that appeared in the April 2, 2013 issue of the *Toronto Star*. Referring to a report from the *New York Times*, the article went on to say that nearly one in five boys of high school age in the United States are being diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. It is estimated that 6.4 million children ages 4 through 17 were diagnosed at some point in their young lives as having ADHD. This represents a 53% increase in the past decade.

Of course ADHD is more readily diagnosed nowadays; but it's interesting how the increase in ADHD parallels the increase in the use of technology, including smart phones, social media, computer games and the Internet. According to Gary Small, UCLA professor of psychiatry, the current explosion of digital technology is not only changing the way we live and communicate, it is rapidly and profoundly altering our brains. A study by psychologists at Iowa State reported in 2010 found that kids who exceeded the recommended two hours per day of screen time were one and a half to two times more likely to have attention problems in the classroom. And psychiatric investigators in South Korea find that 20% of Internet-addicted children and teens end up with relatively severe ADHD symptoms.

Although other reasons have been proposed for the increase in ADHD, including decreasing air quality (as indicated in a February 15, 2014 *Toronto Star* article titled ‘Neurotoxins’ hindering brain development in kids) the plasticity of the brain, combined with the incessant bombardment of digital technology and observable changes revealed by functional MRIs, places greater credence on technology being the culprit.

An online poll of over 1000 Canadian adults released by *Angus Reid/Vision Critical* (*Toronto Star*, January 26, 2013) revealed that 90% of the respondents believed their smartphones made their lives more convenient. So convenient, evidently, that 30% of them went online before getting out of bed, 31% at the dinner table, 29% in the washroom and 42% before falling asleep at night.

We adults should know that smartphones may seem smart, but they lack intelligence. Why are we so willing to be at the beck and call of an idiot? The Internet leads everywhere, which for the undisciplined means nowhere. Why browse away the hours? Email, computer games and social media are endless, but our time is not. So why do we behave as though we will live forever?

Research shows that the Internet and digital technology can have a negative impact on our ability to learn, focus, pay attention, memorize and relate to others on a personal basis. It also gobbles up our time, encourages busyness and multitasking and stifles creativity.

The futures of our business, personal lives, and our nations do not depend on technology, but on our ability to manage the technology we develop.

There is no shortage of information pointing to the possibility that technology is literally rewiring our brains. And there is a lot more we can do about it besides prescribing Ritalin or Adderall. Or we can assume and accept that our brains are evolving to adapt to our new ultra-efficient environment. Personally I view the unfettered use of technology as an assault on our brains.

1.2 Welcome to our ADHD world

I quoted statistics on the ADHD increase in children, and you might compare that to the rise in the use of cell phones as reported in the April 6, 2013 issue of *National Post*. In Canada alone, smartphone users increased from 4.7 million in 2009 to 10.5 million in 2012. According to the *National Post* report, worldwide there were 695 million smartphones shipped in 2012 – estimated to increase to 1.3 billion by 2016. And this doesn't include portable devices such as tablets, netbooks and laptops. The number of mobile subscriptions is expected to overtake the world population.

According to a 2001 study by Larry Rosen, Ph.D., children at that time were being exposed to computer and video games at a much younger age than their older brothers and sisters. Vince Poscente's book, *The Age of Speed*, reported that by the last quarter of 2008, teenagers were sending and receiving an average of 2,272 text messages per month. In the recently published book (February, 2013) *Fast Minds: How to thrive if you have ADHD*, the authors say "There's a lot of support for the idea that television or media or modern life causes ADHD."

According to a special report in the January 6, 2013 issue of the *Toronto Star*, new research indicates that excessive use of digital technology can decrease the brain's capacity for intense focus, memory storage and deep thinking. We become more easily distracted and less efficient. Our brain's prefrontal cortex, where the bulk of our executive skills reside, is under attack. The executive skills are those skills that are weaker in most ADHD diagnosed individuals.

The impact on an individual's time management skills and resulting productivity is tremendous since the limitations of "executive skills" negatively affect planning and organization, working memory, focus, attention and other behaviors essential to both efficiency and effectiveness.

ADHD is not restricted to children. According to *WebMD Medical Reference*, an estimated 60% of the afflicted children will continue to have symptoms as adults, and the *Fast Minds* book indicates that about 4% of adults meet the criteria for ADHD. Since ADHD is believed to be caused by a combination of genes and environment, I expect this figure will also increase as we surrender our lives to technology.

In the following chapters I will discuss how you might stop outsourcing your life to computers, and offer some time management strategies for those exhibiting some of the ADHD symptoms – which could include most of us.

2 The time management battlefield has shifted from the office to the mind

2.1 Leave your brain at home but don't forget your smart phone

I indicated in the last chapter that more adults seem to have deficits in the brain-based skills normally associated with ADHD. These deficits may include, but are not limited to such things as self-control, disorganization, impulsiveness, lack of focus, distraction, and difficulty in planning – all of which tend to affect our ability to manage time.

Technology is at worst a major cause of these weaknesses and at best the great enabler. E-mail, text messages, smart phones, continually distract us – enticing us to switch focus, start something new, forget the task at hand and lose control of our day.

You wouldn't offer chocolate cake to someone wanting to lose weight or wave a glass of wine in front of an alcoholic. So why tempt yourself when trying to stick to an important task? The first step in helping yourself or others gain control of each day is to structure it so that there is little temptation to be distracted. The "90-minute rule of scheduling" introduced in my book, *Time to be Productive*, (Bookboon.com, 2012) is even more important in light of today's distractions.

Break the day into segments, grouping similar activities into these segments. The first 90 minutes of the day might be dedicated exclusively to priority tasks, the second segment to checking and responding to e-mail, text messages, voicemail, personal communications, and the third segment to lunch, exercise, and relaxation and so on – with no overlap of segments. For example, you wouldn't answer the phone or check e-mail, during your first "priority" segment of time. If you did check your e-mail or voice mail at that time, you could easily take off on another tangent.

You could have one or more additional segments in the afternoon for priorities, communications (email etc.) or other activities. The segments should vary in length according to your personal attention span, preference and need, and contain those activities that seem to go together. It is best to schedule the priority segments during your prime time, and for most people that is first thing in the morning. (Your "prime time" is that part of the day when you feel most energetic, enthusiastic and mentally alert.)

By sticking to this routine, you will eventually form a habit. This places less demand on any weak executive skills. This suggestion also agrees with the authors of *Boosting Executive Skills in the Classroom* (John Wiley & Sons, 2013) since it would involve less decision-making and more automatic actions, “reducing the load on the executive functions, particularly memory.” It’s important to break free of technology’s grasp so that it can serve you without enslaving you.

Don’t feel you have to ban paperwork from your life. We tend to ridicule those who print articles from the web instead of reading them in electronic format where they may be accompanied by links to supporting information, images and videos. But according to Nicholas Carr, author of *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to our Brains* (Norton, 2010), studies by psychologists, neurologists and educators find that when we go online, we enter an environment that promotes cursory reading, hurried and distracted thinking, and superficial learning. Links are particularly distracting, and studies show that jumping between digital documents impedes understanding. Comprehension declines whether or not people actually click on them.

According to Carr’s book, the depth of our intelligence hinges on our ability to transfer information from working memory (short-term memory) to long-term memory. But a bottleneck is created since working memory can only hold a relatively small amount at a time. When we are swamped with information, links, images, and advertising, the information spills over, so to speak, and doesn’t make it into our long-term storage. It’s like watering a house plant by continuing to pour on more water without giving it a chance to soak in. But when we read books for instance, we transfer information a little at a time into long-term memory and form associations essential to the creation of knowledge and wisdom.

Technology seems to attack the weaker executive skills – the very ones that individuals with ADHD need to strengthen. In future chapters I will offer some time management strategies that could strengthen those executive skills.

2.2 Will the same time management system work for individuals with ADHD?

The same time management system won’t work for *anyone*, whether they have been diagnosed as having ADHD or not. I believe we all possess ADHD traits to varying degrees. When I was young, they might have called it “Type A” behavior. I am certainly a “Type A” person. I talk fast, work fast, have a keen sense of time urgency, finish people’s sentences for them, exhibit impatience and tend to be emotional – all classic characteristics of “Type A” people. (And I probably share some of these traits with those who have been diagnosed as having ADHD.)

Although I might use a different time management “system,” I use the same basic time management ideas, principles and strategies as everyone else; but I select only those ideas that will work for me. The troublesome word in the question is “system.” In a way, it’s misleading when we call something “time management for seniors” or “time management for students” or “time management for those with ADHD.” It gives the impression that there are different time management strategies and principles for different people. This simply isn’t true.

Time management is for everyone. It doesn’t change. Time management is time management. The way the principles are put into practice may differ or the application may differ, or the ideas we select to put into practice may differ – because we are all unique. Whether you call it a disorder, a condition, a learning style or brain chemistry, it makes no difference. We are individuals, and what works fine for me may have to be changed so it will work for you and vice versa. So we simply must be selective when we recommend strategies to others.

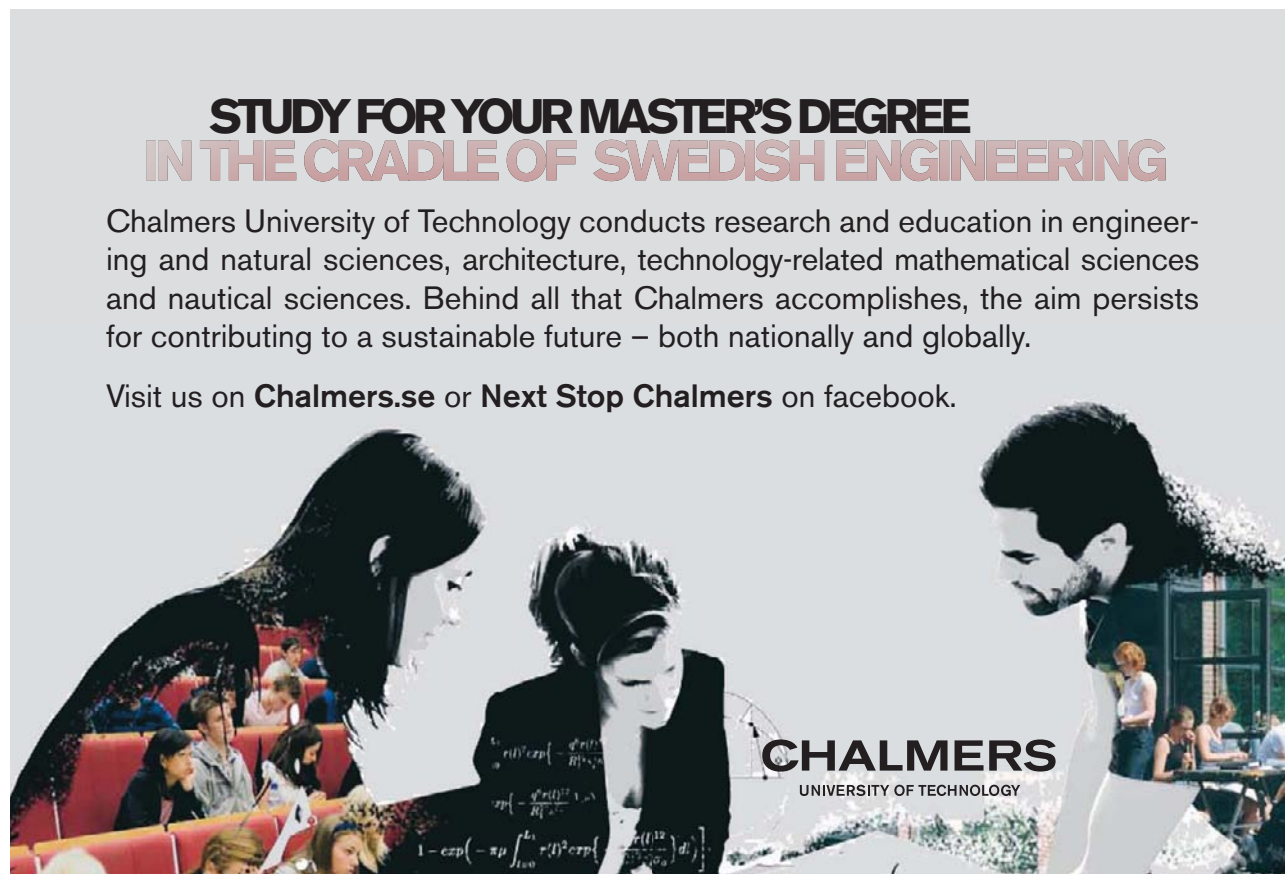
I tell people in my workshops that the only time management system that will work for them is one that they design, develop or adapt to their own needs. The ideas I present are things that work for me and for quite a few other people that I know. But they must select the ones that will work for *them*, and in so doing develop their unique “time management system.”

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Whether a person has ADD, ADHD or whatever, they all need to understand the power of goal-setting, planning, scheduling, prioritizing, delegating and other time management strategies. How they put these strategies into practice may differ, but the principles remain the same. Each person selects those strategies that will work best for him or her, and arranges them into a *system*. (The definition of a *system* is “a group of interacting, interrelated, or interdependent elements forming a complex whole.”)

I find that everything I do to manage my time will not necessarily work for someone with ADHD. But most things that work for those with ADHD will work for me. For example, one of the recommendations for people with ADHD is to work on major projects in short periods of time even though it might not appear to be as efficient to do so. That works great for me, and I don’t consider myself as having full-fledged ADHD. I just have a busy schedule, lots of interruptions and a “Type A” personality style.

Getting organized is important for everyone, and I seldom talk about time management without including organizing, and yet I differentiate between the two. I see time management as more of a thought process than it is a physical activity.

My definition of organizing is “the act of rearranging *items* that are in a disorganized, cluttered state so that everything can be retrieved quickly with less effort, maximizing both their utility and visual appeal.”

When talking to *business* people, I would define time management as “increasing both the *efficiency and the effectiveness* of individuals and organizations through the organization of *tasks and events* by using tools such as planners and computers, and techniques and processes such as goal-setting, planning and scheduling.”

However, when talking to young people and students it would probably be more effective to describe time management as “the ability to estimate how much time one has, how to allocate it, and how to stay within time limits and deadlines.” This is the definition used by Peg Dawson & Richard Guare, in their book, *Smart but Scattered*, 2009, which discusses how to strengthen children’s “executive skills.” I also try to instill in young people the *importance* of time management.

The major difference between *organizing* and *time management* is that in general, organizing deals with *things* and time management deals with *activities* that have a time dimension.

From a corporate viewpoint, the *purpose* of time management is to increase productivity and ultimately, profit. From an *individual* standpoint, its purpose is to spend less time on the things we *have* to do so that we will have more time to spend on the things we *want* to do.

3 Your brain has a mind of its own

3.1 Developing your “Executive Skills”

Sometimes referred to as “habits of the mind”, a person’s “executive skills” are those brain-based skills required to execute tasks – that is, getting organized, planning, initiating work, staying on task, controlling impulses, regulating emotions, and being adaptable and resilient.

People with weak executive skills are those who have trouble getting organized, managing time, planning ahead and staying focused. They tend to be impulsive, get sidetracked easily and procrastinate.

As suggested earlier in this book, if children had these characteristics they would probably be diagnosed as having ADHD. Many researchers believe that ADD and ADHD are disorders of executive skills. All seem to agree that if the child has ADHD, at least *some* executive skills will be impaired, such as the ability to pay attention and stay focused, manage time, and stick to one task for any length of time.

Executive skills originate primarily in the front part of the brain and take about 20 years to fully develop – and of course some never fully develop. That’s why a teenager might make poor decisions and do things on impulse – that part of their brain is not fully developed yet.

Strong executive skills are critical in today’s digital age of speed because life is getting more and more complicated with increasing numbers of choices and decisions to make and less time in which to make them. (It seems to be more dangerous being a teenager these days.) The ability to set goals, plan and prioritize, and stay on course is vital if we are to remain effective in this digital age.

The executive skills that I’m describing seem close to what we used to teach managers or executives in workshops and business students in college. The functions of a manager are generally described as planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling – and includes innovating, decision-making and representing. When we trained managers we tried to show them how they should plan, organize, staff and so on in order to become better managers. In retrospect, it would appear that some students were already good in those areas because of some highly developed brain skills. In fact the prefrontal cortex where the executive skills are believed to be located is sometimes referred to as the CEO of the brain, drawing on the feedback from other areas of the brain and making the decision whether to take one course of action or another.

Although there are similarities between the management functions that we teach and executive brain skills, the executive skills, as we are describing them here, relate to brain skills acquired through normal development.

I think that executive skills can still be strengthened when we are adults, and that's one of the strategies encouraged in time management training.

Time management strategies are shifting from environmental control to internal control. Success in the future will depend more on what's going on in your mind, body and spirit than what's going on in your office.

The exact number of executive skills has yet to be determined. *Smart but Scattered* by Peggy Dawson and Richard Guare (The Guilford Press, 2009) identify 11 executive functions. *Work Your Strengths* by Chuck Martin, Peggy Dawson and Richard Guare (AMACOM, New York in 2010) describe 12 executive functions. *A New Understanding of ADHD in Children & Adults: Executive Function Impairments* by Thomas E. Brown (Routledge, May, 2013) proposes 6 separate clusters of executive functions. This makes more sense since several of the executive functions are similar, and the more detailed you are, the more open to error you are as research in this area continues.

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Regardless of the number of skills, they are generally those essential to effective self-management or time management, and they can be strengthened. Next I will pass along some information on how you can use your mind to strengthen weak executive skills – or ADHD traits – in order to manage your time effectively.

The battle in the mind has begun.

3.2 Turn wishful thinking into willful thinking

In past chapters we have been talking about our brains’ “executive skills” – those primarily responsible for time management and organizing abilities, and related skills such as self-discipline, persistence, and controlling impulsive behavior. I indicated in the last section that the skills could be strengthened. *Thinking* can make it so.

When you learn something new or form a new memory, new connections are formed between neurons. Learning changes the brain. And according to the book *A Better Brain at Any Age* by Sondra Kornblatt, you will still have all the neural connections when you are 75 – except the lack of mental exercise will make those connections slower.

Although it was once predicted that the number of people with dementia would double in the next 30 years as the baby boomers aged, increased mental and physical activity among other factors were not considered. An article in the *Toronto Star* on July 17, 2013 mentioned a recent British study that revealed a 25 percent decrease in dementia over the past two decades.

The more you exercise your brain, whether by taking courses, solving problems, brainstorming, memorizing, learning a new skill, language or musical instrument, the more you are strengthening your cognitive skills. This applies to your executive skills as well.

Although it is harder for some people with ADHD to form brain strengthening habits such as regular physical and mental exercise, it is achievable. In fact it’s difficult for *anyone* to form habits. Forget about the “21 days to form a habit” myth that we used to quote. That was a misinterpretation of Maxwell Maltz’s findings. More recent studies show that it takes an average of 66 days – and as long as 254 days – to make any routine automatic. And this range includes those individuals with ADHD traits.

A habit is an unconscious behavior, something you do automatically without thinking, such as always putting on the left sock first or stroking your chin when you’re thinking or going for a walk every morning or doing a crossword puzzle at night. A routine is a customary procedure for doing things, such as a series of steps to take when processing an order or checking someone’s credit rating. A routine implies forethought while a habit does not.

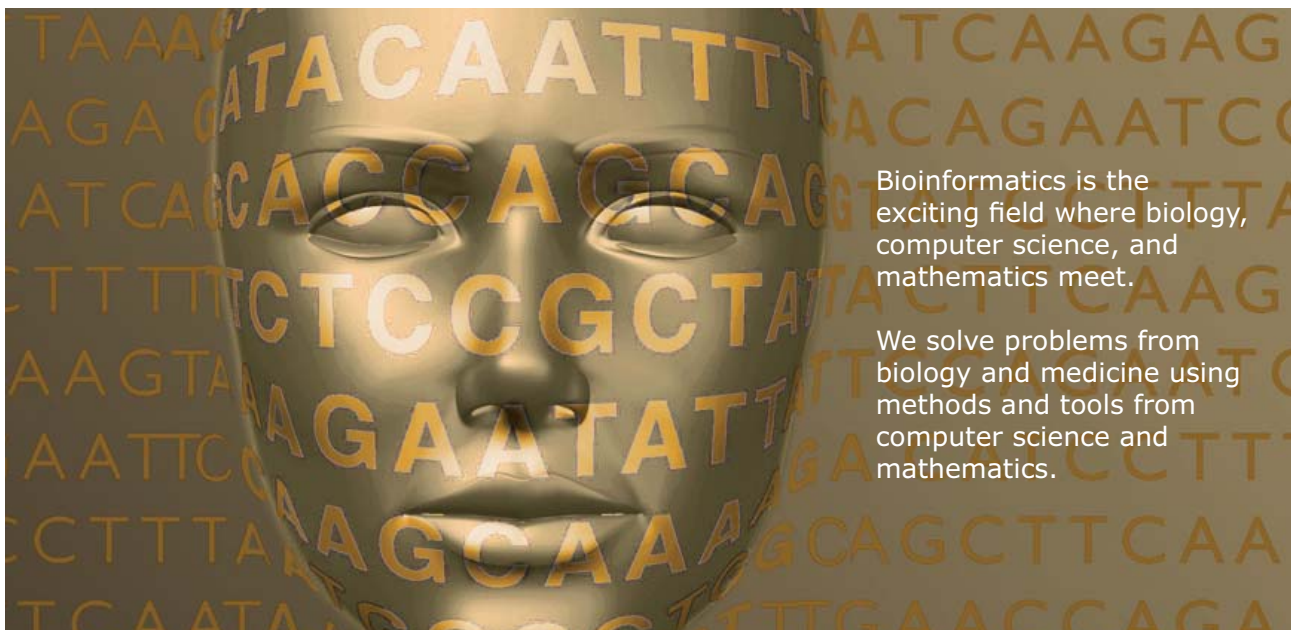
Certain routines, such as steps you take when closing up shop, can become habits through constant repetition. When that happens, you may not be able to recall whether you locked the metal cabinet or set the alarm or put away the cash box. Chances are, you did; but you simply can't recall having done so. If you're taking medication on a regular schedule, as another example, it becomes difficult remembering whether you took your pills or not. There's nothing wrong with your memory, but you formed the task without thinking, so there is no memory of the activity.

Habits can increase efficiency, but when failure to do something could be hazardous to your health, to the company or to others, it can be a dangerous thing. That's when checklists, alarms or pill dispensers could be useful. Routines and habits can reduce the time it takes to perform tasks and even decrease stress and reduce errors. But they can also blind people to better ways of doing things and present the risk of skipping steps altogether. Most people are comfortable with routines and tend to resist change in favor of the status quo. So it pays to periodically question routines to insure that they are still the most efficient way of doing things. And if there are inherent dangers in habits, regardless of how efficient they may be, install controls such as checklists, to insure that errors don't occur.

Physical and mental activities such as some of those mentioned above are probably the most important actions you can take to strengthen your cognitive skills. But there are others.



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4 Let the strategies fit your brain-based skills

4.1 Routines and habits will make your days easier

I suggested previously that you structure your workday so as to place less demand on any weak executive skills, and resist the temptation to yield to the distractions of the moment.

You may have heard of the marshmallow tests, which indicated young children who were able to suppress temptation in favor of a greater reward later did better both scholastically and socially as they grew older. (If you're not familiar with these tests, search for videos on "marshmallow tests" on *YouTube*.) A recent article claimed that those youngsters who were able to wait did so by turning their backs to the tempting marshmallow. This is another example of blocking impulsiveness by removing the temptation or at least making it easier to do the right thing. Similarly, structured scheduling such as that described in my book, *Time to be Productive* (*Bookboon.com*), will help those with ADHD characteristics.

Initially, I suggest the following five strategies:

- Develop routines for priority tasks that have to be done on a regular basis, the most important routine being to look at your planner every morning when you get up. This will remind you of the non-routine priority tasks that you have scheduled for that day as well as items on the "To Do" section of your planner.
- The above routine will help improve the planning function. Whenever you think of something that must be done, jot it in your planner on the day that you plan to do it. Whenever possible, that day should be in advance of the task's actual deadline.
- Give positive feedback to yourself and others. Margaret Foster, co-author of the book *Boosting Executive Skills* (Jossey-Bass, 2013), relates the case of a writers' workshop where students were only allowed to make *positive* comments about each other's work. Not only did it make everyone feel good about themselves, each person's writing improved dramatically throughout the course. Extend this to self-talk as well. Let everywhere be heard an encouraging word. It reduces stress and enhances working memory.
- Prevent the "out-of-sight-out -of-mind" factor from putting you under stress and making it difficult to meet deadlines. If an approaching deadline is hidden from sight (on the next planner page or screen), place a note on the current week warning that a deadline is approaching.
- Make the transition from one day to the next both easier and more productive by developing a routine for closing each workday and starting the next. For example, start putting things away 15 minutes before quitting time, and set the next morning's priority task on the now-organized desk.

In the next section I will provide some quick tips that should help everyone, especially those with more obvious ADHD symptoms.

4.2 Don't let ADHD traits reduce your effectiveness

In the previous chapters I have outlined the increase in ADHD symptoms among both children and adults, the role technology plays in this increase, how to avoid outsourcing your life to your electronic devices, and some basic suggestions for managing time when you exhibit ADHD-like symptoms. Here I offer a summary of “quick tips” to help you cope.

1. Organize your working area so that everything you use on a regular basis is visible and within reach.
2. Develop routines for repetitive tasks such as checking email, paying bills and writing articles or blogs.
3. Acquire a planning mindset by closing each day with a list of “To Do”s for the following day.
4. Use a planner and use it to excess, blocking off time for projects, recording future “due dates”, follow-ups, appointments, special events, family birthdays and even recording places you visit and people you meet.
5. Assist your working memory by using techniques such as acronyms, visualization, association, and other mnemonic devices described in most books on memory training.
6. Practice stress-relieving activities, since in addition to the usual benefits, reduced anxiety will free up more working memory. (See *Boosting Executive Skills in the Classroom* by Joyce Cooper-Kahn & Margaret Foster, 2013)
7. Work in short periods of time – breaking longer tasks into “chunks.” Use a timer if necessary.
8. Make up checklists for activities such as travel, shopping, meetings and even for starting the day.
9. Curb lateness by entering the time you must leave your office or home in order to arrive on time. Always allow extra time in the event of heavy traffic.
10. Exercise strengthens executive skills, and research on attention shows that viewing or walking in nature for as little as 20 minutes per week provides the right amount of cognitive input.

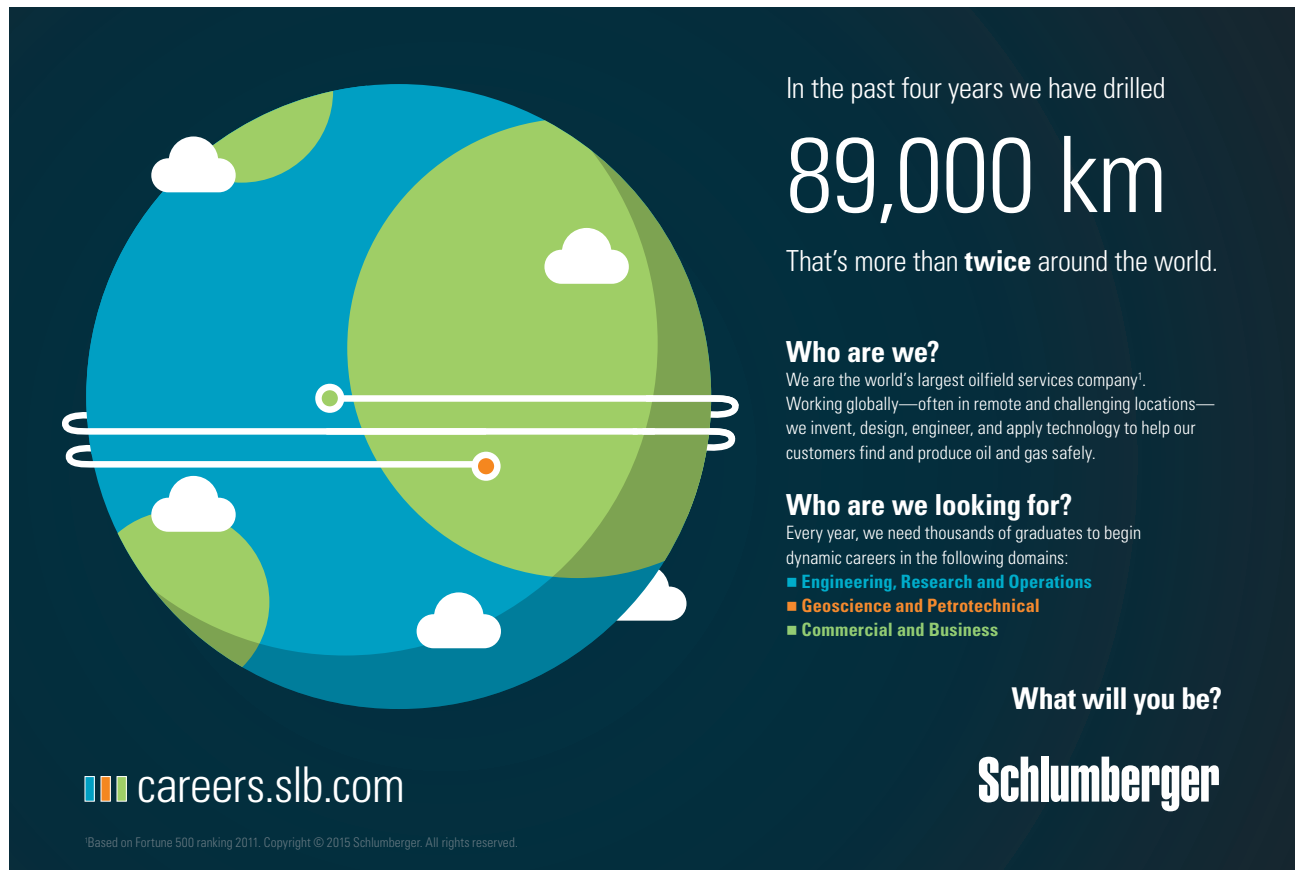
5 Take a more holistic approach to time management

5.1 Exercise both your body and your brain

In past chapters I have emphasized the importance of structure in the lives of those exhibiting many of the ADHD traits – such as setting specific times to do things in a paper planner, planning each day the night before, and breaking larger tasks into chunks that can be worked on in shorter periods of time. I ended the last chapter with a suggestion of exercise.

When scheduling projects, tasks or activities in your planner, be sure to include time for regular exercise. Exercise is good for the brain as well as for your physical health, and according to Dr. Hallowell in his book, *Delivered from Distraction*, it is an excellent treatment for ADD, depression, and most mental ailments.

Research indicates that getting regular exercise can improve thinking ability and alleviate the symptoms of adult ADHD. And according to the authors of *Fast Minds: how to thrive if you have ADHD* (Berkeley, 2013) exercise can help people sleep deeper and better. The book suggests that the brain area called the hippocampus may grow more new cells in people who exercise than in those who don't.




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The amount of sleep you get is also important, and an article in the May 10, 2013 issue of the *Globe & Mail* refers to recent research indicating that children with ADHD experience sleep problems. Some researchers even suggest that sleep disorders are actually misdiagnosed as ADHD. The authors of *Fast Minds* suggest the average need for adults is between seven and nine hours of sleep per night, and that too little sleep is destructive. For exercise, a minimum of 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise per day is recommended. An article published in 2012 by WebMD, LLC, points out that stimulant medicines used to treat ADHD work by increasing the amount of dopamine in the brain. Exercise also releases dopamine, among other chemicals, which help with attention and clear thinking. If nothing else, it would help them burn off excess energy and maintain a calmer, more focused state. Certainly that was the case with one of our sons, who won the high school “athlete of the year” award in the process while increasing his focus and bolstering his self-esteem.

Lifestyle issues, including exercise, sleep and diet are just as important as, if not more so, than traditional time management strategies in helping those with ADHD traits manage their time and their lives more effectively. Diet may include supplements, in particular omega-3 fatty acids, which studies suggest may help ADHD symptoms. Some studies have actually associated ADHD with low omega-3 fatty acid levels and/or higher omega-6 to omega-3 ratios. Marilyn Wedge, PhD, author of *Pills are not for Preschoolers: A Drug-free Approach for Troubled Kids*, emphasizes the importance of nutrition when she claims “the behavior of some children is worsened after eating foods with artificial colors, certain preservatives, and/or allergens.”

Dr. Wedge also mentions that children in France are not exposed to TV as much as those in North America since the government has banned TV programs designed for children under three. This may or may not be related to the fact that fewer children in France are diagnosed as having ADHD.

But it does bring weight to the suggestion that technology is having an impact on our brain.

5.2 Strengthening your executive skills

In a previous chapter I promised to offer some more ways of strengthening your executive skills, i.e. those brain-based skills that are primarily responsible for our ability to set goals, plan and organize. Various parts of the brain mature at different times and the prefrontal cortex, where most of our executive skills are believed to reside, take about 20 years. So, the greatest impact of interventions such as memory training, creativity exercises, language study, or learning to play a musical instrument would take place if we had started as a child or teenager. But the plasticity of the brain allows improvement at any age. And regular exercise has been shown to slow the loss of gray matter in the brain caused by aging.

Keep your brain active and strengthen neural connections by learning new skills. You might start by doing everyday tasks differently. Use your left hand to control the computer mouse (if you're right-handed), or to brush your teeth. Even better would be to learn to play an instrument, speak a new language or join a Yoga class. Over a dozen of the "brain" books in my personal library agree with these claims and more. Exercising your brain – even without moving from your chair – could reap physical benefits. *Cleveland Clinic Foundation* research has indicated that just *thinking* about exercising a muscle will strengthen that muscle.

5.3 Sleeping as a time management strategy

One strategy can hardly be called a strategy, except that so few people give it the attention it deserves – adequate sleep. It is thought that sleep helps to forge new neural connections and solidify memories, filter out unimportant connections, and repair itself. Lack of sleep can impact our ability to think, concentrate, and make decisions. Research indicates that it is also linked to obesity, premature aging, diabetes and heart disease.

According to the April, 2012 issue of *Vitality Magazine*, sleep is essential for regenerating cells, especially those necessary for bone growth, as well as burning fat, building muscle and stimulating the immune system. The article cites a study of 21,000 twins followed for 22 years that found the optimum number of hours of sleep is between seven and eight hours per night. Less than seven or more than eight hours increases your chance of dying sooner.

Some experts suggest that sleep disorders are actually misdiagnosed as ADHD. An article in the May 30, 2013 issue of the *Globe & Mail* (*A curious link between ADHD and sleep*), further discusses research in this area.

Yet we continue to cut back on sleep in an attempt to get more done. The average person now gets 90 minutes less sleep a night than a century ago. In my lifetime, the average amount of sleep we get has decreased from just over eight hours a night to 6.7 hours. Getting less than six hours of sleep a night can impair motor coordination, speech, reflexes and judgment.

Busy schedules and 24/7 connectivity tend to encroach on sleeping time. Most people have experienced the impact of staying up late to finish a project or to check e-mails or to search the Internet. And when we finally get to bed, falling asleep can be difficult as we replay the day's events in our minds, mull over problems encountered or start thinking about all the things that have yet to be done.

There is little doubt that sleep has restorative and memory-supporting powers. And if you agree on a holistic approach to time management, you must include adequate sleep among the strategies for improving personal productivity.

One tip that helps many people sleep easier and longer is to stop checking e-mail at least two hours before bedtime. So try turning off all your electronic gadgets, including TV and smart phones, at the same time each night, and spend the few hours before bedtime relaxing, reading, listening to music or even participating in a yoga class. Your productivity will probably improve as well as your physical and mental health.

In the next chapter I will discuss more ways of strengthening our executive skills. By doing so, we will in turn improve upon any ADHD traits that may be impeding our attempt to get organized and to manage our time more effectively.



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6 Take a backward step in order to go forward

6.1 Is the objective to go faster or to win the race?

In the last chapter I promised to say more about balancing high-tech with high touch in order to strengthen “executive skills.” I suggested this could be done by introducing more paper into your life, which to most people might represent a backward step. But I feel we moved too quickly and too completely into the digital world. It’s as though our goal were not to increase productivity, but to eliminate paperwork. And for many of us, especially those struggling with ADHD, personal productivity decreased while stress levels climbed.

Take a paper planner for instance. It serves to ground me in reality. I can touch it and feel it and see my scheduled projects the moment I open it. Writing down an appointment solidifies that meeting in my mind, while dictating it to a handheld device makes little impact, little commitment, and little chance I will even recall it the next morning.

Everything is composed of electrons anyway, and if I prefer to write down my plans on electrons that are in the form of paper (just as I prefer to sit on electrons that are in the form of a solid chair) what’s so inefficient about that?

A pen in hand generates focus, attention, commitment, and a “do it now” mindset – something those with ADHD tendencies frequently lack. Written down, a name or number stays in working memory longer and has a greater chance of making it into long-term memory for later recall. Fast is not necessarily better; it’s just faster.

Similarly, I prefer to make handwritten notes while on the telephone, jot ideas on a steno pad instead of reaching for my iPhone, write notes on an “Action Sheet” in meetings, and, heaven forbid, even write personal notes on hardcopy birthday cards and send them by snail mail. (I admit I’m often tempted to just text a message saying “In honor of your birthday, a dozen electrons have been consumed in your name.”)

One big advantage of using paper planners is that you never lose sight of your past. You have a permanent record in your own unique handwriting – your dreams, goals, achievements, activities, and highlights of a lifetime. Your planners serve as journals or diaries – personal mementos of a flesh and blood unique individual, complete with likes, dislikes and personality quirks. You leave footprints long after you have passed on.

You could record the same information in an electronic handheld device; but it's very unlikely to happen. The purpose of an electronic handheld device is to get things done faster, not to record them. But it's easy to scribble notes, times, places and directions in a hardcopy planner. And it has a permanence that surpasses electrons, immune from an instant delete.

Long after they were gone, my parents were alive again in my mind through their papers – meticulous notes of income and purchases, appointments and events. I could imagine their struggle to keep five children clothed and fed during the great depression, along with their health problems and their hopes and dreams of a better life. I could relive my own forgotten years, the youngest of five boys, oblivious to the hardships that my parents must have endured. None of that would have been revealed in an iPhone, iPad, BlackBerry or other PDA if one had been available at the time.

I record events in my planner after-the-fact as well. If I meet someone by chance or decide at the spur of the moment to attend a movie or go to a restaurant, the first thing I do when I get home is jot the information into my planner – the time, place, and phone number of the restaurant and so on. At the end of each year, I print the year on the spine of my planner and store it with others in chronological order in my bookcase.

My life story is in those planners – from my teen years (little pocket calendars) through college, and my forty plus years as an entrepreneur, husband and father. As I get older and the threat of dementia looms, I take solace in the fact that I will never lose my memories; they are recorded for me as well as for my offspring. It sure beats ancestry.com.

There is a place for digital devices. And I do own a handheld Android, an iPad, a netbook and a laptop. And like most people I do online banking, use e-transfers, make calls with Skype, shop online, have a PayPal account, participate in social media, and correspond by email. But I also use a paper planner and a hard copy follow-up file system, a telephone log booklet, paper checklists, note pads, sticky notes as well as read hard copy books.

Paperwork adds structure to my life – because paperwork IS structure.

Because we live in a digital age of speed, I'm almost embarrassed to admit that I handwrite all my books and articles. But I quickly regain my self-esteem when I recall the story of the tortoise and the hare. The objective was clearly not to run the fastest, but to win the race.

6.2 Slowing down can be an effective strategy

Although it may seem hypocritical for a book on time management to suggest we spend more time on tasks, projects or activities, there is something more important than time – and that's health. This refers to the health of body, mind, and spirit. Speed, multitasking, frenetic activity, racing the clock to meet deadlines, all create stress and have a negative impact on our health and well-being. They are especially counterproductive for those with ADHD traits and weak executive skills.

Someone who is blamed for frequently missing deadlines could just as well blame the deadlines for being unrealistic. Those reading my books and articles or attending my workshops know that for over 30 years I've been recommending that extra time be allowed. Whenever I block off time in my planner to work on a task, I schedule about 50 percent more time than the task is expected to take. This could be more or less, depending on the individual.

If we take on too much, we could accomplish too little. Most of us would be better off if we tried doing a little less a little better. We should concentrate not on doing more things but more important things.

There is little doubt that the digital age places a heavier burden on the executive skills. The Internet, e-mail, texting and social media are now a fact of life. But the negative effects of a high-tech environment can be neutralized somewhat by incorporating a few high-touch systems into your personal and business life. These could include a paper planner, to-do lists, manual note-taking and checklists -- things that aid working memory, focus and attention. You're no less progressive by doing this.

In the meantime, for those who think they have ADD or ADHD or work with ADHD clients, I have included a list of books at the back. The most useful book for me on the topic has been *Fast minds: How to thrive if you have ADHD (or think you might)* by Craig Surman, M.D. and Tim Bilkey, M.D. (The Berkley publishing group, 2013).

Have a slower, calmer, less hectic day.

7 New times require new strategies

7.1 Controlling your environment counteracts low self-discipline

Most people struggle with a lack of self-discipline and impulsive behavior, not just those who have been diagnosed as having ADHD. We tend to avoid unpleasant things and gravitate towards pleasant things. It is a natural tendency that has even been given a label, the *Pleasure Principle*, and has been defined as: “an organism avoids pain and seeks immediate gratification.”

In a way, the *marshmallow experiment* is an example of this principle. It was conducted at [Stanford University](#) back in the 60s. A group of four-year olds were given a [marshmallow](#) and promised another, only if they could wait 20 minutes before eating the first one. Some children could wait and others could not. The researchers then followed the progress of each child into adolescence, and demonstrated that those with the ability to wait were better adjusted and more dependable and scored an average of 210 points higher on the [Scholastic Aptitude Test](#). Those who gave into temptation early on were more likely to be lonely, easily frustrated and stubborn. They didn't cope well with stress and stayed clear of challenges. Yale University later conducted research on adults and found similar results.



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As mentioned in previously, the brain skills needed to wait for the greater reward are known as the “executive function” or “self-regulation.” They include inhibiting impulses, sustaining attention, planning, prioritizing and finding and carrying out strategies to stick to plan. These skills mainly reside in the prefrontal cortex – the most involved part of the brain. They take about 20 years to fully develop so no wonder almost half of today’s children have poor self-regulation by the time they get to school.

This may also explain why we tend to procrastinate on distasteful or overwhelming tasks and work instead on those brief and pleasant tasks, even though they may be less important. When we procrastinate, we are frequently putting off what we want most in order to receive what we want at the moment.

But how were the few four-year-olds, who presumably also had very weak executive skills, able to resist temptation and wait for the second marshmallow? Well, in examining the tapes many years later, researchers noticed that those children used strategies that allowed them to resist temptation – strategies that we could use ourselves in order to manage ourselves more effectively. They all changed their environment in some way to offset their natural inclination to devour the marshmallow right away. Some put the marshmallow out of sight by sitting under the table or by facing away from the marshmallow. Others sang a song or hummed a tune, focusing their attention on something other than the marshmallow. They did something to avoid having to face the temptation.

Translating these strategies to the business environment, you could turn off your cellphone, engage voicemail, turn off email alerts and close your office door at specific times while you work on your priority projects. Remove all clutter and other potential distractions from your immediate work area – including any in-baskets. Don’t have family photos or memorabilia in your line of sight. Face a blank wall, not a window or open doorway. Work on projects for 60 or 90 minutes at a time – maximum. If you find that’s too long to postpone urges to interrupt yourself, shorten the work sessions. You can always increase them gradually later. Between sessions you can check email, return phone calls and grab a coffee. Work in short sprints rather than attempt marathons. Research shows that it takes a lot of energy to practice willpower.

Do what you can to develop a work environment that makes it easier to resist the temptation of interrupting yourself or others, checking email constantly, grabbing for your smartphone whenever there’s a call or being distracted by other things.

7.2 Outsmarting your smartphone will help you to focus

There was an experiment conducted about 12 years ago that involved subjects watching a video of a basketball game. The psychologists showed the same video to everyone. A person dressed in a gorilla suit walked across the playing court during the game. Half the viewers never noticed. They coined the phrase “illusion of attention” to describe the fact that we are unaware of how much we are really missing in our visual world.

When you are focusing on a task, whether it is watching TV or working on an article or thesis, the mind tends to filter out distractions so that “intentional blindness” is a side effect of your power of concentration. If you’re not looking for it, chances are you may not see it. As a case in point, 75% of the cases where DNA evidence frees someone previously convicted of a crime, they had been convicted by the testimony of eye witnesses.

You can use this fact to work more efficiently by focusing on a task even in a noisy environment or one in which people are forever walking past your field of vision. If you are interested and focused on what you are doing, you will be less susceptible to self-interruptions. But the sound of your smartphone may challenge your ability to focus. So turn it off for those 90-minute blocks of time when you are working on those priority projects. And engage the voice mail on your land line as suggested previously. We have enough trouble focusing without allowing technology to intrude.

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8 Match the time management strategies to the weakest skills

8.1 Which ideas or strategies are most likely to work for those with ADHD?

Everyone is unique, and different ideas will work for different people; but in this chapter I will give some suggestions that might compensate for the various diagnostic criteria normally associated with ADHD traits. Following each trait are some suggested ways of compensating for this weakness.

8.1.1 Difficulty getting organized

Build structure into your life. Develop habits and routines – such as always putting things away when you’re finished with it, filing every afternoon, checking email at noon, etc. It would help to break the day into quadrants and do similar types of things in those quadrants each day – similar to the time policies I describe in Chapter 3 of *Making Time Work for You*. For example in the morning until the break you can work on your priority task for the day before checking email or anything else. After the break, you can return any phone calls, check and respond to email, and initiate any calls for information or set up meetings. Immediately after lunch you can work on your priority tasks again. Following the afternoon break, you can once again handle your email, return calls, work on routine tasks from your “To Do” or “Action” list, and check your plans for the following day. Set up a routine that will work for you.

8.1.2 Chronic procrastination

“To Do” lists are not very meaningful to people with ADHD because there is no built-in commitment to actually *do* them. Anything important should be scheduled in your planner as an “appointment with yourself.” Most people learn at a very early age that appointments have to be kept, such as the doctor, the teacher, the hairdresser, and so on. This is true for everyone. Items on a “To Do” list are intentions, but appointments in your planning calendar are commitments. “Return books to library” should be written in your planner at a specific time of day, not added to a “To Do” list, since it is both important and has a deadline (assuming you want to avoid fines.) Schedule all important tasks in your planner and the top priority ones during your “prime time” if at all possible.

8.1.3 Not completing projects

It’s difficult to maintain focus on a specific task for long periods of time. So use the chunk method of scheduling to get things done. If it’s a three hour job to clean the basement, spend one hour per day for three consecutive days. Most people with or without ADHD have a problem estimating how long a task will take, so schedule about 50% more time than you *think* it should take. This will also allow for unavoidable interruptions that may occur.

8.1.4 Easily distracted, trouble focusing

When you are working on a scheduled task, turn off any radio or TV, close the door if you have one, engage voice mail and ignore email, turn off your cell phone – do everything you can to eliminate distractions until you have finished. This may or may not include background noises. Researchers have found that adding white noise to a classroom can be just as effective as drugs at aiding the learning among ADHD pupils. Also, recent research at the University of Illinois on the effects of background noise on creativity found that the level of noise experienced in a bustling coffee shop enhanced performance and even helped people concentrate. Now there is a website called Coffitivity that lets you bring the sound of a coffee shop to your computer while you work. On a personal note, a good portion of my books, including this one, were written in coffee shops during the morning rush hour.

8.1.5 Tunes out. Has problem listening

Many people have a problem listening, although it may be even more difficult for people with ADHD. When someone is speaking at 125 words per minute and you're listening four or five times that fast, it's natural for your mind to wander. The key to effective listening is this: as your mind starts to wander, try to keep it relevant to what the speaker is saying, such as guessing his or her conclusion, summarizing what has been said to date or evaluating the information. Don't start thinking about tonight's basketball game.

8.1.6 Impulsive. Changes plans & priorities

Post your goals where you can see them, preferably at the front of your planner. If you can't see your goals, you're more likely to get off track. Writing things down tends to increase their permanence in your mind. It certainly aids working memory. Write everything in your planner in ink. Pencil indicates something is tentative and too easily changed. Schedule time for the priorities and leave routine items on your "Action List."

8.1.7 Trouble starting something

Make it a habit to start your priority project first thing in the morning during your prime time – before you check email or do any other work. Habits help. Just as you have a routine in the morning, such as get up, brush your teeth, get dressed etc., so you should develop an office routine. Before leaving work each afternoon, place the material you will need for the next morning's project on your desk in plain sight – as a visual reminder and reinforcement of what is already noted in your planner.

8.1.8 Chronic lateness

This is related to another weakness – difficulty estimating the passage of time. If an appointment is not until 9 a.m., and it's only 8:45 a.m., you may feel you have plenty of time, even though it may be a 15 minute drive away. Always record in your planner the time you have to *leave* the office or home, not just the time of the appointment, meeting or event. Always allow about 50% more time than you think the trip will take. You should focus on the *leaving* time, not the *arriving* time.

8.1.9 Forgetfulness

The solution for forgetting is to write everything down. Make notes when in meetings and on the telephone. Whenever you think of something that you have to do, add it to your “To Do” list or schedule it. When someone hands you a business card, write on the back of it. If something is urgent, write it on a post-it note and stick it in your planner where you can’t miss it. Set alarms in your smart phone to remind you when it’s time to leave or to make a call, and so on.

8.1.10 Daydreaming

This is usually caused by a lack of focus. Work sessions should be shorter. Engage in sprints rather than marathons. People vary in their attention spans. One way to determine your attention span is to put a checkmark on a piece of paper every time your mind starts to wander. When you start getting a lot of check marks, that is the maximum length of time you should work on a task without taking at least a stretch break or switching to a different task.

8.1.11 Needs immediate reinforcement

Scheduling the important tasks in your planner and writing the other ones on your “To Do” list gives visual feedback of your accomplishments as you cross them off. And you have an ongoing record of everything you have done. Seeing your successes is motivational and will provide an incentive to continue managing your time well. You could also reward yourself when you complete a project by taking a brief coffee break or at least a stretch break.

8.1.12 Needs direction, structure

Use tools to add structure to your life. For example a planner and a “Personal Organizer” with forms for making notes while on the telephone or in meetings. You could also use your smart phone for reminder alarms, checklists for repetitive activities and events, stacking trays for keeping paperwork in categories, and so on. Building routines into your life will help as well. Every evening spend 15 minutes or more planning the next day.

8.1.13 Often lets little things slide, like remembering birthdays

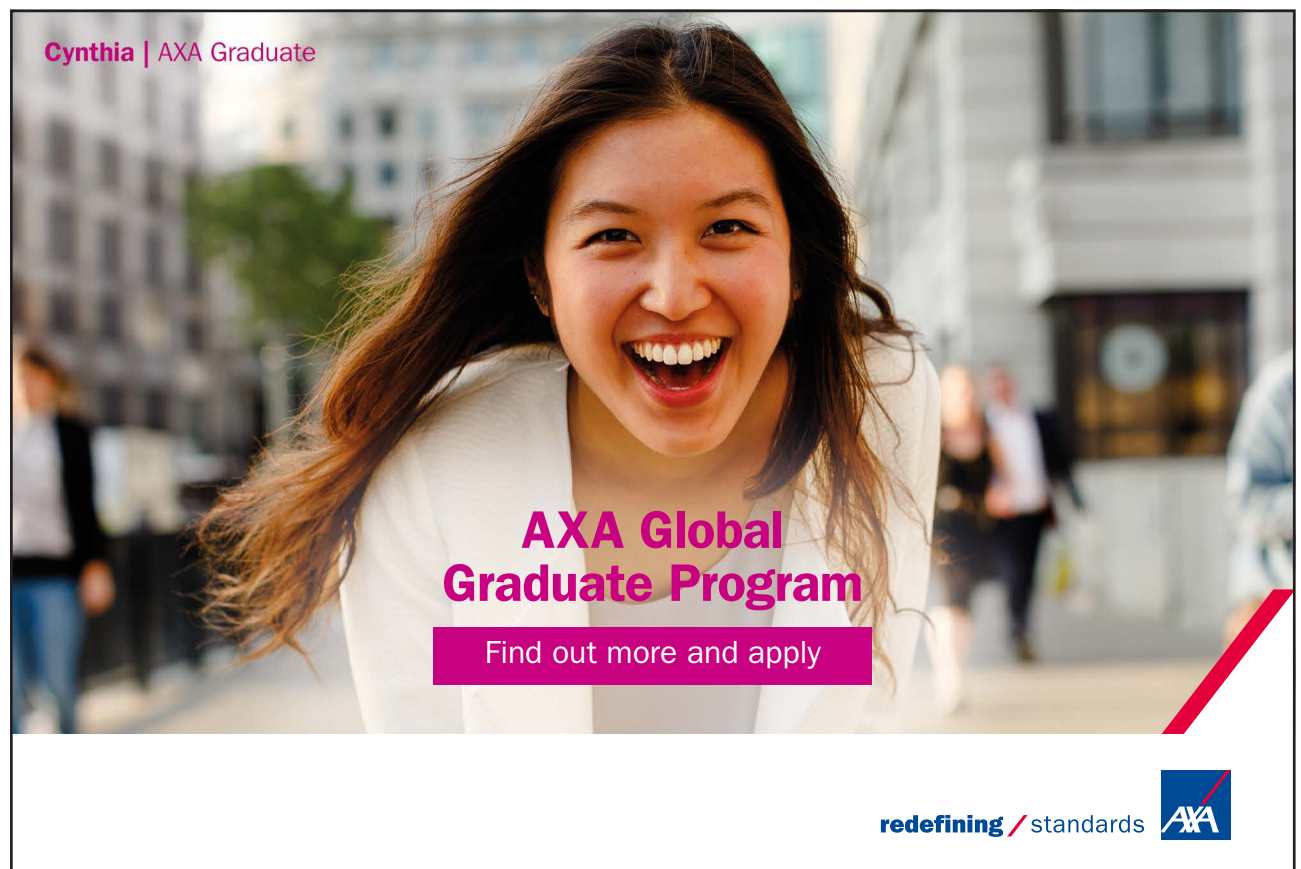
Mark all follow-ups in your planner, and store any corresponding paperwork in dated follow-up folders. Don’t put anything into the follow-up file without first putting a note in your planner to remind you to look in your follow-up file. Place colored self-adhesive labels in the daily “Follow-up” sections of your planner, with notations such as “Joan’s Birthday Day” or “School play.” Have a box-bottom folder for greeting cards that you buy in advance.

8.1.14 Poor sense of time passage

Set alarms on your smart phone or PDA to indicate when the time scheduled for tasks is almost over. But also get a feel for the passage of time by using analog clocks and watches instead of digital ones. Even better might be the visual clocks that show time gradually disappearing such as the ones at www.timetimer.org.

8.1.15 Poor time management skills

Time management skills, in fact all “executive skills” can be developed over time by using the above suggestions and working at it. For children, they have parents as role models. Use the strategies outlined above, and read the book *Time to be productive* (bookboon.com, 2012) There are also suggestions for people with ADHD traits on some of the websites listed at the end of this book.



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9 Where to go from here

9.1 Take control of your life

In my opinion, personal productivity has changed very little in the past 30 years in spite of technology. The net result of technology has been to speed up the pace of life. We are working faster, driving faster, communicating faster, eating faster – in short, living faster. The time savings gained by technology have been offset by increases in complexity, choices, interruptions, expectations, stress, delays and errors. Our bodies are not designed to operate at warp speed and we are faced with a variety of ailments to the point that “getting well” has become another time consumer.

We have automatic washers and dryers; but we have more clothes to wash and we wash them more often. Cars go faster; but we have more distances to travel and we have to contend with more traffic, construction, and gridlock. We complete specific tasks quicker; but experience more interruptions and timewasters. And so on.

In this fast-paced environment, many traditional strategies are losing their impact or simply no longer work. Quiet hours, as we used to know them, are a thing of the past. “To Do” lists are losing their effectiveness. Focus is becoming weak or non-existent. Multitasking is counterproductive. In some cases, even goal setting has become ineffective. Eating on the run has become the norm. Sleep, in many cases is seen as an annoying necessity. And we are probably spending more time getting well than staying healthy. The division between work and personal life has become blurred. Discretionary time is disappearing. *Infomania*, ADHD, stress, inefficiency, and lack of balance are common in today’s environment.

The good news is that we do have a choice. We can decide what technology we will use, when we will use it and how we will use it. And we can decide what we will do and how fast and for how long we will do it. And one the biggest challenges is to convince ourselves that multitasking is neither productive nor healthy.

According to Stefan Klein, in his book *The Secret Pulse of Time* (Marlow & Company, 2007) every time you turn your attention to a new problem, you interrupt your train of thought and important information vanishes from your working memory. The book, *iBrain*, by Gary Small and Gigi Vorgan published in 2009, confirms this. In fact, not only do high-tech multitaskers have weaker memories, they tend to have poorer social skills and have trouble focusing as well. And brain scan studies reveal that if we do two tasks at the same time, we have only half of our usual brainpower devoted to each. When we multitask, we are only half there for each activity.

Some people think they are multitasking only when they are *physically* doing two things at the same time. But it's the *brain* activity that determines whether you are multitasking or not. For example, you could be writing an article while *thinking* about another task that has to be done. In that case, you are *mentally* multitasking. If you are solving math problems in your head or dreaming of a white Christmas while you are driving or walking or working, you are *mentally* multitasking. You are mentally multitasking when you are doing one thing and worrying or even thinking about something else.

Multitasking is more common than you might think. 91% of Americans watch TV while they eat, 26% admit that they often eat while driving, and 35% eat lunch while they're at their desks while reading, working on a computer or making and receiving phone calls. In a 2006 survey conducted by *Basex*, a New York research company, 50% said they wrote emails or instant messages during conference calls.

Mono-tasking will be the new time management strategy for gaining control of your time and your life. For example, go walking without Bluetooth in your ear, eat breakfast without reading the newspaper, have a coffee in the cafeteria or coffee shop instead of at your desk, drive home without the radio turned on, participate in a meeting or school class without texting anyone, and so on. See if your personal productivity increases or decreases. You may be surprised. It may seem awkward or strange at first, but I predict that you will soon be more creative and clear headed as well as more productive. And according to recent research, you will also be under less stress, more organized, less anxious, have an improved memory, and make better decisions.

It's easier said than done; because everyone seems to be multitasking, and taking pride in the fact that on the surface they seem to be making great progress, and being ultra- productive. Unfortunately in doing so they are becoming more like the technology they are using and less like the people they are meant to be. And they are so busy doing things that they don't realize they are not getting anywhere.

Once you are able to resist the urge to multitask, you are on the road to regaining complete control of your life, and you will be able to use technology without it using you. Multitasking is a job for machines, not mankind.

9.2 Looking ahead

Leaders of the future will be those who can master some of the more useful technology that becomes available while maintaining their interpersonal skills. Not only will they be able to work efficiently, they'll be able to relate to other people, negotiate, gain consensus, close deals, network effectively and motivate and inspire others.

Technology is good; but you can have too much of a good thing. Research published in the February, 2008 *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin*, showed that daily social contacts may boost brain power and cognitive abilities. In a *University of Michigan* study of 3500 people, it was revealed that more time spent chatting with friends was associated with higher scores on memory tests. Interaction with people provides greater brain stimulation than watching a computer monitor or TV set. Technology, on the other hand, encourages multitasking, which in turn leads to stress, anxiety and inefficiency.

Technology writer Danny O'Brien interviewed top achievers and found one thing in common that may account for their increased productivity. They all used some sort low-tech tool, such as a written "To Do" list or a plain paper pad. In the future there will be less talk of merging man and machines and more talk of merging high tech with high touch. It pays to limit technology and maintain balance in your life. A UCLA study found that people who adopted a healthy lifestyle instead of constantly manipulating their BlackBerrys and cell phones, within a matter of weeks, showed improvement in memory scores and reasoning. We must be careful that technology doesn't become all-consuming and addictive.

We can't fight progress; nor should we. But we must adapt to the greater demands on our time by being more aware of the priorities in our jobs and in our personal lives. A clear mission, specific objectives and definite plans become essential if we are to avoid being sidetracked by trivia. We must focus on the important and ignore the urgent – unless they contribute to the attainment of our goals.

The advertisement for Linnaeus University features a bright yellow background. On the left, there is a black speech bubble containing the word 'Scholarships' in white script. Below it, the text 'Open your mind to new opportunities' is written in a large, black, serif font. To the right of this text is a photograph of a person in a plaid shirt and jeans performing a backflip in a modern, glass-walled interior space. In the background of the photo, several people are sitting at tables. The university's logo, a stylized black tree, is in the top left corner. The website 'Lnu.se' is in the top right corner. A black box in the bottom right corner lists various academic programs. At the bottom left, the university's name 'Linnæus University' and 'Sweden' are displayed.

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We cannot do everything, and more and more our personal effectiveness will be determined by what we don't do. "Don't do" lists will become just as important as "To do" lists. It might someday be referred to as "management by omission."

The information age has brought with it a greater need to delegate, to prioritize and to make some tough decisions as to what can be ignored. There is no room for pet projects, perfectionism or procrastination. Time management training will concentrate less on timesavers and more on building self-discipline and decisiveness. The ability to work effectively in stressful situations takes on greater importance. Coping with stress, life balance and managing personal health and fitness will be standard courses for aspiring executives.

Although a common cry is to keep pace with technology, this is impossible. We must come to terms with our own pace and recognize that we must selectively utilize information, technology and the Internet while working at the pace dictated by our individual internal clocks. Taking on too many priorities is counterproductive while taking on too many low priority activities is organizational suicide.

As far as ADHD is concerned, the more I study it the more I am convinced that we all have it to varying degrees. As we learn more about the amazing brain, we will adopt more drug-free strategies that will mitigate the undesirable traits and emphasize the desirable ones. And as Lara Honos-Webb points out in her book, *The Gift of Adult ADD*, there are many desirable traits such as creativity, adaptability and intuitiveness that we could all benefit from enhancing. On the other hand, as Thomas E Brown points out in his latest 2013 book, *A New Understanding of ADHD in Children & Adults*, medications can mask the symptoms but will not cure the disorder – if we can even call it a disorder.

At any rate, the next great discoveries will involve an unraveling some of the mysteries of the brain – enough to keep our neuroscientists occupied for another thousand years.

In the meantime, celebrate your uniqueness, utilize your gifts, and piece together a time management system that will assure you a long, productive, and self-fulfilling life.

10 Resources

10.1 ADHD Reference books:

Brown, Thomas E. *A New Understanding of ADHD in Children and Adults*. New York: Routledge, 2013.

Hallowell, Edward M. & John J. Ratey. *Driven to Distraction*. New York: Touchstone, 1994.

Hallowell, Edward M. & John J. Ratey. *Delivered from Distraction*. New York: Ballantine Books, 2006.

Hallowell, Edward M. *Crazy Busy*. New York: Random House, 2006.

Honos-Webb, Lara. *The Gift of Adult ADD*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, 2008.

Kelly, Kate & Peggey Ramundo. *You Mean I'm not Lazy, Stupid or Crazy?!* New York: Scribner, 1995.

Kolberg, Judith & Kathleen Nadeau. *ADD-Friendly Ways to Organize your Life*. New York: Routledge, 2002.

Ratey, Nancy A. *The Disorganized Mind*. New York: St. Martins Press, 2008.

Sarkas, Stephanie Moulton. *10 Simple Solutions to Adult ADD*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, 2005.

10.2 Helpful websites:

www.additudemag.com/

www.drhallowell.com

www.ADD.org

www.addwarehouse.com

www.chadd.org

www.addconsults.com

www.addvance.com/help/women/

www.add.about.com

www.ADHD.com

www.livingwithADD.com

www.youraddnews.com

www.addcopingskills.com

www.addresources.org

www.myaddstore.com

www.adhdnews.com

10.3 Books referenced in *Time Management Strategies in an ADHD World*:

Brown, Thomas E. *A new understanding of ADHD in children and adults*. New York: Routledge, 2013.

Carr, Nicholas G.. *The shallows: what the Internet is doing to our brains*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2010.

Cooper-Kahn & Margaret Foster. *Boosting executive skills in the classroom*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, 2013.

Dawson, Peg, and Richard Guare. *Smart but scattered: the revolutionary "executive skills" approach to helping kids reach their potential*. New York: Guilford Press, 2009.

Hallowell, Edward M. & John J. Ratey. *Delivered from distraction*. New York: Ballantine Books, 2006.

Honos-Webb, Lara. *The gift of adult ADD*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, 2008.

An advertisement for SKF. It features a woman with long dark hair smiling in the foreground. In the background, a large white wind turbine is visible against a blue sky. The text 'Brain power' is written in large white letters on the left. On the right, there is a block of text about wind energy and SKF's role. At the bottom left, it says 'Plug into The Power of Knowledge Engineering. Visit us at www.skf.com/knowledge'. The SKF logo is in the bottom right corner.

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Therefore we need the best employees who can meet this challenge!

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Plug into The Power of Knowledge Engineering.
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Klein, Stefan. *The secret pulse of time: Making sense of life's scarcest commodity*. Cambridge: Da Capo Lifelong Books, 2009.

Kornblatt, Sondra. *A better brain at any age*. San Francisco: Conari Press, 2009.

Martin, Chuck, Richard Guare, and Peg Dawson. *Work your strengths: a scientific process to identify your skills and match them to the best career for you*. New York: American Management Association, 2010.

Poscente, Vince. *The age of speed: Learning to thrive in a more-faster-now world*. Austin: Bard Press, 2008.

Small, Gary W., and Gigi Vorgan. *IBrain: surviving the technological alteration of the modern mind*. New York: Collins Living, 2008.

Surman, Craig & Tim Bilkey. *Fast Minds: How to thrive if you have ADHD (or think you might)*. New York: The Berkley Publishing Group, 2013.

Taylor, Harold L. *Time to be productive: How to develop your time management skills*. Bookboon.com (Ventus Publishing ApS), 2012.

Taylor, Harold L. *Making time work for you: a guide to productive time management*. Toronto: Harold Taylor Time Consultants Inc., 2011 edition.

Wedge, Marilyn. *Pills are not for preschoolers: a drug-free approach for troubled kids*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2012.

11 About the author

Harold Taylor, CSP, CEO of Harold Taylor Time Consultants Ltd., has been speaking, writing and conducting training programs on the topic of effective time management for over 30 years. He has written 18 books, including a Canadian bestseller, *Making Time Work for You*. He has developed over 50 time management products, including the popular *Taylor Planner*, which has sold in 38 countries around the world. He has had over 300 articles accepted for publication.

A past director of the *National Association of Professional Organizers*, Harold Taylor received their *Founder's Award* in 1999 for outstanding contributions to the organizing profession. He received the CSP (Certified Speaking Professional) designation in 1987 from the *National Speakers Association*. In 1998 the *Canadian Association of Professional Speakers* inducted him into the Canadian Speaking Hall of Fame. And in 2001, he received the first *Founder's Award* from the *Professional Organizers in Canada*. The award has been named in his honor.

In 2014, Harold formed an Internet training company, mindsontime.com, to conduct mastermind programs, teleseminars and webinars on time management, organizing and leadership – with a focus on the application of recent research findings to increase personal productivity and well-being.

Since 1981, when he incorporated the original time management company, he has personally presented over 2000 workshops, speeches and keynotes on the topic of time and life management.