

Time management, organization for the new year

In with the new, out with the old,' is a saying repeatedly heard in the last weeks of 2018, as the world prepares to usher in a new year full of opportunities for growth and development. With the new year, it is time to manage the continuing challenges of resolutions, time management, and organization. Time cannot be managed in the same manner that other resources can such as humans and information. Time is a resource that must be used the instant it is received. Time cannot be saved; you cannot get more of it, and it cannot be replaced. Therefore, knowing that we have a finite but valuable resource, how do we best use it to yield the results that will help us achieve our goals and dreams?

1. Set your priorities before the new year begins

Managing time effectively requires a distinction between what is important and urgent. As a business professional, it is highly likely that you will be lured with the urgent tasks crying for immediate attention at the expense of the critical tasks that will sul k and hide in the corner. Covey categorized activities into four quadrants: urgent, not urgent, important, and not important. The task is to sort all projected activities into a time matrix and then focus on the important tasks that will impact your career and increase the bottom line. Keep in mind that your goal is not to check off the most items; rather you to mark off the highest priority items. By doing so, you can say no to activities that do not align with your mission.

2. Get organized and get

rid of the clutter

Individuals are overwhelmed with ever-growing incoming information that demands attention (Geri & Gefen, 2007). To manage time effectively and get the most important tasks completed, getting organized is essential, which involves managing clutter and designing a system of incoming processing information. The most common method to implement this strategy is to setup 'keep,' 'toss,' and 'give-away' boxes for items in your workspace. Below are five strategies to help manage incoming information:

- Throw it away, delete it, or otherwise get rid of it.
- Delegate it: give it to someone else to do, file, or respond.
- Act on it yourself. Then throw it away or file it.
- File it temporarily until it needs action or until additional information is received. Follow

up: a "tickler" file can be useful for holding temporary information.

- File it permanently.
- Implement strategies to avoid wasting time**
- Tackle the easiest tasks first.
 - Create to-do lists at the end of the day for the next day.
 - Use calendars to keep track of everything.
 - Ignore unnecessary distractions.

With these necessary steps, 2019 should be productive and rewarding. The goal of managing time on purpose is to learn how to manage ourselves and other resources.

Dr. Deborah Johnson-Blake is an educator and the CEO of The Writing Pad, LLC, writing, editing and consultant firm and author of Managing Time on Purpose, a practical guide to help people become more time management efficient. www.deborahjohnsonblake.org.

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- The basic elements of a news article are who, what, when, where and why. Make sure your article includes all five Ws.
- Write your news article in the third person (he, they, their) not in first person (I, we, our).
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- Always include the name, daytime number and email address of a contact person in case there are questions about the news item.
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