



VITALITY
FITNESS



**HOW TO MAXIMIZE
YOUR TIME**

The busiest people on earth still have the same minutes in a day to work with. If you can remember that and that no matter how busy you think you are there are people who are getting more done than you, we have a chance to improve.

Time management is at the root of all success in life. Any one who has ever achieved any thing note worthy has always been able to maximize their output with various time management techniques.

I first started practicing the art of time management when I became the manager of a busy health cub in downtown Toronto. With over 30 trainers and a goal of \$120,000 in personal training sales each month you have to be aware of every second.

I started with a few books and CDs that were suggested to me to help keep me more in control of my time. But it wasn't until I started implementing and actually taking action towards using these techniques before I started to notice the effects. Just like everything else, knowledge is power only when it is put into action.

Learning how to structure my day around activities at the appropriate time was the first lesson. I know that I think most clearly between the hours of 5am and 10am so this is when I would schedule any creative work that needed to be done. If for instance, I also had to paint a wall today I would never use my good, creative thinking time to do that and would schedule the painting towards the evening when I am winding down and can still perform manual labour type of work.

As we get older and life gets busier and busier faster and faster we need to learn to balance all of our work, exercise, family and pleasure time as well and if we are not careful one will suffer.

Through my career I was fortunate enough to come in contact with my now friend and mentor Mr. Jim Estill. Jim built his software company out of the trunk of his car into a billion dollar a year sales business, sold it for untold hundreds of millions and now enjoys life running marathons, growing vegetables in his garden, spending time with his family, reading an insane amount of books and writes the most comprehensive and useful blog on Time Management there is. Jim truly is a master of time management and he thrives on helping others improve this area as well.

Here are just a few tips on how to improve your Time Management.

1. Create a note on your phone and record all your thoughts, conversations and activities for a week. This will help you understand how much you can get done during the course of a day and where your precious moments are going. You'll see how much time is actually spent producing results and how much time is wasted on unproductive thoughts, conversations and actions.
2. Any activity or conversation that's important to your success should have a time assigned to it. To-do lists get longer and longer to the point where they're unworkable. Appointment books work. Schedule appointments with yourself and create time blocks for high-priority thoughts, conversations, and actions. Schedule when they will begin and end. Have the discipline to keep these appointments.
3. Plan to spend at least 50 percent of your time engaged in the thoughts, activities and conversations that produce most of your results.
4. Schedule time for interruptions. Plan time to be pulled away from what you're doing. Take, for instance, the concept of having "office hours." Isn't "office hours" another way of saying "planned interruptions?"
5. Take the first 30 minutes of every day to plan your day. Don't start your day until you complete your time plan. The most important time of your day is the time you schedule to schedule time.
6. Take five minutes before every call and task to decide what result you want to attain. This will help you know what success looks like before you start. And it will also slow time down. Take five minutes after each call and activity to determine whether your desired result was achieved. If not, what was missing? How do you put what's missing in your next call or activity?
7. Put up a "Do not disturb" sign when you absolutely have to get work done.
8. Practice not answering the phone just because it's ringing and e-mails just because they show up. Disconnect instant messaging. Don't instantly give people your attention unless it's absolutely crucial in your business to offer an immediate human response. Instead, schedule a time to answer email and return phone calls.

9. Block out other distractions like Facebook and other forms of social media unless you use these tools to generate business.
10. Remember that it's impossible to get everything done. Also remember that odds are good that 20 percent of your thoughts, conversations and activities produce 80 percent of your results.
11. Learn to say 'no'. Saying yes to every engagement or offer without running it through your screening process as to whether or not it will move you further or closer to your goal is a sure fire way to waste time. Stay ever focused on your desired outcomes and base your decisions on that and not what you feel like doing in the moment.

Jim is currently using most of the Pomodoro system a lot right now. The gist of the system is set a timer for 25 minutes and focus heads down on the task at hand.

The Pomodoro system is based on using a timer and breaking everything into 25 minute blocks called a Pomodoro. In order to use the system, you need to know what to do (the to do list) and it needs to be prioritized.

The trick of this system is it helps with focus. For a 25 minute block, 100% focus on one task. Then take a 5 minute break.

Time management is nothing that you will master in one sitting and like fitness, it takes a lifetime to fully develop and master but I encourage you to start. If you can start to do even one thing that saves you an hour a day you will find the time you need to get in all of your exercise first and that is what the main focus of improving this area of your life is all about right now.

Go to www.jimestill.com and sign up to receive his free blog posts. Better yet buy his book and audio CD. I am in no way making money from this (maybe I should) and Jim certainly doesn't need it, which is what makes it such a good value. Like I said, if you gain one great tip that you actually put into action the \$25 investment will pay you back for a lifetime.