

How to Get Organised, Focussed and Stay On Track

by Lorraine Pirihi

About the Author



Lorraine Pirihi is regarded as Australia's top personal productivity specialist, business and life coach and a professional speaker. She runs her own business The Office Organiser showing businesspeople how they can dramatically boost their productivity and profits, reduce the stress and the mess and have more time for living life!

Lorraine authored the best-selling book “[Get Organised – Get a LIFE!](#)” and has produced a range of terrific timesaving products including, “[Work Smarter, Not Harder](#)” and “[How to Gain An Extra Hour In Your Day](#)”. Lorraine has written many articles, which have been published in magazines and trade journals Australia-wide and internationally.

Outstanding in her field of personal productivity. She has a reputation as a person who makes things happen. A highly educated speaker with a Bachelor of Experience, PHD in Commonsense and Masters in Results, Lorraine shares with you the tips, tools and tactics, which will help you, get organized, get focussed and stay on track! For more information about Lorraine's products and services see <http://www.office-organiser.com.au>

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How To Plan For Your Success

Writing your goals down, visualising them and taking the action required is all you need to do to achieve them.

Is it really that simple? Well, there are a few other things you can do to speed up the process.

Schedule Everything

Use your diary to plan your time.

Plan for the most important things in your life first...Like your exercise, family time, and financial welfare.

If you avoid doing this then you'll never have enough time. Everything else will get in the way.

Pay Yourself First

You may have heard the saying "pay yourself first before you pay anyone else" or "deduct 10% of your income each week and transfer the money into an investment account". You do this because there is never any money at the end to save and yet if you pay yourself first you actually do save.

Set Timeframes

It is vital to set timeframes for all your activities, otherwise you'll never have enough time.

Be realistic, as life doesn't always go according to plan. Allow extra time to do what you need to do. If attending the gym or running is a high priority, allow enough time to shower and change. It's no good planning an hour to attend the gym and not include the showering time. If an hour is all you are prepared to spend then you'll have to finish up after 45 minutes to allow the changing time.

The same applies for attending meetings, allow for the travelling - block that time in your diary.

Allocate time each week to work on your goals.

Schedule it!

The unimportant stuff can wait. Stop telling yourself how busy you are.

Clear the Clutter

In his book "Personal Best" David Rock, the founder of Results Life Coaching says:

How you treat your physical space, your home, your car and your workspace can dramatically impact how you feel about yourself and increase your confidence and chance of success.

Things like cleaning out your wardrobe of anything you haven't worn in two or three years, or cleaning out the car of all the rubbish that ends up there can leave you feeling sharp and energised.

If your goal is to start a new business and your home office is a complete shambles, getting it organised may be the big thing that gets you going. Clutter drains your energy, but it's so easy to get attached to it. (See <http://www.resultslifecoaching.com.au> for more info.)

The Sales Manager

A few weeks ago I presented to a group of business owners and one of them mentioned he used to be the Sales Manager of a Public Relations company.

Keith said he could always tell when his sales team were on track just by looking in their cars. If their cars were a mess, clutter strewn all over the place, then he knew they were off track. He said the same applied to himself, when his car was clean and tidy he knew where he was heading.

The Final Word

Are you "on track" or "off track"?

Congratulations if you are "on track".

If you are "off track" here are two questions for you: Is the clutter overwhelming you? Is it time to clean up your life? If your answer is YES then do something about it! TAKE ACTION NOW!!!

Cleaning out the Clutter

If you seriously want to get organized, get focussed and stay on track then you have to look at cleaning out all the clutter.

You know it's time to take action when:

- You have difficulty finding things
- Your colleagues make comments about your mess
- You can't see your desk for the mess
- You cut your fingers in the filing cabinet when you try to dig out a file
- You have to push your body against the cupboard door to close it.
- The bookshelves are beginning to break because of all the weight.
- You've forgotten what your office floor looks like because it's buried under the mess

In his bestselling book "Clutter's Last Stand, Don Aslett, America's No. 1 Cleaning Expert says:

"Most of us attain, accumulate, collect, but plenty always seems to require more. Enough is never enough.

Clutter Costs

We have to pay for it, keep track of it, protect it, clean it, store it, insure it and worry about it. This takes energy and effort (in fact, a great part of your life). Later we have to move it, hide it, apologise for it, argue over it.

Clutter Stifles

It requires so much of our time to tend. Not only are our houses, drawers, closets and vehicles so crowded we can't breathe, but our minds, emotions and relationships are crowded into dullness and immobility.

We're so surrounded with stuff, we don't even have time for the people whom mean the most to us.

The Final Revelation

Finally, often too late, we realise that most of that which has surrounded us, choking out good living, squeezing out the physical and emotional life out of us, is just junk - clutter!

Clutter in the Workplace

Clutter is costing businesses thousands, if not millions of dollars!

Here are a few reasons why:

- *People waste time searching for things.* In fact, The Wall Street Journal did a survey and reported that white collar workers spent on average SIX WEEKS A YEAR looking for things in the office.
- *Clutter occupies space*
Floor space costs money! One of the most common complaints I hear is "I have no room, there's not enough space."
- *Extra money is spent on stationery and office supplies, which have already been bought.* The trouble is people can't easily find them in a cluttered environment so they order more.
- *Money is wasted on excess office furniture and storage to hoard the clutter.*
- *Clutter makes you feel busy.*
Combined with a busy workload, clutter will dramatically increase your stress levels. It is extremely easy to be distracted with so much 'stuff' surrounding you.

Time to Take Action

Make a decision to rid yourself of excess clutter. Clean out your workplace and your home. Then decide on the activities in your personal life that need to be decluttered and take action. Now is the best time to start. Stop making excuses that you don't have the time...guess what? You do.

For more detailed information on How to Clean out The Clutter see:

<http://www.office-organize.com/timemanagement/>

How to Achieve More by Listening to Your Body

Are you:

1. one of those people who bounce out of bed at 6.00a.m., throw on your gym gear and race to the gym for a workout?

By the time you leave for work, you've showered, had breakfast and organised everyone else in your household. You arrive at work and you're on fire!

OR

2. do you wake up at the last possible second and drag your weary body out of bed, walk around like a zombie and gradually get yourself organised? You need your morning coffee to snap you out of your sleepy state and finally drag yourself into work?

There's no right or wrong way to be, it's just how you are. It pays to listen to your body clock, identify when your peak performance times occur and use that time to your advantage. Hopefully it will be a few times during the day, otherwise you've got a problem.

The Earlybird

If you are an early bird, then it makes sense to do the hardest tasks first thing in the morning. That could mean that you work on a specific project, or prepare a proposal.

It's a waste of your time to clean up and do filing. Save that for when you begin to feel tired or lose concentration.

Organise meetings and appointments for the afternoon as that's when you'll probably run out of steam. You can always wake up when you're with someone else.

Meetings scheduled late afternoon tend to be shorter as everyone wants to get home. You can also make your phone calls and attend to email in this time.

The Late Starter

In many instances you will be the reverse of the Early bird.

Going to the gym at 6.00a.m. is just not on your agenda. Maybe lunchtime is a goer or after work.

You're likely to be more productive seeing people in the morning and tackling the hard stuff later in the day.

6 Ways to Give Your Mind & Body a Break

1. Stand up and get a drink of water (six glasses a day are good for you)
2. Walk to another office and see a colleague.
3. Switch to an easier task.
4. Go outside for a breath of fresh air.
5. Clean up
6. Have a 10 minute powernap (You might have to find a secret hiding place for this one)

The Final Word

Everyone is different. However if you can recognise your high energy times and plan your activity accordingly, you will achieve so much more.

Another very important area to address is your diet and exercise regime (or lack of it). If you feed yourself right and exercise regularly, your energy levels, enthusiasm, self-esteem and quality of life will skyrocket, regardless of whether you are an Early bird or Late Starter.

Remember, you are your most important asset...you need to be healthy and continue to stay that way...and that takes constant effort!

It's the Little Things That Count

Have you ever been in the situation where you have become so focussed on achieving a goal that you have done so at the detriment of everything else in your life?

The 'All or Nothing' Syndrome

In a coaching session I had with one of my clients this week, he realised that to complete the goal he wanted to achieve by the end of September, that he has totally neglected every other area of his life.

He has fallen into the 'all or nothing' syndrome. He has put all his eggs in the one basket. While he's been pursuing this goal he hasn't paid attention to anything else. His health and well-being has suffered and so has his relationships.

It's important to get some perspective and 'balance' in your life. You can become so focussed on achievement that you miss the little things...and before you know it, the little things become major problems.

We Don't Stumble Over Mountains

"We don't stumble over mountains." It seems we stumble over small things mostly. Serious problems seem to begin with small things, and often at early ages. Homes, families, marriages are broken often by little things, annoyances, small acts of thoughtlessness, lack of courtesy and consideration, lack of honesty in little things - small falsehoods, small deceptions in accounting for time or money. The breaking point may add up to something major and dramatic, but leading to it are small steps: inconsideration, irritations, indiscretions. Sometimes people protest their love and loyalty and offer to do almost anything to make amends, but leave the little things undone. There are those who profess they would lay down their lives, but who won't serve or sacrifice in the small day-to-day duties and discipline. Some have the all or nothing attitude. But life isn't like that. Those who insist on all or nothing are likely to have little or less.

The years are made of minutes. Much of life is made of memories, warm and happy memories of small kindnesses and consideration, of courtesy, of constancy, consistency; a mother's attentive care, a father's kindness, a child's thankfulness; thoughtfulness each day, not grand and rare and obvious outward acts - not all at once, but small and constant ways as each occasion comes.

If we want happiness with loved ones, and peace, and quiet conscience, we need to learn the little lessons, the small services, the continuing kindnesses, the habitual acts of honesty, the constancy of cleanliness - not just one big washing.

"We don't stumble over mountains." We stumble over small things mostly.

(Excerpt taken from Noel Whittaker's Newsletter noelnews@whittakermacnaught.com.au)

The Final Word

Allocate time each day to handle some of the little things in your life. As mentioned in previous newsletters, put yourself in your diary first. Plan time to action your goals...step by step, day by day. As Neil Armstrong, the first man to walk on the moon said "One small step for man, one great leap for mankind".

Seminar Success Strategies - How to Action What You Learn

It's no secret that many people who attend seminars, workshops and conferences have great difficulty in implementing the ideas.

They get all hyped up and excited on the actual day, write a book full of notes and proclaim to everyone in earshot "this is it! I have found the magic pill that will transform my work and my life."

I know how overwhelming it can be when participating at these events. By the end of the day my brain goes into overdrive. The question I always ask myself is "what am I going to do next?"

Here are some useful tips you can use so that you do something with the knowledge. Because if you do nothing with what you learn, the time, money and energy that you have invested to attend would have been a total waste.

Taking Action

1. Read your notes immediately after the event or within 24 hours.
2. Summarise the ideas to take action on.
3. Number each idea with No. 1 next to the highest priority and continue until each idea has a number next to it.
4. Get your diary and plan when you will action idea No. 1.
5. Do the same with the rest.
6. Then just do it!

Planning

The key to implementing this knowledge is all in the planning.

When working out when you will take action on each idea, be realistic with timeframes.

I find that the majority of people do not follow through because they underestimate the amount of time it takes to get things done and end up being overwhelmed.

They then put all their intentions into the "too hard, can't be bothered, I'm too busy" category and move on to another seminar for further motivation and newfound knowledge.

Unfortunately, the cycle continues. They become educated derelicts.

Attending the event is the easy part. Taking the action is much harder.

The Final Word

Always allow time afterward to assimilate the ideas and plan in your diary the actions you will take.

It's the small steps that you take consistently which will make the difference.

Remember "inch by inch, it's a cinch, yard by yard is too hard" or as Neil Armstrong the astronaut said, "one small step for man, one great leap for mankind".

It's the one percent improvements which will make a huge difference overall in your life.

Take action on what you learn because "to know and not to do, is not to know".

How Your Personal Organization Affects Your Kids

Last year I attended a presentation from Parenting Expert and well-known author, Stephen Biddulph on "Raising Boys". As I have an 11 year old son, I was interested to hear what Stephen had to say. In fact, so were the other 800 other parents in the room!

The key point that I picked up on was that boys from the age of 6 -14 really need 'time' with their dads. That is the most influential period in their lives when they bond with him. And the type of time they need is not all thrown into a once a week or month block or some exotic holiday once a year, they need to spend time with their sons on a regular basis. Otherwise how can you build a strong and stable relationship?

For the single mums reading this, don't despair. If you are estranged from your partner and bringing up your son is your responsibility, having a positive male role model in his life i.e. uncle, brother, grandfather teacher, tennis coach etc. will work as well.

What's happening in our society in the chase for the almighty dollar and in many instances the big ego, our relationships are breaking down. People are totally dominated by their work and have little energy to invest in themselves and their families.

Planning Personal Time

It's very interesting to note that every client I have coached ... male or female, whether they are the business owner, director, executive or whatever title they hold, all have the same common goal... they want more time for their personal life.

They do not want to start work at 7.30 a.m. and return home at 7.00 p.m. They are committed and enjoy what they do, however they are not prepared to sacrifice their own relationships and wellbeing anymore. THE PRICE IS NOT WORTH IT!

You Can Turn Your Life Around

And do you know what the three key things you need to do to turn your life around? Learn to say 'no', how to manage your time and then take action.

That's right. Everyone tells you how busy and how little time they have, yet most people do nothing to learn the skills that will have a dramatic impact on their work and personal lives. You have to plan time to get things done. Do you want to spend more time with your family?

Do you know how to plan for it? How much time do you spend working? How much time do you invest in yourself to learn how to be more effective? Are you hoping that one day, work will ease off and then you can spend more time with your family? Do you really need a bigger house, nicer car or overseas holiday? Will that improve your relationships? Do you think that

you'll (hopefully) stumble on the secrets to getting more time back in your life? If that's the way you live your life, your kids will probably be all grown up and not really need you.

Cats in the Cradle

For those of you old enough to remember, Cat Stevens recorded a song called "Cats in the Cradle". It was about a young boy whose Dad was always busy working. He never seemed to be available when his son wanted to be with him. Over the years this continued until the boy became an adult. By then his Dad had retired and had time on his hands, however his son had now become too busy to see his Dad. He too was working and had kids. The tables had turned. All of a sudden the Dad realised what he had done. He was too busy caught up in his work and missed out on his son growing up.

The Final Word

For those of you who have managed to maintain a good balance in your life, congratulations. No doubt you are happier, healthier and more fulfilled. For the rest of you who are unhappy, unhealthy and unfulfilled, then you need to take action if you are serious about wanting to make changes. Do it, because nothing changes if nothing changes!

Delegate Or Drown

Why waste your precious time working on tasks, which are definitely not your forte when you can delegate or invest your money on a product or service, which will free up your time? You can then focus on the more important areas in your work and your life.

Debbie's Story

Debbie was the Director of her own computer company, employing four staff.

Debbie had a hectic lifestyle. She worked long hours, had three children and a husband to organise and on top of that was in the middle of a major renovation of her own home. To make matters even worse, she was also studying for a Bachelor of Computer Science!

No wonder she was stressed out!

Here was a situation where she had overburdened herself unnecessarily. She had far too much going on in her life and something was about to snap!

Debbie was unable to sleep properly with all the worry and strain of juggling everything and had neglected her own self in the process.

Debbie looked tired and haggard when I first met her. She was 15 kg overweight and looked at least 10 years older than she really was. She had lost touch with what was really important to her. Debbie was trying to be superwoman!

She had taken on far too much and was forced to review her lifestyle (or lack of it) or she would either have a nervous breakdown or die in the process.

The Solutions

In working with my clients I always get them to write down all the activities and responsibilities they are currently involved in, both at work and home.

By writing them down you can clearly see what is really important and what isn't. You can also see where you fill up your day with unnecessary activity.

With Debbie there were many areas where she could free up her time to give her the time for herself as the number one priority and get some sanity back into her life.

Before Adding, Look at Subtracting

I suggested to Debbie that she needed to look at which activities and responsibilities she could defer, delete, delegate or outsource.

This is what she chose to do:

1. Defer her Computer Science Degree until the following year.
2. Organise a building company to project manage her home renovation. Up until that time she had been organising the whole project on her own!
3. Hire a babysitter with a car who could pick her kids up from school and run them around to their activities. The babysitter would also cook the dinner and do other light domestic duties.
4. Utilise her bookkeeper much more by delegating to her basic administration tasks, which she was very capable of doing. Her bookkeeper was only employed three days a week and was delighted to work an extra day assisting Debbie with other tasks.
5. Attend her local gym at 6.00 a.m. three mornings a week and once on the weekend. She also sought advice on her diet.

Within four weeks you could see the change in Debbie. She was more confident now that she has taken control of her situation. Her life was getting back on track!

The Final Word

It's really easy not to invest money in yourself.

Do you spend money on your car, your computer, your business, your home and other 'things' in your life?

Are you not worthy enough to invest in yourself? Is the price you pay for neglecting yourself really worth it?

What can you defer, delete, delegate or outsource so that you can have more time for living your life?

How To Get A Grip On Your Money

Most people have no idea where their money goes. They earn it and they spend it.

That's fine if you want to live from week to week and are not concerned about your financial future. However if you want to increase your wealth and have more options, action needs to be taken by you otherwise you could end up like most people further down the track, totally dependant on a pension.

Karen's Story

Karen is the Marketing Manager for a well-known organisation. She's 39 yrs old, single and earns over \$80k a year. She is paying off a mortgage and that's all the debt she has.

Karen buys whatever she likes and says she has more than enough money for her lifestyle...or so she thought. And that's a very important point - Karen 'thought' she had plenty of money to splash around yet she had no real idea of where it went. She was at the stage where she wanted to achieve more in her life including taking charge of her financial future.

One of the exercises I gave her to do was to sort all her financial statements - visa card, bank accounts and any cash receipts and list her income and expenditure under specific headings i.e.: loans, clothing, utilities, food etc. Karen recorded everything that occurred for the past 6 months . She nearly fainted when she saw how much money she had wasted and how much she was overspending! She was going backwards fast and only realised it by doing this simple exercise.

In the past Karen hadn't put a high priority on her financial well-being as it was just too hard. Being a marketing manager, her life was busy at work and she had a hectic social life. She didn't want to bother doing something that wasn't exciting like working on her financial future. After all, she had a well-paid job, didn't she?

Karen has now come to her senses and knows her true financial situation. If she lost her job, financially she couldn't afford to be off work for more than a month. She realises that she is responsible for her future.

The area of wealth creation hadn't been of great interest to Karen in the past. Now that she was undertaking coaching, she was serious to making a change. Prior to writing down where her money was going, Karen was completely closed to any suggestion to read more about how she can accelerate her wealth (or lack of it), so I didn't pursue this with her. Her attitude had now changed so she was ready and willing to move to the next step.

The next move...I referred Karen to an organisation who would look at her total financial picture and be able to recommend what she could do. The reason I chose these people is because they take a holistic approach to wealth creation. They look at every aspect and provide an on-going education as well as a hand-holding service.

We met after her first session and Karen said she nearly had a heart attack at the meeting. She realised how much money she had been giving away to the tax office. Being on such a high income she was being taxed 47c for every dollar earned. She now realised that by making some small changes she could keep this money and have investments that over time would accelerate her financial situation dramatically.

She now had enough knowledge to make decisions and take actions that could make her financially independent over the next few years. Karen couldn't believe how simple it was!

Your Financial Future - Whose Responsibility?

Unfortunately you cannot leave your financial well-being in the hands of anyone else except yourself.

Of course, you can seek advice from professionals in that field like accountants and financial planners; however, it really is up to you to lead the way ...to be proactive!

Having attended many seminars, spoken to wealthy people and to the financial professionals (many of whom aren't independently wealthy themselves), and read many books on the topic of wealth creation, I have found you cannot rely on any one person to delegate your financial affairs to. You need to be proactive and take control of your own life.

How to Take Control of Your Financial Future

Get your finances in order first: You need to know what you spend, what you earn, how much you owe and how much you own...Not in your head but in writing. What you think your situation is and what is reality, will more than likely be two totally different scenarios. If you know where you are right now you can then seek out appropriate solutions to your specific financial needs.

How to Get Started

1. Speak with your accountant on the best way to set up your recording system.
2. Ask them how you can increase your wealth.
3. Ask your accountant and/or your financial advisor how they have created their wealth.
What do they invest in?
4. Talk to people who are wealthy. Ask them how they accumulated their wealth.

5. Question everything.
6. Read books and attend seminars on wealth creation...the more informed you are the easier it is to make sound decisions.
7. Don't believe everything you hear, see and read, particularly if the person advising you reaps financial benefit from you accepting their advice.
8. Only listen to people who "have rungs on the ladder". Once you've have done some research (and this can happen in a matter of days or weeks, depending on your efforts) then:
9. Take action

Sure you'll make mistakes along the way, however that's the only way you can progress. Learn from them and move on.

The Final Word

Looking after your financial well-being should be high on your priorities. It's about having choices in your life. Do you really want to work from dawn to dusk to support the lifestyle you and your family have become accustomed to? Perhaps you don't get to enjoy the lifestyle because you're too busy busting your guts at work.

Imagine what it would be like to work because you want to, not because you have to?
If financial freedom is something you desire in the not too distant future (and it doesn't happen overnight), you have to take action sometime... like right now!

How To Network Your Way to Success!

Successful people do not achieve success on their own, they surround themselves with a well-developed, sophisticated support network. In a world that grows more complex and more competitive each day, networking is necessary not only for survival but for high achievement"...excerpt from the best-selling book "Masters of Networking".

Observing many people when I'm out and about attending various business related functions, I'm convinced that so many of them do not realize how powerful it is to make the effort to meet others and network.

Networking is great for business ... if you do it right and have a system in place to follow up.

Secret No. 1

The successful networker always carries their business cards with them. They have stacks of cards in their diary, purse, wallet, all bags...briefcases, laptop, handbag, car and office. Before they step outside the front door in the morning, they check they have their business cards.

They know their card is a crucial promotional tool and ensure that the information on it clearly says what they do, has all their contact details and the design is attractive. The super successful networker likes to stand out from the crowd and will have a card that stands out too. Often they'll have a photo of themselves on it and information on the back stating what they specialize in.

Secret No. 2

When you meet the superstar networker they will ask you questions about yourself and your business and they will genuinely LISTEN TO YOU. They will focus their attention on you and maintain eye contact. They will ask you for your business card and offer you one of theirs.

Secret No. 3

The successful networker will write on the back of your business card where they met you and a couple of key points about you, so they remember who you are. They may do that immediately afterwards or later that day.

Secret No. 4

The superstar networker may provide you with a contact to help you and will expect nothing in return as they know what goes around comes around.

Secret No. 5

The successful networker will have a follow-up system. They will enter the details of the relevant contacts they have made into their database and communicate with those people within a couple of days. They'll ring or send an email , card or letter saying it was great to meet you, include information of the goods/services they offer which may benefit you. If they sent you information they'll FOLLOW-UP usually by phone a couple of days later.

Secret No. 6

The successful networker knows that the power of networking is in building relationships. They will stay in touch with you via an occasional letter, email, phone call or newsletter.

Get Connected And Get A Serious Return On Your Investment

Never underestimate how powerful networking is. It works if you work it. I know because it has played a huge part in the success of my own business.

Unfortunately many businesspeople waste their time, energy and money attending events because they don't know how to network effectively to get results.

They usually take your business card, promise to get in touch and never do! Or they get back to the office with a handful of business cards and throw them in a drawer, never to be seen again!

Now you can learn how to make the most of your time and money and learn from the people who specialise in this area.

Global Networking Specialist Robyn Henderson is a living testament of how powerful the skill of networking is. Both Robyn and I have recognised that so many people would benefit from knowing not only how to network but how to manage their time so they can be far more successful from their networking efforts and get a serious return on their investment.

In response to this need, we've produced a brand new product entitled "Get Connected - Timesaving Tips For Serious Networks see: <http://office-organiser.com.au/Products/>

The Final Word

Make the most of your opportunities in the future, learn how to network effectively on an on-going basis and you will see the dramatic impact it will have on your business

How to Run Successful Seminars

In the past three weeks I have attended three major events, two were well-run, the third was a shambles. All three had a number of speakers and more than 200 hundred people present.

The Disorganized Event

This is what happened at an event I recently attended:

1. On arrival, there were two people at the front desk who completely ignored me, so I walked straight in and organised my own stand. (This was a combination expo/seminar event).
2. There were no name tags for stallholders or attendees.
3. Refreshments were non-existent. Even water was unavailable.
4. Instead of briefly wrapping up at the end of each presentation, the Master of Ceremonies wasted at least another 10-15 minutes rambling on.
5. A sponsor who wasn't scheduled to speak was 'squeezed' into the programme for a SHORT 10 minute promotion...he prattled on for 40 minutes boring everyone. No one...the organiser or the MC stopped him.
6. At one point, the audience had been sitting for two hours with no break.
7. The last speaker who was scheduled to speak at 3.30 p.m. presented at 5.00 p.m....that's how poorly organised the event was. By this time many people had left (including me).

Apart from a few other ridiculous situations which occurred that day, some of the presenters were great.

Unfortunately, many of the attendees will remember more of the negative aspects, rather than the positive ones. It would certainly cast a shadow over this organisation's credibility.

The Ingredients of Successful Seminars

1. One person is in charge of the event and if anything goes wrong, their helpers know who to turn to.
2. The leader oversees everything. They delegate responsibility of different aspects of the seminar i.e. Registration desk, ushering, speaker minders, meeter and greeters, venue co-ordination, timekeeping for speakers etc.
3. Stretch breaks are factored in the schedule. Research shows that a 10 minute break every 50 minutes is a great refresher for the mind and the body.
4. Water is always available.

5. If refreshments are provided include healthy alternatives like fruit...not just biscuits or cakes.
6. The Master of Ceremonies needs to be entertaining and have the ability to keep the programme on track. The speakers should be informative and entertaining.
7. The room layout has to be set up so that people can sit comfortably and not rub shoulders with the next person.
8. If appropriate, name tags should be supplied with the attendees name and the company they represent.
9. Hand-outs and/or showbags with relevant information and goods should be supplied.
10. Play motivating music - before the commencement of the speakers, during the breaks and at the end of sessions. It provides an uplifting atmosphere.

The Final Word

By following the basic ingredients, you'll ensure that your next event is a success. And it doesn't matter if it's a workshop for 10 people or a seminar for thousands. Always do the basics.

Transform Your Office Into A Powerhouse Of Success

Did you know that the area that you call your 'office' is a direct reflection of you? If your environment is clean and uncluttered it projects that the person who works there is calm and has everything under control. Consequently if it looks like the local rubbish tip then the impression others get is that this person is disorganised, and a complete mess.

Now before any of you get upset with these assumptions, I'm just stating the fact that the way you have set up your office will greatly affect how other people perceive you.

Of course, clutter is not the only area to address if you want to project a professional image, however it plays a bit part. There are several easy to implement ideas which will have a dramatic impact on your productivity, providing you take action.

If you seriously would like to turn your office into a powerhouse of success, then take action on these tips from Feng Shui guru Debra Jarvis...

The First Step

Move everything out of the area designated as the office, especially what's stored in cupboards and up on shelves. There is no place to hide from Feng Shui eyes. Bring back in only those items that are relevant. Evaluate the other stuff, do you love it, is it useful? If not get rid of it (sell, dump or give it away).

Everything in its Place

It is important that all items have a designated place to which they are returned after use. Put things used frequently in the most accessible spots. Time spent working is much more pleasant when we can easily locate and access items when required.

Set up Your Power Position

Place yourself in the power position. This is the position where you have a view of every entryway. Where you have a choice of places or directions, put your office chair in each position and sit quietly for a few minutes getting an idea of what it would be like to spend time there. The one that immediately feels right is your power position. When you set yourself up in the power position you have control in the space, your self-esteem will go up and you accomplish more. Try it for 28 days and if you don't find any benefits (including increased business) then change the position.

Clean and Clear Clutter

Maintain a clear desktop. Paperwork is relentless in its onslaught. Deal with it immediately,

use TRAF (Toss, Refer, Act or File). Creating a pile to deal with later creates clutter and clutter is bad Feng Shui.

Remove Obstacles

Make your office area inviting to come into. In Feng Shui it is considered that opportunity flows to us in direct proportion to the ease of entry and the welcome that is experienced in our workplaces. This applies even when we are the only ones who ever go there. Only have items that you personally care for. Feng Shui tells us that everything is alive with memories, feelings and associations. What are the objects in your office saying to you? Question their origin, did you come by it because that's all you could find at the time, are you still in a good relationship with the person who gave it to you, would something else be more suitable?

Condition Audit

Does everything in your office work and is everything kept in optimal condition? In Feng Shui it is very important that we either attend to the repair of items immediately or where we are not prepared to do this we discard them. An item that is less than ideal is said to begin negatively impacting after 28 days.

Lighting

Use natural light as much as possible. Use incandescent electric lighting in preference to fluorescent. It is less tiring to work under especially if you are also operating a computer. Harsh white light is not optimal for working under. If you have to use fluorescent use full-spectrum (daylight) bulbs and experiment with only utilising half as many i.e.: where there is a double fitting only install one bulb.

Plants

Plants absorb potentially harmful gases and clean the air. During the day they take the air we breathe out and recycle it. You can use plants in your office to improve the quality of the air to make it a more pleasant place to work. When people feel good, they perform better. It is important that the plants are well cared for and that they remain healthy and vibrant.

Water

Water features are another wonderful Feng Shui enhancement. As water symbolises opportunity and abundance, ensure that water is not stagnant and, if flowing, the fall is a full 360 degrees or towards the centre of the occupied space.

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The Final Word

It makes sense doesn't it? When you have an uplifting environment to work in, you feel good,

you look good and you're more productive. Think about this...how many hours a week are you in your office? Probably more hours than you spend at home. All you need to do now is take action!

It's worth the effort to make some simple yet very effective changes so that you can power up your worklife. All you need to do now is take action!

7 Ways to Get More Done In Your Day

There are many ways in which you can get more done in your day. You'll find the most simplest ideas work the best. And it can be so easy to do, it's just a case of doing it!

1. **Look After Yourself First**

Exercise regularly, eat healthily and be around positive people. Feed your mind by attending personal development courses. Read self-help and motivational books, listen to tapes.

Do the right thing by yourself and you'll have heaps of energy, be motivated which in turn will help you be more productive.

2. **Clean out the Clutter**

You will save yourself heaps of time, energy and money if you clear out your work and home environment...paperwork, books, old equipment etc. You'll be able to find things, save money because you won't have to buy what you already have hidden somewhere, plus you'll be less stressed.

3. **Use the Right Tools**

It's no good having the latest whiz-bang computer when the desk that you sit at is too small to accommodate it, or the chair has poor back support, or the lighting is dull causing you eyestrain and fatigue. All these factors heavily influence how you work. Invest or ask for a decent desk, purchase a desk lamp or request the light globes be changed.

Don't avoid the warning signs your body gives you. Take action now before you have eye, back or neck problems.

4. **Use a diary or digital organizer**

With so much to organise in your busy life you need to record your appointments, things to do and goals somewhere. Preferably in a paper diary or digital organiser that you can take everywhere. This is the most effective way to get things done, plan your work and your life.

5. **Learn to say "No"**

To dramatically improve your productivity and do more of the things you want, you have to be firm with others and let them know if you cannot, will not or are unavailable to fulfil their requests. If you constantly say "yes" to everyone else's requests you will never have the time to do what you really want to.

Book yourself into a self-assertiveness course to learn these skills if you feel you need to.

6. Do What You Do Best and Delegate the Rest

At work see if there are ways you can delegate tasks which would suit someone else's talents. Many office and home based workers are spending heaps of time on mundane secretarial tasks which would take a person who is trained in that area a quarter of the time to undertake.

At home hire a gardener and cleaner to take care of the basic household chores. It's worth investing the extra dollars if you can have more free time to do what you want to.

7. Avoid Unnecessary Meetings

Before agreeing to attend a meeting, check if you really need to be there. Maybe a phone call or email will be just as effective.

The Final Word

By following these simple yet very effective ideas you will have more control over your work and your life, experience less stress and be more proactive. All of these factors affect your general well-being, confidence and results.

Yes, these strategies are simple and you probably already knew what you need to do, you just haven't done it yet.

Isn't it time you took action?

The Pitfalls of Procrastination

We all put off making decisions and taking action sometimes (yes, me too). It's okay to do that occasionally but if you are a regular pontificator then it will constantly cause you pain, even if you aren't aware of it. By putting things off on a regular basis you hold yourself back and instead of progressing in your life, you'll regress.

Mary's Story

I've been [coaching](#) Mary for over the past 6 months and she is a classic procrastinator. She'll often agree to taking necessary action which results from each coaching session she has and then not do anything. She's always got the excuses. In fact she could write a book with some of the reasons she comes up with. Her behaviour has had a dramatic impact on her business and personal life.

Her business is growing yet she can't keep up with the growth. She's constantly had staff issues because she puts off dealing with them.

Her office systems are in chaos as a result of not taking action.

She's losing money and having sleepless nights. Her personal life is taking a battering and her relationship with her husband is floundering. She know what she needs to do and yet will not take the time to get the foundations in place.

Now I just wanted to say that the coaching hasn't been a failure in fact despite all of this, Mary has made progress ... slowly.

She has finally had a wake up call. And it's such a shame it had to happen this way. Mary was working on her computer when the task alarm rang reminding her to ring her Grandmother. This was not the first time she had set this reminder up. In fact it had been appearing over the last month and each time the bell rang, she put off ringing and set another date. It would have been easy to pick up the phone and call her grandmother, yet she chose to procrastinate and reset the alarm again.

However this time when it rang, she stopped in her tracks. She read the note which said 'Phone Grandma'. A wave of sadness engulfed her...Mary's Grandmother had died three weeks earlier!

The Final Word

Mary shared this story with me and was happy for me to write about it so that maybe

someone reading this will stop procrastinating and ring their grandad, husband, brother, sister, mother or other loved one before it is too late.

Mary is really feeling the pain and that profound incident has turned her around.

Reminds me of the story of the old man and the dog:

Old man sitting on porch on rocking chair, his dog next to him is whining and howling .. another person walks past and asks "what's the matter with your dog?" and the old man replies, "oh, he's just sitting on a nail" ... stranger asks "so, why doesn't he just get off?" .. to which the old man replies "well, it obviously doesn't hurt enough".

Are You Worth Investing In?

Do you realise that if you're green you're growing and if you're ripe you're rotten? So says Winston Marsh, Business Marketing Guru in his recent newsletter.

Here's an excerpt from it ...

"Over the last week or so I have been presenting a series of seminars for MYOB throughout New Zealand and I have made an amazing discovery.

Most people would rather service their car than service their brain!

Now what do I mean by this? Well, quite simply, nobody gives a second thought to putting their car in for service or to get it fixed. They might moan and groan about the cost but they'll still do it.

Why?

Because they need their car to get around! They rely on it and have become dependent on it. So, no matter what the cost, they get the car serviced or fixed or whatever. They might have to beg, borrow or steal to pay for it but they front up with the money and get it done.

But, it's a whole different scene and set of feelings when it comes to an investment in the most important piece of machinery--- that money making, good time creating piece of machinery called themselves.

So many people have truckloads of reasons and excuses as to why they can't spend some time or money to get better at what they do... and some of the reasons are pathetic. "That's the night that Who Wants To Be A Millionaire is on" or "I'm too tired after work" or "I went to something like that once and I didn't like it" or "I can't afford it" or whatever are the reasons that they don't invest in their brain.

Yet there's only one thing that will determine your income and level of success and that's your brain ... what you feed it on and how you use it determines your results. Look after it and fill it with new ideas and information and it will richly reward you. Neglect it and it will fade and fail."

<http://www.bgrowth.com.au>

The Final Word

I've found that those people who do not invest time and money in themselves and rely on

their employer to pay for their development, dance to someone else's tune. They leave their future in someone else's hands.

In fact most people drift along in life taking whatever is dished out to them. They cannot 'be bothered' investing any extra time, money or energy in themselves. It's much easier to float with the crowd.

I also notice that many of the clients I have who invest their own money into their [coaching](#) program are extremely committed to making changes into their lives. They move ahead in leaps and bounds compared to clients who have had their program funded by their company.

When you pay for something yourself, you are more likely to value it.

If you really want to move ahead in your life, isn't it time that you started to invest in yourself?

The Final Word

There you have it. Simple ideas to help you get focussed, get organized and to stay on track.

For these ideas to work, you must take consistent action. When you do you'll have more time, more control, more peace of mind in all areas of your life.

If I can help you in any way feel free to contact me at lorraine@office-organiser.com.au or visit my website <http://www.office-organiser.com.au> for more terrific ways to get organized and on track!



Warmly
Lorraine Pirihi