

Small Business Success

June 2014



Community
Futures Newsask



Creating More Time in Your Day

We never have enough time to do all the things we need to do. How many times have you said - if only there were a few more hours in the day? Well, we all waste a bunch of time every day and don't even realize it. Here are some brief tips to help you find a few more minutes, or even hours in your day.

Published in cooperation with [Blue Beetle Books](#)

Get organized

If your office is cluttered you will not be working efficiently - period. If you are wasting time looking for stuff and moving the same piece of paper ten times then you need to tidy up and organize things in a way that makes sense for you. It's surprising how much better a tidy office will make you feel - and the better you feel the more productive you will be.

Say no more often

Learn to prioritize and quit agreeing to do everything you are asked. We all like to be helpful to colleagues, people who are referred to us, charitable organizations and others, but you can't be all things to all people. Remember your own business is your priority.



Manage electronic interruptions

Telephone and email are massive time thieves - every time you get interrupted it takes several minutes to get back into the swing of what you were doing. Handling these disruptions will depend on your style of work. Some people prefer to deal with calls and emails immediately and can get back to what they were doing quickly and easily - if that's you, and it's working for you, great. But, for many people it spirals into a never-ending series of distractions that prevent any serious work being done.

Turn off the sound that alerts you to an email arriving, and let callers leave a message. Then once, or twice a day check your messages and return those that are urgent. If you need to, you can check more often, but give yourself extended periods of uninterrupted work.

Index

Creating More Time in Your Day	1-2
Creating Even More Time in Your Day	2-3
5 Online Business Services to Make Life Easier	3
The Write Therapy	3-5
News from the General Manager	5
Cartoon	6
Challenge 4 Communities	6

Disappearing time

How often have you said, "I just don't know where the day went"? Looking back on what we have accomplished in a day, or a week, most of us feel that we could have been more productive. If you start to take stock of every minute in the day you'll find that your working day is a great deal shorter than you think it is. Consider the number of minutes wasted driving to meetings, looking for parking, going to lunch and coffee breaks, water cooler visits, washroom breaks, daydreaming, dealing with interruptions, checking your Facebook/LinkedIn/Twitter accounts, and you can see how easy it is for an eight-hour day to turn into just two hours of productive work. Be aware of the disappearing minutes and try to steal some of them back!

Meetings - the productivity black hole

If ever there was a way to create more time in your day it is to manage your meetings more efficiently, or better still cancel most of them! If you have to have a meeting, use a timed agenda and stick to it. Set the time of a meeting at an odd time like 9:50am, or 3:40pm. You'll be surprised to find that more people actually turn up on time when you use this strategy. This will reduce the massive waste of time waiting for people to show up. Also, don't let people add items during a meeting - train them to provide items in advance of the meeting so that they can go on the agenda.

Creating Even More Time in Your Day

Published in cooperation with [Blue Beetle Books](#)

Don't try to be a hero

Entrepreneurs are terrible at delegating work - we always think we can do it better and faster than anyone else. We may be correct in that assumption but doing everything ourselves is a time waster and not sustainable in the long-term. Delegation is as much a time-management skill as a human resources one, and is grossly underutilized by business owners.

Perfection is often unobtainable

Spending additional hours fine-tuning a document, or a project, can sometimes be necessary but ask yourself whether it is in every case. And, is anything ever perfect? When is excellent good enough? Those extra few hours spent polishing and polishing something are often not necessary and can be a major time-thief.

Don't touch the piece of paper twice

You've probably heard the old sayings, "procrastination is the thief of time" and "don't put off to tomorrow, what you can do today"? Well they're true. One way to deal with this time-destroying plague is to make a list of all things you need to do and prioritize them. Then do the most difficult, or least appealing tasks first. Doing that is tough but it will make you feel like you achieved something good, and that will spur you on to do more.

Plan, prioritize, focus

At the start of each day, think about what you need to achieve, make a list, and plan how you will execute what you need to do. One trick is to schedule specific time to do the most urgent tasks - treat them like an important meeting and carve out uninterrupted time.

Be nice to you!

You will be more productive if you are not working so hard that your stress levels are through the roof. Give yourself breaks - go for a walk - you'll end up getting more done because your mind will be fresh and alert.

Think about all the time thieves in your day-to-day working day and do your best to eliminate them. If you do your day might end up being a whole lot longer than you thought it was!

5 Online Business Services to Make Life Easier

Published in cooperation with [Blue Beetle Books](#)

Freshbooks

Freshbooks is a cloud-based accounting solution that allows subscribers to send, receive, print and pay invoices. Your customers will be able to pay via PayPal or credit card and even be sent a reminder automatically if they 'forget' to pay. It's the #1 cloud accounting solution designed for small business owners. It helps everyone from the most fragile of businesses (many of them one person, first time owners) to the most vibrant businesses, collecting billions of dollars. www.freshbooks.com



GoToMyPC

Wherever you go, GoToMyPC goes. Connect to work from anywhere on your smart phone or tablet. When you connect to your Mac or PC, what you see is a real-time image of your computer's screen. Instantly work with your files, programs and network - from anywhere - just as if you were at your desk. www.gotomypc.com

SpiderScribe

SpiderScribe is an online mind mapping and brainstorming tool. It lets you organize your ideas by connecting notes, files, calendar events, etc. in free-form maps. You can collaborate and share those maps online! www.spiderscribe.net

Shopify

Set up your own ecommerce store with having any technical or design experience. This is pretty simple, all you do is choose a website design, customize your online store, add products, and you're ready to accept payments. www.shopify.com

Square

Square lets you take payments on your mobile devices. You can swipe or key in all major credit cards, you can also record cash, debit, cheques, and other forms of tender for bookkeeping purposes. Customers sign and tip right on your device, and can choose an email, text message, or printed receipt. <https://squareup.com/ca>

The Write Therapy

This article first appeared in a magazine back in 2006, and we thought it deserved another airing now that we are heading quickly into the summer months. It's the sort of fun exercise that you could do while sitting enjoying the sun in your garden.

Published in cooperation with [Blue Beetle Books](#)

The idea behind it is to free your mind up to deal with all those background issues that pile up and get pushed to the side - you know, the ones we're too busy to deal with. This fun exercise really works to

boost creativity and help solve some of those underlying problems your sub-conscious is trying to deal with.

This exercise comes from a fabulous little book by Elizabeth Ayres called "Writing the Wave". You need to follow the steps in exactly the order prescribed (no cheating or jumping ahead) in order for the process to be effective. You'll need a pen and notebook or paper, a timer that you can set for up to 10 minutes, and about an hour of uninterrupted time. DO NOT SKIP AHEAD - just do each step at a time in sequence.

Step 1 - Invent a dream

I know it sounds weird, but just make one up. Ayres says "dreams are easy to invent because nothing has to make sense". You cannot use a dream you've actually had. Set your timer for 7 minutes, put your pen to paper and begin with the words "Last night I dreamed...". Just allow your imagination to take it from there - the less you censor, the more accurate the outcome. Your subconscious mind has an amazing ability to stream out the things you will need to see. At first I thought it would be difficult, but as I started writing, one bizarre idea flowed into another. Stop when the timer goes.

Step 2 - Jot down a current event or world situation

On a separate line in your notebook, write down a world situation, or current event, that comes to mind. It can be anything - something you heard on the news, something that's currently going on in the world. It can't be personal, and it can't be in the past. Pick one thing and write it down. This should take less than a minute.

Step 3 - Invent another dream

Now you've done it once, do it again. Set your timer for 7 minutes and repeat step 1. It cannot carry on from your original dream; it must be a new idea. Stop when you hear the timer.

Step 4 - Jot down a personal situation

In a minute or less, write down one thing that's going on in your life right now. It can be anything from looking for a job, to building a house, to celebrating a birthday - it's up to you.



Step 5 - Evaluate your dreams

Take a minute to compare your two dream sequences, and jot down ways in which your dreams are alike. They may seem like two completely different ideas, but look hard to see whether there are similar themes. It can be as simple as "the colour red is in both", or "in both dreams I'm running from something", or "my best friend is in both dreams." Set your timer for four minutes and come up with as many things as you can.

Step 6 - Evaluate your two situations

Similarly, write down any similarities you find between the two situations you wrote down - the current event or world situation and your personal situation. It might seem impossible as they are completely unrelated, but don't give up. Look hard. Say you wrote down world hunger and celebrating your birthday - some similarities

might be they both have to do with food, they both inspire in you a desire for some change, or that they both have a significant impact on your life. Set your timer for four minutes to do this step.

Step 7 - Identify a theme

Read over all that you've written so far, and see whether you can identify one main theme that emerges - something which is common to all your answers. It might be "I'm looking for a way to express myself", or "forgiveness", or "I'm running from something I fear". If more than one theme emerges, feel free to write them down as well, but make sure you come up with at least one.

When I did this exercise about a month ago, I was amazed at what these seemingly completely random exercises revealed to me. I was able to clearly see an area where I had no idea I was struggling, and that it had been holding me back from moving forward in my personal life. I identified some things I wanted to change in my business as a result of that, and I recognized an underlying theme that I had not been aware of that was draining my energy and emotional resources. Looking at it on a conscious level allowed me to take action and make dramatic changes - it got me "unstuck".

If you've taken the time to go through this process, I'm confident you will already have some ideas that are going to propel you forward. (By the way, if you really enjoyed this exercise or you've got a penchant for writing, Ayres' book is one of the best I've ever read on inspiring creativity - do yourself a favour and add it to your library). Use this writing exercise as a way to solve some unidentified problems the next time you're feeling frustrated or stuck in life or your business.

News from the General Manager – Judy Childs

Newsask hosts Regional EDO/Economic Development Committee meetings on a quarterly basis. Our goal is to bring together the region's economic stakeholders to discuss and address regional opportunities. For example:

In 2014, our group successfully initiated a joint tourism marketing campaign in partnership with Tourism Saskatchewan. We branded the campaign "A Thousand Miles of Snow". We combined our funding resources in a concerted effort to promote the recreational opportunities that the snow in northeast Saskatchewan offers all Saskatchewan residents. Our group developed a full page ad in the Destination Saskatchewan magazine, radio ads in the Regina area and we developed a Facebook page.

More recently, we invited the Minister responsible for the Economy, Bill Boyd to our Regional EDO meeting scheduled on June 12, 2014. In addition, we invited our federal MP's and/or provincial MLA's to outline the Ministry's plans for economic development in northeastern Saskatchewan.

We believe our group will benefit by understanding the Ministry's plans for our region. The group plans to leverage this information and continue our own regional dialogue. One of our goals is to align our priorities with those of the government on a community basis and/or broader regional basis. As a result, we as a group will be well equipped to provide leadership in the Region and ensure the citizens are aware of the federal government's and the Saskatchewan Ministry's economic plans for northeast Saskatchewan.



Cartoon

Published in cooperation with [Blue Beetle Books](#)



“What if, and I know this sounds kooky, we communicated with the employees.”

Challenge 4 Communities 2014

4 Weeks 4 Challenges 4 Winners 4 Prizes

Community Futures Newsask is hosting our fifth annual “Challenge 4 Communities”

All community groups (service groups, neighbor groups, youth groups, etc.) are invited to submit community projects that compete for prize money. The public will decide the winners with weekly voting on the internet over a four week format beginning October 31, 2014. Rules and an application form are available on our website at www.newsaskcfdc.ca (click on Challenge 4 Communities)

Get involved with your community today, submit a project, and compete for prize money!



PO Box 357 903-99th Avenue West Tisdale, Saskatchewan S0E 1T0
Phone: 306-873-4449 Fax: 306-873-4645 admin@newsaskcfdc.ca www.newsaskcfdc.ca

Supported by Western Economic Diversification Canada



Western Economic
Diversification Canada

Diversification de l'économie
de l'Ouest Canada



Published in cooperation with [Blue Beetle Books](#)