

THE TIME MANAGEMENT POCKETBOOK

Mike Clayton

Drawings by Phil Hailstone

“A handy pocketbook guide packed with hints, tips and techniques that will help anyone who has ever struggled with ‘getting it all done’. A pick ‘n’ mix of tools and ideas presented in Mike's engaging, easy-read style, this is one to have ready to hand in your desk, kitchen or workshop drawer.”

Graeme Rees, Director, Trend Control Systems Ltd

“In business and life, time is precious – this wonderful book will make sure you make the most of it.”

Paul Griffiths, Head of Operations, Mary Rose Trust

CONTENTS



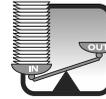
TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR TIME 5

The basic process for using your time well, a simple & flexible plan, when to plan, what is your purpose?, what do you need to do to achieve your goals?, use your to do list properly, projects you don't have time for, how to allocate your tasks, understand your personal energy cycle, when to have meetings



BOOST YOUR PRODUCTIVITY 29

The power of the right routines, productive working routines, organisation & systems, the 5S approach to organisation, planning, preparation & follow-up, perfect preparation prevents poor performance, postparation, deadlines, milestones & self-motivation



OVERCOME THE CHALLENGE OF TOO MUCH 47

Why is time management hard?, prioritising your work, which idea next?, the failure of multi-tasking, overload & overwhelm, how to delegate, negotiating more time, how to say NO, getting behind, handling your backlog – 4Rs, always on, sometimes off, social media & email, hanging on the telephone, distractions, preventing interruptions, beat procrastination



EVERYONE HAS A SYSTEM 81

Learn from the best, eating frogs, Italian tomatoes, getting things done, setting your focus, urgent & important, a chain of success, Kanban, software



STRATEGIC TIME MANAGEMENT 99

Time is more valuable than any resource, executive busyness, initiative overload, investment in resources, leadership leverage, strategic responsibilities, time budget, organisational time, the gift of time, the nature of time



TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR TIME

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR TIME

YOU CANNOT MANAGE TIME...

BUT YOU CAN CONTROL HOW YOU USE IT



The ticking of a clock.
The passing of the days.
The rhythm of weeks.
The cycles of the moon.
...and another year is gone.

What makes you think you can manage any of that? You cannot.

Yet many of us feel we need to pack more and more into each day. We need to get more done, check more messages, engage with more people on social media, give more time to our families, and make more of our lives.

Productivity is our mantra, and getting stuff done is our goal. And to do it, we need to manage our time. But we cannot.

All we can do is learn how to use the time that we have, as well as we can.

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR TIME

USE YOUR TIME AS WELL AS YOU CAN



This book is about how to use your time as well as you can. It's in five sections.

Section 1 will show you how to plan your time, to balance the advantages of feeling in control against the necessity of remaining flexible and able to adapt to changes.

Section 2 deals with ways of working that will make you more productive. View each idea as a tweak that will help you get more out of each day.

Section 3 tackles one of the biggest problems you face: the challenge of too much. Whether you have too much to do, too many messages and social media feeds, too many distractions, or a backlog of all of it, we have strategies to help you.

Section 4 will save you time. So you don't have to read a load of other books, we've summarised eight of the most popular time management systems out there, for you.

Section 5 introduces you to the idea of time as a strategic asset in your organisation. Without it, you'll achieve nothing, so what's the organisational perspective on time?

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR TIME

THE BASIC PROCESS FOR USING YOUR TIME WELL



Planning your day, your week, or your month is a good thing.
But an hour into the morning, when the phone rings...

There goes your plan.

So you need two things:

1. A plan that is simple and adaptable.
2. An approach to reviewing your plan when you need to.



TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR TIME

A SIMPLE & FLEXIBLE PLAN



There are four components to a simple, flexible plan for how to use your time.



Goals

First – you need to know what you want to achieve: your goals.



Tasks

Second – your plan must list what you need to do to achieve your goals: your tasks.



Durations

Third – estimate how long each task will take: your durations.



Allocations

Fourth – decide what time slot to fit each task into: your allocations.

Goals – Tasks – Durations – Allocations... GTDA

You can remember this acronym as telling you how to **Get Things Done Adaptably**.

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR TIME

KEEP IT ADAPTABLE: REVIEW YOUR PLAN WHEN YOU NEED TO



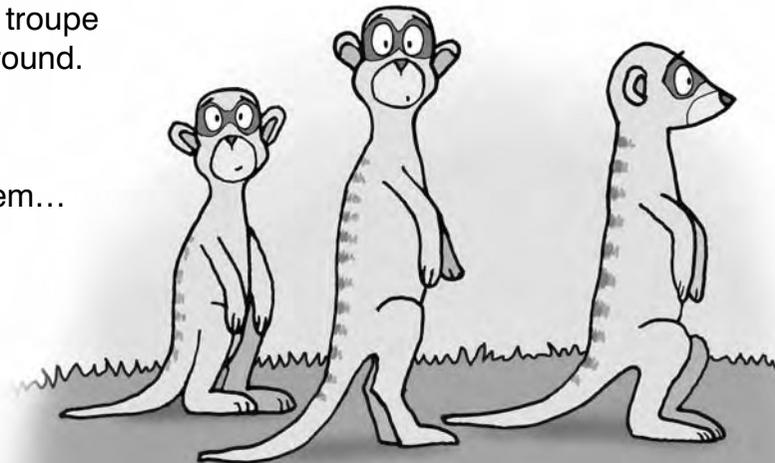
Modern working life is full of interruptions. The phone rings, an email pings, or a colleague turns up at your desk. Your plan is out of date already.

So you need a process called '*meerkating*'.

Meerkats ferret around looking for food on the floor. But every now and then, the whole troupe will stand up on its hind legs and look around. They are scanning all the way out to the horizon, looking for anything.

And if they see anything that disturbs them... they change their plan.

You must be like a meerkat. Regularly survey everything that's going on. And, if you need to; change your plan.



TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR TIME

WHEN TO PLAN



If you are new to regularly planning your time, start with creating a daily plan. The best time to do it is to make it the last thing you do at the end of each day. That way, when you start the next day, you already know what you are doing, and you can dive straight in.

Decide what goals you want to achieve tomorrow. Then list the tasks you need to do to achieve those goals. Estimate a duration for each task. And then allocate each task into your day. Leave spaces to catch up, or deal with things that emerge during the day.

As you get more practised, the best approach is often to plan a week ahead, before your new week starts. Use your diary or a one-page week planner, to put your tasks into your week. Leave enough gaps for the unexpected but inevitable things that will take over your diary.

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR TIME



UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE



Your **goals** are the things you want to achieve. They are the changes you want to make. So they should be the driving force of your plan.

Your goals matter... or they should. Selecting the right goals for tomorrow, or next week, is the start of prioritising how to use your time.

The way to find your goals is to ask yourself:

What do I want to be different, this time tomorrow, or this time next week?

A good way to think about your planning goals is to think of them as worthwhile changes you want to bring about.



TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR TIME



WHAT IS YOUR PURPOSE?

Good goals need to fit into a bigger picture.

Your work goals need to be consistent with the purpose of your job. To set good goals, you need to know:

- What is your job description and what does your contract say?
- Whom do you serve and what value can you bring?
- What are your organisation's strategies, objectives, and priorities?
- What do your bosses and managers expect of you?

The same thing is true for other areas of your life, whether it is personal activities, your interests, family or social activities, or stuff you do in your community.

Know what matters to you and the people that you care about. Then set goals that will make worthwhile changes you want to create.

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR TIME



DON'T BE GREEDY



Too many people set themselves up to fail... day after day. They never achieve all their daily targets, and they end each day with a list of things they wanted to achieve, but haven't. And one reason for this series of failures stands out: they set too many goals for the day, the week, or the month.

Let's put aside the problem that too many goals means too little focus. Though important, **this is not the issue.**

When you plan your day, do you look at the day and think: *'Hmm... 8 hours. I'll plan 8 hours' worth of tasks.'*? That's tempting. But how many days do you get to use the full eight hours on the tasks you planned? Instead, think: *'Hmm... 8 hours. But I have 2 hours of meetings and I'm bound to spend 2 more dealing with interruptions and unexpected problems. I'll plan 4 hours' worth of tasks.'*

For you it may not be two hours of interruptions. It may be three, or four, or even six. Start your plan with only the amount of ambition that matches a **realistic** assessment of how much time you'll have. Don't be greedy, or you'll set yourself up to fail.

About the Author

Dr Mike Clayton

Mike is a freelance speaker, advisor and trainer. He has worked with organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors, helping managers to improve their communication, leadership and management skills. He specialises in project and change management, personal effectiveness and in communicating to influence. Time Management is his third Management Pocketbook.



Mike has spent his whole professional life learning how to be productive and effective. As a consultant, his time is literally worth money, and as an entrepreneur he is constantly trying to do more with the time he has available. Mike's approach to time management is drawn from what he has learned as a project manager and his study of Psychology. Mike has been a senior manager at Deloitte, a director of Kent Trainers and is now founder of OnlinePMCourses.com

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