

ABOUT PRIORITIZING

DEFINITION

The word “Prioritization” means to put tasks in the best order so as to facilitate and better ensure complete and timely task accomplishment in advance of actual need.

WHY YOU MUST PRIORITIZE THINGS

Learning to Prioritize is one of the Most Important things you can ever learn because if you have “all the capability and all the horsepower” necessary to accomplish something and then, instead of expending your available time, energy and most importantly, your opportunity to accomplish something timely on other projects, you don’t perform those deeds that need to be done at the right time

then you ALWAYS WASTE PERFECTLY GOOD OPPORTUNITIES ... and some of those opportunities may be “One Time” open windows in opportunity/time that may be open to you only for a short time and which then may close and go “away” forever ... and you may never get another opportunity again.

For even the MOST COMPETENT person CAN’T “GET IT ALL DONE” unless he prioritizes.

Learning to prioritize things is the ONLY way to habitually get “all” of the really important stuff done.

HERE'S HOW TO DO IT

FIRST, CLASSIFY THE TASKS TO BE PRIORITIZED

Examine the entire scope of tasks to be accomplished and categorize them into these Classes:

1. This is a 'Once in a Lifetime' Opportunity task ... If I don't complete this task now, I'll never get a chance to get this done, again.
2. This is "such a small task" in its need for my attention, that I might be able to "squeeze-it-into-the-cracks" while I am doing other stuff, if a little time arises unexpectedly ... use that time to be productive and and "get-it-out-of-the-way" so that it doesn't reach out and bite me, later.
3. This is a Very, Very Important task.
4. This is a Not Very Important task NOW, but completing it shortly, means that I will have accomplished something very important that will be "in preparation" for something else, which I will need when something happens later.
5. This is a task that is either Lesser in Importance or not "do-able" because you are missing something that you need which might not be available until later.

Then, within each class, arrange the tasks into the most important "order" and assess how much time, effort and resources you have available to devote to accomplishing them ... putting those items that are immediately accomplishable at the top of each list ... and adding some smaller tasks in case you suddenly get some unexpected time or opportunity to do them.

NEXT, ARRANGE THEM IN AN APPROPRIATE SEQUENCE ... (there can be more than "one kind" of sequence)

"TIME ORDER" SEQUENCE

Prioritize so that you first complete those tasks which must be accomplished first, recognizing that some things depend on other things on your list being completed (or sometimes merely "begun" first, even if not completed).

GEOGRAPHICAL SEQUENCE

Sometimes ... For Example, when you have many errands to run, it is a good idea to “route” (prioritize) yourself so that you are not always doubling back across your travel path ... so you may end up putting all your errands in a sequence that first follows your “going away” path and then follows your “return path”.

WHEN TO PRIORITIZE

Re-Prioritize each day, each week, each month, each year ... and try to make yourself perform this critical sequencing only when you are at your daily “Mental Sharpest” ability.

Make a morning “To-Do” List and don’t forget to add a few extra “non critical” items to the list to give you things to do usefully, in case you complete your list early ... “Early List Completion” happens frequently.

At the end of the day, it is important to review mentally what you accomplished that day and reinforce your accomplishment goals

this not only focuses you better on “How much you did Right” ... but your errors for the day ... and what need further to be done.

SPECIAL NOTES:

1. **It is Vitally Important for YOU to be impressed with “How Much [I] Got Done”** each day for this trains you to “Accomplish Things in Order” and further trains you to Prioritize.

**Do not Fail to Reinforce yourself daily ...
your Mental Attitude
Genuinely Needs the Reinforcement.**

2. But after you have reinforced your Attitude, it is THEN important for those items to be “scratched off” the list and “disappear” from that list **SO THAT YOU CAN ONLY “SEE” WHAT REMAINS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED and focus on that, next.**

Make a Weekly List and re-view it mid-week, perhaps on Wednesday mornings, for example.

Make a Monthly List and review it every 10 days or every week to examine it for progress towards your goal.

Make a Yearly List

Re-arrange the lists, frequently.

and enter the “annual reminder” for your annual re-evaluations of the unfinished tasks on your calendar.

CONSTANT RE-EXAMINATION

You must constantly re-prioritize and re-evaluate “where you are” in the sequence in order to compare your actual accomplishments to your plan so you can adjust for finishing early or late or some interruption caused by the “normal” exacerbation of some unanticipated problem jumping up and really “use the time, well”.

It is also a good idea for you to carry a printout of your calendar when you expect to have to make prioritizations in the field.

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