

IN THIS ISSUE, WE WILL DISCUSS:

- TOP 10 TIME MANAGEMENT RESOLUTIONS - HOW TO MAKE THEM LAST
- HOW TO USE POST-IT NOTES FOR MAXIMUM STICKY POWER
- TURNING SOMETHING OLD INTO SOMETHING NEW



TOP 10 TIME MANAGEMENT RESOLUTIONS - HOW TO MAKE THEM LAST

Time management is one of the hardest things to deal with in this day and age. Now, more than ever, the pace of our lives is busier than it has ever been with the masses of opportunities presented to us. With all these prospects, it is difficult to decide what to say no to. Follow these 10 steps as time management New Years resolutions for a less harried New Year.

1. Slow down – Slowing down will help you ease up on making mistakes. When we have thousands of tasks to do each day, we tend to panic and move more quickly, making more mistakes. Slowing down is a great way to avoid this. Going hand in hand with slowing down is remembering to breathe. If you've never take yoga or tried circle breathing, take 10 minutes in the new year to introduce yourself to this wonderful type of breathing, its an excellent way to take a time out during a stressful day. <http://tinyurl.com/st7fp>

2. Don't forget to eat – Many of us get so busy during the day that we forget to eat, and certainly forget to eat healthily. For most people this makes them light headed and cranky. More importantly, it makes one less focused and sleepy. These side effects make us slow in our actions, which leads to taking more time to complete at task. The irony is, that if we had taken that half-hour break to eat well and rejuvenate, we would be more refreshed and ready to take on new tasks, which would take less energy and time then when we are fatigued.

3. Don't perfect your tasks – More often than not, the hardest time management issue people confront is the amount of time spent perfecting projects. There is nothing wrong with wanting something to look well thought out, but there is a difference between working hard and perfecting it. Perfecting is a never-ending process where it is never good enough and taking up hours of time on a project, when it should have taken a fraction of the time. Challenge yourself to be satisfied with your project when it is well done, but not perfect; the rewards will be a thousand-fold in time and energy saved.

4. Avoid procrastination – We all love to procrastinate when tasks are unpleasant. Sometimes we even do it subconsciously. When we do procrastinate, we end up wasting time doing less important things, such as checking email repeatedly, or going to the kitchen and eating when we are not hungry. Instead, we could use that time to do other important things.

There is always a reason behind procrastination:

- **Taking on too much** – Often we find ourselves taking on tasks that are not our responsibility out of a sense of guilt. This leads into the cycle of procrastination as our resentment towards to the new project keeps us from working on it, causing even more delays in finishing.
- **Feeling Overwhelmed** - When you start a major project, you are overwhelmed by it and you don't know where to begin.

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- **Feeling Unfocused** - You have difficulty staying focused on tasks for a long period of time, especially if you don't find them interesting. You take frequent breaks, change projects, or distract yourself with other things to do when you get bored.

- **Perfectionism** - you keep working on projects until they're absolutely perfect. Refer back to #3.

Try figuring out the source of your avoidance to steer clear of this, or you will continue to do so and waste more time.

5. Prioritize Prioritizing –

Prioritizing can be very difficult for many people, as their main concerns can change on a daily basis. It sometimes can be tricky to determine what is the most important task of the day and what has to be done first, second, etc. In addition, people with lesser time management skills will have a hard time figuring out how to set deadlines for a project due later in the month,

To begin prioritizing, ask yourself:

- What can wait: a project that isn't due until the following month, gardening, or other household projects?
- What can't: an email, a phone call, or forgetting something on your way out that you **need** to take with you to an appointment, or on a trip out of town?

6. Stop and Get Back on Track –

Pause for a second to see what you are doing. Have you wandered off into the garden, when you intended to be inside sorting papers in the office? Or, did you get side tracked on your way back to your desk by a co-worker and start up a conversation that ended up taking 20 minutes? Sometimes, we do this without realizing it. Other times we get distracted by something more pleasant than the task at hand. That is why it is good to stop and check in. Try to do it often.

7. Acknowledge What Works –

Take note of what is working and what is not. Are you ignoring when your timers go off? What would work better? Figure out what kind of learner you really are: auditory? Visual? Tactile? If the timer is being ignored it is time to figure out a new system for managing your time. Maybe you are not an auditory person, may a visual flashing alarm on your computer screen would work better, along with the alarm going off.

8. Make a list and stick to it- When you make your to do list daily, stick to it –

(Unless something more key comes up – such as an emergency, or your boss needs something done ASAP). Don't stray from it. I have seen this happen many times, and the results are disastrous. Nothing gets accomplished, only half-finished projects. By sticking to the list, you will get things done, and have a sense of accomplishment, when you can cross items off the list. Nothing beats that.

9. Be realistic –

Recognize how many tasks you are squeezing into your schedule each day. Many of us squash far too many things into our schedule, which results in long days at work, and frustrations for loved ones and ourselves. Our personal life suffers, as does our work. Remember that you can only do so much in a day.

10. Evaluate –

Estimate how much time each task takes you and see how much time you are really spending on it. I bet you will be surprised with how much time you are actually spending on each task/project. For example, before you sit down to make a list of phone calls; guesstimate how long the phone calls will take. Keep an eye on the clock to see how long you actually spent. Doing so will allow you to start planning your day more accurately.

Now Prioritize –

Rank the things you are spending time on from 1-10, 1 being the least important, and 10 being the most important. See how many things in your day you are spending time on that are not important to you. That way you can cut out the things that are inconsequential, and spend your time on things that are of value to you.

Use this New Year to manage and **enjoy** the time you have so that your year is less stressful and more joyful.

HOW TO USE POST-IT NOTES FOR MAXIMUM STICKY POWER

As a professional organizer, one of my biggest exasperations is with the ever-popular Post-it notes! I find them stuck all over the place while organizing a client, but NEVER where they should be. They are stuck to random pieces of paper, behind books on bookshelves, under desks and office furniture and even to the bottom of my shoes when I come home in the evening!

“Post-it” is a brand of the 3M Company. “Post-its”, or sticky notes, were invented when one of their engineers was trying to develop a super-strong glue. He failed miserably, but decided to try using the not-very-strong-at-all glue to hold up paper. The secretaries in his office took to it immediately, and a phenomenon was born.

Unfortunately, I have seen these little tools do more harm than good. Most of my clients have had major sticky note catastrophes. To avoid having you suffer the same fate, I am going to let you in on the secret of the right way to use Post-it notes.

First, the Golden Rule of Sticky Notes: This will seem obvious if you remember how Post-it notes were invented, so bear with me.

If the Post-it isn't stuck between two pieces of paper, it will fall off!

So putting a sticky note in a book to keep your place is great. Putting a sticky note on your monitor is like throwing it in the trash!

HERE ARE SOME GOOD USES FOR POST-IT NOTES:

- **As a book mark**

When you find a good magazine article, a quote you'd like to remember, a citation for your research, or a favorite recipe, put a sticky note on the page. If you're going to have more than one note in the book, write a word or two on the note to remind yourself of what it is.

- **Signatures on an important document**

When you're giving papers to another person to be signed, put a note on them that sticks out past the edge of the paper to remind them where to sign. Write “signature”, “initials”, or “sign and date” as appropriate.

HERE ARE SOME BAD USES FOR POST-IT NOTES:

- **Quick reminders to yourself**

When you need to take down a phone message, keep a pad of paper for messages near you, even when you are on the road. This way you won't lose the phone number. If you need to make a list of things to do, guests to invite to a party, or shopping lists, put them directly into your palm pilot or daily planner.

- **Important Ideas**

If you are a writer and have a stream of ideas you want to write down, keep them in a journal. Many a writer has been distraught when the plot to their next story has vanished into thin air by a rebellious Post-it.

So, please, use Post-it notes if you must, but use them wisely!



TURNING SOMETHING OLD INTO SOMETHING NEW

Sometimes, we have things that are old that we just don't want to throw away because we know they can be of some use, or they have some meaning to us*. It can also be a great way to save a little cash during the holiday season. Below are a few examples of how to use something old and make a new use out of it.

*Remember that it is ok to hang onto some things that are meaningful.

Old photos – Most of us have tons of old photos of family and friends, some of which admittedly are more meaningful than others. A good starting tip is to keep the photos when you know who the people are and get rid of the ones you don't (you know the ones). One way to save space with photos is to take the photos that are the most significant and put them into a collage. Perhaps you have your grandfather's Medal of Honor, or another piece of memorabilia, this could go into the collage as well. For a beautiful, professional effect take the final product to a small business that can frame it for you. Hang your framed collage some place special for all to enjoy.

Old frames – Perhaps you have a painting or a large photograph where you really don't care for the subject, but you love the frame. Why not take that frame and make it into a corkboard, or a white board. For directions on how to do this go to <http://tinyurl.com/yghbn4>



Milk crates – Face it, we all have a few of these hanging around from our college days. Instead of tossing them out, they can be great for storage in your car to hold groceries, or for a roadside emergency kit. They are also a great to organize large items in your

garage, such as extra paint rollers, paint pans, and tarps or drop cloths. Smaller items, such as nails and screws, can be stored in cans with lids inside the milk crate.

Shoe boxes – these are a great storage solution, just be sure you label them, so that you don't forget what is inside. I would also suggest covering them with some colored

paper, so that you don't see the name brand of the shoes and it will create a uniform look in your space. If you are a creative person that thrives on color, use this to your advantage, by color-coding the boxes. For example, red is for photos, while yellow is for craft supplies. Be sure not to use them for things that you regularly use like a stapler, as you are less likely to put them away, or remember where they are, when there is a lid on things.

Taking something old and making it new is a great way to de-clutter a space that you were taking your time making spick and span. Now not only have you organized a space, but also you have saved money by re-using some useful tools that you didn't know you even had.

