

Welcome to the distance learning programme from Paul Bangs. I hope that you get as much out of the material as others who have attended one of my training courses or motivational talks. If you would like to know more about the programmes or would like to discuss your training or mentoring needs, please email or phone with your enquiry.

## Time management

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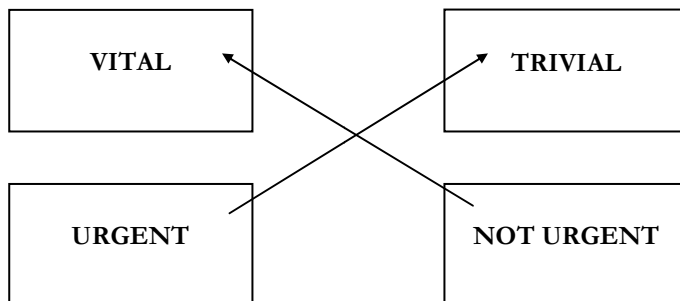
If you live to age 72, you will have spent 21 years sleeping, 14 years working, 9 years watching TV, 7 years at bathroom basics, 6 years eating, 6 years travelling, 5 years waiting in line, 4 years learning, 3 years in meetings, 2 years returning calls, 1 year looking for lost items, 6 months at traffic lights and only 4 minutes a day with your children.

Imagine someone put into your bank account £1,440 every day, but with the stipulation that you have to use it all up every day, otherwise what is left over will be cancelled. I would imagine that you would become very inventive and careful to ensure that you use up every last pound.

Of course it is highly unlikely that anyone is going to make such a gesture, but every one of us has 1,440 minutes given to us each day, and every minute is worth a great deal more to us than any amount of money. Every minute lost can never be replaced - it is gone, vanished for eternity.

### What are your priorities?

Imagine you came into your office or place of work today and only had two tasks on your desk to deal with. One was marked vital and the other trivial; which one would you deal with first? Most people would agree the vital. Next day you come into your office and again there are only two tasks for you to deal with. This time one is marked urgent and the other non urgent; which one will you deal with first? Again, most people would say the urgent task.



But wait a minute, suppose the urgent task is trivial whilst the non urgent task is vital? All too often we are bombarded with urgent trivia; urgent to someone else but trivia because it's not what we are supposed to be doing; it's not taking us towards our goals and vision.

We spend a great deal of time dealing with the urgent made urgent by somebody else, but in reality trivia. The key to good time management is deal with the vital first.

We cannot “manage time,” but we can manage ourselves with the time we have available. We need to understand the relationship between our goals, what we are paid to do and the time we have available to accomplish the tasks that are our responsibility

The following shows us how to manage our time

<b>1. Important &amp; urgent</b>	These tasks must be done today, as they would add value to your business or work you are doing and won't wait. Put time in your diary now
<b>2. Important, not urgent</b>	Plan when to do these tasks, but don't get started yet. Planning the time is both important and urgent, be sure to do it now
<b>3. Not important, but urgent</b>	Do these tasks after 1 & planning 2. Take as little time as possible to get them off the desk. Delegate if you can
<b>4. Not important, not urgent</b>	Check again whether work is really taking you towards your/Company goals. Could you not do it at all?

Successful business people are very good in five vital areas:

- 1. Clear-cut goals on what they want to achieve**
- 2. Good people skills**
- 3. Know how to use their time properly**
- 4. Are passionate about their business**
- 5. Manage the finances well**

Managing time is a vital skill and one that needs to take a priority in our life

## **Keys to good time management**

Imagine you have a blank weekly planner in front of you, a dairy with the entire week on one page. You now need to start to enter the tasks you need to perform during the next week. What do you think is the first task you should book into the dairy? Many people would say appointments, meetings already arranged, reports that need to be written. The more enlightened amongst you might say, “Time with my family”

All the above are important but there is one task that needs to be planned before anything else and that is when are you next going to plan. Each week, you should make an appointment with yourself to sit down quietly, review the week that has just gone, look at the new week ahead and ask yourself the question, what do I need to do? If you don't book planning or thinking time then you go from one week to the next without planning and then you wonder where the week has gone.

Your time with your family is vital. No one in their last days states “I wish I had spent one more hour at the office or I wish I had earned one more pound/dollar/euro” it’s inevitably “I wish I had spent more time with my family, my children, friends or learning new things, seeing more places.”

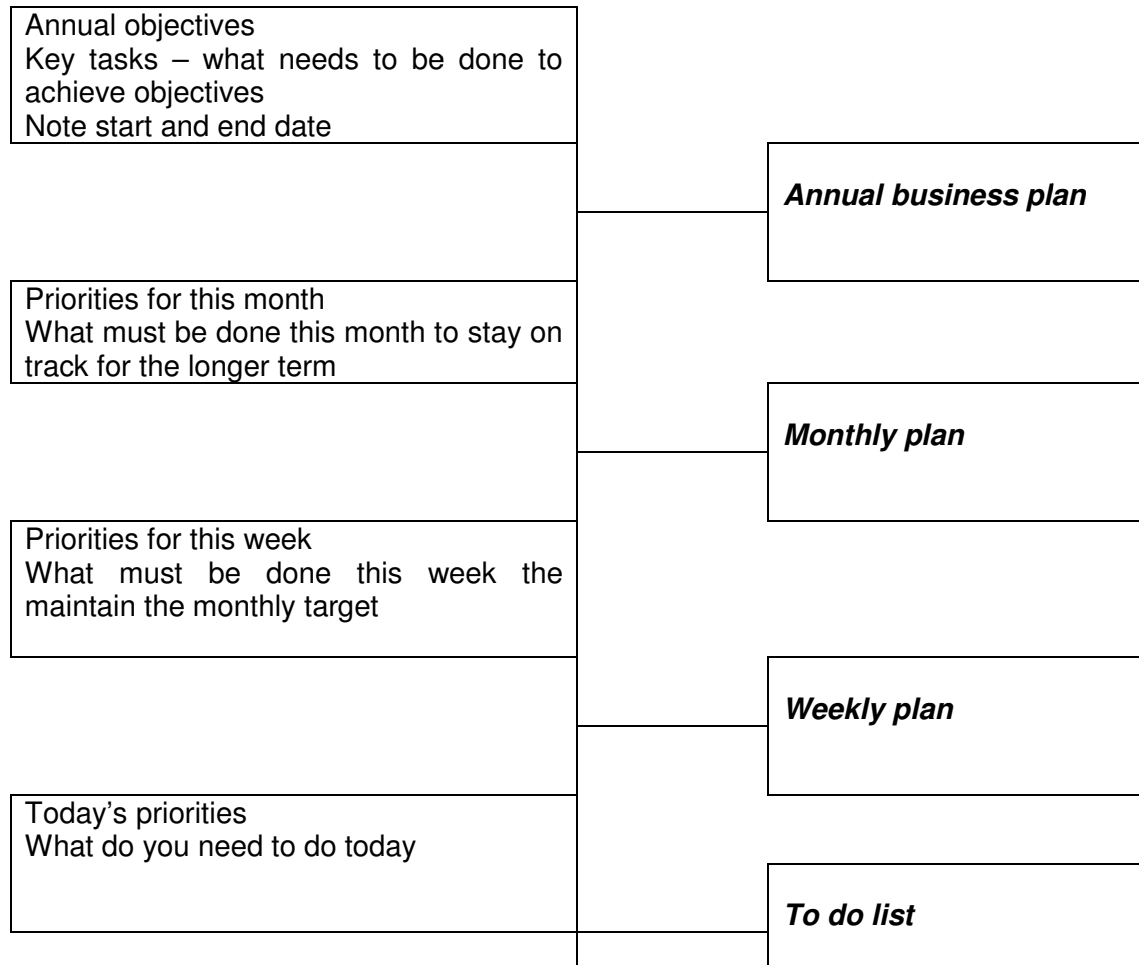
Work is the means to fund the times with family and friends but we get so wrapped up in attempting to work harder, earn more that we forget why we are doing it; we end up wealthier but those we care most about aren’t there any longer.

	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
	Planning	Planning	Planning	Planning	Planning		
	WORKING TIME						
1 p.m.						FAMILY TIME	CHURCH
	WORKING TIME						
6 p.m.					PLANNING TIME	FAMILY TIME	FAMILY TIME
	WORKING TIME	STUDY TIME	FAMILY TIME	SPORT	LEISURE	FAMILY TIME	FAMILY TIME

So how do we plan?

1. Have balanced goals between work, family and leisure; then allocate time accordingly.
2. Create space to deal with the vital first, then the important, then the rest. Plan when you are next going to plan otherwise you won't plan at all.
3. Each day review what you have achieved and then plan what you want to achieve. Think on paper – make lists of everything that must be done.
4. Prioritise what is important to you; how much of your time is spent doing those things that are important to you or spent with people who are important to you?

## GOALS & TIME



Take time out now and do the following exercise.

Look at the chart above and write down your goals for the next 12 months, then break the goals down into monthly and then weekly tasks. Your goals are not only work/business related; they should also include your family and personal goals. Family comes before work and personal growth is required to help you achieve your business goals.

Having done that, create a 7 day planner starting from when you would normally get up until you would normally go to bed. The planner will be blank, now book an appointment with yourself at a time which is relevant, to plan the following week. Give yourself sufficient time to review the past week and plan the following week. Having done that, plan time with your family, leisure, time to read, do a course, and learn something new.

Once you have planned your planning time and family and personal time, you will find that you still have a great deal of time to plan your work. For some of us, our hours are fixed but for most self employed people and business owners, they have a great deal of freedom as to when they work and how long. That is why business owners often end up working very long hours, they are

free to go and earn another buck, “I’m doing it for my wife and family” but his wife and family never see him.

The work/life balance is vital, it needs to be planned but it takes discipline and desire. You have got to want to plan your time just as you have got to want to set yourself goals.

Time is slipping away; every minute lost can never be regained. Plan your time and plan your future; you will achieve so much more by taking time out to plan.

Some years ago I heard a story of a young lawyer in America who in his early 30’s was being given the opportunity to become a senior partner in a major practice. He had worked extraordinary long hours, often over 80 per week to gain the recognition to be considered good enough to become a partner.

As part of his preparation, he was sent on a course and part of the programme was time management. During the session the trainer explained about the importance of work/life balance and how vital it is to book time with your family, they come before work. The young lawyer realised on that course that he had robbed his wife and two young children and resolved to put it right immediately even if it meant putting off promotion for another year or two. That night as he was driving home he was involved in an accident and was killed.

He never had time to put things right with his family. His children weren’t interested in a bigger pay cheque, better house, the latest car; they didn’t need those things, they wanted their daddy and he was gone. Not only that, all of their lives they had wanted him but he was always too busy “providing” for them. We only get one life, it’s not a rehearsal and we can never buy back the time we have lost so we need to make better use of it.

## **Only I can do this**

There are certain things that only you can do that no else can do. If you are neglecting key activities to do things that others can do, then you are wasting your prime resource – You.

## **Write down the answers to the following questions now**

a) What are the things I do at work that other could do?

b) Why do I do them?

c) What do I do at work that no one else can do?

d) How do the answers to question a) affect my ability to do the things in question c)

A key question that you need to ask is “What am I paid to do” If my worth to my business is £20 per hour, am I doing tasks that I could pay someone else £6 per hour to do? It would be better for me to pay someone else to do those tasks and they would probably do them better than me as they are experienced in those areas.

## ***There are two types of activities in work/business***

- Those that add to the business/service we are in
- Those that use up time and other resources but add nothing to the business/service

## **So how do we plan?**

- ❖ Plan when you are next going to plan. Remember, if we don't book time with ourselves to plan we end up not planning
- ❖ Work at a faster pace. I have noticed that successful people get a lot done and normally in less time. You won't find them standing round by the coffee machine telling everybody how busy they are, the truth is, they are busy getting on with it.
- ❖ Don't mix with negative people – they will always tell you why it can't be done. Successful people enjoy mixing with other positive people and they are always looking to learn from them.
- ❖ Keep your eyes firmly on your goals at all times. Goal setting and time management go hand in hand together; you can't have one without the other. Our business/life plan needs to be linked to our time plan.
- ❖ Break bad habits and create good habits. It takes 21 days to create a new habit and 28 days to break an old habit. Which habits would you like to create and which would you like to break. I heard Kelly Homes, the great double gold medal Olympian comment today that to be a winner, you need preparation, dedication and perspiration. It takes effort to be a winner and it takes effort to break bad habits and create good ones.
- ❖ Don't procrastinate, but don't be too hasty in making decisions. It is good to take time to make decisions and not rush the process but once it is made, get on with it. Sometimes you have to make a "gut reaction" decision as the challenge you are facing needs to be dealt with quickly. If this is the case, seek advice from others first, it is good to take good council.
- ❖ Take time out to read, study, learn. There is a great deal of good common business sense available if we are willing to seek it out. Plan time to grow, learn new things.
- ❖ Keep your desk clear. Imagine that you go into your office today and your desk is piled high with reports, files and papers. You probably feel swamped by it all. Follow the simple ABCDE method below.

You start with a list of everything you have to do for the coming day. Think on paper. You then place an A, B, C, D or E before each item on your list before you begin the first task.

An "A" item is defined as something that is vital. This is something that you must do and only you can do it.

If you have more than one “A” task, you prioritize these tasks by writing A-1, A-2, A-3, and so on in front of each item. Your A-1 task is the most important.

A “B” item is defined as being important but not vital. This means that someone may be unhappy or inconvenienced if you don’t do it, but it is nowhere as important as an “A” task. The rule is that you should never do a “B” task when there is an “A” task left undone.

A “C” task is defined as something that would be nice to do, but for which there are no consequences at all, whether you do it or not. It may be a personal task or something that is not important now but might be later. The documents appertaining to these task should be locked away in a cupboard and you then make a note to look at them again in a couple of weeks and then decide if they have become a “B” item or can be delegated or eliminated.

A “D” item is one that could be delegated to someone else, don’t procrastinate; get rid of it quickly.

“E” stands for eliminate, file in the round filing basket under your desk. “But I might need it some day” Six months later you are throwing it out so why not throw it out now

It is likely that **80% of the items** on your desk fall into “C” “D” or “E” categories, that being the case, you have now removed 80% of the paper on your desk

After you have applied the ABCDE method to your list, you will now be completely organized and ready to get more important things done faster.

The key to making this ABCDE Method work is for you to now discipline yourself to start immediately on your “A-1” task and then stay at it until it is complete. By following this simple but effective method, you will find that the pile on your desk reduces and eventually you will discover that your desk is made of wood and not paper

## **Exercise**

Go through the list above on “How do we plan” and test yourself against the suggestions made. Then look at all the papers and tasks you have to do, decide which is “A” and “B” tasks or files, file away the “C’s” and deal with the “D’s” and “E’s” then priorities the “A’s” and then the “B’s” and work on each file or task methodically.

Final hint, why do you open your Emails every time you hear that ping? Open your Emails at the start of the day, decide if any are vital or important, deal with those appropriately, then park your Emails and don’t look at them again until you have completed your key tasks

## **FOUR RULES OF TIME**

There are four rules of time. The first is that time is perishable. Because time is perishable, the only thing you can do with it is to spend it differently, to reallocate your time away from activities of low value and toward activities of higher value. But once it is gone, it is gone forever.

## **TIME IS INDISPENSABLE**

The second rule of time is that time is indispensable. All work requires time. According to the 10/90 Rule, the 10% of time that you take to plan your activities carefully in advance will save you 90% of the effort involved in achieving your goals later. The very act of thinking through and planning your work in advance will dramatically reduce the amount of time that it takes you to do the actual job.

## **THE CURRENCY OF THE**

The third rule of time is that time is irreplaceable. Nothing else will do, especially in relationships. Time is only currency that means anything in your relationships with the members of your family, your friends, colleagues, customers and co-workers. Truly effective people give a lot of thought to creating blocks of time that they can then spend, without interruption, with the important people in their lives.

## **SPELL THE WORD CORRECTLY**

There is a question: "How do children spell the word 'Love?'" And the answer is "T-I-M-E." It is the same with your spouse, as well. The important people in your life equate the amount of time that you spend with them, face to face, head to head, knee to knee, with the amount that you actually love them.

## **GROW YOUR RELATIONSHIPS**

The more time you spend with another person, especially a member of your family, the deeper grows your understanding and affection for that person. If you get too busy to spend time with your children, you eventually lose contact with them and they go off into their own personal world of school, peers and other activities.

## **THE KEY TO GOAL-ACHIEVEMENT**

The fourth rule is that time is essential for accomplishment. Every goal you want to achieve, everything you want to accomplish, requires time. In fact, one of the smartest things you ever do, when you set a goal, is to sit down and allocate the exact amount of time that you are going to have to invest to achieve that goal. The failure to do this almost always leaves the goal unaccomplished.

## **ACTION EXERCISES**

Here are two things you can do immediately to put these ideas into action:

First, decide today to redirect and reallocate your time away from low-value tasks and toward high-value activities.

Second, make a plan to spend more time face-to-face with the most important people in your life. The more you think about the use of your time, the better you will become.

***Above all, value your time, once spent you can't get it back and***

***Once you have planned your time – work your plan***

*One of the services I offer companies is a personalised "Strategic Planning" programme where I work with management and key people to create the right strategy and to help make it happen. Part of this service is helping both individuals and the company to set realistic goals. If you feel that you might benefit from this service, phone or email me and we can arrange an initial meeting to discuss your needs.*

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