

Advanced Time Management Tools

OUTLINE

1. MEETINGS
2. OBJECTIVES
3. PROJECTS
4. PROSPECTS
5. INTERACTION LOG
6. MEMORY
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8. AUTOMOBILE

INTRODUCTION

Jesus was a carpenter. We often picture Him as spending days in a workshop quietly making household furniture. In reality there was a lot of hard, physical labor involved. The wood wasn't delivered to his door by a truck. He had to chop it down Himself. And He didn't have a chainsaw to make his work quicker. He had to use a blunt, primitive axe. No sharp, whirling blades cut the logs into beams. It all had to be done by hand. The fact that tools were relatively crude meant that a good finish was an extremely skilled task. Basic tasks required basic tools, but there were also skilled tasks that required smaller, more intricate tools—tools that not every carpenter had or even knew how to use.

You have already learned to use the basic time management tools. You know about goals, priorities, schedules and calendars. Because you have learned to excel in using these tools that you will always need, you are ready to increase your skills. Today I would like to give you specialized time management tools. Because they are specialized you will not need them in every situation. Like the carpenters of Jesus' day, you will need to know what tools you have and which tools are needed for which job. As you become familiar with them, you will find these tools will help you achieve more, get higher quality results faster, and do things you couldn't do before.

1. MEETINGS

MEETINGS: Here is an outline for discussion items with a decision/action list. It is wise to use this form for each and every meeting—not only for large groups but also for private meetings with a team member or a church leader.

There are two ways to use this form, either as preparation for leading a meeting, or as a participant. The greatest use will be for preparing meetings, and that is what I will describe. Often meetings that are necessary end up becoming time-wasters, and this can be a big frustration for people with busy schedules. People like to take a moment to tell a funny story and are easily sidetracked to issues that don't relate to the purpose of the meeting. In fact, many times at a meeting two people will discuss something that could just as well be settled between the two of them later without wasting the time of the rest of the people present.

This Meeting tool /// 4 /// will streamline meetings, keeping them interesting for everyone and on target. The first step is to record the date the meeting will take place, when it will start, how long it will last, when it will end and where it will be held. Next you will write down the topic of the meeting. This will help keep you focused in your later planning and will also help others know how to prepare for the meeting when you tell them about it. Also write down the names of the people who will be attending. Is everyone there who needs to be? Does this person really need to attend? The person answering the phone will need to know whether you will accept any phone calls during the meeting, and who has the right to interrupt the meeting to talk with you.

Now we move to the main part of this form. In the left column you record all the things that need to be discussed or decided on during this meeting, and any notes relating to them. If it doesn't need to be discussed, it won't be written here. This will be of great help to you in keeping the discussion focused and in keeping it moving. The

next column will be filled in during the meeting. As soon as a decision has been reached, you write down what the decision was or what action needs to be taken and immediately assign it a priority (A, B, or C). Often the decision that is reached involves assigning a task to a specific individual. If that is the case, you can record who that individual is and when the task is due in the next column.

On the back of this form there is a place to take extra notes during the meeting. Once the meeting is over, there is a place to record the date and time of the next meeting and to summarize the things that need to be done as a result of the decisions arrived at during this meeting.

2. OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVES = various short-term or monthly things to accomplish—goals

Each month we have objectives that we would like to achieve. Most often these come from our Yearly Overview, but sometimes they may simply relate to the family or a household project that needs doing. Sometimes they will be the result of One Minute Goal Setting in the process of being a One Minute Minister (see lecture TB3). Whatever the case, if you want to get them done, you will find it helpful to write them down. Usually objectives like these are too complex or cover too much time to write them down on a simple “To Do” list. So let’s look at a better way of handling them.

As usual */// 5 ///*, we start by writing the date and month at the top of the form. Notice how this form is split into three identical segments. Each segment covers one objective. First you write down what your objective is. Next, you write down what area of interest it relates to. Does it have to do with your ministry, your job, your home life, etc. Certain of these areas will take precedence over others when you set your priorities. Then we see a place to assign this objective a number which, as we learned in the previous form, will allow us to refer to it quickly and conveniently at other places in our notes. As usual, we see a place to write down a due date and to assign this objective a priority. Where we write the priority level there is also a little box that we can use to check off this objective when it is completed. The next line down contains a place for us to record any noteworthy benefits or obstacles that we will want to be aware of each time we consider this objective.

Having filled in the preliminary information, we now arrive at the true value of this form. In the remaining space we can break the objective down into steps, each of which can be completed in the course of a regular day. Each step contains a number or one word description, a brief explanation of what is to be done, and a date by which it must be completed. By breaking the objective down into steps in this manner, we have come from having a vague idea about something that needs to be done by the end of the month to a detailed, focused, day-by-day strategy of how to achieve our objective.

3. PROJECTS

From time to time we face assignments that can’t be summed up in a few lines. They may involve several objectives, may require the involvement of several people, and may take place at various locations, to say nothing of the money or equipment they may call for. We will refer to these assignments as projects. One example of such a project would be an evangelistic outreach planned to take place in another village over the course of several days. There are many things that need to be taken care of in such a scenario.

/// 6 /// Start by writing down the dates for this project. When does it start, and when does it end? Next, write the project description. At first it might seem like a waste of time to write a project description. Not so! This is more than repeating the idea that everyone involved has running around in his head. This is where you set your standards. Writing down a description is stating your expectations: what results do you want to see from this project, what are the conditions that need to be met to satisfy you? How will you know whether or not you have been successful as you approach the end of the project? By looking back here you will see whether or not you have met the conditions of satisfaction that you set.

Now it is time to write down your plan of action. This can take any number of forms depending on the project at hand and your own personal style. In any case, you will find it helpful to write down the various steps or stages in sequential order and number them. You may even want to draw a diagram of some sort. As you write down the different parts of the project, be sure to write down who needs to know about each part. This will simplify the future execution of your plan.

Having outlined your project, you can now turn the form over. On the backside you will find several categories of information. This provides you with a convenient, easily accessible place to record information that relates to

your project. The first category provides a place to record the names and phone numbers of people involved in the project, or of people who must be contacted during the course of the project.

The second category contains information about the locations involved in a project. Perhaps part of your project will take place at a new location or in a part of town that you are not familiar with. Or perhaps there are simply many locations involved and you need a way to keep track of them.

The third category lets you make a list of resources you will need. This would include things such as literature or electronic equipment. When you have obtained the item listed, you can put a check mark behind it to indicate this.

The fourth category contains information about the various time elements involved. Many projects require “lead time,” that is time for various preparations to be made. Perhaps the evangelistic outreach is to be announced by posters two weeks in advance. People need to prepare lectures, sermons, songs etc. On the day of the event the building needs to be opened, inspected and prepared, or it may involve travel time. These are all things that a good organizer plans ahead, writes down, and has handy as a reference to share with others.

The final category is used to record anything having to do with project finances. Many projects require you to spend money and you need a handy way to keep track of that. For example, if you are going to do an outreach in another village, you will need to buy gas, perhaps some tracts, photocopy some songs, or purchase some food. All of these expenses can be recorded in this space so that you can quickly account for the money you spend when you need to do so. Another way of using this space would be to write down a list of expected expenses—a budget. That way, during the course of the project you can keep referring back to the budget to make sure your expenditures are on track. A final way to use this space is to keep track of money that is owed you. Perhaps you gave another brother some courses, but he didn’t have the money to pay you right then. You write down what you gave him and how much it costs, and before you finish the project you can review this section and make sure that all such financial issues have been straightened out.

Remember that the purpose of these categories is not that you fill in each of them. Rather, you should use those that will help you most in that particular project. Sometimes you will fill in everything, sometimes you will use two or three of the categories, and sometimes you may find that they don’t relate at all to your project. Don’t force yourself to serve them; ***let them serve you!***

4. PROSPECTS

Life is about relationships. During your day you might meet with an unbeliever who would like a New Testament, an elder who would like to start studying a course, or a pastor who would like more information about your ministry. Normally one or more of these people would slip through the cracks because you already have a full day with places to go and things to do. They are important, and you want to help them, but by the time your head hits the pillow in the evening they have evaporated from your thoughts.

The Prospects tool **/// 2 ///** is a way of turning these “distractions” into success stories. By writing down some simple information as you are talking with him, you can help change his life. There is a place to write his name and phone number. You will also want to help your memory by recording where you met, who introduced him to you, or who referred him to you. Otherwise you will read his name later and think, “Sasha? Sasha who? Which Sasha is this?” Of course, if he needs some information or material from you, you need to write this down. The place for this is in the middle of the bottom line.

Next you record follow-up information, starting with the date you met. Sometimes the result of your efforts will mean arranging to meet with this person. In that case you can write the date and time of the appointment on the bottom line.

Finally, we decide what our relationship will be with this person in the future. This is where you record the results of your effort. Either he was a once-off contact who does not need further help from you, or else he has become a regular contact and so you record his information with the rest of your contacts in your address file.

5. INTERACTION LOG

You will find that there are some contacts with which you have continual dealings. I’m not talking about the kind of people you have written down in your address book whose phone number you need once every two or three

months. I'm talking about the people with whom you have weekly or even daily contact. Perhaps it is one of your facilitators, or maybe the pastor of a certain church.

Obviously the first thing you need to do is write down their name. /// 3 /// On the next line you can write down the name of their church, their job, or in the case of people from the secular world, the name of their company. Then write down their contact information: their address, their phone number. Next write down the names of the people close to them. Obviously this would include their spouse's name and the names of their children. If it is a single person, you may want to write down the names of his parents or of his siblings. If they regularly partner with someone in ministry, you may want to write down that person's name. Now write down any pertinent dates such as their birthday, anniversary, etc. On the final line you can record other useful information such as where and when you met or who brought you together.

As you can see, most of the page is taken up with space for you to record things you have discussed with this person. This may be the result of face-to-face conversations, telephone calls, or correspondence with that person. Obviously you do not need to record your entire conversation. The things you would record here would include requests you have made of them, things they have asked you for, promises of action you have made to them, and so on. As you record this information, you will also want to record the time and date of your conversation. This will improve your reputation by helping you fulfill your promises in good time, and will also let you know how much time has elapsed since they told you they would do something. By holding them accountable in this way you are helping to make them successful. The final column includes space for you to write down dates of follow-up relating to this item as well as time or money amounts.

This is a fabulous management tool which you pull out every time just prior to meeting with this same person and refresh your memory about the issues at hand.

6. MEMORY

During the course of a normal day, you probably have any number of good ideas passing through your mind. The means by which these ideas come are endless: people, articles, even dreams perhaps. Where do these ideas come from and how can you keep track of them? Believe that all your ideas come from God. Therefore they are good ideas that He wants you to have and He revealed them to you at this specific time for a purpose. The best way to keep track of them is by writing them down.

There are many other kinds of notes that you will also need to take down during the day. Some relate to what you need to do, some relate to what others need to do, some may be questions, some may be plans. The list of things you may need to write down is endless. There are very few people who are in the habit of writing things down that come to their mind instead of simply trying to remember them. But even rarer still are those that have a system for effectively and efficiently dealing with them. I would like to present you with a form that will take the place of the napkin or envelope most people grab for when an urgent thought crosses their mind and they want to write it down. That is a good start, but there is a higher level of success to be achieved.

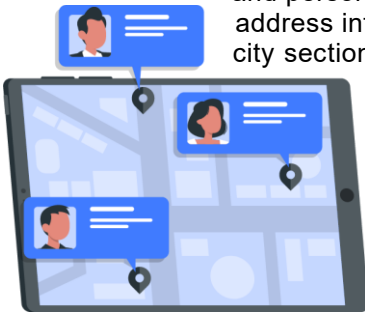
The form /// 8 /// we are looking at now is a variation of the "To Do" list that you learned about in the lecture TM3 on making a Daily Schedule. It starts with a place to write the date at the top of the page. Most of the space on the page is left empty for you to write down thoughts. To the left of the middle column there is a place that allows you to assign the item a priority, either now or at the end of the day when you can compare all of the items on the list before you enter them on your Daily Schedule or in one of your other management tools.

The first column on this form is probably the most valuable. It is here that you can assign each entry a unique number or code. Some suggestions for doing this are listed at the bottom of the page. Assigning a code to each item on your list is very helpful because it allows you to quickly and easily refer to this item in other time management tools that you use, such as your Daily Schedule or your record of Prospects.

Finally, on the right hand side of the page, there is a column that is helpful for those who need to delegate. Here a person can quickly and easily assign a task to another person and help that person prioritize by assigning a due date. When a task is being assigned to someone else, it is wise to have him write it down and his memo must always include the due date. That way both parties involved know what the task is and when it is due, thus overcoming many common communication misunderstandings. Even if you don't need to delegate, this is a handy place to write down when a task on your list is due.

7. ADDRESSES

Modern life gets more and more complicated, but an organized manager knows how to keep things simple and handy. Basic contact information is comprised of four parts: physical address, quick contact telephone, email, and personal information. Let us clearly define these points. There are eight parts to full postal address information: 1) family, 2) father's name, 3) given name, 4) street, 5) house number, 6) city section, 7) city, 8) province. There are four parts to telephone information: 1) number, 2) city code, 3) country code, 4) home/office, plus possibly 5) a forwarding message system. Personal information includes his place of work, position, birthday and names of wife & children.



The secret to efficiency in this area is to:

- (a) Prepare a standard form to record information.
- (b) Use one identical method in all your note taking (i.e. family names *always* first).
- (c) Record all information; leave no gaps like missing telephone code.
- (d) Always organize it alphabetically with family names first.
- (e) Sequentially order all pages either by number or alphabet.
- (f) A wise extra is to add his place of work, position, birthday and names of wife and children.

The info is best listed by alphabet with one page for each letter and under that the names beginning with that letter. This efficiency results in having this information at your fingertips just when you need it most urgently.

Example: You know a coach as "Jolly Oleg" but now you want to write him a letter. What is his father's name?. Without the city section you can't find his street. With tiny little inaccuracies our whole ministry can come to a standstill. With this info handy in a well-organized system, it is a snap to be a spiffy, with-it leader.

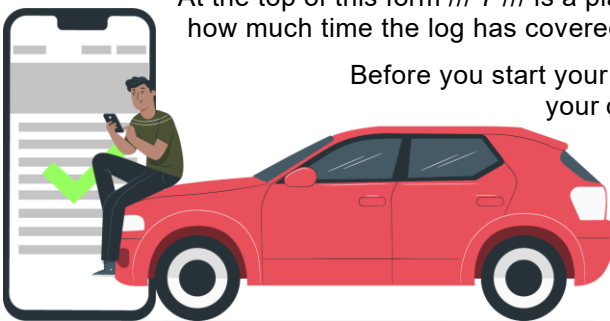
E-mail addresses are very valuable for larger memos and documents because email is a fast, convenient and **accurate** form of long-distance communication. Some advantages of email are: it can be prepared in advance, sent any time, no one has to be present to receive it, both parties have a copy, and it can be reread.

The personal information, if readily available, cannot only help you avoid many embarrassing situations, but using it makes you a five star leader, a person who thinks of the little pleasant things in life. How pleased people are when a birthday is thought of, or when the age and sex of a child is remembered! This personal information is a vital ingredient that makes people want to be with you, work for you and assist you.

8. AUTOMOBILE

Many of you have a car, and you need to keep track of the travel expenses involved. Others of you have coaches with cars, and you need to know how much to reimburse them for their traveling expenses to and from their groups. We have a simple form for this purpose that can be used each time the vehicle is put to work.

At the top of this form /// 7 /// is a place to record the beginning and ending dates of the log to show how much time the log has covered (i.e. weekly, monthly, quarterly).



Before you start your trip you get out this form and write down where you are going-- your destination by city. Then you write in the time and the date. Next, jot down the purpose of your trip. Finally, you look at your odometer, and record what it says in the "begin" blank on the right. When you get to the end of your journey, you again look at your odometer and again record what it says in the appropriate top blank on the right. Now to see how far you have traveled all you have to do is subtract the lower number from the top number.

Often you will have expenses that are part of the trip that you need to keep track of. Obviously fuel is an ongoing expense, but there will also be various other expenses, such as the fee you now often need to pay for parking in larger cities, or the fine you had to pay when you were stopped by the police. Writing these things down takes only a moment, and this good habit can save you a lot of headaches in the future when you need to try to figure

out where your money is disappearing to. At the end of the form you can total each category of information and keep a handy record for future reference.

One common use of this form is for coaches who have their own car and need to be reimbursed for their travel expenses. Instead of recording all of the times they use their car they would only need to record those trips that were made for ministry. When they have used up the whole form, they will be able to total all the kilometers traveled for ministry in the time the form covers. By comparing odometer readings for when they started the form and when it was completed, they will also be able to find out how many kilometers were traveled altogether. By comparing these two numbers, they can come up with a percentage of how much of their travels have to do with ministry. Finally, there is a memo where the amount for reimbursement should be recorded, as well as a place for approval of this sum to be indicated and a place for the coach to sign when he has been paid.

CONCLUSION

Like master carpenters who excel in their work, learn to use these tools. Successful business people who led their companies to the top designed them. Let them make you a person of powerful reputation, strong in word and deed. No time was ever wasted sharpening an ax.

We should bring our capabilities under the power of the Holy Spirit and strive to do our spiritual ministries on an even higher level than our worldly counterparts. Our work is for eternity and God reminds us to “redeem the time.” Let us say yes to Him and do it God’s way! Amen!

ADVANCED TIME MANAGEMENT TOOLS

Practical assignment

Completed

- During the next four weeks review your CBLT Center by the eight points in this lecture

Week 1:

—Addresses: Make an address form and set up an efficient filing system for them.

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—Prospects: Begin to use the prospects tool as suggested in the lecture.

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Week 2:

—Interaction Log: Begin an interaction log.

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—Meetings: Begin using the meeting tool provided with the lecture.

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Week 3:

—Objectives: Record your objectives for the next month as specified in the lecture.

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—Projects: Make a list of the projects that you will be involved in during the next month. Make sure that you include all of the essential information.

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Week 4:

—Automobile: Begin an automobile log or help your facilitators to begin one.

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—Begin using the memo form and system recommended in this lecture.

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- Now that you have begun to implement these ideas you can see their value for your CBLT Center. After four weeks of practicing each idea you need to evaluate whether or not this is a tool that will really benefit your CBLT Center at this point in time. If it is make the system that you have established permanent and write a ½-1page report stating what the idea is and how it benefits your CBLT Center. If you do not find the tool beneficial write a ½-1page report stating what the tool is and why you do not find it beneficial at this point in time. Give these reports to your workshop leader.

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Blessings to you, our dear friends!

We are happy to present the video, audio and paper materials that have been prepared by **New Life for Churches** . You have the privilege upon completion of your practical assignment to use this lecture with others.