

Time Management

Action Steps to Get Started

A MASON JAR FILLED WITH ROCKS

At a college seminar I attended, an alum gave a presentation on time management. He was one of the most prominent graduates of the university and had successfully taken companies public. His presentation was unique.

He began by walking out on stage; not saying a word to anyone, he put a huge mason jar on the podium in front of him. Reaching down, he then showed everyone a bucket full of large rocks. With purpose and precision, he piled the rocks inside the Mason jar until they reached the jar's opening.

After completing this task, he finally spoke for the first time: "Is this jar full?" Most of us yelled out, "Yes," as it was obvious he would not be able to fit any more of those rocks in the jar.

He then reached down behind the podium and pulled out another large bucket—but this one was filled with smooth pebbles. He poured the pebbles into the mouth of the jar as it filled to the top and then stopped. He again asked, "Is this jar full?" Once again some responded yes, but this time others said no and many remained silent, intrigued by what they were seeing.

Reaching down behind the podium, he pulled out a third bucket, this one containing sand. He poured the sand into the jar until it reached the top. And then, as you can guess, he asked, "Is this jar full?" Most remained quiet, but there were a few jeers from the crowd.

Without hesitating, he reached down once more, and this time he pulled out a pitcher of water. He filled the jar to the top. It was obvious that any additional water would only pour down the sides. For the fourth and final time, he asked, "Is this jar full?" Everyone said yes.

He went on to ask, “What did we learn here? What was the purpose of this demonstration?” People offered many different suggestions. “If you try really hard you can get a lot done,” some said. Others tried, “There’s always room for more,” and other things as well.

The presenter smiled and said, “If you don’t put the big things in first, they aren’t going to fit.”

This presentation hit me like a ton of bricks, and ever since then I have always tried to make sure I had my calendar filled with my IMPORTANT things first. This sounds easy, but it requires practice, determination, and an understanding of what YOUR IMPORTANT THINGS actually are.

7 STEPS TO GOAL SETTING

Seven Steps to Goal Setting will help you understand what your big things are. This is a simple process of determining what is important to you, to help you make decisions more easily in the future.

Imagine, if you will, what your Number 1 goal is. OK, so what is it? What about your Number 4 goal, what is that? Gotcha, didn’t I? When we are asked what our goals are, we often don’t really know what they are, do we?

On the job, our bosses will tell us what our goals are—or rather, what their goals are that they want to accomplish through us. But what about the goals we have for our family, health, and other concerns? What are these goals?

You know it’s difficult to hit a target you can’t see. That’s why recording goals or writing them down is so important.

We have six very different parts of life that we should have goals for. These parts are: Spiritual, Family, Health, Recreation, Education, and Vocation, which is also Money or Finances.

Our family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, TVs, magazines, and radios all tell us what we should do, want, and aspire for. They even tell us what to wear, drive, eat, drink, and think—but is it for our good or theirs?

If you want to know what the most important things in your life are, you need to ask your subconscious, not the TV or your brother. We were wired, each of us, for a special purpose. So have a tournament with your conscious and subconscious to learn what your most important purpose is.

Start off with a legal pad, and meditate or pray. Ask yourself, “Why am I here?”; “What am I trying to do?”; “What are the most important things in my life?”

Write it all down. Don’t waste time trying to evaluate what you’re writing—just write it all down. When you finish, transfer each goal to an index card. Every goal should have its own index card.

Now on the back of each index card, put a letter corresponding to the goal that is on the other side. Take “swimming pool,” for instance. I want a swimming pool, but why? Is it for my family, and I want to bless them? Or is it that I want to swim laps every day, and it’s for health? Maybe I want to teach swimming lessons and it could be vocation or to earn money. How about just chilling out with my family and friends, wanting to spend recreation time with them? We already do this: we want something, so we find other reasons besides the one that matters, and rationalize the desire.

Go through each index card and put the appropriate letter on the reverse side. Rubber band each stack together. You should have six different stacks. Pick up one stack at a time, spread the cards on the table, and review the goals, ordering the cards by their importance to you. So, take two index cards first and decide which one is the most important. Then take another and put it on top, bottom, or in the middle, so you eventually end up with each stack ordered from most important to least important.

At the end of this tournament, you’ll end up with six stacks of goals, with the top of each being the most important all the way down to the least. The last thing to do here is put the Top 5 in each category on a single page, which we’re going to call your POWER PAGE at these types of events.

THE MENTORING SYSTEM

The Mentoring System will help you move forward, but only after you know what you want. We all have an inner-circle of friends or family that we pass our “GREAT IDEAS” by. They are all too happy to give us advice on what we should do, or need to do. The problem with this is that many of them are not QUALIFIED to give us this advice.

There are two circles of life, and these two circles have three separate areas. Outside the circles are everyone, the folks we just haven’t met yet. Inside this first, larger circle are people we know, our family and acquaintances. But inside this first circle is yet another, smaller circle. This is our inner-circle. The inner-circle is filled with the people we go to for advice. We bounce our ideas and desires off these folks.

How many of your inner-circle friends have gone through the seven steps of goal setting? Probably none right? So they don’t know why they are here, or, more importantly, what the BIG things in their lives are—and we now want them to tell us what we should be doing? Sounds a little crazy, doesn’t it.

Once you understand WHY you want what you want, and what the most important things in your life are, you will identify those people who can help you get them. These are the people that should occupy your inner-circle.

The truth is, “Once the student is ready, the teacher will appear.”

You have people that are currently inside your inner-circle that will be moved out to the larger family & acquaintances circle. There are also people you haven’t even met yet, that are all the way outside your circles, but they will move all the way into your inner-circle. Why? Because you know where you are going, and these people can help you get there.

The last step in this process is using your time wisely.

If we follow what the doctors say, we need to sleep eight hours a day. If we have a job—a normal job—we typically work eight hours a day. Most North Americans travel and eat four hours a day. This only leaves four hours of discretionary time.

The difference between you and a millionaire is how you spend those four hours. Take Mr. Serba. He focused his time early in his LegalShield career. He used his time wisely; his discretionary time was spent creating a book of business and an asset-creating team of associates that produce an enormous income. So today he is in a position to switch his discretionary time with his working time, gaining a lifestyle that is envied by all of us.

You see, a millionaire spends the time in his 24-hour wallet differently than the rest of the world. When you take control of your 24-hour wallet, you will in a very short time conquer the same mission that the millionaires have, and be able to flip your discretionary time with your working time. You'll be living a lifestyle that you designed, because you have decided what the most important things you'd like to achieve are, as opposed to doing what others think you should do.

Once you know what you want, the "HOW TO" will show up. In each area of your life, you will get a mentor that will give you advice—not just some uninformed person, but the RIGHT person, your new MENTOR. Listen to them. They are where you want to be.

They will help you create a Plan. You start working the Plan; then with your new MENTOR, review the activity and look for areas of improvement. Then simply make adjustments and repeat the process.