



Use your time wisely and
boost your productivity

Time Management

FOR
DUMMIES®

Clare Evans

*Personal and business
time management coach*



A Reference for the Rest of Us!®



UK Edition



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Dummies®***

by Clare Evans

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About the Author

Clare Evans is a personal and business coach working with individuals and businesses to improve their time management, increase productivity, and create a better work life balance in these time-challenged times.

Clare worked in the corporate sector for a global company for many years. Managing IT projects and working with global teams, she understands the pressures today's working environment places on people's time and the difficulty of creating a better work-life balance.

Now running her own business, Clare coaches people one-to-one and runs workshops, seminars, and teleclasses on the subjects that challenge our time. She frequently writes and publishes articles for newsletters and magazines such as *Zest*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *New Woman* magazines, *Better Business Focus* (a monthly Internet magazine for business advisers), and *Financial Solutions* (the Personal Finance Society's magazine for financial advisers).

Everyone cares about the best use of their time. Clare specialises in enabling people to achieve what they want in ways that makes people master their use of precious time.

For additional information about time management, or to invite her to speak at your meeting or event, you can contact Clare at info@clareevans.co.uk. You can visit her

website and sign up for her free newsletter at
www.clareevans.co.uk.

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: Further Reading

Introduction

Time management is a bit of a misnomer. You can't actually manage time. Time just is. All you can hope to do is manage yourself and what you do with your time - that's my definition of *time management*.

This book provides you with tools, tips, and ideas to enable you to get control of your time, and find ways of managing yourself and others around you so that you can do more with the time that you have. Even if you don't think that you can ever be organised, you can always change something that makes a difference. It's surprising how something small - a new habit you adopt or a tip you take on board - can make a big difference.

In our modern 24-hour society there never seem to be enough hours in a day, as you face more and more demands at work and at home. Poor time management results in a loss of productivity and worse - increased stress and poor health. The good news is this book doesn't just show you how to be more organised, but also how to find more time for yourself: to relax, to spend time with family and friends, and to do something that busy, overworked people often fail to fit in - have fun!

About This Book

Time Management For Dummies is ideal for those of you who need to brush up your time management skills. Nearly everyone can do something to use their time more productively and avoid wasting time. This book can help.

The book is divided into easy-to-read sections that cover specific challenges with practical exercises along the way. I cover all manner of subjects – from tackling time-wasting to giving you the best time-saving strategies.

Although some of my advice may not be new, reading it again never hurts. A little bit more sinks in each time and repetition reinforces knowledge and skills.

Conventions Used in This Book

To help you navigate through this book easily I use a few conventions:

- ✓ *Italics* are used for emphasis and to highlight new terms.
- ✓ **Bold-faced** text indicates keywords in numbered or bulleted lists.
- ✓ Monofont is used for web addresses, which direct you to further sources of information.

✓ Sidebars are the grey boxes that contain interesting information, anecdotes, or something fun relating to the chapter or section's topic.

Foolish Assumptions

While writing this book I've made some assumptions about you and your knowledge of time management:

- ✓ You're perfectly capable of managing your time, like most of the people I work with; you just have some blocks around doing so.
- ✓ You recognise that you waste a lot of your time and you want to do something about it.
- ✓ You want some simple, straightforward advice, tips, and ideas on how you can be more organised.
- ✓ You fit into one of the following categories:
 - You've read quite a bit about time management already but want reminders of the key skills.
 - You're starting from scratch and want to know how best to organise your time.
 - Someone has mentioned or dropped a hint that you could benefit from improving your time management.
- ✓ You realise that you can't actually manage time, only yourself. It's just easier to phrase it that way.

How This Book Is Organised

Time Management For Dummies is divided into six major parts, each of which is divided into chapters that focus on key topics relating to time management.

The great thing about *For Dummies* books is that you don't have to read them all the way through. Each chapter is self-contained, providing ideas, tips, and information on a different issue. If you want to, you can simply turn to the area you need to focus on – a chapter, a section, or even just a paragraph. The table of contents and the index help pinpoint where to find the info you need.

The following is a brief summary of what's in each section.

Part I: What Is Time Management?

This part begins with why it's important to manage your time in an effective way and then helps you identify exactly where all your time goes. If you've never done this before it may be an interesting, eye-opening exercise, especially when you realise just how much your time is worth. I then move on to look at the things that get in the way of you getting on, and give you plenty of strategies to help you get motivated. Finally, I explore something that often leads to dithering and time wasting - making decisions.

Part II: Getting Your Time in Order

This part sets some of the ground rules and key strategies you need to start using if you want to be more effective. Optimise how you use your diary or calendar, and see how just a few minutes' planning immediately increases the amount you get done each day. Find ways to create an action list that actually works, rather than a to-do list that comprises a never-ending list of things you need to do - if only you had the time. And discover how setting boundaries and saying no to people gives you more time for yourself.

Part III: Organising the Work You Do

This part is about the nitty-gritty of managing your time, giving hands-on, practical tips that address the main areas that challenge people in their day-to-day life. Creating systems and processes to deal with each of these particular areas is important if you want to avoid being disorganised, overwhelmed, and totally stressed out. Avoid wasting time being distracted and interrupted, and find out how to make even better use of your time by doing less and getting someone else to do things for you.

Part IV: Working from Home

Many people now work from home. Outside of the traditional office environment, home-working requires a different discipline and comes with unique challenges. This part shows you how to organise yourself, both in finding a work style that suits you and in getting to grips with the practical side of having a home office, so that you can work more comfortably and efficiently.

Part V: Looking at the Bigger Picture

Although it's important to get as much as you can out of every day, including increased productivity, a income to live on, and efficiency at work, you mustn't forget why you're doing it. This part is all about finding time for the important things in your life - you, your family, and your friends. If you had more time, you'd probably spend it on being healthier. Don't let your health take a back seat just because you're too busy to exercise regularly, eat properly, or take time to relax. Read this part and you'll be able to reset your work-life balance.

Part VI: The Part of Tens

This part includes lists of ten things that help you to save even more time. I give you ideas of things to do when you've got a few spare minutes, and tell you about ten gadgets that can save you time and effort.

Icons Used in This Book

This book won't throw lots of questions at you, but it should certainly set you thinking. These icons highlight some of the points you may find most thought-provoking and useful:



This icon highlights something that's just a little bit different from a conventional tip.



This icon draws your attention to an important point to bear in mind.



I give really great time-busting tips with this icon. Think of it as a sort of turbo-boosting time tip - this icon shows you where you can really start to make the best use of your time.



This icon highlights tips and tricks that can help you manage your time more effectively.



If there's something you need to watch out for, then I use this icon. Ignoring this point can cost you time.

Where to Go from Here

Time Management For Dummies is a reference book, designed to give you the most helpful information in an easy-to-read, user-friendly way.

You may decide to read through the book one chapter at a time, or if there's a particular issue you'd like to get started on right away then you can skip to the relevant chapter. You can dip in and out of the book as necessary, but I recommend reading through the first two chapters at some point because they're important for setting the scene and identifying your existing time habits.

However you read the book, and wherever you go from here, the most important thing is to do something with the information, tips, and advice in this book. Remember, little changes add up to big differences.