

Booklets in this series

Operational

1. Time Management.
2. Managing Change.

Strategic

1. Profiting from your Local Heritage.
2. Networked Learning for Tourism Professionals.
3. Employing Graduates.

Learning Tourism

TIME MANAGEMENT

Learning
Tourism

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Welcome to Learning Tourism

Learning Tourism is a two-year European Regional Development Funded programme which shares resources at Lancaster University with the wider community.

This series of booklets is just one element in the four activities which the project has outlined.

The others include:

- Free 'bite-sized' small businesses consultancies to help the company grow;
- An interactive website, for the tourism industry to use - <http://www.learningtourism.lancs.ac.uk>
- Action Learning sets - essentially business clubs - will help like-minded business professionals come together in a relaxed forum to discuss issues from business rates, through to purchasing power, decoration tips, to menu alterations.

To find out more about how you can get involved please call
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You can send any thoughts, suggestions or criticisms about this series of booklets back to the team :

Comments on this subject

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Any suggestion for future topics of discussion?

.....

Have you visited our website?

Any comments?

Have you read any of the others booklets in this series?

Any comments?

Name

Company

Address

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Telephone number

Thank you for your comments.

Use the telephone or e-mail to avoid time spent travelling.

Finish each job before starting the next – difficult in practice but useful.

Next steps

Make a list of those items above which seem to be holding you back. For your, say, three biggest 'time wasters' sketch out a possible solution that suits your business situation. Start today implementing it.

Identify your fragments of hidden time and begin using them.

Which are your most productive hours? Make the most of them.

Box clever!

About the author

Dr Gordon Clark is Senior Lecturer in Geography at Lancaster University. His main research interests include rural geography, Europe, environment, and economic geography.

You know the problem – too much to do and too little time to do it in. Your job can take over your life. This is particularly a problem for smaller businesses and for those in tourism and leisure. If your marketing succeeds in extending the season, even your quiet periods may begin to disappear. Are there any ways you can free up time (for other tasks or your own leisure) while still running an efficient business? Studies of managers and active owners under pressure reveal some general tactics that can free up time.

In this paper Gordon Clark looks at the variety of ways you can have more...

FREE TIME: FREEING UP TIME

Time wasters

Your time can be wasted by people and also by practices and events.

People ramble on needlessly.

Train your staff to be concise and give you just the details you need.

E-mail, telephone calls and post take a long time to wade through.

Delete or bin some; delegate other items; reply quickly and concisely.

Losing things – they are not actually lost; you just can't find them when you need to.

Get someone to devise and keep a logical filing system for you after you have binned what you don't need on paper or as e-mail messages. Huge time savings are possible.

Interruptions; you lose your train of thought and waste time re-gaining it.

Control interruptions unless it is a life-or-death situation. Divert your telephone. Don't have our PC 'bleep' every time an e-mail message arrives. Fend off interruptions with a "Do not disturb" notice.

Lack of time for the important and urgent jobs.

Try to prioritise tasks, doing first the important and urgent ones, then the urgent but less important ones, and finally the less urgent ones.

Re-inventing the wheel.

Try to re-use letters, text and procedures so, once done, they can be re-used for different situations with a bit of tweaking.

Meetings going on endlessly.

Keep meetings crisp; brainstorm not waffle; urge others who chair meetings to do the same. Summarise frequently; move to agreed action; move on to the next item.

Commuting by car.

Driving time is almost impossible to use safely for anything else.

Over-analysing situations; not finishing jobs, hence they pile up.

Collect the information you really need and then make a decision and act on it.



Hidden time

'Hidden time' means those periods which don't look like formal work time but which could be profitably used for work because they cannot be used for much else, so freeing your real leisure time. Examples of hidden time include:

image: www.freeimages.co.uk

- while waiting for a train, taxi or flight;
- during your journey (though perhaps not when actually driving);
- when 'on hold' in a telephone queuing system;
- during a really boring television programme;
- while waiting for the meal to cook;
- while washing the car.

If you can use these fragments of time for work (mostly thinking and planning) then you can get finished more quickly and so preserve your leisure time for just that.

Your most productive hours

Certain periods can be more productive than others.

- If you are at work when no one else is, then you will not get any interruptions and so will get more done in these periods.
- If you are by nature a morning person then work early in the day and *vice versa* if you are an evening person.
- Working in a quiet corner minimises interruptions.
- Several short bursts of work can be more useful than one long period of slog.

'Boxing clever'

Get jobs done by whoever is best at them. If, for example, you are a slow typist, don't do your own typing unless it is urgent, confidential or your secretary is away.

Delegate.

Someone probably already knows the answer or has the skills or has solved this problem before. Keep a list of possible contacts. Don't be afraid to ask. Learn from others – it is far quicker.

Learn from history.

What worked and what did not? Evaluate events as best you can. Amend or avoid what did not work so you don't repeat mistakes.