Time Wasters to Eliminate Now

Every day we time-wasters spend hours finishing chores around the house, wondering why we didn't finish everything.

A lot of time wasters are subconscious. We do them without thinking – they have become habits. So it's time to move off those habits and be more proactive with how we spend our time instead. Don't ever murder time, as Macbeth did!

Here is a list of the top 15 time-wasters to avoid. Time waster, take note.

#1 – Downers

Some people are "fair-weather friends." They are only there in good times. However, "true friends" are always there for you. And it's okay to have a mix of these types of friends in your life – but know and understand the difference. Watch for people and friends who lift you and give you energy – these will be more important than those who drain your energy. You've got to get rid of the Debbie-Downers and the David Droops. When you do, you'll have energy for everything else in your life.

#2 – Work You Do – But it's not Necessary

Is it always necessary to do a job that no one sees? Yes, sometimes – like cleaning your house – but is it essential to do that cleaning so frequently? Limiting unneeded job frequency will give you more time each week.

#3 – Tasks You Could Delegate

Whether a pro or a willing helper, you can delegate some

tasks. When you need help, ask, and budget your time. For example, why waste time ironing or cleaning unless you enjoy it? If you don’t have enough money to pay for this help, could you swap with a friend and do a job they don’t like in return? Or just know you have the work and do it quickly, not allowing it to pile up.

#4 – Long Talks or Meetings

Long meetings waste time in offices and can waste time at home. Arranging a meeting to discuss something, and offering to wait for a tradesperson, etc., can be a waste of time. Consider alternative approaches to the same goal. Could you send the tradesman a photo of the job with measurements and details? Could you call instead of meeting in person? If you need to meet, set a specific plan, state your availability, and stick to your Calendar plan. Don’t be someone else’s timer waster, either.

#5 – Queues

Plan your day ahead of time to avoid busy times. For example, skip your drive during rush hour. Someone at our office gets up and works an hour earlier to go to the gym every morning, which saves him time. The earlier drive covers all the time at the gym. Likewise, consider shopping late or early rather than during or after school/work when the store is busier. Very early mornings seem to find most stores (especially grocery stores) quite empty.

#6 – Banking

Online banking is a quick and easy way to save time with your finances. You are more likely to stay on track if you can access your accounts quickly and easily without queuing or traveling to the bank. If you must go to the bank – go during non-peak times and know exactly what you need. Most banking needs can be done over the phone nowadays.

#7. Pay Bills Once Received

Examine your bills and set up automatic payments. Many companies offer a discount for paying by direct debit, and you save time not having to pay each month manually. Don’t waste time searching for a bill – especially a late one. Direct bill pay saves much time and many issues, including late fees. If you pay bills another way – make sure you never set a bill down except in its correct location – one that is always the same.

#8 – Answering Unknown Callers

Stop answering unknown numbers because most of them are cold callers who waste your time and distract you from your work (which can take time to get back into). If it’s essential, they’ll leave a message, and you can respond quickly, but why interrupt your flow when it’s not? Even faster – have your answering message say that the fastest way to get hold of you is to send you a text. Quickly reading a text helps save time, so you don’t have to listen to a long, detailed, time-waster phone message.

#9. Checking online

Checking email and social media sites wastes a lot of time, and most of us aren’t even aware of how much time has passed. Consider scheduling this in your day so you can respond to emails and messages simultaneously. If you’re waiting for something – you could do this as a “treat” at the end of the day and make it on your TO-DO list. That way, you can answer questions, but they don’t take over the day (if you answer any calls, social media, or emails first thing in the morning – you’ll miss something essential you need to do that day).

#10 – Reacting to Errors

Try not to react when running errands – have you ever gone shopping only to realize you forgot something and had to return to the same city area? Do you suddenly remember someone's birthday and go shopping? Instead, be proactive and try to group errands according to the area of the city – or type of errand. Only go to certain places (like the market) once a week. Begin to shift your thinking – shop online for gifts at the start of each month so they're ready to go when you need them?

#11. Wasting Time Food Shopping

We all enjoy shopping in small increments, but we know that ordering groceries online saves time and avoids impulse purchases. If you spend too much time shopping for food or deciding what to buy, then shopping online is the way to go. If you still go to the market and specialty grocery – as said above – only go once a week or less.

#12 – Viewing

Especially since COVID – surveys show that our show-watching is by far the most popular time-waster, and half the time, we don't even realize it. So for a week, track how much time you spend watching TV. Watching just one less series or soap operas may be enough to give you the time you need.

#13. Things You Should Never Do

Things you should never do – Watch for THINGS you will resent if you DON'T do them and those things you will begrudge if you DO do them. Instead, try to fill your schedule with something you have to do – like work – things you want to do and enjoy – like reading, hobbies, and relationship things. And learn to say NO to a few things you should say no to, and see how much better you feel.

#14 – Delaying

You can complete most tasks in less time than you think – so set a five-minute timer and get started. If you need to do something, do it. Time is not to waste, and you'll feel so much better when you get things done early and on time.

#15. Perfectionism

Another snoozy topic – being too perfect. Usually, we can get by with a solid 80% effort and be finished with the task. Those who want 100%, and especially those who work at 110% thought capacity, waste so much time on that extra 20% – that the extra twenty percent will become a problem somewhere. If you can get something done, that's good enough instead of perfect. You'll save not just time – but your life. Perfectionism kills many things in productivity – and in your life. Stop wasting time on perfection.

Do You Have Time Wasters You Want to Eliminate?

We all have a limited amount of time, so why not make the most of it? Identify your time wasters and minimize them. That will allow you to find bushels of extra time.

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