



Your Partner in Facility Management.....

How to Take Control of Your Workday - Time Management From an FM's Perspective

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Each day we have a precious 24 hours to live our lives. During that time, we sleep, eat, work and socialize in various proportions. Based on the unique workload that facility professionals are faced with, a common complaint is – "Not enough time in the day!" Inefficient time management affects all of us. Unfortunately some of us are more affected in a negative way than others. How do you get better at controlling your day? How can you get it all done and still have a life?

There are a number of issues that cause us to be ineffective time managers, so let's take a look at just a few:

- Drop in Visitors
- Telephone Time Wasters
- Inability to say "No"
- Trying to do too much
- Procrastination
- Lack of priorities
- Refusal to Delegate

So let's briefly talk about a few of these issues. First, drop in visitors. When you allow drop in visitors to "steal" your time, you are not respecting your busy schedule. Determine if the visit is a legitimate job related issue or just social. Next, is it urgent or can it wait? Try these ideas: Remove the chairs from your office or use a script such as "How much time do you need? I can give you 30 seconds now or 30 minutes after lunch."

Next, let's talk about the telephone. The average unplanned telephone call takes eleven minutes. Most of this time is spent in needless over-socializing. Do the math! Suppose you field just six calls per day and each is eleven minutes in length. You'll spend over an hour a day on the phone, with most of the time being wasted! Get to the point and finish those calls!

Delegation is usually a weak point for those managers that don't manage their time well. "Nobody can do the job as well as I can." Probably true – but the cause of many of our time management problems. Decide what tasks are core to your job and focus on those areas. Allow your team to grow by delegating new and challenging tasks to them.

Unfortunately we've been conditioned to "Go the extra mile, think outside of the box". Saying no is often viewed as a character flaw. You owe it to yourself to say no, when your schedule cannot absorb another project – say so! Offer to do the project if another project can be delayed. Delegate. If you find difficulty in saying no, ask: "What is the worst that can happen if I say no?"

Finally, concentrate your efforts on doing a good job on the tasks that are core to your job. Don't take on too much. You'll effectively make yourself less effective. Never schedule more than 50% of your time and always over-estimate the time something will take. You know why!

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