



Strategic & Mindset Mastery for Entrepreneurs

When Time Manages You. The Surprising Truths Behind Time Management

You're dangerously close to missing at least one deadline, your inbox is overflowing with priority emails, and your kids have begun to recycle their dirty socks. If you could, you'd petition for a 26-hour day because those touted time management techniques and gimmicks no longer seem to make a dent in that long to-do list.

You have more power over time than you may realize. Lack of time is not the over-arching problem. It's a symptom of 3 much more significant issues.

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Not enough time in the day? Ask yourself these 50 tough questions to learn why.

Our mind is the guardian of our time--our belief systems and behavior govern our time.

Definition of time management according to Brian Tracy:

"Time management is the ability to **plan** and **control** how you spend the hours in your day to effectively accomplish your goals."

I don't think it's quite that simple. Sure, we can plan but the "control" part is questionable. I don't know many entrepreneurs (especially moms and dads) who can control how they spend their hours 100% of the time!

So, hands down, one of the most common problems faced by entrepreneurs is the lack of time. Yet, how is it that some people achieve so much more than others when we all share the same 24-hour time clock? It's not because they use time management tools to keep them on track. No, it's because they have a [high level of awareness and respect](#) for their own time--and teach others to respect it as well.

Poor time management isn't about a lack of time, it's how you think about time. It's a symptom of the overarching mindset we have about time. Our mind is the guardian of our time--our belief systems and behavior govern our use of time.

You can use all the tips and tools you want, but if you don't have a healthy mindset about your time none of them will work. Entrepreneurs who don't manage time well always have at least one of three things going on:

1. A lack of clarity, vision, and a plan.
2. An inability to set boundaries, communicate them to others, and have the discipline to stick with them.
3. Self-sabotage. Fear of success, failure, and/or letting someone down.

#1. A lack of clarity, vision, and a plan.

This is the number one issue I see in entrepreneurs who are failing in time management.

If you don't know where you're going, you can't possibly have any idea of how to get there. If you're not clear on your goals and priorities, and don't stick with a plan, you will be all over the place.

You'll chase bright and shiny objects, investing time in things that aren't within a specific vision, but grasping at straws to identify a direction. Looking for the magic bullet...there is no magic bullet – but there can be MAGIC!

All of my clients who have gone from struggling entrepreneurs to successful entrepreneurs have changed ONE thing: their mindset. Everything after that is just logistics and strategy.

Do you know what your business will look like in 1, 3, and 5 years from now?

Do you have a plan? Have you broken it down into steps, and are you clear about what you need to do each and every quarter, month, week, and day to get there?

A lack of clarity and a plan are the #1 enemy of time management.

#2. An inability to set boundaries—for yourself and others.

We teach others how to treat us. This begins with respecting yourself and your own time.

Over committing—We over commit out of fear, guilt, a need to please or prove ourselves.

Entrepreneurs over commit and over deliver to clients because they are afraid of losing them. If you do the job, and do it well, it's not likely a client will walk. Be careful about how far you stretch the boundaries!

- Never offer up a deadline to a client without carefully considering the other commitments you have in place.
- Stay within scope on your client projects.
- Avoid over committing in your personal life. This often happens due to guilt, "I'll make up for not being a good friend, mom, spouse by doing x,y,z."

Allowing interruptions--client relationships and personal relationships

- Separate your time between your work and personal life with as much INTENTION as possible. Be present when you're with friends and family to eliminate any guilt over not giving to your relationships.
- Tell mom, your sister or and others who reach out that texts and calls are great – but after hours! Avoid calling them during working hours to set the example.
- Employee interruptions – train your employees well so they don't have to ask the same questions over and over again. Also train them how to handle issues as they arise – or at least to take messages.
 - o Direct employees to document processes as they do their work, until you have a handbook of procedures and processes in place. This makes training easier and adds value to your business.
 - o Assign one or two small segments of your day to meet with your employees. Answer and ask questions, do updates, and provide encouragement and recognition as needed.
- You interrupt your own thought-process by allowing distractions. Set boundaries for yourself and be disciplined enough to enforce them.
 - o Track your time for 3-5 days at least twice a year. We believe we know where our time goes but the true reality differs.
 - o Assign 2-hour chunks of time to projects. Turn off the phone, shut down your browser and email.

Multi-tasking:

Multi-tasking is only task shifting, and it's extremely harmful to our brains. Your brain cannot disassociate itself from a problem or overwhelming activity. This causes stress, even panic. Your brain was designed for thinking and reasoning, not for managing all of your to-do lists and keep everything straight when you are toggling between tasks. It takes up to 30 minutes to re-focus after a single interruption or distraction! With ten distractions a day (realistically, it's far more) that's more than half of your day down the drain!

- After communicating your boundaries and putting processes in place to lessen the number of interruptions, set a timer for your tasks. Again, within that timeframe, shut down email, the browser, and turn off your phone. Unless someone is in the hospital, it can all wait.
- At about the 2-hour mark, your brain begins to lose focus and your body needs a break. This means a break, not just shifting gears. 5 minutes will do.
- Drink water! Hydrating the brain is important for focus. Our brains depend on proper hydration to function optimally. Brain cells require a delicate balance between water and various elements to operate, and when you lose too much water, that balance is disrupted. Your brain cells lose efficiency.

#3. Self-sabotage. Fear of success, failure, and/or letting someone down.

In this instance, poor time management is mostly due to the conflicting conscious and subconscious messages you send yourself.

Conscious message: “I want to succeed.

Subconscious message: “If I succeed there will be negative consequences.”

Ask yourself this revealing question to determine what’s holding you back:

What are the NEGATIVE consequences of achieving my ultimate success?

Sometimes simply recognizing the issue is enough to move through it. However, most limiting beliefs are built upon a lifetime of experiences and/or trauma. Professional assistance—a therapist or coach, is the most effective and efficient means to eliminate these barriers.

NOTE: The Emotional Freedom Techniques, also known as Tapping or EFT, is one of the most powerful methods of eliminating fear and negative beliefs. Many of my clients have knocked down life-long barriers in only a few sessions, allowing them to gain the success and happiness they had been striving for.

If you would like to talk about how coaching may help you to achieve your vision, contact me via this [contact form](#) or by phone for a complimentary 30-minute consultation!