



## Congratulations!

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# LTS Lowdown

November 2011

## Time Management

*Doing More with Less!*

### Online Time Tracking Tools...

Every week when it's time to turn in your progress report, and you rack your brain to trying to remember how many hours you studied, you think to yourself, "There must be a better way!" Well... there is! Behold the magic of the internet- there are a wide array of free time-tracking software options available at your disposal, anytime and anywhere you need them! Here are just a few to get you started...

#### Toggl

<https://www.toggl.com/>

Free for single users, simple interface, use online or downloadable version.

#### Tick

<http://tickspot.com/index.html>

Slick interface with lots of advanced options. Free for limited users.

#### YaTimer

<http://www.nbdtech.com/yaTimer/>

Non-web based, a simple, downloadable application. Free trial.

Below is an article I just finished reading about "Time Management in Today's Workplace". As we all work, study and transition back into the workplace most of these attributes translate or should translate in to our lives here and now. Whether taking one course or six courses, just starting or about to finish your program, planning/time management is of the essence. It is a skill that we can use each day and continue to improve upon no matter where we are in life.

Below is a simple outline of the article:

1. Sit down and actually put a plan together (write it down).
2. Focus and prioritize your items of concentration.
3. Evaluate time usage and workload.
4. Re-evaluate weeks plan; mark off completed task, re-task that have yet to be completed.
5. Don't be afraid to ask for help, or to give help!
6. Consistency, Steps need to be done each and every week (same time and place if possible) for plans to work.

The old adage still stands true "plan to work, and work to succeed". Take a quick look at the article and I hope you can glean something beneficial just as I did.

- **Jeff Blomquist**

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## **Time Management in Today's Workplace**

*By Dave Willmer — July 2009*

Because many organizations are operating with leaner staffs and smaller budgets, you may be managing heavier workloads with fewer resources. How can you get everything done without overloading yourself and burning out? Here are a few tips to help you manage your time.

Put together a plan. It might seem cliché, but one of the best tools at your disposal is a simple to-do list. At the beginning of the week, take a few minutes to note — in a PDA, day planner or just a sheet of paper — what you have to accomplish that week, highlighting whatever daily deadlines you may have. Review it at the beginning and end of each day, adjust it as and when necessary, and stay on top of your most pressing priorities.

Focus on just one thing. Contrary to popular belief, multitasking can kill your efficiency. It may seem like you can save time by tackling several projects at once, but if you jump on a conference call while answering e-mail and putting together the agenda for an upcoming meeting, your decreased attention on each task is likely to lead to mistakes or cause you to overlook important items.

If you find yourself being pulled in multiple directions, determine which task is most important and focus on it. Keep in mind the assignment with the closest deadline may not be your most pressing concern. An important production deadline may not hit until next week, but it will likely take precedence over a brainstorming session you have planned for the next day.

Evaluate where you spend your time. Keep track of your workload for a week, noting every time you switch projects and how long you spend on each task. Don't worry about being overly detailed — this process should be informal.

At the end of the week, you should be able to identify where you can streamline or eliminate tasks. In addition, you'll have a good idea of when you are most — and least — productive. Take advantage of your normal rhythm. For example, you might lose steam as the day progresses and realize it's best to tackle your most complex assignments first thing in the morning.

Avoid interruptions. Whether it's the co-worker who insists on swinging by to talk about the TV shows he watched the night before, an incoming text message or a constant stream of e-mails, distractions pop up all the time. To avoid them, schedule some time when you can unplug and concentrate exclusively on the project at hand.

For example, Friday afternoon may be an ideal time to forward calls to voice mail and shut down your e-mail program, at least temporarily. If you're finding it hard to set aside time, block out your calendar as you would for any meeting, so others know you're unavailable during a certain period.

Clean up. Take a moment to step back and look at your work area. Do you know where all your most important documents are? If the answer is no, or even maybe, it's time to clean up. File or discard old documents and e-mails and organize information you need to access frequently.

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It may seem daunting at first, especially if you haven't gone through things in a while, but you'll be surprised at what you can accomplish in a short amount of time. Set aside a few minutes at the end of each day to tidy up. A cleaner, more organized work area will help you locate items quicker and also makes it easier for people to find important files in your absence.

Ask for help. Don't be afraid to request assistance. You may think it's a sign of weakness to ask someone else for help, but it's actually a sign of a smart worker. Top-notch employees know when they can accomplish a task alone and when they need some support to get the job done. Also offer to lend others a hand whenever you're able to spare some time. It's not only a nice thing to do; it also makes it more likely those people will return the favor when you're overwhelmed.

As IT professionals see their workloads grow, the temptation often is to work longer hours to accomplish everything. But the longer your workdays are, the greater the risk of burning out. By managing your time more effectively, you can eventually get more done in less time.

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to anyone who refers a new student\***



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