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Contact us at info@linkmanagementgroup.com

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Building your Chief Executive Skills

Article contributed by Andy Low.

Chief Executives of all businesses today are finding that additional pressures on their time are making it more vital that this time is managed effectively.

Time is only one of several areas that business leaders must manage well to stay ahead of the game.

Examples of others include:

- managing information flow in your office
- managing your staff
- managing your key projects.

Time Planning:

Make this a daily routine

Review your day and plan for tomorrow and beyond

This means allocating time at the end of every day to review what you have done and to set out in a 'to do list' what you need to do tomorrow. This session will allow you to look ahead for tomorrow and the rest of the week/month and establish what your priorities and goals are.

- Treat it like any other meeting-Close the door and allow no interruptions.
- Review the day just gone and tick off the items on your to do list that you have done and reschedule those that need to be done tomorrow or later in the week
- Plan your to do list for tomorrow and beyond. Allocate priorities to each task. These can be urgent (A) and/or important (B). Try to do the urgent things first followed by the important things. Other tasks can be assigned priority codes (e.g. C and D).
- This to do list can also be organised into categories such as people to see, places to visit, people to phone, projects to do and things to delegate Note here Can you delegate the C's and D's??

It is good practice to email or voice mail the people to whom you are delegating before you leave in the evening so that they have a head start in the morning and will be able to plan your request into their own day.

- Manage your paper and voice and email messages. Your goal is to end the day with a clean desk and no outstanding communications. This means with email, ruthlessly using the save, reply or delete keys and with voice mail making a response, however brief. With paper, as with email, you file it, pass it on, or chuck it in the waste paper basket. --'The circular file'!
- Be disciplined. Avoid the temptation not to do this. It will take time to get used to, but the benefits become obvious very quickly.

Finally a note on emails and memos, which will save a lot of time for everyone.

- Encourage the following discipline with all your staff. They will also benefit with their own time management
- When addressing internal emails or memos, only include in the 'to' box those people who actually have to do something as a result of the message. ALL others (e.g. those who need to know what is happening but are not required to do anything) should be in the copy box.
- Imagine how much easier and quicker it will be to process all your emails and memos. You will be able to focus only on those which have your name in the 'to' box. All others you can quickly decide to read and/or file or discard. The 'circular file' is your best friend!!!! Throw away as much as you can!