the organized life

Tracking Your Time with an Audit Chart

A time audit can help you carefully track your time, in 30-minute increments, over the course of a week. This detailed picture of what you're doing each day can help you determine if you're spending your time on the tasks and activities you want and need to be doing.

Here's how to do a time audit:

1. Choose a "typical" week—that is, one in which you're not on vacation, at a conference, or otherwise doing something you don't generally do for more than a day at a time.
2. Print a copy of this chart. Be sure to print in landscape format so you get the full chart.
3. For each half hour, write down what you've done, being as specific as possible (e.g., "answered client e-mails" instead of just "e-mail"). You don't need to track things you do in long, unbroken chunks—such as sleeping—by the half-hour.
4. At the end of the week, review your chart. Which tasks and activities did you spend the most time on? Which did you spend the least time on? Can you identify any "time sinks"—that is, activities that wound up taking much more of your time than you intended? Where would you like to make improvements?

Week of:

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
6 a.m.							
6.30 a.m.							
7 a.m.							
7.30 a.m.							
8 a.m.							
8.30 a.m.							

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9 a.m							
9.30 a.m.							
10 a.m.							
10.30 a.m.							
11 a.m.							
11.30 a.m.							
12 Noon							
12.30 p.m.							
1 p.m.							
1.30 p.m.							
2 p.m.							
2.30 p.m.							
3 p.m.							
3.30 p.m.							
4 p.m.							

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
4.30 p.m.							
5 p.m.							
5.30 p.m.							
6 p.m.							
6.30 p.m.							
7 p.m.							
7.30 p.m.							
8 p.m.							
8.30 p.m.							
9 p.m.							
9.30 p.m.							
10 p.m.							
10.30 p.m.							
11 p.m.							
11.30 p.m.							

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
12 a.m.							
12.30 a.m.							
1 a.m.							
1.30 a.m.							
2 a.m.							
2.30 a.m.							
3 a.m.							
3.30 a.m.							
4 a.m.							
4.30 a.m.							
5 a.m.							
5.30 a.m.							