

*This is the 1st tool of 3 in the Time Management Toolkit series. You can download the tools in this series at: <http://atctools.org/resources/tools-for-transformation>*

Understanding and analyzing how you actually spend your time is a critical piece of gaining better control over your energy, your work and your life. You will likely find it an eye-opening (and possibly unsettling) experience to have a sober and accurate picture of where your time actually goes.

## **STEP 1: Choose your period of study**

Pick the Time Log period now and put it in your calendar. Then, when the time comes for your log, ***please read the instructions VERY carefully.***

- You will need to select a two-week period in which to keep the log (One week is a bare minimum... two weeks are far preferable to get good and representative data.)
- To the extent possible, pick weeks that are “typical” of your work life.
- Some of you may not have “typical” weeks. The 12-14 days don't need to be sequential. In order to get more “typical” data, you could, for example, track 2 days one week, a day the following week, etc.
- Remember, the sole purpose of this exercise is to give you some perspective and baseline data on how and where you spend your time.
- Some of us whose work involves a lot of travel may have two radically different schedules – one at home and the other when we're on the road. Some people have chosen to:
  - review their entire previous year's calendar to determine what percentage of the time they're on the road.
  - then, tracked a number of days in the office and days on the road roughly in the same percentage.
- As with all our exercises, the most important criterion is to make this maximally useful for yourself.

## **STEP 2: Set Up Your Time Log**

- 1) Read the included article, *Time Management Matrix*, by Steven Covey.
- 2) Create categories for how you spend your time, similar to budget categories. The categories should be based on function or role, not activities.  
For example:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ managing interface with the Board</li><li>○ leading workshop</li><li>○ writing my book</li><li>○ supervising staff</li></ul>	But <b>NOT:</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ telephone calls</li><li>○ meetings</li></ul>

- o fund-raising

You will want to include non-work activity as well. For example:

- o love relationship
- o parenting
- o taking care of the house/apartment
- o recreation

There's no right way to do this. The purpose of the categories is to help you understand where *your* time goes. Your categories may look very different than these.

- 3) Number the categories starting from 1. We suggest no more than 20 categories.
- 4) **Don't be scared!** In an effort to make this as easy as possible, we've provided a couple of different tools to help you record and calculate your time use. Decide which process you want to use.
  - o A printable time management log ([TimeManagementLog.doc](#)) and worksheet ([TimeLogCalculationSheet.doc](#)) for calculating your time-use manually.
  - o An Excel database ([TimeManagementDatabase.xls](#)) into which you or your assistant can enter completed hand-written logs. The advantage of you or your assistant entering your completed logs into the Excel database is that it will save you the manual step of calculation.
  - o We unfortunately do not yet have an app that lets you enter data into your smart phone.
- 5) Record the categories either:
  - o in the space provided on the attached form titled [TimeManagementLog.doc](#)
  - o or, if you choose to enter data into [TimeManagementDatabase.xls](#), enter on the first tab of the Excel spreadsheet. (See instructions below.)

### STEP 3: Maintain Your Time Log

1. Keep the time log for a minimum of one week. Two weeks is much better.
  - o Record your log using the [TimeManagementLog.doc](#). Enter your categories in the yellow fields provided prior to printing the form.
2. Record every time you shift your attention. Record everything.
3. Record your time in 15-minute increments. Round up or down to the nearest quarter-hour.
4. Give enough detail to each entry that you will be able to identify it later.
5. After each entry, record the identifying # of the time budget category. You may need to add or adjust categories as you go.

6. Then mark “P” or “U” depending on whether the activity was planned or unexpected (incoming telephone call, drop-in visit, requests from others, etc.). Depending on the nature of your work, this may or may not be a useful distinction. If not, simply disregard.
7. Assign each entry to Quadrant I, II, III or IV according to the model in the Steven Covey article.
8. Keep the log with you at all times.
9. Track time as you go... after each activity. Do not wait until the end of the day and try to recreate your log.
10. At the end of the day, rank your day regarding the criteria included on the log form.
11. Be scrupulously honest. Notice tendencies to want to distort your entries.
12. Maintain the daily discipline. Keep your log impeccably. Watch and learn.
13. There are numbers of time tracking apps that you may choose to use for additional help in tracking such as:
  - <http://www.wonderapps.se/atracker/>
  - <https://new.toggl.com>

#### **STEP 4: Compiling and analyzing your data**

You may opt either to use the included Excel spreadsheet, which is set up to calculate automatically, or calculate manually.

#### **To manually calculate**

Use the document, [TimeLogCalculationSheet.doc](#). (See reference on next page.)

- 1) Add up the amount of time in each of your budget categories. Make a rough calculation of % time spent in each category.
- 2) Review the entries for **P** (planned) vs. **U** (unplanned) for each activity on your log. Make a rough calculation of what % of your activities are planned vs. % unplanned. Again, if this distinction does not seem very significant, please disregard.
- 3) Add up the amount of time spent in each of the four Covey quadrants. Make a rough calculation of % time you spend in each quadrant.
- 4) Add up and average your daily satisfaction/productivity rankings.

## Time Log Calculation Sheet

- 1) On the following chart:
  - Add up the total amount of time spent in each of your budget categories (e.g. total amount of time spent in staff meetings; board relations; etc.)
  - Make a rough calculation of % time spent in each category.
  - Rank each category in relative importance to your purpose and mission. Score the most important activity "1", the second most important "2", and so on.

category	total time	% of total time	rank in importance
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			
13.			
14.			
15.			
16.			
17.			
18.			
19.			
20.			

- 2) Review the entries for P (for planned) vs. U (for unplanned) for each activity on your log. Make a rough calculation of what % of your activities are planned vs. % unplanned.

% of planned (P) activities \_\_\_\_\_  
% of unplanned (U) activities \_\_\_\_\_  
= 100%

- 3) Add up the amount of time spent in each of the four Covey Quadrant. Make a rough calculation of % of time you spend in each Quadrant.

% of time spent in Quadrant I activities: \_\_\_\_\_  
% of time spent in Quadrant II activities: \_\_\_\_\_  
% of time spent in Quadrant III activities: \_\_\_\_\_  
% of time spent in Quadrant IV activities: \_\_\_\_\_  
= 100%

## To calculate using Excel

The spreadsheet **TimeManagementDatabase.xls** is set up for easy data entry, and will automatically make time-use calculations for you. To use it, please follow the steps listed below. (See reference on next page.)

- 1) After opening the spreadsheet, click on the **Setup&Calculations** tab in the lower left corner of the window.

At this point, you can ignore any area that is *not* shaded light yellow (e.g. "#DIV/0!"). These fields are protected, and will display the automated calculations once you have completed the logging project.

- 2) Under the **category** column, enter the names of your time log categories in the spaces that correspond to their assigned numbers. *Please note that the database is set up for a maximum of 20 categories.*
- 3) Under the **rank in importance** column, enter the number you have assigned to each category.
- 4) To the right of the **Setup&Calculations** tab there are 14 tabs for 14 separate days.

### Begin on Day 1 by entering data as follows:

- Under the **Activity** column, give enough detail that you will be able to identify it later
- Record the Category Number under the **Category** column.
- Under the **P or U** column, enter **P** or **U** depending on whether the activity was planned or unplanned.
- Under the **Quad #** column, assign the activity to one of the four Covey quadrants.
- Enter your **Overall productivity** and **Overall personal satisfaction rating** (on a 1-10 scale) in the yellow boxes (under the **lavender boxes**) in the right sidebar.
- *Again, you will only be able to enter data into the yellow-shaded fields. The other fields are locked.*

- 5) Continue entering log data in the remaining tabs. **Note:** some of the tabs may not be immediately visible on your screen. You can scroll back and forth to see them by using the arrow tools (◀ ▶) located just left of the tabs.
- 6) Once you have entered the final day, you will find calculations for your overall time use in the **Setup&Calculations** tab.

Time Management Excel Log.xls

Home Layout Tables Charts SmartArt Formulas Data

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44

TIME LOG SETUP & CALCULATION SHEET

**Instructions**

- This set-up worksheet and the other worksheets (see tabs below) are set up so that you can only enter data into the yellow-shaded cells.
- In the left-hand cells below, list up to 20 overarching categories of your activities. There is no need to use all 20 spaces.
- In the right-hand cells below, rank each category in relative importance to your purpose and mission. Score the most important activity "1", the second most important "2", and so on.
- Fill in the time log sheets (labeled Week 1, Day 1, then "W1,D2" in tabs below) for each day being tracked. Please note that each day is set up to print on two pages, in case you wish to keep a hand-written log.
- Once you have finished logging your time, you will find automatic calculations of time-per-category, % of total time spent per category, and rank in time spent. Please disregard existing data (e.g., "#DIV/0!").

**Time Spent by Category**

#	category	total time spent (hours)	% of total time spent	rank in time spent	rank in importance
1		0	#DIV/0!	1	
2		0	#DIV/0!	1	
3		0	#DIV/0!	1	
4		0	#DIV/0!	1	
5		0	#DIV/0!	1	
6		0	#DIV/0!	1	
7		0	#DIV/0!	1	
8		0	#DIV/0!	1	
9		0	#DIV/0!	1	
10		0	#DIV/0!	1	
11		0	#DIV/0!	1	
12		0	#DIV/0!	1	
13		0	#DIV/0!	1	
14		0	#DIV/0!	1	
15		0	#DIV/0!	1	
16		0	#DIV/0!	1	
17		0	#DIV/0!	1	
18		0	#DIV/0!	1	
19		0	#DIV/0!	1	
20		0	#DIV/0!	1	

**Time Spent by Covey Quadrant**

#	Covey quadrant	total time	% of time	rank in time spent
I	Important + Urgent	0	#DIV/0!	1
II	Important + Non-Urgent	0	#DIV/0!	1
III	Unimportant + Urgent	0	#DIV/0!	1
IV	Unimportant + Non-Urgent	0	#DIV/0!	1

**Planned v. Unexpected Time**

	total time	% of time	rank in time spent
P	Planned	0	#DIV/0!
U	Unexpected	0	#DIV/0!

**Daily Self-Evaluation**

	Average
Productivity	#DIV/0!
Satisfaction	#DIV/0!

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Setup&Calculations Day 1 Day 2 Day 3 Day 4 Day 5

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