

Time Map Worksheet

1. Write down the five (or six) main categories in your life. These are the key areas that you've made strong, meaningful, long-term commitments.

These are the critical areas of your life that must get your attention. If one suffers, they will all suffer. The order isn't important.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

2. For each of these categories you need to be clear about the purpose, the goal. The answer to the question "why? What's the point?"

If you don't have the why, then all the tasks you could do are really meaningless busywork.

- 1) _____

- 2) _____

- 3) _____

- 4) _____

- 5) _____

The answers to these questions then give use a basis for the next step.

3. For each of the categories, now write down three things that you have to do regularly in order for the "why" to happen. Example - What do I need to do regularly to achieve financial security?

These are the three focus areas for each category.

1) _____ (category)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

2) _____ (category)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3) _____ (category)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4) _____ (category)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

5) _____ (category)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. Make a Time Map

One of the most useful things I have ever done was to map out my ideal day. The kind of day that fits all of the important things and still leaves plenty of room for unexpected delays, fun, or just time to stop and do nothing.

Take a look at the example time map. The five categories and the three focus areas in each category need to be represented each week in your schedule.

Take each category and focus area and block out any time you have already committed to them for the week. For example, work – for me is 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM. So I can block out that time for work. I have a #1 written in the block to show me that it corresponds to my category #1.

Do this for everything you've already committed to. If you have regular time committed to something not related to your categories or areas of focus, it can probably be eliminated or just put on hold. If you can't pay attention to your most important categories and focus areas, then it certainly won't matter if you skip, cancel, delay, or eliminate things that really don't matter to you.

5. Your Work Category.

Really, there are only a very few things you should be doing with your time as a consultant.

1. Marketing / networking / selling.
2. Client service - consulting, meetings, idea generation, etc.
3. People / project management - coordination, communication, follow up.
4. Administrative - billing, accounting, etc. (outsourcable)

The fact that there are only 4 things to do makes it easy to get our heads around. And the administrative, billing, accounting can be outsourced.

6. Map out your Work Week.

Now you'll want to map out your work week, making sure you're spending adequate time in each of these areas. You'll also want to make sure you have enough "buffer" time between appointments. The last thing you'll want is to have a plan that has to have absolutely everything happen as scheduled for it to work.

Take a look at the example time map for my work week.

See how I have each of the four critical "work tasks" accounted for each week. Also notice that most of my time is spent meeting in person by phone with the clients. Actual "work" heads-down getting things done kind of stuff (writing, research, competitive intel calls, billing, etc.) is done together on Friday. Grouping things together makes it easier to get momentum and keep on task to get things done.

Having your non-work commitments as unmovable, non-negotiable blocks on your schedule also makes you more aware of time. Knowing that you have to leave by 6:00 each day because someone is counting on you forces you to make each hour count.