



TIME MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST TEACHES HOW TO SAVE UP TO FOUR HOURS A DAY

In a busy day to day, where time seems increasingly scarcer for doing all the urgent and necessary tasks necessary, the feeling of impotence is inevitable for not having been able to execute everything that was on one's to-do list. Establishing priorities, calculating deadlines, maintaining focus on what you intend and wish to do are some artifacts that help with time management, an indispensable method for balancing both professional and personal life and appease any feelings of failure.

In her book *Make time work for you – and achieve extraordinary results*, published by Ser Mais in April, author Tathiane Deândhela, time management specialist with a master's degree from the University of Atlanta and specialization courses at Harvard and Ohio, shows how *time optimization* is the word of order today. "In working with the commercial area for more than 15 years, I noticed that a professional can have the best sales technique in the world, but if this person does not have control over his or her time and automatically his or her life, his or her results will always be inferior to those of other salespeople," she said, reinforcing that it is possible to turn around the situation and become more productive by putting simple measures into practice.

In this month's Interview, Tathiane talks about the importance of self-awareness for identifying one's own strengths and vulnerabilities, and also teaches neuroscientific techniques that promise to make the hours in the day produce much more, improving productivity and quality of life.

O Papel – What personality characteristics define a person who is more proactive or a procrastinator? Are there people who are more productive than others?

Tathiane Deândhela – You can't say that one profile is more productive than another, because each one has its own peculiarities in terms of strengths and vulnerabilities. According to the DISC assessment (behavioral profile tool proposed by psychologist William Moulton Marston), people fall into four different profiles: dominance, influence, steadiness and compliance. The dominance profile is characterized by very accelerated people, who like to execute and dedicate themselves to results. They are, in other words, people who start out by already putting measures into practice. In terms of strengths for the dominance profile, we have quickness to execute any task and decision-making capabilities.

On the other hand, the dominance profile tends to be highly centralizing. This person knows how to execute tasks with so much quality and learns everything so quickly that he or she ends up not having the patience to teach or train other people to do the tasks at the same pace. The habit of centralizing functions and activities ends up becoming an enemy of time management, since the person becomes overloaded for not sharing any of the work. In turn, the influence profile has a strong sociable, political and diplomatic side, which for certain areas like sales and commercial are excellent skills.

This profile is also very creative. On the other hand, they are people who do not like routine and tend to be disorganized, which aspects may have an impact on time management. The steadiness profile stands out for being very helpful. It is characterized by people who are more introspective, good listeners and like to do things with perfection. The bottleneck of this profile resides in the inability to say no. For liking people so much and wanting to help at every moment, the steadiness profile tends to have a lot of difficulty saying no to jobs, causing this person to become overloaded and not meet deadlines on time. Lastly, the compliance profile is very methodical and analytical. Included in this group are people with excellent potential for detailed planning, landscape studies and forecasts. The weak point of the compliance profile is to work with certain slowness for being very perfectionist. This type of person needs to develop the awareness that it's better done than

perfect. As such, I would say that each profile has its strengths and weaknesses. The balance that leads to the combination of these four profiles would be the ideal standard.

O Papel – But is it possible to adopt techniques to change a profile and make it more productive?

Tathiane – In spite of having a little bit of each one of them, we all have a profile that stands out more than the others. The first issue is to know oneself in order to identify which profile has greater emphasis. Only after this identification is it possible to acknowledge our strengths and vulnerabilities, and define an action plan that satisfies our needs. Another important factor to be pointed out is that the identification of one's purpose in life, dreams and objectives is what makes some people more productive than others. People who lead their lives without defined goals or dreams to be conquered have a productivity level that falls way shorter than those who vie to change the world in some way. Having a purpose in life and acknowledging individual motivation factors make any profile much more productive. It's this greater objective that makes a professional prepared to eliminate distraction factors that steal time. Therefore, I would say that the first measure for changing is being aware of one's strengths and vulnerabilities and then identify one's purpose in life. Asking yourself "why do I wake up early every day?" is a good strategy to check whether there's a greater purpose driving a person, which makes one's eyes shine, causes enthusiasm and a desire to do something real.

O Papel – What are some practical techniques for optimizing time and managing tasks more effectively in people's day-to-day, especially at work?

Tathiane – Working with profiles that are complementary to one's own profile is efficient for any area of work. If I am a leader and I have the mission of contracting people to work in my team, for example, it is interesting that I seek profiles different than mine, since characteristics that stand out as my weak points can be strengths in another person, and, with this, help fill the gaps. An important suggestion is to plan the week before it begins. To arrive at the company on Monday morning already knowing where to start your activities

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is much more productive than to prepare a list of tasks upon arriving, losing valuable time right off the bat. Mapping one's own day to identify the time thieves is another valuable suggestion. By identifying these thieves, it's indispensable to establish an action plan to minimize them or, better yet, eliminate them, since they are what cause you to lose the most time in a day. Sometimes, you have a whole plan, a clear purpose, an agenda all ready, but time thieves like social networks, and frequent interruptions, meetings with no time to end and unproductive ones cause you to lose time and keep you from executing everything that was planned.

O Papel – By putting these suggestions into practice, is it possible to win four additional hours in the day?

Tathiane – Yes. By just eliminating merely one the time thieves, the frequent interruptions, which I call 'the gang leader', it is possible to gain 4 ½ hours in a day. By reducing 27 interruptions in the day, for example, we arrive at this gain. This is because, according to neuroscience, for each interruption, we take anywhere between 7 and 14 minutes to regain concentration. By adding up all the interruptions, we arrive at these 4 ½ hours spent simply resuming our concentration after interruptions. Considering that some people are interrupted more than 50 times a day, we can see how much this suggestion can be efficient if put into practice.

O Papel – In this pursuit of better time management, how do we deal with virtual reality demands, which require responses practically immediately?

Tathiane – In order to not become hostage to demands of the virtual reality, it's necessary to keep in mind that it is unviable to check WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram and e-mail messages in real time. To remain connected the entire time, and believe that this is time management, is a mistake. Quite the contrary; it's super nonproductive. Professionals need stop this immediatism and become protagonists of their own story. I say this because time management is highly linked to evolution, that is, the person needs to see that through organization he or she will obtain much more positive results, including new projects and, consequently, new achievements. Organization is the key to constant and gradual evolution.

O Papel – So how do you adapt today's urgency with that uncomfortable feeling that it's impossible to accomplish all tasks?

Tathiane – The big issue is to divide time for each task. How do you do this in practice? By stipulating times for accessing emails, social networks and even WhatsApp. When not in these pre-established times, it is necessary to fully dedicate yourself to other activities, be it a meeting, a client visit or writing an article. Each technology has its

value, and they are powerful tools nowadays, but balance in accessing them is indispensable. This balance, of course, varies according to a professional's routine. Some only need to access their emails once a day, while others need to check them three or four times. Stipulating times for this task to be done is a path for reaching the balance desired. Doing one activity at once is equally indispensable. Once I decide to read a book, for example, I leave my cell phone out of reach. The moment is exclusively for reading. When trying to execute two or more activities at the same time, we don't do either one adequately and run the risk of reaching the end of the day with a series of unfinished activities.

O Papel – Time seems to go by in a different manner when our emotions are exalted, becoming slower or faster. Do emotions in fact influence how time goes by?

Tathiane – Yes, they influence a lot, since 95% of a human being is unconscious. We are much more emotion than reason, in spite of investing a lot in rational development. The trend is for us to be more emotional, including when it's decision-making time. And we notice this as time goes by. It's not by chance that we have the feeling that time goes by faster when we're doing something pleasurable and that the clock seems to not move when we're doing something boring.

O Papel – Do you believe that today professionals have greater awareness about the need to manage time and divide it adequately between their personal and professional life? How does one reach this desired stage?

Tathiane – This balance is highly associated to the values of each person. If the value related to professional recognition is very high, it is highly unlikely that time will be divided 50%-50% between professional and personal life. In turn, for a person whose value towards family is very intense, the priority will be to do more leisure activities with family members. So, it's something very individual. This personal trend may be prejudicial, however, when bad symptoms like body aches and high levels of stress begin to appear among those who prioritize work. When health becomes jeopardized due to the choice that a person made over the best way to use his or her time, it's time to review this dedication ratio between personal and professional life. It's important to point out that this management also is closely linked to a person's phase in life. Youngsters normally tend to give less importance to quality of life, because the moment is ideal for building and consolidating a career. Therefore, it's natural that a young person dedicate more time at work than a more mature person. We cannot affirm, therefore, that the ideal is to work eight hours a day, as we also cannot come to the conclusion that, in order to be successful, a professional must work more hours. Hour load depends on a person's objective and phase in life, and of course how he or she manages its own time. ■