

Elsewhere in JumpStart, we've emphasised the crazy speeds at which things happen in today's world. You can be a township goalkeeper one day and a Leeds United soccer player the next. You can write a letter to friends in London and they can read it moments later via e-mail.

Circumstances change, information is transmitted and people travel at enormous speeds – and it's possible to be so flustered by all the frenzy that you accomplish nothing. This feeling that time is out of your control is a very easy trap to fall into.

There aren't enough hours in the day. I never seem to get anything done! I don't know where the day goes...

Concentrate on results - not on being busy. Many people spend their days in a frenzy of activity, but achieve very little because they aren't concentrating on the right things. Remember that time management is self-management, and that the best thing you can do to be in control of your life, is control your time.

Where Do I Start?

Start by considering that there are only 24 hours in a day and you have to spend some of them sleeping. Which leaves you limited time, perhaps 14 to 16 hours, to do all the things you need to.

You may have priorities (main concerns) that include family, friends, entertainment, sport, religion, politics, clubs or societies, work, health and study. Keep in mind that different areas of your life need attention. Try not to focus too much on any small combination of these, because you'll probably neglect the others.

Scheduling is where your priorities meet the hard reality of the time you have available. You look at the time available to you and plan how you'll use it to achieve the goals you've identified.

By using a schedule properly, you can:

- understand what you can realistically achieve with your time;
- plan to make the best use of the time available;
- leave enough time for things you absolutely must do;
- preserve emergency time to handle "the unexpected"; and
- minimise stress by avoiding over-commitment to yourself and others.

What's The Next Step?

- Be aware of how you presently use your time. Perhaps you should keep a record of how you spend each hour of the day for a week. This will help you gain insight into your current patterns of time management.
- Mark important dates – like exam dates, project deadlines, work deadlines and holidays – on a year planner. Stick the year planner onto a wall or above your desk, to consult it as you need to. Use colour to make things clearer and easier to follow.

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- Transfer relevant information from the year planner to a month planner, increasing the level of necessary detail.
- Transfer information from your month planner to a week planner and then to a daily planner or diary. Diaries are commonly used by successful people as part of their time management technique, so if you don't use one - start today! It's a valuable planning tool that enables you to better manage your time and activities.
- Ask yourself, "What are the main things that I need to do today?" and "What is their order of importance?". Under the heading "Priorities for today", write down your daily tasks and goals, in these categories:
- Once you've set your priorities, you're ready to start your day! At the end of the day, tick off what you've achieved (doesn't it feel great?) and transfer whatever still needs to be completed to the next day's page.
- Always check that you're spending most of your time and energy on Priority A and B activities. Ask yourself, "Am I using my time in the best possible way?" and "Is my schedule realistic?".
- Another benefit of a diary is that you can write down any additional tasks that come your way during the day. Add them to your list and prioritise them too. Remember that flexibility is important – you must be open to adapting your list as things crop up.
- The more efficiently you structure your working time, the more leisure time you'll have. You'll be able to spend some of your day without being worried, guilty or anxious, because even free time forms part of your time management plan.

Priority A: Must do:

Urgent and essential, to do today

Priority B: Should do:

Important, to do as soon as possible

Priority C:

Not urgent: To do when convenient

Be careful not to fall into the trap of post-poning these activities for so long that you never get around to doing them!

Time-Savers

- Remember: it's not how much time you spend but how efficiently you use it!
- Use waiting and travelling time for reading, planning or creative thinking.
- Be proactive (plan ahead). Pack lunches and put out clothing the night before.
- Try to do things right the first time.
- Don't procrastinate (put things off).
- Don't waste time worrying – do something about the problem instead!
- Get unpleasant things out of the way first.

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- Get out of bed as soon as you wake up in the morning.
- Recognise that work expands to fill the time available - and plan accordingly.
- Delegate: trust others and allow them to help you with some of your tasks.
- Be a good listener.
- Concentrate so that you seldom need to double-check.
- Don't be a slave to the telephone or television.

At heart, I'm a social entrepreneur - an innovator for others! I joined loveLife, first as an mpintshi (friend), then as a groundBREAKER. Knowing that young people connect more with who you are, I became honest about my failings, which made me a more powerful agent of change.

I'm a 28-year-old young ward councillor for Mandeni municipality in KwaZulu-Natal. Contrary to popular belief, I don't have aspirations to enrich myself as a politician. Instead I thrive on the impact I make on the lives of my constituents.

My motto? No child growing up in South Africa today should have to experience hunger and hardship that I did.

The oldest of 7 children, I grew up in Sundumbili Township outside the town of Mandeni. My parents sweated to bring in enough money to feed and educate us. When I was in high school, my parents lost their jobs within months of each other and getting an education seemed like a pipedream.

I so badly wanted to pass my Grade 12 that I became a banana-seller, walking from house to house each afternoon and over weekends. Before I knew it I was able to open a little tuck-shop. In 1996 I matriculated with distinctions in most of my subjects. Three years later, I completed a diploma in Public Relations at Anchorlite College.

At heart, I'm a social entrepreneur - an innovator for others, not just for myself. So my friends and I decided to start a youth group in Sundumbili Township, to provide recreational opportunities for young people. We formed a band which sounded good to us, but it didn't attract many takers. Next we formed a drama group, but with the same disappointing results. It seemed that a vital spark was missing and we blamed it on the ignorance of young people.

An opportunity came my way when loveLife opened a Y-Centre in Sundumbili. This bright purple youth centre provides motivation, recreation and sexual health services for young people. There I soon realised that it was I - and not the young people - with the spark missing. With music and drama they also wanted to be inspired by people who walked the talk, who treated young women as equals and faced up to the fact that HIV is devastating our community. I joined loveLife, first as an mpintshi (friend), then as a groundBREAKER. Knowing that young people connect more with who you are, I became honest about my failings, which made me a more powerful agent of change.

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A year later I was appointed as chairperson of Crime-Stop youth organization; gangs were taking over our neighbourhood. I worked with the ANC youth league and other youth forums, mobilizing young people to take control of their own lives. I was now a leader in my own right.

The real purpose of politics is to ensure that resources are distributed fairly and that everybody has real opportunity. Not every loveLife groundBREAKER wants to go into politics but what strikes me is that, since its inception, the one-year service programme has developed over 5,000 community leaders able to deal with local issues. I for one don't want power but really want to continue to be of service. In this regard, I don't plan to change.

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