



Truth of Time Exercise

Most people have difficulty doing what they want because they are unaware of how they are using their time. By measuring where you are using up time, it will help you clarify what you want to do to be more effective.

Because we have so much going on in our lives, it's difficult to see the impact of bringing on something new.

There is only so much time in a day so what we try and do is cram as much stuff as possible that actually takes more time that we truly have ... and then we complain that 'we don't have enough time'.

It's really simple when you look at it this way:

THERE IS ONLY ONE TIME LINE.
THERE IS ONLY ONE YOU.

Maximum Time You Have in a Week

Whatever you do, you cannot change the fact there is a total of **168** hours in a week. There are only 60 minutes in one hour, only 24 hours in one day and just 168 hours in a week.

This exercise will help you understand where you are using the 168 hours you have in an average week. By understanding how and where you use your time, you will see options to where you can make changes in how you use your time.

After you have assessed your time, you can adjust accordingly so you are able to live your life efficiently and avoid burnout.

Steps

1. Take the worksheet and add in your activities in the first **Activity** column. Choose broad categories you do in your life so you don't need more than the space provided. You will notice the form has some general categories already filled out to get you going, but more examples may be:
 - a. Friends
 - b. Time consuming hobbies and sports (soccer/hockey)
 - c. Housework
 - d. Exercise

There is a "lost time" category that is included because every one of us loses time during the week with the little things we don't account for - like getting a glass of water, or taking a restroom break, etc. Typically, we lose about an hour per day.

2. The **Boundary** column helps you define what each activity means. The idea is to ensure no activity overlaps another in how you account for time. For example, if you have Family Time and Spouse Time as activities, clarify the difference between the two such as specifying "time alone with spouse" applies only to Spouse Time and time spent with both spouse and children is considered Family Time.
3. In the **Current** column, estimate how many hours in an average week you spend in each activity. Just round to the nearest half hour, it doesn't have to be detailed. The Lost activity has a "7" filled in because every single person inevitably loses an hour every day doing small, random things such as going to the restroom, getting a snack, and so on. Pay attention to the differences in your weekend compared to your week such as getting more sleep on the weekend, maybe you sleep an extra hour each day.

Important: Do not try and reconcile the total to 168 as you go, just make your best guess at this point. In the next step, you'll have a chance to clean up.

4. Now it's time to total your estimates in the Current column, and then subtract from 168 (the number of hours in a week). You more than likely will end up with a number like +5 or - 8.5. If you happen to estimate exactly at 168, skip to step 6.
5. You know there is only one true time line so you need to bring your time estimates into balance. This is done by adding or subtracting time from different activities until your total reaches 168.

Here are typical areas that may challenge your time estimates:

- Having an overlap between one or more activities because the Boundary activities have not been clearly defined.
 - Over or underestimating large blocks of time like sleep and work.
 - Forgetting an activity
6. You should now have a clearer picture of how you are using your time, look for and highlight the rows you want to change.
 7. In the future column, choose a date sometime in the future (a month works well) and create a new time budget according to how you want your use of time to look like by the date you decided on.
 8. Make sure you double-check your numbers to ensure they total 168.
 9. Locate a blank weekly calendar with the hours shown and map out how you want to budget your time using a highlighter color for each type of activity. You can also go the digital way and have a calendar on your iPad or tablet, there are multiple 3rd party apps that will do what you want.

Credit: The Myth of Multitasking by Dave Crenshaw

Truth of Time Worksheet

| Activity | Boundary | Current | Future |
|---------------------|---|---------|--------|
| Sleep | Total hours of actual sleep | | |
| Prep | Showering, getting dressed, etc. | | |
| Work | Primary job - work related activities, including travel to and from your work | | |
| Lost Time | Getting snacks, browsing the Internet, etc. | | |
| Family Time | | | |
| Personal Recreation | | | |
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| Activity | Boundary | Current | Future |
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