

"Time Management" Consultant Offers a Timely Look at Personality Styles

Most business people today have been drilled in various time-management techniques: set goals, prioritize, use a comprehensive planner, clean up your desk and overcome procrastination. So why are so many still unorganized and losing money, opportunities and balance in their lives?

"One of the saddest things I see is the desperation people feel to do it all," says Pam Vaccaro, owner of Designs on Time, a time-management and organization consultant service. "New technology only puts more in front of us. And the 'one size fits all' style of time management doesn't work.

"Time management is a myth, anyway," she adds. "It's really life management. All we can manage is our behavior around a finite resource called time. It's the only resource that's equal for all."

Vaccaro has pioneered a new system of time management based on the Enneagram personality model. That model describes nine primary personality types motivated by different needs, i.e., interpersonal relationships, success, knowledge, emotional intensity, etc.

"According to personality type, each of us has a different view of time. We view 'time well spent' through the filter of our own personality and motivation. For instance, someone who appreciates knowledge sees time well spent in research; someone who values relationships will take time to volunteer.

"It is a rich, complex system," explains Vaccaro. "Each personality has its primary assets and liabilities. Each has its own fears and security points.

"People procrastinate or take action ineffectively according to their personality styles. Each personality type needs different kinds of time-management interventions."

Vaccaro developed her theory and those interventions in 1992. She teaches them and other time-management topics in seminars to Fortune 500 companies, banks, nonprofit and educational groups nationwide. She also customizes time-management solutions for individuals and enjoys the "long-term, deep friendships that result."

After earning her master's degree in human-resource development at Webster University, she taught there, at St. Louis Community College and for the State Department of Education.

Her customized programs, facilitation skills, humor and engaging activities during the past 20 years earned her the Outstanding Adult Education Teacher Award from the St. Louis Arts and Education Council.

Vaccaro is currently writing a book about her time management and Enneagram personality

insights, and hopes to market it to a large publisher within the next year.

She writes about her time-management philosophy in professional journals like *Enneagram Educator*. Features about her have appeared in local newspapers and national magazines like *Good Housekeeping*.

Vaccaro also serves as a consultant on work-space management to managers and executives. Neither the "innies," who want a clean desk, or the "outies," who want their work in sight, are necessarily organized, she says.

Vaccaro's nine-step process includes using a productive paper-management system and tickler file (with paper reminders in slots for 31 days and 12 months) and customizing space choices to match a person's style.

"You should be able to find anything you need in three minutes or less," she states. She says 15 minutes of planning fosters eight hours of productivity.

Vaccaro believes the crux of effective time management is setting long-term goals, both personal and professional. "How can you manage your time if you don't know what you're managing your time for?" she asks.

In one seminar, she asks participants to write "A Perfect Day" for themselves. "There is almost always balance," she says. "Yet people still want quick fixes and not the hard work of deciding what they want to do with their life and how they'll make it happen."

She points to the fact that "values clarification" emerged in education in the mid-1970s, but was "pushed away." In the 1980s, John Rutherford and others espoused the same theories. Today, "Stephen Covey said it at the right time," she explains. "You have to know and state your principles and be true to them."

Vaccaro designs her own time for her "passions," which are work, spiritual development, relationships and recreation. For years, she has spent part of her summers in New England, writing, sailing and antiquing.

She has traveled all 50 states ("a personal goal" made as a teenager), backpacked alone in Alaska and taken part in Outward Bound experiences.

She recognizes her "four" (Enneagram personality style) tendencies. "I am creative, adventurous, and I value being different," she says. "A typical four avoids the mundane."

A member of the National Association of Professional Organizers and the St. Louis Area Enneagram Association, she also values networks like the Professional Women's Alliance and the National Association of Women Business Owners. She and three other women consultants meet monthly to share "support, camaraderie and ideas to help grow each other's businesses," Vaccaro says. When Vaccaro designed her first seminar in time management in 1980, she knew she had found her passion. "It's so satisfying to help people come to grips with what's important to them."

Pam Vaccaro, CSP is a professional speaker whose expertise in managing time and attention brings her before audiences internationally. She is a Certified Speaking Professional, the highest earned designation by the National Speakers Association. Her company Designs on Time challenges companies and associations to rethink traditional time management. She is most known for tailored programs and innovative ideas.

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