

# Twelve Tips For Getting More Accomplished Every Day

---

**Pam Vaccaro, MA, CSP**

From tabloid to professional journal, a plethora of articles appear during the first quarter of any new year telling you the “10 best ways to.....” accomplish whatever objective in whatever area of interest you want to invest your time. Like so many of us from the new “bullet-point generation,” your eye is quickly drawn to the hopeful list of “how-to’s.” You search for relief from the longer way around doing your increasingly extended lists of “want to do’s” and “have to do’s.”

This year presents more interest in the best ways to do whatever it is you do because of the subtle message that humanity will need to take some giant leap in the years to come. It is not your imagination. There is more to do in less time. The technology revolution did not keep its promise to make life easier.

Here are “10 best plus 2 tips on how to manage your time and balance your life” for now and the future. Some of these suggestions would have appeared on a similar list ten, fifteen years ago...they are that good. Others are less time-tested, but more time appropriate. Some are quick fixes and others demand more time but give a greater return on your investment. The ten plus two:

1. Think snippets: Waiting for blocks of time to do something you want to do is waiting for a “bus that’s not coming.” Blocks of time are a myth now. As soon as you hear yourself say, “There’s not enough time to start something,” know that it’s time to stop and apply the snippet tip. Think, “What can I finish in twelve minutes or less (a snippet of time)?” Write the memo, pull the files you need for a bigger project, make a quick call...tell the person you have three minutes and would like to talk, sit and relax.
2. Get control of meetings: If you organize the meeting, don’t wait for anybody. Start on time, end in less than an hour. Have an agenda that is divided into things to discuss and assign an time limit for each topic. Have an action oriented minutes...who agreed to do what by when.
3. Hire a personal organizer: You have a staff to help you professionally (usually). Personal assistants take your clothes to the cleaners, holiday shop, plan your parties, get your shoes repaired, wait for the tuckpointer, take Spot to the vet or groomer, and get your new license plates. Figure your income and then decide if their fee is worth it. It is.
4. Think simple: What can you live without? Discuss with the important people in your life what things are routines are taking more time from you. Get rid of them. Much is written about simplicity living.
5. Lose “wait”: Procrastinate less. The biggest reason for procrastination? You don’t like doing something! The remedies are: do it, ditch it, barter it, buy it (pay someone to do it), delegate it

(responsibly), or tell yourself 7-11. Work on it seven minutes at the beginning of the day and eleven minutes in the afternoon. It will drive you crazy..you'll want to do more.

6. Send boring e-mails: Always have a verb on the subject line of your e-mails. Outline and bullet-point all your communications. Don't be creative with e-mails.
7. Don't be a sap: Never accept or use ASAP. It is not action oriented. Tell/ask the person the deadline date and exactly what needs to be done.
8. Buy yourself some time: When someone requests an action and even assigns a time, ask, "Is this is the longest possible time I can have for the completion of this task?" It is a rare exception when someone does not give you more time than the original request especially if you promise to meet the deadline and approach the request nicely and with assurance.
9. Sign up: Put a sign in your office that says, "Fifteen minutes of planning sets you up for eight hours of productivity." That is the return on your investment when you plan effectively.
10. Plan by the week: Daily to do lists are only as good as the weekly plan you set up for effective use of your time. Daily lists keep you in the urgent mode. Think twice before you buy an organizer or electronic scheduler that does not have a weekly planning component.
11. Prepare your "FMI" calls: When calling/e-mailing information for yourself, always take a minute to jot down all the questions you want to ask. Tickling your mind before the call, saves you from, "I wish I had remembered to ask." This is a simple but profound time saver.
12. Leave town: Leave without skis, golf clubs, kids, or books. Do the most beneficial time saver of all. Retreat and ask yourself two questions, "What will I have accomplished by the end of my life and what am I doing now to make that happen?" Second question, "What's my game plan?" Less than 6 percent of the readers will consider this most important "10 plus 2 best time management tips." Consider being the 6 percent.

*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.*

[www.DesignsOnTime.com](http://www.DesignsOnTime.com)

*Permission to reprint is granted if this bio is attached to all reproductions of this article.*

---

**Pam Vaccaro, MA, CSP**