

Preface

'The day is of infinite length for him
who knows how to appreciate and use it'

Goethe

If you are busy then you are normal. The modern workplace is unrelenting and deadlines, pressure (and, if you let it get to you, stress too) and a daily avalanche of e-mails are the order of the day. Dealing with this must be part of everyone's stock in trade. The fact that this book is being produced in a second edition is a sign of the perennial nature of its subject.

You are doubtless judged by what you do, by the results you achieve. To survive and prosper you have to be productive, efficient and effective. Time management is about working actively to create efficiency and effectiveness in a way that makes achieving your targeted results more likely. Success does not just happen. You make it happen. So too with your work pattern, *you* create it and do so for good or ill. Here we examine an essential foundation to success.

Good, effective time management is a core skill, a career skill that we all need both to make us able to perform in a current job and to enhance our career prospects. It is a real differentiating factor, one where getting to grips with it can see you consistently achieving what you want in both job and career in a way that gives you an edge on other people, perhaps of equal ability, but who lack this aspect of self-organisation and disci-

pline. Addressing this area is not in any sense an option. It is not that being an effective time manager would be somehow ‘nice’ or maybe ‘useful’; it is essential to making your work and career successful.

Making a difference

The overall principles of time management are straightforward. It has been said that you should: *do what's important, and ignore what isn't* and that *urgent things are only important things that were not addressed when they originated*. True enough, but oversimplifying does not make tackling the details any easier. The process needs application and commitment if some of the elements of good time management are to be put into practice. As things become engrained as habit it becomes easier. But becoming, and remaining, well organised *is* possible. It is not rocket science; indeed what needs to be done is largely common sense. But it is a matter of getting the details right – there is no magic formula, and there are many factors to consider. This book reviews the key approaches, and sets out the techniques and a whole raft of tips to make you more productive. It is designed to be practical, and to make implementation manageable.

Reviewing the process is the first step to improving what you do with your time. You can make a difference, and you will like the difference you make. If you work smarter (rather than just longer and harder), then you will achieve more and find your job less stressful and more satisfying.

Of course, you must read the book and that takes a while (though by definition a good book about time management is surely a short one, as this is). Consider it an investment – take a little time now and you can save a significant amount of time every day thereafter. If you can certainly use some extra time, then that again shows that you are normal.

