

Final words

Next week there can't be any crisis. My schedule is already full.

Henry Kissinger

Making time management work is important to everyone. At worst, the alternative is a life of permanent muddle, pressure and frustration – not to mention the fact of actually achieving less than you would want or believe possible. So, there are considerable advantages to getting to grips with the process. To recap: principally, effective management of your time will allow you to:

- achieve greater productivity, efficiency and effectiveness;
- give more focus to your efforts and make any particular way of working, for example creativity, easier;
- be more likely to achieve your various objectives;
- be more likely to be able to develop the job long term;
- get more satisfaction and enjoyment from what you do;
- find that home and family and job responsibilities fit better together.

These benefits incorporate many things, from fewer missed deadlines to more time for key projects and better relationships with the people working with or for you in the organisation. Further, because time management affects results and

efficiency so directly, it can have a direct bearing on your career progress.

So, there certainly seem to be more than sufficient reasons to make it work for you. Some of the ideas that help seem very obvious and when you take them up they quickly fit in, become habits and work well without great effort. Other aspects of the process are, as we have seen, inevitably harder. At the end of the day, is time management really something to bother about or is it just another management panacea, actually only taking up time that could be better spent simply getting on and doing the job? I firmly believe that it is not just worthwhile, but essential. I hope this book has demonstrated that the time it takes to become better organised need not be prohibitive, indeed that, as good habits develop, the techniques, tricks and, most important, the attitudes adopted, clearly pay dividends.

What makes it all work is not simply having an understanding of the principles and enough ideas, but the discipline and ultimately the habit to make it stick as an overall way of working.

The results stemming from it have been stated. Even so, is the net effect worthwhile? I believe the answer is certainly yes. It is one business technique that not only affects the organisation through the individual's job and the results it generates, but also affects the individual – your job satisfaction, state of mind and general well-being. Becoming a better time manager may take a commitment, and needs working at but, as the saying has it, 'There is no such thing as a free lunch.' Most worthwhile things do need some investment of time and effort. This is no exception. It is no exaggeration to say that good time management can change your life quickly for the better and, if you foster the habits involved, forever (or, more realistically, for the remainder of your career).

Eternity is a terrible thought. I mean, where is it going to end?

Tom Stoppard