



NEWS

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Do More, Stay Organized & Avoid Burnout

Do you struggle with time management? We do! Keeping organized, on-track, and productive is a real challenge for many small business owners. In this issue we'll share our best suggestions for staying organized and avoiding burnout.

Recently Tari wrote and asked,

"What are some of your most effective time management tips? I am actually terrible at time management and before I know it, most of a day has passed and nothing has been accomplished. I have books but hearing it from real people sometimes helps more!"

When I told Cinnamon I was writing this week's newsletter about the topic of time management she started laughing - because neither of us feel like we're good at it. Our problem? Over-commitment, trying to do too much, and frequent feelings of burnout.

Other people struggle with intense distraction that leaves them unproductive. They are constantly reacting instead of being pro-active.

But whether you're running too hard and ignoring the more important things in life, or distracted and achieving too little, the result is the same - intense frustration!

While you might not ever feel like an efficiency guru - everyone can learn to improve.

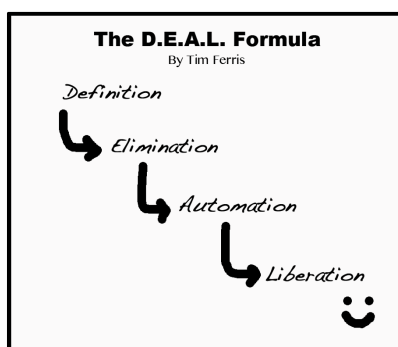
The Tim Ferris D.E.A.L. Model

Tim Ferris wrote [The 4-Hour Workweek](#) in 2007 and it has remained at the top of the best-seller lists for the last seven years. I have the audio book version and I find myself listening to it several times a year. He advocates a simple approach he calls the D.E.A.L. model.

D Is For Definition

The most critical issue involved in efficiency is defining the outcomes you want to have happen - and the outcomes you don't want to have happen. Goals are

the most common way to achieve this. Goals are like a framework for business success - without them work turns into a giant blob of randomness. Do you have a daily goal for what you want to achieve? Do you have a monthly revenue goal? Do you have annual goals? Goals are your first tool to help you stay on-track.



E Is For Elimination

The 80/20 Principle, also known as Pareto's Law says that frequently 80% of the results will come from 20% of the actions. For example, 80% of the sales come from 20% of the customers. 80% of the success comes from 20% of the effort, etc.

Are there things you're doing that you can eliminate and still have a successful business? Are you trying to run two or three businesses within your business, but not doing any of them well? It's time to get focused and eliminate non-vital activities.

A Is For Automation

Once you've identified the duties you need to personally do, it's time to "sharpen the saw" as Dr. Steven Covey calls it. That means take the time to get hyper-efficient at what you do. The height of efficiency is automation. Can you have someone else, or even a software system do your work for you?

A terrific example is typing up emails to new email list subscribers. Using Mail-

Chimp's autoresponder system - you can have those messages sent out automatically when people sign up for your email list, rather than personally emailing every new subscriber. Do you have an autoresponder system set up? (Mail Chimp is free until you hit 2k subscribers.)

L Is For Liberation

In Tim Ferris' book he describes being totally burned out and wanting to go on an extended vacation to Europe. But his business required his constant attention - 24/7. So he started working on ways to get the work done without being personally involved.

Can you take a vacation and still continue to make money through your business? If not, you have a job, not a true small business. Begin working toward the goal of liberation.

3 Lists To Freedom

Author Chris Ducker has another great idea for creating efficiency. He encourages people to make [Three Lists To Freedom](#). The first list includes things you hate doing. The second list includes things you can't do well, but are important. The third list includes things you shouldn't be doing and need to delegate.

Take your three lists and begin identifying items you can eliminate, automate, or hand-off to someone else. Chris runs a Virtual Assistant business. We've tried VAs before, and didn't like it, but maybe it'll work for you.

Conclusion

Efficiency is like exercise - some people don't seem to need it as much as others do, but everyone can benefit from focusing on it. Work your D.E.A.L.!

Do You Have A Question?

We'd love to write about a topic that you are struggling with - so feel free to submit a question. [Submit it here.](#)

Jason