

If You Need to Get Something Done on Time, Ask a Busy Person to Help You

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One of the first things that any business leader learns is that some people can accomplish a hundred times more than other people can. Assign a critical task to one of these highly productive people, and you will be most pleased with the timely results . . . no matter how busy the person is.

How do highly productive people do it? They pay attention to the following principles of working with good discipline:

1. Structure work to make good use of the time available. That means if some of the required tasks take longer than others, they start those lengthy activities first. In addition, they schedule all tasks to be accomplished over the ideal length of time and completed in optimal order.
2. They only take on assignments for which they have enough time and resources to achieve good results and still meet the final deadline. Following this discipline usually means planning a project in some detail before agreeing to work on it.
3. They delegate whatever can be done acceptably by someone else so that the organization accomplishes more than it otherwise would. This means being aware of what other people in the organization are capable of doing and what they are working on.
4. They assign subtasks to outside specialists and organizations when such resources can add important value to the project results. This requires understanding the quality of work that can be done internally and externally within the necessary schedule.
5. They know which disciplines can add important benefits to an assignment. To choose the right disciplines requires a lot of continuing education, experience with a variety of tasks, and an interest in making on-going improvements.

6. They keep asking if anything that's been started is no longer needed. They drop activities that are unimportant or which have proven to be inappropriate.

With so much to do before becoming highly effective, how do such busy people cram in all the efforts required to become so highly productive? It's easy: They combine a never-ending thirst to learn with efficient resources for gathering new knowledge and insights while continually polishing and building on what they already know.

Dr. Oliver Hackl, a Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) graduate of Rushmore University (an online school), is a perfect example of this kind of superior orientation and ability. Let's look at his background and work history to help you see how he became a world-class entrepreneur in his thirties who is equally comfortable doing business in Europe or New Zealand.

A native German, Dr. Hackl's life took on a new seriousness at age nine when his father died. That untimely loss taught Dr. Hackl an important lesson: Live every day as though it might be your last. He acted on that insight by learning as much as he could and never leaving until tomorrow what could be done today.

Two years later his mother married a New Zealander. Dr. Hackl moved with her to the opposite side of the globe and began learning English from scratch. He enjoyed New Zealand and did well in school despite an initial language barrier.

Five years later his mother returned to Germany, and Dr. Hackl made another difficult adjustment. But he vowed to return to his newly beloved New Zealand.

After finishing secondary school in Germany, Dr. Hackl faced compulsory military training in the German Army. For financial reasons, he chose to spend 24 months in the military rather than the required 18 months. This decision meant learning a lot more, but Dr. Hackl likes to learn and was not concerned. He received valuable education in personnel administration and training and eventually served as a non-commissioned officer in roles where he was allowed a lot of latitude.

After the two-year army stint, he studied mechanical engineering while also spending some time learning about business administration, a field he enjoyed. Dr. Hackl next enlisted through a 14-year contract to become an officer in the German Air Force. Four rigorous years of study helped him complete officer's training and earn a degree (Diplom-Betriebswirt (FH) that's the German equivalent of an MBA) from the University of the German Armed Forces, majoring in information and communication technology and business organization.

Having been fascinated by computers since he was 14, Dr. Hackl also took every possible course and accepted every voluntary assignment he could to develop his knowledge of computer languages and how to apply computer technology. In addition, he took special training in how to lead a platoon of 100 men. Still wishing to learn more, Dr. Hackl took additional courses in English and IT while in the Air Force.

Loving the military, he was disappointed when a broken ankle ended his Air Force career. However, this unexpected change opened up new opportunities to learn through more studying and applying what he had already studied.

While Dr. Hackl was in the Air Force, his mother and older brother started a major company trading wooden components for the timber and furniture industries. Dr. Hackl joined them after the accident, starting in a sales role for the company. Within three years at the company, he had worked in many different functions and roles, becoming quite expert in the furniture industry.

When he was 34, Dr. Hackl was pleased to realize that he had achieved a high level of knowledge in many business management disciplines. He decided it was time to become his own boss to test how well his management lessons had been learned. He purchased a wooden parts production company out of a bankruptcy proceeding in Austria and soon directed the company into healthy profitability.

While many people would have been happy to settle back and enjoy the business success, Dr. Hackl decided to earn a DBA degree and hoped to gain skill in delegating daily tasks to his colleagues while learning more about advanced management practices for international businesses. Already working a 75-hour week, he knew that studying to earn a DBA degree would challenge him to accomplish more as a leader in less time. During his

DBA studies, Dr. Hackl often turned to himself as that busy person who can get everything done on time.

Through fitting DBA studies into spare moments during his long and hectic work week, Dr. Hackl improved his already impressive time management skills. The company continued to prosper. Graduation brought new opportunities: After earning his doctorate, Dr. Hackl found that business people treated him with more respect and it was easier to work with others to accomplish important tasks.

When a fire destroyed the company's production facilities in 2008, Dr. Hackl was able to turn that potentially negative event into an advantage. He quickly re-started the company's production while more than doubling capacity to permit increased sales while lowering costs. As a next step, he will add a power plant fueled by wood chips and shavings. When those operations are running smoothly, his production manager will take over the company. At that point, Dr. Hackl intends to accomplish his long-held dream by relocating to his beloved New Zealand, starting another company there, and enjoying the home, boat, and lifestyle of his dreams.

When asked what might be next on the horizon, Dr. Hackl responded that he might start on a Ph.D. With his unquenchable thirst for knowledge and accomplishment, I wonder if one Ph.D. will be enough to keep him stimulated for a lifetime.

As you can see, a lot of preparation went into Dr. Hackl's quick climb to business success after leaving the German Air Force. After having gained the right knowledge and discipline, he quickly surpassed what most people accomplish in a lifetime.

How can you become your most effective employee, the one who always gets key tasks done on time?

What do you need to learn?

What are you waiting for?

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