



Talk versus Action—Doing

Effective managers get things done. There are a million sayings about it. Perhaps my favorite is "walk the talk". Our people follow our example. Once we have planned out our priorities, communicated our plans, and ensured that the management processes and tools are all in place, it is time to execute brilliantly.

Identify the top payoff activities that you need to do and schedule time to do them. This is much more than a "to do" list. This is actually scheduling time on your calendar to get the work done. Then treat that time as respectfully as if it were a meeting with senior management. Keep your appointment with yourself and do the specific work you have scheduled. The temptation will be to peruse email, make a couple 'quick' calls and take care of lots of fast little odds and ends. **RESIST THE TEMPTATION!!!** High performers do the important things first,

NOT the easy things!

Remember that your team will follow whatever example you set. If they are to execute the important things, then it is absolutely fundamental that you do so first and consistently. Then hold them accountable for their end of the projects. What do you think will happen once you operate like this for a few weeks? Here's what you might expect:

1. Your important projects will get and stay on track.
2. Your people will either step up their efforts, or look for other work.
3. You will have fewer 'fires' waste your time.
4. You will start to sleep better, because your mind will be at peace.

Go get it done!

Timely Humor

An employee advised his supervisor that she could complete a project in eight days.

"Eight days!?" cried the supervisor. "I could travel around the world in eight days!"

"If you do that," replied the employee, "I'll have it done for you in five."



Trivia Time

"Horology" is the science of measuring time, or the art of making a timepiece.

If you are over 100 years old, chances are good -- about 80% -- that you are a woman.



A Timely Decision

Effective Use of Overtime

As a young manager, I knew pretty much everything. It was beautiful then, having such certainty over so many issues - and being so open and willing to share my knowledge so freely with anybody that would listen! It's incredible to reflect back on how much certainty I have lost over the years; how much more gray the world is than the black and white clarity I used to see.

Academia, textbooks, articles, even snippets from a daily blog seem to present the world as if it were concrete and predictable. Reality is quite different from that. There are real, live people that each of us

care about who may be hurt by our clear, sharp opinions. We watch pundits on TV, who are paid well to violently disagree, attack each other verbally, and too many young managers use them as role models. They then enter the workforce and express themselves accordingly. The ensuing carnage isn't pretty.

Real leadership must include picking our issues, and then expressing our viewpoints with sensitivity and respect. It's far more art than science, and observing a great leader is much like viewing a piece of art. It leaves you in awe and full

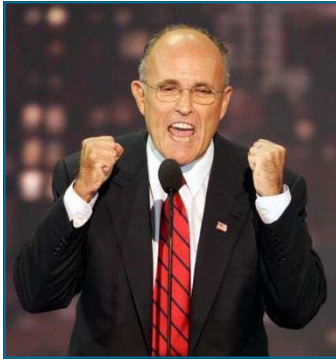
of respect and appreciation. If you have such a leader in your life, you may choose to model your behavior accordingly. If you are not yet garnering that reaction from your colleagues, you will no doubt want to reconsider your approach over time. When an issue is truly important to me, I often stand back and evaluate the stakeholders, those who will be impacted by my opinion and stance. I try to imagine the way it looks and feels to them before I publicly express myself, and then, if and when I open my mouth, I do it with their perspective well considered.

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Make it a Great Presentation



Think about the very best presentations you've ever witnessed. What did they have in common? Now recall a really poor presentation. How was it different? My hunch is that the great presentations had the following in common:

Enthusiasm or passion - the speaker seemed to really care about what he or she was talking about. It was conveyed via gestures, voice emphasis and substance.

Connected to you - the speaker spoke in terms that you could relate to, about a topic that was relevant to you in some way. It was neither above nor below your

intellectual comfort zone. The odds are that you also agreed with some aspect of what the speaker discussed.

Simple and easy to follow - the speaker didn't clutter his or her case with extraneous information or marginal points. Rather, the talk was focused and clear. Points seemed to flow appropriately and hang together well.

Clear visual aids - whatever was used was large enough to be seen, and clear. It actually supported what was said rather than the other way around.

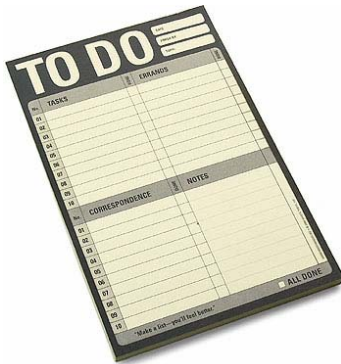
Now let's recall that really poor

presentation. The odds are that at least three of the four items listed above were badly compromised. Perhaps the speaker's nerves or speaking style got in the way of enthusiasm, or worse, the speaker was forced to talk about a topic he or she didn't believe in. If it didn't seem to make sense, the issue could have been one of organization or clutter. Maybe it was just not a topic that you could connect with.

The next time you are asked to make a presentation, keep it simple, enthusiastic, clear and connect it to your audience. Preparation is the path.

To-Do Lists

"...prioritize your to-do list using a number system"



One of the most effective methods of managing your time is simply knowing what you have to do and when you have to do it. To-do lists can help you keep track of your work and achieve greater efficiency. They can also enable you to feel a sense of accomplishment and control over your schedule as you complete and remove tasks from your list.

Your to-do list should be organized into two sections – scheduled and unscheduled activities – to help you plan your time. If possible, schedule your unscheduled tasks to help you get them done within a

certain time frame. Additionally, prioritize your to-do list using a number system. For example, "1" would indicate the most important tasks, "2" would denote tasks of secondary importance, and "3" would indicate your least important, perhaps even non-essential tasks. At the end of each day, transfer unfinished tasks on your to-do list to your next day's list.

Use these guidelines to maintain your to-do list:

- Get in the habit of writing and reviewing your to-do list every day.
- Carefully evaluate each task

to make sure it is absolutely necessary.

- Be realistic and aware of your schedule limitations. Don't overbook your schedule.
- Don't create a to-do list that is a random collection of activities. Specify priorities and objectives.
- Make large tasks more manageable by dividing them into smaller parts, and complete one part at a time.
- Before initiating a task, consider if it can be delegated.



"Time - all men neglect it; all regret the loss of it; nothing can be done without it."

Voltaire
(1694-1778)

