



Three Skills for Effective Multi-Tasking

by Peggy L. McNamara, author and professional speaker

Whether you like it or not, multi-tasking is a way of life these days. The ability to deal with multiple tasks going on at the same time is a needed skill for getting through your workday and personal/family demands.

Here are three skills that will help you be more effective:

1. Constant Prioritizations. All the distractions, chaos and choices you have can get in the way of accomplishing what you need to on any given day. Multi-tasking is consistently making sure that you are staying on track with the highest and best use of your time and energy. What are your most urgent and pressing priorities today? Are you working on or towards them?

The ability to figure out your priorities and follow through on them is crucial. Understand what is required for you to consider it a successful day and, with all your might, follow through on those tasks. Don't allow yourself to get sidetracked. If something pressing shows up that you weren't planning on, deal with it and get back to task.

The toughest part with this skill is figuring what your priorities are; once you have that figured out, the rest is easy.

2. Deal with things as they come along. Take a deep breath. Don't make more out of the situation than there really is. Figure out the solution(s) versus who's to blame. Think through your options and be decisive. Rehashing decisions, or being indecisive, are two big factors that can waste your time and get in the way of effectiveness. Trust yourself to do what is right and take whatever steps are needed to get through the situation.

3. Look at each "juggling act" as an opportunity.

Multi-tasking is like juggling a bunch of plates and keeping them all up in the air. Don't allow yourself to get stressed out by simply thinking about all that has to be done. Many people overwhelm themselves, to the point of a migraine, just by their thoughts. Please clarify, how does that help?

It takes mental discipline, that only comes from experience, to keep a smile on your face while being pulled in lots of different directions. Look at each day as an opportunity to improve your skills, understand those around you better, and make the choice to find the good in whatever comes along. When you make the decision to look at your day

as a training ground for better things in the future, it helps to see the opportunity.

Many people are busy. The ability to multi-task effectively is not necessarily "being busy;" it is the skill of getting things done without getting mentally undone.

Peggy L. McNamara is an effectiveness expert that works with organizations that want to Stimulate Some Action™ and with association executives that want inspiring, practical value from their events.



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