



Time Management Lessons from Mary Kay Ash

“In 1963, when I began Mary Kay Cosmetics, no one thought I would succeed – not even my accountant or my attorney.

“To prove them wrong, I had to organize every minute of every day. Time was too precious to waste.

“Here are some time-management lessons I taught myself over the years:

- Each night, list the six most important work-related tasks you must do the next day. List only six because if you make the list too long, you most likely will feel overwhelmed and discouraged – and you won’t tackle any of them. Anyone can accomplish six things in one day. When you finish a task, cross it off your list. If something doesn’t get done, make it one of the six items on your list for the next day.
- Add hours to your day by getting up early. Before I started my company, I was a single mother supporting three children and trying to go to college. To accomplish everything I wanted to achieve, I decided to get up two-and-one-half hours early. It’s important to get a good night’s sleep, so avoid getting hooked on television programs or anything else that will keep you up late.
- Don’t waste dollar time on penny jobs. It amazes me how people who are well-paid for each hour they work, waste time doing chores they could pay a professional, or their kids, a fraction of what they earn to do them. We think of such a service as a luxury or a waste of money. Paying for house-cleaning is only a waste of money if you’re not making valuable use of the time you’ve saved.
- Do two things in the time you used to do one. People assign each task into a separate slot, and one slot is tackled only when another is empty. I listen to motivational tapes and audio books while I apply my makeup. If I’m waiting at a doctor’s office, I bring work to do until the doctor is ready for me.
- Don’t be afraid to say ‘no.’ If I accepted all the requests I had to serve on boards or committees and to attend luncheons and dinners, I wouldn’t have time to accomplish anything else. Help out when you can. But, there aren’t enough hours in the day to do it all. You can’t manage your time if you give it to everyone who asks for it.
- Program yourself to succeed. Having something that you love to do, someone that you love, and something to look forward to, are the foundation of true happiness. To achieve this success, you must always have something new on the horizon to work on. Have short-range and long-range goals. And, don’t worry if your long-range goals seem impossible to attain. You can reach any goal if you keep moving toward it one step at a time.”