

# Time Management

## The SMART Way

SMART is a convenient acronym for the set of criteria that a goal must have in order for it to be realized by the goal achiever.

- **SPECIFIC:** In order for you to achieve a goal, you must be very clear about what exactly you want.
- **MEASURABLE:** All goals need some form of objective measuring system so that you can stay on track and become motivated when you enjoy the sweet taste of quantifiable progress.
- **ACHIEVABLE:** Setting big goals is great, but setting unrealistic goals will just de-motivate you. A good goal is one that challenges, but is not so unrealistic that you have virtually no chance of accomplishing it.
- **RELEVANT:** Goals, in and of themselves, do not provide happiness. Goals that are in harmony with our life purpose have the power to make us happy.
- **TIMED:** Without setting deadlines for your goals, you have no real compelling reason or motivation to start working on them. By setting a deadline, your subconscious mind begins to work on that goal, night and day, to bring you closer to achievement.

## Eat That Frog!

"If the first thing you do each morning is to eat a live frog, you can go through the day with the satisfaction of knowing that that is probably the worst thing that is going to happen to you all day long!"

Your frog is the task that will have the greatest impact on achieving your goals, and the task that you are most likely to procrastinate starting.

**"If you have to eat two frogs, eat the ugliest one first!"**

This is another way of saying that if you have two important tasks before you, start with the biggest, hardest, and most important task first.

**"If you have to eat a live frog, it does not pay to sit and look at it for a very long time!"**

The key to reaching high levels of performance and productivity is for you to develop the lifelong habit of tackling your major task first thing each morning.

## Using the PAT Approach

- **PURPOSE:** What is the purpose of the meeting? We usually state this in one short sentence. Example: "This meeting is to review the new invoice signing policy." This helps people evaluate if they need to be there. It will also help you build the agenda and determine if the meeting was successful.
- **AGENDA:** This is the backbone of the meeting. It should be created well in advance of the meeting, sent to all participants and observers, and be used during the meeting to keep things on track.
- **TIME FRAME:** How long will the meeting be? Typically, meetings should not exceed one hour. (In fact, we recommend a fifty minute meeting, starting at five past the hour and ending five minutes before the hour.) If the meeting needs to be longer, make sure you include breaks, or divide it into two or more sessions.

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## The Glass Jar

The glass jar represents the time you have each day, and each item that goes into it represents an activity with a priority relative to its size.

- **ROCKS:** Plan each day around your most important tasks that will propel you toward achieving your goals. These represent *important, but not urgent* tasks that move you toward your goals.
- **PEBBLES:** Next, fill in the space between the rocks with pebbles. These represent tasks that are *urgent, and important*, but contribute less to important goals.
- **SAND:** Now add sand to fill your jar. In other words, schedule *urgent, but not important* tasks, only after important tasks.
- **WATER:** Finally, pour water into your jar. These trivial time-wasters are *neither important nor urgent* and take you away from working toward high return activities and your goals.

## The Urgent/Important Matrix

