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The ABA Insider™

Insights for improving profits, cash-flow, and quality of life

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The Power of Focus

Everyone seems to be rushing through life at such a hectic pace. We read articles about finding more time or making more time, but the fact remains there is a finite amount of time in each day, and a lot to do each day! While it may not be likely that you can simply cut your "to do" list in half each day, improving your focus and setting priorities can help you get more done and feel better about it at the end of the day. Following are five ways to increase focus and help you focus on the priorities at work.

1. **Write it down.** Whether it's a brief phone call or a large project broken down into smaller steps, planning your day and reducing it to writing has proven to increase success in achieving results. Besides preventing things from falling through the cracks, writing things down sharpens your focus by reinforcing what is important right now, just for today.
2. **Prioritize your list.** In addition to ensuring the most important things get done, prioritizing clears your mind by not worrying about what to do next.
3. **Do only one thing at a time.** Many people are proud of how they can multi-task, but in reality even the multi-taskers do one thing at a time (they just bounce back and forth very quickly). Focusing on only one thing at a time is perhaps the most powerful way to plow through tons of work.
4. **Clear your space.** Keep your work space clear of everything but the one thing you are working on at the present time (see #3). Seeing piles of additional work is distracting and can fragment your attention.
5. **Block your time.** When writing down your tasks for the day, try to group like-items together, such as returning phone calls or meeting with people. It is easier to maintain focus on a writing project or meeting if you aren't interrupted by phone calls or e-mails that pop up frequently.

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