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Career Moves

Decide best ways to utilize your 168 hours a week

Denver Business Journal - by [Judith Briles](#)

Winter will be here in a few months. Imagine being in a car that's stuck in snow. You forward and reverse the gears, hoping to jimmy yourself out of the rut. The wheels are in motion, but your car isn't.

Are you like your car -- living a life where there's action, but no real movement or completion of task?

Is there just not enough time in the day to get done what you want to do, within or outside of work? Do you ever feel you have too much on your plate to handle? With daylight savings ending soon, do you think you might lose an hour in your day?

According to Jeff Davidson, author of "The 60 Second Organizer" (Adams Media, www.BreathingSpace.com), "Everyone has 168 hours a week. One way or another, everyone fills them."

He lists the cumulative amount of years you spend doing various activities. "Any activity consuming 30 minutes of your day consumes a year of your life," he says. "During a work life of 48 years (from ages 22 and 70), an activity that you engage in for an average of 30 minutes each day consumes one complete year of your life."

Now, 30 minutes doesn't seem like much, and if you are like the average employee, you kiss off almost two hours a day just at work. It's called shirking, such as phone chats, idle chatter with co-workers, computer games and surfing the Internet. Home could add another two if you consider TV time.

Using Davidson's formula, you could see that -- poof! -- four to eight years of your productive life have passed you by. You've ambushed yourself.

With this new perspective, you can eliminate activities that don't fit with what you want, or where you want to go or be. It means you must take control, and both look for new ways to accomplish your goals and be willing to question your routines.

- Sabotaging routines, rituals and gottas -- If you feel you don't have enough time in the day, the question is: What are you so busy doing? What are your routines, rituals and gottas?

You may have a morning ritual of reading the paper before leaving for work. Instead, could you listen to the news in your car on the way to work and skim the paper in the evening for items you missed.

You may routinely open every piece of mail that comes your way. Could you just dump all the junk mail in the trash and not open any of it? How often do you really act on the sales pitches that fill most mailboxes?

You gotta get to this meeting or start a new project or go to this event. You know the "gottas." We all face them throughout the week, almost beating ourselves up in completing some superficial task. Truth be told, it really is no big deal if it is bypassed.