

Good Time Management Builds Confidence By Karen Whiting

We can't avoid unforeseen problems, but we can create backup plans and manage time to make the most of our days. Rushing and time crunches zap confidence. It's easier to feel prepared when you can think things through and have a strategic plan in place.

One of the biggest traps in time management is poorly estimating the time for routine tasks. Keep a log tracking how long you spend on routine chores and special projects. How much time you spend checking email, paying bills, and placing orders might surprise you.

Review your log weekly, at first, and then monthly. Schedule the right amount of time for each activity. Build in time cushions between activities to avoid burnout. Let these moments be down time to relax. Don't let other tasks overflow into them. Schedule those cushions between meetings and busy tasks.

Streamline time with people. Ask questions to understand customer lifestyles, priorities, and problems that need solutions. Knowing the needs and interests of regular customers helps you suggest and order books that will sell. Keep an online file of regulars in a database with emails, needs, and interests so you can find them fast and easily email when you have new books they might want to review.

For routine work like stocking shelves, ordering, and bill pay, set aside regular times for these tasks and try to streamline like tasks together. An example might be stocking certain shelves on specific days, like fiction on Fridays.

Consider finding an accountability partner who can view your time choices objectively. (See article called, *Time and Accountability Partners*, in the *Time 4 Retailers* tab of the flash drive or *Retailer/Librarian* page on ChristianAuthorsNetwork.com/Retailers-resources/) Together, assess your strengths and weaknesses. Use your strengths and delegate your weaker tasks. Understand the strengths of your employees and volunteers. A great non-fiction book to help assess you and your employees is *Strengthfinders 2.0*. You'll be more enthused and confident leading from your talents and allowing the strengths of others to shine while shoring up your business.

Check your expectations. See if they match the reality of time you can invest. Understand which dreams will have the biggest impact and which ones are desires, but not needs. Write your dreams and post them so you'll remember to pray for opportunities to fulfill them. For now, focus on dreams that will make a difference and dreams you can realize now. Let other dreams be part of your future hopes and plans.

In your daily routine include time for positive reflections. This helps you focus on successes, gratitudes, and blessings. At the end of each day, be thankful for accomplishments, progress, and the kindness of people around you. A grateful heart helps you move forward to the next day with hope and confidence.

Bio: Karen Whiting is an award-winning author of nineteen books. She writes to grow tomorrow's wholesome families today. Her newest release is *The One Year Devotions for Active Boys*.

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