

February 4, 2019
By Rick Boxx

IMPORTANCE OF PERFECT TIMING

A lot of things go into the realization of success in business: Quality workmanship and service. Execution of a novel idea. Effective leadership and direction. Those, for the most part, are factors we can manage. One factor, however, that we often overlook is timing. Especially, perfect timing.

In his book, *When: The Scientific Secrets of Perfect Timing*, Daniel Pink addresses the importance of timing as it affects productivity and ultimately, our success. A Wall Street Journal article summarized his findings, pointing out ways Pink suggests for better allocating our time at work throughout the day.

His research discovered that we are “smarter, faster and more creative in some parts of the day than others.” Confirming these conclusions, Russell Foster, a neuroscientist, claims, “The performance change between the daily high point and the daily low point can be equivalent to the effect on performance of drinking the legal limit of alcohol.” That may seem like a startling comparison, but it is probably very accurate for assessing when we can do our best work.

Personally, I have learned that my best time for writing is early morning. My mind is fresh after a good night’s sleep and ideas seem to flow more quickly and smoothly. Not everyone, of course, is a “morning person.” Some people do their best work in the late morning, in the afternoon, or even late at night.

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The key is to realize when you are most productive and make certain to safeguard that time from unnecessary distractions.

In reading the Bible, I have found it interesting to find that it places a high premium on our effective use of time – and timing. For instance, we are told, *“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity...” (Ecclesiastes 3:1)*. We can apply this principle in a number of ways, but one of them is that there is a best time for us to pursue our work, meaning we should strive to schedule other important, but non-work activities for other times during the day, week or month.

Another passage, *Ephesians 5:16, emphasizes the urgency for “making the most of your time, because the days are evil.”* This does not mean time in itself is inherently evil, but time passes quickly. Not capitalizing on the time we have can result in failure to achieve desired goals and objectives. At the very least, we will have missed out on the opportunity to pursue those projects when our productivity and efficiency levels are at their peak.

Looking at the example of Jesus Christ, we find that He also designated specific times for doing certain things, including prayer and time alone with God the Father. Jesus was much in demand, and at all hours of the day people were thronging around him, whether as observers or seeking His attention to address specific needs they had. For this reason, He devoted many early mornings to time alone, even from His disciples.

Mark 1:35 tells us, “Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.” Many people I know realize how important it is for them to begin the day by focusing on their relationship with God, knowing they will require His direction, wisdom and strength to carry out the work and deal with challenges they face later on.

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As the adage reminds us, timing is everything. There is a time to work, a time to rest, and time to play. Also, a time to ensure that we sustain a strong, growing relationship with the Lord.

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Reflection/Discussion Question

1. When you think of the importance of timing – perfect timing – as it relates to your work, what comes to your mind?
2. Most people do have certain times during the day when they feel most productive and creative? Have you found that to be true for yourself? If so, what part of the day is that – and what do you do to ensure you optimize the use of that time?
3. At the end of the workday, do you ever evaluate whether you have made the most of your time that day? How do you feel if you conclude your time could have been better spent – that you failed to practice “perfect timing”?
4. If even Jesus made certain to set aside time for prayer and spiritual renewal – what many people would call a “quiet time” – what does that say about us?

NOTE:

If you have a Bible and would like to read more about this subject, consider the following passages:

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8; John 7:1-9; 2 Corinthians 6:1-2; Colossians 4:5-6; 1 Peter 3:15

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