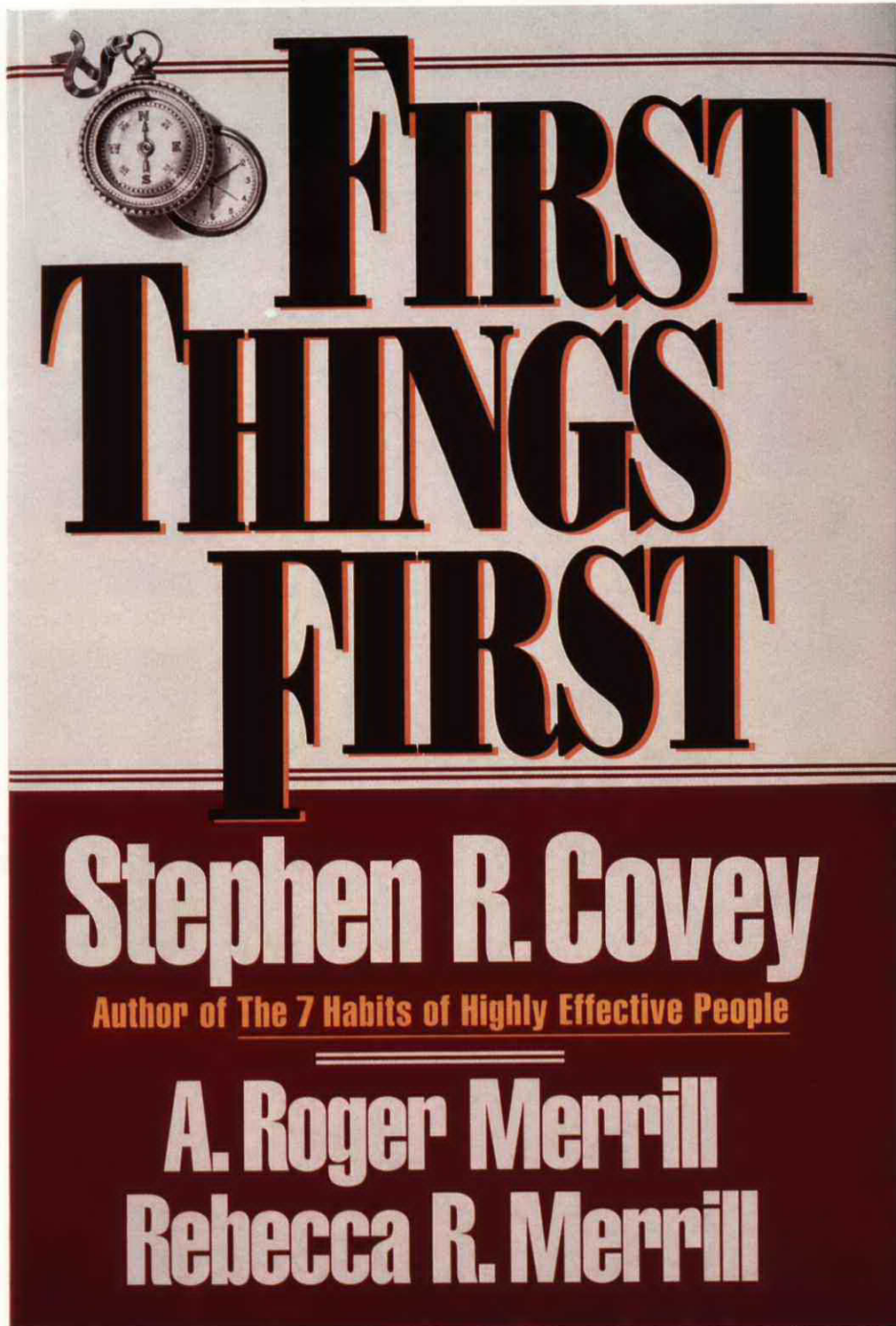


"Profound and powerful, *First Things First* shines a brilliant light into the semi-darkness of time management techniques. Instead of seeing fragments of our lives, we can now see the whole picture. This book can be the lever with which you can truly change your life."

Scott DeGarmo, Editor-in-Chief, *SUCCESS* magazine



Harvard
Economist Predicts
MLM Explosion

Book Bonus: Stephen Covey's Time-Management System - p.8A

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From the book **FIRST THINGS FIRST** by best-selling time management expert **Stephen R. Covey**.

First Things First

IF YOU WERE TO PAUSE AND THINK SERIOUSLY about the "first things" in your life — the three or four things that matter most — what would they be? Now, the tough questions: Are these things receiving the care, emphasis, and time you really want to give them? • Why is it that so often we do not put our first things first? • For years, we've been given methods, techniques, tools, and information on how to manage and control our time. We've been told that if we keep working harder, learn to do things better and faster, or use some new device or tool to organize in a particular way, then we'll be able to do it all. So we buy the new planner, go to the

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new class, read the new book. We learn what we need to know, try to apply that knowledge, and try harder. And what happens? For most people, the result is increased frustration and guilt. Some familiar responses:

- I need more time!
- I want to enjoy my life more. I'm always running around. I never have time for myself.
- My friends and family want more of me — but how do I give them the time?
- I'm always in crisis because I procrastinate, but I procrastinate because I'm always in crisis.
- I have no balance between my personal life and work. It seems like when I take time from one for the other, it just makes matters worse.
- There's too much stress!
- There's too much to do — and it's all good. How do I choose my priorities?

Traditional time management suggests that by doing things more efficiently, you will eventually gain control of your life. The implication is that increased control will inevitably bring peace and fulfillment.

We disagree.

Basing happiness on the ability to control everything is futile. While we can control our choice of action, we cannot control the consequence of our choices. We can't control events in the world, even that part of it nearest to us. Those results are governed by universal laws or principles. Thus, the idea of achieving complete control is a fallacy. This is the reason why so many people become frustrated with the traditional "time management" approach to life. Even if someone waved a magic wand and gave you 15 to 20 percent more time, it might not solve your problems — if you aren't doing things right.

Ours is a *principle-centered* approach to time management. It transcends the prescriptions of faster, harder, smarter, and more. Rather than offering you another *clock*, this approach provides you with a *compass* — because where you're headed is more important than how fast you're going.

In one sense, this approach is new; in another, it's very old. It's deeply rooted in classic, timeless principles. We live in a modern society that loves shortcuts. Yet quality of life cannot be achieved just by taking the right shortcut.

In truth, there is no shortcut, but there is a path. A meaningful life is not a matter of speed or efficiency. It's much more a matter of what you do — and why you do it — than of how fast you get it done.

The Clock and The Compass

For many of us, there's a gap between the clock and the compass — between the way in which we spend our time and what is deeply important to us.

Decisions are easy when it's simply a question of "good" or "bad." We know that some time expenditures are wasteful, mind-numbing, even destructive. But for most of us, the issue

is not the difference between the "good" and the "bad," but between the "good" and the "best." So often, *the enemy of the best is the good.*

I knew a man who was asked to be the new dean of the College of Business of a large university. When he first arrived, he studied the situation the college faced and felt that what it needed most was money. He recognized that he had a unique capacity to raise money, and he developed a real sense of vision around this. He came to see fund-raising as his primary function.

This created a problem at the university because past deans had focused mainly on meeting day-to-day faculty needs. This new dean was never there. He was running around the country trying to raise money for chairs, research, scholarships, and other endowments. The day-to-day things were not being attended to as when the previous dean served. The faculty had to work through his administrative assistant, which was demeaning to many of them, who were used to working with the man at the top.

The faculty became so upset with his absence that they sent a delegation to the president of the university to demand a new dean or a fundamental change in his leadership style. The president, who knew what the dean was doing, basically said, "Relax. He has a good administrative assistant. Give him some more time."

Within a short interval, the money started pouring in, and the faculty began to catch the vision. It wasn't long until every time they saw him, they would say, "Get out of here! We don't want to see you in the office. Go out and bring in more money for chairs, for endowments, for research purposes. Your administrative assistant runs this office better than anyone else."

The dean admitted to me later that the mistake he made was in not doing enough team building, enough explaining, enough educating about what he was trying to accomplish. I'm sure he could have done better, but I learned a powerful lesson from him. We need to be constantly asking ourselves, "What is needed out there, and what is my unique strength, my gift?"

For some of us, the pain of the gap between clock and compass is intense. We feel trapped, controlled by other people or situations. We're always responding to crises. We're constantly caught up in the thick of things, putting out fires and never making time to do what we know would make a difference. We feel as though our lives are being lived for us.

For others, the pain is a general discomfort. We feel so guilty about what we're not doing that we can't enjoy the things that we choose to do.

Wake-Up Calls

Sometimes, the realization that our hard work is not paying off comes to our attention in dramatic ways. Our company downsizes, and suddenly we hear our job is on the line. Our doctor tells us we have just a few months to live. Our marriage is threatened by divorce.

Such jarring "wake-up calls" are not always a bad thing. Without them, we might have continued our day-to-day exist-

tence without ever really examining our aspirations. We might have a nagging feeling of unhappiness. But instead of looking for chronic causes of our pain, we try to cover it up with quick fixes; the psychic equivalent of Band-Aids and aspirin. Fortified by temporary relief, we get busier and busier, doing "good" things and never stopping to ask ourselves if what we're doing really matters most.

In our effort to close the gap between the clock and the compass, many of us turn to the field of "time management." Three decades ago, there were less than a dozen significant books on the subject. Today, the subject is addressed by no fewer than 100 books, thousands of articles, and a wide variety of calendars, planners, software, and other management tools. The interest in time management reflects something of a "popcorn phenomenon," with the increasing heat and pressure of the culture creating a rapidly exploding body of literature and products.

There are three basic "generations" of time management. Each generation builds on the one that came before it and moves toward greater efficiency and control.

The *First Generation* is based on "reminders." This system advises you to "go with the flow" but keep track of things you want to do with your time — write the report, attend the meeting, fix the car, clean out the garage. This method is characterized by simple notes and checklists, which you carry with you so that you don't forget to do things. The hope is that at the end of the day you've accomplished many of the things you set out to do, and you check them off your list. You put the rest on your list for tomorrow.

The *Second Generation* is devoted to "planning and preparation." The basic tools of this method are calendars and appointment books; its goals are efficiency, personal responsibility, planning ahead, and scheduling future activities and events. Those who use this generation of time management make appointments, write down commitments, identify deadlines, and note where meetings will be held. They may even keep this information stored in some kind of computer file or network.

The *Third Generation* approach is "planning, prioritizing, and controlling." If you're in this generation, you've probably spent time clarifying your values and priorities. You've asked yourself, "What do I want?" You've set long-, medium-, and short-range goals to obtain these values. You do things in order of importance every day. This approach is characterized by a wide variety of planners and organizers — electronic as well as paper-based — with detailed forms for daily planning to assist the process.

In some ways, these three generations of time management have made us more effective. But it has not been enough. "We're getting more done in less time," people say, "but where are the rich relationships, the inner peace, the balance, and the confidence that we're doing what matters most and doing it well?"

Let's consider some of the underlying paradigms, or mind-

Few of us realize how much the adrenaline rush of urgency drives our choices.

sets, of traditional time management techniques. These paradigms are like maps. If the map is wrong — if we're trying to find an address in Detroit and all we have is a map of Chicago — it's going to be very difficult for us to get where we want to go. We can try to change our behavior: travel more efficiently, get a different car with better mileage, increase our speed. But with the map we've got, we are still going to get lost or wind up in the wrong place. We can work on our attitude, get ourselves so "psyched up" about getting to our destination that we don't even care we're in the wrong place. But changing our behavior and our attitude will not help us if *we have the wrong map*. . . .

Some of the fallacies of traditional time management theory include the following paradigms:

- "We Are in CONTROL": Plan, schedule, manage. Do things one step at a time. Don't let anything fall through the cracks. But the fact is, control is an illusion. The method ignores an essential reality: Most of our time is spent living and working with other people, who cannot be controlled.
- "EFFICIENCY Above All": Efficiency is "getting more done in less time." It makes good sense. We get more done. We reduce or even eliminate waste. We're streamlined. We're leveraged. The increase in productivity is incredible. The underlying assumption is that "more" and "faster" are better. But if you're headed south down the California coast on Highway 101 and your destination is New York City — some 4,000 miles to the east — you're not being very effective.
- "Plug in Your VALUES": To value something is to esteem

The essence of *kairos* time is how much *value* you get out of it, not how many hours you put into it.

it to be of worth. Values are critically important; they drive our choices and actions. But we can value many different things — love, security, a big house, money in the bank, status, recognition, fame. Just because we value something does not necessarily mean it will create quality of life. When what we value is in opposition to the natural laws that govern peace of mind and quality of life, we set ourselves up for failure.

Traditional time management focuses on getting what you want and not letting anything get in the way. Other people are seen either as resources for getting more done faster or as obstacles or interruptions. Relationships are essentially transactional. The trouble is that most great joys and achievements are not the result of transactional relationships, but of transformational ones. When people get together and collaborate, something new is created. Both are transformed, yet neither controls what is happening.

Is “Chronos” Enough?

■ “The CLOCK Tells the Truth”: Conventional time management addresses *chronos*, the Greek word for chronological time. Chronos time is linear and sequential. No second is worth more than any other second. The clock dictates the rhythm of our lives. But is this idea of time an adequate framework for all of human experience? We think not. Just as some things are more important than others, some moments are more important than others. There are entire cultures in the world that approach life from a *kairos* paradigm instead. The essence of *kairos* time is how much *value* you get out of it

rather than how many minutes or hours you put into it.

■ “COMPETENCE Is King”: Time management can be boiled down to a set of competencies. The idea is that if you can develop competencies, you can create quality of life. But personal effectiveness is a function of both competence and character. We cannot truncate what we do from who we are.

■ “MANAGEMENT Cures All Ills”: It is important to remember that time management is a form of management, as opposed to leadership. Management works within a paradigm. Leadership creates new paradigms. Management works within the system. Leadership works on the system. Realistically, you *manage things*, but you must *lead people*. To put first things first in our lives, we must place leadership before management. Before we consider this question: “Am I doing things right?” We must first ask ourselves, “Am I doing the right things?”

The Fourth Generation

My life is hectic! I'm running all day, juggling meetings, phone calls, paperwork, and appointments. I push myself to the limit, fall into bed exhausted, and get up early the next morning to do it all again. My output is tremendous; I'm getting a lot done. But I get this feeling inside sometimes that asks, "So what? What are you doing that really counts?" I have to admit, I don't know.

There is too little of me to go around. The board and shareholders are on me like a swarm of bees for our declining share prices. I'm constantly playing referee in turf wars between my top executives. I feel tremendous pressure to lead our organization's quality improvement initiative. The morale among our employees is low, and I feel guilty for not getting out with them and listening more. On top of all this, despite our family vacations, my family has all but written me off because they never see me.

I don't feel in control of my life. I try to figure out what is important and set goals, but other people — my boss, my work associates, my spouse — continually throw wrenches into the works. What I set out to do is blocked by what other people want me to do for them. What is important to me is getting swept away in the current of what's important to everybody else.

A casualty of time management: Everyone tells me I'm highly successful. I've worked and scraped and sacrificed, and I've made it to the top. But I'm not happy.”

One thing's for sure: If we keep doing what we're doing, we're going to keep getting what we're getting. One definition of insanity is “to keep doing the same things and expect different results.”

There's clearly a need for a fourth generation of time management. This requires a paradigm and an approach that is not different by degree, but in kind.

Urgency vs. Importance

Take a moment to consider your answers to the following questions:

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8D

■ What is the one activity that you know that if you did superbly well and consistently would have significant positive results in your life?

■ If you *know* that this thing would make a significant difference, why are you not doing it now?

As you consider these questions, let's look at the two primary factors that drive the choices we make on how to use our time: *urgency* and *importance*.

The fourth generation approach is based on the importance paradigm. Knowing what is important, instead of simply responding to what is urgent, is the first step to putting first things first.

Few of us realize how much urgency affects our choices. The phone rings. The baby cries. Someone knocks at the door. A deadline approaches. A few more examples:

"I need this now."

"I'm in a jam; can you come right over?"

"You're late for your appointment."

Some of us get so used to the adrenaline rush of handling crises that we start to depend on that feeling for a sense of excitement and energy. How does urgency feel? Stressful? Pressured? Tense? Exhausting? Sure. But let's be honest: It can also be exhilarating. We feel useful. We feel successful. We feel validated. We become good at handling urgency. We get a temporary "high" from solving urgent and important problems. Then when the importance isn't there, the urgency fix is so powerful that we are drawn to do anything urgent, just to keep moving.

Urgency is an addiction, a self-destructive behavior that temporarily fills the void created by unmet needs. And our society is overflowing with urgency addicts. The prevailing culture reinforces the notion that we must behave in this way.

Urgency itself is not the problem. The problem is that when urgency is the dominant factor in our lives, it overrides those things that are merely important. Urgent things become "first things." We're so caught up in a whirlwind of activity that we don't stop to ask if what we're doing really needs to be done.

Daily planning and "to

do" lists keep us focused on urgent activities. And the more urgency we have in our lives, the less importance we have.

Many important things — those things that lead us to our objectives and give meaning to our lives — don't demand our attention. But because they are not "urgent," they are precisely the things that we must act upon. In order to focus on the issues of urgency and importance more effectively, we have organized the following Activity Matrix. It categorizes our activities into four quadrants.

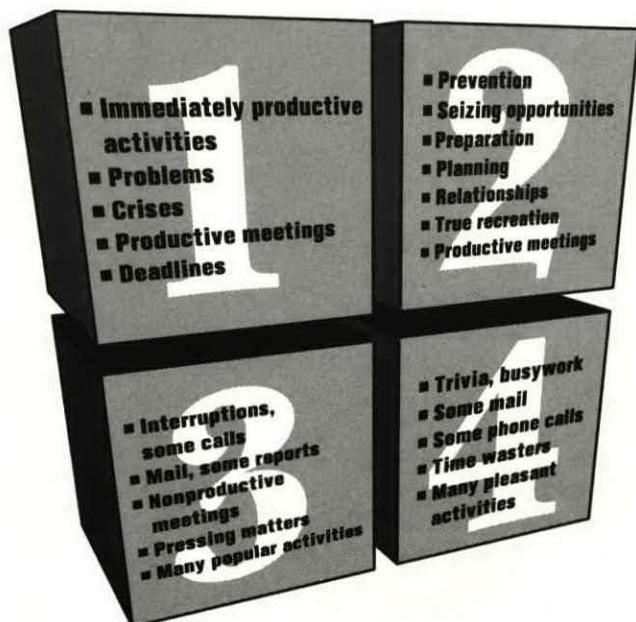
Quadrant I represents activities that are both "urgent" and "important." Here's where we handle an irate client, meet a deadline, repair a broken-down machine, undergo heart surgery, or help a crying child who has been hurt. We need to spend time in Quadrant I. This is where we manage, where we produce, where we bring our experience and judgment to bear in responding to many needs and challenges. But we also need to realize that many important activities become urgent through procrastination or because we don't do enough prevention and planning.

Quadrant II includes activities that are "important but not urgent." Here's where we do our long-range planning, anticipate and prevent problems, empower others, broaden our minds, increase our skills through reading books and participating in professional development, prepare for important meetings and presentations, or invest in relationships through sincere effort and deep, honest listening. Ignoring this quadrant feeds and enlarges Quadrant I, creating stress, burnout, and deeper crises. On the other hand, investing more time in this quadrant shrinks Quadrant I.

Planning, preparation, and prevention keep many things from becoming urgent. Quadrant II does not act on us; we must act on it. This is the Quadrant of personal leadership.

Quadrant III could be described as the phantom of Quadrant I. It includes things that are "urgent, but not important." This is the Quadrant of Deception. The noise of urgency creates the illusion of importance. But the actual activities, if they're important at all, are only important to someone else. Some phone calls, meetings, and drop-in visitors fall into this category. We spend a lot of time in Quadrant III meeting other people's priorities and expectations — thinking we're in Quadrant I.

URGENT VS. IMPORTANT



Quadrant IV is reserved for those activities that are "not urgent and not important." This is the Quadrant of Waste. Of course, we really shouldn't be there at all. But we get so battle-scarred from being tossed around in Quadrants I and III that we often "escape" to Quadrant IV for survival. What kinds of things are in Quadrant IV? Not necessarily recreational things, because recreation in the sense of re-creation is a valuable Quadrant II activity. But reading addictive pulp novels, habitually watching "mindless" television shows, or gossiping around the water fountain at the office would qualify as Quadrant IV time wasters. Quadrant IV is not survival; it's deterioration. We quickly find there's nothing there.

Take a look at the Activity Matrix and think back over the past week of your life. Place each of the activities you engaged in that week in one of the four quadrants. If you're like most of the people we work with, there's a good chance you spent the majority of your time in Quadrants I and III. And what's the cost of that misspent time? If urgency is driving you, what important things — what "first things" — are not receiving your time and attention?

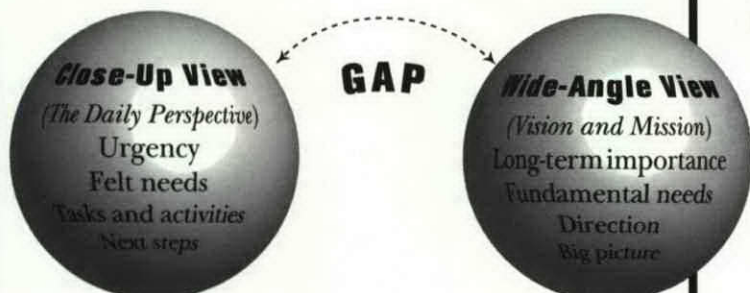
Think again about the question posed earlier: What is the one activity that you know that if you did superbly well and consistently would have significant positive results in your life?

Our guess is that the answer fell into Quadrant II. We've asked this question of thousands of people and found that the great majority felt that one of the following six key activities would help them to achieve their objectives:

- 1) Improving communications with people.
- 2) Better preparation.
- 3) Better planning and organizing.
- 4) Taking better care of self.
- 5) Seizing new opportunities.
- 6) Personal development.

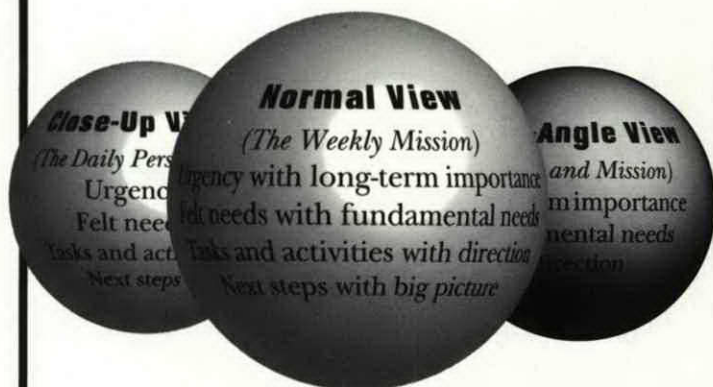
Why aren't people doing these things? Why aren't you? Probably because they're not urgent.

But as we spend more time in preparation, prevention, and planning, we decrease the amount of time we spend putting out fires in Quadrant I. Even the nature of Quadrant I changes: Now, we're there by choice rather than default. We may even choose to make something urgent or timely *because it's important.*



The Fulfillment of Needs and Capacities

There are certain things that are fundamental to human fulfillment. If these basic needs aren't met, we feel empty, incomplete. We may try to fill the void through urgency addiction, or we may become complacent.



The essence of these needs is captured in the phrase: "To live, to love, to learn, to leave a legacy." The need to live implies our *physical* need for such things as food, clothing, shelter, economic well-being, and good health. The need to love relates to our *social* need to relate to other people, to belong, to be loved. The need to learn is our *mental* need to develop and to grow. And the need to leave a legacy is part of our *spiritual* need for a sense of meaning, purpose, and contribution.

Now we can address the Quadrant II Organizing Process, which organizes your time in *weekly* segments. Conventional daily planning provides us with a "close-up" view of our lives that keeps us focused on urgency and efficiency. Weekly organizing, on the other hand, provides a broader context. The activities of the day take on more appropriate dimensions when viewed in the context of the week.

Daily planning systems are like trying to walk down the street while looking through the telephoto lens of a camera. They keep us focused on what's right in front of us. Of course, we can't just focus on the big picture, either. If we don't translate vision into action, we lose touch with reality and become idealistic dreamers.

How do we keep both our focus and larger perspective? The answer is a weekly planning technique that links the big picture to the immediate needs of the day in a balanced, realistic way.

Before you begin to organize each week, you must decide what is most important in your life. Consider the big picture. Ask yourself: What gives your life meaning? What do you want to be? What do you want to do?

Many people capture their answers in a written, personal creed or mission statement. Be very precise. Clari-

ty on these issues is critical because it affects everything else — the goals you set, the decisions you make, your paradigms, and the way you spend your time.

If your mission includes such things as personal growth or family involvement, reviewing them now will reinforce these “first things” in your mind. You will be armed with a powerful framework for decision making.

The next step is to understand that we live our lives in terms of *roles* — not in the sense of role-playing, but in the parts we’ve chosen to fill. We have important roles at work, in the family, in the community, and in other areas of life. If we are unhappy, it is often because we feel that we’re succeeding in one role at the expense of another.

A clear set of our roles creates order and balance. List the roles you think you perform. Don’t be overly concerned about getting them “right.” You may define your family role simply as “family member,” or as “husband” and “father,” “wife” and “mother,” and so on. At work, one job may encompass several roles, including administrator, marketer, personnel officer, and long-term planner.

Once you have identified your framework, ask yourself: What is the most important thing I could do in each role this week? As you pause to consider this, consult the wisdom of your heart as well as your mind. What do you feel would make a significant difference in each role? Begin to use your compass instead of the clock. Listen to your conscience. Focus on importance rather than urgency.

If you were careful, your goals would represent those activities that you feel are truly important in your roles. They are Quadrant II activities. Now ask yourself these questions:

What would happen if I did these things during the week? How would I feel about the quality of my life? What if I did even a few of them? Would that be enough to make a positive difference in my life?

And: What if I did this every week? Would I be more effective than I am now?

The Weekly Decision-Making Plan

To translate Quadrant II goals into action, you need a framework for making effective decisions. Most people are constantly trying to find time for the “important” activities in their already overflowing Quadrant I/III schedules. They move things around, delegate, cancel, postpone — all in the hope of finding time for first things. The key, however, is not to prioritize your schedule, but to schedule your priorities.

One of our associates described a seminar he attended, a lecture on time:

The instructor said, “Okay, it’s time for a quiz.” He reached under the table and pulled out a wide-mouth gallon jar and some fist-size rocks. “How many of these rocks do you think we can get into the jar?” he asked.

After we guessed, he said, “Let’s find out.” He set one rock in the

To translate goals into action: The key is not to prioritize your schedule but to schedule your priorities.

jar . . . then another . . . and another. I don’t remember how many he got in, but he filled the jar. Then he asked, “Is the jar full?”

Everybody looked at the rocks and said, “Yes.”

Then he said, “Ahhh.” He reached under the table and pulled out a bucket of gravel. He dumped some in the jar and shook it. The gravel filled all the little spaces left by the big rocks. Then he grinned and asked once more, “Is the jar full?”

By this time we were on to him. “Probably not,” we said. “Good!” he replied. And he stooped down, reached under the table, and brought out a bucket of sand. He dumped the sand in, and it filled all the little spaces left by the rocks and the gravel. Once more he looked at us and said, “Is the jar full?”

“No!” we all roared.

He said, “Good!” and grabbed a pitcher of water and began to pour. He got something like a quart of water in that jar.

Then he said, “Well, what’s the point?”

Somebody suggested, “There are gaps, and if you really work at it, you can always fit more into your life.”

“No,” he said, “that’s not the point. The point is this: If you hadn’t put these big rocks in first, would you ever have gotten any of them into the jar?”

Our Quadrant II goals are the “big rocks.” If we fill our lives with other activities — water, sand, and gravel — and then try to squeeze the big rocks in, they won’t fit, and we’ll end up making a big mess in the process. But if we put the big rocks in first, it’s amazing how many of them we can fit, along with quite a bit of the sand, gravel, and water.

As you plan your weekly activities, put your Quadrant II goals in place first. If you don't, your week will quickly fill up with the flood of activities from Quadrants I and II that constantly clamor for our attention.

With Quadrant II goals in place for the week, the daily task is to keep first things first while navigating through the unexpected opportunities and challenges of the day. There are three additional things you can do at the beginning of the day that will enhance your ability to put first things first:

1) *Preview the day:* Spend a few moments at the beginning of the day to revisit your schedule, get your bearings, check your compass, look at the day in the context of the week, and renew your perspective.

2) *Prioritize:* Before you begin to prioritize, you may find it helpful to identify your activities as Quadrant I or II. This gives you an additional opportunity to insure that Quadrant III activities haven't slipped into your schedule in disguise. We recommend that you highlight your most important priority. If the nature of the day is such that nothing else gets done, you then have the satisfaction of knowing you did the one thing that mattered most.

3) *Use some form of time planning for the day:* List the "time-sensitive" activities on the left-hand side of your daily schedule and those activities that can be done at any time of the day on the right. This technique is often called "T Planning." By separating the time-sensitive activities from the rest, you're able to make more effective scheduling decisions and remain sensitive to important commitments.

The Quadrant II process would be incomplete without closing the loop — without turning the experience of one week into the foundation for the increased effectiveness of the next. Unless we learn from living, how are we going to keep from doing the same things — making the same mistakes, struggling with the same problems — week after week?

At the end of the week — before you review your mission statement to begin organizing the next week — pause to ask questions such as:

- What goals did I achieve?
- What challenges did I encounter?
- What decisions did I make?
- In making decisions, did I keep first things first?

We realize that this fourth generation of time management will not solve all of anyone's problems overnight. But by listening to conscience and organizing ourselves to do first things first, we can all make contributions that are currently falling by the wayside. You may have to let go of illusory paradigms, rationalizations, wants, and urgency addiction. But deep inside, do you feel there is a contribution you can make, a legacy you can leave, that will improve your family, work team, community, or society? If there is, we encourage you to act on it. As Emerson once said, "Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles." ■

To obtain First Things First, see page 60.

Your Mission

WE REACHED STEPHEN R. COVEY BETWEEN SEMINARS in Great Falls, Mont., where 1,200 people had turned out to hear him in -38°F weather. After teaching management at Brigham Young University for 25 years, Covey wrote *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, which became a three-million-copy best-seller. Today, *The Covey Leadership Center* in Provo, Utah, has trained more than 10,000 organizations around the world. We asked him about First Things First.

What gave you the idea for this book?

We've worked with more than 50,000 managers teaching our program, and of all the seven habits, they reported that they scored lowest on Habit III: Put first things first.

What were they doing instead?

Too much. They do too much management, and not enough leadership. They try to get more efficient at fitting activities and tasks into their day — instead of becoming more effective by doing what's important.

What makes us try to do too much?

People don't lead disciplined lives — they're flaky, a product of their feelings, their moods. They're driven by events and pressures; they're addicted to doing urgent, secondary things, instead of sticking to their mission. And many haven't defined their mission to begin with. That's Habit II: Begin with the end in mind.

So, what should we do?

Keep your scheduling soft. Bag the schedule for people, because whether it's a business or family matter, fulfilling your mission is based on your relationships. Most conventional time management tries to increase your output as an individual, which puts the focus on "me." But to gain your significant goals in life, you need to act through other people. Be guided by the compass of your conscience instead of the clock on the wall.

What happens if you put first things first?

You'll see a new sense of direction in your organization, if you've built it around principles, such as people acting on their own. Trust will go up. You'll have peace of mind. There will be temptations to backslide into urgency — to get more done *today*. Keep asking, "Is this the most *important* thing?" And in the larger picture, no one on his deathbed ever wished he'd spent more time at the office.

— DUNCAN MAXWELL ANDERSON