



Activities Rule, Not the Clock!

ATTACK YOUR DAY!

Before It Attacks You

*"Finally, a quick-fix approach to activity management
that doesn't take more time to learn than
the amount of time it saves!"*

—TRAPPER WOODS, CSP

MARK WOODS | TRAPPER WOODS

PRAISE FOR *ATTACK YOUR DAY!*

“This activity management approach makes it easy to get the right things done. I highly recommend this book to anyone looking to reduce stress and be more effective.”

—**Denny Mitchell**, CEO, E Systems Management,
largest Sprint dealer in Arizona

“I am always looking at ways to be more productive and reduce stress. As a single mother and career woman, I thought I had multitasking and time management down to a science. Learning to color my choices changed my life!”

—**Dr. Heather Frederick**, PhD, Dean, School of Behavioral and
Health Sciences, Northcentral University

“As an entrepreneur and CEO of a CRM software company, I know the importance of planning and prioritizing daily activities. The concepts in this book can easily be applied to electronic communication tools for greater productivity.”

—**Keith Norris**, CEO,
Complete XRM, Inc.

“The authors really connect with the reader! Viewing time as space that we fill with activities helps me schedule, prioritize, and focus on the right activities. This book is a must read for anyone who manages projects.”

—**Helge Soreide**, Project Leader,
Logistics Management Institute

“This book is great for entrepreneurs, small business, big business, students, moms, and anyone simply looking to be more efficient with their time.”

—**Rick Hall**, Professor, Arizona State University

“*Attack Your Day!* targets your internal toolbox and provides you the awareness that times have changed. You better get on board or the train will leave without you. Perfect for those who enjoy the keep it simple dance!”

—**Loren Simpson**, COO, London Bridge Trading Co.,
Command Sergeant Major, U.S. Army, Retired

“This is a must-read for entrepreneurs, startups, or anyone looking to increase their productivity!”

—**Adam Toren**, author,
Small Business, BIG Vision!

“I love the color-coding idea. It will definitely help with prioritizing and arranging your schedule so that you are more successful with your time. It helps in every area of life.”

—**Brenda L King**, graduate student

“*Attack Your Day!* is an easy process that reaps huge benefits. Every student, every faculty member, and every administrator would see their productivity escalate and stress reduced just by practicing what’s outlined in this book. I did. It works.”

—**Gena Wikstrom**, Executive Director,
Northwest Career Colleges Federation

“The authors take into account not just the activities we face at work, but the ones at home, too. Improve the quality of your work-life by implementing the skills found in *Attack Your Day!*”

—**James Finnegan**, CEO, Inspiring Physicians

“*Attack Your Day!* offers a fresh perspective. As President of a volunteer organization, I’ve found time can be better managed by focusing on the practices identified in this book. These same practices are essential for success as a project manager.”

—**Elizabeth Chappel**, PMP, President,
Project Management Institute, Phoenix Chapter

“*Attack Your Day!* is an innovative, practical approach to managing time for people with too much to do! It revolutionizes time management into real-world activity management with ease and freedom. A must-read for anyone who wants more free time!”

—**Lori C. Ebert**, PhD, Regional VP for Academic Affairs,
Brown Mackie College

“This book helped me jump-start my life! Learn to focus, eliminate distractions, and invest time on your highest priorities. These activity management skills apply to both my military and civilian career.”

—**Jay R. Greeley, Sr.**, LTC, U.S. Army, Retired,
President/CEO, Pegasus Info Group, Inc.

“Practical techniques that work! This book addresses the challenge of having to do more in less time. If you are experiencing a time crunch, then *Attack Your Day!*”

—**George Burns**, Founder/CEO,
The Master’s Touch, Inc.

ATTACK YOUR DAY!

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BEFORE IT ATTACKS YOU

MARK WOODS AND TRAPPER WOODS

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*To my father, Trapper Woods (1935–2010), who taught
me that time is our most precious commodity.
That in life, it is the relationships we forge and simple
moments in time that matter most.*

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Contents

INTRODUCTION XV

CHAPTER 1

Activities Rule! Not the Clock 1

Don't Be a Slave to Time

Activities Rule 6

Activities Are Never Neutral 7

To Be a High Performer 9

Three Incredible Gifts 9

CHAPTER 2

Color Your Choices 11

The Art of Choosing and Refusing

Get What You Want 11

Predetermine and Anticipate 13

Create, Then Do 16

Color Your Choices 17

STOP! Do Now 18

GO! The Majority of Your Day 18

CAUTION! Really 19

NO! Don't Even Think About It 20

Mother Knew Best 21

CHAPTER 3

Carry Your Time in Buckets	23
<i>Fine-Tune Your Tools</i>	
Keep It Simple	24
Bucket One—	
The Monthly Calendar	25
The Most Important Appointment	27
Bucket Two—	
The Catch-All Bucket	30
Bucket Three—	
The Daily Bucket	35
Bucket Four—	
The Memory Bucket	40
Bucket Five—	
The Fingertip Data Bucket	44
Bucket Six—	
The Communication Bucket	46

CHAPTER 4

Arrange Your Plate	49
<i>Think Inside the Box</i>	
Because You're Worth It	56
Five Times the Outcome	58
Easy as One, Two, Three	61
What's on Your Plate Today?	67
For Best Results	68

CHAPTER 5

- Don't Just Execute, Flexicute! 73
Learn to Turn on a Dime
- The Newest and Best Survival Skill 74
 Be Where You Are 76
 Use Your Own Style 78

CHAPTER 6

- The Hocus Pocus of Focus 81
Make Time-Wasters Disappear
- You First 81
- Self-Imposed, Internally Motivated Focus Breakers 82
- System-Imposed, External Focus Breakers 85
 Be Strong 87
- Improving Your Life Quality 90
 Get What You Want 91

CONCLUSION 93

101 PRODUCTIVITY STRATEGIES 97

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About the Authors

MARK WOODS

“Attack every day with purpose, be present, and do your best to live in the moment. Life is now; live it and enjoy the time.”

Mark Woods is a successful entrepreneur, author, business owner, motivational speaker, and training consultant. He has a strong passion for helping individuals and organizations achieve their true potential.

Throughout his career he has held leadership roles with several organizations, implementing process management solutions to assist in new business development, branding, marketing, training, and client acquisition.

His engaging style combined with practical solutions connects with audiences on an emotional level. Mark’s presentations are punctuated with stories, real-life experiences, and anecdotes that ignite life-changing energy in those who experience his programs.

Mr. Woods is CEO of Woods Group Incorporated, a training and business development firm specializing in activity management, goal setting, work-life integration, and personal productivity.

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TRAPPER WOODS

Trapper Woods (1935–2010) enjoyed a career that spanned more than 40 years and was also known as “*Father Time*.” Trapper was an executive leader, corporate consultant, company president, business owner, and internationally acclaimed speaker.

A professional member of the National Speakers Association (NSA), Trapper was the recipient of the Certified Speaking Professional (CSP) designation, the speaking industry’s international measure of professional platform skills.

For 23 years, Trapper was a speaker and a leading spokesperson for Day-Timer, a subsidiary of ACCO Brands Corporation. His engaging style is the result of his fundamental belief in the goodness inherent within each person and the value of diversity.

He traveled more than 2 1/2 million miles influencing tens of thousands of people in more than 350 corporations throughout the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the Caribbean.

His favorite geographical spot in the world was Snowbird Resort in Utah where he loved to experience nature.

Introduction

It was approximately three weeks before my father passed away from cancer when we received the first prepublished copy of this book. We were working hard to finish it; we both knew we were running out of time.

I remember that day like it was yesterday. We were at the Snowbird Ski Resort, his favorite place on the earth, where he spent as much time as possible. He loved nature; he called it God's medicine. We were sitting on his balcony at 8,100 feet looking up at the mountains. There wasn't a cloud in the sky. The sun was just west of the mountain peaks and there was a slight breeze that made the aspen tree leaves flicker back and forth. It was beautiful.

Suddenly we got a call from the front desk. "Trapper, your package has arrived." I rushed to the lobby to retrieve it and gave it to my father. He was like a kid in a candy store filled with excitement. He couldn't wait to sample the goods.

He opened the book to a random page and began to read.

“*Three Incredible Gifts*. Getting down to the most basic of basics, you need to realize that each day we are given three incredible gifts.

They are

- The gift of *time*, without which activities cannot be executed.
- The gift of personal *energy*, essential for doing the activities.
- The gift of *choice*, to determine what activities we will do.”

He took a long pause, and with tears in his eyes said, “Cancer has taken all three gifts from me. It’s taken my gift of time; I don’t have much left. It’s taken my gift of personal energy; I have none. And it’s taken my gift of choice; I no longer can choose my activities.” Three weeks later on his birthday, he passed away.

I often think about that day because it changed my life. It gave me a new perspective on these three incredible gifts that so many of us take for granted. We often get caught up with low priority activities and lose sight of what’s truly important to us.

You don't have to experience cancer to maximize these three incredible gifts.

- **Manage *time wisely*.** Plan your day around your high priorities in life. Balance time between family, work, self, and service and always be present when engaging in conversation with others.
- **Increase your *personal energy*.** Our bodies naturally go through a repeating energy cycle every 90 to 120 minutes. Do one activity for about 90 minutes, followed by a lighter activity for 15 minutes to recover and sustain your energy throughout the day.
- **Get what you want out of life!** You can have it or not, based on the activities you *choose*. Choose wisely.

And above all, whenever possible get lost in moments. It's then that you truly experience life.

FATHER TIME

In 1986 my father, Trapper, changed his career. He joined Dr. Charles R. Hobbs to be one of his Time Power seminar facilitators. He was fortunate to have Charles as a mentor. Charles was a leader in time management strategies and a major influence in initiating the time management training wave that continues even today. His Time Power seminar has become a classic and continues to have life-changing impact on its practitioners, including me.

When Charles sold his company to Day-Timers[®], Inc., Trapper was invited to work directly for Day-Timer[®] at its corporate offices in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Serving as a consultant to and for Day-Timer[®] further solidified his interest in the subject of time. Through the Day-Timer[®] connection, he had the opportunity of talking time with hundreds of corporations and organizations.

He later started his own consulting firm and, shortly thereafter, met William A. Guillory, PhD. Bill invited him to coauthor the book *Tick Tock! Who Broke the Clock?*, and they became friends. Bill, a scientist and gifted educator, challenged Trapper and helped him in numerous ways. He used to joke, “Bill makes me think so hard I always have a headache after we’ve been together.” Since my father’s passing, I, too, have become friends with Bill and consider him a mentor and friend. His ideas have been a major influence in the development of this book.

In 1998 I began providing a consulting service to my father’s company and later joined the family business. I was fortunate to have been mentored by Trapper in time, life, and business. He was more than a father; he was “father time.”

Fast forward. Today we find ourselves swimming in a cyber sea, filled with unbelievable technology. We have BlackBerrys, iPhones, iPads, Androids, tablets, Facebook, Twitter, Google, Siri, and more than 500,000 apps in the App Store. Yet people still can’t manage their time.

After 23 years as a time management consultant, logging more than two and a half million miles in the air, training many thousands of individuals, Trapper figured it was about time we write this book—about time.

So get ready! Here is a quick-fix approach to today's time dilemma that doesn't take more time to learn than the amount of time it saves.

Mark Woods

C H A P T E R 1

Activities Rule! Not the Clock

Don't Be a Slave to Time

So you've read all the best-selling books about time management and productivity. They sounded good at first. In fact, they are good. But, you didn't implement them, or implemented them only for a short time, because they seemed to further complicate an already complicated world. It's hard to remember what all those principles and skills are, let alone apply them. The problem with some of the old, established time management strategies is many of them do not fit today's high-intensity, rapidly changing, and fast-paced environment.

What we need today are fast, flexible, and ridiculously easy solutions to help us navigate "time" for greater productivity.

Is there an easier way to approach the time challenges we face today in this chaotic world? We think so!

You already know what the problem is: Times have changed. Not that time itself has changed; it hasn't. But the times in which we live have changed. It's not that we don't have enough time—we have the same amount of time we've always had, and all the time we ever will have.

The problem is that we have more events and activities to manage in the same amount of time. This is due, in part, to technology, the Internet and expectations of doing more with less. We are wired 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, with multiple demands, and hardly a chance to catch our breath. In a way, we've become compressors of life, trying to jam an unrealistic number of events into our daily allotment of minutes.

All of this has caused a paradigm shift. A paradigm is a patterned way of thinking. The old way of thinking had us dividing our work and personal life with an imaginary line. For most people, that simply doesn't work anymore. For some people it never worked, simply because life was too complicated. When we separate work and personal life with an imaginary line, we set the two up in opposition to each other. That drives stress upward. We feel guilty regardless of which side of the line is getting our attention.

The new paradigm is for us to see our work and personal life as one life, with work and personal activities integrated throughout the 24-hour day.

Maybe you're thinking that an integrated work and personal life sounds undesirable. Maybe, for you, it even sounds as final as placing the last nail in the coffin of work-life balance. After all, doesn't work-life balance mean equally dividing time between work and personal life? No, that's the old way of thinking.

The new way of thinking about *balance* is to realize it means maintaining equilibrium in a sea of change. It requires the ability to *flexicute*. Okay, so we invented a word—but, you have to agree, it is a very descriptive word and it makes sense. *Flexicuting* activities means the ability to adapt to changes during the day without letting it throw you. It is executing activities by way of being flexible. As author James Ballard said, “We need to learn to dance while the carpet is being pulled from underneath us.”

The first step in creating ridiculously easy time management is to learn the new “time management dance steps.” In other words, recognize and embrace the simple but significant differences in the new time paradigm.

Here are some old ways of operating as compared to the new ways. Making these adjustments will help you be more comfortable with chaos.

Old way: Balance meant equal amounts of time spent on work and personal life.

New way: Balance is maintaining equilibrium in a sea of change.

Old way: Emphasis on multitasking.

New way: Emphasis on alternate-tasking, alternating work and personal life activities around the clock in a way in which both can be fully experienced.

Old way: Work is a marathon with long, hard hours and inadequate recovery time.

New way: Work is a series of sprints with adequate recovery time. Energy management is an essential component to achieving peak performance. (Source: *The Power of Full Engagement* by Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz.)

Old way: After-hours accessibility was limited.

New way: All-hours accessibility is becoming standard with technology.

Old way: Daily schedules and plans were fixed.

New way: Daily schedules and plans are fluid and flexible.

Old way: Work could be caught up and finished.

New way: Work is continuously processed but seldom finished.

Old way: One time management tool provided a complete system.

New way: Multiple tools are combined to create a complete system. We use both paper and electronic.

Old way: Activities were arranged primarily based upon the clock.

New way: Activities are arranged primarily based upon necessity, practicality, efficiency, and spontaneity. In other words, doing activities when they make sense, rather than based on what time it is.

Old way: Performance is judged by the number of hours one puts in at the office.

New way: Performance is judged on the basis of productivity.

Let's emphasize again that time hasn't changed. We still measure time by the same calendar and clock. And time is still defined as the occurrence of events one after another. An event is anything that happens, including activities: These are the basic building blocks for designing the quality of life we desire.

ACTIVITIES RULE

In the new paradigm, the clock does not rule: Activities rule. If you are looking for an easier way to manage time, it is simply to become an effective activity manager.

Let's take a closer look at the nature of activities, as outlined in the book *Tick Tock! Who Broke the Clock? – Solving the Work-Life Balance Equation*, coauthored by Dr. William A. Guillory and Trapper Woods.

An activity is something we do. Even sleeping is an activity. From the day we draw our first breath of life until the time we expire our last breath of life, we are executing activities on a nonstop basis. Examining activities further, we realize that activities can be

- Physical
- Mental

- Subliminal
- Long in duration
- Short in duration

ACTIVITIES ARE NEVER NEUTRAL

Some activities of long duration can have very little consequence. Some activities of short duration can have huge consequences. The most important thing to recognize about activities is that they are never neutral. They either enhance or detract from our lives by changing the quality for better or for worse. The following statements illustrate this point:

- Activities that align with what we value give us a greater sense of satisfaction than those that don't.
- Activities creatively arranged in a sequence can culminate in the achievement of a desired outcome or goal.
- Negative activities repeated over and over again can erode our well-being.

- Positive activities repeated over and over again can make us stronger and improve our well-being.
- Activities repeated over and over again become habits. Habits can be our greatest servants or our worst masters.
- When we choose to do certain activities we simultaneously exclude other activities. It's about choice.
- We can change the quality of our life simply by changing activities.
- Focus permits us to fully experience an activity.
- The day's productivity is determined by the activities we choose and those we refuse.
- We live and die with our choice of activities.

TO BE A HIGH PERFORMER

Hopefully you feel empowered with a better understanding of activities. The exciting thing here is that to be good at what you want to be good at—to be a high producer in today’s environment—simply be a good activity chooser. It’s easy! Poor choosers become losers when competing for promotions or getting what they want in life. The bottom line is this—self-management excellence is really activity management excellence.

THREE INCREDIBLE GIFTS

Getting down to the most basic of basics, you need to realize that each day we are given three incredible gifts.

They are

- The gift of *time*, without which activities cannot be executed.
- The gift of personal *energy*, essential for doing the activities.
- The gift of *choice*, to determine what activities we will do.

To maximize these three amazing daily gifts, the following activity management skills must be implemented:

1. Choosing activities
2. Tracking activities
3. Arranging activities
4. Flexicuting activities
5. Focusing on activities

This ridiculously easy time management approach is to simply get good at these five activity management skills. We're going to forget about all the old laws and rules, and just focus on becoming good activity managers.

These skills will help you stress less, avoid being overwhelmed, and deal with interruptions so you can enjoy life. It's time to color your choices.