

The 3 P's of Personal and Professional Productivity

By Bob 'Idea Man' Hooley

Over the past several years, I've had the privilege of traveling across North America sharing my thoughts and seeing my **Ideas At Work!** on how to regain control of your life and time. I've been able to share with readers just like you and hearing your ideas and suggestions on how to productively tackle the problems and time wasters we commonly face. Frequently, I hear people telling me their life is good; but...out of control, over-committed, and with a blurring lack of focus on the important things and people in their lives. Sound familiar?

Is there really an answer? Can we really take control in this increasingly fast-paced world of Internet, Cellular phones, pagers, faxes and other forms of **instant communication**? Can we balance our need for finances, with our need for job and family satisfaction? How do we balance our drive for personal and professional success, with a need to **actually live our lives**?

*"Success is not about money; it's about what you feel about yourself, your life, your friends, and your loved ones," shares Success Magazine CEO Peter Morris. "My friend, **happiness, success, and enjoyment come from a balanced life**, where material and spiritual values are viewed in perspective. The most profound success derives from the consistent application of your natural skills and energy in work that constantly challenges you to expand your horizons. **Get a life!**"*

The key here, as Peter said, is the word balance. And all too often we find our lives in an imbalanced situation. This is what causes the negative stress on our lives, our families, and our career. **But how do we regain this balance?**

I think the secret is simply in how we portion out our time. During the past year, I've been experimenting with new ways of looking at, and blocking out my time. The results of this research are what I now call the **3 P's of Personal and Professional Productivity**.

This planning process will, if applied wisely, help you focus your energies and resources in setting and achieving those worthwhile goals, and the real desires of your heart. Please take heart, **you can gain freedom** by applying these techniques, along with the other ones we share in our programs or publications.

Our days can be more productively used, if we plan or block out our time, based on the **3 P's of Personal and Professional Productivity**. And in brief, here they are:

PEOPLE: Our success in life, and in business is often directly related to our ability to relate and work with people. In business, our success is very dependent on maintaining good working relationships with our co-workers, our employees, our employers, our suppliers, our competition, and most importantly our clients or customers.

Simply put, a **people day** is one where the **major** focus is on finding, building and maintaining the relationships that are important in your life and business. Spending time nurturing and augmenting these relationships can work miracles in team building, customer loyalty, and business longevity.

POWER: There are days when the deadlines, the commitments, and the process of running our business and career just have to be our **major** focus. And rightly so! The work has to be done, the business must be managed, and the bills and orders must be processed. **Power days**, are the days in which **we set aside blocks of uninterrupted time** to focus on specific projects or obligations.

Days where we work thru to make sure they are completed properly, and on schedule. **Days - when the work must be about the work – really do WORK!**

PAUSE: There are days when we need to regenerate, to relax, take a break from our labors, enjoy our families, and sometimes daydream or even goof-off. Days, in which we have fun, not focused on building a business, or in pursuit of training that will advance our careers. Maybe we take a '**fun**' course in something unrelated to what we do - just for the **joy of learning**. Maybe we take part of an afternoon off and sit quietly on a swing, watching the clouds as they slowly meander across the sky. **Pause days** allow us to reflect and refocus our energies, priorities and resources; and **make life worthwhile!** They are most effective in helping us regain control and in balancing our power and people days to maximize our ongoing productivity.

May I suggest that a proper balance of the 3 **P**'s in planning your week might be to schedule two Pause's (together like a weekend), three Power's, and two People days. Again, please remember: **Plan monthly, schedule weekly, & focus, so you can live daily!**

That is not to say that you may have some weeks in which this isn't feasible, or you are working your way out of being over-committed. There are days when you will only be able to accomplish part of your goal to schedule a people day, a pause day, or a power day. **Remember the secret here is to have a focus for the day and then fit in the other items accordingly.** I find it is important to have a guideline to assist in effectively laying out your life and commitments. Having a guideline also helps keep you focused and working toward your optimum productivity. **Enjoy your life and choose to truly live each day!**

There is actually another P in the equation – Prep or planning days. I cover it in greater detail in “I’m already running as fast as I can!” So, you might want to allow for an adjustment from time to time to replace a people or power day with a **Prep/Planning day or two. Plan Monthly, Schedule Weekly and LIVE daily is my mantra!**

These days could be scheduled at the beginning of the month or time period and are set aside strictly for planning and preparing to make maximum use of those who follow. Then each successive week take a part of one of your power days to schedule your week and a few minutes each day to ensure you’ve done so to allow yourself to live your life and to be truly productive in your career.

To close, a few other reminders to help you regain your balance, and enjoy life.

- Just because you have the skill, **does not** mean you have the time! **Learn to say NO!**
- Filtering your commitments thru your life priorities can be a very effective tool against over commitment. **Ask yourself, “Is it important for me to do this?”**
- What activities can you eliminate, delegate, or ignore, to free up time for the activities and people you really value in life? **What’s stopping you?**
- 5 minutes spent each day on planning can save your hours in productivity. **Plan, and then do!**
- 15 minutes daily spent studying or reading in your field of study can give you a major competitive edge in your career. **A major investment that pays off big time!**
- Use your day timer as a planning tool to block out time for family, planning, fun, commitments, deadlines, creative time, and time for yourself. **Control is a process of planning.**

The more I discuss this topic with my audiences, the more important I see it as a **foundation for success in living**, and in seeing our lives become fulfilled and productive. I welcome your ideas on how we can make it work even better. Drop me a note at: ideaman@canada.com

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Bob ‘Idea Man’ Hooey, DTM, PRA, CKD-Emeritus, Accredited Speaker, 2011 Spirit of CAPS recipient is an inspirational leader, speaker, and a prolific author whose works include **‘Legacy of Leadership, Strive for significance – lead on purpose!’**, **‘Speaking for Success’** and **‘The Courage to Lead!’** His articles have been featured in a multitude of North American trade and global consumer publications. He is a

*respected leader who has been honored by CAPS, NSA, Toastmasters, and the United Nations for his leadership contributions. His creative Ideas At Work have allowed him to travel the globe sharing insights, encouragement in 61 countries, so far. With Covid-19 he has been zooming around the globe to share his ideas. His **innovative Ideas At Work!** have been successfully applied by global leaders as well as Canada's 50 Best Managed Companies.*