

Avoid Common Time Traps using the COPE Acronym

C = Control – Take control of your time

- Initiate phone calls so you have more control of when you are on the telephone
- When leaving a telephone message, be specific as to what information you need
- Prevent incomplete information by creating a checklist of what you need from others
- For meetings, be sure there is an agenda, the right people are invited, meeting notes are taken and shared, with participants held accountable for tasks
- Understand authority level so decisions and actions can be handled faster

O = Organize effectively

- Maintain an organized work area/desk
- Design an efficient system that works for you
 - Paper system – planner tool, file folders
 - Computer/on-line system – MS Outlook folders, on-line calendar & tasks
 - Email processing – determine frequency, eliminate ding & pop-up, minimize
- Have needed supplies at your finger tips
- Label a container/file basket for items to be hand-delivered with less trips

P = Plan using PRODUCTIVE™ Goals

- Write annual, monthly, weekly and daily goals
- Create PRODUCTIVE™ Goals

P - pride-worthy
R - results-focused
O - optimistic
D - defined
U - useful
C - challenging
T - time-sensitive
I - inspiring
V - viable
E - engaging

PRODUCTIVE™ Goals are results-focused, useful and also challenging. It is easy to set a goal you can attain with some ease; but defining goals that stretch you, often encourages greater meaning and a higher degree of pride when they are accomplished. Each goal should trigger a sense of emotion, to engage you to start and sustain your motivation. Lastly, if you don't feel an emotional connection to your goal, the chances of you committing to it and achieving it, significantly decreases.

- Prioritize tasks daily, as all tasks are not created equal - if you don't, someone else will
- Set realistic time estimates, given your responsibilities
- Finish tasks
- Prevent procrastination by effectively planning

E = Education – Continue to learn and grow through numerous avenues

- Collaborate with other leaders and other community organizations/boards
- Seek advice and guidance from a trusted mentor
- Learn new technology tools
- Actively engage in industry associations
- Read industry publications