

Personal Operations Management

Lean Principles for Getting Good Things Done

Arthur V. Hill

The John & Nancy Lindahl Professor
Professor of Operations & Management Science
Curtis L. Carlson School of Management
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, MN 55455 USA

Phone 612-232-2542
ahill@umn.edu

September 12, 2009

My family

Jon (23) & Lindsay
(23)
Stephen (21)
Chris (27) & Katie (26)
Michael (18)
Art & Julie



My family



My students



My students



Motivation

Why do some students get better grades

AND

have more fun?

Motivation

Do not understand
personal operations
management principles.

- Do the wrong things
- Break promises
- Disappoint others
- Little success in school
- Little success at life
- Stress
- Worry
- Guilt

Poor health

The margins principle

- How many hours in each day?
- Keep safety capacity.
- Use the pi rule ($\pi \approx 3.14$).
- Say “I will get back to you.”
- Ask what will I give up to do this?
- How does this fit with my goals?
- Simplify.



The boundaries principle

- Do you do your friend's homework?
- Clarify responsibilities.
- Do not feel guilt that is not yours.
- Help others develop responsibility.



The priorities principle

- Do you always do the right thing first?
- Do not chase rabbits.
- Do not allow the urgent to win over the important.
- Have one calendar and one task list.
- Pray for God's leading every day.



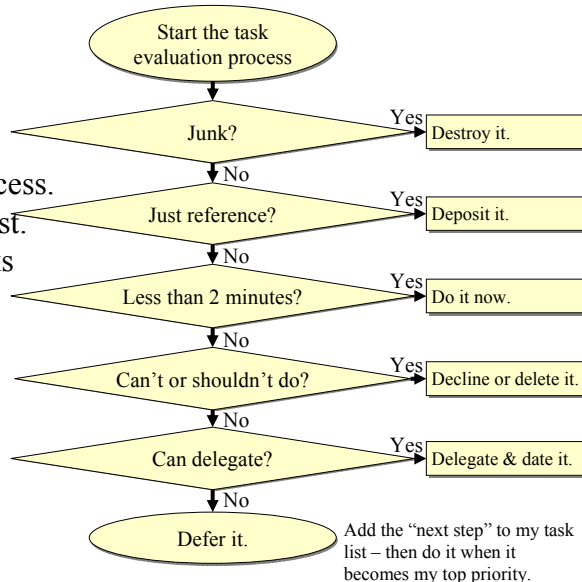
The focus principle

- What is the average time between interruptions?
- What is the average time to recover from an interruption?
- What is the source of your interruptions?
- Use the two second rule – quickly write it down and stay focused.
- Analyze and stop the interruptions.
- Find a quiet place to work.
- Turn off e-mail notifications.
- Manage time thieves.
- Take breaks.



The planning principle

- How much planning?
- How should I plan?
- Use the 10% rule.
- Use task evaluation process.
- Use calendar and task list.
- Schedule important tasks
 - Classes
 - Study time
 - Time for friends
 - Time to grow spiritually



The handle it once principle

- How many times do you open and close an email?
- How many emails do you have in your email in-box?
- How much paper do you have on your desk or in your work area?
- Open it once and decide.



The stop the junk principle

- How much junk email do you get per day?
- Spend time to stop the flow.
- Unsubscribe from reputable mailing lists.
- Reduce the number of e-mails you write.
- Reduce the number of people you copy.
- Set up filters to keep out junk.



The file now principle

- Do you have piles of paper in your workarea?
- Does it take you more than 5 seconds to find something you need?
- Create a good filing system.
- File it now.
- Use the file pile.



The in-box zero principle

- How often do you check your e-mail?
- Do you check your e-mail the first thing in the morning?
- When was the last time you got to zero emails in your in-box?
- Process each e-mail when you open it.
- Immediately file reference e-mails.
- Get your email in-box down to zero at least once per week.



The review priorities principle

Tasks → Projects → Goals → Purpose

- Review daily → Tasks
- Review weekly → Projects
- Review monthly → Goals
- Review annually → Purpose

The lean email principle

- Write short e-mails.
- Make the e-mail subject line short and meaningful.
- Do not send an e-mail for a complex issue.

The purpose principle

- What are the benefits of writing out your life purpose?
- Five questions to define your life purpose:
 - What will be the center of my life?
 - What will be the character of my life?
 - What will be the contribution of my life?
 - What will be the communication of my life?
 - What will be the community of my life?



Warren, Rick (2002). *The Purpose Driven Life*.

The purpose principle

Dimension	Purpose	Goals
Spirit		
Mind		
Body		
Relationships		
Service		
Work		
Finances		

Purpose -- Long-term, character-related, being rather than doing, not directly measurable

Goals -- Specific, measurable, achievable, results-oriented, and time specific (SMART)

The lean thinking principles

- Simple
- Visible
- Error-proof
- Wasteless
- Standard

Example: Crash cart at Park Nicollet Medical Center



The lean thinking principles - Simple

Example:

Our family keeps a large basket of standard brand white socks in our laundry room.



The lean thinking principles - Visible

Example:

We use a little glass in our dishwasher to indicate when the dishes have been washed.



Example:

The mailbox flag is a simple signal.



The lean thinking principles – Error-proof

Example:

I always keep my keys, wallet, and watch in a box on my desk so I know where to find them when I go to work.



The lean thinking principles – Wasteless

Example:

Shaving kit in my roller bag.



Example:

Re-opening and re-reading emails, text messages, and letters is clearly wasteful.

The lean thinking principles – Standard

Example

I have a standard place to keep my shoes in our closet so that I can always find them easily.



The balanced life principle

- What are the benefits of a balanced life?
- Why do balanced people often get better grades and have more fun?

- Take care of your body.
- Take care of your spirit.
- Take care of your mind.

- Watch out for warning signs.

Conclusions

The principles:

- The margins principle
- The boundaries principle
- The priorities principle
- The focus principle
- The planning principle
- The handle it once principle
- The stop the junk principle
- The file now principle
- The in-box zero principle
- The review priorities principle
- The “lean” email principle
- The purpose principle
- The lean thinking principles – Simple, Visible, Error-proof, wasteless, and standard
- Balanced life principle

Conclusions

The Bible

Be very careful, how you live.

Live as wise people, not as unwise, and make the most of every day, because the days are evil.

Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what God's will is.

- Ephesians 5:15-17 (paraphrased)

Discussion questions

1. Which two principles did you like the most?
2. What do you need to do to live a balanced life?
3. Using these principles write a prayer you can pray daily.