

The ABC's of Business How to get through all the things in your day

by Michael DeLory

Abstract. This is a simple time management and organization system that anyone can apply to their business or daily life to get through things they have to do. It helps you to enjoy what you are doing, and end the day with a sense of accomplishment.

This is a wonderful system getting the things you really want done. It was taught to me years ago, though I can't remember by whom. I have been using it on and off for more than ten years, and find it very effective. Sometimes I feel overwhelmed, disorganized, or as if my business or life is not working out. Then I realized I haven't been using the system for a while to get my daily priorities done. When I get back onto it, it helps me straighten everything out and get things accomplished with a much clearer head.

The reason for the ABC system, is to keep me focused on what is really important in my day. To often I end up doing all the things that are urgent, and none of the things that are important. Other times, people add things to what I have to do on a given day and throw me off my stride. By prioritizing my day, I really get control of my work and my life.

This system also helps with one simple fact I have found about business: It is impossible to get everything done. Luckily it is entirely possible to get the important and meaningful things done in our lives. We all know people who are forever running around but never seem to accomplish the important things, even though they spend so much time telling us what they are doing. Tell them to use this system.

Please Note:

It is a good idea to have your long term goals written out before you begin your daily To Do lists. The everyday things work out better in the context of the overall goals and purposes of your business or life.

Directions:

1. Write down everything you have to do today.

Do this first thing in the morning or as soon as possible after that. Feel free to add things that come up during the day whenever you think of them.

2. Choose five or six that are the most important to do today. Mark them A.

Anything urgent goes on the list (e.g. It is the first of the month and you must pay the rent today). The most important things for you to achieve also go on the list. If you have more than five urgent things, then choose the five most urgent and call the others to tell them you can't do it today. Hopefully you will only have one or two urgent things. If you do this exercise everyday you will be doing things before they become urgent.

3. Choose five to ten things that are the next most important. Mark them B.

These are the things you would like to get done, but they are not necessarily essential to do today.

4. Mark everything else as a C.

Any items you add later must be entered as B's or C's unless you have already completed the A's

5. Focus on completing your A priorities without worrying whether you do the B's and C's or not.

Many of the B's and C's will be easier to accomplish and will get done in the course of the day. Some of your A's will be tough, and you may have been avoiding them.

6. When you finish your A's congratulate yourself.

Stop and take a minute to say "Job well done." Or pat yourself on the back. Then take a coffee break, make a personal call, have a nap. Or give yourself some other reward. Make sure you give yourself some recognition for doing the things that are important in your day. Once in a while simply pack it in and go home, whenever you complete your A's even if it's eleven o'clock in the morning.

7. If you finish all your A's by 1 pm, you can give yourself two or three more if you like.

You can also just work through your B list.

8. B is for bonus.

Each thing you do from the B list is a bonus that you didn't have to do today. You should feel great that you get some of them done, because then you are getting ahead.

Notes:

Daily things to do must be realistically achievable that day or they can't be A's. They must be realistically achievable on some day or they can't be B's or C's either. You will need to break down many things. For example you can't put "Write a book" on your daily list (that should be on your six month, one year, or five year goals). You can put "Spend one hour writing" on your list. You can even break it down by putting "Spend one hour writing" on your A list, and putting "Spend another hour writing" on your B list.

That way, once you've done one hour, the second is a Bonus, if you get around to it.

A successful day depends not on how many things you do, but on how important they are. Completing 20 b and c things is not much good if the A's get left behind in the process.

B & C things will move up and down the list as you do the A's. Don't worry about them too much.

When someone calls you or something happens and you have to add it to the list, tell them immediately "I can't guarantee I'll do this today," then put it on your B list. Anyone who doesn't give you enough warning doesn't deserve to be an A priority. This way you won't be victimized by others' lack of organization or communication. Remember, the point of the exercise is to do the things you think are important, not the things others may think are important for you to do.

Do this exercise every day for at least a week and you will notice a difference. Make sure you reward yourself on days when you complete you A's

Profile

Michael DeLory is a Touch for Health Instructor and also the Executive Director of the TFHA of Canada. He is dedicated to excellence in teaching and presenting Touch for Health skills. He is always on the lookout for tools which will help people create the type of business they want in their kinesiology careers.

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