



IDEAL WEEK

Welcome to this next lesson, your ideal week. You can find this on pages 28 and 29 of your planner. Your ideal week is a planning tool. It's what your perfect week would look like if you could control 100% of what happens. The premise behind this tool is that you have a choice in life. You can either live on purpose, according to a plan that you've set or you can live by accident, reacting to the demands of others. The first approach is proactive and the second is reactive.

Now granted, you can't plan for everything. You can't control everything. Things happen that you can't anticipate, but it's a whole lot easier to accomplish what matters most when you're proactive and you begin with the end in mind. And that's where your ideal week is designed to do. It's similar to a financial budget. The only difference is that you're going to plan how you'll spend your time, rather than how you'll spend your money. And like a financial budget, you spend it on paper first.

Your ideal week is divided into a simple grid. Each day has a stage at the very top row and it's segmented according to a specific focus area, the left column. You'll enter first your daily stages. This is based on the metaphor Shakespeare used when he said, "All of life is a stage." For our purposes, there's a front stage, a back stage and an offstage. You're going to want to try to batch your activities based on those stages.

It can be useful to batch similar activities together in order to maximize your focus and your productivity. Front stage activities are those things you get paid to do, whether it's by customers, clients, or in some cases your boss. If it's your boss, these activities are the ones that are visible to your boss. Then there are the back stage activities. These are those things you do to prepare for the front stage and they're typically invisible to your customers or your clients or maybe your boss.

Then there are the offstage activities. Those are the things you do that have nothing to do with work. However, and this is important, they rejuvenate you so you can be more effective at your work. If you don't find this metaphor of the stage helpful, you could organize your week by themes. Mondays could



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be people days where you consolidate all of your meetings with your teammates. Tuesdays could be preparation days, Wednesdays and Thursdays could be presentation days. Fridays could be planning days. Do whatever works for you, but consider assigning day themes if possible. The point is to batch your activities together for maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

Now, keep in mind that your ideal week is just that, your *ideal* week. It's not going to happen every week. In fact, it might not happen most weeks, but hopefully over time you're going to be able to shape your weeks based on this model so you can become more and more focused and more and more efficient. Once you've created your ideal week, it's good to share it with your teammates and your family. They can help you stick to your ideal week if they know what you're shooting for. If they don't know, they may inadvertently be undermining your efforts. You're going to find that this is a work in progress, so be easy on yourself. Every quarter is a new opportunity for you to evaluate what's working, what's not, and then adjust accordingly. Now let's go to the next lesson. This is where the rubber meets the road, daily pages.