



presents . . .

Killing Time **Vampires**

Systematic control of your workday for time and wealth creation -

In less than 3 weeks

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Acknowledgements

Without Tim Ferriss and his book, *The Four Hour Work Week*, this book would have been, of course, impossible. Tim's "epiphany" of the mini-retirement and escape from 9 to 5 and his concept of Lifestyle Design have inspired countless entrepreneurs and professionals like me to take a hard look at how they view their work/life balance and overall goals.

I would also like to acknowledge the thought leaders in time management and productivity and its like-minded principles, specifically David Allen, the master author of "Getting Things Done and the Art of Personal Productivity" as well Elena Morgenstern, whose book "Never Check Email in the Morning" inspired me to change my entire view of email as the enemy of all productivity and, ironically, to always check my email in the morning. These three books led me to invent the concept of Time Creation that underscores the principles of the Barefoot and Rich

Roadmap, of which this book, *Killing Time Vampires*, is just one small part and just the beginning of a process.

I also want to acknowledge certain true entrepreneurs who have put their ideas into action by leveraging the principles of Lifestyle Design and carved out their own niche thanks to those principles: Jon Jonas (outsourcing expert and creator of ReplaceMyself.com), Joel Peterson (affiliate marketing) and Michelle MacPhearson, whose tireless, but appropriate, use of e-marketing has taught me more than I can say about automation of income.

The real life experiences of other entrepreneurs who earned their freedom from the 9 to 5 grind have inspired me and many others to step out and take risks that are well worth it in the long run.

Many thanks are due to my wife, Arlene and my children, Matthew and Nicole, who have

supported me in writing this book and provided the inspiration to make possible the lifestyle changes that this book is about and which allow me to spend time with them everyday while others are still at their offices.

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– **John Cummings**

THE 4-HOUR WORKWEEK DOES NOT (CANNOT) EXIST

There, I said it. I want to clear this up right away. If you have not read the book "Four Hour Work Week" (4HWW) by Tim Ferriss, you have definitely heard about it and we need to talk about it. And you should read it.

The 4HWW conjures up images of walks on the beach in foreign lands while teams of virtual assistants in far-flung places do, virtually, every task for you. After adopting the 4HWW, your only work will be to occasionally check your bank account balance on your iPhone while you skip stones into the surf, somewhere in the South Pacific. I love the book and the concept, but for most of us, it's not realistic.

So, let's get real. For reasons I will explain at length below, the possibility of living a life filled with the free time and money you desire while "working" only 4 hours a week is about as real as unicorns and the Loch Ness Monster, at least for most of us mortals. I want to dismiss the myth but more importantly, show you what actually is achievable, starting in less than 90 days.

So, let me introduce you to the 4-hour workday . . .

You can finish everything that you NEED to do everyday, (for living expenses, for vacation money, for college accounts, for retirement money), in half the time you are spending right now, every day.

If you're working 20 hours a day, we've got a big problem to deal with. But even if you work an 8-hour day, cutting it in half would give you a four-hour workday. What would you do with the other four hours? How about spending more time with your wife, your kids, and your golf clubs?

Maybe you could build your own business so that eventually, you don't have to answer to anyone else. (Recommended). If you're reading this book, you think you're working too hard and you wish you had more time and money. You at least wish you had more time to enjoy your money, right?

I am living the 4-hour workday . . .

Because there are so many books out that glorify “get rich quick” and other fanciful ideas about time and money, I want to tell you the real story about myself.



My name is John Cummings and I work 4 hours a day or less.

I am in my forties. My career started as an attorney and I made very good money. But I was very unhappy with how much time it

took to make that money the way I was doing it - and how quickly that time (my life) was passing me by. So, I began to plan an escape that took nearly 6 years, almost as long as it took me to become an attorney! It took me another 6 years to get it right.

While I worked on my plan, I kept track of everything I did to get where I am and I created this system. Now, I am still an attorney, an entrepreneur, a writer, a dreamer and doing very well, in a lot less time. What’s the secret?

It’s Called Barefoot and Rich

I don’t want you to misunderstand me. I still have a day job. I write, provide legal and business advice to others, and I run several companies. I spend more time on my laptop than most people do. But everything I need to do so I can pay my bills, happens before lunch. The rest of it is just for fun. The more I refine my system, the less time I need to spend trying to make money, so I get to do what I like. A lot of it is “work,” but it’s work I really enjoy.

What’s important to understand as we unpack this concept, is that this is **NOT** a get rich quick plan. This is a plan that takes time, but also makes time. In other words, it adds time to your day. You choose if you want to use the time to make more money (or to make even more time!).

Everyone can do this. You can do this. You’re holding part one of the process in your hands. Part one will take you almost a month to master. It cannot be rushed. But once you get the hang of it, and move to the next step, I guarantee you’ll be done with work in HALF the time, in 90 days, or less.

Core Concept:

What is

**Barefoot
and Rich?**

“What Does Barefoot and Rich Mean?”

My daughter asked me that when she first saw my website and my book. At 12, she didn't know how many times I worked through the night or started my workday at 4 a.m. (or both) so that I could be around. But, I almost missed my chance to be “around.” My first job had me working 80-hour weeks for less than \$50,000 a year. My secretary was earning a higher hourly rate than I was!

I knew where I wanted to be and it wasn't in my office 80 hours a week while my wife and kids waited for me at home. We all have a vision of where we would be if we weren't working at all. Retired or on vacation, I think it's fair to say that the “anti-work” that most of us envision involves a hammock, a beach chair, or maybe sitting by a pool. It usually involves kicking off your shoes, putting your feet up and relaxing. *That was my vision. Palm trees. Umbrella drinks. Barefoot. Someday*

Working Wherever, Whenever (www)

My wife and I moved to Florida from NJ shortly after starting a web-based business that eventually did allow us to be not only financially successful, but barefoot, whenever we wanted, wherever we wanted. Ever since then, it's been my goal to share my secret with as many people as I can.

“Barefoot and Rich” is about having time, more than it is about having money.

But you can have as much money as you need or want, without dressing up and going to an office everyday (unless that's your thing). If you can make as much money as you need to, in just a few hours a day, you can leave your shoes off a lot. I do.

In order to fully grasp what you're about to do to your daily schedule, your weekly grind and your overall time bank, I want to help you put into perspective what it is that you're striving for, so you'll know what to do with all of the extra time you'll soon have.

Death of a Corporate Lawyer

"The first thing we must do is kill all the lawyers."

- Shakespeare's King Henry VI

Under my yearbook photo, my aspiration for the future was: "Corporate Lawyer." The list of attributes on my mind must surely have been wealth, power, expensive suits, fancy offices, private jets. What a vision!?

Fast forward.

Seven years of college and law school later, I was an associate at a law firm (picture "The Firm" as depicted in John Grisham's novel and the popular film starring Tom Cruise). I had arrived! If I played this right, I would someday be partner! But, there was no amount of billable hours that could satisfy partners of The Firm. Lawyers at firms like that are expected to bill at least 1950 hours a year and the real prizes (big bonuses, big offices, partnership) don't kick in until you are on track for 2200-2400 hours a year.

The 2400-Hour Work-Year – Seriously?

Wouldn't that be an instant hit for a book? Grab your calculator. 2400 hours in a year means over 200 hours a month. In order to bill that much time, you need to work (head down, on the clock) 10 hours a day or more. (You're not supposed to bill time at lunch, coffee breaks, bathroom breaks or time looking out the window). My workday began when I left the house at 7 am and ended most nights after 8 pm.

I played that game for about 3 years, skipping lunch, smoking at my desk. I had a coffee pot in my office. Instead of weighing 180 pounds (my ideal weight), I weighed about 158 (holding my briefcase), smoked a pack a day and spent most Saturdays in the office.

Maybe if I just worked a little harder, I could catch up and "get there." But, without cheating the clock or the client, there was no way to do it. And, partnership was not going to make this any easier; only more stressful. There had to be a way out, right?

My Escape Plan – Part One

Exhausted, another associate and I took a hike and opened our own law firm.

Immediately, we had weekends free and created fabulous money and free time in the process!

OK, I couldn't resist. But, seriously, with all due respect to my law partner who is still one of my best friends and business partners in the world, it wasn't much better. We were working for ourselves but, any way you slice it, an hour is an hour is an hour and I wasn't getting rich (or barefoot) any time soon.

What I didn't realize at the time though, is that I had opened up the first door to my escape. Having my own firm and some control over my schedule allowed me to see a way off of the treadmill that I had created. And this is the essence of the first part of this plan. **Creating time to get unstuck.**

Create Extra Time, one hour a day.

While practicing law on my own, I finally had a little bit of time to think straight again. I had stopped the flood, just a little. It was during that freed up mental time, that I had my first idea for a non-lawyer business - one that did not depend on billable hours.

My new business would allow me to make money over and over again from the same labor. Amazing! I had blinders on for so long, I was blown away by the concept. My income did not need to be tied to my time!

I'll bet you're too busy to have your own epiphany or just too busy to figure out how to carry it out. So you plod along every day, doing the same things, knowing that you're spending too much time working.

The way out of this is simple. It's about time. It's about just one extra hour a day, at first. And I'm going to show you where to find it.

My Escape Plan – Part Two

So I started my first internet business and within just months, I was making a lot of money. Thousands of dollars arrived in the mail every day. This is not typical and, honestly, I have not started a business like it since. It was a bit of luck and a ton of work.

But after a couple of years, hundreds of plastic surgeons were paying us thousands of dollars a year to advertise on websites we created. Do the math. I had arrived (again), this time financially.

But, shame on me. I was working a full day at my law firm and then came home and worked until the small hours of the night to keep up with my other job. Uh oh! I found myself in another little prison cell. This time, I had a lot more money coming in but I was stuck, again, in the same spot.

Then, I fully grasped it. I had to **choose time over money**, to get both. If I chased money, I would never have time. It wasn't a very easy decision.

It's Not About Money, It's About Time

I decided to choose time, for the first time in my life, and ended up having time and money. As I write this, I'm not at the beach with my toes in the sand. I am actually at a desk a lot (even with shoes on). Unless you decide to live in a hut, you'll probably need to work a few hours every day, no matter how good you get at time management or time creation.

But here's the thing that has changed my life: I now put my work hours in whenever I want, wearing whatever I want and I don't answer to anyone about how, when or how much money my time is generating. I have the time to pursue my dreams and my wish list, in addition to having wealth. This is the essence of being Barefoot and Rich.

One last note: I can prove to you that you too can do this, in any profession. After my success as a lawyer and web entrepreneur and with plenty of money in the bank from the sale of one of my websites, I took

a job in a sales organization at an entry-level salary to prove that my system works. Read on

Undercover CEO

In the year before I wrote this book, I quietly assumed a business development position in a rapidly growing niche services company and applied the principles in this book. I became one of the company's top-producing sales people in less than 4 months and still had time to write this book and enjoy time with my friends and family. How?

This story is not a boast but a scientific example of how the principles you're about to use, are universal.

I took the job at first as a business opportunity but found that the prospect of making any money in this particular company was going to go against everything I had learned about honoring time first, and money second.

But I realized that to make my system relevant to EVERYONE, I would need to apply it in a job where NO ONE was following any sensible rules about time management. This was going to be tough.

Time Creation in any Job

What you're about to read, regarding taking back your time, your calendar, your schedule and your life, has all been tested in the hot furnace of a real, live and quite dysfunctional sales organization. Not only did the system work, but several other people in the organization adopted these principles, doubled sales, and now leave work every day before quitting time. You can listen to their stories on my website.

YOU can do this too!

I want you to know that the path to extra free time and financial freedom is not a difficult one. You just need to take one step at a time. This is where most concepts fail people: by imposing too many concepts and rules all at once. Like another job!

This first module, Killing Time Vampires starts at the very beginning, at the root of all evil in your daily routine (email) and begins to build daylight for you, one day at a time. You'll never be the same.

So How Does it Work?

OK, let me cut to the chase. I want to underscore the simplicity of this system so that you don't miss it. Most people have the same reaction when being told that they can do something better than they are doing now. It sounds like this:

"Oh, I already do that."

"Yeah, I have already heard this."

"I don't really have time for that."

My answers to those objections are always the same: "No, you don't already do this. No, this is not like what you've heard and Yes, you do have time for this."

The other reaction is for people to think that what I am proposing is simply working harder at managing email or doing it faster. This is NOT what I am proposing. Each day of this process is listed in order for a reason.

Please don't fall into the trap of thinking that you will clean out your email box or get to the more important things first. You won't. My system, when followed one step at a time, creates extra time to think about more important things. The steps are as easy as 1-2-3 but I'm going to unpack them in very tedious detail, on purpose.

For now, here is an overview:

Step One – Emptying your inbox (yes, empty)

Step Two – Reducing & Taming Email (for good)

Step Three – Phone Call and Meeting Management

Core Concept:

Why?

Why Do YOU Work So Hard?

"We have to find out what's wrong or find out why we don't know what's wrong"

– Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance

I'm going to jump right into day one of this process in a minute but I don't want to start without a reason. You've got one, like anyone else, but let's put it on the table so that we'll know why we're going through this exercise.

No matter where you are in your career and no matter how much money you make or have in the bank, ask yourself one question:

"Am I doing the things that make me happiest in life?"

It's not a trick question. Take a minute. Close your eyes. Answer that question honestly.

What Do You Really Want?

OK, welcome back. I know what your answer was. It was either "no" if you were being honest or "not really" if you were hedging a bit. But at the beginning of each week, when your feet hit the street, do you feel like you've refilled your cup and you're raring to go, or is the weekend always over too soon?

You're reading this book because you're not doing the things that make you happiest, at least not as often as you would like. Instead, you're spending too much time doing things that don't make you happy. They just pay your bills.

Worse, you're missing the things that matter. You're frustrated about that every day. But I want you to take a deep breath and relax, because you're on the right track now. And the first step is to identify the WHY.

100% Mortality Rate

I recently attended the funeral of a close friend. His name was also John. That's his real name. He was 48 years old, had three children and a very busy life. He had a huge wish list but he had massive heart attack on a Sunday night. Lights out. Game over.

Everything on his "bucket list" was gone in 60 seconds.

The company where I applied and perfected the Barefoot and Rich System was filled with people just like John and just like you, who talk about what they want to do when they get some time off or when they retire. Sadly, I am afraid many of them will never do most of those things. **But you will.**

You will do the things you wish for. If you define them, plan, and execute.

So what's on YOUR Barefoot List?

In order to find the time to do those things that make you happiest, you need to figure out what's keeping you from them. Why are you not doing the things that make you happy?

Answering these questions honestly and figuring out what is blocking your access to the things you actually want, right now, is the first step to getting there. Only you can answer these questions, but I want to give you the roadmap to figure it out before it's too late.

Before you start transforming your calendar, take 10 minutes to make your own "barefoot" list. I call it a barefoot list because it's a lot more fun to think of what I want to do when I find time to get barefoot rather than "before I die."

Let's try one little exercise and then we'll begin.

Barefoot Exercise #1 – Create YOUR Barefoot List

Make a list of things that you would regret not having done, if you died tomorrow.

Mine looks like this, but not necessarily in this order:

- Take my son hunting / fishing with his grandfather
- Take my daughter to the beach and go boating more often (work in progress)
- Take my family to Europe (done)
- Learn to speak Italian, French and Spanish
- Play guitar and sing, live, on stage
- Become proficient at a martial art
- Minister to the poor and underprivileged overseas
- Skydive
- See the Great Wall of China

- Take my wife to Las Vegas, Greece, Israel (and that little island off of a Florida Key that not many people know about)
- Take the family to the grand canyon
- Run the Boston Marathon
- Complete the Ironman at Kona, Hawaii
- Ride a motorcycle on a cross-country trip (maybe in Europe)
- Publish my own book (check!)
- Break a 90 score in golf for real (not kidding)
- Scuba Dive
- Read the Entire Bible

Build your own barefoot list now

at BarefootandRich.com.

(please remove shoes)



My Barefoot List

Many of the items on my own barefoot list are now in progress as you read this and a handful, like writing this book, are now checked off. But all of my barefoot items used to live on the mythical place of Someday Isle. "Someday, I'll take my son fishing." "Someday, I'll get back in shape." It's time to make the wishes real.

Building your own barefoot list is a great way to start your first step of figuring out YOUR why? Before you can find fulfillment in each day, each week and each year of your life, you have to have a reason (or reasons) that you do what you do.

Otherwise, you'll spin your wheels to make money, but with no identified reason why you're trying to earn money. Or worse, you'll end up like my friend – dead long before any of your dreams are realized. If you don't have a big picture vision of what it is you want, you won't take any defined steps to reach the

prize. Or you'll start, only to burn out, asking "why am I doing this?"

Now, don't fool yourself with compound barefoot list items. If one of your dreams is to "Become a Millionaire Before I'm 40," you need to ask yourself "why?" more than once. In other words, "WHY" do I want to become a millionaire?

If you want a rush of adrenaline on the day your assets exceed your liabilities by \$1,000,000 (you're a millionaire!), and you think this will give you a pleasure worth striving for, then go for it.

But trust me, it's not that all exciting to see your bank account balance top any number. It's only a number, and it's about as exciting as watching the odometer in your car flip to 100,000 miles. The fun is over in a second and you're on to the real question: "Now what?"

If the more likely reason that you want to be a millionaire is that it will allow you to go boating every

weekend or sky dive or travel to Europe, forget the part about how much money you have amassed or saved, and just write those items on your list:

- “Boat every weekend”
- “Sky dive”
- “Travel to Europe”

You don't need to be a millionaire to do any of those things. Focusing on trying to be a millionaire will surely sidetrack you from what you really want.

It's also important not to misinterpret what does and does not matter. As a society, we tend to get this twisted, a lot. The media love to demonize wealth and certainly, the accumulation of wealth for wealth's sake or by illegitimate means, is clearly not an admirable goal. But striving for the money that allows you to do the things you want is an admirable goal. In A Christmas Carol, Ebenezer Scrooge's only goal was to be rich and keep getting richer, no matter

the cost to anyone else. If that's you, we need to talk.

So let's examine what you think you're doing every day at your job right now. Whether you work for yourself or for someone else, are you trying to gain more money and more stuff? If so, it's important to establish whether you have a finish line or not. If you don't have a finish line, you will continue to work to attain more wealth without ever stopping to ask if you've got enough money, to enjoy the money you're making. Let me illustrate with a personal story.

When I started my first internet company, I was making \$5,000 - \$10,000 a month within the first few months. The clients were big-ticket advertisers paying for yearly fees of \$2,000 to \$3,000 and I only had one partner. Making a sale was hard at first but as the sales began to accelerate, the monthly numbers became \$15,000, \$20,000 and so on for my share of the profits. This was more money than I had ever made from any source and well beyond what I

needed to do everything I wanted to do with my life at the time.

Instead of sitting down and figuring out what to do with all of this financial freedom I had created, I thought “how much more can we make” if we sell this many or that many new clients this year? And off we went. We reached a point where the company made me over \$40,000 in most months. And I enjoyed it. I had some great vacations and drove nice cars. I also sold that company for a very nifty amount of money. But I worked more than 10 hours a day and usually 7 days a week because I kept thinking I should grow it and grow it and grow it. I never had a finish line so I spent about 8 years trying to make it bigger for the sake of making it bigger. During that time, I never once went fishing. I played golf about 8 times (in 10 years!). I dreamed of learning to play the guitar, of going to Europe, of studying a martial art, of ministering to the poor. Someday, I would get to all of those things, when I had made *enough* money.

I lied to myself that this was all part of a great plan for retirement and paying for the kids’ college expenses someday. But even for all of the money that I did make and that I did save, I don’t have enough to retire. As I write this, I turned 43 years old, yesterday. If I wanted to retire at 55 and my life expectancy is say, 85, I’ll need enough money to pay for my living expenses for 30 more years after I retire. I was wondering how much I would need to squirrel away to make that happen so I Googled “how much money do I need to retire?” Here’s what I learned from the experts:

Your Results

You will need a total of
\$4.6 million
(\$3.2 million in today's dollars) to retire at 55 years old.

[Try Again](#)

Here's my favorite part of the graphic. It says: "TRY AGAIN". Doesn't that just sum it up? There is no way that I am going to strive for the next 12 years of my life to accumulate \$4.6 million so that I can retire at 55. Why? Because right now, my children are teenagers, I am in the prime of my life and I've got a barefoot list a mile long.

To top it off, my father died when he was 55. There's a wake up call for you. No matter what your age or income level or desired retirement age, retirement as the goal is foolish. So let's throw out "so I can retire comfortably" as the reason you're working so hard.

I want to thank Tim Ferriss one more time for putting that concept squarely in my head in his "4-Hour Work Week." To live what I call the 4-hour workDAY and really enjoy what you do every day, you must focus on fitting the things that you want to do into your life right now. When you retire (if you live long enough!)

you may be too old or not healthy enough, to get to ANY the items on your Barefoot List.

Let's get to those things right now. It's about time.

Literally

Step One: Day One

Kill Email Before Dawn

E-mail is at risk of killing its own usefulness. Daily e-mail volume is now at 210 billion emails per day, worldwide, and increasing.

- *The Radicati Group, a market research firm (2009).*

Always Do Your Email First

In know! I know! Doing your email first goes against at least 5 of the most popular time management and work/life books ever written. Just check out my recommended reading list at the end of this book to confirm this.

In fact, a New York Times bestseller, "*Never Check Your Email in the Morning*" builds an entire time management system around the principle that we should always focus first on the most important tasks of the day and NOT on email. Otherwise, we'll waste our entire morning on the mundane and wasteful tasks in our inbox, right?

Well, that COULD be true, if you follow the old rules about how you deal with email. But thanks to a whole new approach to email management, you can (and should) clear your entire inbox, before you even start your day.

You must Kill Email Before Dawn!

Email is the #1 Vampire. It sucks!

Your email inbox is the single biggest "time vampire" in your entire workday and in your personal life too.

How many emails are in your inbox? I already know. At least one too many.

I don't care whether you've read those emails or whether you're "saving them for later." You've got dozens, if not hundreds, of email in your inbox right now, and they are controlling your entire day, every day. Two people I've recently saved from this time thirsty predator actually had between 500 and 1000 emails IN THEIR INBOX!! Using my system, they now start their day clean and clear of email, every day and enjoy massive productivity as a result. My favorite example: 17,101 emails in my friend's gmail. I witnessed this myself. (see picture below).

Don't tell me your job is different or that you have to keep all of your email in your inbox. It's simply not true and it's killing you.

Email Analysis Paralysis

You need to understand a problem before you can fix it. Every single email that lands in your inbox and sits there for any length of time is a “to do” list item in your mind, whether you realize it or not. Otherwise, you would simply delete it. The reason you don’t delete it is that you think you need to do something with it. Mentally, that is an “unclosed loop” that creates anxiety, and which saps your power to act (say hello to paralysis).

The bigger problem, besides the anxiety of knowing about all of those unclosed loops, is that every time you go back to your inbox throughout the day, you have to keep re-sorting those emails to find the ones that are “important”, “highest priority!” or “urgent!” (this is the analysis).

Every day, you repeat the cycle like a mouse on a wheel. You’ve even become okay with this. That’s the part that’s really scary.

. . . it’s a form of laziness

I will guarantee that you spend AT LEAST one extra hour a day (probably two) at your computer because of just this one habit. The problem: mental laziness. If you stopped to fix it, you would free yourself from it’s power, but that seems, ironically, like too much work, so you keep doing it.

This is madness! Stop it. Today!

Fixing email paralysis requires some planning but is very simple. It’s a small step that takes very little time, but frees up hours of time. Immediately. What would you do with 365 extra hours this year?

I owe a tremendous amount of credit to David Allen, the author of *Getting Things Done* and regarded by many as the guru of organization for what I am about to tell you. I have applied his organizational approach directly to my Kill Email Before Dawn methodology for maximum impact on your inbox. Here’s where to start.

The First Hour of Every Day

By 6:30 am, before anyone else is awake, you must roll up your sleeves, get into your inbox for one hour and take decisive action on every email in your inbox. You only get four choices for what to do with each:

- **DELETE IT**
- **MOVE IT**
- **DO IT NOW**
- **SCHEDULE IT**

Notice that there is no “I’ll get to it later” option.

Your goal is to start each day at the office (whether that’s at home or a 40-minute drive away) with ZERO emails in your box. A clean slate is the key to this.

Your First Job is to Empty the Box

I don’t want you to get this mixed up with more work. Or think that I’m trying to save you time simply by getting you out of bed earlier to do more grunt work.

No. The reason this process **MUST** happen before daylight is that otherwise you’ll be digging a hole, while others are filling it. If you do that, you won’t be able to take the next few steps in this process. We need your inbox empty so that you can see what’s coming into that box with a clear head for further action as you refine the process each day.

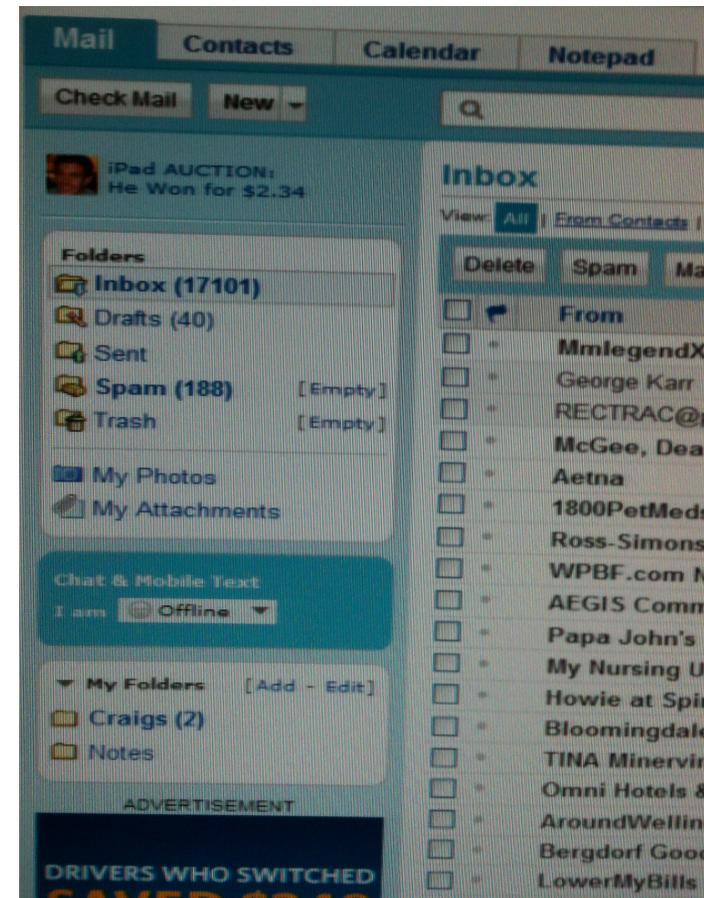
Although this will be a lot of work at first, the amount of deleting, moving, etc. that you do will be reduced dramatically after just a few days and will continue to be reduced every day thereafter.

Trust this process and you’ll be clear in a week. If you can’t reach zero emails in your box within 30 days, I’ll give you back what you paid for this book.

Day One

Facing the Vampire

(check out the inbox number!) >>



Day One – Cleaning Out the Box

You may have to do this for the first time on a weekend if you're a real email hoarder. (You are, aren't you?). I know that Sundays are for rest but if you ever want to really rest on a Sunday going forward, give up ONE Sunday for this first day and tell the family why you're doing it. They'll understand. Lock the door to your office and get this part done. Bring coffee (and chocolate) if you need to.

No matter what your process of handling email has been in the past, you must follow four simple rules for this new system to work. These are very simple but very important:

1. Start from the oldest email in your box.
- 2. Don't skip any emails.**
3. Follow the process outlined below.
4. Don't stop until you're done.

This is where a lot of people get off the bus. Please stay with me. This road leads to freedom.

One Email at a Time

Read your oldest email first. Maybe it's from 2 years ago. Maybe it's from last month. No matter. Why are you keeping it in your inbox? Your answer to that question will determine your next action and then drive your decision to delete it, move it, do it, or schedule it for later.

As noted above, you have only 4 possible actions. We're going to address them in a particular order because it helps you get through this faster. Let's define each of the four actions based on the types of emails you'll encounter.

Do It NOW Emails

OK, remember this: DO NOT start any action that has even a remote chance of taking more than 2 minutes. This is actually the essence of this entire step. Your goal at this step is ONLY to empty your inbox so don't sabotage yourself. If it could take

longer than 2 minutes, don't act on the email now because if you do, you'll never get past this step of processing emails. Also, remember that you are NOT NOT NOT looking to skip around through your email box finding stuff you can do now. That is the opposite of what you're trying to do. Remember to take the emails, in order.

OK, so what is a "Do It Now" email?

Do it now if you can . . .

- Read it and delete it.
- Reply in a few sentences or a few words
- Simply accept or decline an appointment
- Reply with a file that you can find immediately
- Forward the email to someone else for action

Otherwise, it's just not a "do it now" email.

Don't do it now if you need to:

- Call the person in order to reply properly
- Call someone else in order to answer the email
- Complete research, locate files or coordinate a meeting with other people
- Create a report, chart, graphic or other deliverable that will take more than 2 minutes

"Delete it" Emails

This should be the easiest of the four types of emails you'll deal with in this exercise but I've learned from countless clients that I have coached through this, that it's hard to say goodbye to some emails.

"Oh, but it's so funny!" "Oh, but I might need it!"

Fortunately, I have two ways to let you off of the hook so you CAN delete the emails that you need to delete and not feel so bad about it. First, if you really

feel you need to hang onto the email, even though it does not require any action on your part, you can follow the "Move it" process for saving stuff (see below).

Second, you can rest easy knowing that a lot of the emails that you'll delete but which have an important function going forward, are going to end up on your calendar before you delete them or move them. (see Schedule It, below)

Everything else can simply be deleted.

Stuff to Just Delete:

- Emails you quickly read and don't need to act on (cc's, news alerts, simple confirmations)
- Emails you have just replied to and no longer need
- Spam, promotions, notifications, alerts

Most of these will be read it and delete it but many will be just "delete it".

TRAP ALERT! Don't follow links to articles that you "just have to read". If the email is going to require you to leave the email to do something else that takes more than 2 minutes, you have to schedule time to deal with it (see Schedule it, below).

Advanced! After we get through your first week of this exercise, you're going to get off of mailing lists and cancel notifications and alerts that are flooding your inbox. You aren't benefiting from, reading or acting on most of these. You want to, but if you're honest, you can do without most of these without any negative effect on your happiness or your bottom line.

"Move It" Emails

This type of email will probably end up being your favorite. You can take the stuff you don't want to delete and put it somewhere other than your inbox. You won't believe how much freedom this gives you.

This is the equivalent of putting away all of the junk on your desk (and your floor and the top of

your filing cabinet) so that you don't have to keep looking at it.

"Move It" emails usually require one or two steps before you move them. If you need to tell someone else about the contents of the email, you'll likely forward it to someone else and then move it to a new place. Or you may need to copy the contents of the mail (directions to an event, details of a proposal) into a calendar event (see Schedule It below) and then move it. In any case, these are mails that you've been holding in your inbox because either you just want to save them for later reference or you need to do something with them. If you need to do something with them (that takes longer than 2 minutes), you're going to treat it as a "Schedule It" email but if you just want to keep it (for any reason at all), put it in some folder other than your inbox.

I like to keep one folder simply called "KEEP" as a subfolder of my inbox. Anything that I may need in the future or any work email that I want to refer to IF

something comes up as a question later, goes in this folder.

Folder Overload Alert!

Don't make the mistake of making a million folders in your mail system that you are going to have to manage. Like email analysis paralysis, you will end up with folder paralysis. "Where do I save this?" "Which folder?" "Should I just leave it in my inbox?"

Most every mail software has a sufficiently robust search tool that lets you search by words, names, dollar amounts, etc. so that you can find every email to "Dr. Zhivago" that you've ever sent or received by simply searching "Zhivago". And if you don't have a system like that, there are add-ons like "Xobni" that will do this for you. (Google it)

So don't get caught up in the fear that you won't find it later. Trust me when I tell you that the paralysis you are experiencing by leaving it all in your inbox will be heavily outweighed by the freedom and

productivity that results from moving it out of your inbox into your KEEP folder or some other subfolder.

And if you create 10 or so subfolders, I can bet you will end up wasting time trying to figure out which folder something is in later. But I'm not going to play folder cop right now. Create whatever subfolders you need to make you feel comfortable ("Keep", "Important," "Dr. Zhivago Stuff", etc.) and let's move on.

"Schedule It" Emails

All right, this may be the most important type of email to deal with and I saved this for last because this is the really hard one to accept. The "Do It Now" analysis described above is always a bit of a challenge because you will often find yourself thinking "maybe I can just do this one email now and get it out of the way!" It's called "just gonna" disease. We all suffer from a little bit of this.

But, if you're going to make this work, you will be following this process only to clear out your inbox without actually doing the tasks while you're processing email. Instead, you're going to schedule time to complete whatever (longer than 2 minutes) task is sitting in that email you're staring at.

Why is it so important to move these emails out of your inbox to your calendar (Schedule It)? Because the next action you need to take is not always apparent from the email sitting in your box. That's why you keep opening that email item and closing it and leaving it in your inbox. Moving it to your calendar is the first step towards completion of the task. It forces you to identify (in under two minutes by the way), how long it WILL take to deal with this issue (later) and also forces you to be realistic about where in your schedule you have time to deal with it.

Example: You have an email from a customer or a co-worker requesting a proposal. You have a good

idea about how long it will take to do that proposal because creating them is part of your job, right?

Let's say you need an hour. Look at your calendar for today (or tomorrow if today is already booked) and find the time you need. Set an appointment with yourself ("Prepare proposal for Dr. Smith") on your outlook or other calendar for a particular time and for as long as you need to get it done (60 minutes, e.g.). TIP: Paste some of the details from the email into the body of the appointment so you don't have to pull out that email again.

Now that you have scheduled the task contained in the email, you can comfortably Delete It or Move It, because you've Scheduled It.

You no longer need to worry about failing to do this item (or keep it in your inbox) because you have created the first of several action steps toward completing that item, big or small.

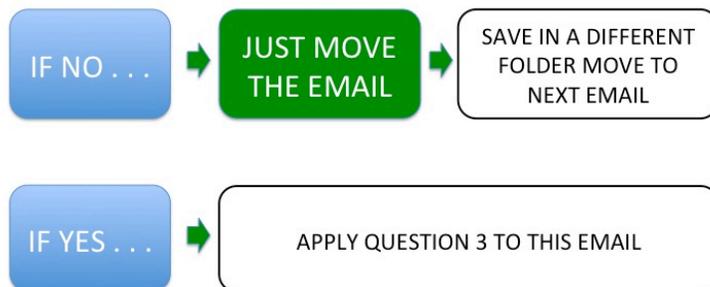
OK, now let's unwrap the best way to get through your entire inbox without stopping. Stick with this and you won't get fooled into saving emails you don't need and you won't get caught in the trap of DOING tasks that you should be scheduling for later.

1. FIRST - ask if you need to keep the email for any reason. If not, **delete** it and move to the next email. If you have ANY reason to keep it, apply question 2.
2. Is there ANY action that you need to take on this email right now, or are you just saving it for later? If the answer is NO, **move** it to an appropriate folder. If there IS any action you need to take, move to step 3.
3. Can you take action on that email and complete it in less than 2 minutes? If not, **schedule** the task in your calendar and then move the email to another folder (like "keep"). If yes, **complete** the task and the **move** the email to another folder or **delete** it.

QUESTION 1 - DO I HAVE ANY REASON TO SAVE THIS EMAIL?



QUESTION 2 - DO I NEED TO TAKE ANY FURTHER ACTION ON THIS EMAIL?



QUESTION 3 – CAN I COMPLETE THAT ACTION IN LESS THAN 2 MINUTES?



Now, follow this process for every email from the oldest to the newest. If you're doing this on a weekend or during the pre-dawn hours, you won't have a lot coming into your box. After an hour or several hours, you will have **DELETED** all email that you just don't need, **MOVED** email that you need to save to a new folder, **COMPLETED** any task that takes under two minutes and **SCHEDULED** time on your calendar to do all of the tasks that need more than two minutes.

Now, you've got an empty inbox and a full calendar. The power of your calendar is that when you start your workday, you already have your day planned and you don't need to be led around by the emails that have ruled you in the past. You are on the path and about to have a REALLY productive day!

Day Two

Keeping the Vampire Asleep

Day Two – Stay the Course

From what all of my clients have told me (and I can confirm this myself after looking at what happened on so many Monday mornings), Day Two is the hardest day of all in this process. Like most monsters we see in the movies, vampires have a way of coming back over and over.

Nearly everyone who attempts to kill his or her email vampire, performs the Day One task over the weekend or on a holiday. It's just too big of a job for most people to fix during a workday. That much needs no explanation.

But when Monday morning comes, the old habits that put us where we are now, come creeping back. Like the vampire waking back up, these habits also cause us to bleed our time. The reason for this is usually fairly simple. There is an email in your inbox that stands out as something you have to DO right now. Maybe you have a really demanding boss or client or

co-worker and everything that they want from you is always an emergency. You know it's not an emergency but you treat it like one anyway.

Or maybe you sabotage yourself, thinking you'll do "just this one thing" because you feel like it's ok now that your email box isn't full anymore. But if you think like that, it will be full again soon and you'll be back in the same position.

So on day two, let's say it's a Monday, make sure you are up before the worms and look at all of the email that came in since you finished your Sunday clean out. What to do? **You are going to PROCESS the emails the same way you did on Day One.** The only difference is that you should now have only emails that are 24 hours old or less and you've now got a good idea on how this works. If you still have more than that, it's OK.

I'm going to be honest. I don't have a single client who actually pulled off a full email box cleanout on Day One. So if you are one of the typical email

hoarders and you start Day Two with a lot of old baggage, don't be discouraged. Use your pre-dawn hours to continue the battle on Day Two and then, just get through your normal day. On Days Three through Seven, you're going to stay the course as best as possible, with one caution and key requirement. You must devote Day Seven to complete cleanout if you have not achieved the goal of zero email by that time.

I don't recommend doing anything else differently during this first week. Practice this method of dealing

with email every morning until you figure out how much time it takes you to manage email from the day before. By the next Monday (day 8), you should be starting every day with email that is only a day old. You'll zap all of it before your workday starts and your entire day will be planned with tasks that used to sit and grow mold in your inbox.

And now, you're ready to move on to the next step.

Do not move on until you have achieved ZERO emails in your box!

Step Two: Day Eight

Email Reduction Plan

Day Eight:

Give Your Email a Timeout

Would you let your kids, your spouse, your friends and your co-workers interrupt you every 60 seconds or every 5 minutes? Picture them at your desk, all around you, taking turns poking you and asking you questions or telling you their latest thought. Could you get any work done?

Guess what? This is happening to you every day while you sit alone at your desk. Nearly everyone who finds himself or herself in the prison of email addiction has Outlook, or a similar mail program set to bring new email in every minute or every 5 minutes.

I did this for years. It's so hard to imagine not being available to everyone every 60 seconds. Have you thought about how insane that is? Why are we OK with this? Like Pavlov's dogs, we respond every time we hear the "bong" of the email arriving. Day in and day out, we follow the same pattern of addressing the concerns of others as they show up in

our inbox, as if everything was equally important. Don't do it to yourself. Take back your box!

Check your email no more than once an hour. That means set your Outlook or other auto settings to retrieve email no more than once per hour. Or if you check email manually, don't do it more than hourly unless you're waiting for a specific file to arrive. In that case, refresh the mail and move on after finding that one thing you needed.

Unless you are a heart surgeon or guarding a nuclear facility, what is really going to happen in the span of an hour that requires urgent attention? If you are a heart surgeon, you'll want to get a copy of my "Barefoot and Rich System for Heart Surgeons – saving lives in half the time."

OK, I'm kidding (a little), but seriously, start to train the people who communicate with you to expect your reply to their "urgent" requests to take place on your scheduled timeline, not theirs. If you have a boss or a client that is so demanding that you'll lose your job

over this or a client that cannot wait, you might want to consider a different job or the value of that client, but that's too much to cover in this checklist.

(I address dealing with bosses and clients in the Second Module of the Barefoot 24/7 Program because its such an important part of time creation and wealth building, in less time. Available at barefootandrich.com)

OK, so now that you've changed the settings to retrieve mail every 60 minutes instead of every 60 seconds, new email will pour into your email box after a full hour has passed (deep breaths). If you follow the rest of this chapter on email reduction, you'll start to have a lot less hourly email every day that you apply this system. But even before that happens, here's what to do with all of that new email.

Remember. These instructions are for "during the work day" when email is creeping into your box, during your carefully scheduled day.

Read each email (again, starting with the oldest) and locate any emails that will require a response or an

action today. If they don't require a reply because they're not going to bring you new money or they're not from someone you have to reply to, leave them in your inbox and don't open them again until you process them tomorrow morning during your processing time.

Stick with me here. Don't let emails that don't require immediate action start to eat away your carefully planned calendar today. Don't start processing emails like we did in week one DURING the day. You will continue to do that, but only in the pre-dawn hours!

Any emails that do require an immediate reply should be replied to immediately if you can do it in less than 2 minutes (then move it or delete it). If the email requires more than 2 minutes, and if that person requires some immediate response for some reason (don't assume that this is true), tell the person sending it that you'll take care of it for them at x time on x day and schedule the time do that task (as you

would have done during your cleanout process) in your calendar.

Emails that require a phone call should be added to a list of callbacks that you'll handle at a specific time (see Call Back Times in Step Three, below) and then deleted or moved to a folder if they need to be saved.

TIP: If you start to notice that you have time slots opening up on your calendar because this system is making you so efficient, good job! Feel free to use an extra 30 minutes in between other tasks to process emails before the end of the day. You'll have less to process in the morning tomorrow.

But remember, the goal is to get out earlier and create an extra hour in your day for things you want to do, not for processing more email (we're going to discuss how to use that hour very soon). The trap of "just gonna finish these few emails" also means that someone is going to try to call you, grab you or rope you into something else if you're still at your desk. If

you've finished everything that has to happen and that you've scheduled, get out of there.

By the same token if you've got yourself scheduled for tasks at 3:00, 3:30 and 4:00 and you're looking at open time slots at 2:00 and 2:30, move your tasks forward, leave the email processing for tomorrow morning and, once again, get out of there! Quick! Someone WILL grab you if you don't.

Day Nine:

Put Your Mailbox on a Diet

Have you stopped lately to ask yourself WHY you get 300 or more emails every day? I know. I know. This is important stuff. You need to know when every new article comes out in your particular trade. You have to know every time your stocks pass a certain price. You need to know when your neighbor or friend posts a new photo or status update on Facebook. I said it before and I'll say it again. "Madness. Stop it!"

If you want to ever get out of work before lunchtime consistently, enjoy 4-day weekends and get all of your work done in half the time, you're going to have to trust me on this.

Anything that you have an email alert scheduled for is something you can also schedule time to do. But schedule it on your plan, not when Google Alerts

come out or when a random friend chooses to update their status. Turn off the Facebook alerts and set a time that you'll go check out what your friends are up to when you're done with work. (Note: If you are using Facebook or LinkedIn to promote your business, this should be a scheduled part of your day.

Your trade email alerts that come into your email box are also just like constant interruptions and will prevent you from getting that inbox empty every day. You can do a Google search for all news about your industry during a set time of day each day or once a week if you really need that information. If it's important, schedule time for it.

The email alerts reduction plan needs to be an ongoing thing. You probably have some mailing lists that hit you once a year, once a month, once a week, or even daily. Look really hard at whether you've done anything useful with these alerts in your job and if not, unsubscribe yourself from these alerts. Instead of just deleting that facebook notification or

google alert (which takes just a few seconds), you'll need to spend one or two extra minutes in some cases to get off that mailing list or turn off that alert. Taking the extra minute or two to get off of those lists will be well worth it.

Getting rid of these alerts will start to save you hours every week. As you start to follow this policy day in and day out, I guarantee that you will start wondering why you have so little email. By the end of thirty days, you will reduce your email volume from useless alerts and mailing lists by 90% or more.

Bah Humbug! OK, I can hear my wife telling me "but I enjoy some of those emails and there are some really great deals that I can use from sites that I shop at!" No problem. If reading emails from LivingSocial

or getting coupons to your favorite stores is something you want to hold onto, at least put some boundaries around when you read and act on these emails. Like the rest of your process, if you can review it and move on in under 2 minutes, do that. If following a link in one of those emails is going to send you into a 30-minute surfing or shopping expedition, don't do it during your scheduled work day. Move them to a folder called "Saturday Shopping" or something silly like that, and schedule an hour at night or on the weekends to do that, if it's something you really enjoy and wish you had more time for.

TIP! You can set rules in your email program to automatically move all emails from (for example) Groupon straight to a separate folder so they don't live in your Inbox.

Checklist of Alerts, Notifications, Lists to KILL:

- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- Twitter
- LivingSocial
- Groupon
- Daily discount emails
- Google News Alerts and Industry Alerts
- Mailing Lists and Newsletters

If you can schedule time to go find this information, get off the daily drip and start controlling when YOU want to find this information!

Day 10:

Effective Subject Lines

Reduce Mail (for everyone)

You know you're part of the problem right? How many emails do you send with subject lines like "please reply" or "follow up" or "important! – call me"? You've just clogged someone else's box with an email that they can't identify as being important or unimportant and that they can't identify as belonging to a particular client, matter or whatever.

Worse yet, for you, is that email is a "garbage in, garbage out" proposition. The recipient of your email is probably going to be too lazy to change the subject line either so you'll get it back later from that person with the same subject line along with dozens like it. Now your email box is filled with crap you can't separate without reading all of it.

IDEA: Use subject lines that identify the matter, case or client and which provide useful information about what action is sought by the recipient.

"Dr. Smith – Your Proposal is Attached".

"Mary Osborne – Properties in Your Price Range".

Your recipients will be very grateful for this, often without knowing why, and be more likely to be agreeable to your way of doing things. Having subject lines like this also makes it easier for you to pick off and delete or move emails during your processing (see Step One) because you'll know what you're dealing with before you open the emails.

Day 11

Email Wars – Learn to “Fight” Fairly and Quickly

In one company I worked for until just recently, there was a culture of email “grenade launching.” I don’t just mean the angry emails that get FW:’ded all over the place, either. I’m talking about run of the mill, necessary business correspondences that are sent without thinking.

The sender volleys the email across the table like a ping-pong ball, maybe to several recipients without any thought and it comes right back because more information is needed. The sender sends it back again with the same vagueness and so the game begins. By lunchtime, in a company with just 20 or 30 people, hundreds of emails are circulating multiple times over issues that could have been solved in just a couple (or maybe even just one) email. Like a

grenade, the collateral damage affects everyone until they crawl out of the office well after five o’clock wondering what happened to their day, again.

Insanity: Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. Albert Einstein.

Control the Conversation and make it end in fewer steps.

There is an Israeli martial art called Grav Maga which, loosely translated means “close fighting.” The object of the art is to not make a big mess out of a fight but end it quickly by using tight, controlled fighting techniques in close proximity to your opponent. By doing so, a fight ends with the least amount of collateral damage.

The example is extreme. But you can practice a little bit of email Grav Maga every day and end the back

and forth that sucks time out of your day and exhausts everyone in your circle of communication.

Here's an example of an email that will create a dozen emails and potentially phone calls, that can be avoided with just a fragment of consideration:

"Hey Dr. Smith, I have some questions about the proposal I'm creating for you. Do you have time to go over them?"

BAD. Bad. Bad. Bad.

You think you're doing Dr. Smith a favor, right? After all, you're being friendly and open-ended about the topic at hand but Dr. Smith doesn't know what you want from him.

Do you want to talk on the phone? Maybe. Probably. Otherwise, why you didn't ask the questions in your email? He's thinking that you just created another thing for him to worry about, instead of solving a

problem for him. He may want to leave this email in his box or if he's as lazy as you are, just fire it right back and say something equally as unhelpful and a big waste of your time too: "Sure, Bob, what did you have in mind".

You see where this is going, don't you? Don't dance like this with Dr. Smith. Grab this issue firmly and take control of the conversation:

Notice how much longer the second email is. It will take you at least 3 times longer to write it this way but save you a half hour or more in wasted email tag.

If you do it the wrong, shorter way, above, you'll end up with 3 or 4 email exchanges with Dr. Smith and probably a couple of incoming phone calls that you're going to have to let go to voice mail to honor things already on your calendar.

Create Emails with Beautiful Bodies

"Dr. Smith, I am almost done with your proposal but there are 2 items I need more information about in order to complete it. They are (1) xxxxxxxx and (2) yyyyyyyyyy. If you could reply with specific answers to these questions, I'll wrap up the proposal within an hour of receiving your answers.

If you are unable to answer the questions without talking to me, let's spend 5 minutes on the phone. I am available tomorrow at 10:30, 1:00 or 3:15. If we need to have a call, just pick one of those times and I'll lock it into my calendar so that we can avoid phone tag."

NEWSFLASH: Most clients like Dr. Smith don't want to talk to you unless they have to. Whatever service you're providing them is not part of their every day duties and is likely an interruption, even if you're

doing something that will benefit them. So, most likely, you'll get your answers by email, as efficiently and completely as the email you send requesting information. That's just how it works.

Also note that offering to set up an appointment on your calendar with the agreement of the other party to your call will be greatly appreciated by the Dr. Smith's of the world. Everyone is looking for sanity in their work day just like you are. When you create a predictable process for them and control it, you don't make extra work for them. Clients, customers, co-workers and even bosses like this.

The same techniques should be applied to your internal communications with your superiors, your colleagues and your assistants. In other words, if you're trying to get work done, take the extra moment to make communication effective and efficient.

I can't tell you how many times my boss or a colleague wanted me to help them with something and just dropped it on me like it was hot.

Subject Line:

"Hey, John. Can you help me with this . . .?"

Now, there's the first problem. I have no idea what the email is about. So I'm likely to not care or it's stressing me out that there COULD be something important in there. So I open the email to find that the sender has included NO information about the background of the issue. Instead, all that I see is a back and forth conversation of 5 or 10 emails between the sender and someone else.

I'm supposed to read all of this and decipher what has transpired between these two other people over the past 3 months and more importantly, I am supposed to also figure out what "help me with this" means. Am I taking over this matter? Am I supposed to help by calling someone? If so, which person?

What happens is that I don't want to deal with this email. I don't WANT to help the sender, even if it's a new account for me because now I need to invest an hour into figuring all of this out. On the other hand, with matters that I am already working on, I know what I'm doing and can get to within moments.

The point is that poorly crafted internal emails snowball. If I want to help in this example, I have to call for clarification (and probably start phone tag) or send an email to get more information, which will start a barrage of emails if I'm not really careful.

The solution, whether you are the sender, or the intended target of an email grenade is to take control of the communication and demand tight, controlled information exchange. (Grav Maga!)

In my example above, the sender could have avoided creating a problem for me (and for him, frankly) if he would have simply handled it like this:

Subject: John, Please Take Over Smith Account

GREAT subject line. I'm immediately interested, I immediately know what is being requested and I even know the name of the matter we're talking about. Better yet, in my dream scenario, the email this time also has a beautiful body, like this:

John, I want you to take over the Smith account. As you can see from the email exchange below, Dr. Smith needs help getting his reports done by end of year. Your co-worker, Bob, has unfortunately been ineffective in helping Dr. Smith. I've already notified Bob about this and Dr. Smith is expecting your call. His number is 555-555-1212.

Now, I will, of course, read the back and forth for all of the flavor but the email saves me from a big investigation and also answers some obvious questions you would have anyway (Dr. Smith's phone number; is Bob aware of this? Does Dr. Smith know?)

The sender of this email spent just a few minutes setting this up. But by doing so, actually saved

himself a lot of time. There won't be any questions from me. Just a quick thank you email. There won't be any later fallout with Bob (at least not for me). And when I call Dr. Smith, he will take my call because he is expecting it (no messages and voice mails and wasteful follow up). It won't be awkward because the matter has already been handed off properly.

Day 12: Ditch the Urgent Flag

Your assistant or secretary gets 10 emails an hour from you with non-prioritized tasks and he or she knows that it's up to them to figure out when to do what. Once in a while, though, you need the urgent priority or high priority flag on an email to make sure they know something really is urgent. For example, at 3:00 p.m., you send an email requesting a proposal for Dr. Smith to be completed and sent out before 5:00. That's worthy of an urgent priority flag to get your assistant's attention.

But what about when your assistant writes you back and confirms that the proposal is not only done, but also sent? The email is no longer urgent. So, when you write back to simply say "thanks!" remove the priority flag. If you don't, when your assistant gets your reply to her email, all she sees in her inbox is "Dr. Smith Proposal by 5:00" (because she probably did not change the subject line) and the urgent priority flag is still attached. Now, she's going to

stay and read that email because she thinks it's still urgent (due to the red exclamation point in her inbox). Worse yet, when she writes back to your "thank you" email with a "no problem, it's just my job, boss" email, if she leaves the urgent priority flag on, you might think she's just caught an open issue and is trying to flag you down.

Over 1,000,000 people will be stuck in their office this week, for at least 20 extra minutes if not an hour, because someone abused or misused the urgent flag. Don't be that guy or gal.

Day 13 – Learn To Be a Master of Outlook Appointments

This is may be the most important rule for email reduction. We touched on this in the example about email wars. We discussed appointments as a way of emptying your inbox. If you're using a system other than Outlook, many of the same rules apply. The object is to set appointments with prospective callers, leads and clients to avoid phone tag, missed calls, and misunderstandings about when a call was supposed to have taken place. Some of this is basic but repeating it helps with email reduction.

Below, we'll discuss in more detail how important it is to honor your calendar, ignore incoming calls and direct all email and phone traffic into your calendar. To do that, you need a system to create appointments in the first place. Outlook, Google, iCloud (formerly iCloud) are all good. Find one that works for you.

As noted in the Dr. Smith example, the best practice will always be to give the client several options available in your calendar and ask them to pick one of those time slots. When they pick one, you will open that slot in your calendar and book that appointment using the following procedure. Note that you will not normally need to send an additional email to Dr. Smith. The Outlook invitation itself will be the email communication and the way of setting the appointment:

- Open Outlook Calendar and create a new appointment on the desired date / time
- In the subject line, place the name of the person you're calling – "Call with Dr. Smith"
- In the location field, put the phone number you'll call to reach the client or the conference call dial in number (ideal if more than 2 parties).
- In the body of the appointment put as much info as you can from your email exchange.

- In the invitation field, put the email address of the other party to the call and send the invitation.

Send.

Outlook will automatically place the event in your calendar and send an email to your invitee that gives them choices to Accept or Decline that invitation. If accepted, it will be in their calendar as well and the invitee's acceptance will typically be sent to you.

Setting all of your phone calls this way will ensure that you and your clients or leads waste as little time as possible since you'll always know what to expect and if they miss that call, they will have no excuse but to reschedule and/or apologize.

Tip 1: Use a service like Free Conference Call to have professional access to a dial in number of your own when there are multiple parties to the phone call.

Tip 2: If you use an iPhone or other smartphone that allows you to open the appointment on your phone, include the phone number you'll be calling in the body

of the invitation. This will ensure that the phone number is clickable right from your phone. If you're in your car or away from your desk, you'll be able to dial that number by simply clicking on the number.

Please drive carefully.

Alternative Appointment Setting

In the examples above, I suggested that you give a person that you're trying to get on the phone with, your available time slots and ask them to pick a time slot. This obviously does not work or is not appropriate if you don't already work with the person. It can seem a little forward to approach it that way.

In those circumstances, it is advisable to let the client, prospect or lead know that you would be delighted to have a call with them at their convenience. "If you'll give me a few times this week that you're available to talk, I'll pick one of those and schedule a call that is convenient for your calendar."

You'll send the invitation the same way you did with the reverse example, thus locking in the person you're calling but giving them more control over the scheduling.

The same conduct should reign over your internal communications and the calls between and among those in your office.

Day 14 - Guerilla Calendar Management

In a later module "Why You Can't Afford Not to Have an Assistant," we'll cover in more detail the effective delegation techniques needed to use an assistant for maximum effect. Here is one use that fits into this context – scheduling meetings.

Most people fear using an assistant to set their appointments or meetings because they think it will take them longer to explain to the assistant what they want, than just setting the appointment themselves.

Take trip scheduling for example. "What if she schedules the trip too late in the day?" What if she books the trip when I have that other meeting?"

These issues can be avoided and the problem solved, by just spending a extra few minutes to plan, just like with effective email communication. What are your preferences for travel? If you don't have any, then there are no issues. But if you do, give some thought to what they are and outline them. Set the parameters once and then let your assistant deal with new issues as they arise with each meeting or travel arrangement. You then re-bake the parameters to take new issues into consideration. Before you know it, you'll barely need to provide anything but the most basic of requirements, because your assistant will already know.

Sample Email Exchange to book trip:

From: John Cummings

Sent: Thursday, August 19, 2012 11:17 AM

To: Assistant

Subject: Re: Meeting with Vince Cabson – Smitty & Jones / Philadelphia

Dee, I need to meet Vince for lunch on the 12th. I would like to do this as a day trip. So that we can be efficient in scheduling day trips like this in the future, let's establish some basic travel parameters. Use these to get me options for this trip and also save them for future reference for other day trips:

Departure: as close to 8:00 am as possible, leaning towards after 8 am if given a choice

Arrival Home: Arrive at PBI airport no later than 6:30 pm, if possible. I like to be home for dinner with my family.

Airline preference: Delta, followed by Southwest.

Seat Preference: Aisle

Credit Card: Book with my Amex, ending in 0000

Page 54 of 64 - Visit barefootandrich.com for more tips and tricks.

Now, in the future, you can simply tell your assistant that you need to book a flight for Philly or Atlanta or Charlotte for a day trip lunch meeting with a client and unless your parameters have changed or cannot be accommodated, you won't need to have a back and forth discussion with your assistant by email.

By the same token, you can let your assistant coordinate a lot of the calls that you'll have with the Dr. Smiths of your weekly schedule, if you provide parameters for your appointment scheduling. If you don't like to have business calls from 12:00 to 1:00 because of lunch meetings and prefer not to have calls before 10:00 am or after 4:00 pm because of other projects and commitments, notify your assistant of these parameters. That way, when you delegate the duty to your assistant to set up a call with Dr. Smith, she'll put it on your calendar at just the right time, without having to interrupt you.

Visit barefootandrich.com for advanced calendar management tips and tools, including a detailed orientation of using Outlook, Google Calendar, CRM Systems and apps like Evernote, to control everything that you do each day, effortlessly. For one on one attention, email info@barefootandrich.com.

Step Three: Day Fifteen

Phone Call

&

Meeting Management

Day 15 – Stop Taking Unwanted, Unplanned Incoming Calls

The point of cleaning out your email and moving tasks and phone calls to your calendar was to create a predictable flow in your day. For that to make any difference in your life and actually get you out of the office in less time, you need to HONOR that calendar and not let others ruin your planning.

The first step to honoring your calendar is to stop taking incoming calls. Kudos to Tim Ferriss on this tip, which I incorporated into my calendar creation techniques for a home run in managing my day.

I know what you're thinking: there's business on those calls! It could be an interested client. It could be your boss. But you've got to trust me on this. The client, your co-worker, your boss, have all gotten voice mail before. If you return that call within 2 hours, everything will be just as good as if you had taken the call when the phone rang.

Except there are additional benefits to letting it go to voice mail:

First, you get to honor your calendar. How many times does an incoming call knock over your appletart? Admit it. It happens every day. You know it the minute you answer the phone and you end up with someone walking all over your schedule. Instead of doing that, you can let the call go to voice mail and control what you do with it and when.

To do that, you'll just let the call to go voicemail and then take 30 seconds to listen to the message and either (1) add the caller to a list of people you'll call back at a time YOU determine (see Callback Times, below) or (2) call back immediately only if it is truly an emergency.

The second benefit to not taking the call is that you get to be prepared for that call, which is essential especially for key customers or clients. Instead of scrambling to find the information and wasting time on a protracted call, you'll be ready. Maybe the call is

from Dr. Smith, wondering where his proposal is. When you call back, you'll have it done or you'll know what you need from him, instead of wasting 15 minutes on an unscheduled, unproductive call that causes you to stomp on other appointments you have carefully set for yourself.

P.S. If you're a parent, program your kids' numbers (and photos) into your phone, if you have not already, so you know when they're calling and take the call. If their school calls on the other hand, you can follow the same procedure listed above and simply call back immediately. You'll know 30 seconds after the call whether you need to call back.

Tip: I've gotten into the habit of programming into my phone the names (and sometimes photos) of people who I WANT to talk to and DON'T WANT to talk to when they call, at least not immediately. There are a certain number of prospects, leads or clients that you'll talk to and realize that if they call back, you'll want to take their call no matter what. If

you program their name and/or photo into your phone and they call at an inopportune time, you can make a decision about whether to take the call. But use this sparingly. It's almost always better to let the call go to voicemail and prepare for the immediate or later call back. Use your judgment. Following this procedure of letting nearly all of your calls go to voice mail will build you a lot of extra time and margin so that you can take the calls that actually matter.

One of my friends actually saved a photo to his phone of a dollar sign. When he has hot, active clients that are nearing a closing on one of his deals, he makes the dollar sign the photo associated on his phone with that contact. Anyone crucial to the deal closing also gets that profile photo on their contact info. When these people call, he knows he wants to answer the phone. After the deal closes, he deletes that photo from the contact to follow the normal rules of letting the call go to voicemail.

Day 16 – Establish Reply and Callback Times

When you set up your day (or your week), with the appointments discussed above, you'll also want to build in some margin to make those call backs or to reply to non-urgent emails that pop up during the day. To do this, carve out 30 or 60 minutes on your calendar just for callbacks and email replies. During that time, you'll return the incoming calls you did not take and any calls that may pop up by email ("John, call me. It's urgent!").

Depending on how call intensive your job is, you might need two times throughout the day for this at first. But chances are you don't need to make as many callbacks as you think you do. I'm not talking about the scheduled, outgoing calls that you've intentionally set on your calendar after carefully planning your schedule for the day. I mean callbacks to people that went to voicemail.

Also, you can make the callback time the same time every day and/or adjust it each day as your schedule changes.

No matter how you handle the callback times issue, after just 2 weeks of applying this along with the "no incoming calls" rule, you will have trained yourself (and your colleagues) to reduce calls by 50%.

In order to carry out your "no incoming calls" and "callback times" plan, be sure to create a voicemail message that gives callers an expectation that they can expect your call. That way, there is even less likelihood that they'll call you more than once (can you believe those people!?!), come looking for you in the office or start sending you emails in addition to leaving you voice mails.

Here's a sample:

"You have reached Sarah Johnson. I check my voice mail and return calls at several times throughout the day. If you're calling in the morning, you can expect

a call back before noon and if you're calling after noon, you can expect a call back before 5:00 p.m. Please leave a number where you can be reached. If this is an emergency, your call will be returned as soon as I receive your message."

Tip:

Some of your more pesky callers, like your Uncle Tim or that gossipy friend, may try to go around your system by also emailing you. You're too smart for that. You're not going to answer that email until its time for your callbacks. During that hour, you can scan your email for anything important and reply to it if it can't wait until tomorrow morning.

Day 17 - Phone Call Denial

Experiment – Turn it Off

You're going to love this but you're going to be really afraid of it at first too. The funny part is most of us do this often enough when we can't avoid it. Like when you're on a plane. Or your phone dies. Or you have a true personal emergency. What happens during those times when you are out of reach to all of those emergencies and urgent matters?

Nothing. Everyone lives. No one loses their job. You don't lose any business because of it. You just apologize, after the fact.

So here's the experiment. Turn your phone off for one hour at first. Give yourself a little comfort by following everything discussed up until now so that you feel like you're under control.

You'll be in the office. All of your email will already be caught up. You'll have a call back time set up for

11:30 am just before lunch. You will have talked to your boss and your secretary. Now turn off your phone and don't turn it on for one full hour.

Guess what happens? Nothing.

A funny thing happened when I did this for the first time. No one even called me. I had executed the steps above for about a month and ended up with all of the people that I needed to talk to, already scheduled on my calendar. Most everyone else in my company had gotten the message that the best way to reach me was to send me an email asking me for an appointment!

After just a few weeks of following the steps above and then turning your phone off for an hour here and there, a funny thing happens. People stop calling you in your office. They start to email you and efficiently request information from you or ask for a time when you are available to talk.

You can encourage this behavior and tell them that you're trying really hard to get more work done. They'll respect it and start changing their evil ways.

When you're ready, turn it off for 2 hours or more. Before you know it, you won't be a phone slave anymore.

Days 18 through Infinity

Apply these tools as much as possible in every workday and I guarantee that you will find 2 hours a day of extra time within a few weeks. After a month, if you continue to Honor Your Calendar, you should be able to slip out of work early several days a week or at least have more time at your desk that is your own (if you have to be at work to earn your salary).

Now what? What will you do with this extra time? If you're in your own business, you can use that time to

make more money, or just enjoy the time if you're already making the money you want. If you're in a job that is not fulfilling all of your needs or in your own business that takes too much time to make the money you want with the time you want, I encourage you to use the time to begin building your escape plan. The Barefoot and Rich System provides the complete roadmap to freeing up more and more time so you can build your escape.

Sign up for the complete Barefoot and Rich System and barefootandrich.com to access the other modules of my time creation strategy:

Rebuilding Your Personal Energy – Advanced Time Creation

- The Calendar is King – Honor It (and make everyone else honor it)
- Batching is Best – Email, Phone, Travel
- Get Everything into one Inbox and Empty It
- Eliminate, Automate, Delegate (in that order!)
- Why You Can't Afford Not to Have an Assistant (and bookkeeper)

Own It Like a Millionaire

- Your Own Business / Your Own Personal Brand
- Social Media Tools for Everyone

- Death of a Salesman
- Thinking Like an Entrepreneur – Owning It
- Applying Ownership to Your Business (the ugly picture I drew)
- Making Everyone Follow Your Plan and Make Them Like It
- Cutting Your Work Time in Half

Live Your Dream – Every Day!

- Applying Time Creation to Your Personal Life

Recommend Reading & Resources

- 4 Hour Work Week – Tim Ferriss
- Never Check Email in the Morning – Elena Morgenstern
- Getting Things Done – David Allen
- Outsourcing – ReplaceMyself.com