

How to Plan and Optimize Your Weekly Schedule

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*“The problem is not that of needing more time, but of making better use of the time we have.”*  
J. Oswald Sanders

1. **Unique Time-Management Challenges Pastors Face**
   1. Temporal autonomy
   2. Need for deep work & to be interruptible
   3. Tendency toward an unbalanced life
   4. Having an ideal weekly schedule, solves all three.
2. A circular chart with different colored circles

   Description automatically generated**Domains of Stewardship** 
   1. Spiritual
   2. Relational
   3. Vocational
   4. Physical
   5. Economical
   6. Recreational
3. **5 Steps to Scheduling Your Ideal Week**
   1. Audit Your Current Schedule
      1. Spend a week tracking everything you do
      2. Categorize each activity by domain
      3. Ask: Which domains am I giving adequate time to?
      4. Ask: Which domains am giving too much time to?
      5. Ask: Which domains am I not giving adequate time to?
   2. Create Your Ideal Schedule
      1. Plan Your “Theme Days”
      2. Fill Your Schedule from Most Important to Least Important
      3. Categorize Your Activities by Domain
   3. Communicate Your Schedule
      1. People will not honor your schedule if they don’t know what it is.
      2. Let your staff know
      3. Let your church members know
      4. Let your family know
   4. Defend Your Schedule
      1. The greatest threat to your schedule is you
      2. Be open to divine appointments, but wary of distractions
      3. Eliminate distractions during your deep work time
         1. Delete distracting apps
         2. Use a website and app blocker like Freedom.to
         3. Design your environment for focus
   5. Modify Your Schedule
      1. Life changes, so should your schedule
      2. Update your ideal week plan at least annually, ideally once per quarter
      3. When there’s a big life-altering event, be willing to throw the schedule out
4. **Why THIS Matters**
   1. Managing Your Time Is a Stewardship
      1. “Wasting time is unbecoming of a saint who is bought by the precious blood of Jesus. His time and all he has is to be used for the Lord.” – George Müller
   2. Managing Your Time Is Wisdom (Ephesians 5:15–16)
   3. Managing Your Time Is an Obligation
      1. Being a respectable man is a qualification for eldership.
      2. “Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, **respectable**, hospitable, able to teach,”
      3. The word respectable describes a pattern of life of a man who is dignified and well organized. He is respectable to others because he is orderly and disciplined.
      4. A respectable man approaches life in a systematic and purposeful way. The way he fulfills his many responsibilities showcases an inner stability of self-discipline.
   4. Managing Your Time Is an Opportunity
      1. “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” – Ephesians 2:10
      2. When we steward our time well, we are being faithful to walk in the good works the Lord has prepared for us.
5. **Misc. Tips on Pastoral Scheduling**
   1. Tom Pennington’s Rules for Your Day Off
      1. Never do church-related business on your day off
      2. Don’t look at your email on your day off
      3. Don’t answer the phone if you don’t recognize it, or think it’s church-related (let it go to voicemail)
   2. Scheduling Prompts (use these as you’re building your schedule, so you don’t miss anything)
      1. Personal Devotions
      2. Meals
      3. Planning Time
      4. Correspondence
      5. Exercise
      6. Household Management
      7. Message Prep
      8. Meetings
      9. Church Events
      10. Family Time
   3. Know Your Energy Levels (from *At Your Best* by Carey Nieuwhof)
      1. Green Zone - Message Prep, Planning Time, Counseling
      2. Red Zone – Rest, Reading, Admin
      3. Yellow Zone – Meetings, Household Management, Emails

**Note**: to download these notes, additional resources, slides, and any templates mentioned in this talk, go to <https://redeemingproductivity.com/e3-2023>