



Two Key Questions for Maximum Effectiveness

There are two questions that you can ask on a regular basis to keep yourself focused on getting your most important tasks completed on schedule. The first question is "What are my highest value activities?"

Put another way, what are the most important tasks you have to complete to make the greatest contribution to your organization? To your family? To your life in general?

Think it Through Carefully

This is one of the most important questions you can ask and answer. What are your highest value activities? First, think this through for yourself. Then, ask your boss. Ask your coworkers and subordinates. Ask your friends and family. Like focusing the lens of a camera, you must be crystal clear about your highest value activities before you begin work.

Keep Yourself Focused

The second question you can ask continually is, "What can I and only I do, that if done well, will make a real difference?"

This question comes from Peter Drucker, the father of modern management. It is one of the best of all questions for achieving personal effectiveness. What can you, and only you do, that if done well, can make a real difference?

This is something that only you can do. If you don't do it, it won't be done by someone else. And if you do it, and you do it well, it can really make a difference to your life and your career. What is your answer to this question?

Every hour of every day, you can ask yourself this question and there will be a specific answer. Your job is to be clear about the answer and then to start and work on this task before anything else.

Action Exercises:

Here are two things you can do immediately to put these ideas into action.

First, make a list of everything you do at work and then select your most valuable tasks from that list.

Second, resolve to start in on your highest value task and stay at it until it is 100% complete.