

Hit The Ground Running:

Time Management for System Administrators

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Top 5

- #1 Create a Mutual Interruption Shield
- #2 Turn Chaos Into Routines
- #3 Record All Requests
- #4 Keep 365 Todo-Lists Each Year
- #5 Document Processes You Hate

Create a
Mutual
Interruption
Shield

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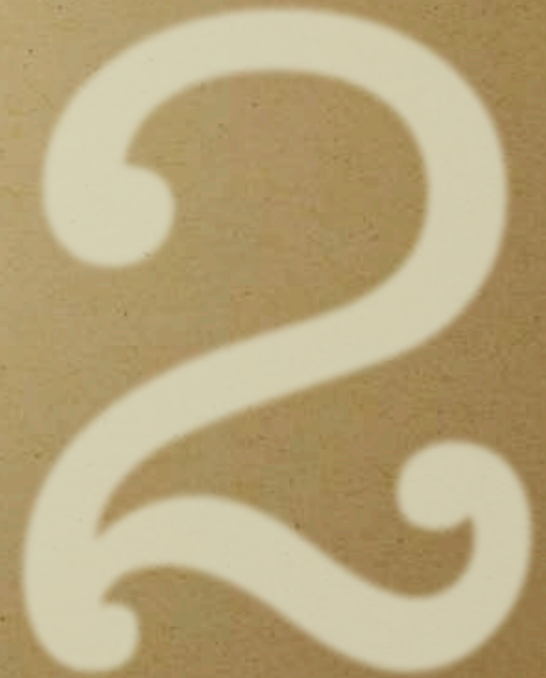
Mutual Interruption Shield

- What's the #1 problem for SysAdmins?
 - INTERRUPTIONS!

Mutual Interruption Shield

- Take turns "fielding interruptions" with a co-worker to permit uninterrupted project time
- You field interrupts in the AM, they do it for you in the PM.

Turn
Chaos
Into
Routines



Get into that old, boring
routine!

Meeting with my boss

Opportunities

- Repeated events that aren't scheduled
- When procrastinating takes longer than the task itself
- Things you forget often
- Maintenance tasks: IT is like gardening

Record
All
Requests

3

Don't rely on your brain

- Reserve brain for task at hand
- Brain not good for long-term storage
 - paper and PDA are better

Avoid the "Oh, I'll remember that!" Trap

- Maintain todo-list in your PDA/PAA
- "Always":
 - Every day
 - When stopped in the hallway
 - When being interrupted

Keep 365
Todo-Lists
Each Year

4

Some todo-list systems
work better than others

Zillions of Scattered
Notes

vs.

The Never-Ending List
of Dooooooooom

How to make "todo lists" work?

- One to-do list per day
- Kept in a single place
- With you all the time
- Easy to access

Too much for one day?

Prio	Done	Prioritized Daily Task List
		Create account for new user "Bob"
		Test new GCC
		Report bug: netscan off-by-1 error
		Call JP: demo of new VPN product
		Add web page: new support hours
		Cricket: monitor new router

Prioritize

Prio	Done	Prioritized Daily Task List
A		Create account for new user "Bob"
B		Test new GCC
A		Report bug: netscan off-by-1 error
C		Call JP: demo of new VPN product
A		Add web page: new support hours
C		Cricket: monitor new router

Reschedule

Prio	Done	Prioritized Daily Task List
A		Create account for new user "Bob"
B		Test new GCC
A		Report bug: netscan off-by-1 error
C	Moved	Call JP: demo of new VPN product
A		Add web page: new support hours
C	Moved	Cricket: monitor new router

Work the plan

Prio	Done	Prioritized Daily Task List
A	X	Create account for new user "Bob"
B		Test new GCC
A	X	Report bug: netscan off-by-1 error
C	Moved	Call JP: demo of new VPN product
A	X	Add web page: new support hours
C	Moved	Cricket: monitor new router

Prio	Done	Prioritized Daily Task List
A	X	Create account for new user "Bob"
B	—	Test new GCC
A	X	Report bug: netscan off-by-1 error
C	Moved	Call JP: demo of new VPN product
A	X	Add web page: new support hours
C	Moved	Cricket: monitor new router

Leave work with a smile

- Leave knowing you've "managed" all items.
- Better than Zillion Notes: You are in control
- Better than List O' Doom: Sense of Completion

Document
Procedures
You Hate

5

What's on my wiki?

- Check-list procedures:
 - "New User Process"
 - "Account Termination"
 - Setup New Workstation
- Error-prone, infrequent procedures
 - How to replace a bad hard disk on a RAID system
- Procedures you dislike doing

How does this save time?

The Wiki becomes:

- A list of things you can delegate to Junior SAs
- The basis of a job description for next new-hire
 - Tasks/responsibilities
 - Required skill-set.

If your boss ever hints at having permission to hire a new person, you have a pre-written list of what they would do.

Top 5 Time Management Tips

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#3 Record All Requests

#4 Keep 365 Todo-Lists Each Year

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#6 thru #99,999 Read my book!

