Time Allocation

Why do we do what we do when we do it? What criteria do we use for allocating time? Each of us has many different ways of deciding what we are going to do at any given point during a day. Following is a list of some of the more common criteria that govern the way we allocate our time. Is this the best way you can allocate your time? Circle your habits that you would like to change.

1. We do what we like to do before we do what we do not like to do.

2. We do the things we know how to do faster than the things we do not know how to do.

3. We do the things that are easiest before doing things that are difficult.

4. We do things that require a little time before we do things that require a lot of time.

5. We do things for which the resources are available.

6. We do things that are scheduled (for example, meetings) before we do non-scheduled things.

7. We sometimes do things that are planned before we do things that are unplanned.

8. We respond to demands from others before we respond to demands from ourselves.

9. We do things that are urgent before we do things that are important.

10. We readily respond to crisis and emergencies.

11. We do interesting things before we do uninteresting things.

12. We do things that advance our personal objectives or that are politically expedient.

13. We wait until a deadline approaches before we really get moving.

14. We do things that provide the most immediate closure.

15. We respond on the basis of who wants it.

16. We respond on the basis of the consequences to us of doing or not doing some things.

17. We tackle small jobs before we tackle large jobs.

18. We work on things in the order of their arrival.

19. We work on the basis of the squeaky-wheel principle (the squeaky wheel gets the grease).

20. We work on the basis of consequences to the group.