

#smNPchat
October 15, 2010
Prioritizing

The Franklin Principle

You're probably already familiar with Benjamin Franklin's "principles." Franklin loved his principles (*almost as much as I love my systems*). He listed 13 principles, which he credited to his personal and business success, including:

1. Temperance: Eat not dullness; drink not to elevation.
2. Silence: Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself, avoid trifling conversation.
3. Order: Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have it's time.
4. Resolution: Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.
5. Frugality: Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; waste nothing.
6. Industry: Lose no time; be always employed in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.
7. Sincerity: Use no harmful deceit; think innocently and justly; and if you speak, speak accordingly.
8. Justice: wrong none by doing injuries or omitting the benefits that are your duty.
9. Moderation: Avoid extremes; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.
10. Cleanliness: Tolerate no uncleanness in body, clothes or habitation.
11. Tranquility: Be not disturbed at trifles, nor at accidents.
12. Chastity: Be chaste in matters with the opposite sex.
13. Humility: Imitate Jesus and Socrates

The secret to Franklin's principles, however, lies in the application. While he knew that every principle was important, Benjamin Franklin also knew that, *in practice*, it would be difficult to practice every principle *all of the time*. Instead he focused on one each week, ensuring that in 13 weeks each principle was covered deeply and thoroughly - becoming ingrained habits.

5 Time Management Tips

1. **Time yourself.** If you don't know how long a project takes you, you need to find out. Buy a digital timer (they're inexpensive. Check out [amazon](#)) You'll also use a timer to time various *daily* tasks, like your 30 minutes daily spent on the phone reaching out to donors. A timer is also a useful tool to ensure that meetings don't go over their scheduled time (*and aren't the majority of meetings time wasters?:*).
2. Yogi Berra is famous for his many malapropisms, among them "You've got to be very careful if you don't know where you're going, because you might not get there." If your goal is "raising more money," you've got to **get specific** and create a fundraising plan of action for exactly how much money you'll be raising and from where (*grants, individuals, online giving, etc.*).
3. **Schedule it.** Your plan calls for raising 20% more money this year from online gifts? It ain't gonna happen by osmosis! If your overall goal is raising 20% more than last year what will you do differently? All things being equal, will you spend 20% more time calling? Ask for 20% higher gifts? Seriously, what is the plan for the 20% increase other than optimism?
4. **Reinvest in yourself.** Yes, I well remember the days when I worked in the sector and paid out of pocket for my AFP classes and fundraising books. And I also know what it's like to sit through yet another boring class offering "same ole same ole, monkey see, monkey do" style nonprofit marketing. So believe me, I know where you're coming from! Make it a point to subscribe to newsletters in your industry, to regularly attend some of the many free webinars offered online, and to read the best books out there.
5. **Make time for yourself.** If you're going to perform at a higher level you must take your rest and recuperation to a higher level too. If you're going to be serious and work hard, be serious about taking time to maintain your physical, mental and spiritual high performance engine! Don't have the time? Here's another instance where the timer comes in handy again - take a 15 minute walk, spend 15 minutes meditating, practice five minutes of yoga beside your desk (*you'll be simultaneously benefitting yourself and giving your colleagues a smile!*).