

## GETTING IT ON THE BOOKS

### Don't Just Plan It, Schedule It!

Do you know the difference between planning and scheduling? Planning is deciding WHAT needs to be done and scheduling is deciding WHEN to do it. Planning without scheduling is nothing more than listing a lot of things that never get accomplished, and you can't schedule tasks that you haven't decided to do, so the two go hand in hand.

**Planning** is done with a master list. The master list contains tasks, large and small, short range and long range, in no particular order. Your master list is merely a place to write down all the things you want to do "sometime". It's a general place to keep an inventory of all the things you'd like to complete so you don't have to store them all in your head. Trying to keep your master list in your head is counterproductive, and uses valuable mental energy needlessly. Write it down to get it out of your head, so you can free your mind to focus on more important things.

For **scheduling**, pull a task from the master list, choose the appropriate time to take action, and schedule it into your calendar. If it is a project or a long-term or complex task, break it into manageable pieces and then schedule each of the pieces into your calendar. By breaking your projects and large tasks into small chunks, you will be able to better estimate how long it will take you to finish, and you won't feel overwhelmed by the size of the task.

Planning and scheduling are both valuable habits to develop, as they keep you on track and focused on both your short term and long term goals. At the end of the year you'll be amazed at how many things you were able to accomplish simply by taking them out of your head and putting them into your calendar.

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