

# ANDROS

ANDROS CONSULTANTS LIMITED

## RED TIME / GREEN TIME

## Executive Summary

We rarely find that we have sufficient time to undertake many of the tasks we would like to - even need to - yet we always seem to have time to give away to others.

Why not give yourself the gift of time. Make an appointment with yourself; you and your goals - both personal and professional - are worth it, aren't they?

Consider the concept of Red Time / Green Time. The underlying premises are:

- We do our best work when we have the opportunity to focus on what we're trying to do (versus being distracted)
- We're able to focus only for short periods of time before we need to change mental gears / refresh ourselves (likely every 20 - 40 minutes depending on the complexity of the task)
- For all the crises in our lives, there are few that cannot be deferred for up to an hour.

So, the strategy is:

- When you have a task that demands your focused attention
  - allocate a period of up to one hour to deal with it
- Should it require more than an hour
  - break it down into shorter segments and tackle each in sequence
- Make a one-hour appointment with yourself
  - a closed door / hold my calls session for the specific time period
- Post a notice
  - "I'm on 'RED' time: I'd prefer you do not interrupt me unless it's critically important"
- Take the time for the task
  - and finish within the specified hour
- Whenever you've taken RED time
  - allocate an equal period of GREEN time that same day
- Post a notice:
  - "I'm on GREEN time and you're welcome to interrupt me - as is everyone else"
- Do not allow anyone or anything to hijack your GREEN time
  - You must be fully accessible to everyone
  - If more than a few minutes is demanded, then schedule a specific meeting for that

This is primarily an individual technique but it's often advantageous to share it with another colleague and thus to cover for one another. One person is on RED time while the other is on GREEN - then reciprocate.

Some are not able to set aside a fixed period each day / week for RED / GREEN time but most keep it flexible and variable. A few organizations actually designate short (30 minute) RED / GREEN time periods throughout the entire office or sections thereof.

Why not give it a try?

