



Organizing Tips... Late Again?

-By Lorena Prime -

I wish I didn't have to work so hard at being on time! As a Productivity Expert, my job is to set a good example which means I cannot be late. There are lucky people who have a natural, built-in clock, and how I envy them! For the rest of us, we have to give it a little more thought.

What can you do if you tend to run behind? Every person's routine is different, but we all have little things we do at home before leaving for our next destination. I call this time period, "Transition Time." It's the time you need to transition between your home environment and your next location. If you want to be on time more often, the process below will help.

1. Own it. Understand that you run late (whether 5 minutes or 30 minutes). Often we are late about the same amount of time, and in order to change our behavior, we first need to admit that we are "chronically late" - even if it is by just a few minutes. (I'm guilty too - if I'm not careful, my natural tendency is to be 10 minutes late.)

2. Time your routine. You need to understand the *actual* time it takes from the moment you *stop your current activity* to the moment you are *sitting in your car ready to drive away*. Often what we *think* we're doing before we leave home and what we're *really* doing is different. For example, in order to leave for work in the morning, you may check your email. You don't consciously register that this activity takes time - after all, it only takes a second to check, right? (This is correct only if *none* of your emails need responses.)

3. Understand your true travel time. Again, time yourself. From the moment you *sit in your car* to the moment you are *at your destination*, how long does it *really* take? In order to get to work, will there be traffic? Are you remembering that the parking lot is 10 minutes from your desk or that you stop for 5 minutes to get a cup of coffee along the way?

4. Make a list. You need to know the little things you do in order to get out of the house. To leave for work in the morning, for instance, your list might consist of the following: make the children's lunch, prep for dinner, let the dog out, pack your brief case, brush your teeth, check your email, drive the kids to school, etc...

5. Calculate the total time. When you know how long your routine *really* takes (including drive time), then you can determine when you need to stop

what you're doing so you can transition to your next destination on time. Don't want to leave the house that early? Then you'll have to cut something from your routine (see #4) or face being 30 minutes late... again.

I'm not promising that you'll never be late again, but if you begin to slip up, this process will help remind you to reassess your "Transition Time." Life is much easier and stress-free when we're not racing to get somewhere; and we might just find that we have a little extra time on our way!

Lorena Prime, Owner of Clearly Organized, speaks at companies and organizations on Time Management and other productivity issues. She uses a 5-stage process to help people shorten routine office work and save 1-2 hours every day. What could you do with an extra 1-2 hours? For more information, visit www.ClearlyOrganizedLife.com or call 617-633-2199.



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