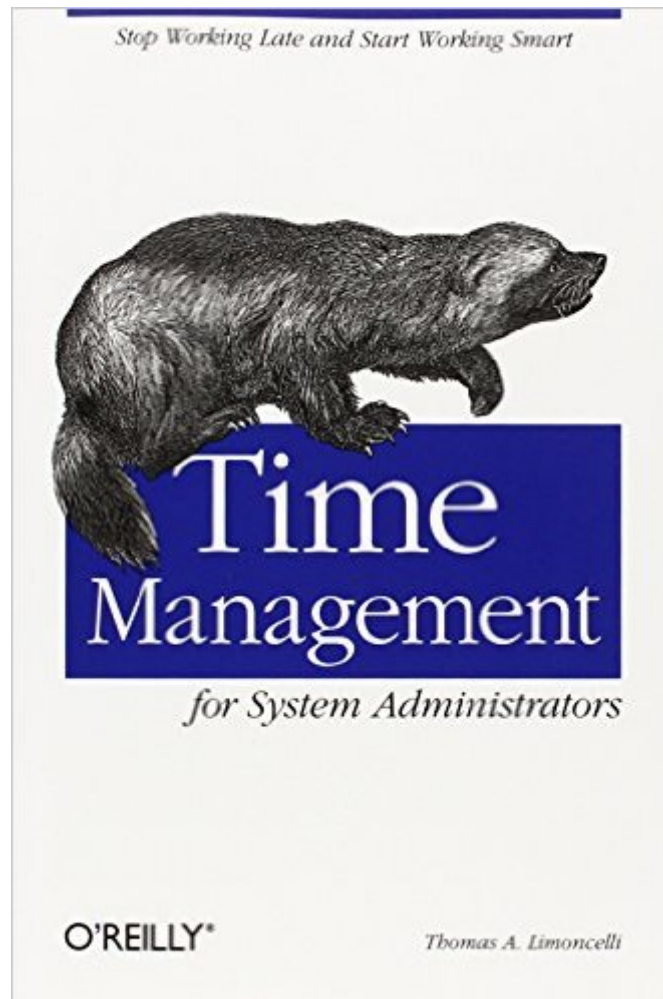


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# Time Management For System Administrators



## Synopsis

Time is a precious commodity, especially if you're a system administrator. No other job pulls people in so many directions at once. Users interrupt you constantly with requests, preventing you from getting anything done. Your managers want you to get long-term projects done but flood you with requests for quick-fixes that prevent you from ever getting to those long-term projects. But the pressure is on you to produce and it only increases with time. What do you do? The answer is time management. And not just any time management theory--you want *Time Management for System Administrators*, to be exact. With keen insights into the challenges you face as a sys admin, bestselling author Thomas Limoncelli has put together a collection of tips and techniques that will help you cultivate the time management skills you need to flourish as a system administrator. *Time Management for System Administrators* understands that a Sys Admin often has competing goals: the concurrent responsibilities of working on large projects and taking care of a user's needs. That's why it focuses on strategies that help you work through daily tasks, yet still allow you to handle critical situations that inevitably arise. Among other skills, you'll learn how to:

- Manage interruptions
- Eliminate timewasters
- Keep an effective calendar
- Develop routines for things that occur regularly
- Use your brain only for what you're currently working on
- Prioritize based on customer expectations
- Document and automate processes for faster execution

What's more, the book doesn't confine itself to just the work environment, either. It also offers tips on how to apply these time management tools to your social life. It's the first step to a more productive, happier you.

## Book Information

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Interaction

## Customer Reviews

To save everyone the trouble, I'll make the obvious joke: "I bought a book on time management, but I haven't had time to read it..." Tom Limoncelli knows this about you. He knows a lot about you. He's encountered, and found solutions for, just about every one of the paradoxes, dilemmas, Catch-22s, and never-ending Sisyphean ordeals that comprise the day-to-day challenge of being a professional system administrator. He wrote (with Christine Hogan) *The Practice of System and Network Administration*, which presents a thorough and practical body of knowledge for IT professionals: it describes all the things you need to do to build and run a manageable infrastructure. Now he's written an equally practical book on how to actually get those things done, and he wrote it in a way that makes it palatable for system administrators -- a famously cynical bunch when it comes to books about personal productivity. And there's a lot to be cynical about... Here's how "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People", by Stephen Covey, begins: In more than 25 years of working with people in business, university, and marriage and family settings, I have come in contact with many individuals who have achieved an incredible degree of outward success, but have found themselves struggling with an inner hunger, a deep need for personal congruency and effectiveness and for healthy, growing relationships with other people. Deep need for personal congruency? The only deep need I feel at the moment involves my gag reflex, and not in a good way. In comparison, here's how Tom begins: Wait! Before we get started, let's do something to make sure we actually finish.

I am largely self-taught and unmentored (only discovered SAGE this year and then they busted it! Thanks, LOPSA for stepping in!). When I started going to Seattle SAGE meetings, I was amazed at how good, how assured, how \*correct\* a sysadmin could be. And they all pointed me to Tom and Christine's book, *The Practice of System and Network Administration*. It is awesome. This is, too. I think Benjy's review puts it well: tPoSaNA describes what you have to do to run a proper shop. This book gives you some tools and approaches to manage all of that work without going insane. Part of my dissatisfaction with the job I was doing had to do with the barrage of stuff coupled with a sense that no particular thing was ever getting finished. Naturally, my stressed and agitated mind was not conducive to productivity. The book has been a big help the last week. Tom does address getting more done, by reducing distraction, improving focus, automating tasks, and especially by defending "project time" by concentrating interrupts in the other part of the day. But I think the heart of the book is in managing the workflow. Even if you don't get more done, you'll get more of the most important

stuff done. The book discusses approaches for prioritizing and tracking tasks, some of which seem counter-intuitive but are inarguable. For example, you could do three easy things or one hard one. If the cumulative impact of the easy ones is low, the hard one may be the right call, even if it results in fewer items crossed off your list. Look at impact - what a concept! O.k., maybe that's common sense, but it may not be a common approach. Much of the book is common sense. I think I have had more than a few of the ideas presented.

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