



# The Calendar Hammer Process™

## Overview

Time is one of a leader's strategic sources of power. Because you can never get back time, leaders must treat and protect their time like a rare gem. Otherwise, burnout, micromanagement, and missing strategic opportunities are a constant threat to the leader, their team, and the organization.

## What is it?

The Calendar Hammer Process™ is where a leader rigorously reviews their calendar with a critical eye to ensure their time is spent hammering out the work that others could be doing instead of them. Constant re-evaluation is critical to upgrading a leader's focus to the fewest, most essential areas of highest impact. Given the company's strategic goals, current global events, and organizational changes, an executive's work evolves. With any major shift, a leader must take the figurative hammer to their calendar and chip away at the work that no longer best serves their time or the organization.

## A Real Leader's Challenge

When working with Michaela, a fast-rising, potential executive in a Fortune 100 company who prided herself on her organization, she quickly realized that she had been too quick to help her direct reports. She was doing their work because she felt it would be faster for her to do it than to take the time



to explain it. The problem: Michaela was underutilizing her team and stunting her and their development, given the rapid growth and pace needed for talent development.

Few leaders do the necessary yet simple following analysis and apply it to their calendar. Each day of the week represents 20% of a work week, a half day is 10% and so on. Even a 5% shift, approximately two hours a week, creates exponential impact week-over-week and quarter-over-quarter on her success, well-being, team, and overall results. Michaela quickly started seeing the power of this strategic process.



Now she started seeing how to open up her calendar to be far more strategic and prepare for creating her Leader's Calendar™.<sup>1</sup>

## The Calendar Hammer Process™

1. Review your current calendar, brainstorm, and define the top 4-5 major categories of how you currently spend your time. For example, categories can include working with your team, strategic planning with peers, answering emails, weekly preparation and review, and strategic thinking time. Be candid with yourself, for you will not reap the powerful source of opportunity otherwise.
2. Identify the top 4-5 fewest, most essential categories that only you can do, not your team. Be ruthlessly compassionate here and examine the work you might be holding onto because you know how to do it well and have been praised for it in the past<sup>2</sup>. This work is a perfect development opportunity for your direct reports, freeing you up to work on the strategic work only you can and should be doing. This work will evolve. However,

you must start somewhere. Also, it is NOT about perfection but rather about making progress.

3. Decide what % of time you should be spending on the above.
4. Compare and contrast how you spend your time vs. where you need to spend your time. What insights are surfacing?
5. What are 1-2 actions you can take to shift how you spend your time? Think about what will be possible when you successfully shift your time. What could be the X factor impact? What will you be freed up to do that you can't seem to get to spend enough time on?

By hammering out work that others can and should be doing, leaders create the strategic space to work on the essential. Calendars are never perfect, but leaders must strive to do more of the work that only they can do. By continually evaluating, leaders can lead at the level the organization needs.

The calendar work evolves over time but you have to start somewhere, and chances are you will be better at it than you think.



I must govern the clock, not be governed by it.

— Golda Meir



### Resources:

<sup>1</sup> The Leader's Calendar - [www.laurastone.com/LeadersCalendar](http://www.laurastone.com/LeadersCalendar)

<sup>2</sup> The Leader's Paradox - [www.laurastone.com/LeadersParadox](http://www.laurastone.com/LeadersParadox)



## Sample Leader's Calendar

My Ideal Calendar	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday		
Early Morning (6:30-8:30)	Prime, read, workout	Prime, read, workout	Prime, read, workout	Prime, read, workout	Prime, read, workout	PLAY!!!	Play, Spiritual time & Family		
Morning (8:30-10:30)	Review the week, ASANA	Write & connect on social media	Project Time	Project Time	Review the week, how did I do compare to what I said I would do, scan next week				
Late Morning (10:30-noon)	Team Alignment	Expansion	Project Time	Project Time	Strategic time, Accountability partner mtgs.				
Healthy lunch, break, 6 min cardio and email									
Early Afternoon	Client Time	Financials & 100-1000x value work	Client Time	Client Time	Bullet journal, ASANA prep ...catch al				
Later Afternoon								Groceries, errands Prep for week	
Healthy Dinner									
Early Evening		Learning Night	Yoga/class						Yoga/class
In bed by 9:30 no electronics 10:15 lights out									In bed by 9:30

### Priorities

- Client Time - YELLOW
- Team Alignment & Project Time - DARK BLUE
- Working on the Business - RED

## Michaelas's Ideal Calendar

My Ideal Calendar	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Early Morning (6:30-8:30)	Exercise, walk dog, get kids off to school	Exercise, walk dog, get kids off to school	Exercise, walk dog, get kids off to school	Exercise, walk dog, get kids off to school	Exercise, walk dog, get kids off to school
8:30-9:00	Check in w Mary M (OT)	Commute/chat w team, Erica (OT)	Commute/Chat w Team (OT)	Connect with Tom O on production (OT)	Open (MT)
Morning (9:00-10:30)	Review Business from LW (TT)	Staff Meeting @10, AIM, PASE Breakfasts, Production Strategy Meetings	OFFICE HOURS (DT)	Review WTD for concerns. MBS Meeting, I&D Meetings, Big Rocks meetings	Morning connect with team on miscellaneous stuff, review to-do list (OT/TT)
Late Morning (10:30-noon)	Production Call, Shipping Call (TT)	Walk around Time, Stores with GMMs (OT)	Store time with my team 1:1, or just alone (TT/MT)	Open (MT)	Production Call, TB with team (OT)
LUNCH	Erica Team noon call, Lunch, SWOT meeting (TT)	In-person Lunch (GMM/exec or team) (OT)	In-person Lunch (GMM/exec or team) (OT)	LUNCH/WALK DOG (MT)	LUNCH/WALK DOG (MT)
12-2		Store Visits with AVP teams, 1:1s with Team/Erica (DT)	Store Visits with AVP teams, Sr. Team Meetings, I&D Meetings (OT)	Business Meetings, Funding meetings (OT)	Block/Open Time (MT)
Later Afternoon		Staff Meeting, Misc Calls, Walk dog 3PM (TT)			
Early Evening	Make Dinner, Walk Dog, Family Time, Sports Driving	Make Dinner, Walk Dog, Family Time, Sports Driving	Make Dinner, Walk Dog, Family Time, Sports Driving	Make Dinner, Walk Dog, Family Time, Sports Driving	Make Dinner, Walk Dog, Family Time, Sports Driving
In bed by 10:30					

### Priorities & Legend

- Develop Team (DT) YELLOW
- My own Reflection/Think time (MT) PURPLE
- Sharing observations with others (OT) BLUE
- Team Time/Business time: Keeping team focused, removing obstacles aside from right product, right stores, right time (TT) GREEN

### Current & Ideal

- Develop Team (DT) Current 12%, Ideal 17%
- My Reflection / Think time (MT) Current 22%, Ideal 22%
- Sharing observations with others (OT) Current 15%, Ideal 27%
- Team Time/Business time: Keeping team focused, removing obstacles aside from right product, right stores, right time (TT) Current 40%, Ideal 27%
- Other/Misc Current 12%, Ideal 7%