

# THE PRODUCTIVITY PYRAMID

Page 41 in *We Are Climbers, All* by Tom Blaisse (www.TomBlaisse.com)

What's Important? I must assess.  
How has my Time been spent?  
Not quite sure, I must confess;  
The years just came and went.

The foundation I must lay in first,  
Each block to firmly fit.  
Values calling, a deepening thirst,  
For strength to harbor wit.

What purpose am I to manifest?  
What reason for it all?  
I crave to build, to be my best,  
Accept my mission's call.

The next step, then, is long-range goals,  
To bridge the values gap;  
The Challenge of Change to pay Life's Tolls,  
A specific, measurable map.

Break down the goals before I start;  
Each step along the way;  
I'll spend my Time working SMART,  
To see results some day.

Through daily tasks, I will produce.  
Distractions I'll resist.  
Time Robbers I will, now, reduce;  
Success, if I persist.

I'll be content with what I've done;  
Productive days increase.  
To balance work with a little fun  
Will nurture Inner Peace.



# THE PRODUCTIVITY PYRAMID Commentary

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## STRUCTURE

Seven four-line verses with an ABAB rhyme scheme make this poem structured and stylized. The content is derived from the FranklinCovey Co. *Time Management* workshop, and the verses build upon the pyramid model that is used in that program. In each verse, Lines 1 and 3 are in iambic tetrameter; Lines 2 and 4 are iambic trimeter. Note that the piece is written in the first-person singular, allowing the reader to affirm his/her commitment to laying in each block of the model.

## IMAGERY

The picture of the pyramid next to the poem represents the “building blocks” for one’s increased personal productivity. The opening verse poses the awareness question: “Where has the time gone?” The rest of the verses offer varied complementary images:

**Visual:** firmly fit; purpose...manifest; bridge the values gap; pay life’s tolls; measureable map; see results; distractions I’ll resist.

**Auditory:** values calling; mission’s call.

**Kinesthetic:** deepening thirst; strength to harbor wit; crave to build; challenge of change; break down the goals; working SMART; success...persist; balance...fun; Inner Peace.

## THEMES

The key (time management) message in this poem is that by “controlling the events of our lives, we can increase our personal productivity and self-esteem.” It all begins with identifying and committing to our “Governing Values,” and then setting “Long-Range Goals” that are Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic, and Time-framed (SMART), to reflect those Values. We then need to break those goals down into “Intermediate Goals,” and write the related work actions on our “Daily Task” list. Resisting “Time Robbers” (matters that may be urgent but not important long-term) and including some recreational activities for balance keeps us focused on success and increases our work/life time productivity and effectiveness, which leads to “Inner Peace.”

## PERSONAL COMMENT

I worked for FranklinCovey Co. (formerly Franklin Quest) as a Seminar Leader for more than 10 years (1989-2000), and conducted close to 1,800 “Time Quest” workshops for more than 50,000 participants. The seminar was a “life-changing” experience that empowered people to take control of their time and their lives by building their “Productivity Pyramid” and using the Franklin Day Planner as their implementation tool and record-keeping book. I was inspired to write this poem by the work I was doing during those years and the pyramid graphic that served as the program model.