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Then make a list of your core competencies: "the things [you] do best and that other people cannot do nearly as well," at work, at home, and in life. Just as in business, Vanderkam believes that individuals need to do a better job of recognizing what they're good at, and what they're passionate about, and to focus on spending their time on those things to get the most out of the time allotted them. "Those who get the most out of life... know that at least one key difference between happy, successful people, and those just muddling along is that the happy ones spend as many of their 168 hours as possible on their core competencies—honoring their focus to get somewhere—and, like modern corporations, chucking every-

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As is usual with time-management manuals, the first step is to figure out where all your time is going using a spreadsheet or time diary, such as those Vanderkam's made available at her 168hours.com website. Once you've tracked your time for a week, you can analyze the raw data on how you actually spend your time. What you learn may surprise you. She points out the discrepancies between the amount of time people claim to spend on work during a week, for example, and the number of hours that studies using time diaries actually show we spend making productive contributions to our jobs. In almost every case, we have dozens of 'free time' hours that we simply don't recognize and don't take advantage of.

Once you've tracked where your time goes, do two things: make a "List of 100 Dreams," life goals big and small, ranging from winning the Nobel Prize to keeping on hand a favored brand of chocolate. Odds are there'll be at least some entries on the ledger that you've wistfully promised yourself you'd do if you ever had more time.

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ask the same question a wide-eyed President Obama did when he was introduced to her at a White House event: "When do you sleep?"

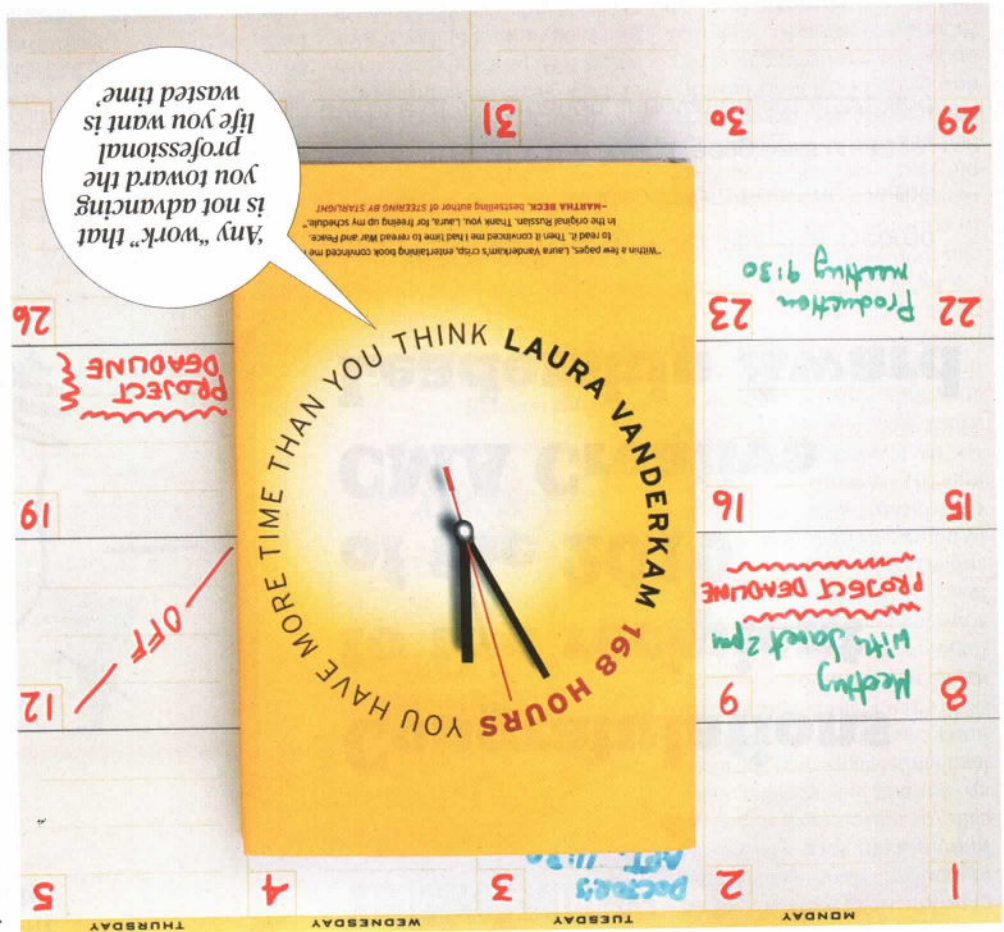
Daytner is one of the exceedingly high-functioning people that *USA Today* and *Scientific American* contributor Laura Vanderkam introduces in her new book *168 Hours: You Have More Time Than You Think (Port-folio)*. Time is our least renewable resource, and the time-management cottage industry has slain better focus on our core competencies and priorities.

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I don't know Theresa Daytner, but I know I don't like her. I don't like her despite the fact that she's undoubtedly a wonderful person. Daytner owns a seven-figure-revenue construction company in Baltimore, and she's a mother of six (including eight-year-old twins). She lifts weights and mountain bikes and plans surprise birthday parties for her husband, and she's a member of a book club and *actually reads the books*. No, despite all this—or more honestly, because of it—I do not like Theresa Daytner. I'm jealous that her week beats my month. I want to grab her by the shoulders and

Time-management is not about efficiency. It's about making informed choices

There are 168 hours in a week. How many do you use well?



EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES

of productivity that's dishonest in pointlessly long conference calls, or unnecessary meetings, are nothing but "disguised and ineffective leisure time" no more noble than sitting numb in front of the television. Vanderkamm wants us to develop a strategy for ignoring, minimizing, or outsourcing non-core competency tasks. Some of her case study subjects have been able to save 10 hours a week or more simply by reducing the number of meetings they attend, for example. So "try to establish a culture in which every meeting has a point, an agenda, an extremely limited time frame, an outcome, and a bias toward involving fewer people rather than more."

A focus on core competencies can help you find extra hours in your home life as well. It's reasonable to think, for example, that when you're reading a bedtime story to your child, you are irreplaceable. When you're doing the household laundry on Saturday morning, however, there's no reason to think that you do the laundry any better than anybody else does, or that it's somehow demonstrative of your commitment to your family to spend hours on that chore instead of taking them to the zoo. So outsource it. Use one of the many wash-and-fold services offered in most population centres, or hire somebody from Craigslist to do it. Look at your channel our excess of intellectual ingesting, has the potential to

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COGNITIVE SURPLUS: Creativity and Generosity in a Connected Age (Penguin)
Clay Shirky



FORTUNE'S FOOL: Edgar Bronfman, Jr., Warner Music, and an Industry in Crisis (Simon & Schuster)
Fred Goodman



FOR ALL THE TEA IN CHINA: How England Stole the World's Favourite Drink and Changed History (Viking)
Sarah Rose

We've embraced the narrative of the Bronfman sion as fool, a green kid who traded his blue-phantom media-convergence gold rush, crippling one of the world's great fortunes. Good-man, whose 1998 *The Manston on the Hill* is one of the definitive books on the pre-Napster music industry, recounts Edgar's rise through the ranks of the family business and his all-in bet on the music business just in time for its business model to be upended by MP3 file-sharing. All the while, Uncle Charles sults in the background, rueing the day the family cashed in its share of Dow Chemical and sold off the liquor business. While the Bronfman family dramas have been well-covered in other books and in the Canadian press—this magazine is among the book's sources—Goodman understands the music business better than any of the family's other chroniclers. He records excellently drawn portraits of hustlers charged with making hits in an industry that no longer offers a clear path to doing so, and he understands better than most the industry-specific challenges Bronfman faces. Whatever its future, Edgar's clearly still flushed with love for the music business. Whether he'll succeed in finding a workable new business model for it is another question.—JT.

Though many of us feel pressed for time, the developed world has actually enjoyed a vast post-war surplus of the stuff. But to date we've filled it mostly with sitcoms: Americans collectively watch some 200 billion hours of TV a year. By comparison, *Everybody* author Shirky, it took a mere hundred million hours or so of human thought to compile Wikipedia. The new, unbundled function of media, he argues, is to form "the connective tissue of society." It's something we use, not just something we consume. Social media, where people participate and share instead of simply ingesting, has the potential to channel our excess of intellectual energy and time—the "cognitive surplus" of the title—into projects that offer more public value than does basting ourselves in pay for a housecleaning service if it means being able to spend more time accomplishing something that matters to you more than dusting.

It's this sort of wide-lens, strategic approach to time management that lifts *168 Hours* above your average compendium of lifehacks. Instead of finding better ways to do the things we don't really have to do, or to do two things at once, we need to understand that we're making a choice to do them in the first place. Like Theresa Daymer, we have time to do almost anything we want to do. We just choose not to.—JORDAN TIMM

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