

rB They'll Manage Your Time | Rod Brace

<http://rodbrace.com/article/managetime>

I've found over the years that others will manage your time if you let them. It is rarely a positive experience when our much cherished passing minutes are put in uncaring hands. Observe the flow of your work place to spot the culprits.

Notice that the same guy who stands in your door frame yapping on about his new lawn chair/cooler is the same guy that walks out the door proclaiming it's quitin' time leaving you in catch up mode. He is managing your time. There's also the pseudo-interested office mate that wants to get into long, seemingly deep, discussions about yesterday's meeting or the big project that everybody is working on. They keep the conversation between the lines in terms of relevant topics, but they go way too deep and long. You get the feeling that they would rather talk than do. You're feeling them right.

They are the type that will manage your time to their entertainment. They like talking. They figure talking about work is work in itself, so they pass time with you strapped to their victim seat jawing about nothing. The only sporting thing to do with them is drop phrases like: "I thought I heard you weren't working on that project anymore." Drives them nuts. The only thing worse than having to actually do the work, is thinking that someone doesn't think they can. Play with them a bit. You've earned the right.

The final type is the can we talk victim. Never fails, you are in the middle of a chaotic crunch so you can get home in time to watch old Burt Reynolds movies with your mother-in-law who is in town for a yet to be determined period of bliss, and the victim enters. They are typically on the verge of tears and the exchange goes something like:

Oh, I'm sorry, I can see you are in the middle of something. Never mind. It's not that important, it's just, well I don't know who else to turn to, you've always been so good at helping me see what to do, and now that I'm pretty sure I overheard someone say my name in the same conversation when they were talking about not needing as many people around here and it's my birthday, almost, it's actually next week, but I know, I'm pretty sure, they said my birth date too, so I know they mean me, and I just bought a new car and can't afford it even with a job and without a job well I'm in deep, whatever you do don't say anything, but if you were to say something it would be great if you'd let them know I have asthma and it would be a shame for an asthmatic to be living on the street, and aren't people with asthma protected by that ADA thing, I have rights and all, but I can't afford an attorney if I don't have a job, and I just knew you'd know what to do, and I'm sorry, listen to me, I've been rambling and probably for no good reason, right? Tell me it's for no good reason.

To which you reply: I'm sorry, have we met?

They all manage your time. Close the door, say no and make them live by your clock. They'll get the idea and start living according to your rules. Stand up when they darken your door so they won't sit down. Gradually start moving toward the door as you chat upon announcing

that you have a call to catch or you should continue the conversation later but right now you're suffering from too much Dr. Pepper intake. If you need to talk with them, go to their office, don't sit down and quickly state your business. Don't wait on them to start a meeting. Don't continue the conversation past 5 p.m. Ask them hard questions when you see them so that they know it's not fun and games when they are in your presence. Ask them how in the world do they manage to have so much free time and they really should let someone know if they need more to do and you'll be happy to put in a good word for them so they don't get bored.

Don't let them manage your time though. After all, it is YOUR time.