

Creative Living



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(C)1E

organizing
Dorothy Lehmkuhl

Planning ahead foils interruptions

Q. It seems I can never accomplish anything because I have so many interruptions. What am I doing wrong?

A. That's a frustrating feeling, isn't it? Many people wonder why there is so little time left at the end of their work day and fail to give themselves credit for all they do. Because they are too close to be objective, many managers, secretaries, etc. feel they achieve little — even though handling interruptions is what they are paid to do.

The average manager is interrupted every 6-9 minutes; secretaries every 3-4 minutes (all too often by their managers.) Adding 20 percent to the time you think tasks should take, plus actual interruption time, may help you be more realistic.

Mothers of small children have the same problem. With preschoolers, a mother must add an average of 15 more to the time it takes to accomplish normal tasks; mothers of infants must double working time. Considering the total hours involved, mothering an infant is almost equal to a full-time job; toddlers, part-time. When viewed in these terms, it's easier to understand where time goes.

FIRST, TAKE WHAT steps you can to minimize unnecessary interruptions. (That's another whole column!) Then analyze the times of day you encounter the most unavoidable ones and schedule only easier work for then.

Delineating between "hard" and "easy" work for you is important. Easy jobs, of course, can be done almost automatically. Although they may be physically demanding, they seem nearly effortless to you. Most importantly, these tasks can be resumed with little or no backtracking. Schedule easy work for the crazy times of day when you know the phone will be ringing, children will be demanding, or people will be persistently popping in.

Save your tougher stuff for quieter scheduled times behind closed doors, during an hour or the noon hour when everyone else is gone. Under the tough category would fall tasks which require concentration, jobs physically demanding, difficult decisions, or things that simply seem hard for you, even though others may glide through them easily.

Trying to sustain difficult work during constant interruption is like beating your head against a wall. By planning carefully, you can get more done and feel better about yourself.

Dorothy Lehmkuhl welcomes comments and questions from readers. Send those to her in care of this newspaper, 36251 Schoolcraft Road, Livonia.

designing ways
Eve Garvin

Laminate shades for custom look

SHADES, SHADES, shades. The Norman Lacoff & Associates showroom in the Michigan Design Center has the answer to whatever piques your interest. They represent a number of top quality lines, including Conrad Imports, Modern Window, Heartwood, Joanna Western Mills, Liz Day Collection and others. They also do custom laminations.

This showroom will laminate mini or vertical blinds, wallpaper or fabric. The service is available through your designer.

Modern window interpretations of the Roman shade are vivid examples of craftsmanship. The design possibilities are limited only by your imagination. The Conrad Original Suma and Reed Weaves are handwoven textures of beautiful straws of golden wheat or hand-dyed reeds interwoven with jute and cotton yarns making a sunshade or wallcovering simple but unique. Winner of the ASID International Award, each sunshade lends itself to traditional or contemporary settings.

Laminating a fabric to a window shade is one way to treat the kitchen window above the sink. Use a wallpaper with matching fabric, keeping in mind the repeat of the pattern so that shade and paper match.

QUESTION FROM A READER: Our house is contemporary inside and out. We are planning on furnishing our dining room as our number one project. We have an opening for a fixture but I can't see a chandelier in the room. What do you suggest?

Try spots over your dining room table or track lighting. You did not give me the size of your room so it is difficult to advise the number of light openings. Eliminating the chandelier frees you to making the centerpiece on the table a focal point. You can use height there.



BILL BRESLER/staff photographer

Joyce Crawford Conedera applies a glue solution to a rose that will then be dried in silica gel. The results are a bouquet (above) that looks as fresh as the day it was "born."



Making memories last

By Mary Rodrigue
staff writer

PRESERVING fresh flowers is a tricky business.

So tricky that many florists don't want to get involved in the expensive, time-consuming process.

Brides, for instance, who want to preserve the bouquet from their special day can turn to folks like Joyce Crawford Conedera, owner of Memory Flowers in Canton Township.

Conedera started preserving flowers a dozen years ago — an offshoot from her first business venture — silk flower arranging. The preservation business got so big that it consumed the silk flower business.

"I do presentations at flower shows around the area. I was at a flower show at the Dearborn Hyatt Regency, and there was a thousand florists there," she said. "They were curious (about preservation) but don't want to get into it."

"IT TAKES A lot of space — storage rooms full of containers. It takes two weeks for one bouquet, with lots of processes and steps. And it's dusty. It's too involved for someone in the floral business."

Conedera came by her technique through experimen-

tal. Roses, daisies, every bloom imaginable became her garden guinea pig.

"I perfected the procedure myself through research and experiments," she said.

Basically, the process involves immersing the bouquet in a silica sand bath for two weeks. Silica is a white clean dry sand — emphasis on dry.

"Any moisture will rot the flowers," she said.

Brides interested in making their bouquet a permanent keepsake should keep it in a plastic bag in a cooler during the wedding reception and refrigerated (still in plastic) overnight. It should be delivered to the preserver the following day.

"Some girls put it in the freezer. Then there's nothing we can do with it," Conedera said.

And while it's true that flowers can be preserved by microwaving, you can't just toss a bouquet in the oven like a two-minute pizza, she says. For one thing, they are usually assembled with wire.

Basic preservation costs \$50 for a bouquet, and \$10 for a corsage. Janier versions are available — such as a hexagon display case with mirror and cover, or an oval frame with bubble glass featuring a photograph of the couple surrounded by flowers from the bouquet.

"Those I manufacture and design myself," she said.

Displays can be created for special anniversaries — 25th, 40th, 50th. Conedera can color old photographs and restore them as well. She has blended old photographs of the anniversary couple with flowers similar to the type found in the original bridal bouquet.

The same can be done with funeral flowers, she added.

"It doesn't have to be morbid," she said. "For instance, (a customer) brought in a picture of her mother when she was a young woman holding her first baby in her arms. We used some flowers from her funeral for a box display."

Conedera's clientele comes from throughout the metro Detroit area.

"I've learned many extras over the years," she said.

Memory Flowers is housed in the front of her home, 51350 Ford Road. A bay window features bridal mannequins. It is a neighborhood of residential homes and businesses.

Conedera suggests brides call her a month before their wedding to schedule a day to bring in their bouquet — traditionally the day after the wedding. She can be reached at 495-0368.

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