

BRAIN  **POWER**

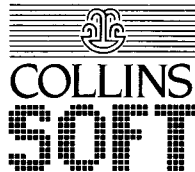
Time Manager

Time Manager

Programs by Duncan Henderson

Manual by Stuart Armstrong

Time Management notes by Sally Garratt



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Contents

TIME MANAGER is a flexible and easy to use database program. Once you have understood how the Program runs, and how to define structures and load in data, you will find that **TIME MANAGER** can solve many time-related administrative problems.

We strongly suggest that you learn how to use the Program by working carefully through this short manual. Sally Garratt's notes on Time Management may then give you some ideas about how best to use the Program.

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TIME MANAGER is a database file, which contains 365 (or 366) records, one for each day of one year. Within the records, up to six fields can be defined. The fields can be of four different types, each of a fixed size;

Text	to 23 characters
Integer	to 27999
Money (i.e. 2 decimal places)	to £ 999999.99
Binary	'Yes or No'

Unlike other databases, the text and money fields can have more than one entry, limited only by computer memory. Finally, a special feature allows you to set a sequence of 'priorities', so that an entry in one field can block out access to other fields on the same day.

Once a structure has been designed to suit your needs it can be saved for future use, with or without the data which it contains.

1/Running the Program

Before you start — the terms used

The Appendix contains instructions on how to load **TIME MANAGER**, but before you first use the Program it is important that you understand how it is structured.

If you have used and understand the jargon of database programs, just read the information in the box opposite, which explains the similarities between **TIME MANAGER** and normal databases. Then you can go on to 'Starting the Program'.

For those with no database experience, you need to know a little more about how **TIME MANAGER** works. Within the computer the Program creates a diary, with one 'page' for each day of the year. You can choose to divide the page into up to six sections, so that different pieces of information can be kept separately. Each section can only contain one type of information, such as a piece of text or some monetary values. Some of these sections can also be used to contain data which is supplied with the Program, such as public holidays and other diary notes.

The sections into which you divide the days in the diary are known by the technical name 'fields', and the overall way in which you set up the fields is called the 'structure' of the diary. You can create various structures for different purposes, and save them on disk or tape (depending upon your version of the Program). The information you keep in the diary is called 'data' and this data can also be saved, with or without the structure.

You should now go on to use the Program. We suggest that you work through the instructions, building a 'test' structure to learn about the features, before you decide how to design a structure to suit your own needs.

Starting the Program

TIME MANAGER is formed of two separate Programs. The first Program is used to set up a new structure, or to load an existing structure and data. The second Program allows you to add new data, to use the information in various ways, and to save data to tape or disk.

Obviously, to start using **TIME MANAGER** you must load the first Program. Do this by following the instructions given on page 41 for your particular type of computer.

Throughout **TIME MANAGER** various lists of options, known as SELECTION MENUS, will be displayed on the screen. To select an option you just move the light highlight bar by pressing the **SPACE** key. When the bar is over the item you wish to select you then press **ENTER** and the Program will act on your choice.

When you have loaded the first Program, a selection menu will appear like this:



```
Load structure
New structure
Load whole
```

- Loads a structure already defined and saved.
- Defines a new structure from scratch.
- Loads existing data and structure.

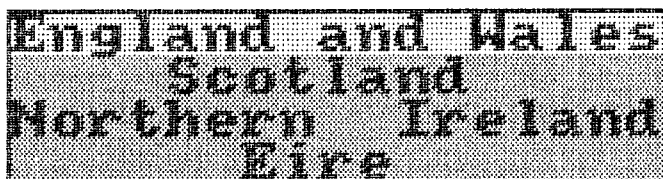
As a first time user you should select the **New structure** option. Otherwise, you can load a structure you have previously defined and saved by following the instructions which will appear on the screen, and continue as you wish.

Defining a new structure

When you select **New structure**, the Program will step you through a series of questions which will enable it to design the structure you require:

Year? (1901 to 2099) — type in the year, and press **ENTER**.

Include Bank Holidays field? (Y/N) — Bank holidays can be calculated by the Program. If you want them included, press **Y**; otherwise press **N**. If you press **Y**, you will be presented with a selection menu from which to choose the appropriate country in the British Isles:



```
England and Wales
Scotland
Northern Ireland
Eire
```

Include Diary Notes field? (Y/N) — If you select this field, the Program will use it to store typical diary information — saints' days, moon phases and so on. Answer using the **Y** or **N** key.

Extra number of fields? (0,1 to 4,5,6) — the numbers offered will depend upon your answers to the previous questions. The maximum number of fields is 6, including the Bank Holidays and Diary Notes fields. Type in the number you require, and press **ENTER**. For each of the fields you require, you must give the following information in response to the prompts which appear at the bottom of the screen:

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| field name | Give a descriptive name of up to 13 characters. |
| type | Choose using the selection menu (see explanation below). |
| size | Type 1 for single-item field, or press any other key (see explanation below). |
| priority | Higher number, higher priority; zero for no priority (see explanation below). |

The **field name** identifies a particular field. Please ensure that your field names are unique, and that they describe the nature of the data they will contain.

The **type** refers to the kind of data which will be added to the field. All fields must be of a specified type. There are four types to choose from:

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 1 text | Your data may be text, e.g. 'Mr Armstrong'. |
| 2 binary | This type has two values, 'Yes' or 'No' (refer to page 15). |
| 3 money | Your data may have monetary values, e.g. £4.89. |
| 4 integer | Your data can be any whole number between 1 and 27,999. Values such as 2.5 or 5/2 will not be accepted. |

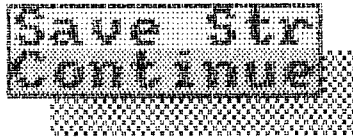
The **size** of a field refers to the number of entries you wish to store in that field in a single day. The field can be defined in one of two ways:

- 1 Single-item field** in which data is restricted to a single line.
- 2 Multi-item field** in which data may be added in as many lines as you wish, subject to the memory capacity of your computer.

Typing **1** indicates a single-item field and this will be displayed on the screen in the size column. If you type in anything else the Program assumes that you are interested in multi-item fields and the infinity sign ∞ is displayed in the size column.

A **priority** indicates the degree of importance for any particular field. You can assign a priority to any field by typing a number in the priority column. If you do not wish to assign a priority to a particular field then you must type **0**. Integer fields always have a priority of zero. Priorities are used to help you manage your diary. If a date contains an entry in a high priority field, then all fields with a lower priority are 'blocked'. You will not be able to enter information in the lower priority field unless you overrule the block each time a conflict arises. Refer to page 12 for further details.

As soon as you have defined a structure a small menu will appear on the right hand side of your screen. You will see that this menu has just two options:



- Saves the structure you have created.
- Goes on to main menu.

To save your structure, select **Save structure** and follow the instructions on the screen. You will be asked to give a name to a file. You can call the file whatever you wish (Amstrad, 8 characters maximum; Spectrum, 6 characters), but we strongly suggest that you choose a sensible file name which is easy to remember and which gives you a good indication of the use you intend to make of it.

When you have used the **Save structure** option the menu will reappear, and you can select **Continue** to reach the next list of options as follows:

```
Load structure
New structure
Load whole
Clear
Continue
```

- Loads a structure already defined.
- Defines a new structure.
- Loads existing data and structure.
- Clears all data from the structure.
- Goes on to the next menu.

The **Clear** command clears all data but leaves the structure intact. In general, you only need to use this option when you return to Program 1 from within Program 2. Use **Continue** to go on to the final menu of the first Program:

```
Load whole data base
Load individual field
Goto second program
Redefine structure
Change first month
```

- Loads existing data and structure.
- Loads one field with existing data.
- Runs Program 2.
- Restarts Program 1 from the first menu.
- Chooses a different month for the start of the 12 month period.

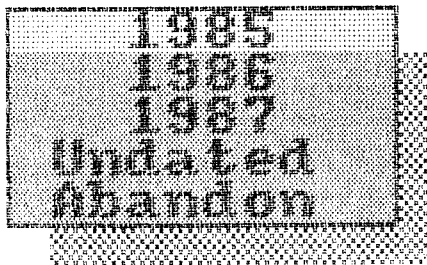
The Program normally starts its calculations from JANUARY, the first month in the year. The **Change first month** command allows you to change this to any other month you wish to specify. The Program will add the relevant Bank Holidays and Diary Notes if you have included these fields in your structure. When you select **Change first month**, please follow the instructions on the screen; the 'Thinking' message will appear because the process takes a little while to complete.

Finally, when you are satisfied with the structure you have created and once you have loaded any data files into it, select **Goto second program** and follow any instructions on the screen.

Loading saved data

The **Load individual field** command allows you to load data which you have previously saved into one individual field of the correct type. If there is data already present in the structure then data for this individual field will be added to the existing data. (Only the individual field which you have specified will have data added to it.)

It is possible that the saved data came from a structure with a different start month to that of the present structure. The program will need to know the year in which the saved data begins, and it will ask you via a menu in the following style. The precise years will depend upon the year(s) covered by the structure currently in the computer. Please follow the instructions on the screen:



- The year before the current structure.
- The first year of the current structure.
- The second year of the current structure.
- Data which is fixed from year to year.
- Return to previous menu.

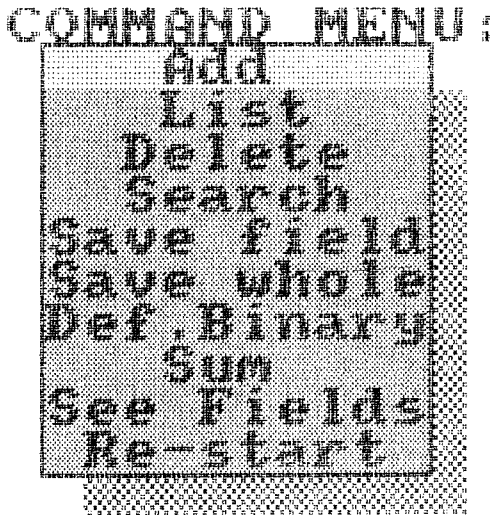
It is possible that when you see the list of years, you may realise that the data you intended to load is not applicable to the current structure. Use the last option to abandon the attempt.

A series of data files are supplied with **TIME MANAGER**. The names and contents of these files are listed on page 42.

The **Load whole database** command allows you to load all data saved from a previous structure, complete with the structure.

The second Program

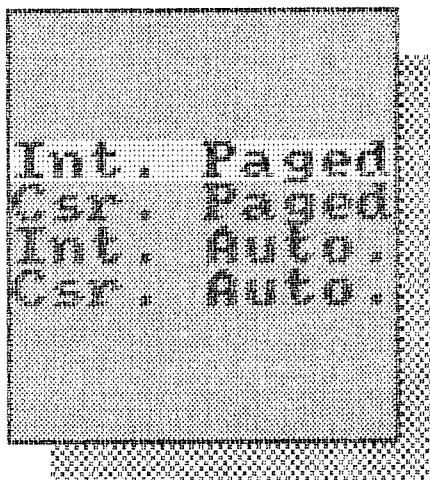
As soon as the computer has loaded the second **TIME MANAGER** Program, a new selection menu entitled 'COMMAND MENU' appears on the right hand side of the screen. This menu enables you to operate on any data available within the structure, or to add and delete data:



- Enters new data.
- Lists existing data.
- Deletes items of data.
- Searches for a particular item of data.
- Saves the data in one field.
- Saves the whole database and structure.
- Redefines binary field (refer to page 15).
- Calculates totals for money or integer fields.
- Examines the details of the structure.
- Returns to Program 1.

Adding data — selecting dates

Select the **Add** option, and you will see the following menu:



Int. is an abbreviation for 'interval', and **Csr.** for 'cursor'. This menu allows you to choose various ways of selecting dates to use for data handling, and all or part of it would also appear if you had selected **List, Delete, Def.binary, Search** or **Sum**.

When selecting dates it is important to understand the difference between the interval and cursor options. The interval commands operate on a range of dates for which you must specify the start and the end. The cursor commands allow you to select dates by passing the cursor over a calendar which will be presented on the screen.

When you use the interval commands, you will be asked for the following information:

- Field name** — The name of the field required.
- Start month** — The first month of the range.
- Start date** — The first day of the range.
- End month** — The last month.
- End date** — The last day.

The Program will not proceed any further until you have provided this information. Pressing **ENTER** without answering however activates the default values. Refer to page 11 for more details. Once you have specified a range of dates you may select dates within that range by choosing an option from the interval selection menu:



- Every date in the range.
- One date at monthly intervals through the range.
- One day of the week, every 1, 2, 3, or 4 weeks.
- Every date on which a nominated binary field is set to **Yes**.

All days: You may select all the days within the range you have specified. The Program will automatically proceed.

Monthly: Data handling commands will operate on a particular date at monthly intervals within the range you have specified. **Repeat date?** asks you to specify the date. If you select **31** then the last day of all the months will be selected.

Weekly: Data handling commands will operate on any day of the week at intervals within the range you have specified. **Interval (1-4)** asks you to specify whether you require weekly, fortnightly, three weekly or four weekly intervals. **Day of week** asks you to specify the particular day of the week.

On field: Data handling commands will operate on any binary field within the nominated range whose dates have set to **Yes** (Refer to page 15).

Once you have made your choice, select **Continue**, which will have appeared on the menu. If you have been using **Int. paged**, the

selected dates will now be presented one at a time for your chosen action to be performed. If you want to abandon the action prior to the end of the range, press the **ESC** key on the Amstrad or the **EDIT** key on the Spectrum.

If **Int. auto** was chosen (available for **Add**, **Delete** and **Def. binary**), your chosen action will be performed automatically on all selected dates and you will be returned to the main menu. You must use the 'Paged' option if the comment to be added to each date is different. If the data to be added is identical for each date selected, we advise you to use the 'Auto' facility because this makes more efficient use of computer memory.

Cursor commands

Choosing either of the **Cursor** command displays a calendar of dates. You must pass the cursor over the dates in which you are interested to select those dates. As you can see there are two cursor options, **Csr.paged** and **Csr.auto**. Before you can select any dates you must, of course, specify the field name in which you are interested. The **Csr.paged** option allows you to specify either a single or all the fields. Typing the name of the field specifies that field. If you are interested in all the fields then press the **ENTER** key twice.

Once you have done this, you must then specify the start month which will be the first month displayed on the calendar. To select a date you must move the cursor on to the calendar date; then you must press the **SPACE** bar once. Pressing the **SPACE** bar a second time will de-select a date.

Cursor movement commands

- (cursor right arrow) Moves cursor to the right.
- ← (cursor left arrow) Moves cursor to the left.
- ↓ (cursor down arrow) Moves cursor down. If the current cursor position is on the last day of the month and you then try to move the cursor down, the cursor will be moved to the first day of the next month.
- ↑ (cursor up arrow) Moves cursor up. If the current cursor position is on the first day of the month and you then try to move the cursor up, the cursor will be moved to the last day of the previous month.

- F** Moves the cursor, at any time, to the first day of the next month.
- B** Moves the cursor, at any time, to the last day of the previous month.
- SPACE** Allows you to select or de-select dates.

All selected dates will display white lettering within a black block, whereas de-selected dates will simply be shown in black lettering. The quickest way to learn how to select dates using the cursor is to experiment.

Paged and **Auto** will operate in the same way as for the **Interval** option. The first will display all dates, one at a time. The second will operate automatically on all the selected dates.

If the dates you wish to select form a regular pattern which can be defined using the **Interval** facilities, do not use **Cursor**. This is because the latter is slower to use, and can lead to mistakes. The **Cursor** facilities are provided as a simple method of selecting an irregular series or a small block of dates. For instance, the Christmas 1985 Public Holidays are the 25th and 26th of December and the 1st of January. These can be most quickly selected using the cursor. If you wish to mark in a week away from work then, once again, the cursor is a good way to select a block of five days in a row.

Default values

The default values in **TIME MANAGER** are values which the Program automatically uses whenever you press the ENTER key without answering the question. They are:

Specify:	Default value:
Field name	ALL FIELDS
Start month	First month, usually JANUARY
Start date	1st
End month	Last month, usually DECEMBER
End date	31st, or last day of month.

The **Interval auto** and **Cursor auto** commands require you to specify an actual field name as they operate on one field only. Therefore, there is no field name default. There is however a start month default.

Viewing fields

At the beginning of this manual we explained what a structure was and how it could be defined. The purpose of defining a structure is to enable you to insert appropriate data. Once you have done this, you can select commands to operate on the data you have inserted.

Before we continue, we suggest that you remind yourself of the structure you defined in the first **TIME MANAGER** Program. This will tell you what kinds of data you can add to each of the fields. Please select the **See fields** option from the 'COMMAND MENU'. This command instructs the Program to display the current structure along with the number of free bytes left in memory for inserting text. Follow the instructions on the screen, and the information will be presented. There is sometimes a short pause because the Program uses this opportunity to rearrange the stored data in the most efficient form.

Inserting new data

The **Add** command allows you to put new data into a structure. Please select the **Add** option. You will then have to select the field or fields in which you are interested, depending of course on whether you have selected an **Interval** or **Cursor** command from the menu. Having specified a field or fields, you will then have to select the individual dates in which you are interested from either the **Interval** selection menu or the calendar as previously described.

You can add as much data as you wish, provided the computer has enough memory. Bear in mind that adding text consumes memory fairly quickly. You can check how much memory you have for items of text by using the **See fields** option. If you use up all of the available memory then a warning message will be displayed, and you will need to delete something before making any further additions.

Priorities

As we mentioned earlier, you can assign a priority number to any field. Assigning a priority indicates how important you feel a particular field to be. If you use an **Auto** command to insert data into a field with a higher priority than another which contains data on the same date, you will see the following message at the bottom of the screen:

'Remove low conflicting priorities?'
(Y/N)

This message will be displayed on the screen whenever the dates of low priority data entries clash with those of higher priority data entries. Typing **N** to this message will return you to the COMMAND MENU. Typing **Y** will delete all the data in low priority fields whose dates clash with the dates of higher priority fields. If you are using the cursor, you cannot add data to dates where there is already a higher priority data entry. Any field which has no priority, i.e. '0', will not be affected in any way.

The only time you can add data to lower priority blocked fields is with the **Paged** commands.. If you try to insert data to lower priority blocked dates then the Program will display the following message at the bottom of the screen:

'WARNING: Low Priority Addition'

By adding data to low priority blocked dates you are effectively overriding priorities on those dates.

There is one situation where the priorities are ignored. This is when you load in some previously-saved data. In this case, the data will be inserted even if a higher or lower priority field conflicts. You will not find this restricting because data loaded in this way will usually go into a zero priority field. When you are going to load a data file where priorities are of significance, you should load it **before entering any other data**. If you have a complex priority-based structure, it should be saved complete with its data (refer to page 16).

It is possible that you may wish to set a priority flag against some items in a field loaded from a file. For instance, you could load some of the sports data supplied with **TIME MANAGER** and then set priorities against all of the golfing events. The appropriate way of handling this is as follows:

- 1 Create a structure which includes a multi-item, zero priority text field for the data file, and a binary field of the priority level you wish to attach to the golf.
- 2 Load the sports data into the multi-item text field.
- 3 Search the sports data for all of the golfing events in which you are interested.
- 4 Set the binary field to 'yes' on the dates revealed in your search. These entries will now provide the priority 'blocks' you wanted to create.
- 5 Once the binary field is set up this way, you can delete all of the data in the sports text field, and use it for something else.

Listing data

The **List** command will display all or part of your data on the individual dates you specify, provided that there is data present in the structure on those dates. (See the section 'Default Values', page 11.)

You may choose to list data in any field or all the fields. To select the individual dates you must choose either an **Interval paged** or **Cursor paged** option. Once you have selected individual dates any data in the structure on those dates will be listed.

Deleting data

The **Delete** command uses the selection options in the same way as the **Add** command, except that data is being deleted on those particular dates instead of being added.

If you would like to delete all the data in all the fields then you should return to the first Program and select the **Clear** option.

Searching for an item of text

The **Search** command enables you to search for any item of text or any number present in text or money fields, subject to a maximum length of thirteen characters. You will be asked to specify the month from where you wish the searching to begin, and the item of text you wish to locate. Just follow the instructions on the screen. Whenever an item of text has been found, it will be displayed in full context. If the Program fails to find an item of text then you will see the 'No text found' message displayed on the screen.

Performing summations

The **Sum** command allows you to do a summation of any field of the Money or Integer type. The **Sum** command operates from the beginning of the range that you have selected up to the individual dates you select. This can include cursor selection, where the first date you select is automatically the beginning of the range.

For example, assume that January 1 is the beginning of the range you wish to select. If you have selected January 12 as an individual date (either with the **Interval** commands or by using the calendar and cursor) then the Program will run a summation of all the data on the dates between January 1 and January 12. If you have also selected January 24 then the Program will run a summation between January 13 and January 24.

Binary fields

In earlier sections of this manual we referred to the term 'binary field'. A binary field can be set to 'Yes' or 'No' on the dates you select. Whenever you define a binary field you will find that it is automatically set to size 1 (single-item field). This is because a binary field can only be set to either 'Yes' or 'No', which is only a single item of data. Therefore, size 1 indicates a single-item field.

The most common use of a binary field is to keep track of Bank Holidays or non-working days. The field can be set to 'Yes' for each such day. If the field is given a high priority, it will then block any entries you attempt to make in lower priority fields. Thus you will be warned if you attempt to make a business appointment on August Bank Holiday Monday, for instance.

The **Def.binary** command will only operate on a binary field. This command enables you to set a binary field to either 'Yes' or 'No' on the particular dates in which you are interested. You will see the following messages:

- Binary field?** — This question asks you to specify the binary field you wish to set. You will then be asked to select the dates in which you are interested (after you have been asked if you wish to rename the field).
- New name?** — If you wish to rename the field, respond to this question. Otherwise, press **ENTER**.
- Set or Reset?** — Typing **S** sets the specified range to 'Yes', whereas typing **R** resets the range to 'No'.

As you will know by now, the **List** command will only list data items present in a structure. Since 'No' is not considered to be a data value, any dates that have been reset to 'No' will not be displayed should you try to list them.

The **On field** interval operates on dates on which a given binary field is set to 'Yes'. This command is very useful if you wish to group together any series of dates which you are going to select repeatedly, but which do not fit the standard 'interval' patterns offered by the program.

For instance, you may wish to keep track of the school cricket fixtures, played on Wednesdays and Saturdays in the Summer term. You can set a nominated binary field to 'Yes' on the Wednesdays using **Int. auto** for the term, then repeat the process for the Saturdays. Now you

can use **On field** to **Add, List** and **Delete** items on this specific series of dates.

Saving data

The **Save field** command allows you to save any data contained in a single field on to tape or disk. You will have to specify the field whose data is to be saved, provide a file name, and then follow the instructions on the screen.

The **Save whole** command allows you to save all your data including the structure. You will be asked to specify a file name, then follow the instructions on the screen. Once the structure and data have been saved, the COMMAND MENU will reappear on the screen.

Restarting Program 1

The **Restart** command will re-load the first **TIME MANAGER** Program. If you select this command you should bear two things in mind:

- 1** The current structure will remain for you to use. You do not have to re-define a new structure unless you want to.
- 2** Any data you have added to a structure will remain in the structure for you to use. You do not have to re-insert data.

Printouts of data

If you have a printer and it has been switched on, then you will see the following message:

‘Printer (Y/N)’

This message is only displayed for the following options:

List
Search
Sum
See fields

Typing **Y** to the message above will instruct the Program to send data to the printer instead of to the screen.

2/Summary of Commands

Program 1 Command	Action	Explanation (pages)
Load structure	Loads any structure saved on tape or disk.	2, 5
New structure	Defines a new structure from scratch.	2, 5
Load whole Data base (Load whole is a shortened form of this command.)	Loads any database saved on tape, complete with the structure.	5
Clear	Clears all the data in the Bank Holidays and Diary Notes fields.	5, 14
Continue	Continues to the next selection menu.	5
Load individual field	Loads any individual field saved on tape or disk.	6
Goto second program	Loads the second TIME MANAGER Program which operates on your data.	6
Re-define structure	Restarts Program 1 from the first menu. You can either define a new structure or load any structure you have previously saved on tape or disk.	5
Change first month	The first month can be changed to any month of the year.	5

Program 2 Command

Action	Explanation (page)
Add	You can insert data into any structure you have defined. 8, 10
List	You can list all the data in any one or all of the fields in a structure. 14
Delete	You can delete data in any field in a structure. 14
Search	You can search for any item of text. 14
Save field	You can save data from any individual field on to tape or disk. 16
Save whole	You can save all the data in the structure on to tape or disk, including the structure. 16
Restart	Loads Program 1 so that you can redefine a structure. 16
Def.binary	Allows you to operate on binary fields. 15
Sum	Gives a summation of Money and/or Integer data. 14
See fields	Displays the current structure and the amount of free memory for inserting text. 12

3/How to put **TIME MANAGER** to use

TIME MANAGER can be used to solve many time-related administrative problems. The key to using it effectively is to construct a data structure appropriate to your needs, which makes the most of the available commands. To see how this can be done we have prepared a series of half a dozen examples, with an explanation of how each should be used. Perhaps none of these relate precisely to your own needs, but if you examine them all you may be able to extract some useful ideas.

Home management

The simplest use of **TIME MANAGER** is to record the basic events of domestic life. We can set the Program up to perform much the same function as a written diary, but with the ability to find and cross-reference things more easily. In addition, it can be used to plan the annual domestic cashflow and to produce monthly reports of cash needs. The required structure will look something like this:

Field name	Type	Size	Priority
Bank Holidays	Binary	Single	0
Diary Notes	Text	Multi	0
Birthdays	Text	Multi	2
Entertaining	Text	Single	1
Expenses	Money	Multi	0
Income	Money	Multi	0

The first two fields are the standard ones which you ask the Program to set up for you. You then ask to set up four more fields, with the characteristics shown in the table above. When you have defined the structure, it would be a wise precaution to save it before continuing.

There are two more tasks you may wish to perform with the first Program before moving on: redefining the first month, and loading data. If you want to run a 12 month calendar starting on a month other than January, this is the point at which to decide. If you want to incorporate some of the additional diary notes supplied with the Program, load them in now.

When all this setting up is done, you can move on to the second

Program. Here you can add, delete and examine your data. First of all, add the important family dates into the 'Birthdays' field — not just birthdays, but other anniversaries as well. The simplest technique is to use the **Add** with **Cursor paged** commands. Make a list of the dates; then select them using **Cursor paged** on the calendar. Highlight all of the required dates before pressing **ENTER**. Each will then appear on the screen in turn, and you can type in the appropriate details. 'Birthdays' is a multiple field, so you can enter as many items as you wish against each date.

Your second step can be to add in all of your expenses for the year, using **Add** and **Int. auto**. Virtually all bills appear once only, or at a regular interval, which can be selected on the interval menu. For instance, enter the housekeeping as a weekly item on Fridays, the mortgage as a monthly bill on the 21st, the telephone quarterly on the 10th, the holiday as a single payment in June, and so on. If more than one item arises on a given date, the Program will allow for it because we have made 'Expenses' a multiple-entry field.

When your expenses are all included, use the **Sum** command to produce a report at any interval you choose, showing the totals. You can then repeat the whole process with the 'Income' field (which will probably not take as long), and produce a similar **Sum** report. When you compare the income and expenditure sums, you will find out whether you had enough cash to buy this program!

The other field, 'Entertaining', is designed to keep track of your social life. Insert your social events as they arise. It is a single-item field, so you cannot double-book your time. In addition it has been given a priority number lower than 'Birthdays'. This will warn you in advance if you try to book something which may conflict with a major family event. Note that we used priority values of 1 and 2. Any numbers in the range 1 to 6 could be used, as long as 'Birthdays' is higher than 'Entertaining'. You should not use zero, because the program ignores fields marked in this way when checking for conflicts.

Bed and breakfast

This is a very straightforward application. For a Bed and Breakfast establishment with 6 bedrooms, you can define one single item field per room. If there are fewer rooms, one or more fields could be devoted to income or expenses, as in the previous example. Another option for a spare field could be to define a family suite consisting of two rooms and shared facilities, which can also be let singly:

Field name	Type	Size	Priority
1 — single room	Text	Single	0
2 — twin room	Text	Single	0
3 — double room	Text	Single	0
4 — double room	Text	Single	1
5 — twin room	Text	Single	1
Family, 4 & 5	Text	Single	2

As the Family suite has a higher priority than rooms 4 and 5, a Family booking will block out bookings for those two rooms, which are required to form the suite. Conversely, if a Family booking is attempted when either room 4 or 5 is already booked, a warning will be given.

The other point to note relates to the allocation of field names. The program has a useful facility built into its structure. When it has received enough letters to know what you are typing, it finishes the word off for you. If each field name starts with a different character, it will select the correct one from that character alone, whenever you are asked for a name. If the fields had been given names starting with the word 'Room', then you would have to type that word and start the next before the name would be recognised (see box on page 22).

Course tutor

This example illustrates how **TIME MANAGER** can help a person running a series of short courses for the self-employed, on behalf of a government agency. Each course runs for half a day, and can occur in the morning or the afternoon. They are run at irregular intervals, depending upon demand. In addition to the courses, the organiser holds individual tutoring sessions for some students in the mornings, and he is also conducting a special research project which requires full days of his time. He has to keep a record of hours spent on the project to justify the grant he receives. A suitable structure to manage his time could look something like this:

Field name	Type	Size	Priority
BankHolidays	Binary	Single	4
Tutoring	Text	Multi	1
A.M. course	Binary	Single	2
P.M. course	Binary	Single	2
Research	Text	Single	3
Hours spent	Integer	Single	0

The 'Course' fields need only be binary — either 'Yes' there is a course or 'No' there is not. The 'research' field could be handled the same way, but instead room has been left for a brief comment. Using binary fields where possible is a more efficient use of computer memory.

The 'Tutoring' field is multi-entry to allow the names of a number of students to be entered. Note that the priorities are set up so that 'Research' overrules the courses, and the courses overrule the tutoring. However, the 'Bank Holidays' have the highest priority, ensuring that no work is booked on holiday dates. Note also the single-entry integer field to track hours spent on the project. Summations can be taken from this at weekly or monthly intervals.

Data entry

There are circumstances when the Program can guess the word you are typing. For instance, if you are naming a field with a month name or a day name, it will compare the letters you type with a list of the appropriate words. When you have typed enough for it to find a unique match, it will finish it off for you. Here is a list of the letters required to define days and months:

January	ja	Monday	m
February	f	Tuesday	tu
March	mar	Wednesday	w
April	ap	Thursday	th
May	may	Friday	f
June	jun	Saturday	sa
July	jul	Sunday	su
August	au		
September	s		
October	o		
November	n		
December	d		

Business traveller

There are many different types of business occupation which require a diary system. This is just one example:

Field name	Type	Size	Priority
Bank Holidays	Binary	Single	3
Diary notes	Text	Multi	0
Visit clients	Text	Multi	1
Trade shows	Text	Single	2
Car mileage	Integer	Single	0
Expenses	Money	Multi	0

These fields would be used just as their names imply. A day's work could be either a series of client visits, entered in the multi field, or a single trade show. The high priority of 'Bank Holidays' will avoid making arrangements on non-working days. In fact, in this situation you could use **Def. binary** to insert 'Bank Holidays' on all weekends and on annual holidays as well.

The 'Mileage' and 'Expenses' fields can be used, once again, to generate timely reports to support claims for reimbursements.

Sports centre

The Local Authority sports centre has a playing field, sports hall and two squash courts. They serve a local school and have a tournament squash club, as well as many other users. The school books the field, hall and one court on regular occasions. An appropriate structure could look like this:

Field name	Type	Size	Priority
Playing field	Text	Single	1
Hall	Text	Single	1
1st court	Text	Single	1
2nd court	Text	Single	0
School	Binary	Single	2

Whenever a school booking is set in the 'School' binary field, the 'Playing field', 'Hall' and '1st court' are all blocked off. This prevents any clash but avoids the need to write further comments in the other fields, thus saving computer memory.

4/Time Management

by Sally Garratt

Why should you manage your time?

When you lead a busy life with lots of appointments, meetings, domestic tasks and emergencies, there are times when you feel that your life is controlling you rather than the other way round.

The well-known writer on management, Peter Drucker, pointed out in his book *The Effective Manager* that 'The supply of time is totally inelastic. Time is totally perishable and cannot be stored. Time is totally irreplaceable... there is no substitute for time'.

This awareness that we can never regain time lost or wasted can make us feel rather helpless. It is at such times that we are inclined to blame other people, or even inanimate objects, because we haven't accomplished what we know should have been done.

You have probably said many times, 'Oh, if only I'd spent half an hour on that last week, I wouldn't be in this mess now', or 'I'd completely forgotten about that — how on earth am I going to fit everything in today'.

The following pages of advice may give you a few hints about organising and saving your time — learning to plan out your day with its priorities and deadlines. As you will see, the **TIME MANAGER** program becomes an ideal companion in helping you to structure activities, to anticipate potential problems with conflicting appointments, to jog your memory and to timetable projects.

What is a 'Manager'?

You don't have to be a manager to need to organise and control your time. For most people, the word 'manager' conjured up a vision of a man in a smart suit, sitting behind a desk in an office block somewhere in the City. He has a large staff to look after and his time is taken up by making important decisions and attending vital meetings.

This is not, of course, necessarily the case. There are undoubtedly some senior executives who may fall into this category but most managers do not. Most of us are managers in some sense. We have to organise our lives so that certain aims and deadlines are achieved. This applies to teachers who have to cover a curriculum to prepare pupils for examinations and for life after school. Nurses and doctors also have constant demands on their time from many directions, balancing the responsibility for their patients' health and their administrative work.

Architects must complete contracts to specific schedules, keeping a close account of the cost of any delays. Factory supervisors have to see that their teams produce goods of an acceptable quality within an agreed time in decent working conditions. Housewives and mothers (and increasingly househusbands and fathers) have to move members of the family between work, school and leisure activities, manage the housekeeping, provide meals, basic first aid and a home. Most of us *can* benefit from looking at the way we organise ourselves (and the people around us) so that we feel that life isn't rushing past us at an ever more frantic speed.

Identify the tasks

If you want to get the most out of your day, you need to know *how* to manage the time available to you. Here are some of the fundamental points to bear in mind:

- Always try to be as realistic as possible about the amount of time which is available — it is very easy to be wildly over-optimistic.
- It is important to recognise which tasks have the highest priority and which can be postponed.
- Decide which jobs have to be done by you and which can be dealt with by somebody else.
- When giving work to other people, identify clearly the tasks expected of them and the objectives you have in mind.

Once you feel clearer in your own mind about the jobs that need to be done and their scale of importance, you will probably feel a much greater sense of achievement. You will become more efficient and a nicer person to know too. The effective use of your time could also mean that money is well spent.

If you are able to bring some order into a busy timetable, you may find time to pursue other interests which are possibly more pleasurable and interesting. It is very easy to get bogged down in the routine of minutiae of office and domestic life.

Admitting your faults

It may be difficult or unpalatable for you to admit that you do have a problem with managing your time. It is often easier to blame other people than to admit that it is often your fault. You may blame everybody else for the fact that you have to take work home at night, that you miss deadlines, that the day's work is never planned. You may end up doing everything yourself because nobody else can do it, and

always end up rushing things at the end of the day. As for home life, social events and leisure activities. . . . well, you can forget those because work is more important, isn't it? And you're too tired anyway to do much more than look back over the day's disasters, perhaps watch a bit of TV, and worry about what tomorrow has in store.

You can convince yourself that the reason other people cope better than you do is because your job is different, more demanding. You may think that you don't have enough staff of the right quality, that their children don't get as involved in outside activities as yours do, or their partner doesn't help as much round the house as s/he ought to. Even if you do acknowledge that you would benefit from organising yourself better, you know that it will take a lot of time to do that, and time is the one thing you don't have enough of.

Bearing in mind that nobody else can manage your time for you, there are several actions that you can take to begin the process of organising yourself and getting back in control of your life.

What do I need to do?

One of the ways to organise your time more efficiently is to take a long, cool look at what it is you want to do, both in the short term and the long term. Most of us do this in times of crisis and stress and that always colours our judgement — so think about it now. Look ahead to what you would like to do, not just in relation to your work but also to home and leisure. Do you think you've got the balance right between the time you spend working and the time you spend with your family or pursuing leisure activities? For the parent at home with small children, the emphasis may be slightly different because the idea of heaven may be to get away from them for a short while every now and again.

Write down what you would like to be doing at the end of the day. For example, getting home at six-o'clock instead of seven-thirty so that you can read your child a bedtime story, or taking those evening classes in oriental lacquerware, or learning to be a better tennis player, or getting that qualification in mechanical engineering, or going to the theatre more often. You can begin to see the advantages of organising your time so that you may accommodate these wishes and dreams.

When you are doing this exercise, don't put down what you actually do now — the idea is to think about what you would like to do if you had the spare time to do it. As you do this, begin to believe that it is possible to do the things that you would really like to do as well as having to cope with some of the less exciting things that make up the

day. Realising that you could begin to develop your own interests is the start of your commitment to looking at the way you spend your time now and how you could improve that.

It may take a lot of courage to face up to the fact that you are going to have to work very hard at managing your time more effectively. Trying to implement all your good intentions means investing time now to reap the benefits later on. Other people — your family, friends and colleagues — are also going to be affected and they may not enjoy the experience as you take your first steps towards becoming organised.

Don't be discouraged by the size of the task ahead of you. It may seem enormous but, luckily, it can be tackled one step at a time. If you try to do everything at once you will fail but, as you take things steadily, gradually trying out new ways of organising yourself, and perhaps the people around you, you will be encouraged by your success.

Time log

You should also begin asking some very basic questions about yourself if you want to make the most effective use of your time. For example, have you ever really thought about when you work best or do you just plough through the day, doing things as they crop up, regardless of when your brain is at its most active or you feel most alert? Are you a lark or an owl? Or are you, like me, good for very little just after lunch? Each of us is different and if you have a best time, when your mind is at its most active and creative, you should try to tackle all the difficult tasks during that period. Your not-so-good time could be used to do jobs that aren't so demanding, small things that can be finished off quickly without a great deal of effort.

It is a very useful discipline to be able to look at what you actually do and then think about what you should be doing. The two lists very rarely tally!

Keeping a time log is something that is more usual in business than in a home environment but it could be done as easily by people who spend most of their time concerned with domestic issues.

How sure are you about where your time goes during the week? Could you look back on the past day and give an accurate account of what you did — telephone calls, impromptu chats with a colleague or a neighbour, unscheduled interruptions, reading reports, dealing with the gasman, answering mail and all the other things that typically constitute a working day? It would be very unusual if you could remember everything because so many different and varied activities take place during a day.

One way of beginning to organise yourself is to keep a time log of the tasks you perform during a week. This is definitely a bore to do but only when you know how you are actually spending your time can you make considered judgements about whether you are spending your time on the right things. You can then think about how you should be spending your day and decide which tasks take priority.

There are several ways of logging your time and two of these are described below. You will have to choose which method suits you best, or you may want to devise your own way.

I find that the most useful way of logging time is to jot down every new activity as it happens and note how long it has taken.

A second way of keeping a time log which is not quite as demanding is to record what you are doing on a half-hourly basis. You can do this by setting an alarm or your watch or some similar reminder.

You will probably be horrified at how much time you are spending with unscheduled interruptions such as the phone call you decide to deal with immediately rather than wait until you have finished your current task, or in speaking to a colleague who is passing by your office and has popped in for a chat. You probably didn't realise how many tasks you started and didn't finish, or how little time you spent on important matters.

Please don't be discouraged by these findings. It probably won't be of much consolation to you that the vast majority of people have the same difficulties, but you should be cheered by the fact that now you know where the problems are you should be able to do something about overcoming them.

Objectives

To get the most out of your time log results, you should also spend some time looking at the work you do and what it entails. I don't necessarily mean the things you are currently involved in but rather the reasons for the job's existence. You may be there to help the business achieve its goals, to be successful and to make money. Perhaps your objectives are to devise an interesting and useful curriculum for your pupils with the intention of helping them not only to pass examinations well but also to give them a broader appreciation of the world around them. You may see your goal as providing a happy, healthy home for your family, combined with carrying out the duties of a part-time job. Everyone has different objectives to aim for and sometimes we lose sight of what we were actually employed to do or what is implicit in the work we have taken on.

If you are in paid employment, have a look at your job description (if there is such a thing in your organisation!). If there isn't a formal document available, draw up your own list. If you're not clear what you ought to be doing, ask somebody you work with. If your organisation does provide job descriptions, have a look at those of your boss and your subordinates as well. This will give you an idea of how you fit into the general structure.

Your list of work activities will probably fall into several categories. Make a note under, say, ten headings, which may look something like this:

Office manager

- 1 meetings
- 2 trouble-shooting
- 3 writing reports
- 4 reading and dealing with correspondence
- 5 counselling and training
- 6 planning
- 7 travelling
- 8 making and receiving telephone calls
- 9 reading trade periodicals
- 10 business entertainment

Of course this is only one example of the kinds of activities that may make up your working day. They could also be combined with a full programme of domestic tasks such as shopping, cooking, ironing, arranging repairs on the house and taking care of the children. These domestic responsibilities are no less important and can cause enormous problems if neglected in favour of work demands. They should always be taken into account when you are planning out your day or the week ahead.

Calculate roughly how much time you *ought* to be spending on each of the activities you list down, bearing in mind the objectives of your job. For example, if you are in a service role, one of your main duties may be to deal with 'phone enquiries. When you analyse your time log to see where time could be saved, you should not consider cutting down the number of calls, but rather the way you deal with them.

Now, looking at the same headings, work out approximately how much time you are *actually* spending on those activities. When you compare the two lists, the discrepancy between the two will highlight

those aspects of your work which are creating the most problems. This will help you to develop a changing work pattern.

When you have looked at the ways you actually spend your time, you can begin to ask yourself a few questions. For example:

- What tasks am I doing that I shouldn't be doing in the first place?
- What things should I be doing more of?
- What things should I be doing less of?
- What things should I be delegating?
- Which people am I spending too much time with?
- Which people am I spending too little time with?
- Does 'personal development' appear anywhere on my list?
- Do I know which part of the day is my best time for creative thinking?
- Could I cut down on travelling time?
- Do I really need to attend all the meetings I go to?
- Is my office/place where I spend most of my time arranged in the way which is most conducive to effective work?
- Do I spend most of my time reacting to other people's demands?
- Do I ever finish a task in one go?

You can probably think of other similar questions which arise from the time log. You can answer them on your own or with someone else who will give you an honest opinion of how you spend your time.

You may be able to identify several ways in which you can begin changing. You will probably be able to initiate some small changes immediately but you may have to discuss others with your family, friends or the people you work with. Perhaps you are not able to change some of your methods of working. They could be an occupational hazard. It may even be the right moment to consider a different job role altogether.

If you can identify two or three areas which you think you can tackle now, plan how you will make those changes. Try them out and then evaluate the results. Don't try to do too many all at once — there is nothing more dispiriting than starting something full of enthusiasm and coming across hurdles and objections at every turn. Most changes have to be brought in slowly and gently, so that everyone concerned knows what is going on, and why.

Priorities

One way to start the change process is to give the tasks of the day or

week an order of priority. This is an area in which the **TIME MANAGER** program can be invaluable since it prompts you to analyse the 'fields' which you have created, and give them an order of importance. The computer will then warn you if you are trying to double-book appointments, filling a week with meetings when you have an important project to complete, or when a Monday is a Bank Holiday.

Write out a new list of all the tasks you know you will have to tackle — not just the immediate problems of today, but all the long-term objectives and projects. They need not be in any particular order — just brainstorm and write down everything that comes into your mind. That alone will probably throw you into a panic and make you want to start work immediately as you know you don't have time to do it all, but take a deep breath and go on to the next step.

The list of tasks that you have is doubtless a mixture of small and large items, urgent and not-so-urgent, boring and exciting, short-term and long-term. Your first job is to identify which of these are the *active* tasks and which are the *reactive* tasks.

- **active** those tasks you must do to achieve the objectives of your job. These are the tasks that answer the question, '*What am I here for?*'
- **reactive** those tasks which are the routine bits and pieces which turn up every day and have to be dealt with to keep things ticking over. You will rarely get any praise or thanks for completing these jobs so you should aim to get them done and out of the way as quickly as possible.

When you have put all your activities under one of these two categories, you can begin to schedule your work into the time you have available.

There are two other things you need to know about a task before you can give it a priority:

- 1 How long do you need to spend on the task? That is determined by how **important** that task is.
- 2 How soon do you have to complete the task? That is determined by how urgent the task is.

Importance and urgency

Importance and urgency are not the same thing. An urgent task is not necessarily important. It may be urgent but trivial, for example, the allocation of locker space in the new cloakrooms. You should deal with this sort of task straightaway — don't put it off and don't spend hours on it. That way you'll leave yourself plenty of time for the more important tasks.

Reactive tasks are often not important whereas the active tasks usually are. If something is important *and* urgent then it must be given a high priority.

It is essential to give important active tasks enough time to complete the work within the deadline. You can then slot reactive tasks into your plan. You can do this if you don't try to do too much in one day. One of the secrets of good time management is to be realistic about what can be achieved and giving tasks priorities means that the important things do get done.

Many people have a fear of planning ahead, of thinking far enough into the future to know how to organise the next few weeks or months. **TIME MANAGER** can help you to structure your planning so the problems can be averted with time to spare.

TIME MANAGER's role

In everybody's life there are events which occur regularly, once a week, once a month or once a year — for example, the annual conference, the termly parent/teacher meeting, the carol concert, the Boy Scout jumble sale, the half-yearly budget. These are the things that are ideally suited to **TIME MANAGER's** sophisticated data-retrieval program. The program works well in conjunction with a desk or pocket diary which you can carry with you everywhere.

You can use your diary as a daily notebook, gathering pieces of information, such as phone numbers and addresses. When you turn to your computer, make a habit of entering any new appointments, expenses or important future dates and keep the existing data as accurate as possible. Scan through the next month and see what is in store to keep your memory primed.

Don't be ashamed to make lists either! Some people make a virtue of never having to write anything down and say that they can always remember appointments and things to do. Most of us know that however good our memories are we do forget important things. There is nothing inferior or wrong about jotting down points to remember as they come up and indeed the mere act of writing something down

seems to help us to remember it more easily.

If you are able to put aside a few minutes at the beginning or end of each day to jot down the tasks that have to be tackled, you should be able to see whether they are active or reactive, important or urgent, to be done by you or delegated, and so on. Then you can assign priorities to each activity and, where possible, allocated time to them.

As you cross off each activity, you will get a great feeling of satisfaction and even if it is only one task, you feel as if you have achieved something. Anything that is not completed today can be transferred to tomorrow and its relative importance or urgency assessed in relation to the new activities that present themselves then.

Some tasks may be entered on a daily or weekly basis with a degree of certainty. For example, some people may deal with their mail first thing in the morning so they can cross that time out immediately. If you are involved in a regular school run or have to check that certain security measures are enforced, you know that a specific period has to be set aside for that and there is no point trying to do other things at the same time.

It is important to realise that, while your diary or the **TIME MANAGER** program can be a great boon to you if they are kept up-to-date, the minute you fall behind in maintaining them, they become a waste of time themselves.

Forward planning

Most of us, at some point in our lives, are confronted by major decisions and plans — a change of job, a new house, an important project or contract. Since we do not have to deal with these issues on a regular basis, it can be difficult to be really efficient and in control in such circumstances.

You may find yourself vulnerable at any time to a radical change in your position at work, for instance taking on new responsibilities without knowing quite what is expected or required of you. It is very tempting to revert to your old methods of work to make you feel more comfortable. However it is important not only to anticipate any potential problems or challenges but also to be flexible enough to react well in unforeseen circumstances.

Interruptions

In order to keep track of your responsibilities and priorities, it is crucial that you find a place and a time to sit down quietly to concentrate. It is very difficult to think clearly and feel in control when chaos reigns around you.

You should make it plain to other people when you need to be left on your own to deal with a job. If you are able to plan your time more effectively, you will find it easier to find time for an undisturbed hour or two during the day. Some people set aside a couple of afternoons a week to deal with minor matters which crop up regularly so that they are not constantly bothered by interruptions for the rest of the week. If your colleagues or your family get used to the fact that you are generally not available at certain times, they will soon get into the habit of leaving you undisturbed.

It is not always possible to hide yourself away to deal with important matters such as preparing long-term forecasts and budgets, writing up case notes and reports, planning next year's curriculum, or drafting feasibility studies. There are one or two possible ways of getting round this.

Is it possible to work from home for a couple of hours? This is not easy if you have small children who are so pleased to see you that they can't leave you in peace but it is surprising how much can be achieved in a couple of hours away from the office without all the interruptions. You may be able to hire a conference room or use somebody else's office if they are not using it — somewhere where you are not immediately available.

In many companies, it is becoming acceptable for teams of people who need to spend some time together to work out a problem to go to a local hotel or conference centre. This is seen as a legitimate expense because the results gained in a short time of uninterrupted discussion far outweigh the financial outlay. If you work in an open-plan office and are not able to book a spare room, it is much more difficult to indicate that you are busy and not to be disturbed. I have heard of people who adopt a system of notices or flags which they display when they need to be left alone. As long as other people understand the system and realise that it is only used in times of real need, it can be made to work.

When people do 'pop in' to see you, whether they are colleagues, friends or the family, it is a great temptation to ask them to sit down and have a cup of coffee. However, you could be in the midst of a minor crisis on a deadline. In such cases my advice is: don't offer the coffee and keep standing yourself so that your visitor can't get too comfortable.

Another way of cutting down on interruptions is to make a policy of going to see the person who needs information. If you go to him or her you are more in control of the time you spend together, especially if

you don't settle yourself down, looking as if you are ready for a long chat. It is then quite easy to end the conversation by leaving the office.

Telephone calls

The telephone is a much used, abused and maligned instrument. It can be a vital link between you and the people with whom you have contact but it can also be a nuisance. With the new phone systems, it is possible to use the 'call forward' facilities to reduce the interruptions (but this assumes you have someone to pass calls to!). If you don't have the kind of support staff who can answer your phone, why not make an arrangement with a colleague who can take your calls for the period that you need to be left alone and you can do the same when that colleague needs some undisturbed time.

For small businesses, one-man bands, or people working at home, it is not always possible or feasible to ask somebody else to deal with telephone calls. If you are working on your own and don't need to be permanently at the end of a phone, it may be worth getting an answering machine and leaving that on while you are dealing with something important and then calling back when you have finished. It is crucial that you do return calls within a specified time or people will not leave messages and may even go elsewhere with their business.

Obviously you can't refuse to see or speak to everyone or you would never know what was going on. You can, however, reduce the number of timewasting interruptions and this is invaluable if you need to have time to think and plan ahead.

Time off

Some people make sure that they put aside time at midday for lunch. This does not necessarily mean a huge meal with plenty of alcohol — just a break and an opportunity to get some exercise and fresh air, even if it is only a walk down to the shops to get a newspaper. If you are working from home, the temptation is perhaps different. You might not want to be bothered with getting a meal at midday, or perhaps you make do with the children's leftovers. It is important to have that break and to eat something. After all, it doesn't take very long to make a sandwich or a salad, or to heat up some soup. However, the working breakfast or lunch can be a waste of time, and make you function less efficiently while your body concentrates its energies on digesting food and alcohol.

Meetings

Formal meetings can be another source of time-wasting for some people, particularly when they are not well run or are without a particular purpose. This applies equally to committee meetings for the local tenants' association, parents' group or sports club as well as to meetings at work.

It could be that the meeting is not really necessary. It may be that a group gathers together regularly more out of habit than a real need to discuss specific issues and make decisions. It is worth considering the alternatives to a meeting. Could the matter be dealt with by letter, a phone call or a face-to-face conversation? Sometimes five minutes spent with six people separately is more effective and productive than a half-hour meeting with all of them together.

Delegation

Another way in which you can use time and your own resources more effectively is by delegation. If you are able to delegate successfully — at home and at work — you are freed to concentrate your efforts on other priorities.

You've probably heard the word 'delegation' many times without giving it much thought and you may often have thought how nice it would be to have people to work for you so that you could delegate things to them, especially things you don't like doing. It sounds so easy when you say, 'I'll give that to Jane to do' or 'That's just the sort of job I can hand over to George', but delegation just isn't as simple as that.

Delegation is not about finding some convenient person to give all the jobs you hate or find boring. Delegation is about passing across part of your job — giving your subordinate the authority to make decisions without consulting you and giving him or her responsibility while you retain accountability.

To do this, you will probably need to overcome the following feelings:

- fear of losing control.
- regret at giving up jobs you enjoy.
- belief that you can cope with the job yourself.
- belief that the delegate can't do the job (both actual and perceived inability).
- fear of competition.
- belief that only you can do the job properly.
- belief that there is not enough time for instructions and training.

On the other hand, the person who you have chosen to do the job may also resist accepting the work for the following reasons:

- it is often easier to ask the boss than to work it through yourself.
- fear of criticism.
- lack of necessary information and other resources such as time, money, equipment.
- lack of self-confidence.
- lack of adequate incentive.
- a feeling that there is no point in applying your talents to the task because the boss will always want it done his/her way anyway.

Before you delegate a task to anybody, whether it is to your assistant, to a temporary typist, to the au pair or to one of your children, you should make sure that certain criteria are clear in your mind.

- 1 What is the task you wish to delegate?
- 2 Who will you choose to complete it?
- 3 How will you make sure that the job is being completed to your satisfaction?

What to delegate

It is important to be clear in your own mind exactly what it is that you want to delegate. You should define clearly the specific task or project to the person concerned and you can do that only if *you* are sure what the assignment is.

Before you delegate work, you should ask yourself several questions:

- Do I fully understand the task myself?
- Do I have a clear understanding of the objectives of the assignment?
- Do I have an idea of the way(s) in which the project could be tackled, and do I need to mention this to the person who will be carrying out the task?
- Do I know of any previously completed, similar assignments that might be useful in showing the layout and presentation, type of approach, standards of information expected?

If the time is right and the chosen delegate has the appropriate capabilities and experience, almost anything can be delegated.

Your choice of delegate

When you have decided which jobs you will do yourself and which can be done by someone else, you have to find the right person. If you are fortunate enough to have a choice, consider the following points:

- How much experience does he or she have in working on similar projects?
- What will their reaction be to the additional responsibilities of the project?
 - how well does the delegate accept current responsibilities?
 - does he or she work well independently, show personal initiative, and a willingness to make decisions?
 - what is their current workload and what difficulties, if any, will this project create?
 - would the delegate welcome this assignment or would it be considered a burden?

How to delegate

This vital step in effective delegation consists of the following points:

- Plan the project's objectives, how much control you need to retain, its completion schedule, and establish some guidelines to measure its success.
- Discuss the project plan with the delegate.
- Monitor the project and regularly support the delegate.
- Judge the final result.

Communication

Try to explain your plan as succinctly and in as much detail as you can. It is very easy to get irritated when a task has not been done to your satisfaction, but it could be that you haven't made yourself understood. A concept which is simple for you to grasp may be confusing for others. If you are in too much of a hurry to explain your ideas, this may only lead to misunderstandings later. Naturally, assignments vary greatly in complexity, and your briefing will also depend on your delegate's abilities and familiarity with the subject.

You might find the following checklist useful:

- Describe the entire project and its purpose.
- Use examples that may be appropriate to illustrate your points.
- Use words and technical phrases which are appropriate to the levels of understanding and experience of the delegate.
- Ask the delegate to repeat back the main steps and critical details.
- Suggest that he or she might like to take notes and ask questions as you proceed.
- Check periodically to make sure that the assignment is succeeding.

If you have people to whom you can delegate work, then you are most fortunate because that means you are giving them the opportunity to develop themselves while you can get on with the things that you should be doing. It may not be easy at first because they may need to have their hands held but as they learn more and gain in confidence (which also means that you learn to trust them more!), the less you will have to keep a continual eye on them. You can never relinquish accountability for a task so it is in your interest to make sure that they carry out delegated work as effectively as possible and then you will both look good!

Additional skills

Whatever kind of work you are involved in, you probably say from time to time, 'Oh, I wish I could do that', or you might even say, 'Why should I do that — it isn't my job to do that'.

There are many skills available these days which may not have been thought necessary or valuable for people in your position a generation ago or skills which have changed over the years. Some of these would certainly give you greater control over the way in which you spend your time and more choice in the way in which you wish to carry out the activities that make up your job.

One of the most important new skills is the ability to use a keyboard, particularly on a computer or word-processor. You may have picked up quite a lot from your computer-literate children or been aware of what's been going on in the office recently, but for many people keyboard skills are still 'just for typists'.

It is not difficult to learn the keyboard although an ability to present work in an attractive form does take longer and a certain amount of visual awareness. However, you do not need to know the finer details of layout if you have a secretary or typist or if it simply doesn't matter if

the presentation isn't absolutely perfect. A computer will do most of the basic work for you and if the document needs to be neater than you can manage, your secretary, the word processor operator or perhaps a friend can tidy it up for you so that it presents a good image and is easy to read.

The new technology has presented us with many advantages but for most people learning how to deal with it is still a novelty which means that there are drawbacks. For instance, people who don't fully understand what word processing entails think that all changes to a document may be made 'at the press of a button' and they strive for a degree of perfection that is quite unnecessary. It is easier to change work, erase mistakes, make additions and modifications than on a standard typewriter **but** it still involves somebody's time so please be reasonable when you are asking for text to be altered.

As well as having to write, you probably also have to read a great deal and that can take up a lot of time. Apparently, most of us read much more slowly than we are capable of as well as having a low comprehension of what we do read. As it is important to get through the mountains of paperwork quickly without missing the vital points, many people are beginning to develop the technique of rapid reading. There are several packages available on the market to help you with this and you should aim to find the one that best suits you.

* * *

It is not always possible to achieve all the goals you set for yourself during a day or a week. If you are able to identify the important tasks and give them priorities, you can begin to impose order and control on your life at home and work. **TIME MANAGER** will give you the support that you need for the days, weeks and years ahead so that **you** can become a more effective manager of **your** time.

Good luck!

5/Loading Instructions

Sinclair Spectrum

Connect your Spectrum, TV and cassette recorder as the instruction manual directs. Switch on the equipment and set the volume control on the cassette recorder. Insert the tape in the recorder with Side 1 facing upwards and rewind the tape if necessary. Now press **LOAD** and **ENTER**. Then press **PLAY** on the recorder and wait for the Program 1 to load. If you have any problems loading the Program, consult your Spectrum manual.

Amstrad (tape version)

Set up your Amstrad and TV as the instruction manual directs and switch on the equipment. Insert the tape into the recorder with Side 1 facing upwards and rewind if necessary. Press the **CTRL** and small **ENTER** keys at the same time. Press **PLAY** on the recorder. Then press **ENTER** again and follow the instructions on the screen. If you have problems loading the Program, consult your Amstrad manual.

Amstrad (disk version)

Connect up the computer, TV and disk drive as your Amstrad instruction manual directs. Turn on the equipment and insert the disk into the drive, making sure that the label is facing upwards and towards you. Type **RUN"DISK"** and press **ENTER**. Program 1 will load automatically. If you have problems loading the program, take out the disk and switch off your equipment. Now begin the procedure once more.

Data Files provided with TIME MANAGER

On the reverse side of the program tape or disk, you will find a series of data files which you may wish to use with **TIME MANAGER**. Instructions for loading them will be found on page 6. The files will be found in the following sequence:

File name	Type	Size	Contents
SHOW85	Text	∞	1985 Agricultural, Flower, Cat, Dog Shows
SHOW86	Text	∞	1986 Agricultural, Flower, Cat, Dog Shows
FEST85	Text	∞	1985 Art, Drama and Music Festivals
FEST86	Text	∞	1986 Art, Drama and Music Festivals
INDS85	Text	∞	1985 Individual Sporting Events
INDS86	Text	∞	1986 Individual Sporting Events
TEAM85	Text	∞	1985 Team Sporting Events
TEAM86	Text	∞	1986 Team Sporting Events
EXCH85	Binary	1	1985 Stock Exchange Account Days
EXCH86	Binary	1	1986 Stock Exchange Account Days
HISTRY	Text	∞	Pre 20th Century History (enter as Undated)
20TH.C	Text	∞	20th Century History (enter as Undated)

Note: 1985 data is for the period September to December only.