

suddenly I'll be as organized as I want to be. But I think that to a certain extent I like being in the whirlwind and having everything up in the air and juggling. To a certain extent I feel most comfortable there, on the edge."

Incredibly, Gottlieb has gotten by in the fast-paced world of record and distribution deal-making without the traditional "in/out" box to help control the flow of paperwork. "Yes, I've survived, oddly enough," he says. "I try to deal with the mail first thing, but it's hard. The hardest thing to do is to hit the balance between tasks that you know have to be done but require some effort, tasks which you know have to be done with dispatch but are not perhaps top priority, and the scary tasks, the ones that require creative thought. In other businesses where they're more staid, businesses that are less opportunistic, you find people with wonderful Rolodexes and Filo-faxes, and who write great letters to people even when they're not necessary."

As a student, Gottlieb says he would always put off until tomorrow what he might do today. "I was a procrastinator and a perfectionist when I was in school," he says, "but that's not a problem people should worry about. The important thing, when you're finally put on the front line and when it matters, is whether you have enough gut and instinct to see it through. The end product is not a clean desk. There are parts of business where presentation is everything, and there are parts where it's meaningless. You have to keep your eye on the ball and not get distracted by organization, or be so consumed by the idea that it gets in the way of everything else."

Gottlieb says he hasn't the time, or the inclination, to study from the endless list of books on organization and business management. "I wouldn't waste a second reading one of them," he explains. Instead, he says people starting their own businesses should just do what works best for them. "But not only do what works for you," he continues, "do what works. It may be working for you, but if you're not getting the job done it doesn't much matter. You have to figure out what's effective. In starting out anything, I don't think you can cover all the bases. It's kind of like a juggler, you know, if you ask him which ball he throws up first. It's balance. It's not a system in the sense of having a prescribed set of rules. It's a feel."

Of course, success leaves little time for anything else. "My social life is complete chaos," Gottlieb admits. "I miss having time to run or work out. I miss having time to read or pursue other interests. When I started this business I realized that at least for the short term what I needed were blinders, a single-mindedness. I have friends who are able to shut it off, and they're supermen. They have an hour a day where they play squash and an hour a day where they do this, and they definitely cut off work at a certain time, so

that they can have time to go out and socialize. I can't do that. I have to be completely immersed in what I'm doing."

HELP WANTED! HOW TO BEAT THE HIGH COST OF DO-IT- YOUR- SELFISHNESS

Your walls need repainting. Your 50-page term-paper needs to be typed by tomorrow morning. And, you've got to pack up all of your earthly possessions and move into that swell apartment off-campus.

How much time have you got?

Well, what little time you do have is running out. You need help.

Sometimes it pays to pay someone else to do your work. It saves you time, yes, but it

first job, you'll likely come upon times when you'll have the spare change, but not the spare time, to see a personal job through to its completion.

A good way to figure whether a task is worth your time and attention is to first set a value on what your time is worth. The easiest way to do this, for most of you, will be to use your hourly wage as a yardstick. (If you don't know your hourly wage, divide your weekly salary by 35 hours. Lunch time and overtime don't count in this equation.) Once you've determined that you earn, say, \$11 an hour (an annual salary of \$20,000), then you can better determine what your leisure time is worth.

Let's take your moving day as an example. Doing it yourself could take the entire weekend to complete — or 16 hours, to represent two full working days—at a time-value cost to you of approximately \$176. If you choose to hire a moving company, the job would be completed in a fraction of the time— The movers, after all, are professionals—and also at a fraction of the cost. Most movers will charge anywhere from \$25 to \$50 dollars an hour, but let's assume for the sake of comparison that



can also save you money. At the office, most people don't think twice about sending a messenger across town to deliver an important package. In some offices people don't even water their own plants. (A hired plant service sees to the care and feeding of the greenery.) The notion that your time can be better spent doing something else is common in the workplace, but it should also be the accepted notion at school, or in your personal life once you've begun your first job. Your time matters as much to you there as it does at work — there just isn't enough of the stuff to go around. If your apartment walls need painting, hire a painter. If your term-paper needs to be typed, offer to pay a neighbor or a friend to help you out, or hire a temporary secretary. And, if you've got some heavy moving to do, maybe you should think about hiring some heavy movers.

But how do you determine whether to hire-out a chore or to do it yourself? From a student's perspective, it may seem that extra cash for such part-time hires will be hard to come by, but once you start your

you find a company to do the work in three hours at a cost of \$100.

In this case, you will have theoretically saved yourself \$76. You will have bought back your free time. Of course, this line of thinking assumes that you could be working at your \$11 an hour job when the movers come to haul off your stuff, which is not necessarily the case, but it still provides a useful measure with which to determine whether a given task or chore is worth your time and attention. You have to consider time's intrinsic value in addition to its actual monetary value. After all, if your employer is willing to pay you that kind of money for your time, then you should accord something like the same value to your off-hour time. Don't sell yourself short.

Every task will cost you either time or money. It's up to you to decide which you want to spend. Below, some questions to ask yourself to help make cost-effective decisions when it comes to personal chores:

—Do I have the skills the job requires?
If you don't, it will take you longer to com-