

Big Rock Story

Author Unknown

One day, an expert in time management was speaking to a group of business students and, to drive home a point, he used an illustration those students will never forget. As he stood in front of the group of high-powered overachievers, he said, "Okay, time for a quiz."

He then pulled out a one-gallon, 'wide-mouth' mason jar and set it on the table in front of them. Then he produced about a dozen fist-sized rocks and carefully placed them, one by one, into the jar.

When the jar was filled to the top and no more rocks would fit inside, he asked, "Is this jar full?" Everyone in the class said, "Yes." Then he said, "Really?"

He reached under the table and pulled out a bucket of gravel. Then he dumped some gravel in and shook the jar, causing pieces of gravel to work themselves down into the space between the big rocks.

Then he asked the group once more. "Is this jar full?" By this time the class was on to him. "Probably not," one of them answered.

"Good!" he replied. He reached under the table and brought out a bucket of sand. He started dumping the sand in the jar and it went into all the spaces left between the rocks and the gravel.

Once more he asked the question. "Is this jar full?" "No!" the class shouted. Once again, he said, "Good!" Then he grabbed a pitcher of water and began to pour it in until the jar was filled to the brim.

Then the expert in time-management looked at the class and asked, "What is the point of this illustration?"

One eager beaver raised his hand and said, "The point is, no matter how full your schedule is, if you try really hard you can always fit some more things in it."

Organizing is an ever-changing field and this tip sheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information contained herein is provided as a public service with the understanding that Room to Breathe makes no warranties, either expressed or implied, concerning the accuracy, completeness, reliability, or suitability of the information.