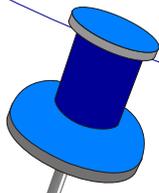


*Memo from Karla Brandau*

# **101 Time Management Tips For Busy Professionals**

**By Karla Brandau, CSP**



## Memo from Karla Brandau

### ***101 Time Management Tips for Busy Professionals***

Copyright 2004 by Karla Brandau. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, or recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without the written permission of the publisher, except where permitted by law. For information please contact: Life Power Publisher, 4985 Chartley Circle, Lilburn, Georgia 30047, USA. First printing 2003. Printed and bound in the USA.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Although the author and publisher have made every effort to ensure the accuracy and completeness of information contained in this book, we assume no responsibility for errors, enaccuracies, omissions, or inconsistencies herein. Any slights of people, places, or organizations are unintentional.

Brandau, Karla  
101 Time Management Tips for Busy Professionals  
ISBN No.

For information on keynote speeches and workshops, contact:  
Karla Brandau, 4985 Chartley Circle, Lilburn, Georgia 30047, USA.  
Tel: 770-923-0883 Fax: 770-931-2530  
E-mail: [karla@timeforresults.com](mailto:karla@timeforresults.com)  
Web site: [www.timeforresults.com](http://www.timeforresults.com)



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Dedication**

**To my daughter, Susan,  
who gets incredible things done  
with her time.**



# Memo from Karla Brandau

## Table of Contents

<i>Introduction</i> .....	<u>-viii-</u>
<i>Tip #1 Invest your time wisely</i> .....	<u>-1-</u>
<i>Tip #2 Direct vision and resources to the greatest results and contributions</i> .....	<u>-2-</u>
<i>Tip #3 Make your problems line up one by one</i> .....	<u>-3-</u>
<i>Tip #4 Let the Pareto Principle work for you</i> .....	<u>-4-</u>
<i>Tip #5 The Pareto Principle twist</i> .....	<u>-5-</u>
<i>Tip #6 Future, present, or past orientation?</i> .....	<u>-6-</u>
<i>Tip #7 Decide your priority base</i> .....	<u>-7-</u>
<i>Tip #8 Do it right the first time!</i> .....	<u>-8-</u>
<i>Tip #9 Don't let a wrong number set your top priorities</i> .....	<u>-9-</u>
<i>Tip #10 Urgency: tyrant or friend?</i> .....	<u>-10-</u>
<i>Tip #11 Tame Crisis, the lion</i> .....	<u>-11-</u>
<i>Tip #12 Understand "The Zone"</i> .....	<u>-12-</u>
<i>Tip #13 Work In "The Zone"</i> .....	<u>-13-</u>
<i>Tip #14 Estimate the time for tasks</i> .....	<u>-14-</u>
<i>Tip #15 Create a productive environment!</i> .....	<u>-15-</u>
<i>Tip #16 Analyze, Plan, DO IT!</i> .....	<u>-16-</u>
<i>Tip #17 Analyzing: dump your mind onto a "Master Task List"</i> .....	<u>-17-</u>
<i>Tip #18 The prioritized daily task list</i> .....	<u>-18-</u>
<i>Tip #19 Keep a "Not on the Immediate Horizon" list</i> .....	<u>-19-</u>
<i>Tip #20 Plan for ten packed minutes</i> .....	<u>-20-</u>
<i>Tip #21 Pack your ten minutes</i> .....	<u>-20-</u>
<i>Tip #22 Close out your day</i> .....	<u>-22-</u>
<i>Tip #23 Take note of critical deadlines</i> .....	<u>-23-</u>



# Memo from Karla Brandau

<i>Tip #24 Anticipate icebergs on the horizon</i> .....	<u>-24-</u>
<i>Tip #25 Eliminate unimportant stuff!</i> .....	<u>-25-</u>
<i>Tip #26 Prioritize, Prioritize, Prioritize</i> .....	<u>-26-</u>
<i>Tip #27 Use the ABC's to prioritize</i> .....	<u>-27-</u>
<i>Tip #28 Do Me NOW! Do Me SOON! Can WAIT! Don't Do!</i> .....	<u>-28-</u>
<i>Tip #29 Pick your top five tasks and sequence them</i> .....	<u>-29-</u>
<i>Tip #30 Use intuition</i> .....	<u>-30-</u>
<i>Tip #31 Plan "thinking time"</i> .....	<u>-31-</u>
<i>Tip #32 Use visualization</i> .....	<u>-32-</u>
<i>Tip #33 Put "have fun" on your task list</i> .....	<u>-33-</u>
<i>Tip #34 Find the "Sweet Spot" in your day</i> .....	<u>-34-</u>
<i>Tip #35 Planning must result in task implementation</i> .....	<u>-35-</u>
<i>Tip #36 Stop being overwhelmed</i> .....	<u>-36-</u>
<i>Tip #37 Start each day with "PRE"</i> .....	<u>-37-</u>
<i>Tip #38 "P" is for planning - the work of worrying</i> .....	<u>-38-</u>
<i>Tip #39 "R" is for read</i> .....	<u>-39-</u>
<i>Tip #40 "E" is for exercise</i> .....	<u>-40-</u>
<i>Tip #41 An additional "E" - eat well</i> .....	<u>-41-</u>
<i>Tip #42 Make an appointment with exercise</i> .....	<u>-42-</u>
<i>Tip #43 Make appointments with yourself</i> .....	<u>-43-</u>
<i>Tip #44 Use "Zip" tasks</i> .....	<u>-44-</u>
<i>Tip #45 One small step in starting is a giant leap in finishing</i> .....	<u>-45-</u>
<i>Tip #46 Make tasks specific</i> .....	<u>-46-</u>
<i>Tip #47 The truth about deadlines</i> .....	<u>-47-</u>
<i>Tip #48 Harness the power of urgency</i> .....	<u>-48-</u>
<i>Tip #49 Be disciplined - #1 is #1!</i> .....	<u>-49-</u>



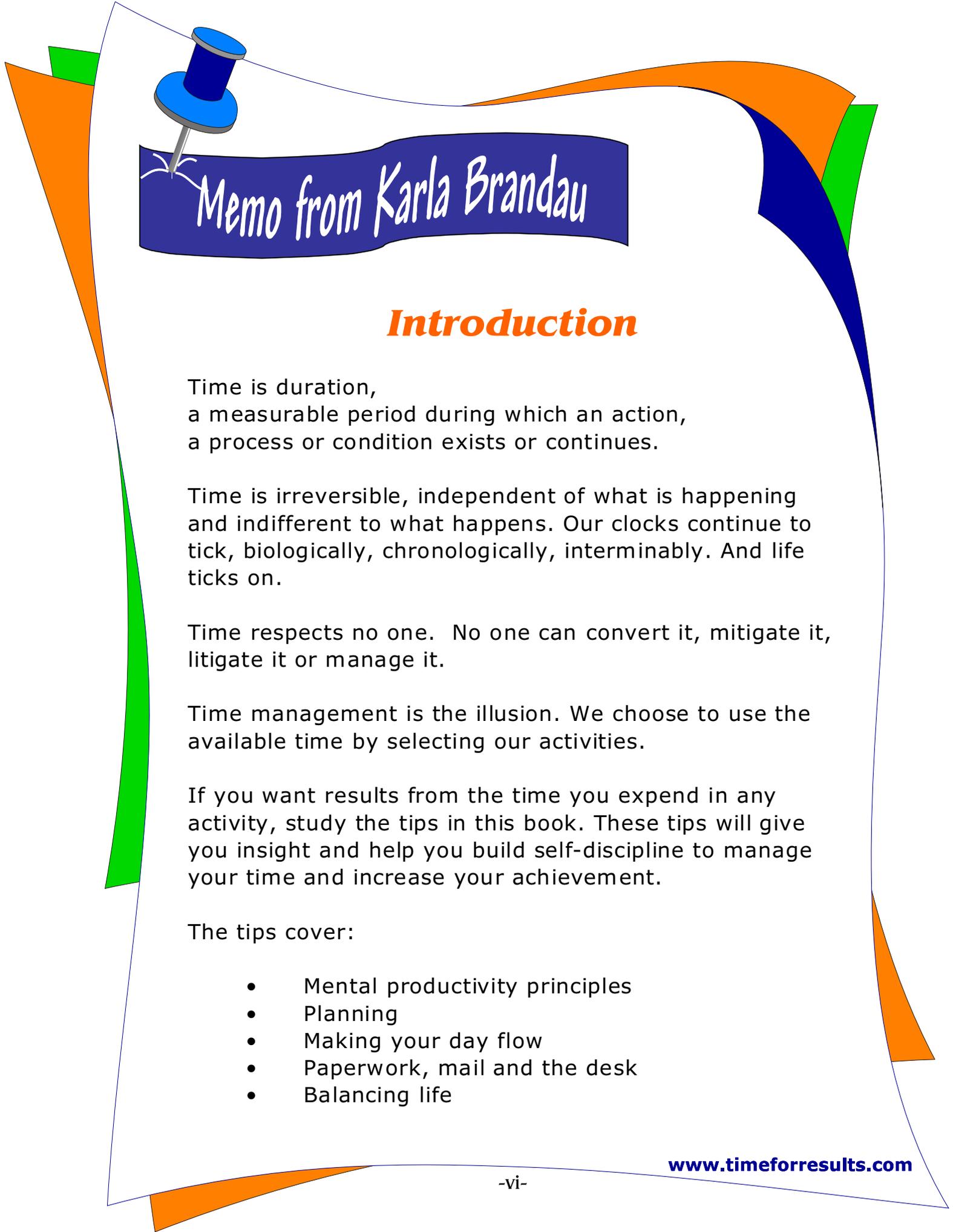
# Memo from Karla Brandau

<i>Tip #50 Plan closed door time</i> .....	<b>-50-</b>
<i>Tip #51 The ultimate tip for closed door time</i> .....	<b>-51-</b>
<i>Tip #52 Be a finisher</i> .....	<b>-52-</b>
<i>Tip #53 Make a place for everything</i> .....	<b>-53-</b>
<i>Tip #54 Use the greatest time saver in the world</i> .....	<b>-54-</b>
<i>Tip #55 Create momentum</i> .....	<b>-55-</b>
<i>Tip #56 Turbo charge with reverse scheduling</i> .....	<b>-56-</b>
<i>Tip #57 Focused concentration</i> .....	<b>-57-</b>
<i>Tip #58 Develop laser thinking</i> .....	<b>-58-</b>
<i>Tip #59 Productivity &amp; total concentration</i> .....	<b>-59-</b>
<i>Tip #60 Build the producer mind set</i> .....	<b>-60-</b>
<i>Tip #61 Make the most of normal body energy</i> .....	<b>-61-</b>
<i>Tip #62 Move conversations along</i> .....	<b>-62-</b>
<i>Tip #63 Be a good interrupter</i> .....	<b>-63-</b>
<i>Tip #64 Be considerate of other people's time</i> .....	<b>-64-</b>
<i>Tip #65 Escape from mindless discussions</i> .....	<b>-65-</b>
<i>Tip #66 Ask "When?"</i> .....	<b>-66-</b>
<i>Tip #67 Break the Pareto Principle</i> .....	<b>-67-</b>
<i>Tip #68 Take time for housekeeping</i> .....	<b>-68-</b>
<i>Tip #69 Know when to be Efficient and when to be Effective</i> .....	<b>-69-</b>
<i>Tip #70 Determine what you can do in less detail</i> .....	<b>-70-</b>
<i>Tip #71 Standardize and consolidate activities</i> .....	<b>-71-</b>
<i>Tip #72 Group like items</i> .....	<b>-72-</b>
<i>Tip #73 Burn the underbrush!</i> .....	<b>-73-</b>
<i>Tip #74 Create productive meetings</i> .....	<b>-74-</b>
<i>Tip #75 The morning mail</i> .....	<b>-75-</b>



# Memo from Karla Brandau

- Tip #76 The immaculate office* ..... **-76-**
- Tip #77 Police the traffic jam on your desk* ..... **-77-**
- Tip #78 Overcome task resistance* ..... **-78-**
- Tip #79 Don't drift or drown, DECIDE!* ..... **-79-**
- Tip #80 Multi-tasking? Choose carefully* ..... **-80-**
- Tip #81 Set goals* ..... **-81-**
- Tip #82 Tackle job-related anxiety* ..... **-82-**
- Tip #83 Give your mind closure* ..... **-83-**
- Tip #84 Reduce waiting time* ..... **-84-**
- Tip #85 Define or count the mountain of details* ..... **-85-**
- Tip #86 Get plenty of sleep* ..... **-86-**
- Tip #87 Know when to use "creative" procrastination* ..... **-87-**
- Tip #88 Play the "time warp" game* ..... **-88-**
- Tip #89 Take direct action when emotion is high* ..... **-89-**
- Tip #90 Wind down your day* ..... **-90-**
- Tip #91 Let your mind "idle"* ..... **-91-**
- Tip #92 Start each day with high spirits* ..... **-92-**
- Tip #93 Make time management a habit* ..... **-93-**
- Tip #94 Include lifestyle issues in your task list* ..... **-94-**
- Tip #95 The creative edge* ..... **-95-**
- Tip #96 The 3 R's* ..... **-96-**
- Tip #97 Relaxing and renewing* ..... **-97-**
- Tip #98 Reflection* ..... **-98-**
- Tip #99 Understand the dimensions of productivity strategy* ..... **-99-**
- Tip #100 Create space in your life* ..... **-100-**
- Tip #101 Someday is a myth* ..... **-101-**
- About Karla* ..... **-102-**



# Memo from Karla Brandau

## **Introduction**

Time is duration,  
a measurable period during which an action,  
a process or condition exists or continues.

Time is irreversible, independent of what is happening  
and indifferent to what happens. Our clocks continue to  
tick, biologically, chronologically, interminably. And life  
ticks on.

Time respects no one. No one can convert it, mitigate it,  
litigate it or manage it.

Time management is the illusion. We choose to use the  
available time by selecting our activities.

If you want results from the time you expend in any  
activity, study the tips in this book. These tips will give  
you insight and help you build self-discipline to manage  
your time and increase your achievement.

The tips cover:

- Mental productivity principles
- Planning
- Making your day flow
- Paperwork, mail and the desk
- Balancing life



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #1**  
***Invest your time wisely***

Exceptional time management begins by understanding

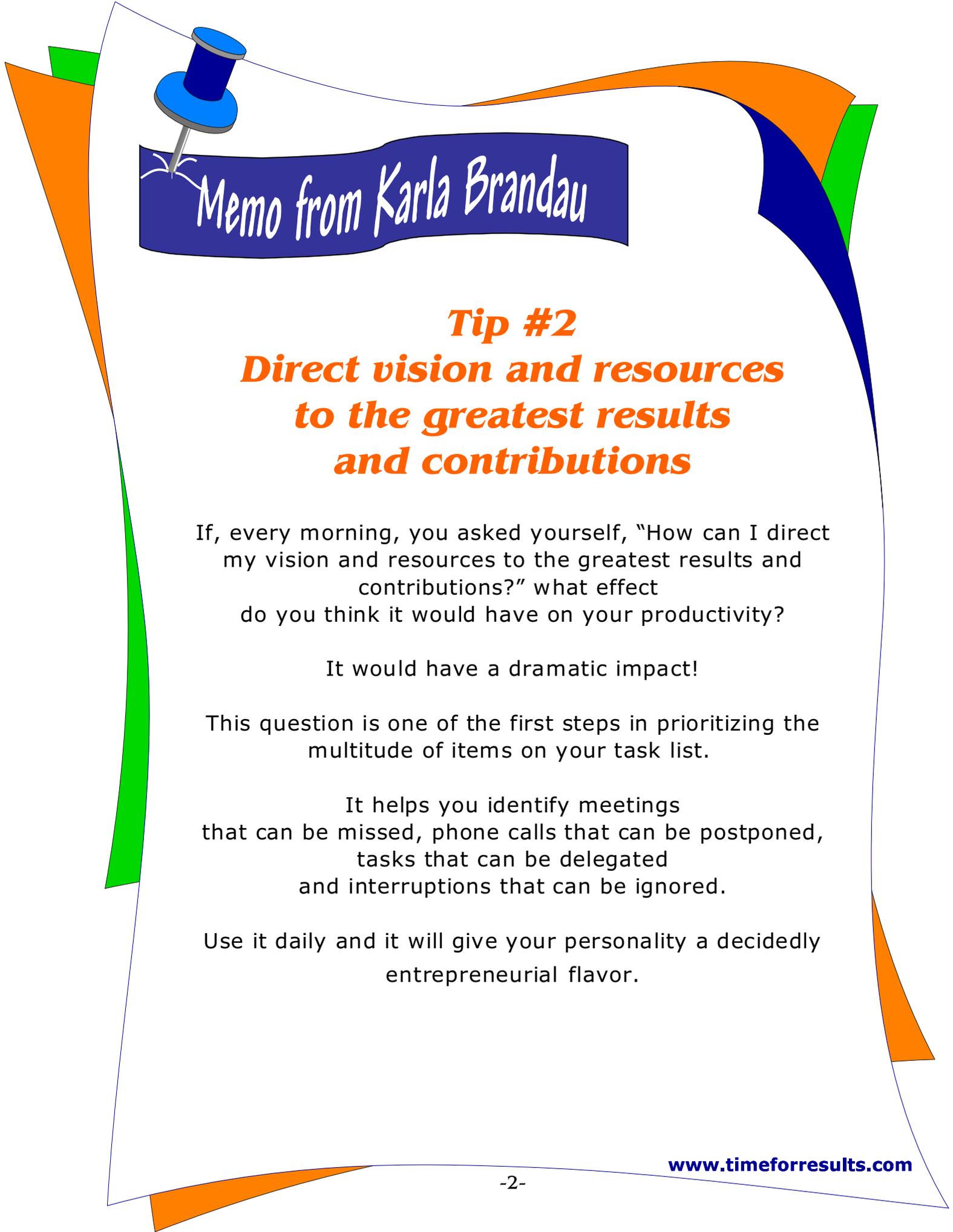
that you can do

ANYTHING you want to do,

but you can't do EVERYTHING.

So choose wisely where you invest

your time and energy.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #2**  
***Direct vision and resources  
to the greatest results  
and contributions***

If, every morning, you asked yourself, "How can I direct my vision and resources to the greatest results and contributions?" what effect do you think it would have on your productivity?

It would have a dramatic impact!

This question is one of the first steps in prioritizing the multitude of items on your task list.

It helps you identify meetings that can be missed, phone calls that can be postponed, tasks that can be delegated and interruptions that can be ignored.

Use it daily and it will give your personality a decidedly entrepreneurial flavor.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

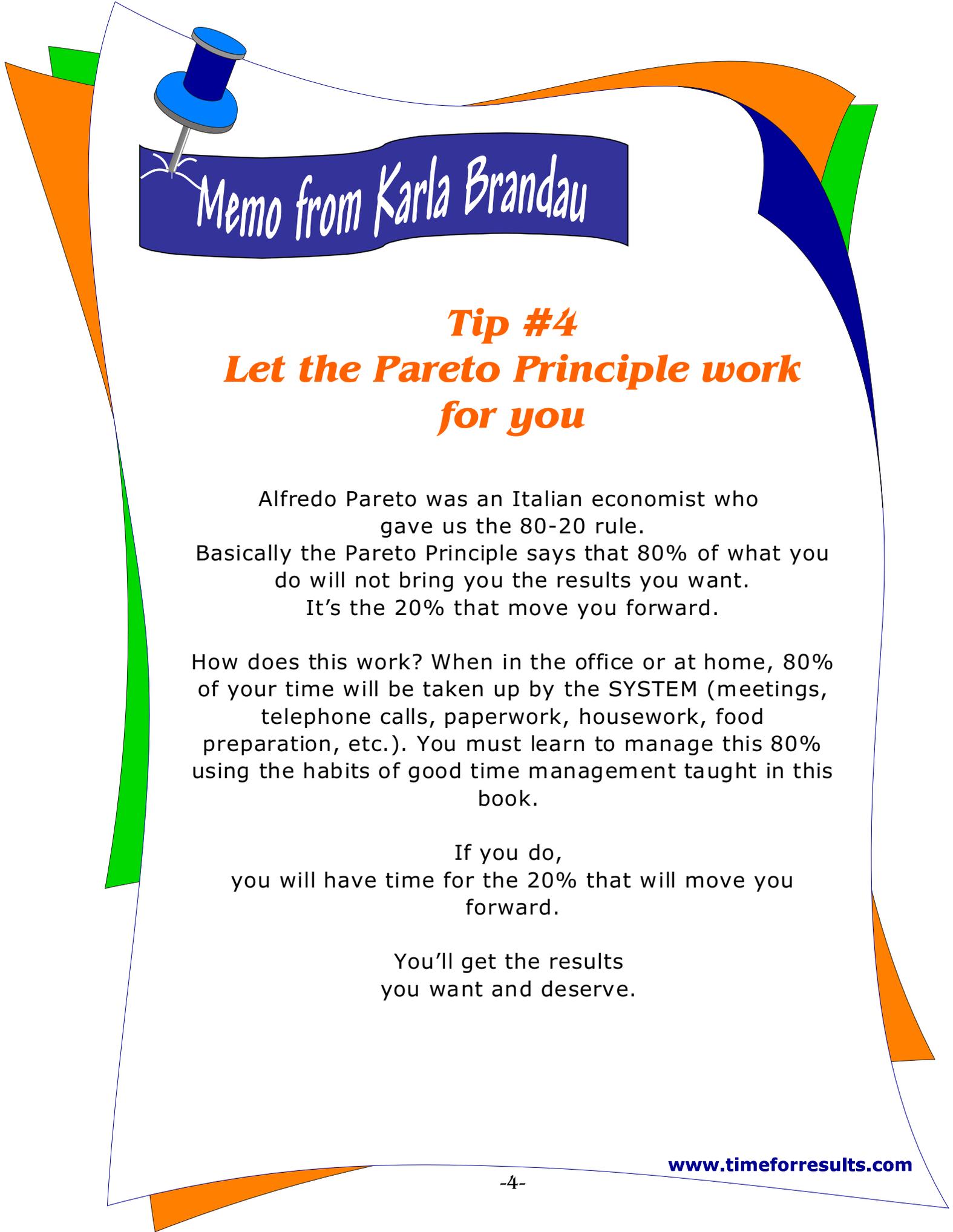
**Tip #3**  
***Make your problems line up  
one by one***

An hour glass lets only one sand of  
grain drop at time.  
Use this philosophy and you will understand that you can  
only focus on one problem at a time.

So make your problems line up one by one  
then focus all of your  
mental and emotional energy  
in solving only one problem at a time.

Leave the others patiently waiting  
on your task list.

Be strong!  
Don't let your mind wander  
toward them.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

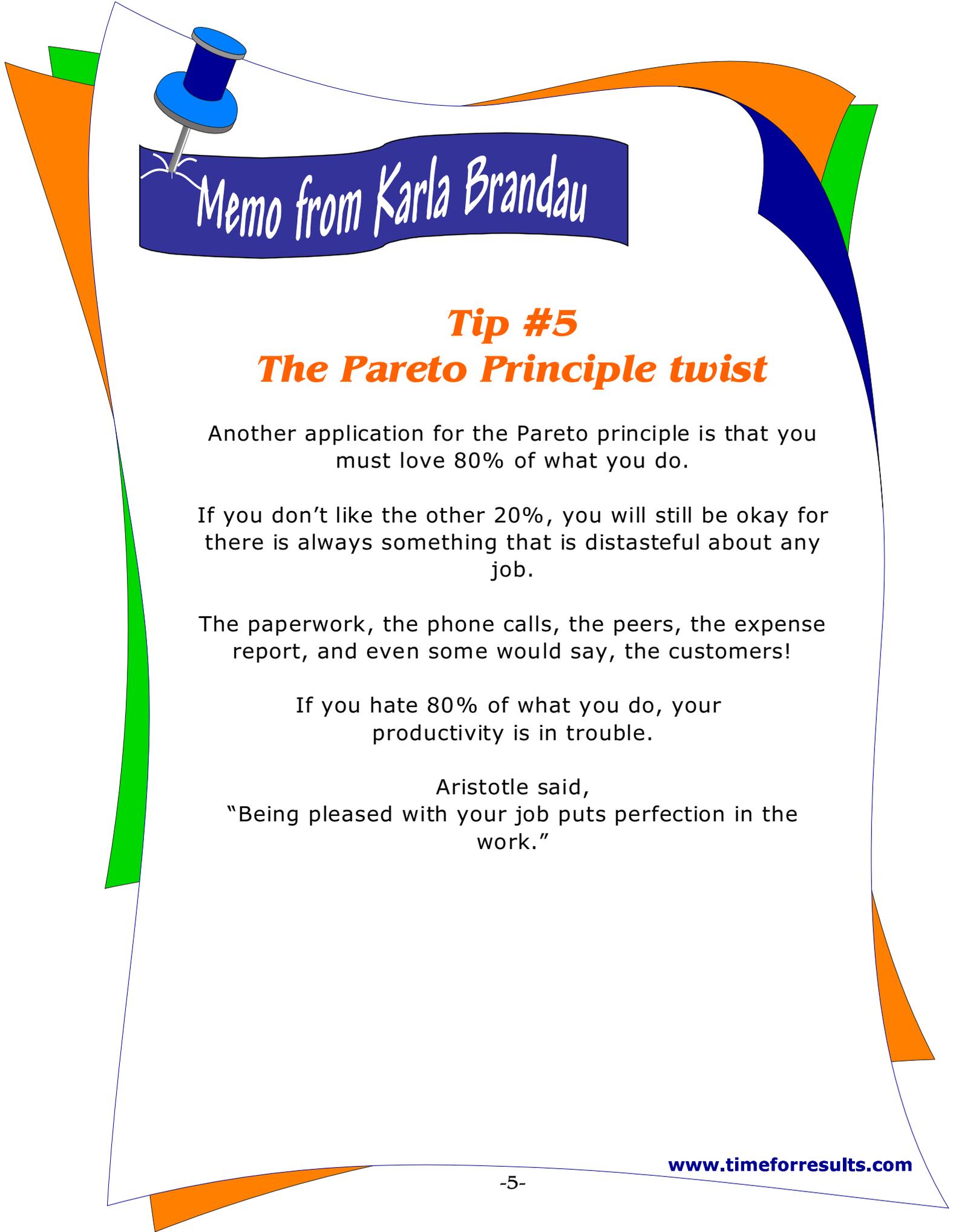
**Tip #4**  
***Let the Pareto Principle work  
for you***

Alfredo Pareto was an Italian economist who gave us the 80-20 rule. Basically the Pareto Principle says that 80% of what you do will not bring you the results you want. It's the 20% that move you forward.

How does this work? When in the office or at home, 80% of your time will be taken up by the SYSTEM (meetings, telephone calls, paperwork, housework, food preparation, etc.). You must learn to manage this 80% using the habits of good time management taught in this book.

If you do,  
you will have time for the 20% that will move you forward.

You'll get the results  
you want and deserve.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #5**  
***The Pareto Principle twist***

Another application for the Pareto principle is that you must love 80% of what you do.

If you don't like the other 20%, you will still be okay for there is always something that is distasteful about any job.

The paperwork, the phone calls, the peers, the expense report, and even some would say, the customers!

If you hate 80% of what you do, your productivity is in trouble.

Aristotle said,  
"Being pleased with your job puts perfection in the work."



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

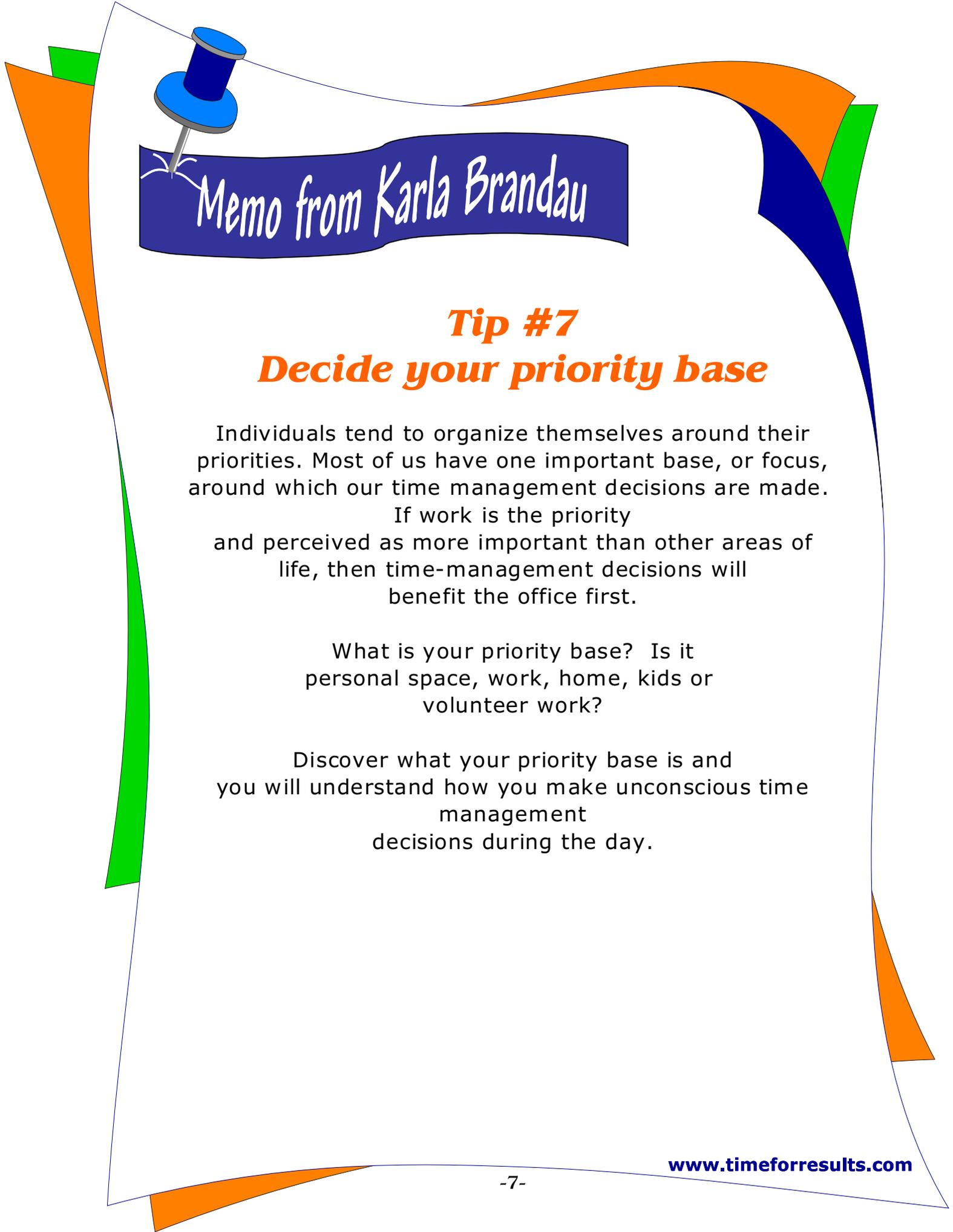
**Tip #6**  
***Future, present, or past  
orientation?***

Your orientation to life is a factor in how you manage your time. If you have a future orientation, you are most likely a great planner and you love time management tips and techniques.

If you have a present orientation, you live with more spontaneity, doing tasks when the fancy strikes you. You may not feel a need for time management.

If you live with a past orientation, chances are you let things happen to you from a time management standpoint. You feel complacent about time management.

Which are you?



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

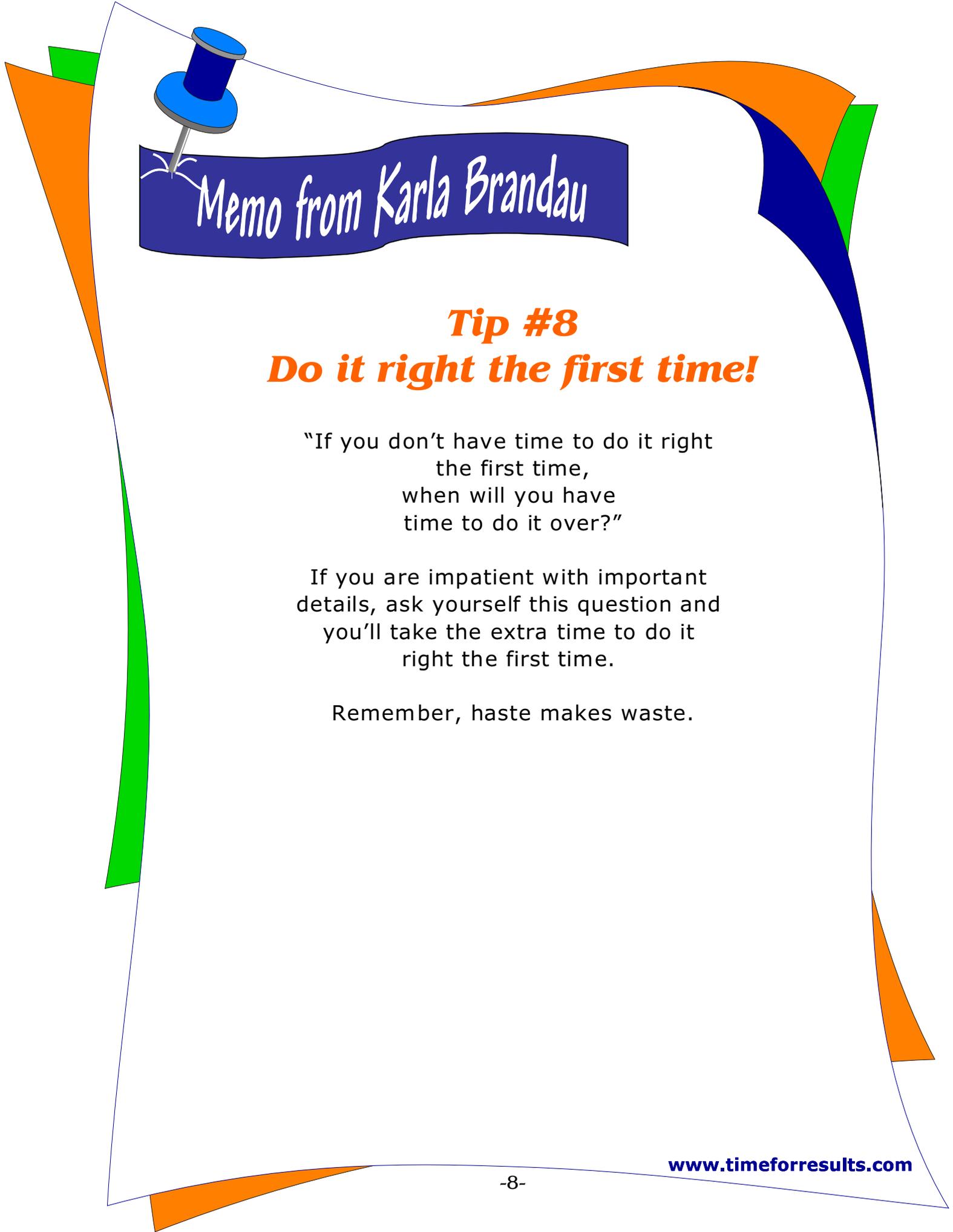
**Tip #7**  
***Decide your priority base***

Individuals tend to organize themselves around their priorities. Most of us have one important base, or focus, around which our time management decisions are made.

If work is the priority and perceived as more important than other areas of life, then time-management decisions will benefit the office first.

What is your priority base? Is it personal space, work, home, kids or volunteer work?

Discover what your priority base is and you will understand how you make unconscious time management decisions during the day.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #8**  
***Do it right the first time!***

“If you don’t have time to do it right  
the first time,  
when will you have  
time to do it over?”

If you are impatient with important  
details, ask yourself this question and  
you’ll take the extra time to do it  
right the first time.

Remember, haste makes waste.



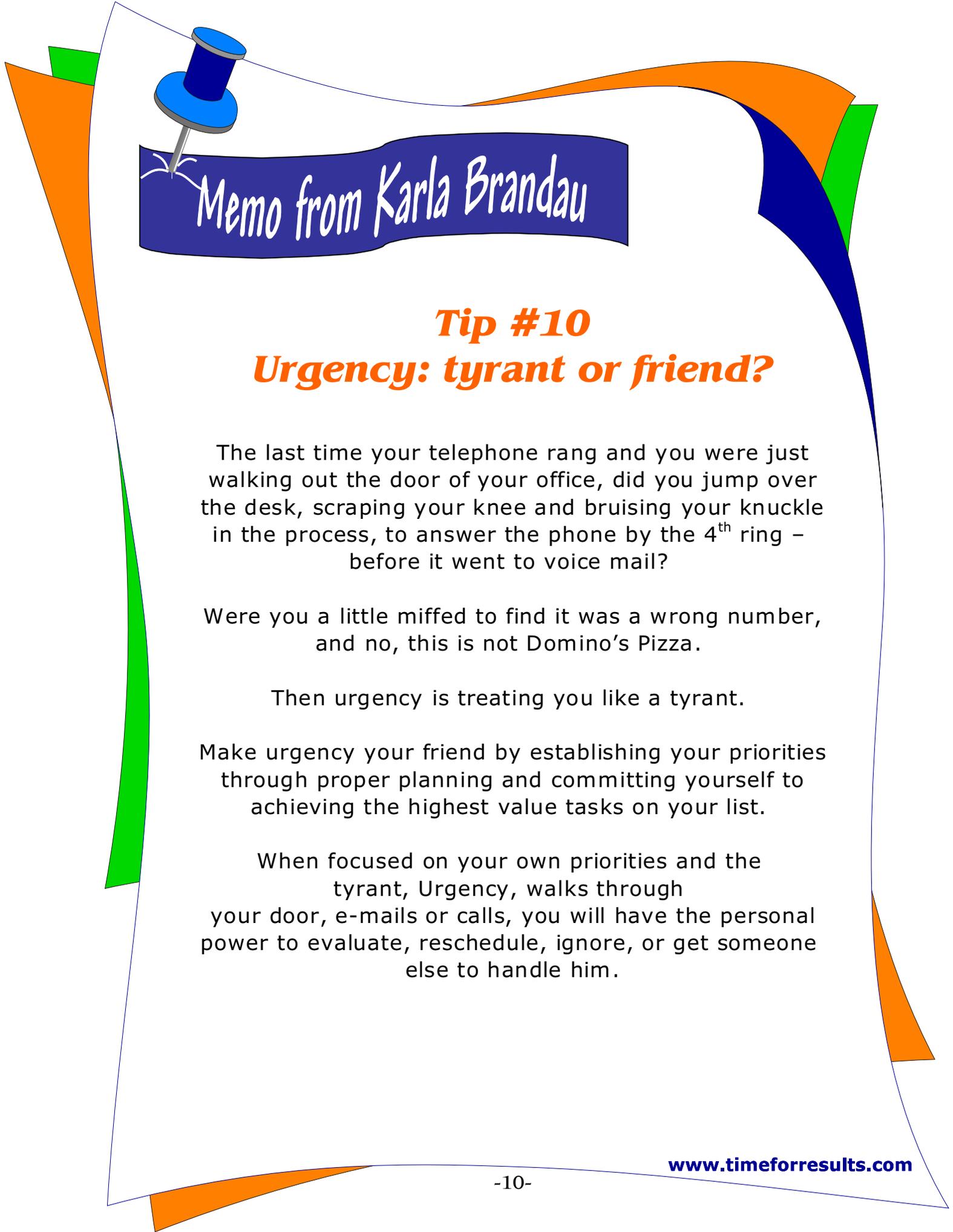
*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #9**  
***Don't let a wrong number  
set your top priorities***

When the telephone rings, it is urgent but you don't know if it is vital and important until you pick it up.

Have the courage to pick your top priorities, not the other way around.

You can do this by sending the telephone to voice mail day and by turning off e-mail at certain times of the day so you can concentrate on the 8high A task with a deadline on your desk.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #10**  
***Urgency: tyrant or friend?***

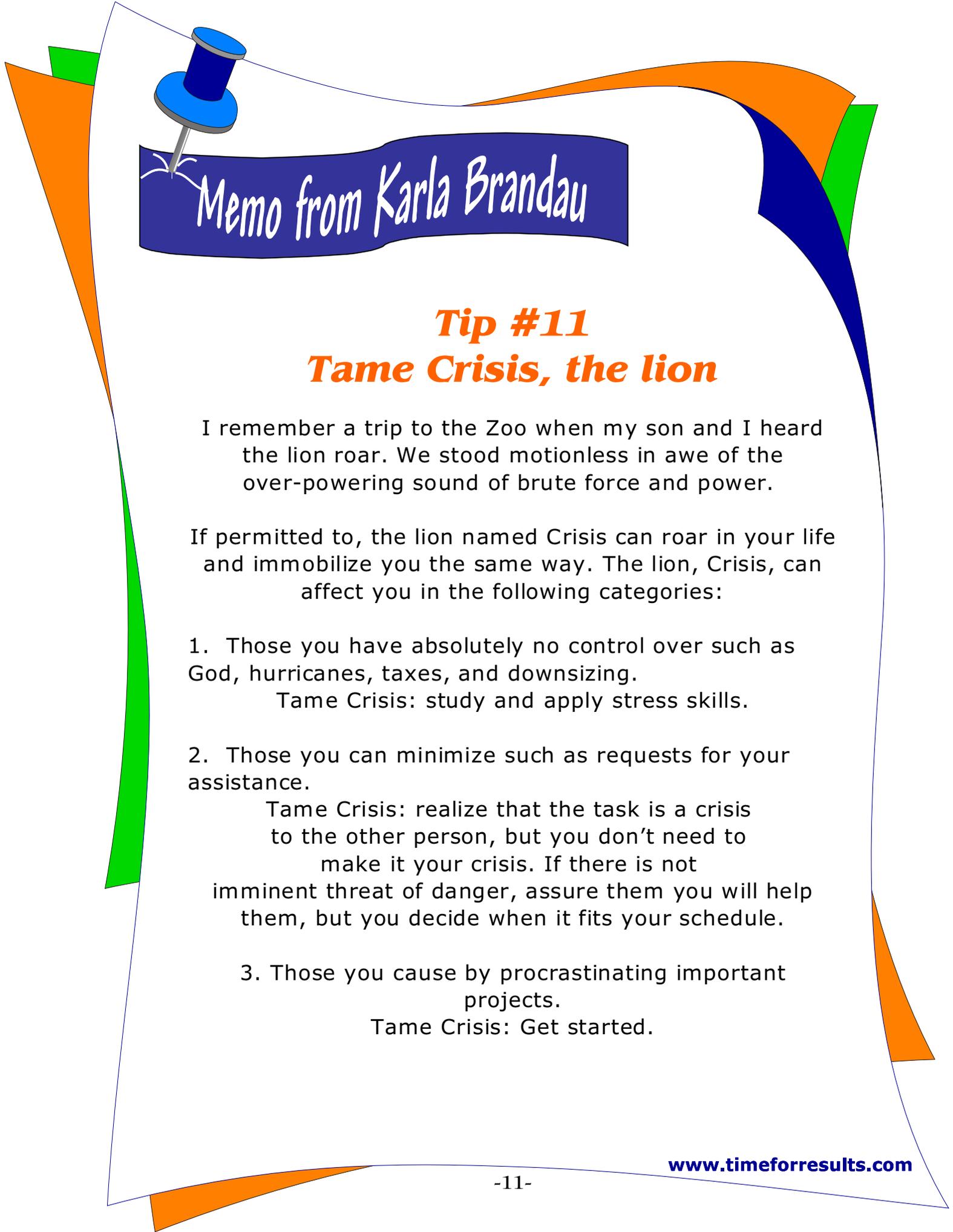
The last time your telephone rang and you were just walking out the door of your office, did you jump over the desk, scraping your knee and bruising your knuckle in the process, to answer the phone by the 4<sup>th</sup> ring – before it went to voice mail?

Were you a little miffed to find it was a wrong number, and no, this is not Domino's Pizza.

Then urgency is treating you like a tyrant.

Make urgency your friend by establishing your priorities through proper planning and committing yourself to achieving the highest value tasks on your list.

When focused on your own priorities and the tyrant, Urgency, walks through your door, e-mails or calls, you will have the personal power to evaluate, reschedule, ignore, or get someone else to handle him.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #11**  
***Tame Crisis, the lion***

I remember a trip to the Zoo when my son and I heard the lion roar. We stood motionless in awe of the over-powering sound of brute force and power.

If permitted to, the lion named Crisis can roar in your life and immobilize you the same way. The lion, Crisis, can affect you in the following categories:

1. Those you have absolutely no control over such as God, hurricanes, taxes, and downsizing.

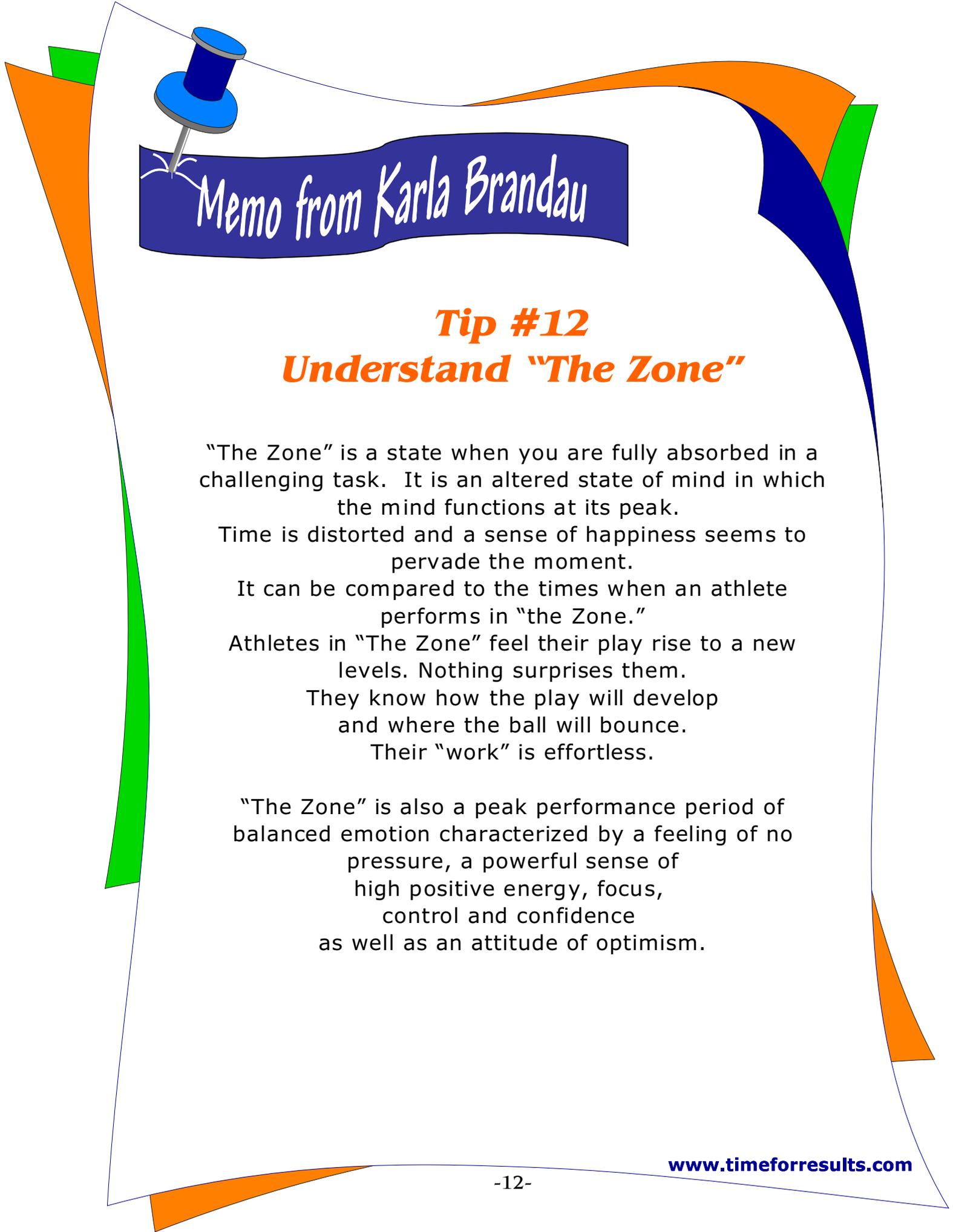
Tame Crisis: study and apply stress skills.

2. Those you can minimize such as requests for your assistance.

Tame Crisis: realize that the task is a crisis to the other person, but you don't need to make it your crisis. If there is not imminent threat of danger, assure them you will help them, but you decide when it fits your schedule.

3. Those you cause by procrastinating important projects.

Tame Crisis: Get started.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #12**  
***Understand "The Zone"***

"The Zone" is a state when you are fully absorbed in a challenging task. It is an altered state of mind in which the mind functions at its peak.

Time is distorted and a sense of happiness seems to pervade the moment.

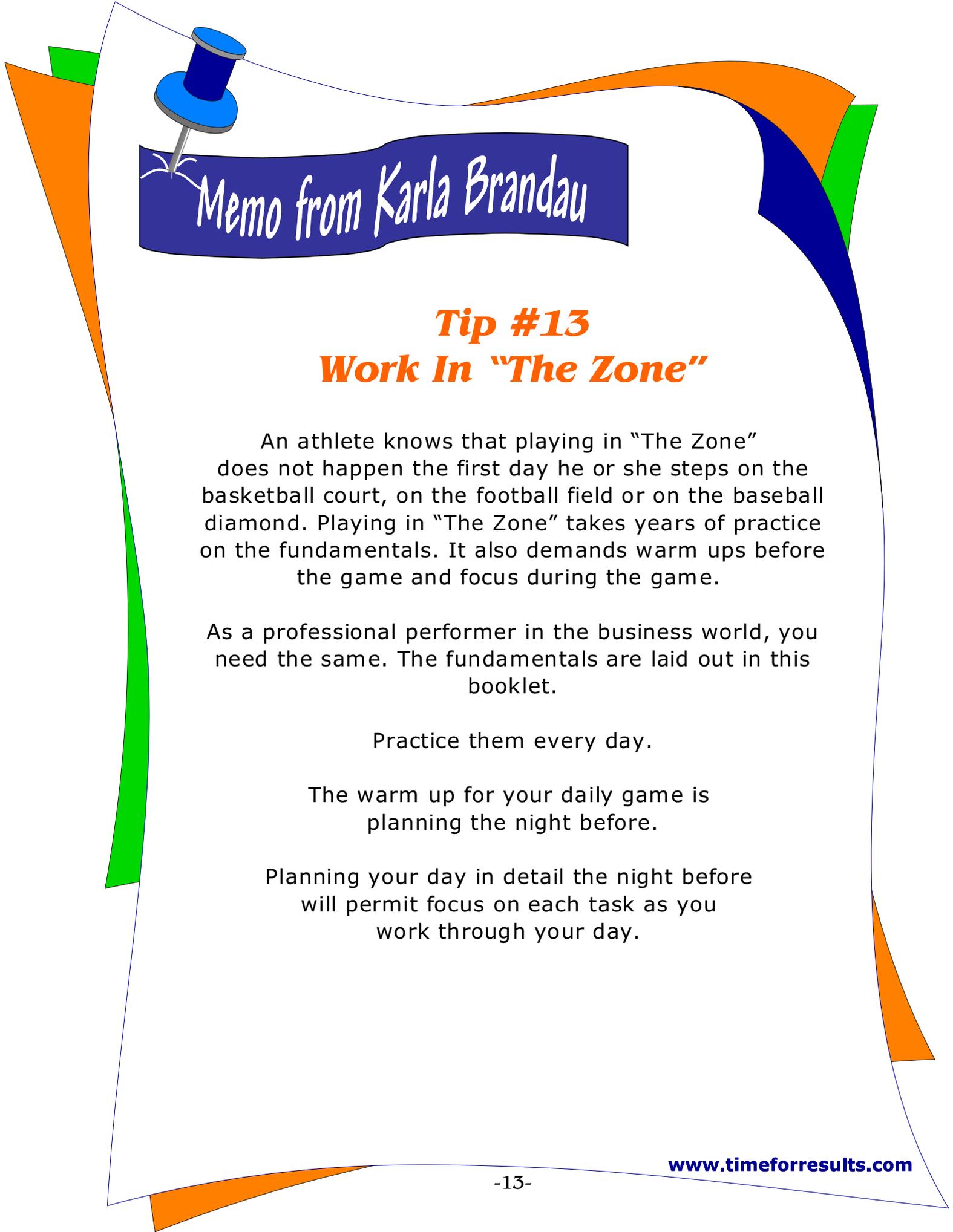
It can be compared to the times when an athlete performs in "the Zone."

Athletes in "The Zone" feel their play rise to a new levels. Nothing surprises them.

They know how the play will develop and where the ball will bounce.

Their "work" is effortless.

"The Zone" is also a peak performance period of balanced emotion characterized by a feeling of no pressure, a powerful sense of high positive energy, focus, control and confidence as well as an attitude of optimism.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #13**  
**Work In "The Zone"**

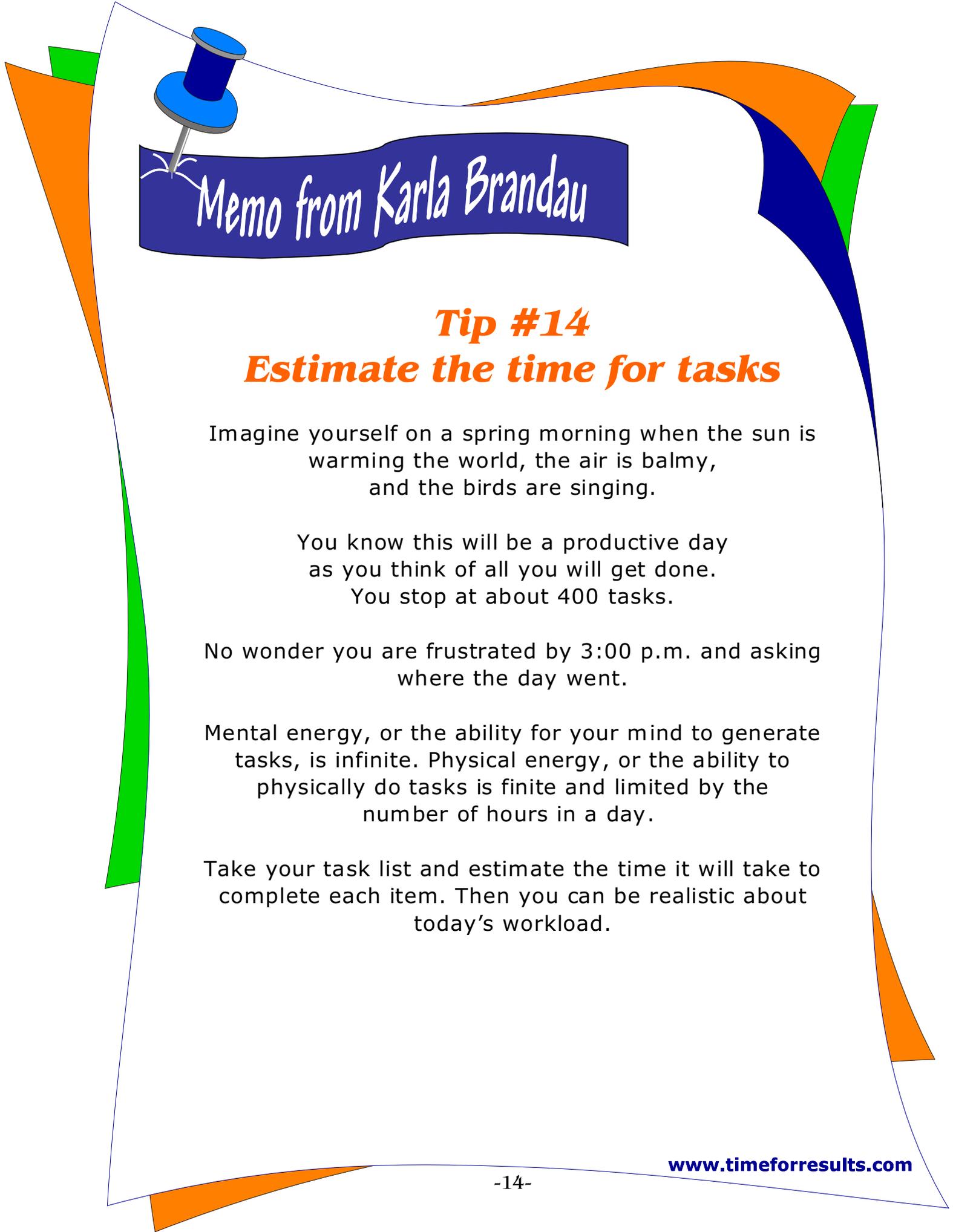
An athlete knows that playing in "The Zone" does not happen the first day he or she steps on the basketball court, on the football field or on the baseball diamond. Playing in "The Zone" takes years of practice on the fundamentals. It also demands warm ups before the game and focus during the game.

As a professional performer in the business world, you need the same. The fundamentals are laid out in this booklet.

Practice them every day.

The warm up for your daily game is planning the night before.

Planning your day in detail the night before will permit focus on each task as you work through your day.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #14**  
***Estimate the time for tasks***

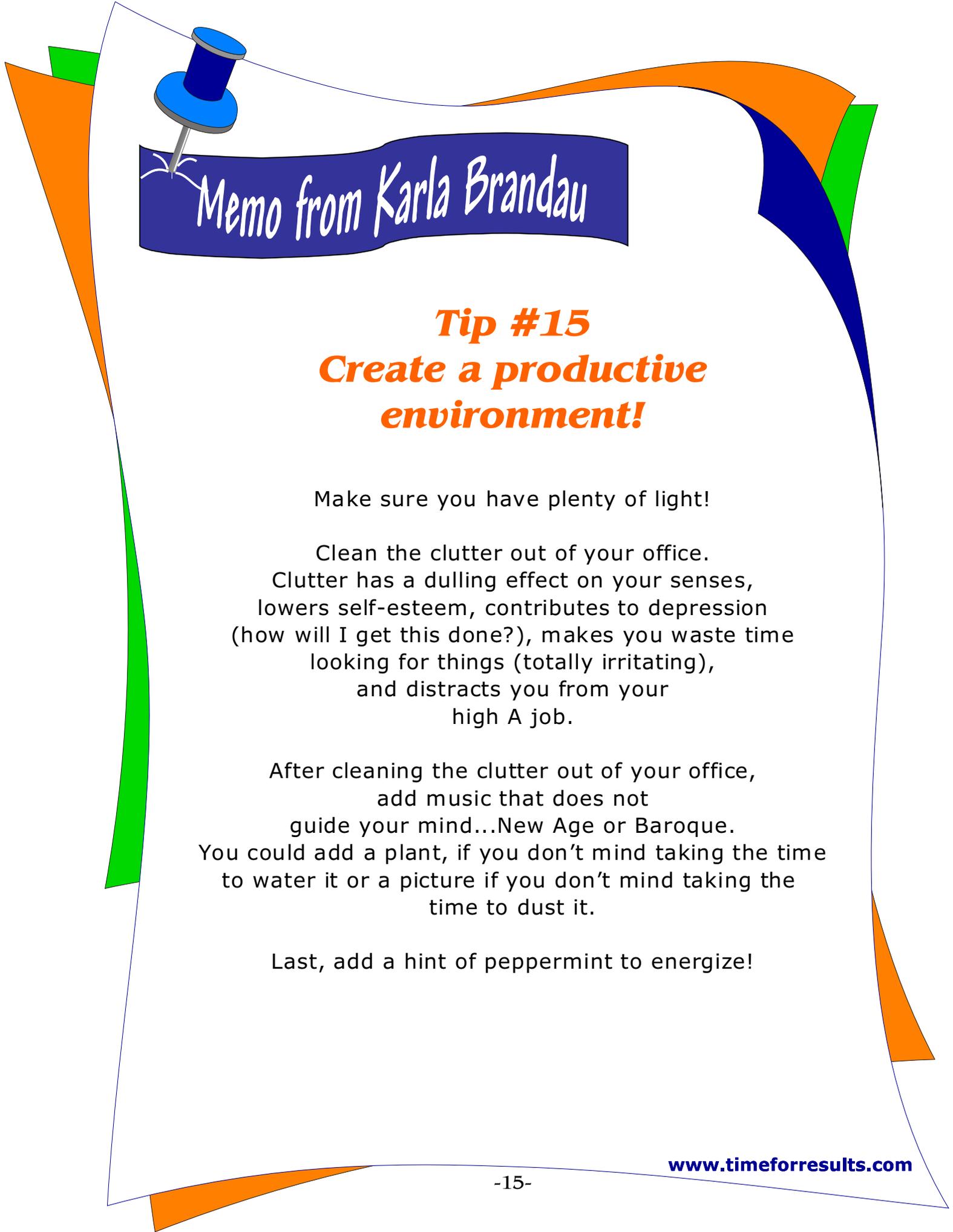
Imagine yourself on a spring morning when the sun is warming the world, the air is balmy, and the birds are singing.

You know this will be a productive day as you think of all you will get done. You stop at about 400 tasks.

No wonder you are frustrated by 3:00 p.m. and asking where the day went.

Mental energy, or the ability for your mind to generate tasks, is infinite. Physical energy, or the ability to physically do tasks is finite and limited by the number of hours in a day.

Take your task list and estimate the time it will take to complete each item. Then you can be realistic about today's workload.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

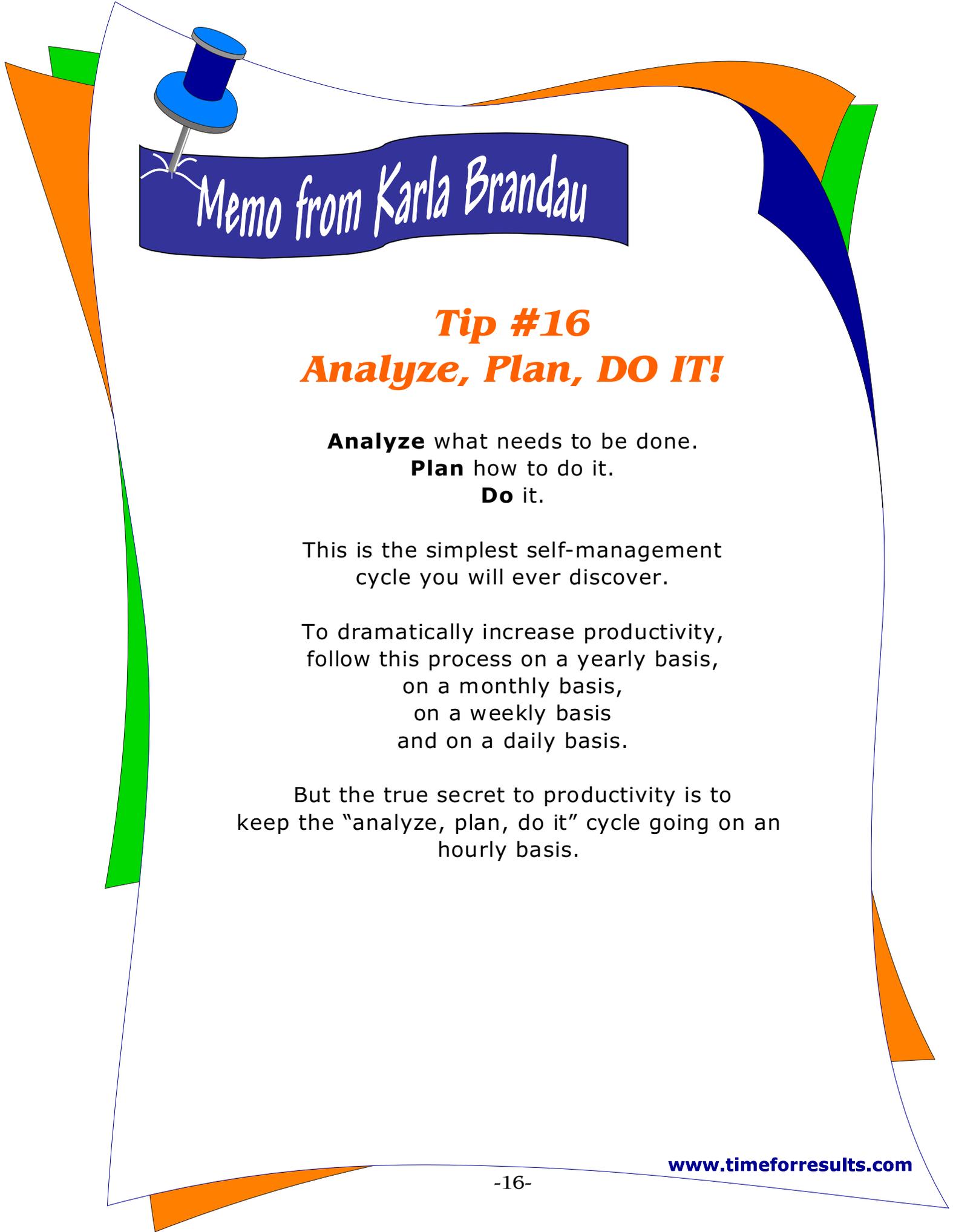
**Tip #15**  
***Create a productive environment!***

Make sure you have plenty of light!

Clean the clutter out of your office.  
Clutter has a dulling effect on your senses, lowers self-esteem, contributes to depression (how will I get this done?), makes you waste time looking for things (totally irritating), and distracts you from your high A job.

After cleaning the clutter out of your office, add music that does not guide your mind...New Age or Baroque. You could add a plant, if you don't mind taking the time to water it or a picture if you don't mind taking the time to dust it.

Last, add a hint of peppermint to energize!



Memo from Karla Brandau

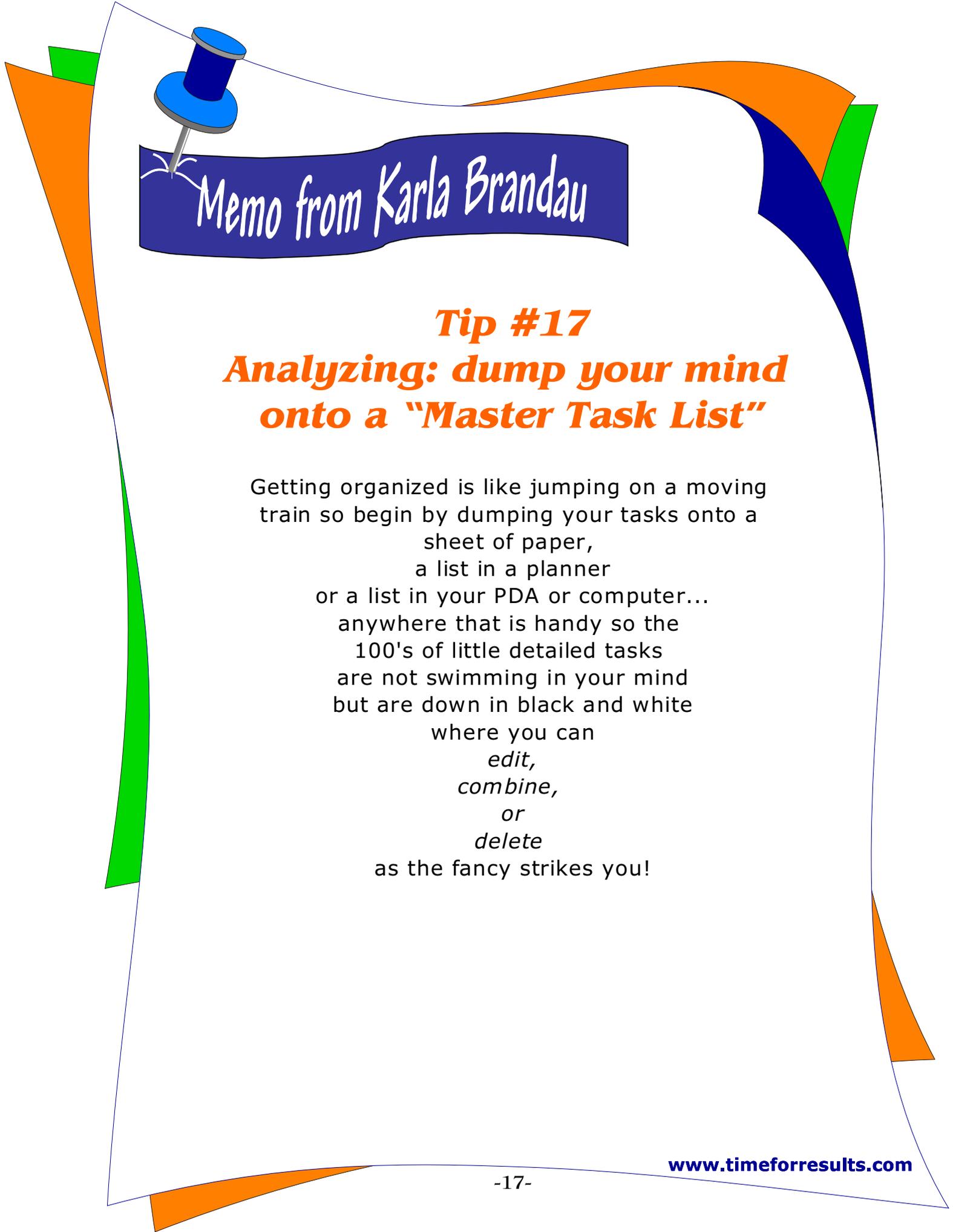
**Tip #16**  
**Analyze, Plan, DO IT!**

**Analyze** what needs to be done.  
**Plan** how to do it.  
**Do** it.

This is the simplest self-management cycle you will ever discover.

To dramatically increase productivity, follow this process on a yearly basis, on a monthly basis, on a weekly basis and on a daily basis.

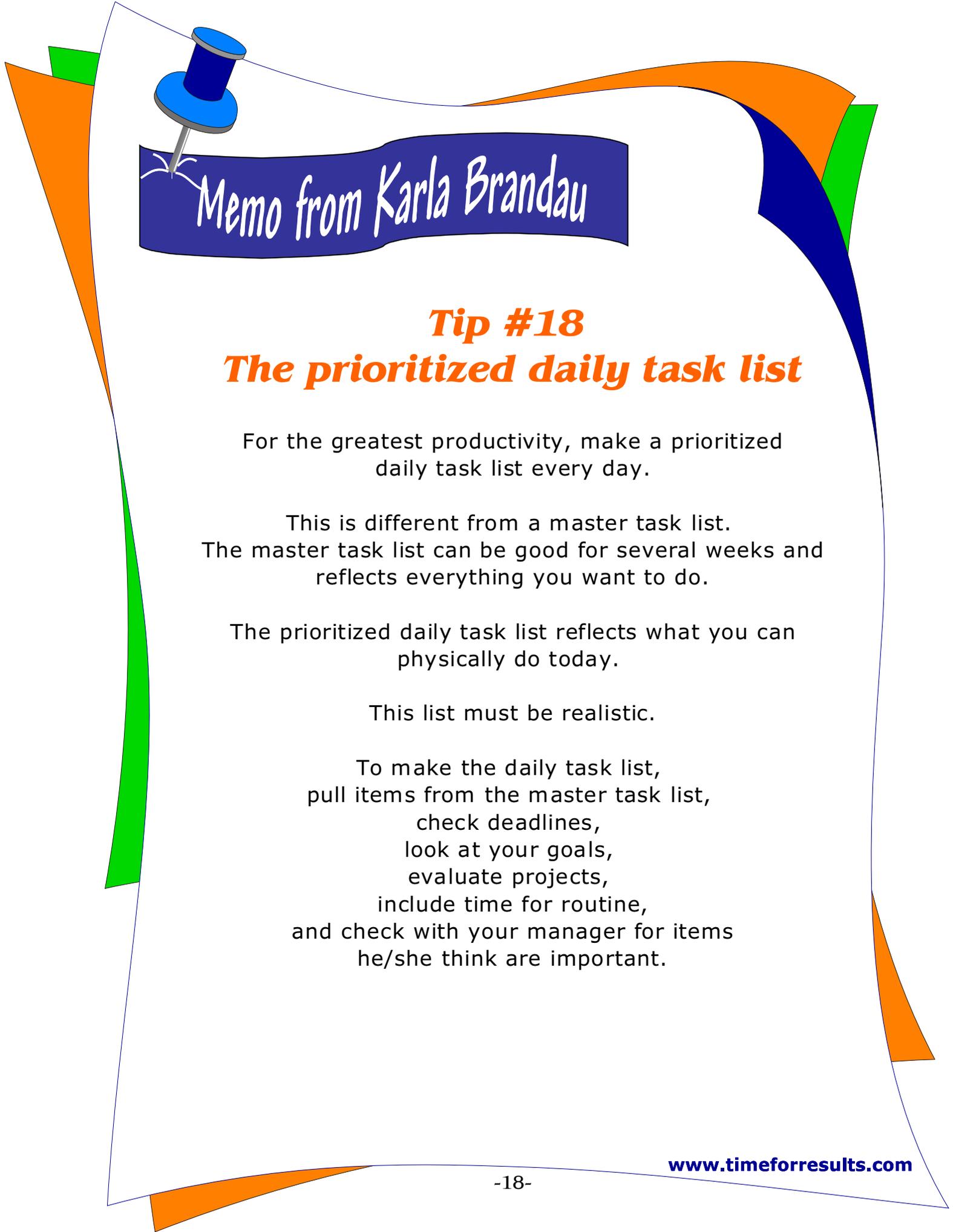
But the true secret to productivity is to keep the “analyze, plan, do it” cycle going on an hourly basis.



Memo from Karla Brandau

**Tip #17**  
**Analyzing: dump your mind**  
**onto a "Master Task List"**

Getting organized is like jumping on a moving train so begin by dumping your tasks onto a sheet of paper, a list in a planner or a list in your PDA or computer... anywhere that is handy so the 100's of little detailed tasks are not swimming in your mind but are down in black and white where you can *edit,* *combine,* *or* *delete* as the fancy strikes you!



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #18**  
***The prioritized daily task list***

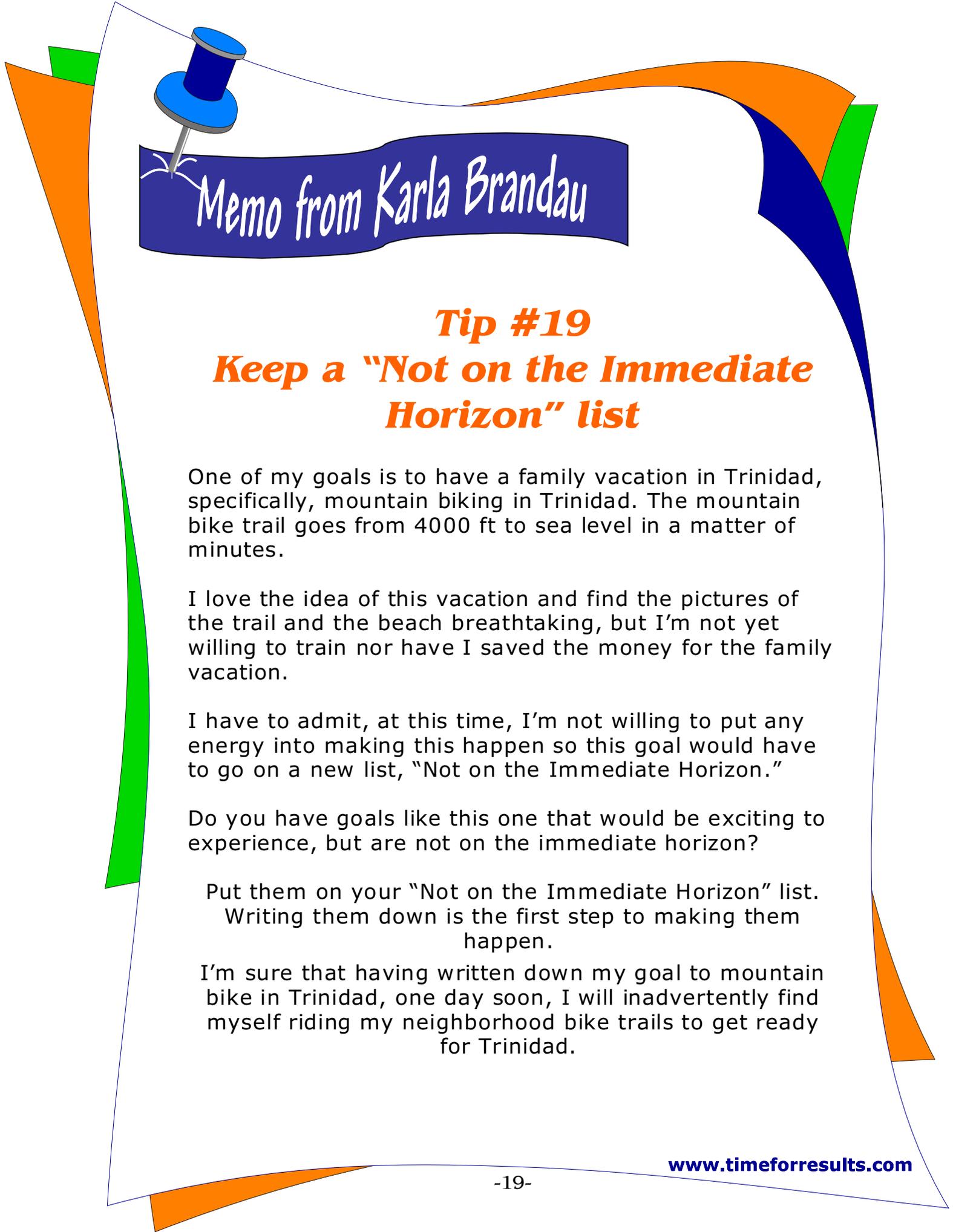
For the greatest productivity, make a prioritized daily task list every day.

This is different from a master task list. The master task list can be good for several weeks and reflects everything you want to do.

The prioritized daily task list reflects what you can physically do today.

This list must be realistic.

To make the daily task list, pull items from the master task list, check deadlines, look at your goals, evaluate projects, include time for routine, and check with your manager for items he/she think are important.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #19**  
***Keep a "Not on the Immediate Horizon" list***

One of my goals is to have a family vacation in Trinidad, specifically, mountain biking in Trinidad. The mountain bike trail goes from 4000 ft to sea level in a matter of minutes.

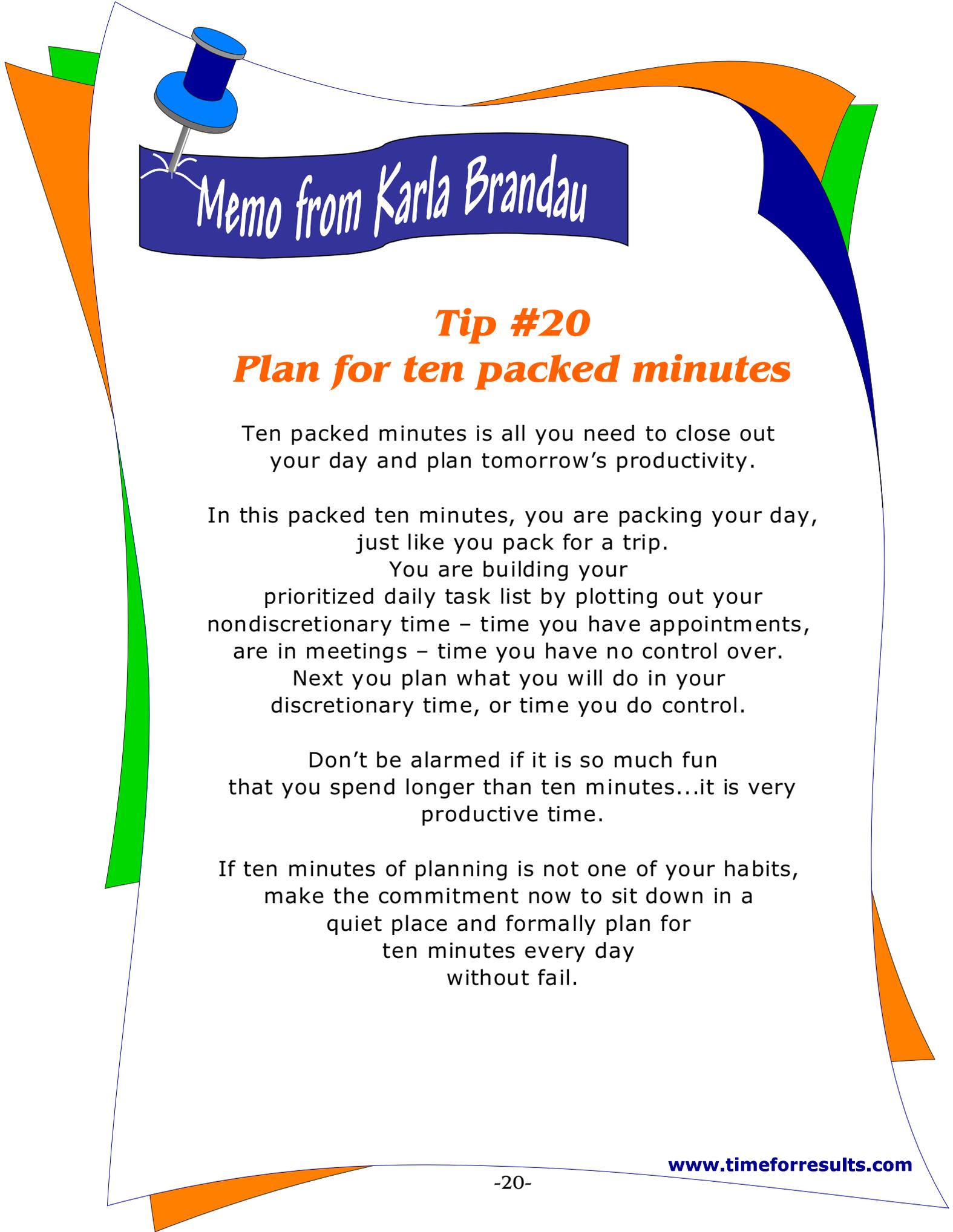
I love the idea of this vacation and find the pictures of the trail and the beach breathtaking, but I'm not yet willing to train nor have I saved the money for the family vacation.

I have to admit, at this time, I'm not willing to put any energy into making this happen so this goal would have to go on a new list, "Not on the Immediate Horizon."

Do you have goals like this one that would be exciting to experience, but are not on the immediate horizon?

Put them on your "Not on the Immediate Horizon" list. Writing them down is the first step to making them happen.

I'm sure that having written down my goal to mountain bike in Trinidad, one day soon, I will inadvertently find myself riding my neighborhood bike trails to get ready for Trinidad.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #20**  
***Plan for ten packed minutes***

Ten packed minutes is all you need to close out your day and plan tomorrow's productivity.

In this packed ten minutes, you are packing your day, just like you pack for a trip.

You are building your prioritized daily task list by plotting out your nondiscretionary time – time you have appointments, are in meetings – time you have no control over.

Next you plan what you will do in your discretionary time, or time you do control.

Don't be alarmed if it is so much fun that you spend longer than ten minutes...it is very productive time.

If ten minutes of planning is not one of your habits, make the commitment now to sit down in a quiet place and formally plan for ten minutes every day without fail.

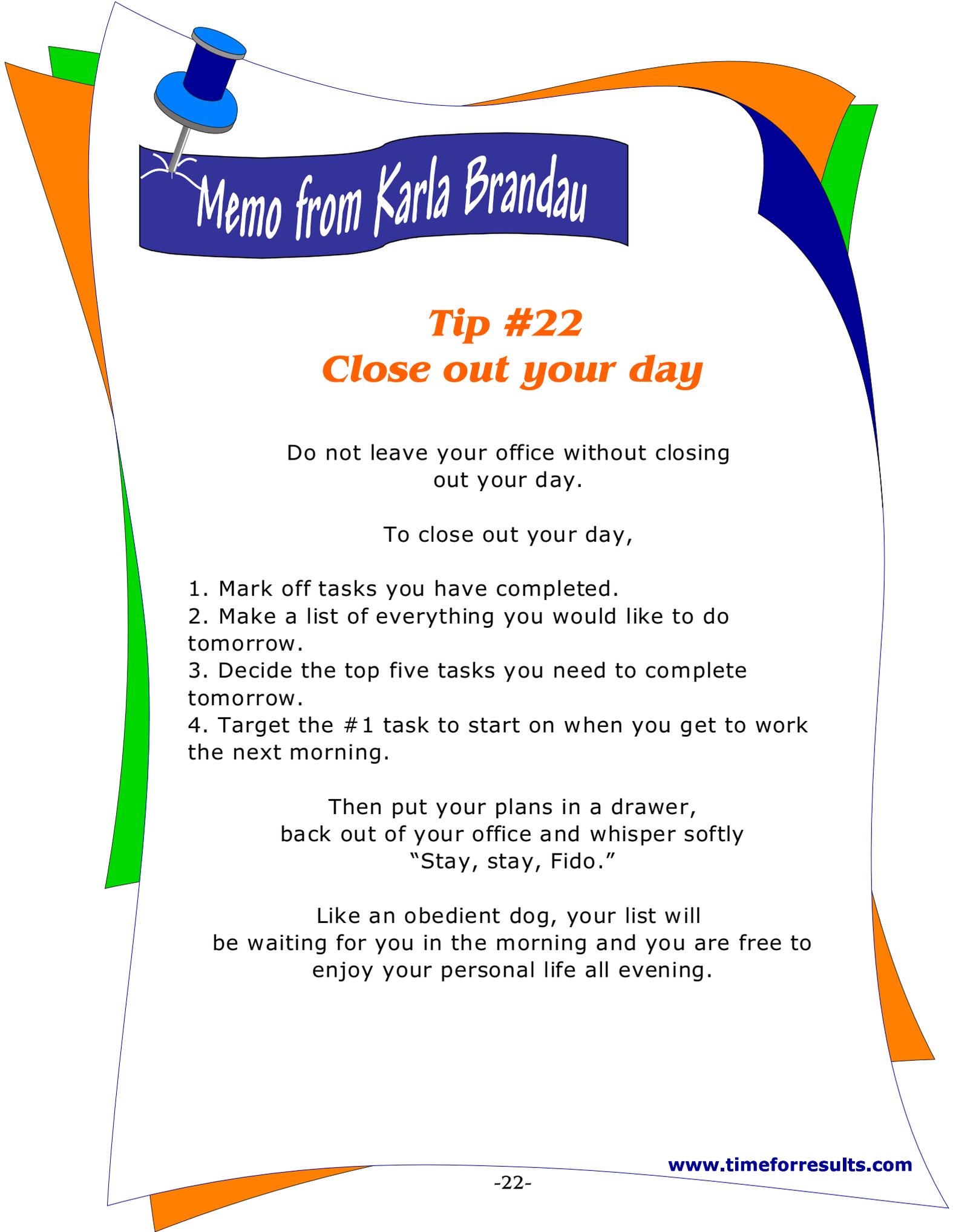


*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #21**  
***Pack your ten minutes***

After you determine your discretionary and nondiscretionary time, continue packing your day by looking at your master task list and:

1. Notating tasks with critical deadlines such as the FEDEX package that MUST be ready by 12:00 Noon.
2. Anticipating icebergs on the horizon such as the 40-hour project due in three weeks.
3. Eliminating unimportant stuff.
4. Grouping tasks that are similar to create momentum and create greater efficiency.
5. Prioritizing the most important task that will be tackled first the next day.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #22**  
***Close out your day***

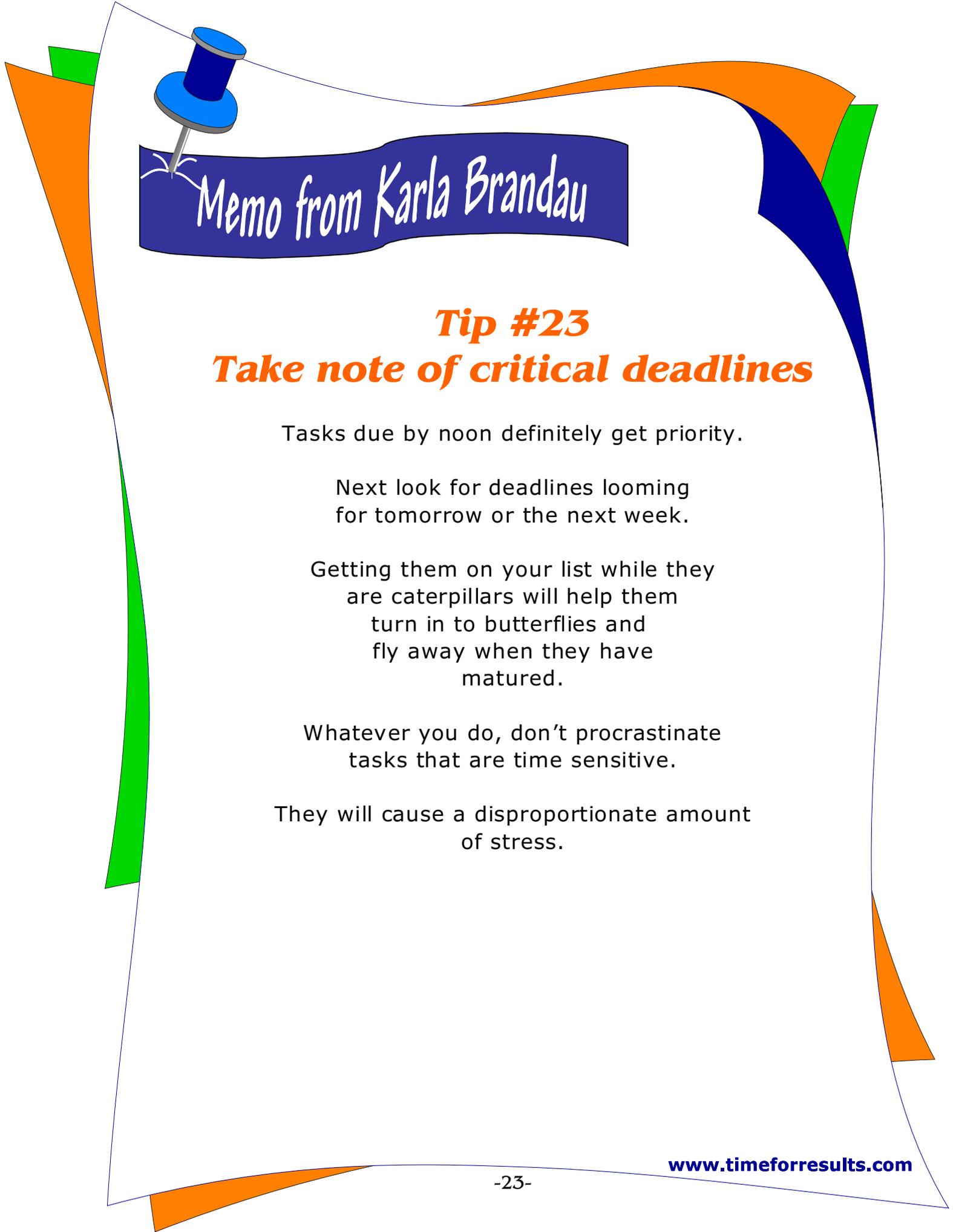
Do not leave your office without closing out your day.

To close out your day,

1. Mark off tasks you have completed.
2. Make a list of everything you would like to do tomorrow.
3. Decide the top five tasks you need to complete tomorrow.
4. Target the #1 task to start on when you get to work the next morning.

Then put your plans in a drawer,  
back out of your office and whisper softly  
"Stay, stay, Fido."

Like an obedient dog, your list will  
be waiting for you in the morning and you are free to  
enjoy your personal life all evening.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #23**  
***Take note of critical deadlines***

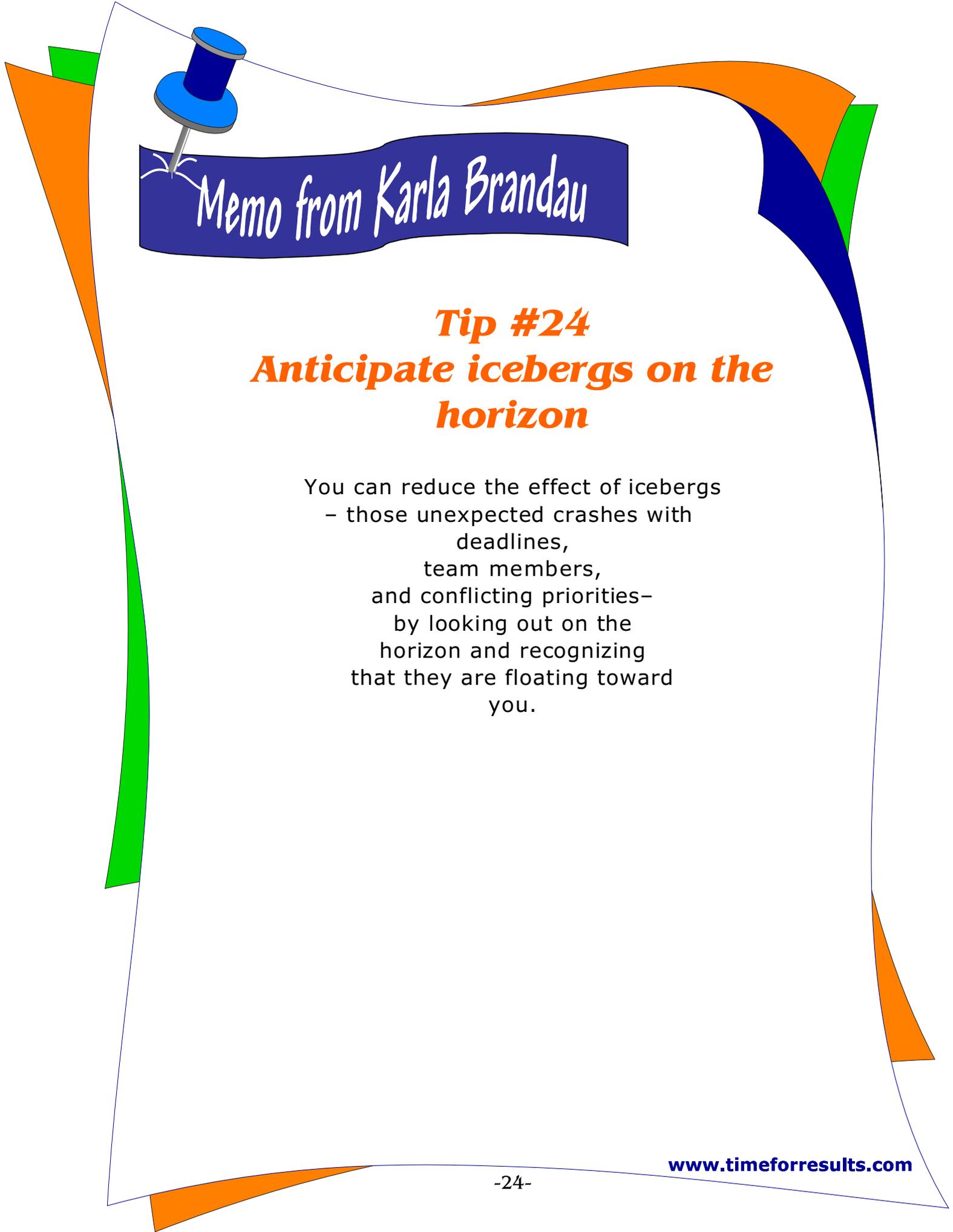
Tasks due by noon definitely get priority.

Next look for deadlines looming  
for tomorrow or the next week.

Getting them on your list while they  
are caterpillars will help them  
turn in to butterflies and  
fly away when they have  
matured.

Whatever you do, don't procrastinate  
tasks that are time sensitive.

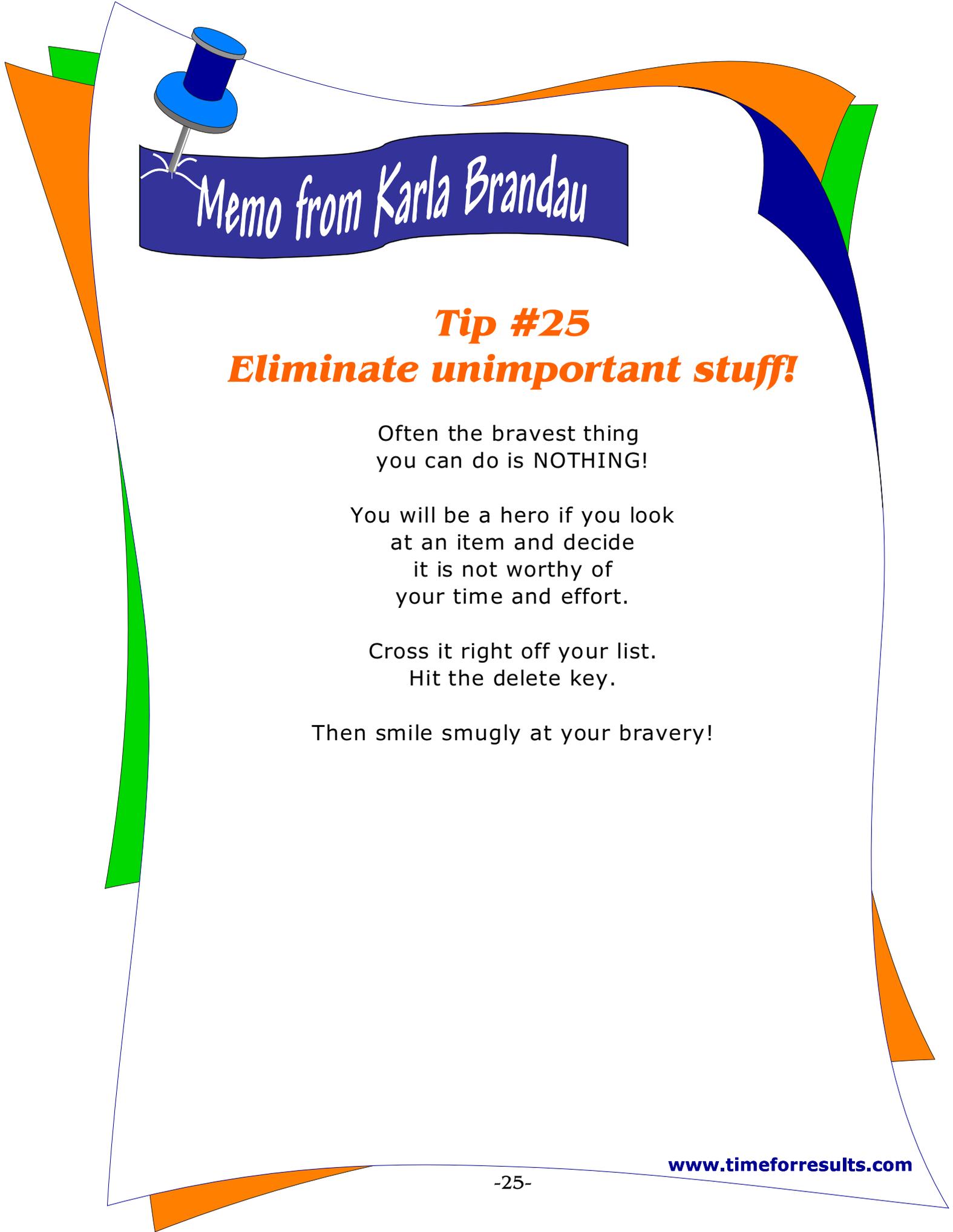
They will cause a disproportionate amount  
of stress.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #24**  
***Anticipate icebergs on the horizon***

You can reduce the effect of icebergs  
– those unexpected crashes with  
deadlines,  
team members,  
and conflicting priorities–  
by looking out on the  
horizon and recognizing  
that they are floating toward  
you.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

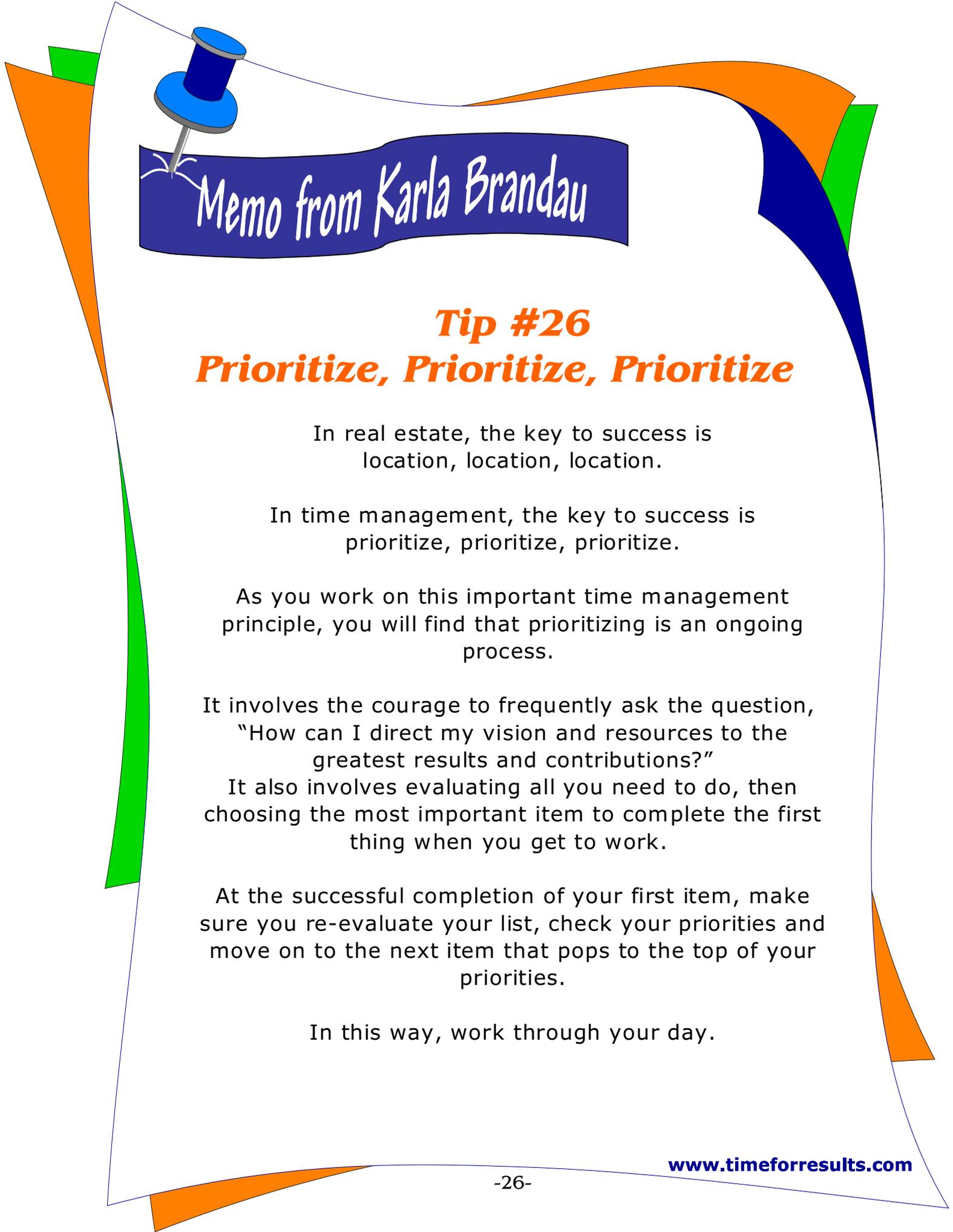
**Tip #25**  
***Eliminate unimportant stuff!***

Often the bravest thing  
you can do is NOTHING!

You will be a hero if you look  
at an item and decide  
it is not worthy of  
your time and effort.

Cross it right off your list.  
Hit the delete key.

Then smile smugly at your bravery!



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #26**  
***Prioritize, Prioritize, Prioritize***

In real estate, the key to success is  
location, location, location.

In time management, the key to success is  
prioritize, prioritize, prioritize.

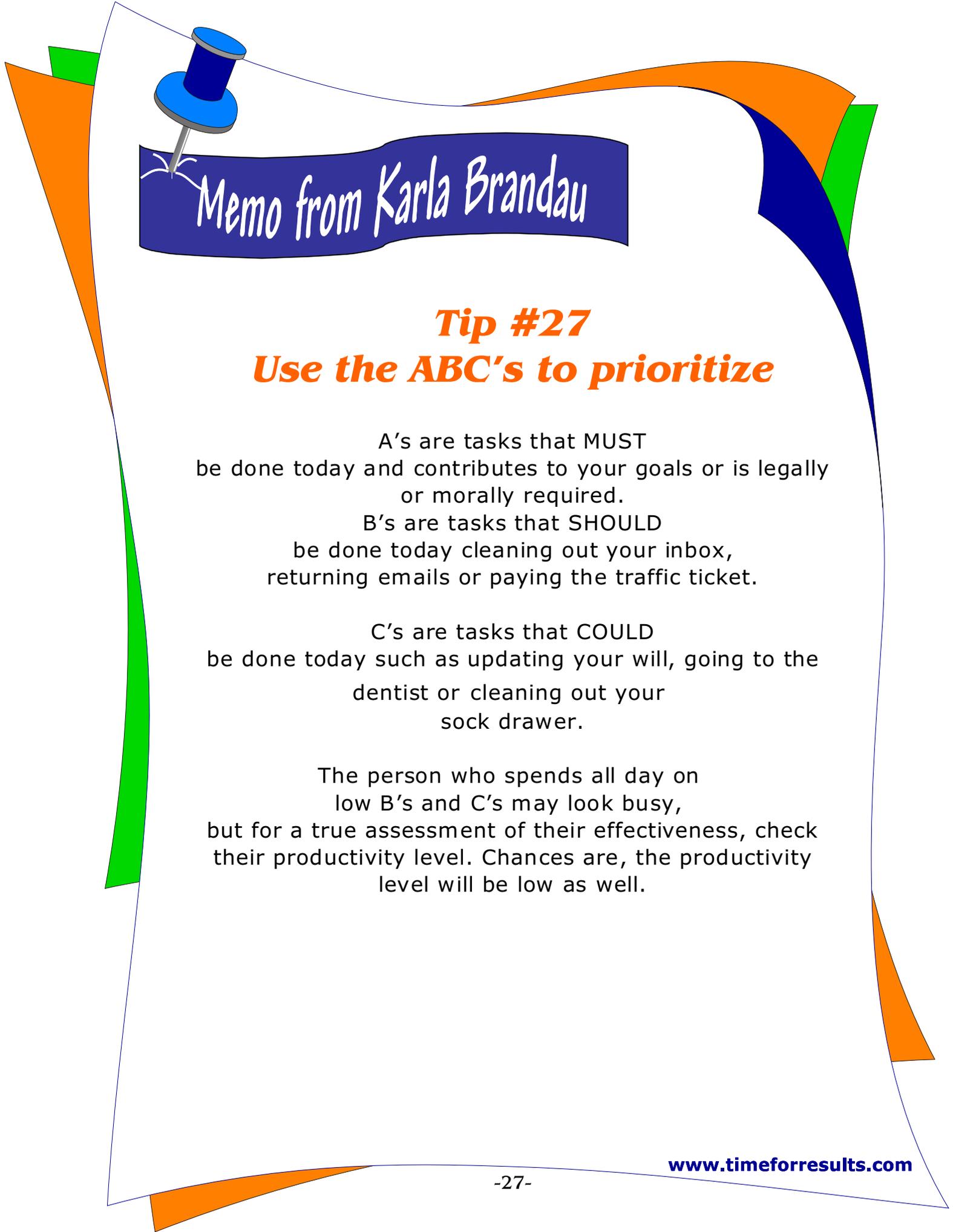
As you work on this important time management  
principle, you will find that prioritizing is an ongoing  
process.

It involves the courage to frequently ask the question,  
“How can I direct my vision and resources to the  
greatest results and contributions?”

It also involves evaluating all you need to do, then  
choosing the most important item to complete the first  
thing when you get to work.

At the successful completion of your first item, make  
sure you re-evaluate your list, check your priorities and  
move on to the next item that pops to the top of your  
priorities.

In this way, work through your day.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

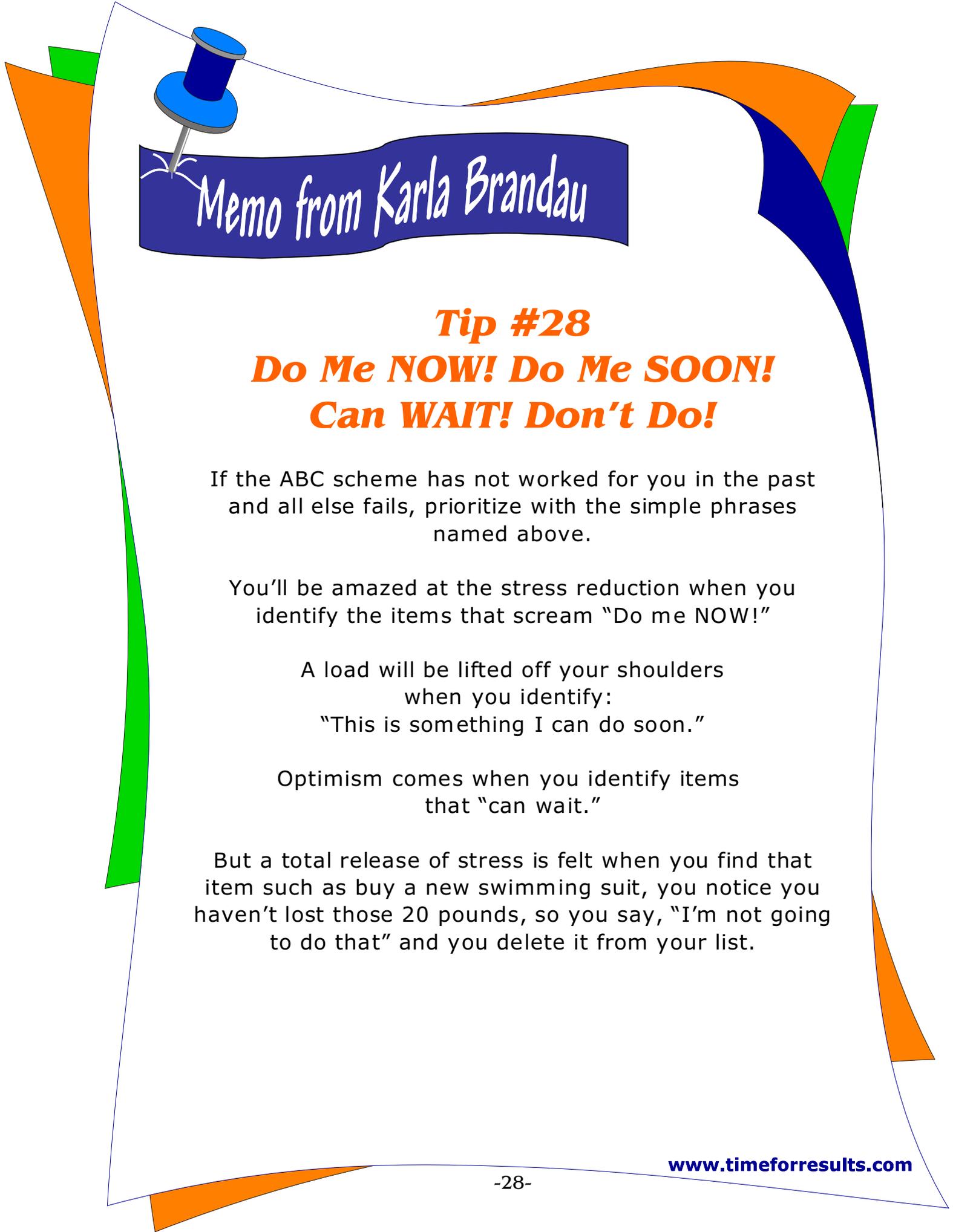
**Tip #27**  
***Use the ABC's to prioritize***

A's are tasks that **MUST** be done today and contributes to your goals or is legally or morally required.

B's are tasks that **SHOULD** be done today cleaning out your inbox, returning emails or paying the traffic ticket.

C's are tasks that **COULD** be done today such as updating your will, going to the dentist or cleaning out your sock drawer.

The person who spends all day on low B's and C's may look busy, but for a true assessment of their effectiveness, check their productivity level. Chances are, the productivity level will be low as well.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #28**  
***Do Me NOW! Do Me SOON!***  
***Can WAIT! Don't Do!***

If the ABC scheme has not worked for you in the past and all else fails, prioritize with the simple phrases named above.

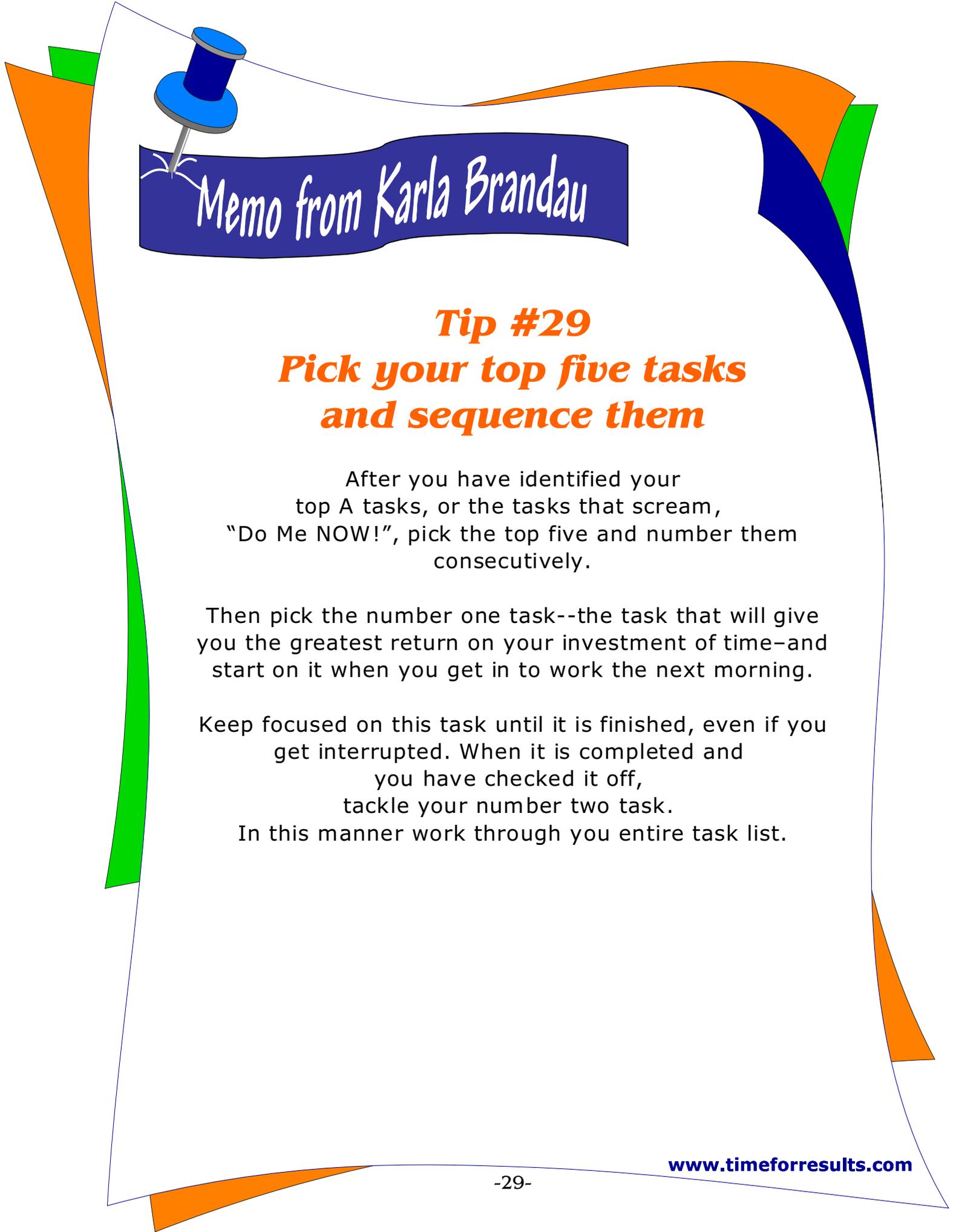
You'll be amazed at the stress reduction when you identify the items that scream "Do me NOW!"

A load will be lifted off your shoulders when you identify:

"This is something I can do soon."

Optimism comes when you identify items that "can wait."

But a total release of stress is felt when you find that item such as buy a new swimming suit, you notice you haven't lost those 20 pounds, so you say, "I'm not going to do that" and you delete it from your list.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #29**  
***Pick your top five tasks  
and sequence them***

After you have identified your top A tasks, or the tasks that scream, "Do Me NOW!", pick the top five and number them consecutively.

Then pick the number one task--the task that will give you the greatest return on your investment of time--and start on it when you get in to work the next morning.

Keep focused on this task until it is finished, even if you get interrupted. When it is completed and you have checked it off, tackle your number two task.

In this manner work through you entire task list.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #30**  
***Use intuition***

What is the best use of my time right now?

Ask this question when you find yourself becoming distracted, starting to procrastinate or shuffling, not processing paperwork.

This question also helps you when can't decide which project to work on, when it is time to transition to another task, or when you've run out steam on the current project.

Even with all the planning, prioritizing and sequencing, the most effective achievers work from intuition.

An inner spirit whispers that the time is now for this task.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #31**  
**Plan "thinking time"**

A lawyer called a plumber to fix his sink.

The plumber looked at the sink, picked up a wrench, banged a few pipes and said, "It's fixed. That'll be \$50."

The lawyer said, "Fifty dollars for 5 minutes of work? Are you crazy. You'll have to itemize that for me."

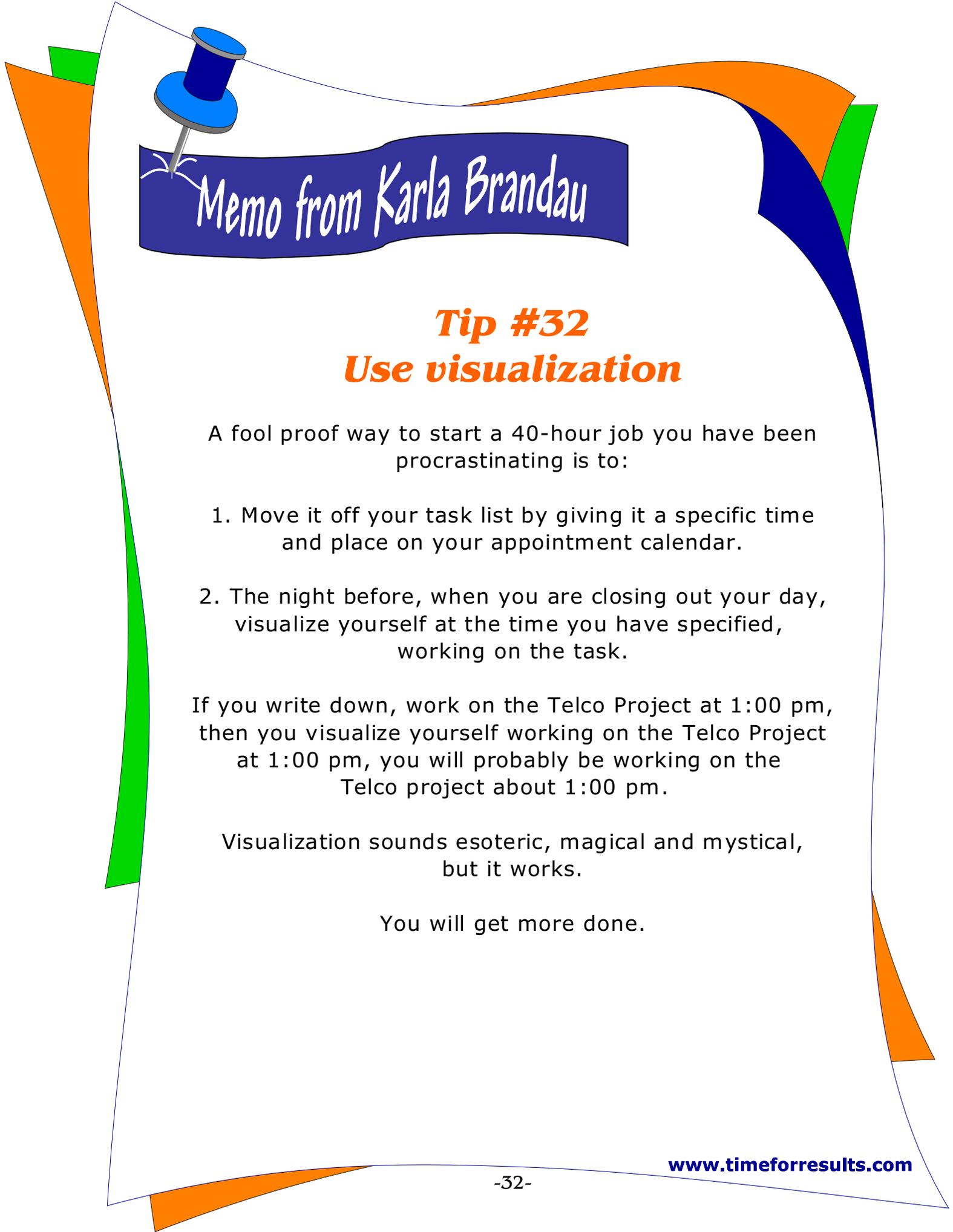
The plumber smiled and said, "It was five dollars for banging the pipes and forty-five for knowing where to bang."

You are not paid to tap dance.

You are paid for your knowledge, your ideas on how to improve processes and your answers to problems. Plan time to think or you won't know where to "bang the pipes."

Thinking time also relieves frenetic brain behavior. Typically, you give your mind problems to solve, but you don't give it time to solve it before you shove another problem at it.

Your mind moves frantically from problem to problem, never solving any of them. Thinking time gives your mind time to finish its thoughts and gives you solutions.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #32**  
***Use visualization***

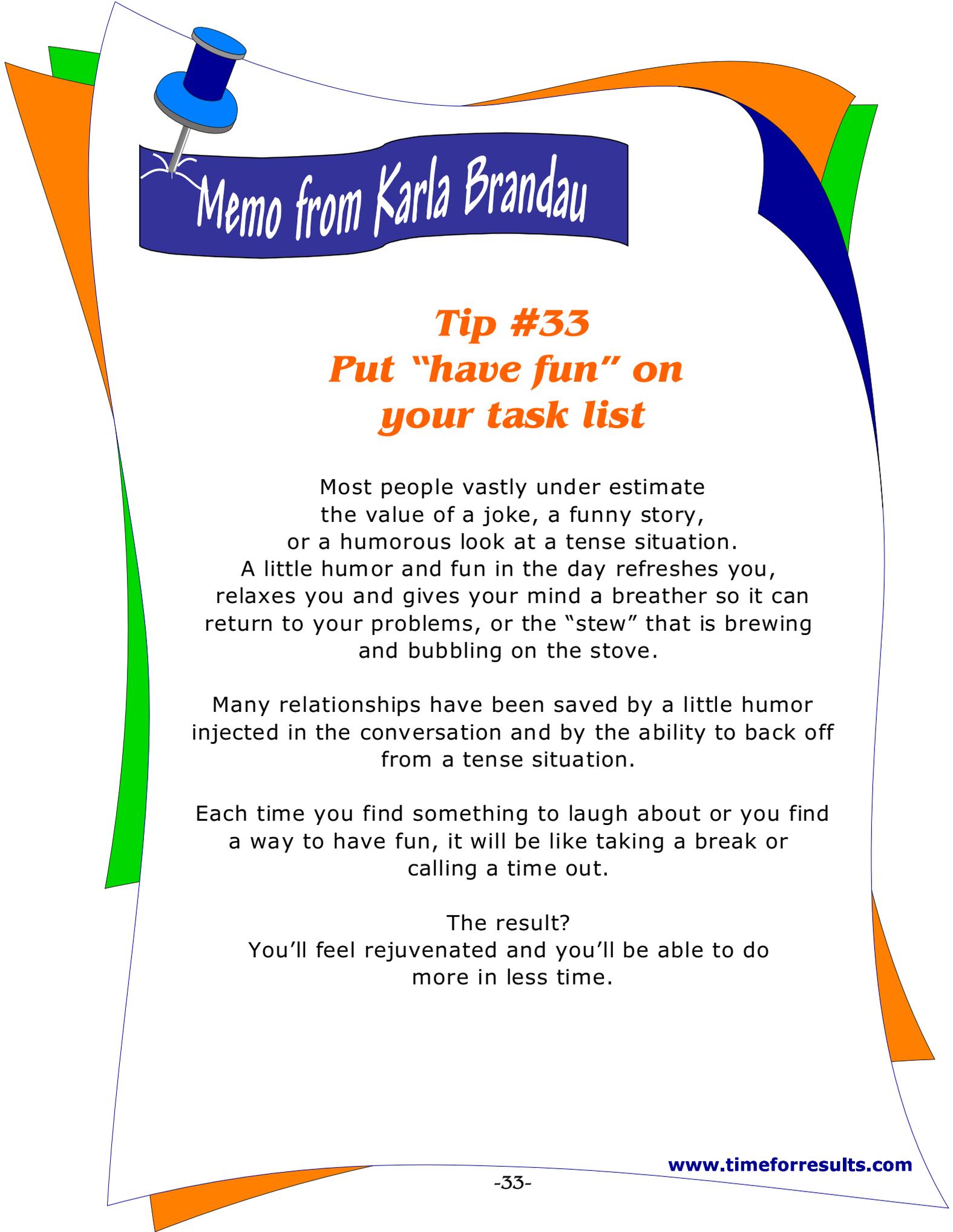
A fool proof way to start a 40-hour job you have been procrastinating is to:

1. Move it off your task list by giving it a specific time and place on your appointment calendar.
2. The night before, when you are closing out your day, visualize yourself at the time you have specified, working on the task.

If you write down, work on the Telco Project at 1:00 pm, then you visualize yourself working on the Telco Project at 1:00 pm, you will probably be working on the Telco project about 1:00 pm.

Visualization sounds esoteric, magical and mystical, but it works.

You will get more done.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #33**  
***Put "have fun" on  
your task list***

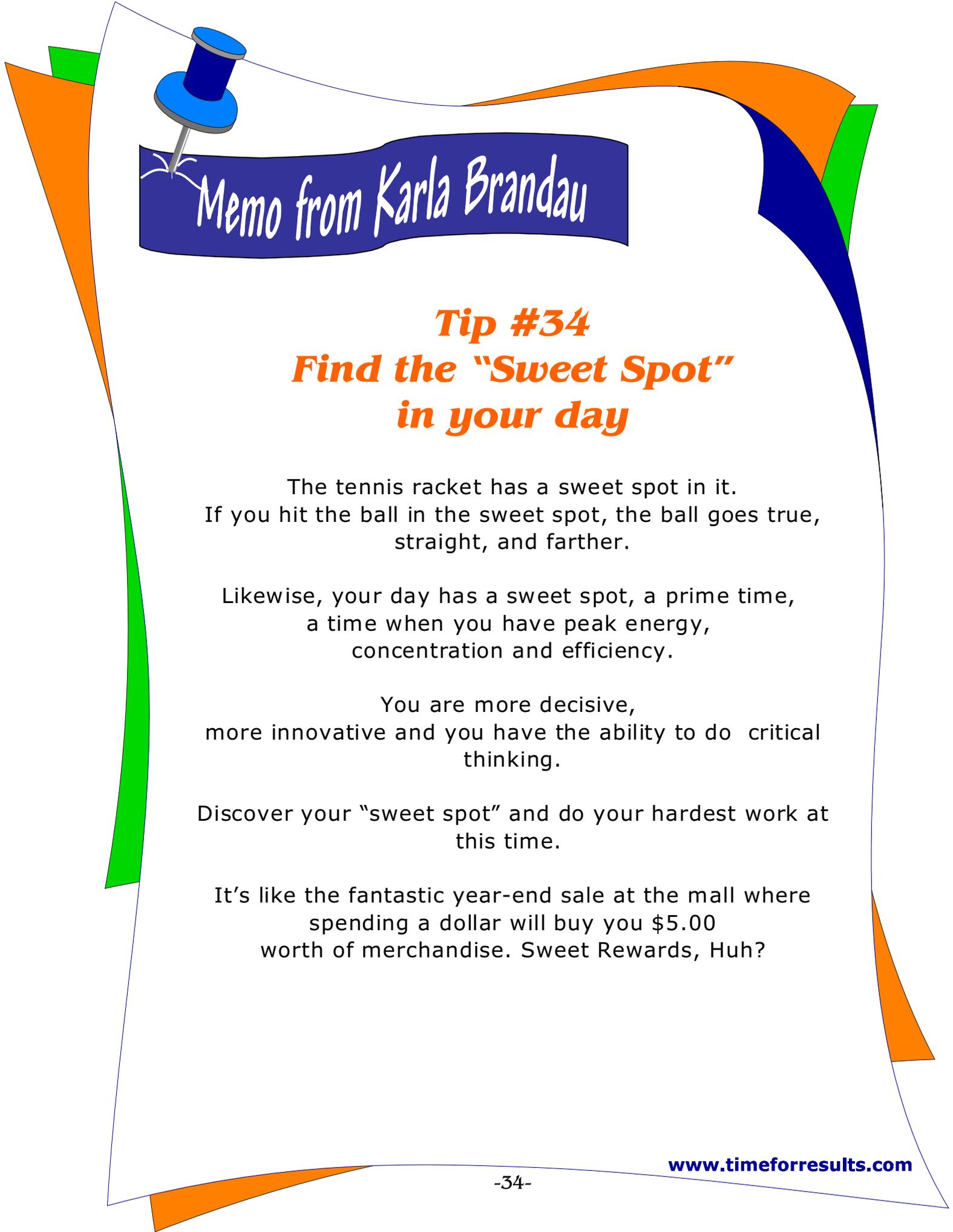
Most people vastly under estimate the value of a joke, a funny story, or a humorous look at a tense situation.

A little humor and fun in the day refreshes you, relaxes you and gives your mind a breather so it can return to your problems, or the "stew" that is brewing and bubbling on the stove.

Many relationships have been saved by a little humor injected in the conversation and by the ability to back off from a tense situation.

Each time you find something to laugh about or you find a way to have fun, it will be like taking a break or calling a time out.

The result?  
You'll feel rejuvenated and you'll be able to do more in less time.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #34**  
***Find the "Sweet Spot"***  
***in your day***

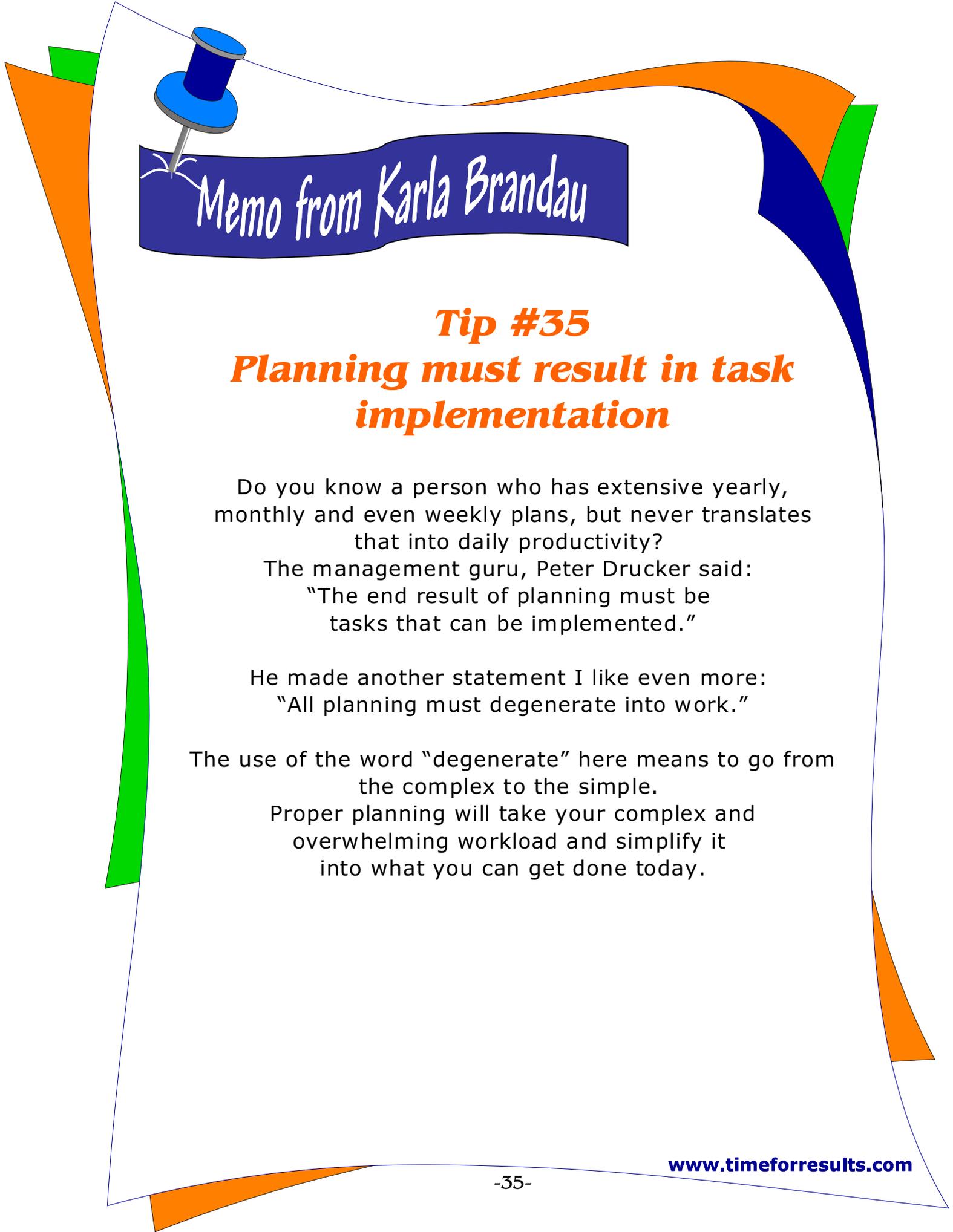
The tennis racket has a sweet spot in it. If you hit the ball in the sweet spot, the ball goes true, straight, and farther.

Likewise, your day has a sweet spot, a prime time, a time when you have peak energy, concentration and efficiency.

You are more decisive, more innovative and you have the ability to do critical thinking.

Discover your "sweet spot" and do your hardest work at this time.

It's like the fantastic year-end sale at the mall where spending a dollar will buy you \$5.00 worth of merchandise. Sweet Rewards, Huh?



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #35**  
***Planning must result in task  
implementation***

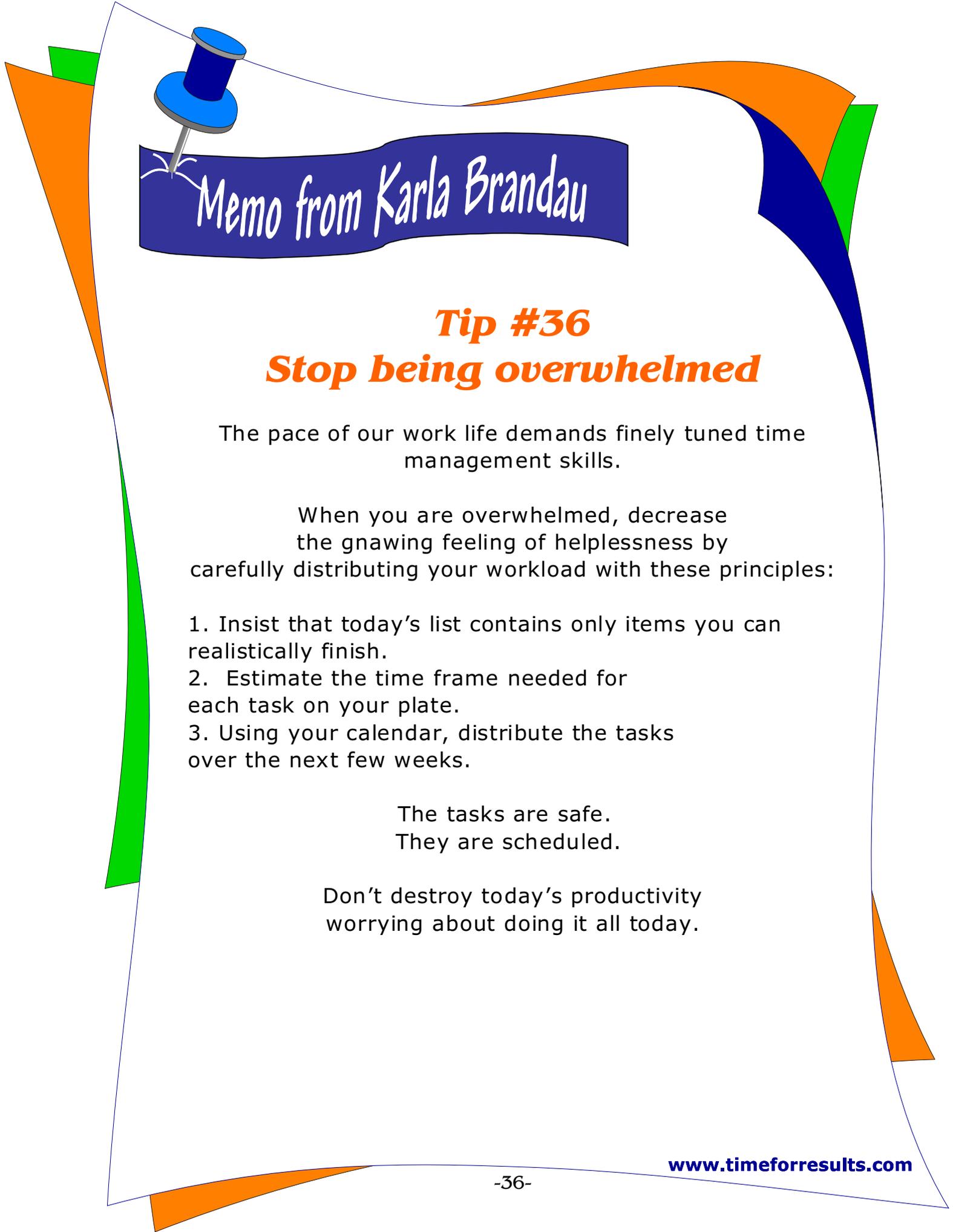
Do you know a person who has extensive yearly, monthly and even weekly plans, but never translates that into daily productivity?

The management guru, Peter Drucker said:  
"The end result of planning must be tasks that can be implemented."

He made another statement I like even more:  
"All planning must degenerate into work."

The use of the word "degenerate" here means to go from the complex to the simple.

Proper planning will take your complex and overwhelming workload and simplify it into what you can get done today.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #36**  
***Stop being overwhelmed***

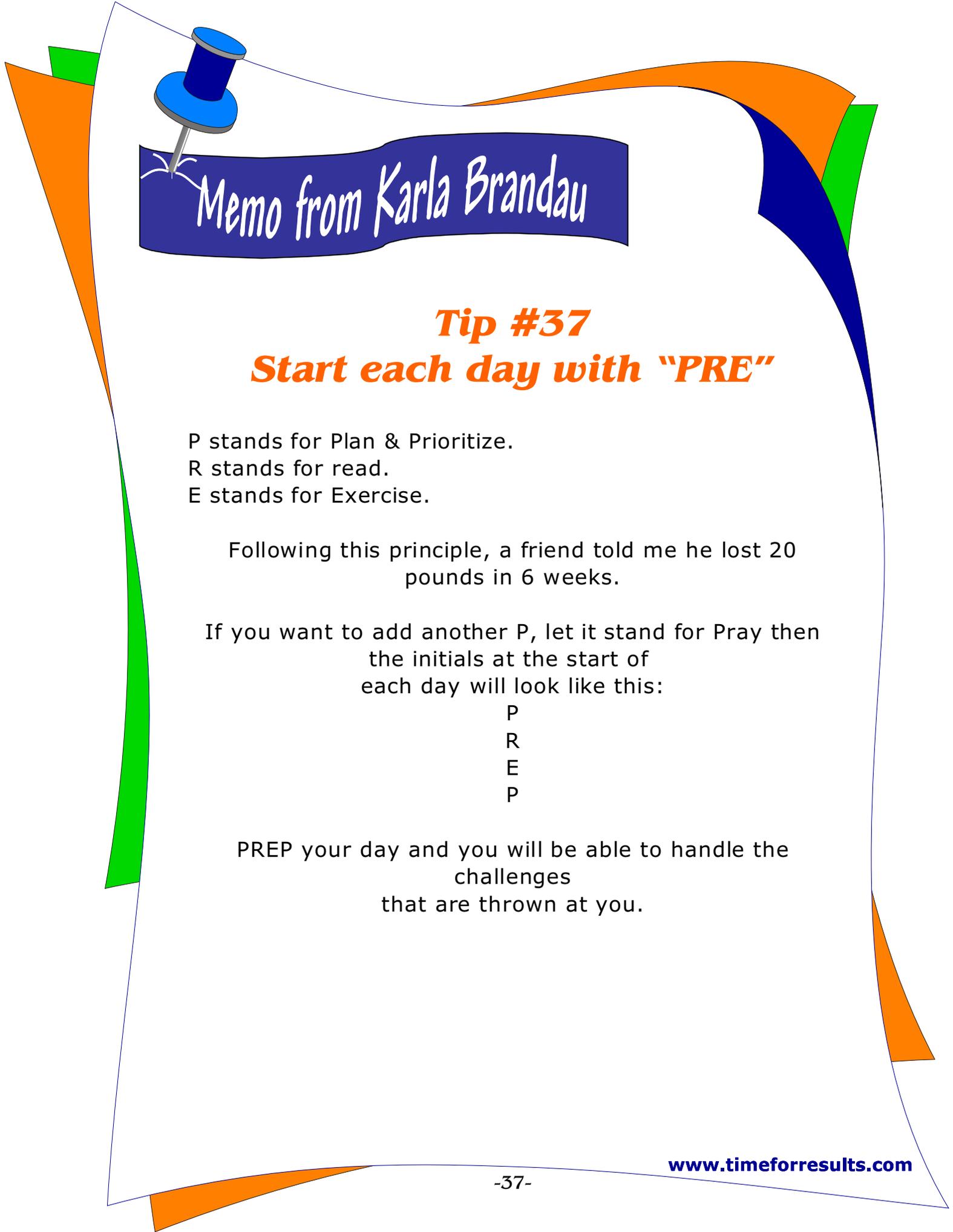
The pace of our work life demands finely tuned time management skills.

When you are overwhelmed, decrease the gnawing feeling of helplessness by carefully distributing your workload with these principles:

1. Insist that today's list contains only items you can realistically finish.
2. Estimate the time frame needed for each task on your plate.
3. Using your calendar, distribute the tasks over the next few weeks.

The tasks are safe.  
They are scheduled.

Don't destroy today's productivity worrying about doing it all today.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #37**  
***Start each day with "PRE"***

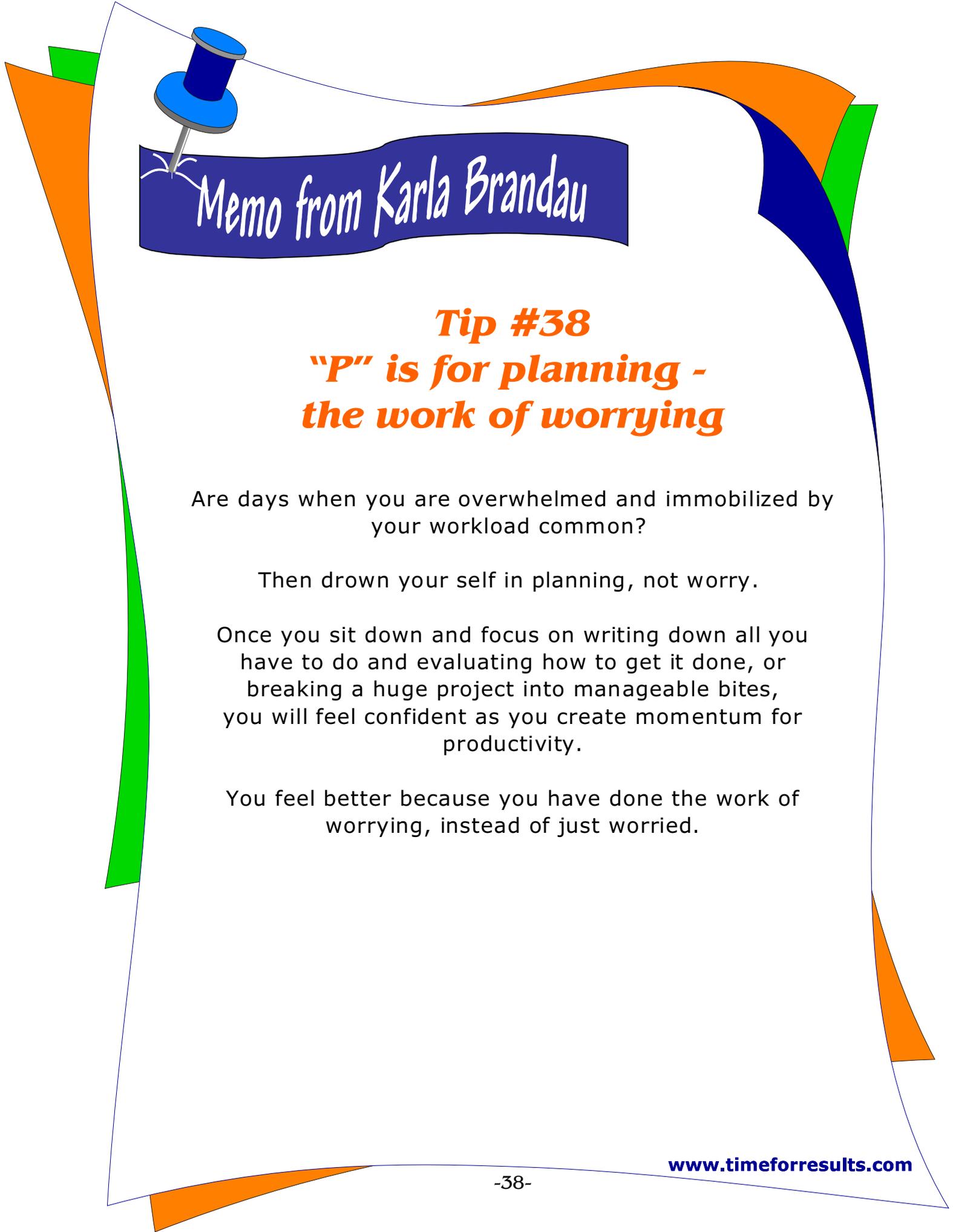
P stands for Plan & Prioritize.  
R stands for read.  
E stands for Exercise.

Following this principle, a friend told me he lost 20 pounds in 6 weeks.

If you want to add another P, let it stand for Pray then the initials at the start of each day will look like this:

P  
R  
E  
P

PREP your day and you will be able to handle the challenges that are thrown at you.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

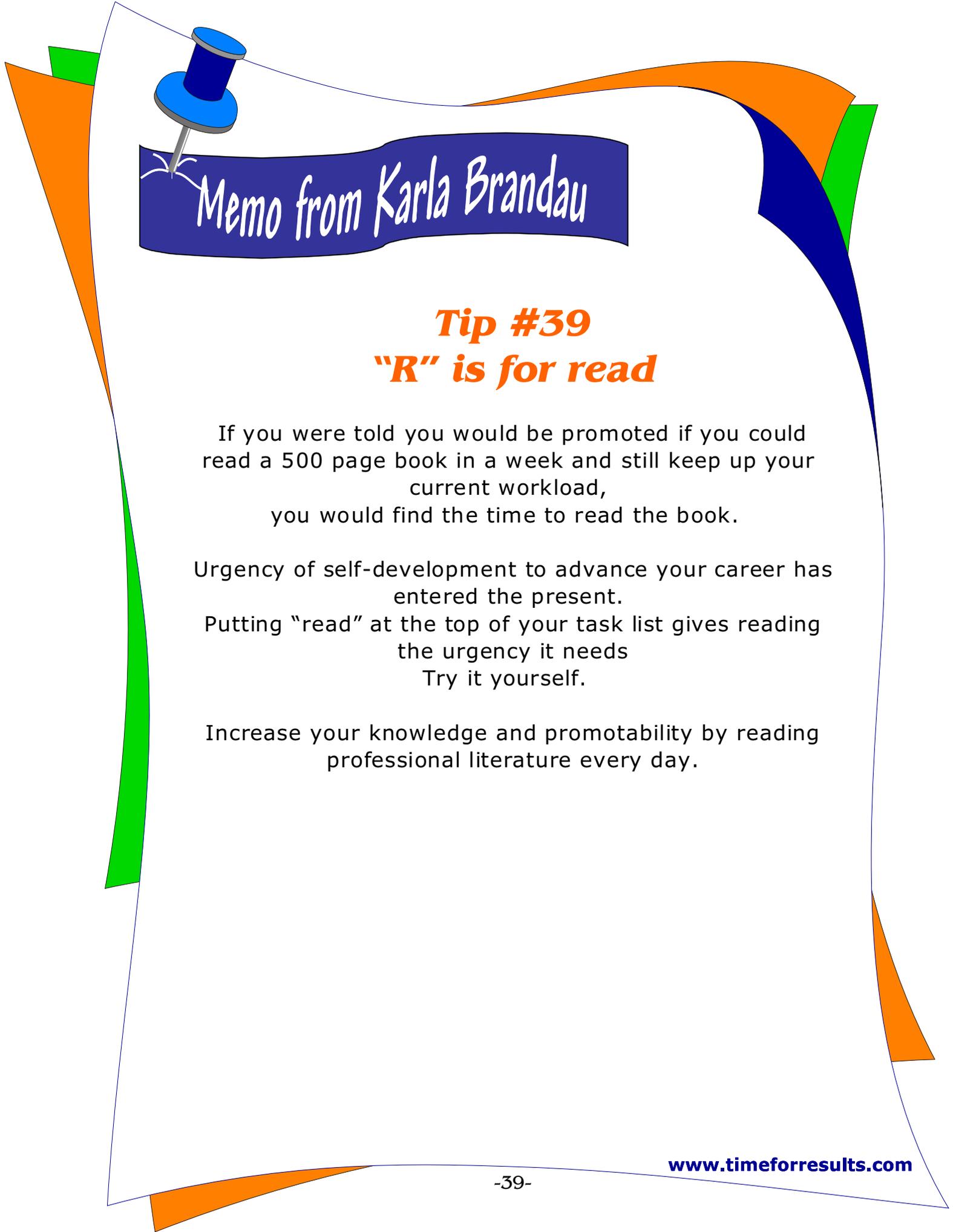
**Tip #38**  
***"P" is for planning -  
the work of worrying***

Are days when you are overwhelmed and immobilized by your workload common?

Then drown your self in planning, not worry.

Once you sit down and focus on writing down all you have to do and evaluating how to get it done, or breaking a huge project into manageable bites, you will feel confident as you create momentum for productivity.

You feel better because you have done the work of worrying, instead of just worried.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

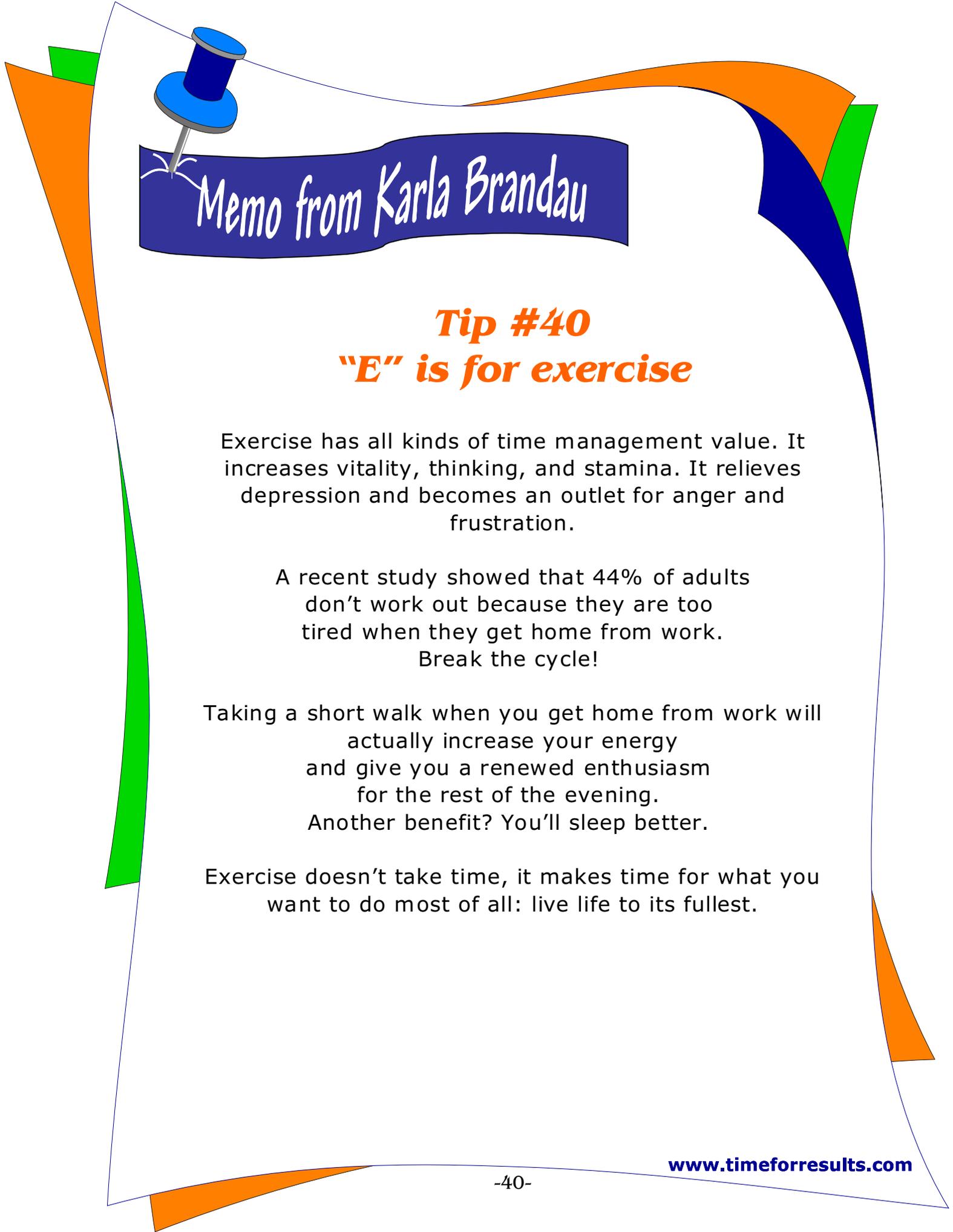
**Tip #39**  
***"R" is for read***

If you were told you would be promoted if you could read a 500 page book in a week and still keep up your current workload,  
you would find the time to read the book.

Urgency of self-development to advance your career has entered the present.

Putting "read" at the top of your task list gives reading the urgency it needs  
Try it yourself.

Increase your knowledge and promotability by reading professional literature every day.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

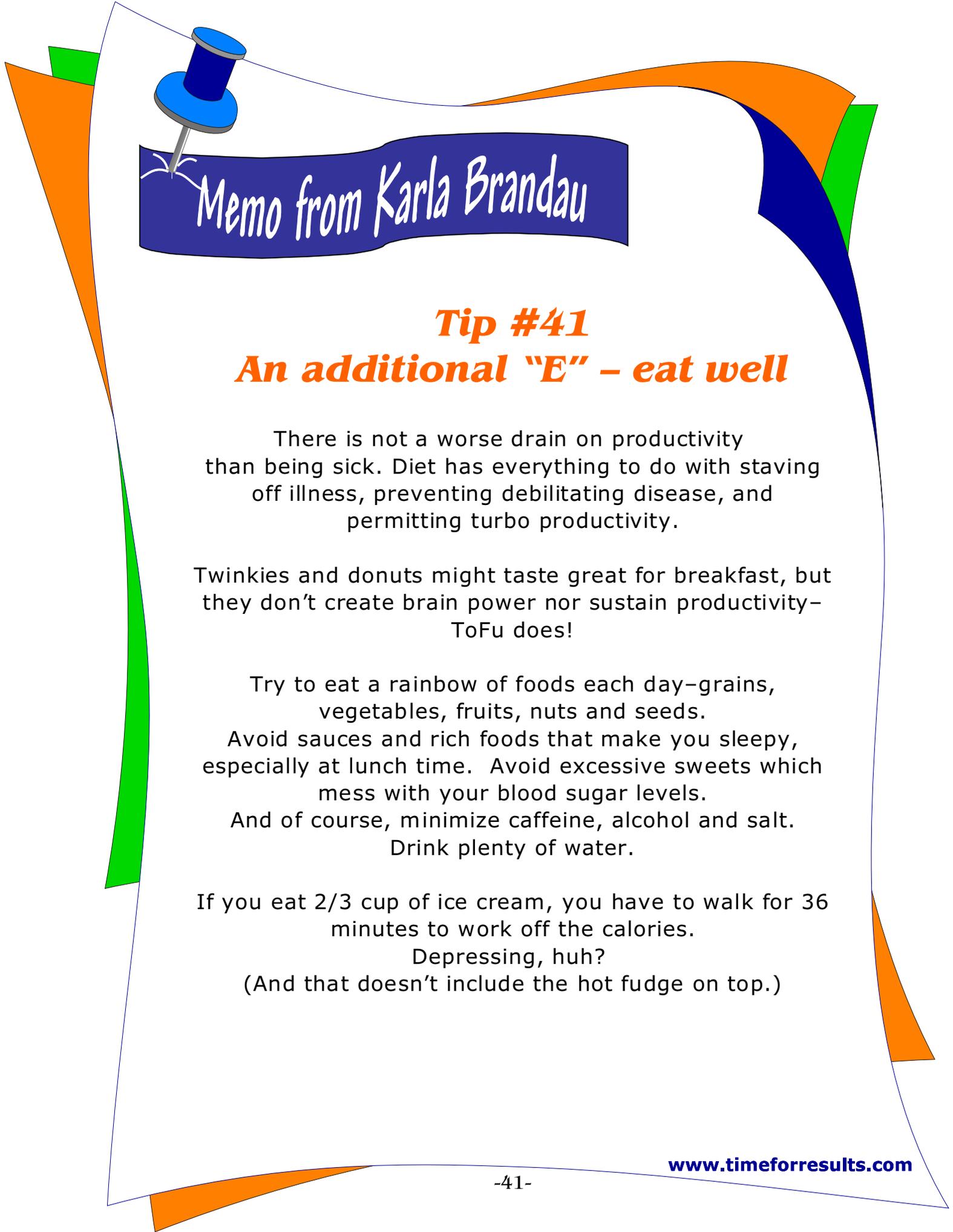
**Tip #40**  
***"E" is for exercise***

Exercise has all kinds of time management value. It increases vitality, thinking, and stamina. It relieves depression and becomes an outlet for anger and frustration.

A recent study showed that 44% of adults don't work out because they are too tired when they get home from work.  
Break the cycle!

Taking a short walk when you get home from work will actually increase your energy and give you a renewed enthusiasm for the rest of the evening.  
Another benefit? You'll sleep better.

Exercise doesn't take time, it makes time for what you want to do most of all: live life to its fullest.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #41**  
***An additional "E" – eat well***

There is not a worse drain on productivity than being sick. Diet has everything to do with staving off illness, preventing debilitating disease, and permitting turbo productivity.

Twinkies and donuts might taste great for breakfast, but they don't create brain power nor sustain productivity—  
ToFu does!

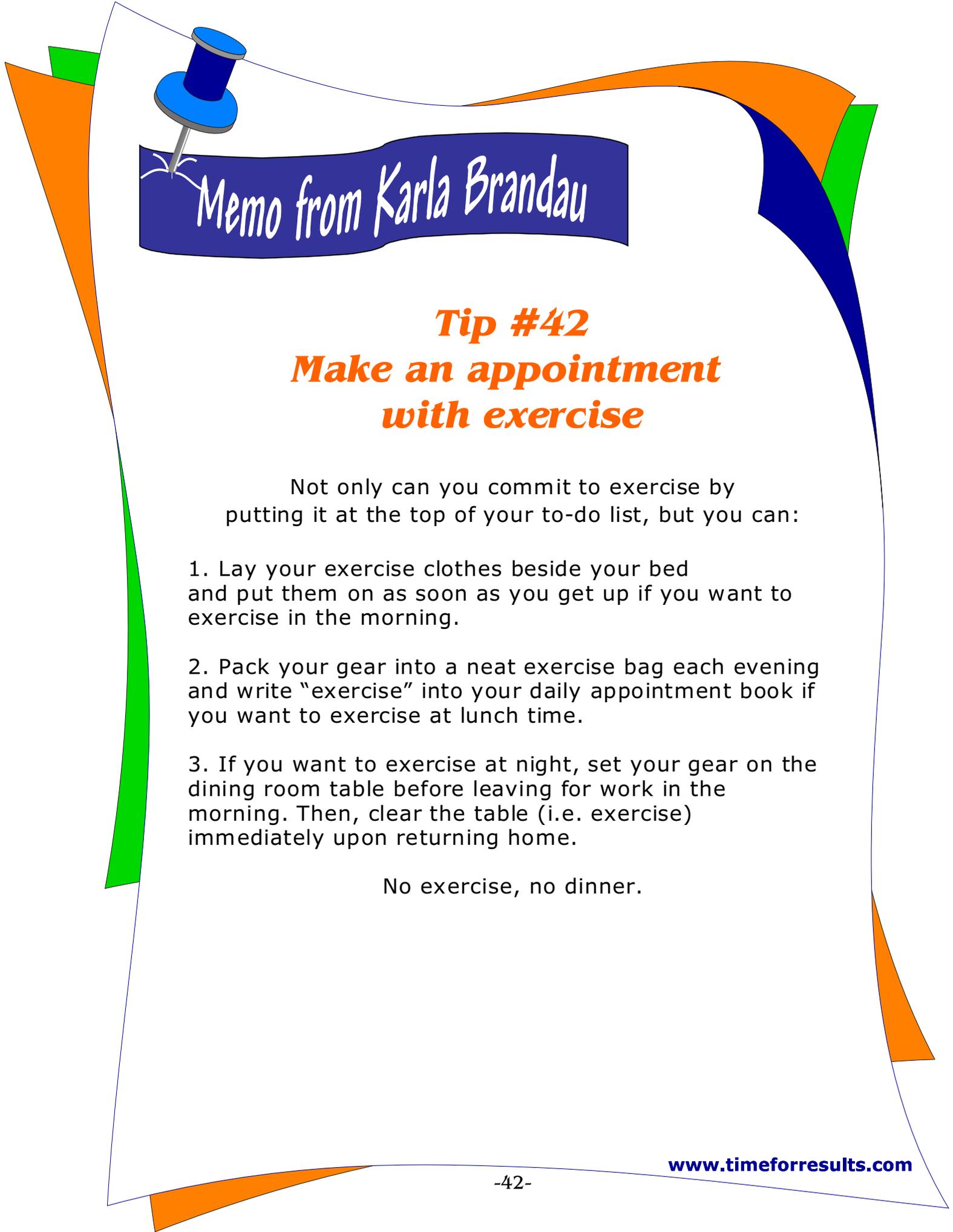
Try to eat a rainbow of foods each day—grains, vegetables, fruits, nuts and seeds.

Avoid sauces and rich foods that make you sleepy, especially at lunch time. Avoid excessive sweets which mess with your blood sugar levels.

And of course, minimize caffeine, alcohol and salt.  
Drink plenty of water.

If you eat 2/3 cup of ice cream, you have to walk for 36 minutes to work off the calories.

Depressing, huh?  
(And that doesn't include the hot fudge on top.)



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #42**  
***Make an appointment  
with exercise***

Not only can you commit to exercise by putting it at the top of your to-do list, but you can:

1. Lay your exercise clothes beside your bed and put them on as soon as you get up if you want to exercise in the morning.
2. Pack your gear into a neat exercise bag each evening and write "exercise" into your daily appointment book if you want to exercise at lunch time.
3. If you want to exercise at night, set your gear on the dining room table before leaving for work in the morning. Then, clear the table (i.e. exercise) immediately upon returning home.

No exercise, no dinner.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

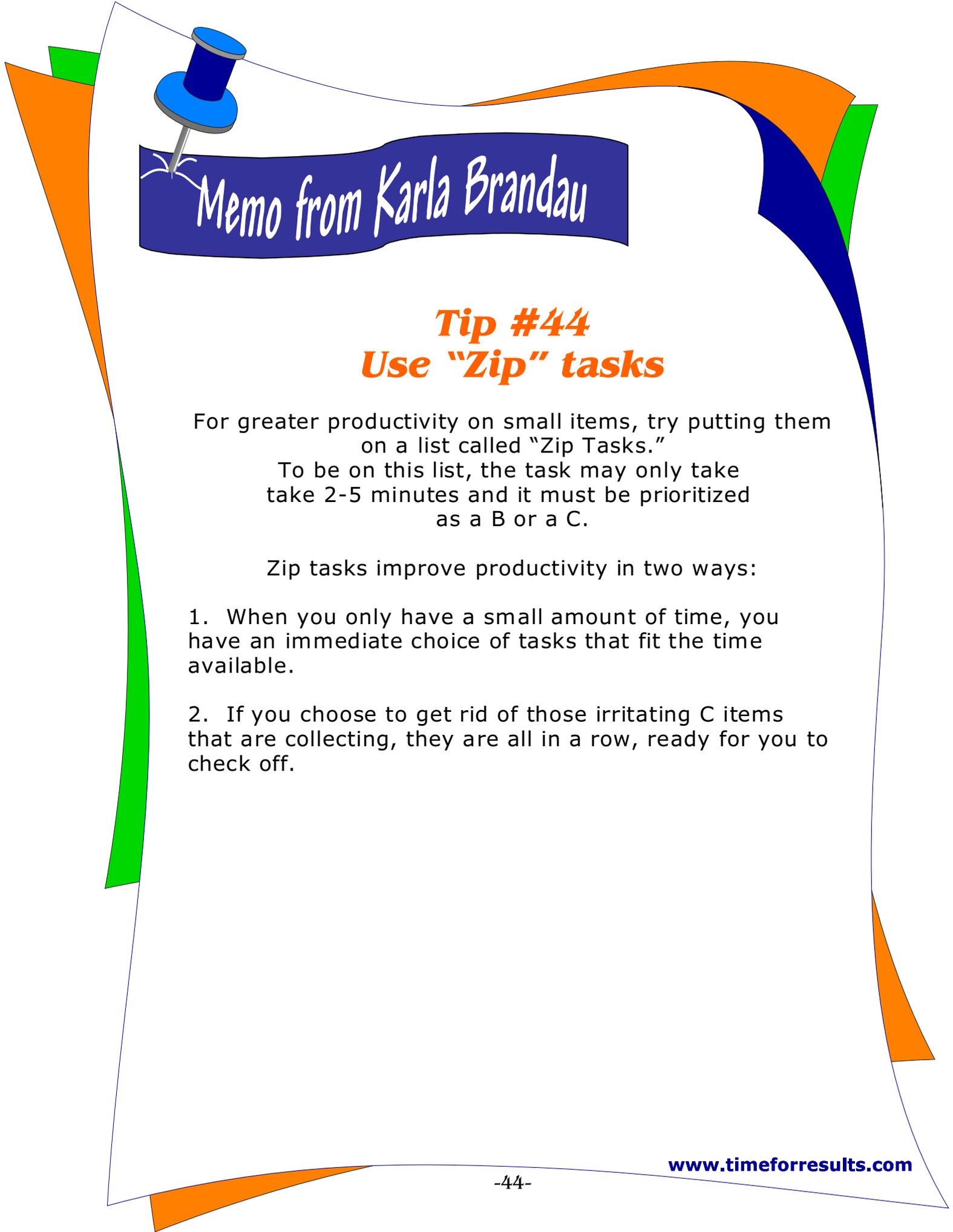
**Tip #43**  
***Make appointments  
with yourself***

Have you ever followed all the “rules”–  
prioritized your “To-Do” list,  
identified your number one task,  
resolved to start on it first thing in the morning, but  
never got to it because of unplanned meetings or special  
requests for your time?

Here is a sure fire cure:  
Go to the appointment column in your planner, PDA or  
Microsoft Outlook or similar program. Write your name  
and the task in a time slot, say 1:00 p.m.

Now when some one wants to get with you on the  
coming company picnic and this is not as important as  
making the FEDEX pick up for the day,  
say, “Let me check my appointment calendar. Oh, I’m  
sorry, I have an appointment.”

They don’t need to know it is with yourself!



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

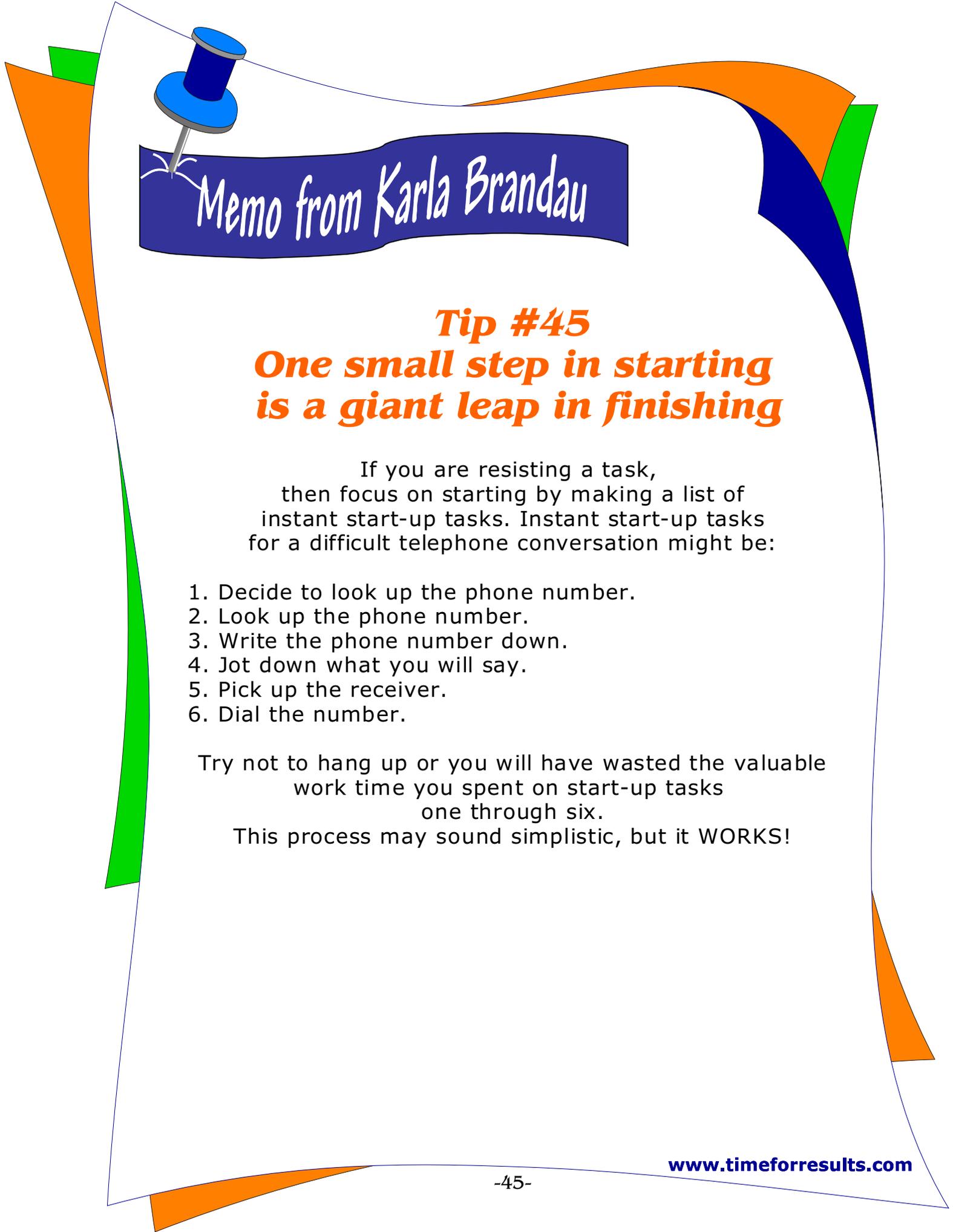
**Tip #44**  
**Use "Zip" tasks**

For greater productivity on small items, try putting them on a list called "Zip Tasks."

To be on this list, the task may only take 2-5 minutes and it must be prioritized as a B or a C.

Zip tasks improve productivity in two ways:

1. When you only have a small amount of time, you have an immediate choice of tasks that fit the time available.
2. If you choose to get rid of those irritating C items that are collecting, they are all in a row, ready for you to check off.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

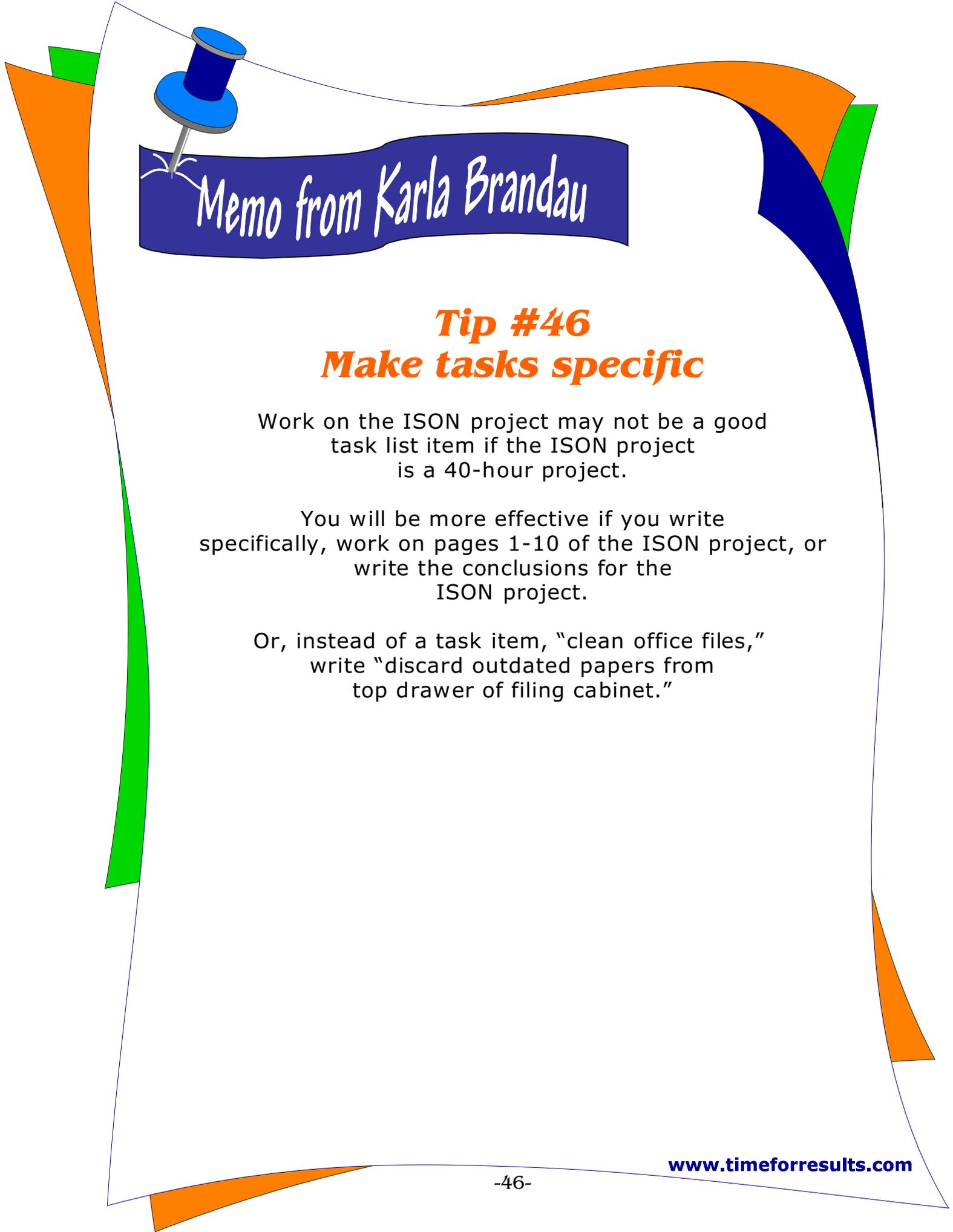
**Tip #45**  
***One small step in starting  
is a giant leap in finishing***

If you are resisting a task,  
then focus on starting by making a list of  
instant start-up tasks. Instant start-up tasks  
for a difficult telephone conversation might be:

1. Decide to look up the phone number.
2. Look up the phone number.
3. Write the phone number down.
4. Jot down what you will say.
5. Pick up the receiver.
6. Dial the number.

Try not to hang up or you will have wasted the valuable  
work time you spent on start-up tasks  
one through six.

This process may sound simplistic, but it WORKS!



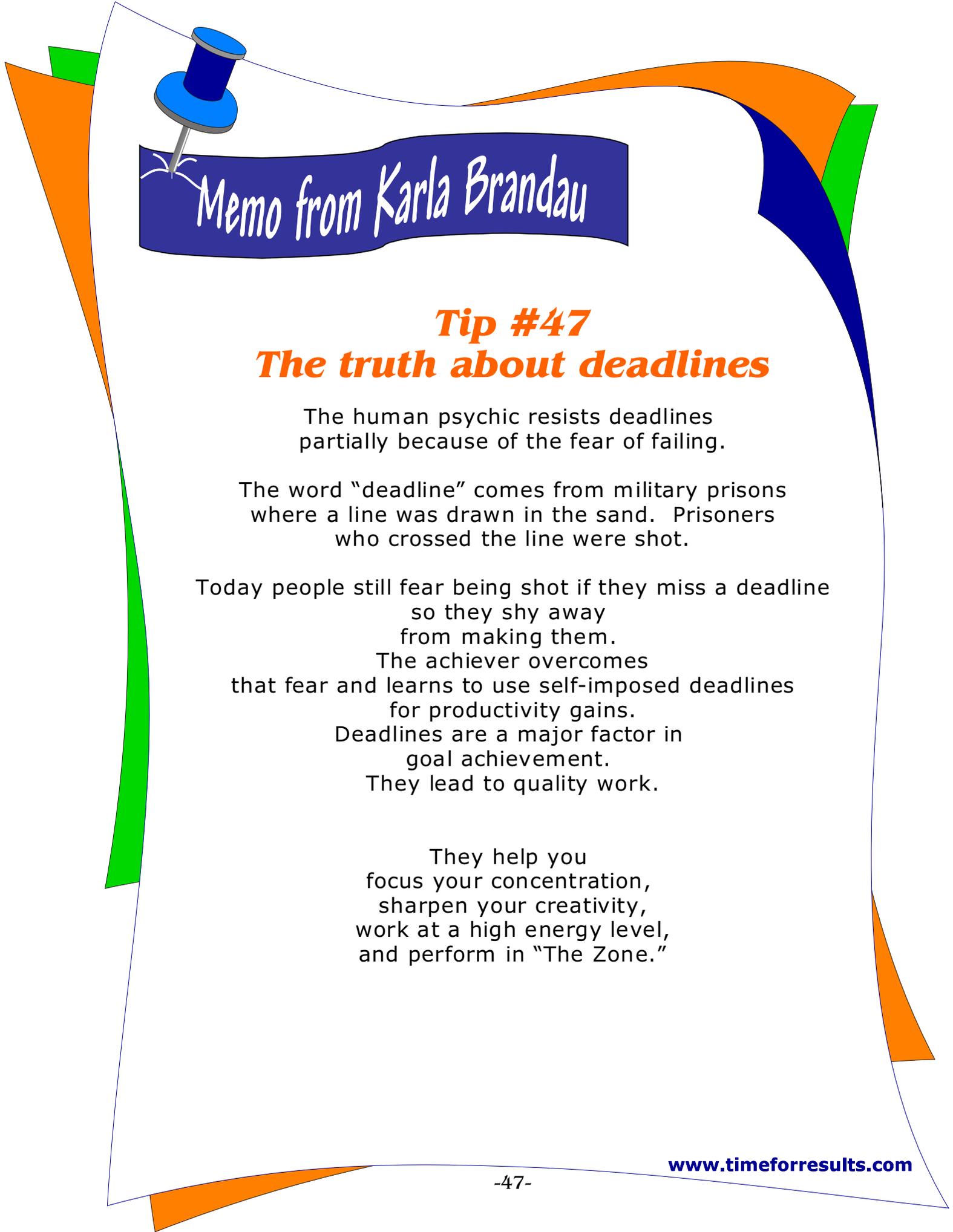
*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #46**  
***Make tasks specific***

Work on the ISON project may not be a good task list item if the ISON project is a 40-hour project.

You will be more effective if you write specifically, work on pages 1-10 of the ISON project, or write the conclusions for the ISON project.

Or, instead of a task item, "clean office files," write "discard outdated papers from top drawer of filing cabinet."



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #47**  
***The truth about deadlines***

The human psychic resists deadlines partially because of the fear of failing.

The word "deadline" comes from military prisons where a line was drawn in the sand. Prisoners who crossed the line were shot.

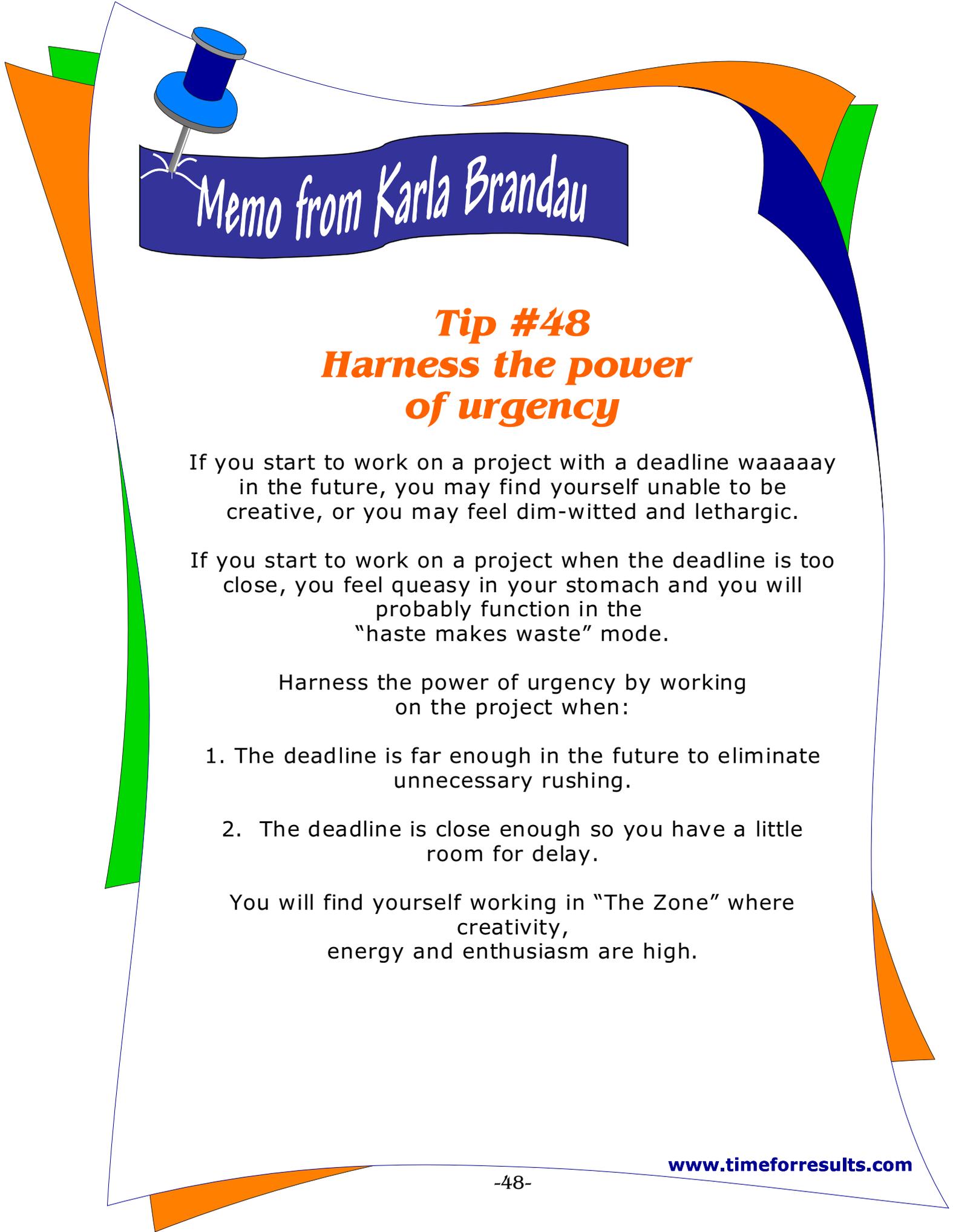
Today people still fear being shot if they miss a deadline so they shy away from making them.

The achiever overcomes that fear and learns to use self-imposed deadlines for productivity gains.

Deadlines are a major factor in goal achievement.

They lead to quality work.

They help you focus your concentration, sharpen your creativity, work at a high energy level, and perform in "The Zone."



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #48**  
***Harness the power  
of urgency***

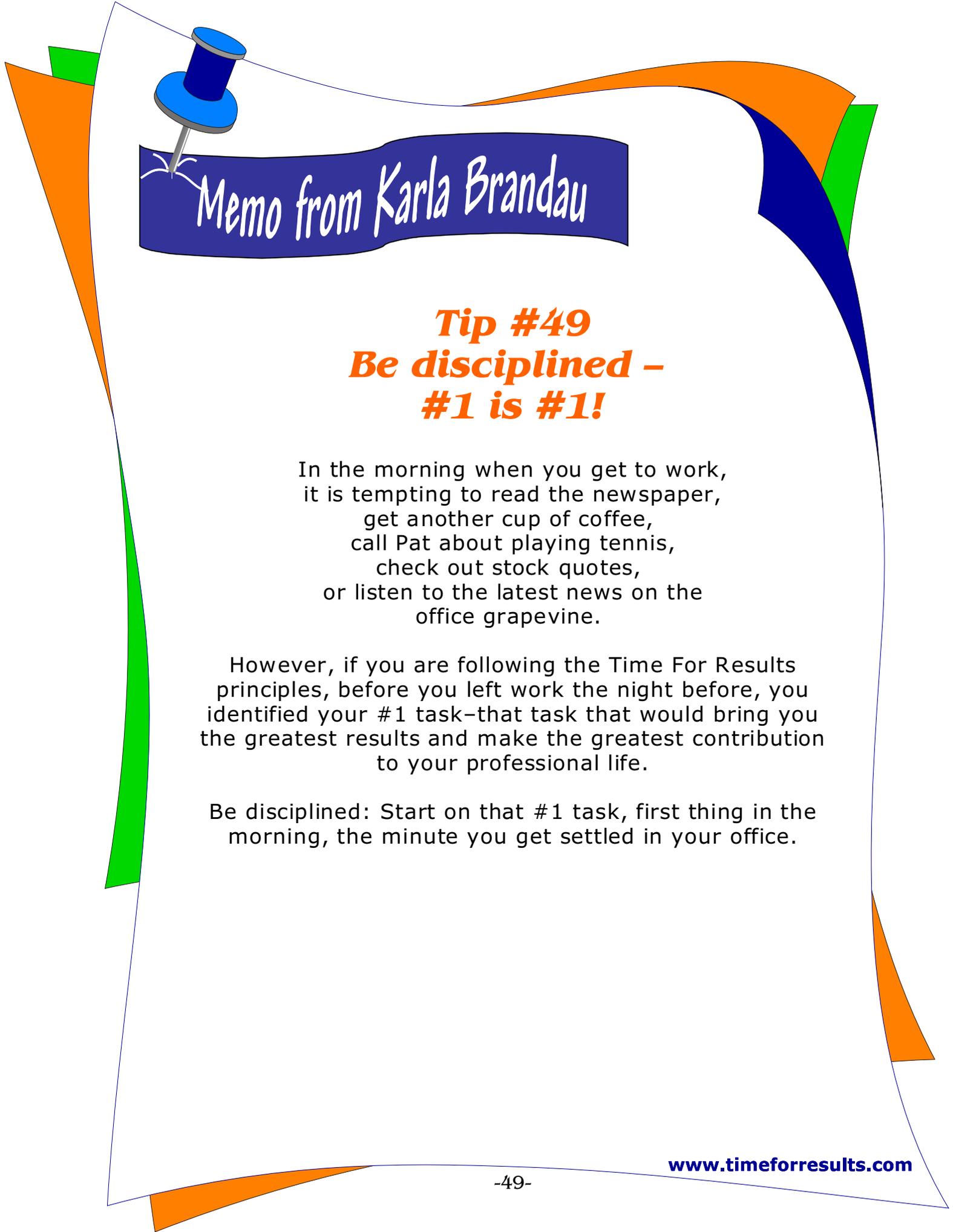
If you start to work on a project with a deadline waaaaay in the future, you may find yourself unable to be creative, or you may feel dim-witted and lethargic.

If you start to work on a project when the deadline is too close, you feel queasy in your stomach and you will probably function in the "haste makes waste" mode.

Harness the power of urgency by working on the project when:

1. The deadline is far enough in the future to eliminate unnecessary rushing.
2. The deadline is close enough so you have a little room for delay.

You will find yourself working in "The Zone" where creativity, energy and enthusiasm are high.



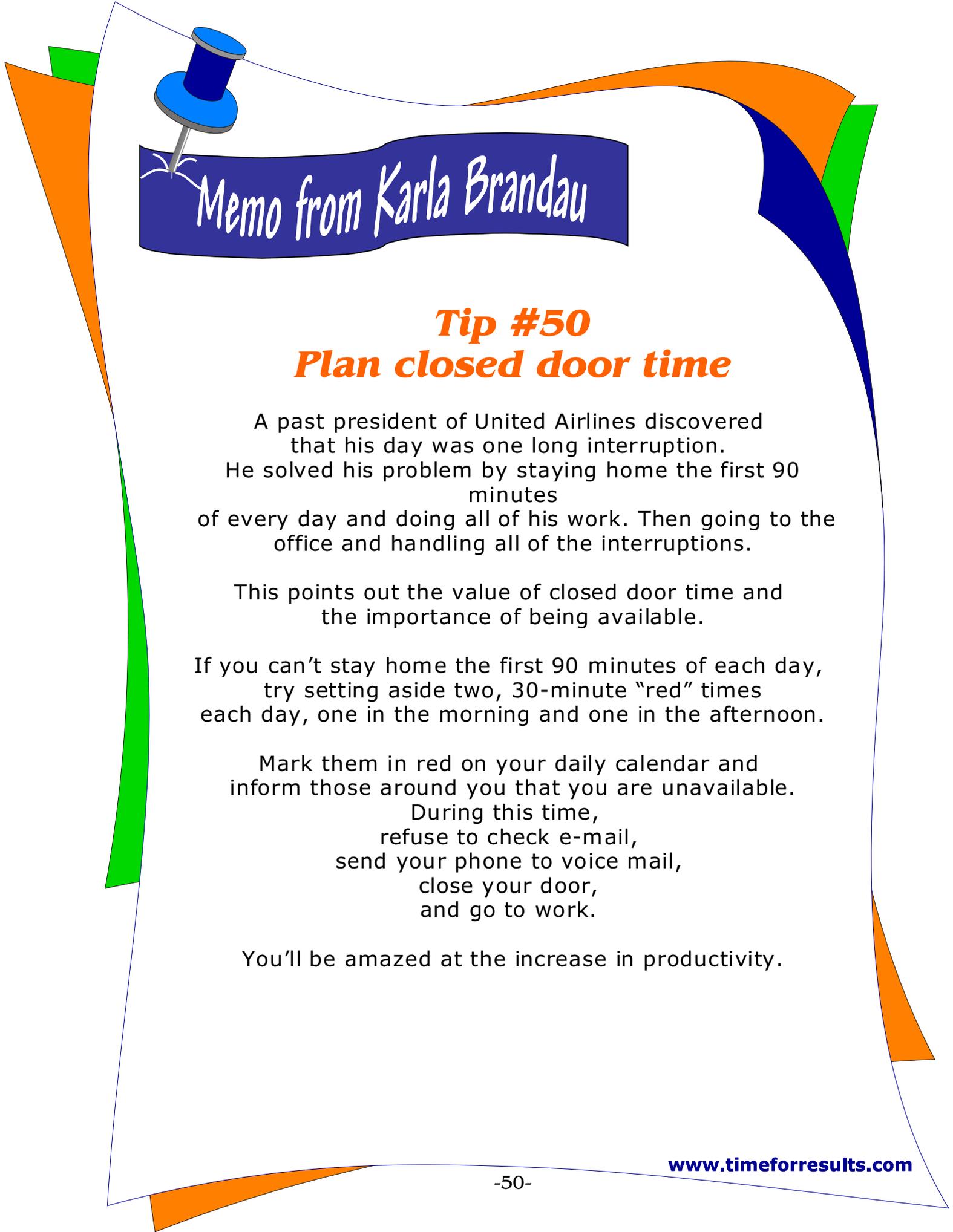
*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #49**  
***Be disciplined –***  
***#1 is #1!***

In the morning when you get to work,  
it is tempting to read the newspaper,  
get another cup of coffee,  
call Pat about playing tennis,  
check out stock quotes,  
or listen to the latest news on the  
office grapevine.

However, if you are following the Time For Results  
principles, before you left work the night before, you  
identified your #1 task—that task that would bring you  
the greatest results and make the greatest contribution  
to your professional life.

Be disciplined: Start on that #1 task, first thing in the  
morning, the minute you get settled in your office.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #50**  
***Plan closed door time***

A past president of United Airlines discovered that his day was one long interruption. He solved his problem by staying home the first 90 minutes of every day and doing all of his work. Then going to the office and handling all of the interruptions.

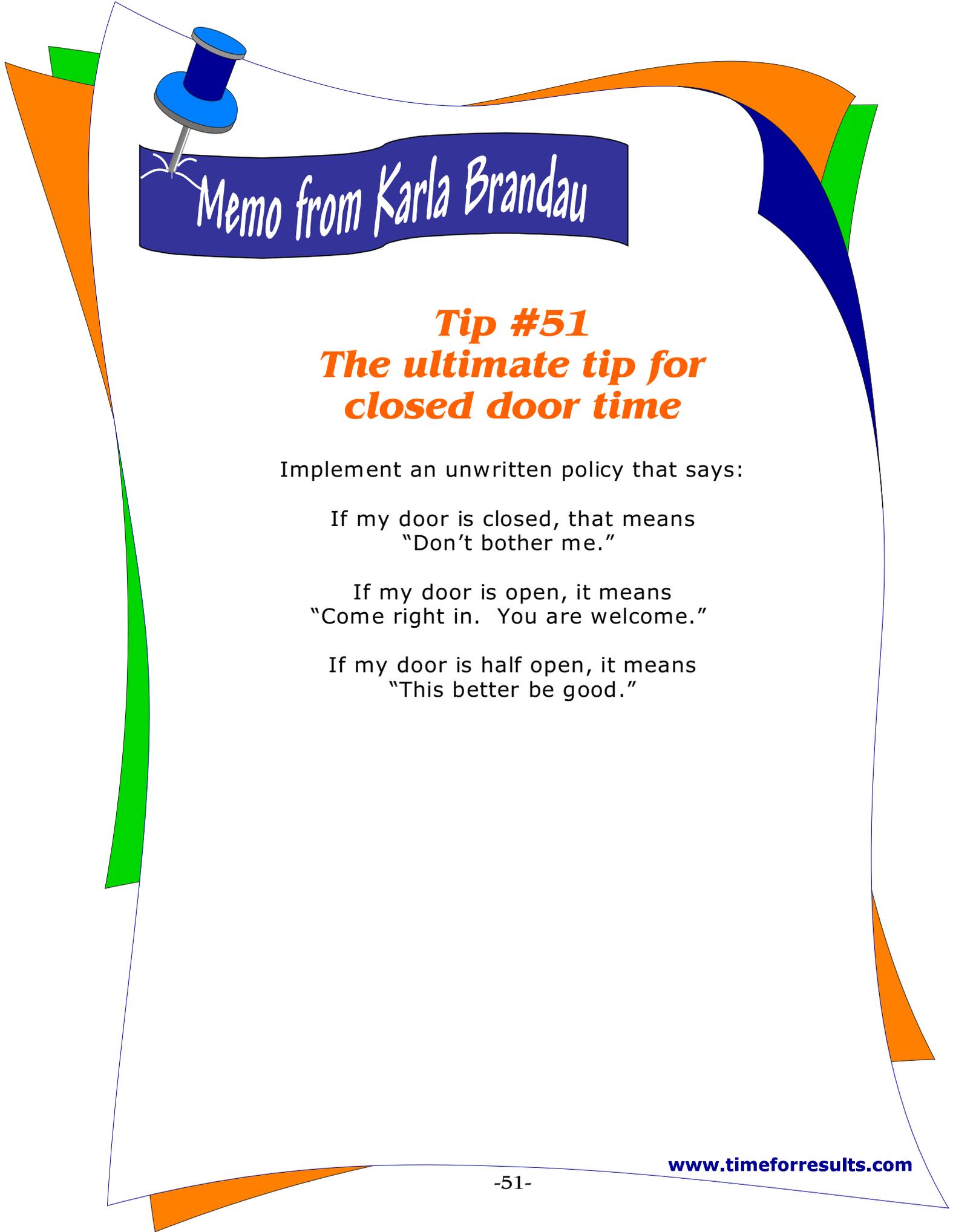
This points out the value of closed door time and the importance of being available.

If you can't stay home the first 90 minutes of each day, try setting aside two, 30-minute "red" times each day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

Mark them in red on your daily calendar and inform those around you that you are unavailable.

During this time,  
refuse to check e-mail,  
send your phone to voice mail,  
close your door,  
and go to work.

You'll be amazed at the increase in productivity.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #51**  
***The ultimate tip for  
closed door time***

Implement an unwritten policy that says:

If my door is closed, that means  
"Don't bother me."

If my door is open, it means  
"Come right in. You are welcome."

If my door is half open, it means  
"This better be good."



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #52**  
***Be a finisher***

Just like a band-aid sticks to a cut or abrasion, stick to a task until it is finished...even if you get interrupted.

It will take courage and determination to focus, but it is well worth the effort because your psychic craves closure.

When you finish the task and check it off, you will experience a feeling similar to the comforting euphoria of your favorite chocolate truffle or Hershey bar.



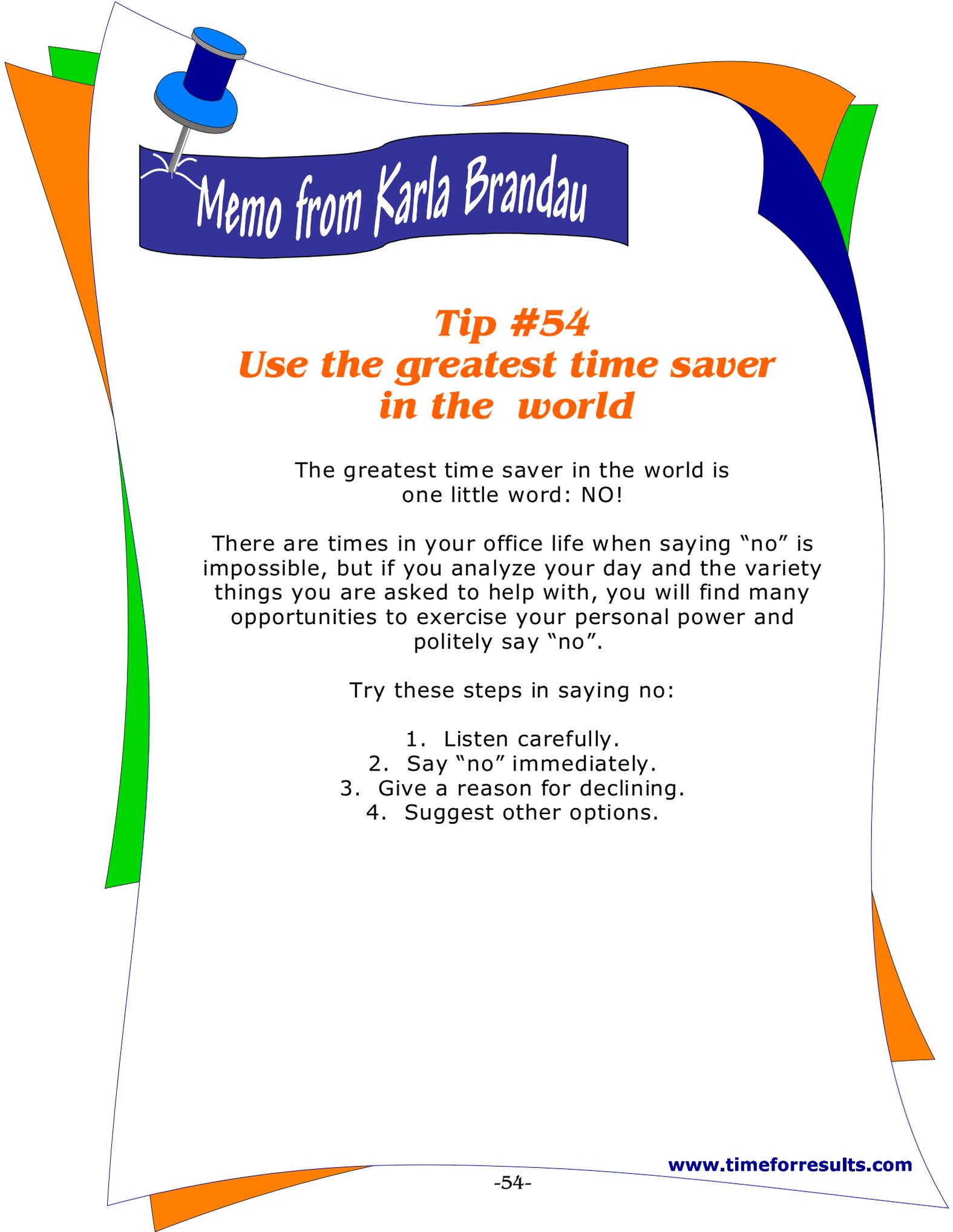
*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #53**  
***Make a place for everything***

You'll accomplish more  
and waste less time looking for things  
if you consciously make a place for everything.

If you don't have a place for everything,  
you'll get caught in a continuous hurry operating mode  
as you vainly attempt to make up the time you lost  
looking for things.

"Set all things in their peculiar place,  
and know that order is the greatest grace."  
--John Dryden



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

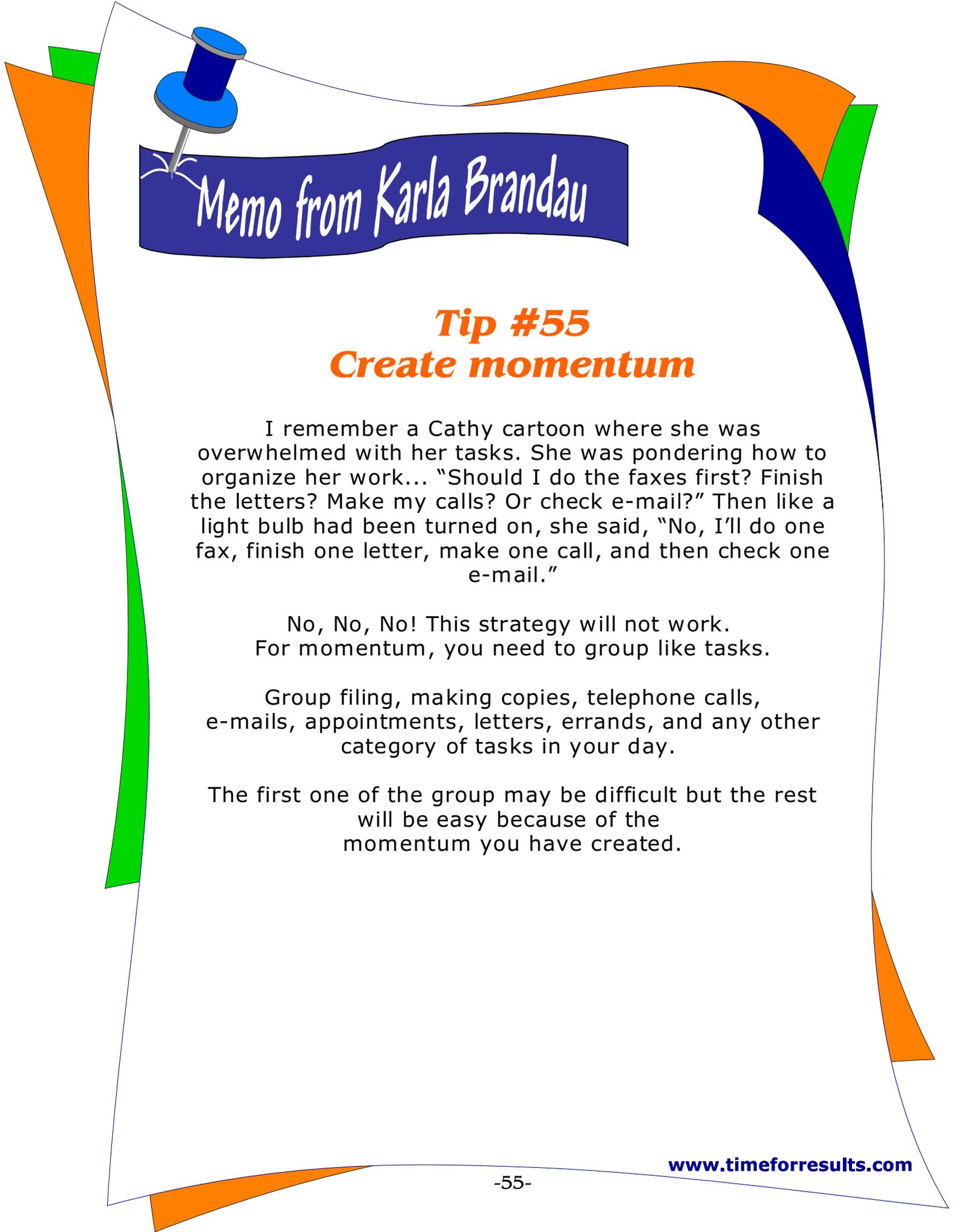
**Tip #54**  
***Use the greatest time saver  
in the world***

The greatest time saver in the world is  
one little word: NO!

There are times in your office life when saying "no" is impossible, but if you analyze your day and the variety things you are asked to help with, you will find many opportunities to exercise your personal power and politely say "no".

Try these steps in saying no:

1. Listen carefully.
2. Say "no" immediately.
3. Give a reason for declining.
4. Suggest other options.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

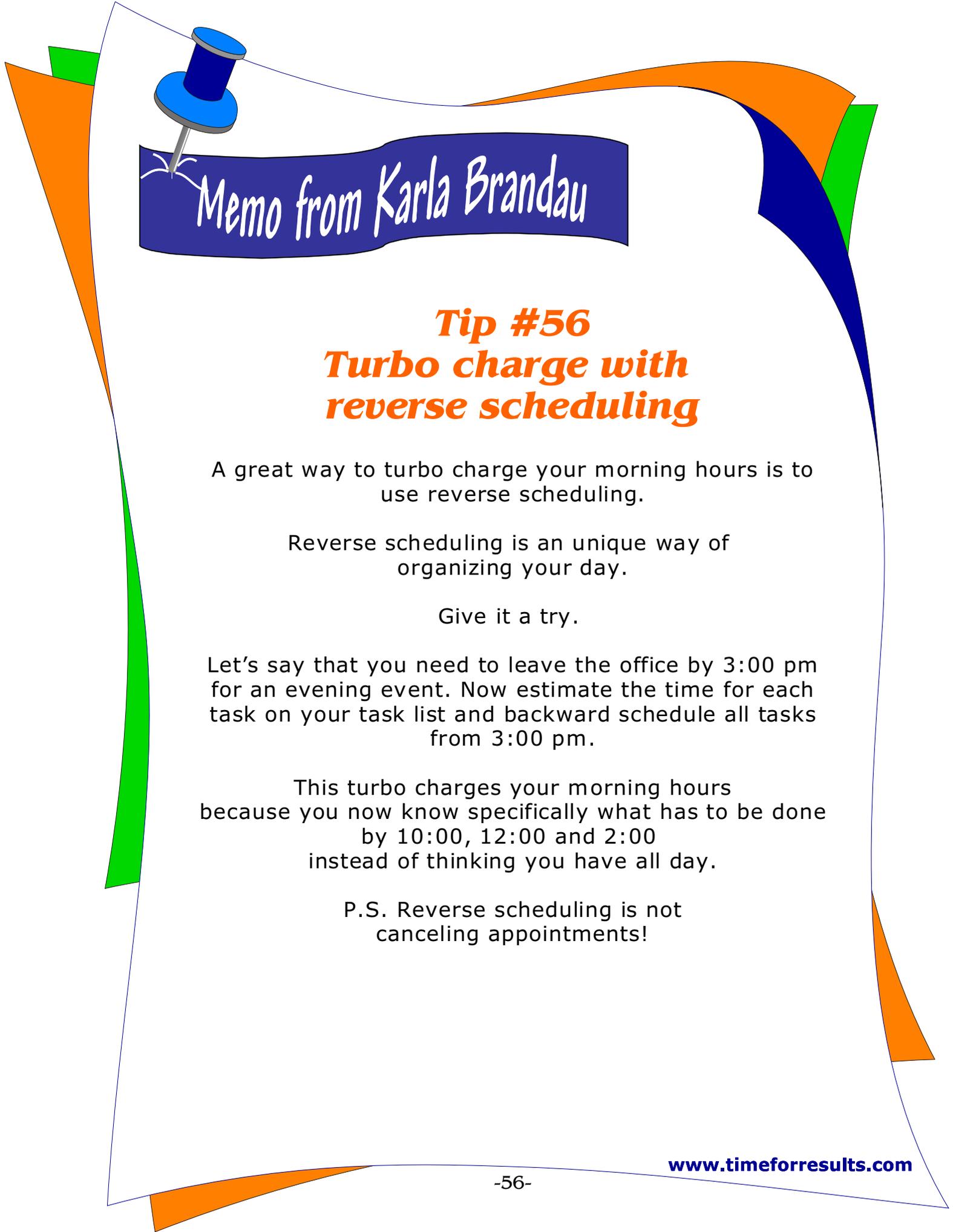
**Tip #55**  
**Create momentum**

I remember a Cathy cartoon where she was overwhelmed with her tasks. She was pondering how to organize her work... "Should I do the faxes first? Finish the letters? Make my calls? Or check e-mail?" Then like a light bulb had been turned on, she said, "No, I'll do one fax, finish one letter, make one call, and then check one e-mail."

No, No, No! This strategy will not work.  
For momentum, you need to group like tasks.

Group filing, making copies, telephone calls, e-mails, appointments, letters, errands, and any other category of tasks in your day.

The first one of the group may be difficult but the rest will be easy because of the momentum you have created.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #56**  
***Turbo charge with  
reverse scheduling***

A great way to turbo charge your morning hours is to use reverse scheduling.

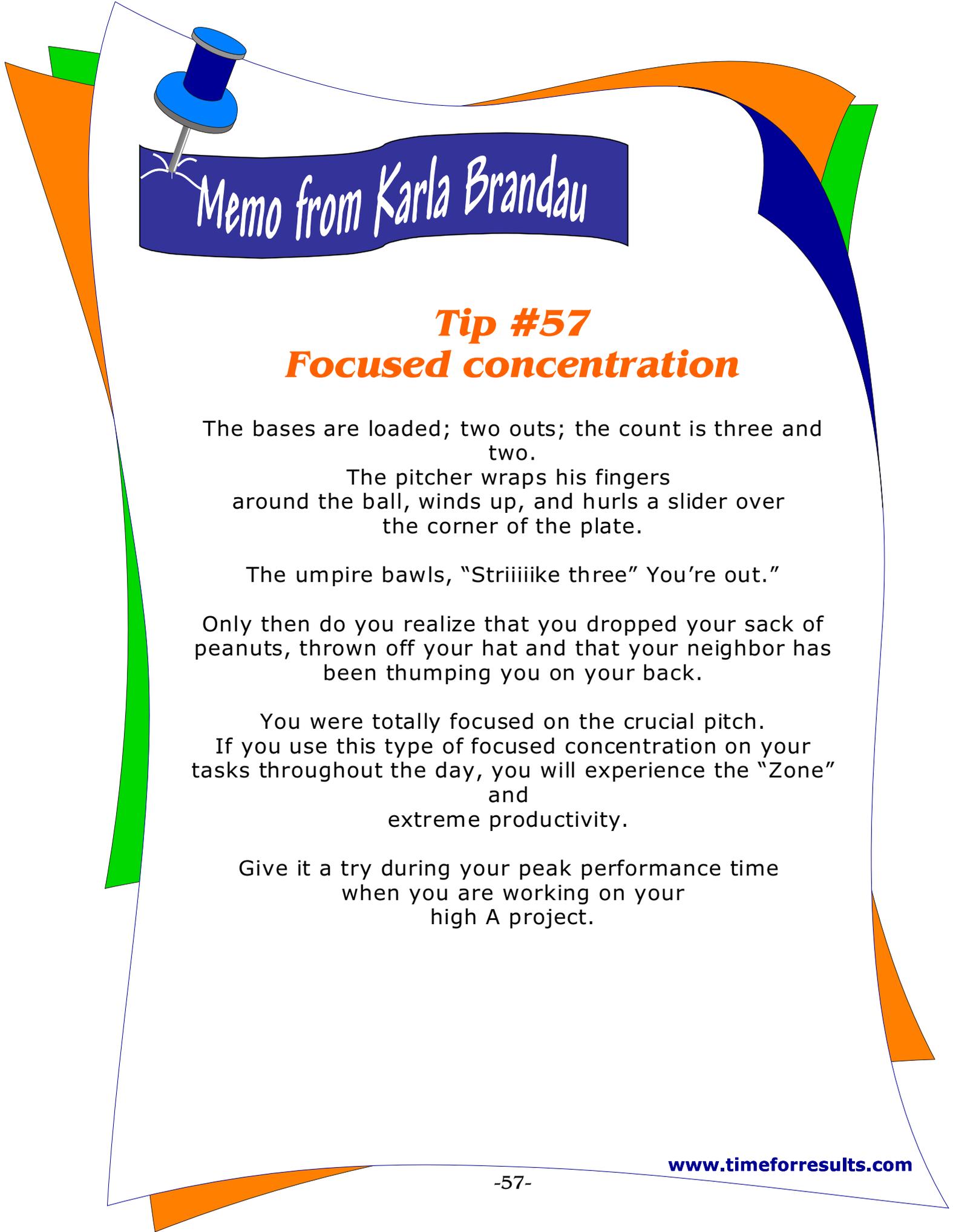
Reverse scheduling is an unique way of organizing your day.

Give it a try.

Let's say that you need to leave the office by 3:00 pm for an evening event. Now estimate the time for each task on your task list and backward schedule all tasks from 3:00 pm.

This turbo charges your morning hours because you now know specifically what has to be done by 10:00, 12:00 and 2:00 instead of thinking you have all day.

P.S. Reverse scheduling is not canceling appointments!



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #57**  
***Focused concentration***

The bases are loaded; two outs; the count is three and two.

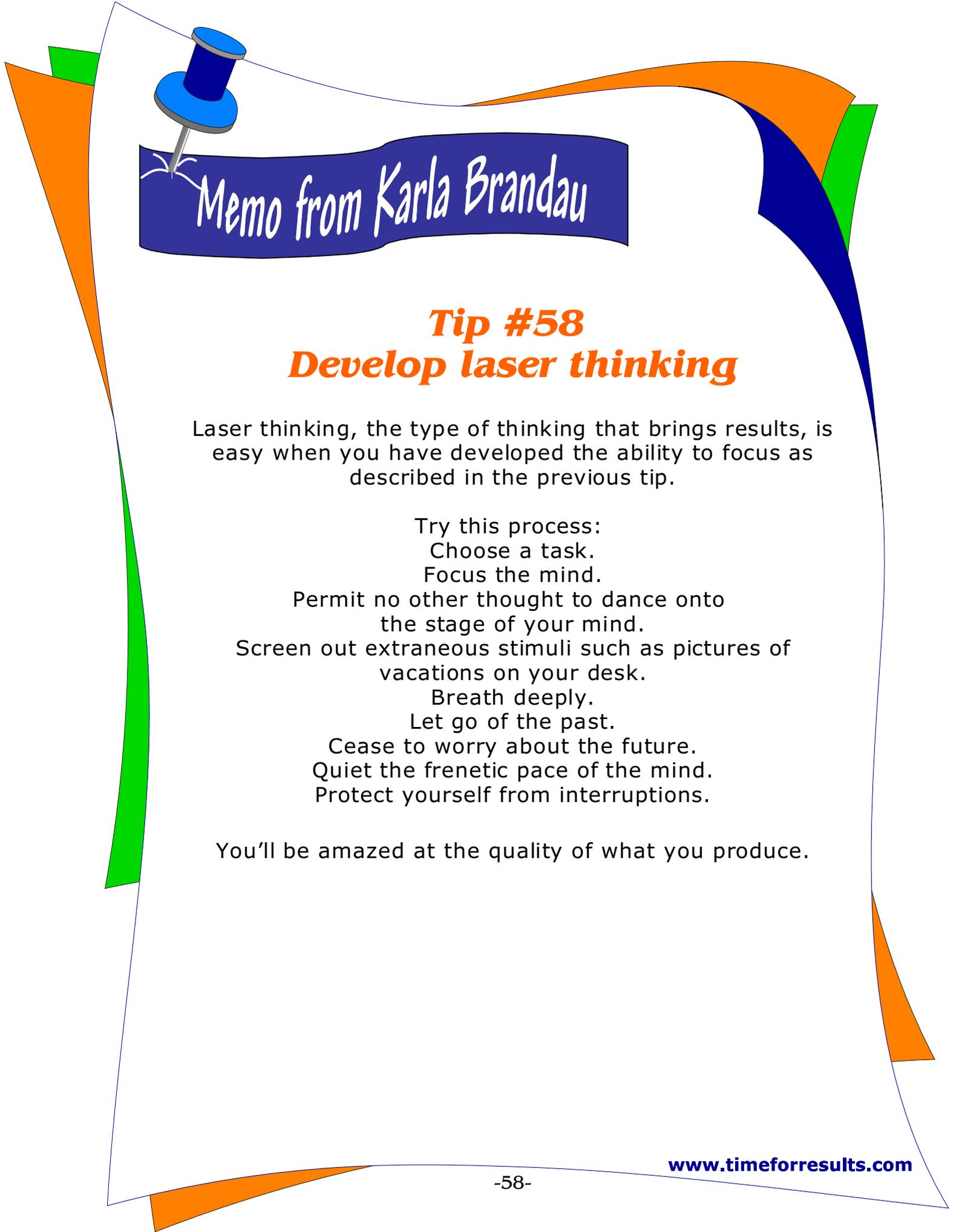
The pitcher wraps his fingers around the ball, winds up, and hurls a slider over the corner of the plate.

The umpire bawls, "Striiiiike three" You're out."

Only then do you realize that you dropped your sack of peanuts, thrown off your hat and that your neighbor has been thumping you on your back.

You were totally focused on the crucial pitch.  
If you use this type of focused concentration on your tasks throughout the day, you will experience the "Zone" and extreme productivity.

Give it a try during your peak performance time when you are working on your high A project.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #58**  
***Develop laser thinking***

Laser thinking, the type of thinking that brings results, is easy when you have developed the ability to focus as described in the previous tip.

Try this process:

Choose a task.

Focus the mind.

Permit no other thought to dance onto the stage of your mind.

Screen out extraneous stimuli such as pictures of vacations on your desk.

Breathe deeply.

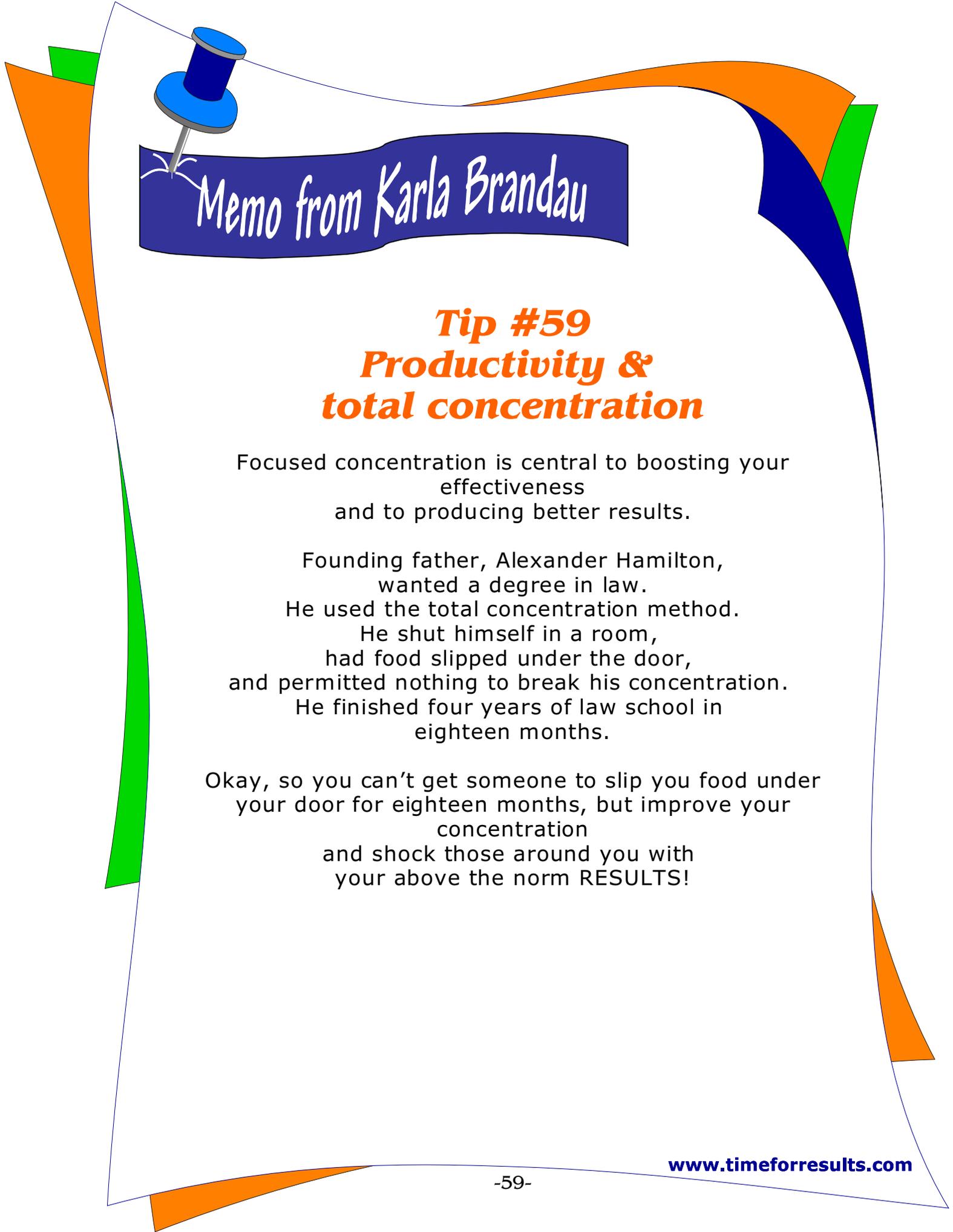
Let go of the past.

Cease to worry about the future.

Quiet the frenetic pace of the mind.

Protect yourself from interruptions.

You'll be amazed at the quality of what you produce.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #59**  
**Productivity &**  
**total concentration**

Focused concentration is central to boosting your effectiveness and to producing better results.

Founding father, Alexander Hamilton, wanted a degree in law. He used the total concentration method. He shut himself in a room, had food slipped under the door, and permitted nothing to break his concentration. He finished four years of law school in eighteen months.

Okay, so you can't get someone to slip you food under your door for eighteen months, but improve your concentration and shock those around you with your above the norm RESULTS!



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

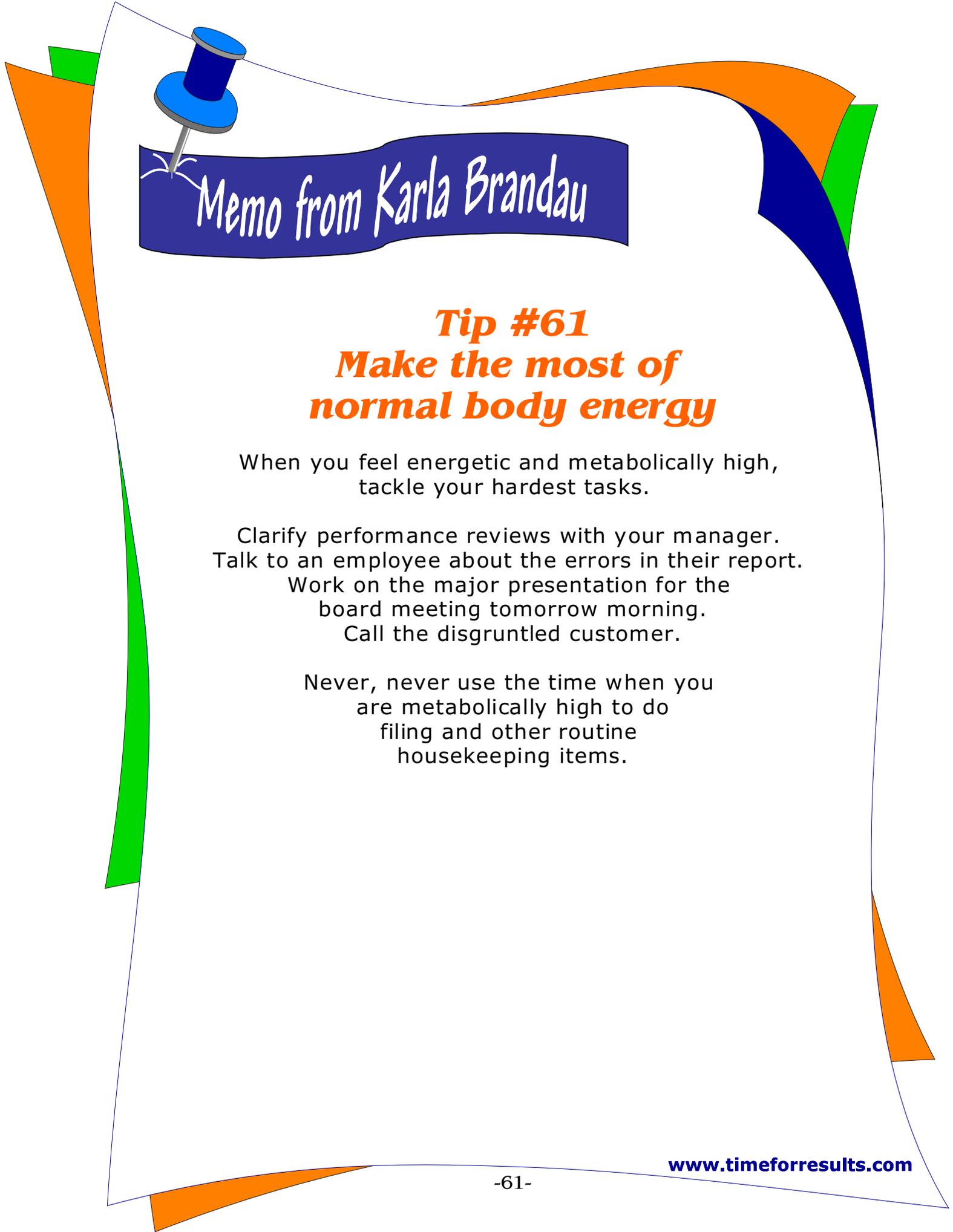
**Tip #60**  
***Build the producer mind set***

Once you make your task list and it is set on your highest priorities and based on what you value, inside of you will be this gargantuan need to achieve.

This need inside sets you in motion, and gives you the producer mind set – a strong sense of purpose combined with a powerful determination to succeed.

You will tackle each day with an intense and profound focus that will catapult you ahead of everyone else in the finished tasks category.

You will finish first!



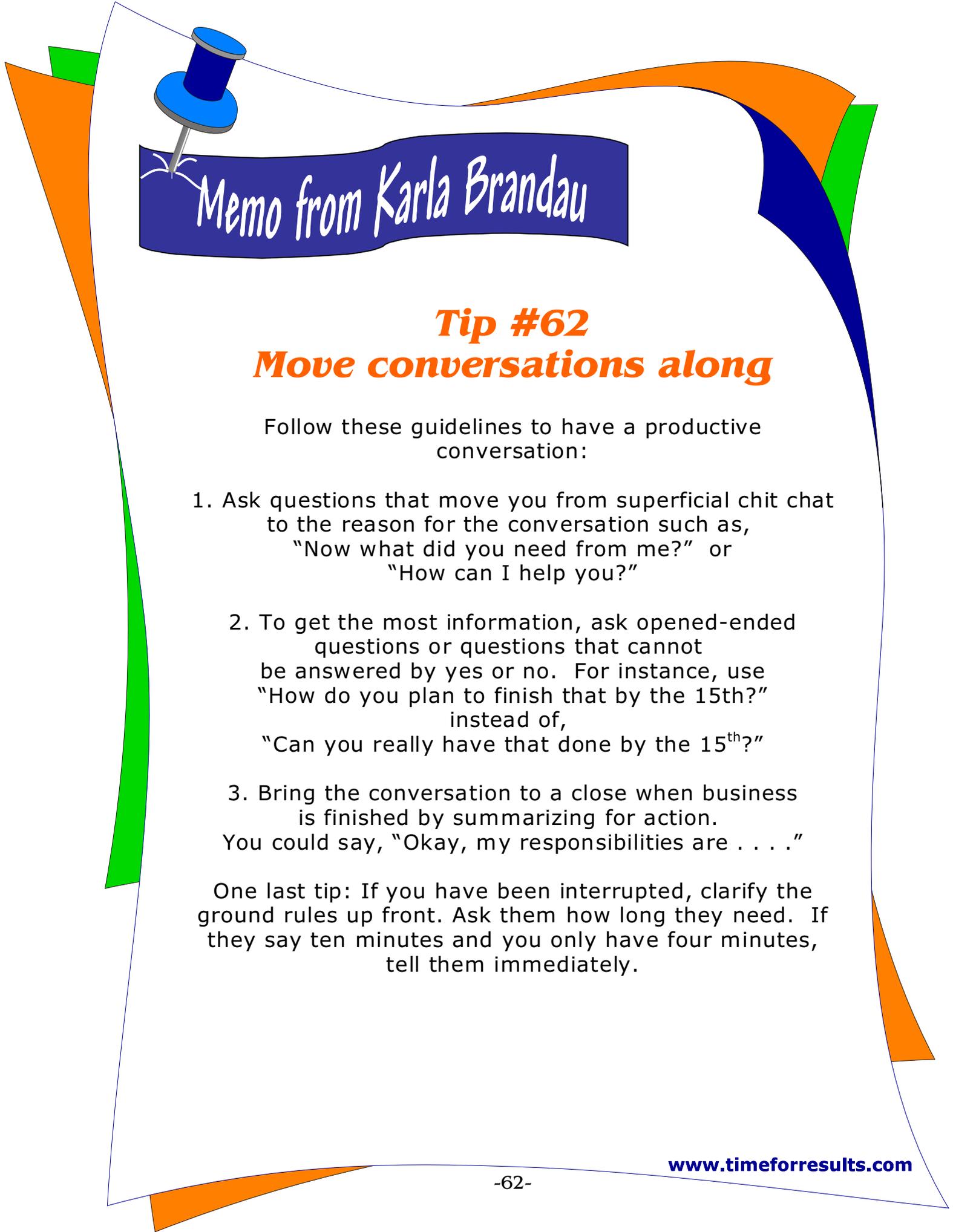
*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #61**  
***Make the most of  
normal body energy***

When you feel energetic and metabolically high,  
tackle your hardest tasks.

Clarify performance reviews with your manager.  
Talk to an employee about the errors in their report.  
Work on the major presentation for the  
board meeting tomorrow morning.  
Call the disgruntled customer.

Never, never use the time when you  
are metabolically high to do  
filing and other routine  
housekeeping items.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #62**  
***Move conversations along***

Follow these guidelines to have a productive conversation:

1. Ask questions that move you from superficial chit chat to the reason for the conversation such as, "Now what did you need from me?" or "How can I help you?"
2. To get the most information, ask opened-ended questions or questions that cannot be answered by yes or no. For instance, use "How do you plan to finish that by the 15th?" instead of, "Can you really have that done by the 15<sup>th</sup>?"
3. Bring the conversation to a close when business is finished by summarizing for action. You could say, "Okay, my responsibilities are . . . ."

One last tip: If you have been interrupted, clarify the ground rules up front. Ask them how long they need. If they say ten minutes and you only have four minutes, tell them immediately.



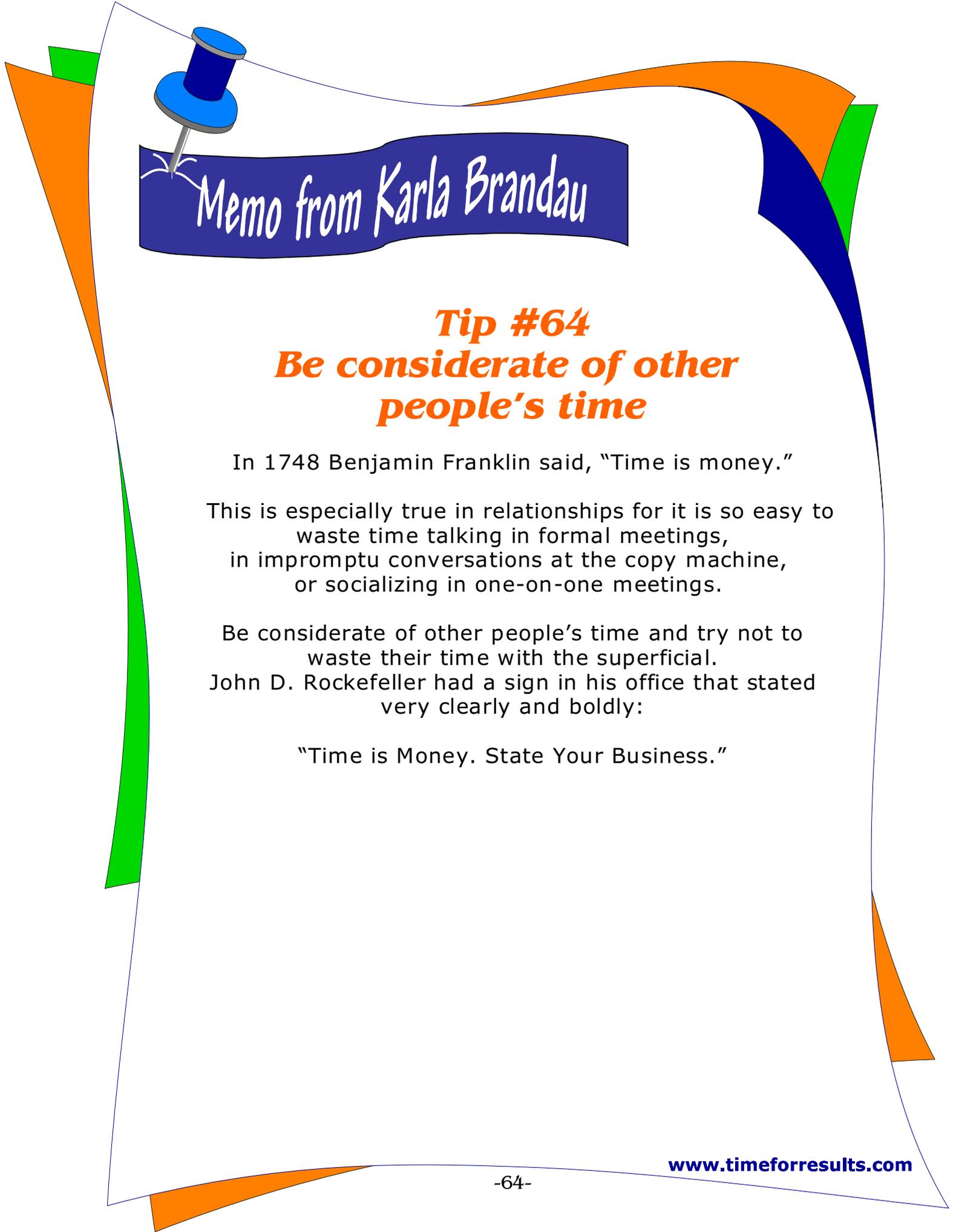
*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #63**  
***Be a good interrupter***

When you need to talk to someone, or interrupt them from their daily work, don't waste their time. Do the following:

- Come quickly to the point.
- State your business.
- Ask for what you need.
- Summarize for action.
- Thank them for their time.

Watch their body language. It will tell you when the conversation is over and it is time to exit!



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

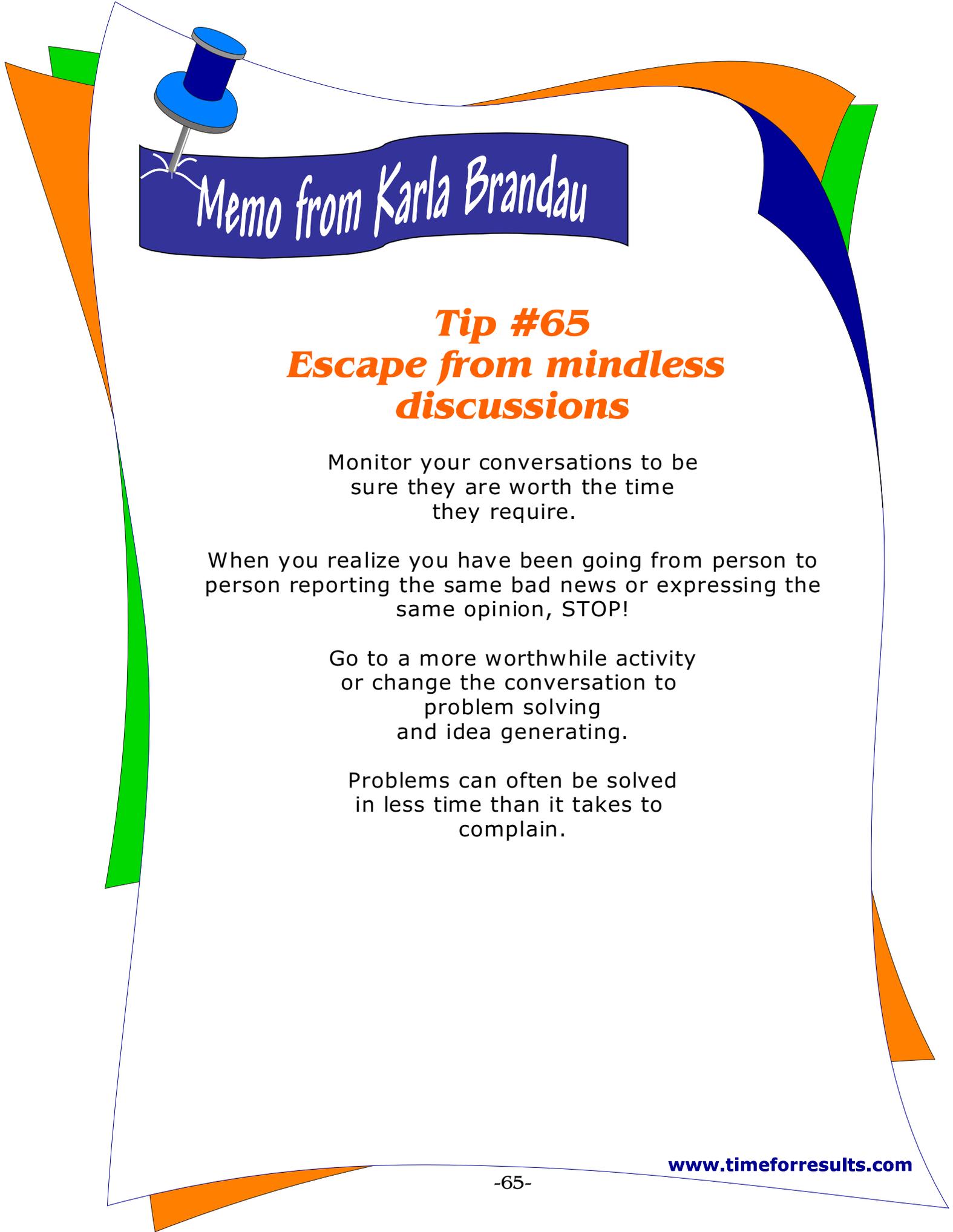
**Tip #64**  
***Be considerate of other  
people's time***

In 1748 Benjamin Franklin said, "Time is money."

This is especially true in relationships for it is so easy to waste time talking in formal meetings, in impromptu conversations at the copy machine, or socializing in one-on-one meetings.

Be considerate of other people's time and try not to waste their time with the superficial. John D. Rockefeller had a sign in his office that stated very clearly and boldly:

"Time is Money. State Your Business."



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

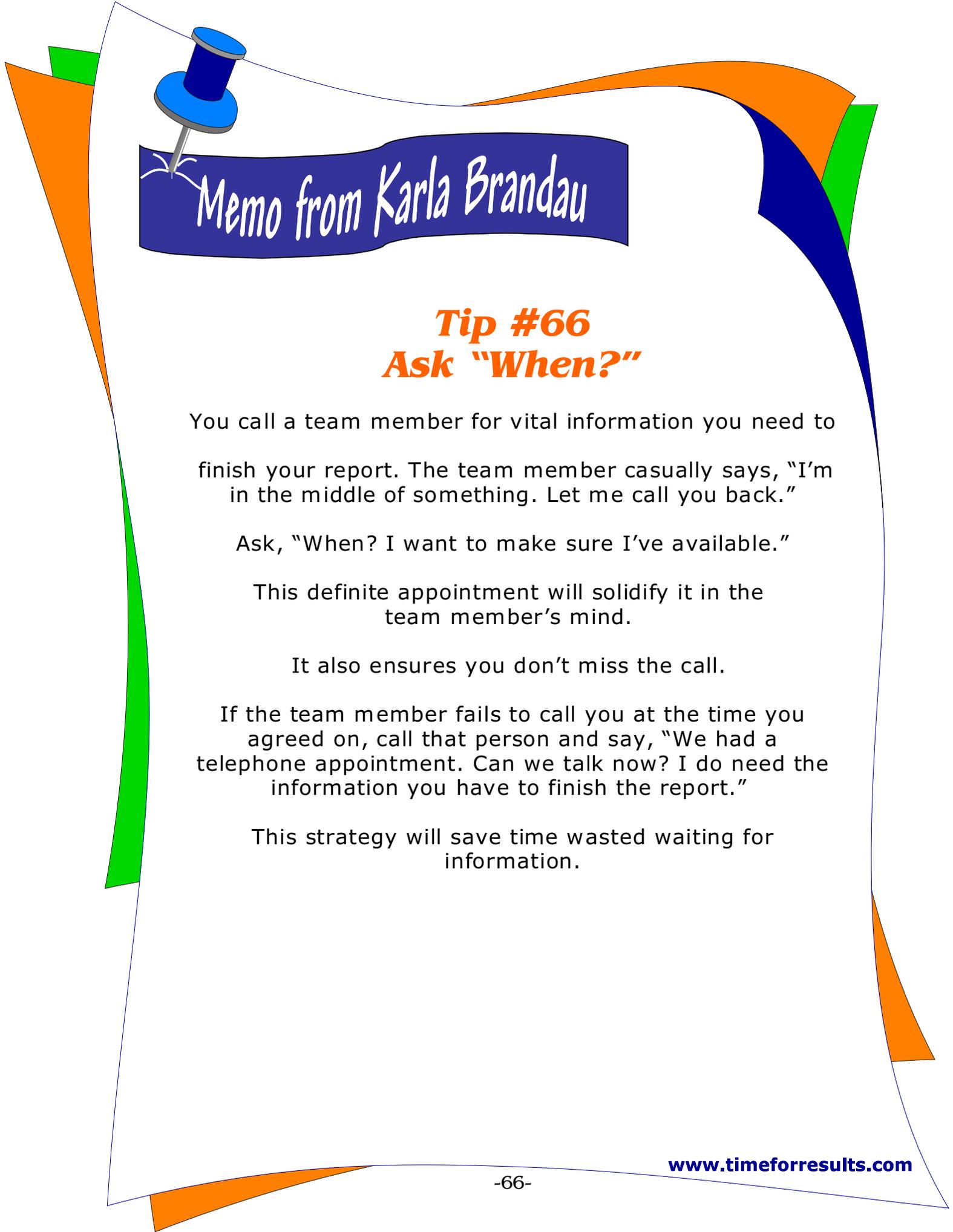
**Tip #65**  
***Escape from mindless discussions***

Monitor your conversations to be sure they are worth the time they require.

When you realize you have been going from person to person reporting the same bad news or expressing the same opinion, STOP!

Go to a more worthwhile activity or change the conversation to problem solving and idea generating.

Problems can often be solved in less time than it takes to complain.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #66**  
**Ask "When?"**

You call a team member for vital information you need to finish your report. The team member casually says, "I'm in the middle of something. Let me call you back."

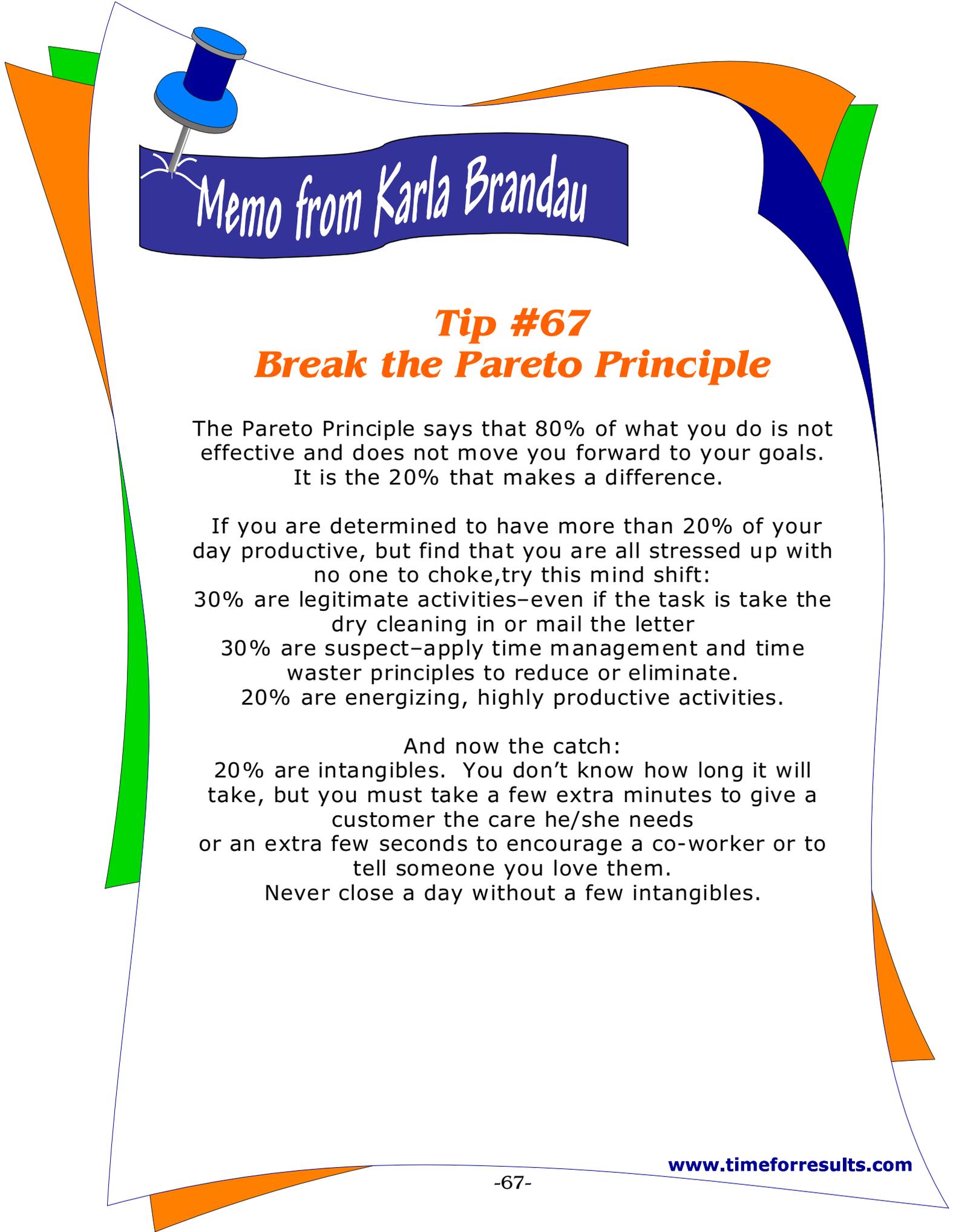
Ask, "When? I want to make sure I've available."

This definite appointment will solidify it in the team member's mind.

It also ensures you don't miss the call.

If the team member fails to call you at the time you agreed on, call that person and say, "We had a telephone appointment. Can we talk now? I do need the information you have to finish the report."

This strategy will save time wasted waiting for information.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #67**  
***Break the Pareto Principle***

The Pareto Principle says that 80% of what you do is not effective and does not move you forward to your goals. It is the 20% that makes a difference.

If you are determined to have more than 20% of your day productive, but find that you are all stressed up with no one to choke, try this mind shift:

30% are legitimate activities—even if the task is take the dry cleaning in or mail the letter

30% are suspect—apply time management and time waster principles to reduce or eliminate.

20% are energizing, highly productive activities.

And now the catch:

20% are intangibles. You don't know how long it will take, but you must take a few extra minutes to give a customer the care he/she needs or an extra few seconds to encourage a co-worker or to tell someone you love them.

Never close a day without a few intangibles.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

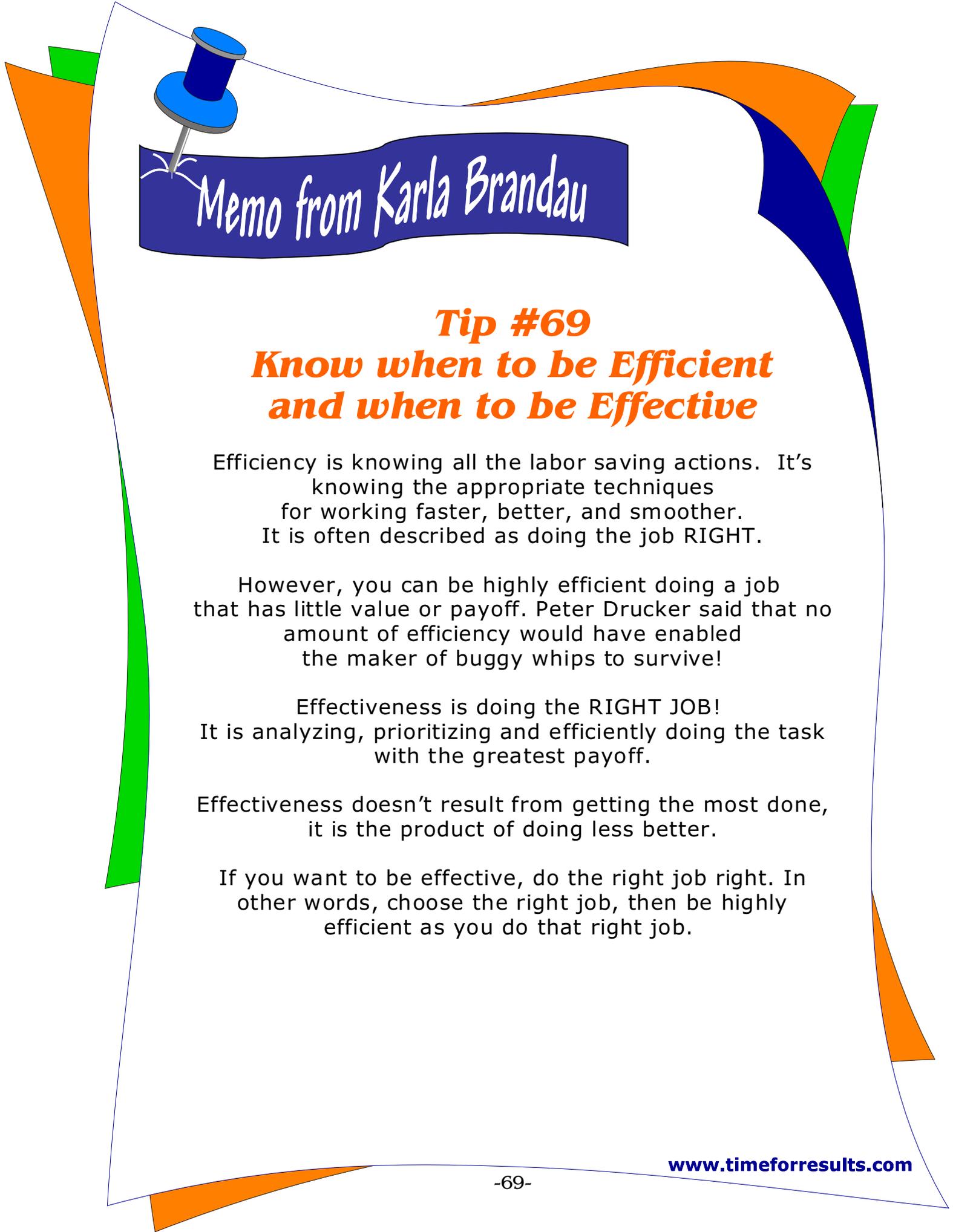
**Tip #68**  
***Take time for housekeeping***

To make sure stuff is where you need it when you need it, spend 10-15 minutes on housekeeping items every day.

Filing, cleaning drawers, taking paint cans out of the garage or pulling weeds usually only take a few minutes, but you typically hate to do these tasks because they do not advance your highest priorities.

Left undone, they irritate you and distract you from high productivity.

Spend 10-15 minutes every day and keep untidy piles cleaned up. Make housekeeping items "Zip Tasks" and tackle them when you have a couple of minutes that would be wasted otherwise.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #69**  
***Know when to be Efficient  
and when to be Effective***

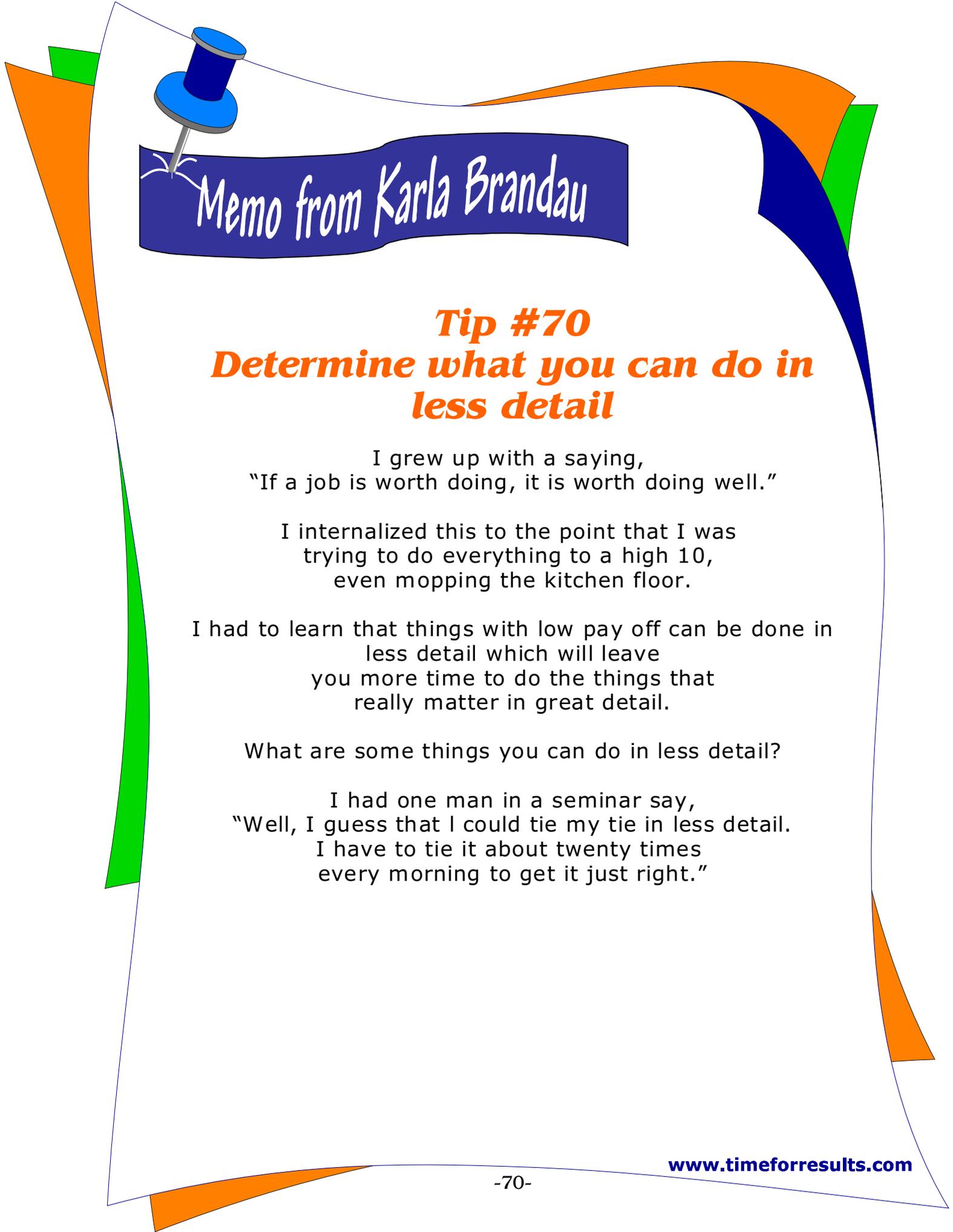
Efficiency is knowing all the labor saving actions. It's knowing the appropriate techniques for working faster, better, and smoother. It is often described as doing the job RIGHT.

However, you can be highly efficient doing a job that has little value or payoff. Peter Drucker said that no amount of efficiency would have enabled the maker of buggy whips to survive!

Effectiveness is doing the RIGHT JOB!  
It is analyzing, prioritizing and efficiently doing the task with the greatest payoff.

Effectiveness doesn't result from getting the most done, it is the product of doing less better.

If you want to be effective, do the right job right. In other words, choose the right job, then be highly efficient as you do that right job.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #70**  
***Determine what you can do in  
less detail***

I grew up with a saying,  
"If a job is worth doing, it is worth doing well."

I internalized this to the point that I was  
trying to do everything to a high 10,  
even mopping the kitchen floor.

I had to learn that things with low pay off can be done in  
less detail which will leave  
you more time to do the things that  
really matter in great detail.

What are some things you can do in less detail?

I had one man in a seminar say,  
"Well, I guess that I could tie my tie in less detail.  
I have to tie it about twenty times  
every morning to get it just right."



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #71**  
***Standardize and consolidate activities***

You will build momentum and increase efficiency if you standardize, consolidate, and group activities.

Standardizing can reduce daily drudgery by eliminating repetition. Make sure you standardize forms and standardize answers to frequently asked questions. Use preprinted return address labels for personal correspondence and have preprinted labels made for people you frequently mail.

Consolidating activities is a great boost to productivity. Consolidate errands: plan out trips to the break room, the copy center, or the mail stop and make them in one swooping round. Consolidate the gathering of information by making notes of all the questions you need to ask in one call.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #72**  
**Group like items**

A recent Cathy cartoon was humorous. She was debating what to do first in her day: return e-mail, make copies or return telephone calls.

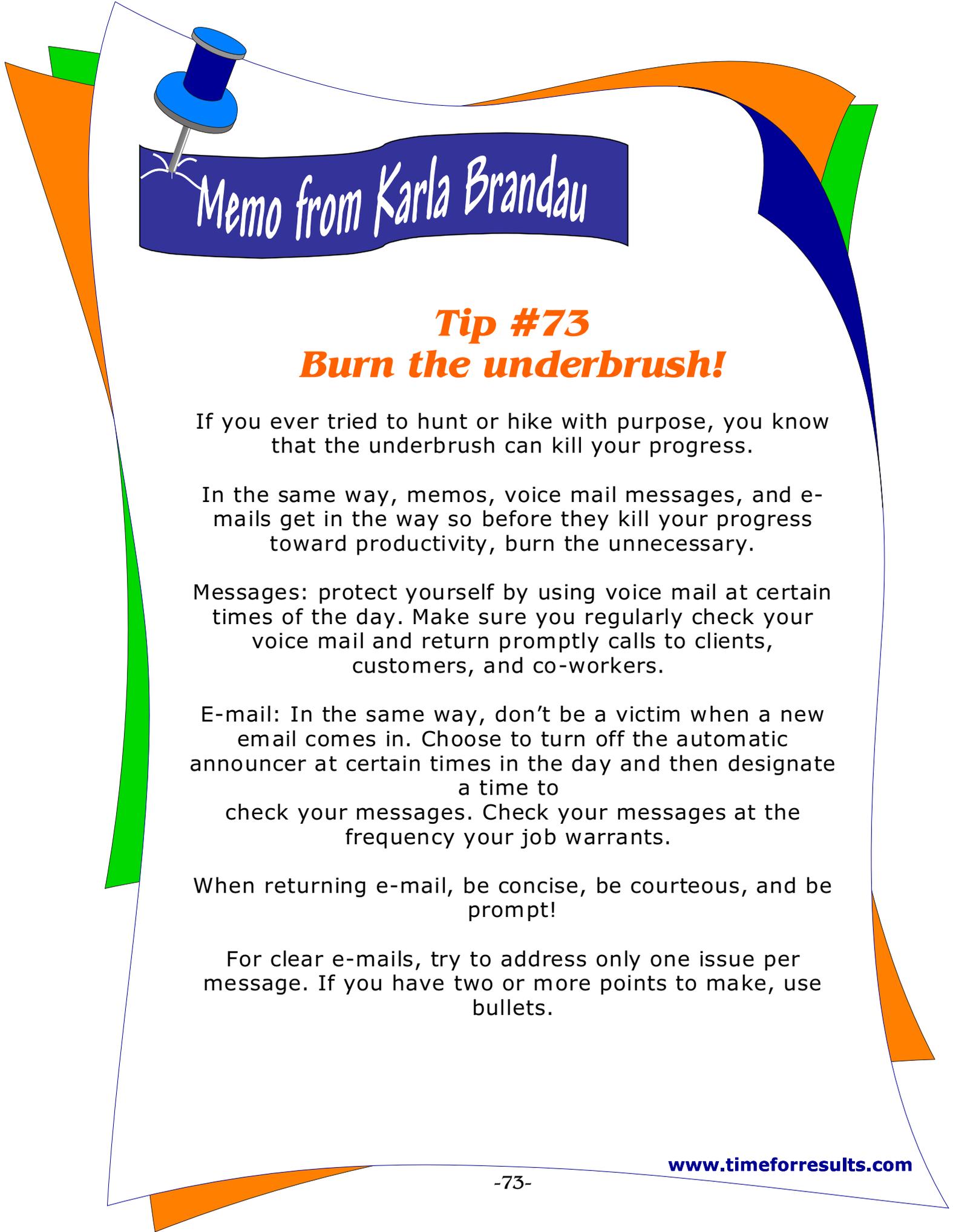
She finally decided to answer one e-mail, make one copy, and return one phone call and then start over.

I had to shake my head in dismay. Cathy was in disarray.

You need to group like items for the greatest productivity.

Group similar activities such as returning phone calls, picking up faxes, reading e-mails, running errands, making copies and appointments or meetings with co-workers.

The benefits of grouping like items is that you'll save starting and stopping time and as you work on each group, you build a mystical kind of momentum that propels you through the day.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #73**  
***Burn the underbrush!***

If you ever tried to hunt or hike with purpose, you know that the underbrush can kill your progress.

In the same way, memos, voice mail messages, and e-mails get in the way so before they kill your progress toward productivity, burn the unnecessary.

Messages: protect yourself by using voice mail at certain times of the day. Make sure you regularly check your voice mail and return promptly calls to clients, customers, and co-workers.

E-mail: In the same way, don't be a victim when a new email comes in. Choose to turn off the automatic announcer at certain times in the day and then designate a time to check your messages. Check your messages at the frequency your job warrants.

When returning e-mail, be concise, be courteous, and be prompt!

For clear e-mails, try to address only one issue per message. If you have two or more points to make, use bullets.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #74**  
***Create productive meetings***

The business world has to have meetings,  
but they can be big time wasters.

To make them productive, be sure to:

1. Help people prepare for the meeting by making an agenda well in advance and sending it out to all invited people.
2. Invite only the people who need to be in attendance and don't have the meeting if the decision makers will not be in attendance.
3. Help attendees maintain focus by referring frequently to the agenda.
4. When the meeting is over, send the minutes to all attendees with a list of assignments.

On the personal side, save time by getting out of the meeting if possible. If you have to attend, take good notes and turn it into a networking event: have questions to be answered, and people to connect with.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #75**  
***The morning mail***

Open your mail next to the trash can, which incidentally is man's best friend next to a dog!

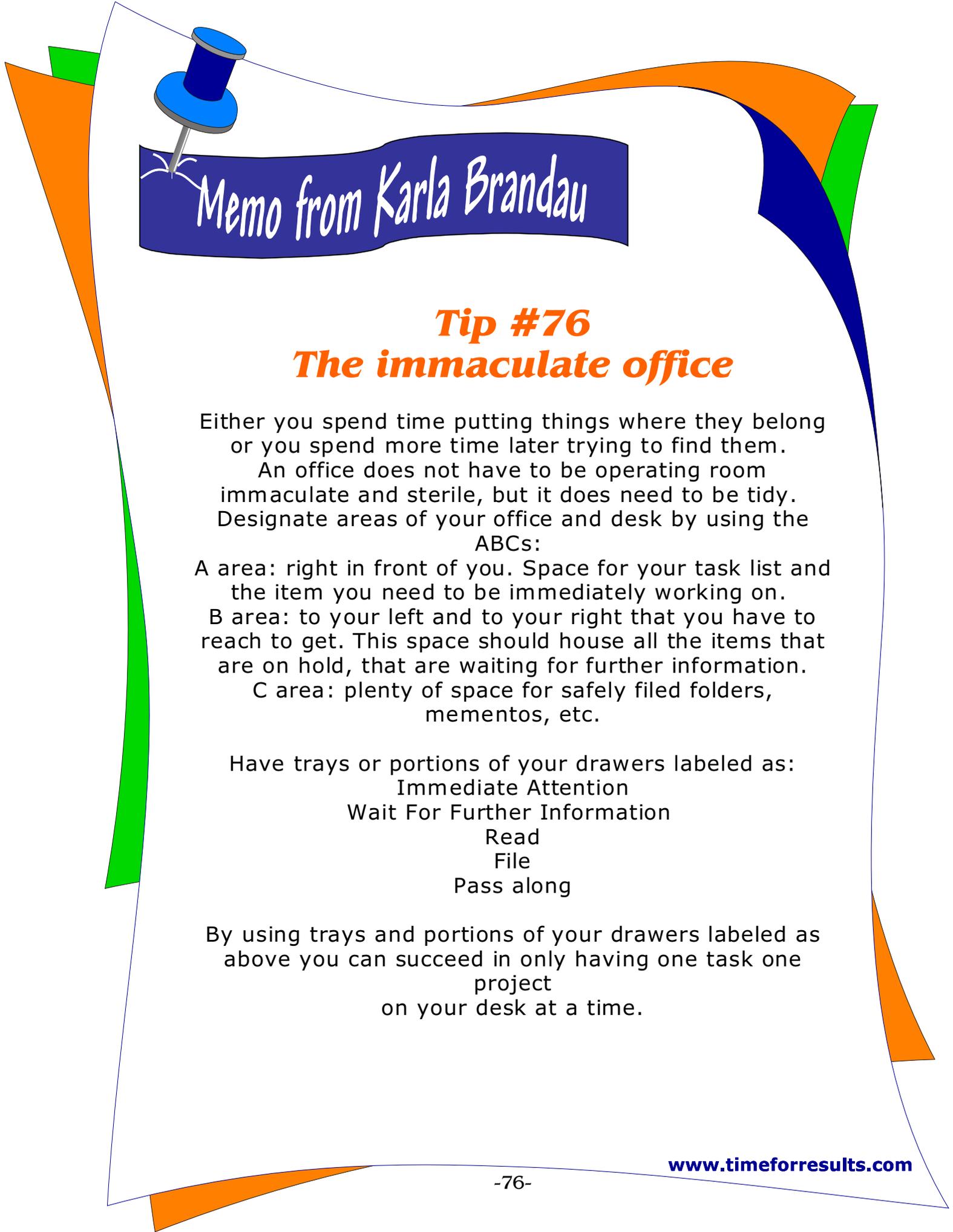
With a colorful magic marker, prioritize as follows:

- A—requires IMMEDIATE response
- B—can wait or hold for more information
- C—read on the commute home or while waiting
- D—delegate

It is important to resist the temptation to leave it in a pile on your desk.

Put the letters or requests for information in appropriate files or folders and put them in your desk. Next, make "to-do" list items with notes on where the item is located and what action item to take.

This effectively eliminates stacks of papers on your desk.



Memo from Karla Brandau

## **Tip #76**

### ***The immaculate office***

Either you spend time putting things where they belong or you spend more time later trying to find them.

An office does not have to be operating room immaculate and sterile, but it does need to be tidy. Designate areas of your office and desk by using the

ABCs:

A area: right in front of you. Space for your task list and the item you need to be immediately working on.

B area: to your left and to your right that you have to reach to get. This space should house all the items that are on hold, that are waiting for further information.

C area: plenty of space for safely filed folders, mementos, etc.

Have trays or portions of your drawers labeled as:

Immediate Attention

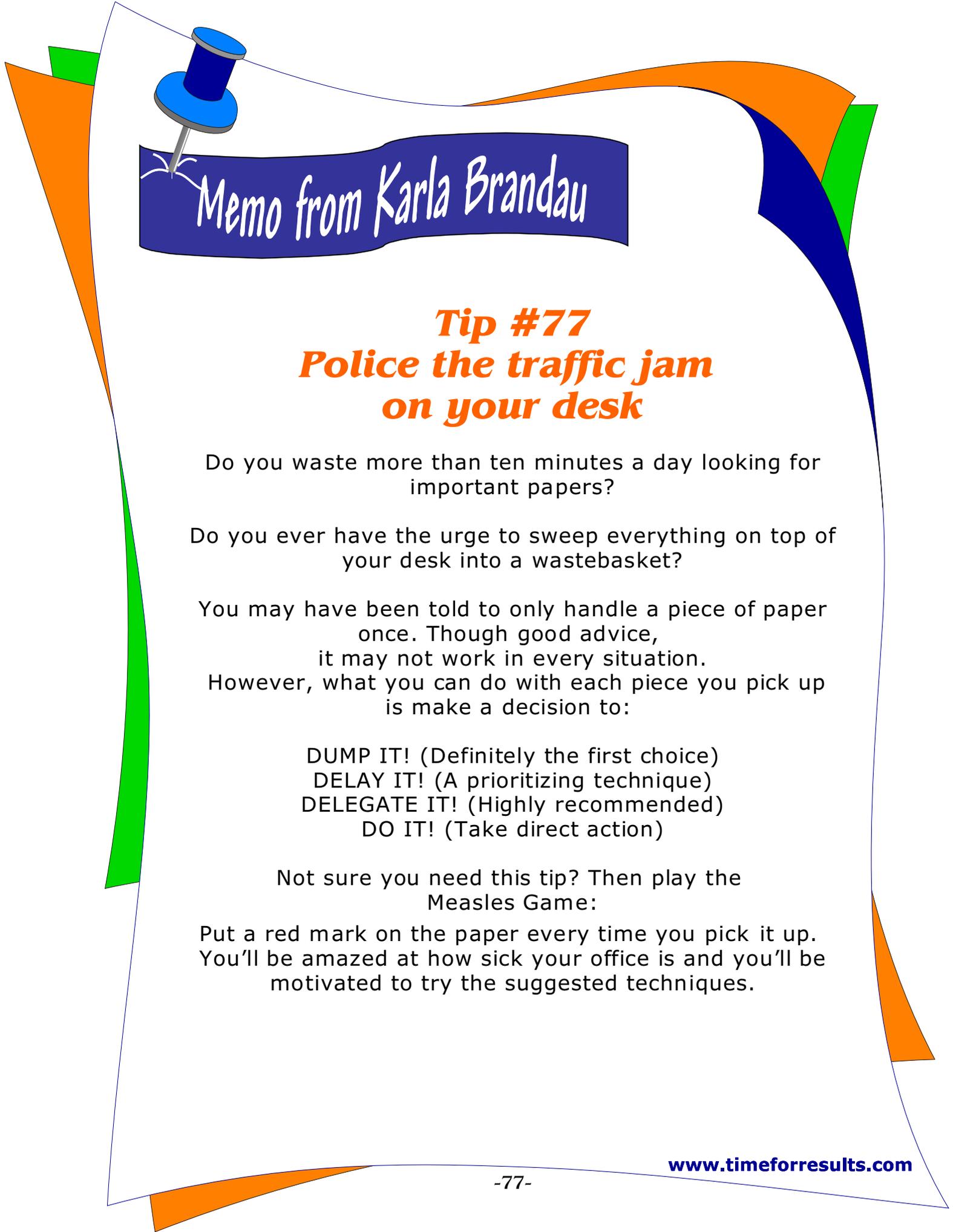
Wait For Further Information

Read

File

Pass along

By using trays and portions of your drawers labeled as above you can succeed in only having one task one project on your desk at a time.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #77**  
***Police the traffic jam  
on your desk***

Do you waste more than ten minutes a day looking for important papers?

Do you ever have the urge to sweep everything on top of your desk into a wastebasket?

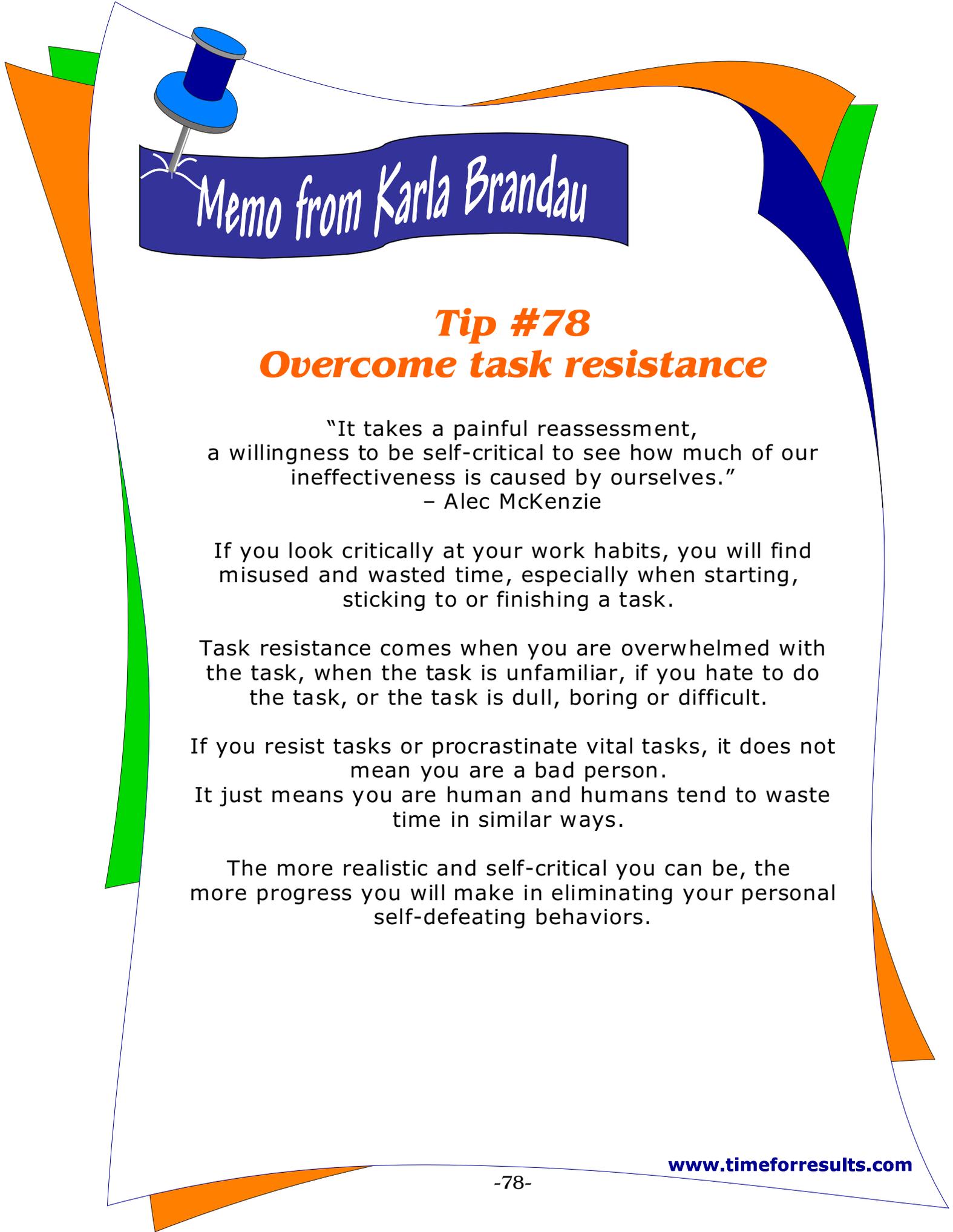
You may have been told to only handle a piece of paper once. Though good advice, it may not work in every situation.

However, what you can do with each piece you pick up is make a decision to:

DUMP IT! (Definitely the first choice)  
DELAY IT! (A prioritizing technique)  
DELEGATE IT! (Highly recommended)  
DO IT! (Take direct action)

Not sure you need this tip? Then play the Measles Game:

Put a red mark on the paper every time you pick it up. You'll be amazed at how sick your office is and you'll be motivated to try the suggested techniques.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #78**  
***Overcome task resistance***

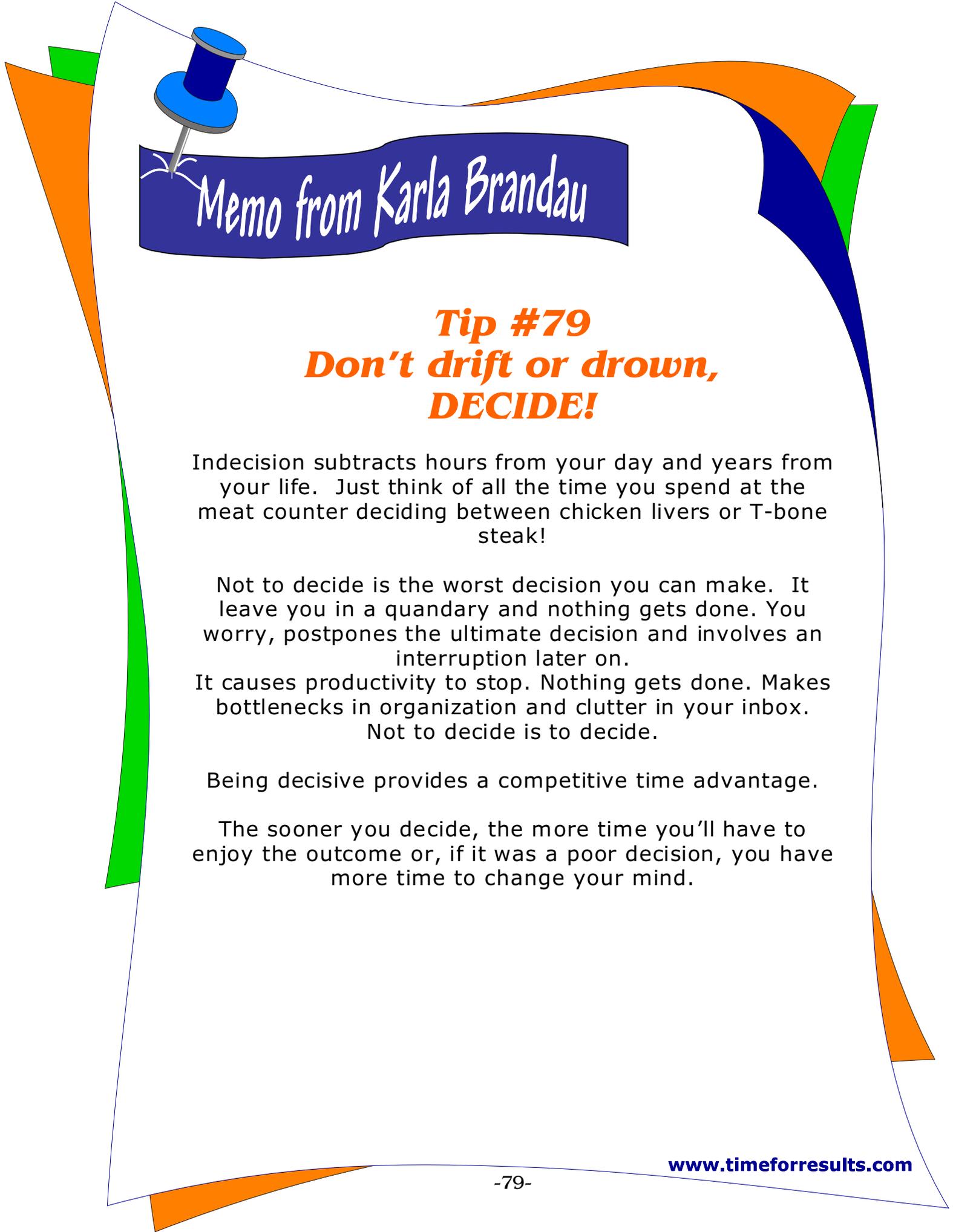
“It takes a painful reassessment, a willingness to be self-critical to see how much of our ineffectiveness is caused by ourselves.”  
– Alec McKenzie

If you look critically at your work habits, you will find misused and wasted time, especially when starting, sticking to or finishing a task.

Task resistance comes when you are overwhelmed with the task, when the task is unfamiliar, if you hate to do the task, or the task is dull, boring or difficult.

If you resist tasks or procrastinate vital tasks, it does not mean you are a bad person.  
It just means you are human and humans tend to waste time in similar ways.

The more realistic and self-critical you can be, the more progress you will make in eliminating your personal self-defeating behaviors.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #79**  
***Don't drift or drown,***  
***DECIDE!***

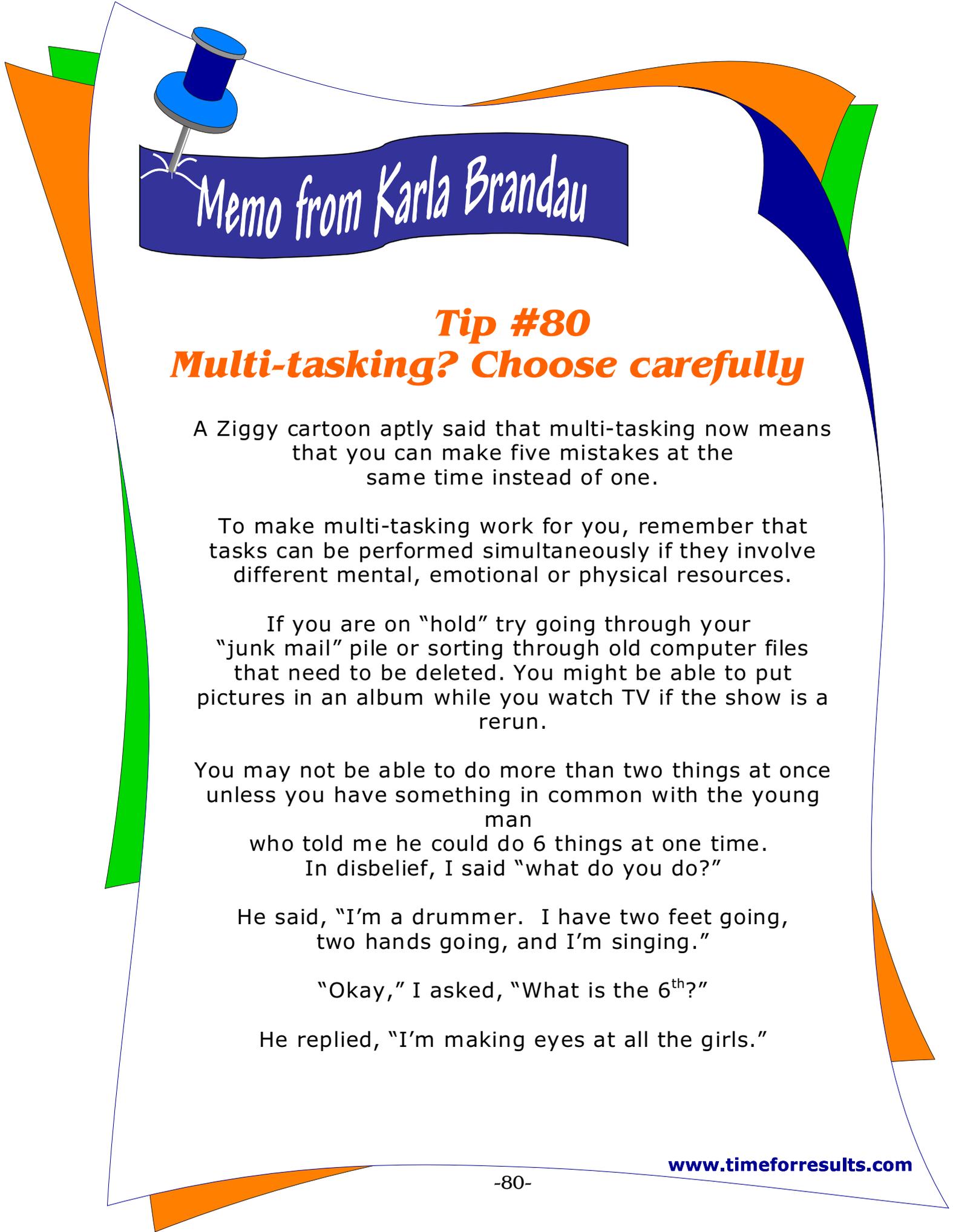
Indecision subtracts hours from your day and years from your life. Just think of all the time you spend at the meat counter deciding between chicken livers or T-bone steak!

Not to decide is the worst decision you can make. It leave you in a quandary and nothing gets done. You worry, postpones the ultimate decision and involves an interruption later on.

It causes productivity to stop. Nothing gets done. Makes bottlenecks in organization and clutter in your inbox.  
Not to decide is to decide.

Being decisive provides a competitive time advantage.

The sooner you decide, the more time you'll have to enjoy the outcome or, if it was a poor decision, you have more time to change your mind.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #80**  
***Multi-tasking? Choose carefully***

A Ziggy cartoon aptly said that multi-tasking now means that you can make five mistakes at the same time instead of one.

To make multi-tasking work for you, remember that tasks can be performed simultaneously if they involve different mental, emotional or physical resources.

If you are on "hold" try going through your "junk mail" pile or sorting through old computer files that need to be deleted. You might be able to put pictures in an album while you watch TV if the show is a rerun.

You may not be able to do more than two things at once unless you have something in common with the young man

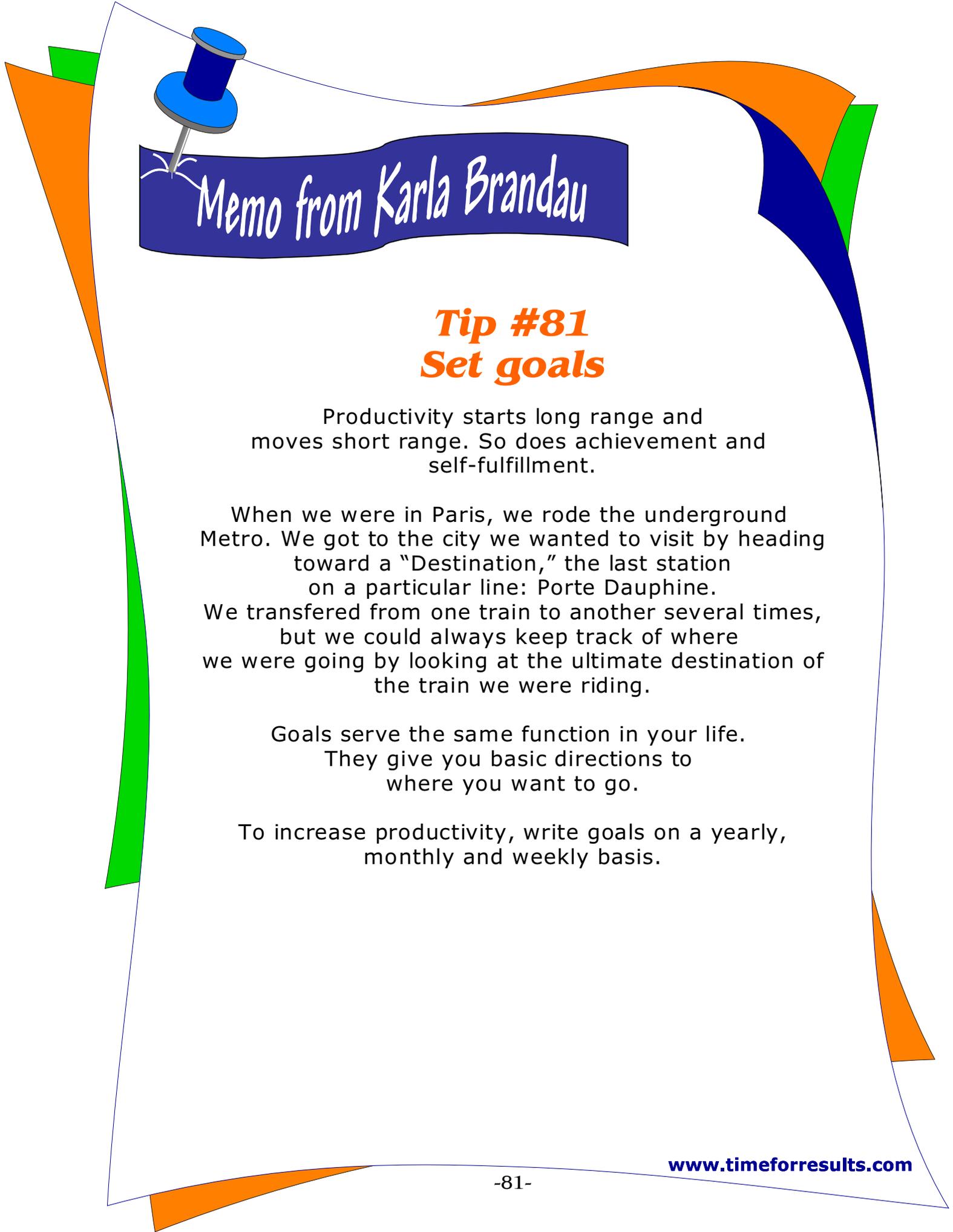
who told me he could do 6 things at one time.

In disbelief, I said "what do you do?"

He said, "I'm a drummer. I have two feet going, two hands going, and I'm singing."

"Okay," I asked, "What is the 6<sup>th</sup>?"

He replied, "I'm making eyes at all the girls."



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

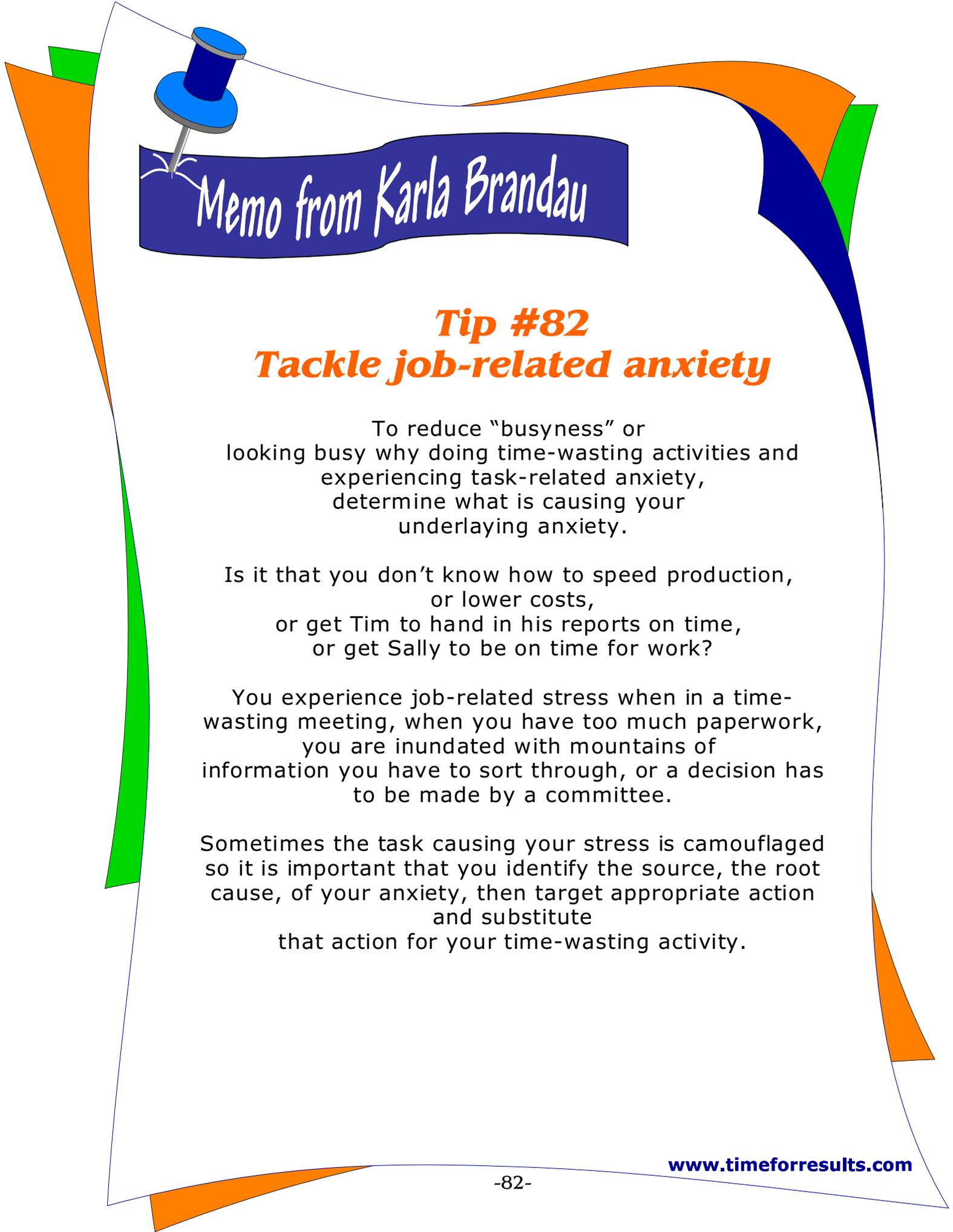
**Tip #81**  
**Set goals**

Productivity starts long range and moves short range. So does achievement and self-fulfillment.

When we were in Paris, we rode the underground Metro. We got to the city we wanted to visit by heading toward a "Destination," the last station on a particular line: Porte Dauphine. We transferred from one train to another several times, but we could always keep track of where we were going by looking at the ultimate destination of the train we were riding.

Goals serve the same function in your life. They give you basic directions to where you want to go.

To increase productivity, write goals on a yearly, monthly and weekly basis.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

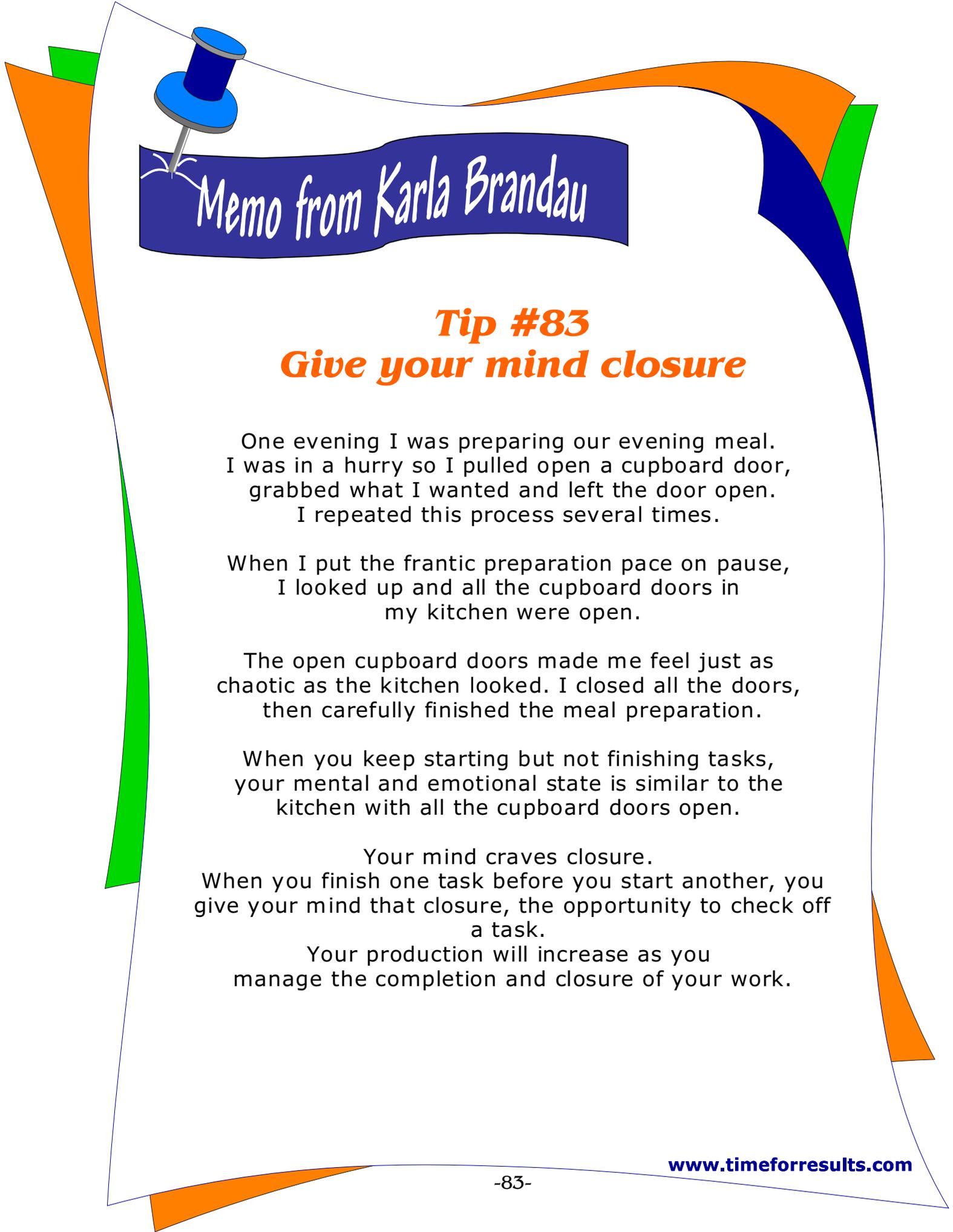
**Tip #82**  
***Tackle job-related anxiety***

To reduce “busyness” or looking busy why doing time-wasting activities and experiencing task-related anxiety, determine what is causing your underlying anxiety.

Is it that you don’t know how to speed production, or lower costs, or get Tim to hand in his reports on time, or get Sally to be on time for work?

You experience job-related stress when in a time-wasting meeting, when you have too much paperwork, you are inundated with mountains of information you have to sort through, or a decision has to be made by a committee.

Sometimes the task causing your stress is camouflaged so it is important that you identify the source, the root cause, of your anxiety, then target appropriate action and substitute that action for your time-wasting activity.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #83**  
***Give your mind closure***

One evening I was preparing our evening meal. I was in a hurry so I pulled open a cupboard door, grabbed what I wanted and left the door open. I repeated this process several times.

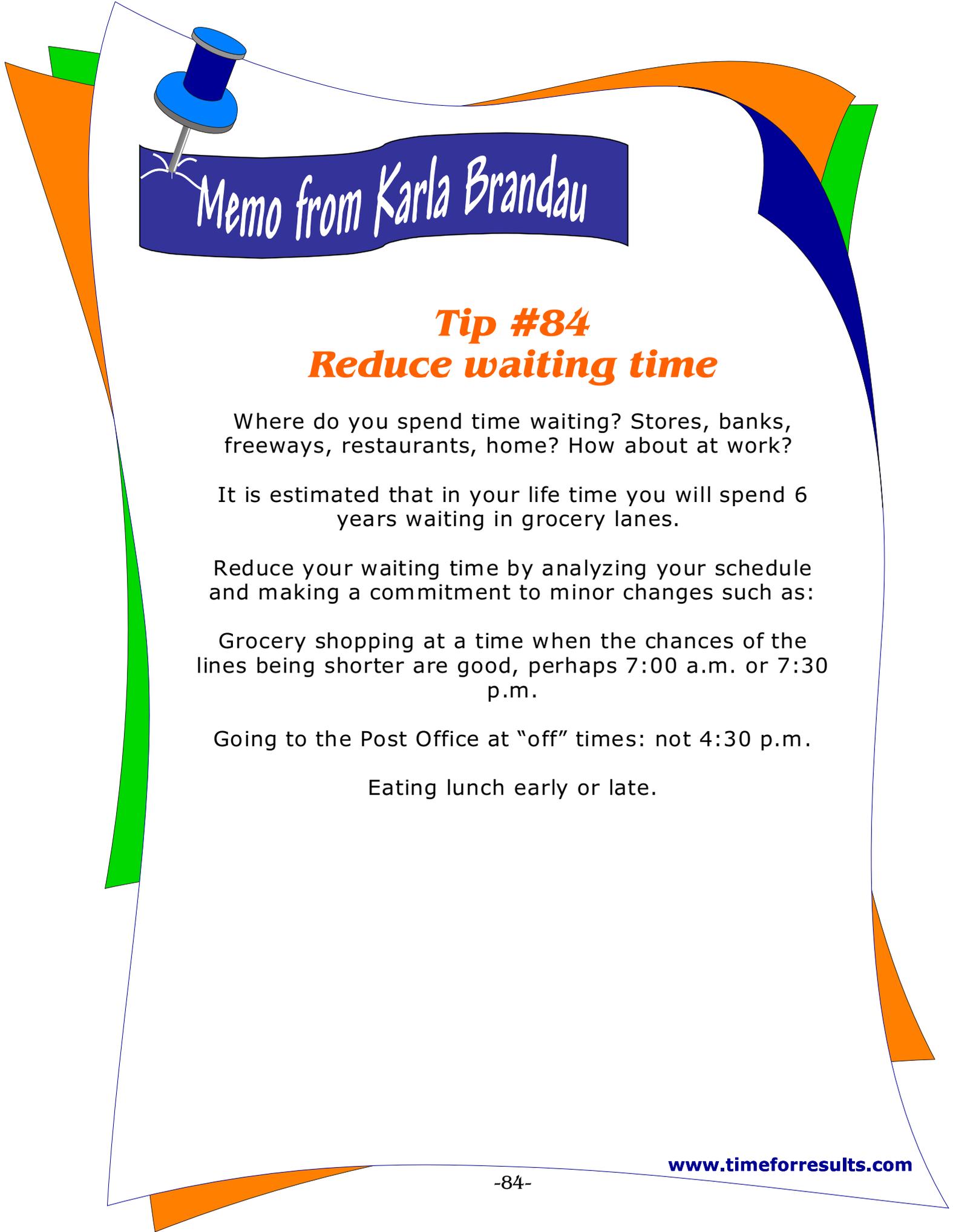
When I put the frantic preparation pace on pause, I looked up and all the cupboard doors in my kitchen were open.

The open cupboard doors made me feel just as chaotic as the kitchen looked. I closed all the doors, then carefully finished the meal preparation.

When you keep starting but not finishing tasks, your mental and emotional state is similar to the kitchen with all the cupboard doors open.

Your mind craves closure. When you finish one task before you start another, you give your mind that closure, the opportunity to check off a task.

Your production will increase as you manage the completion and closure of your work.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #84**  
***Reduce waiting time***

Where do you spend time waiting? Stores, banks, freeways, restaurants, home? How about at work?

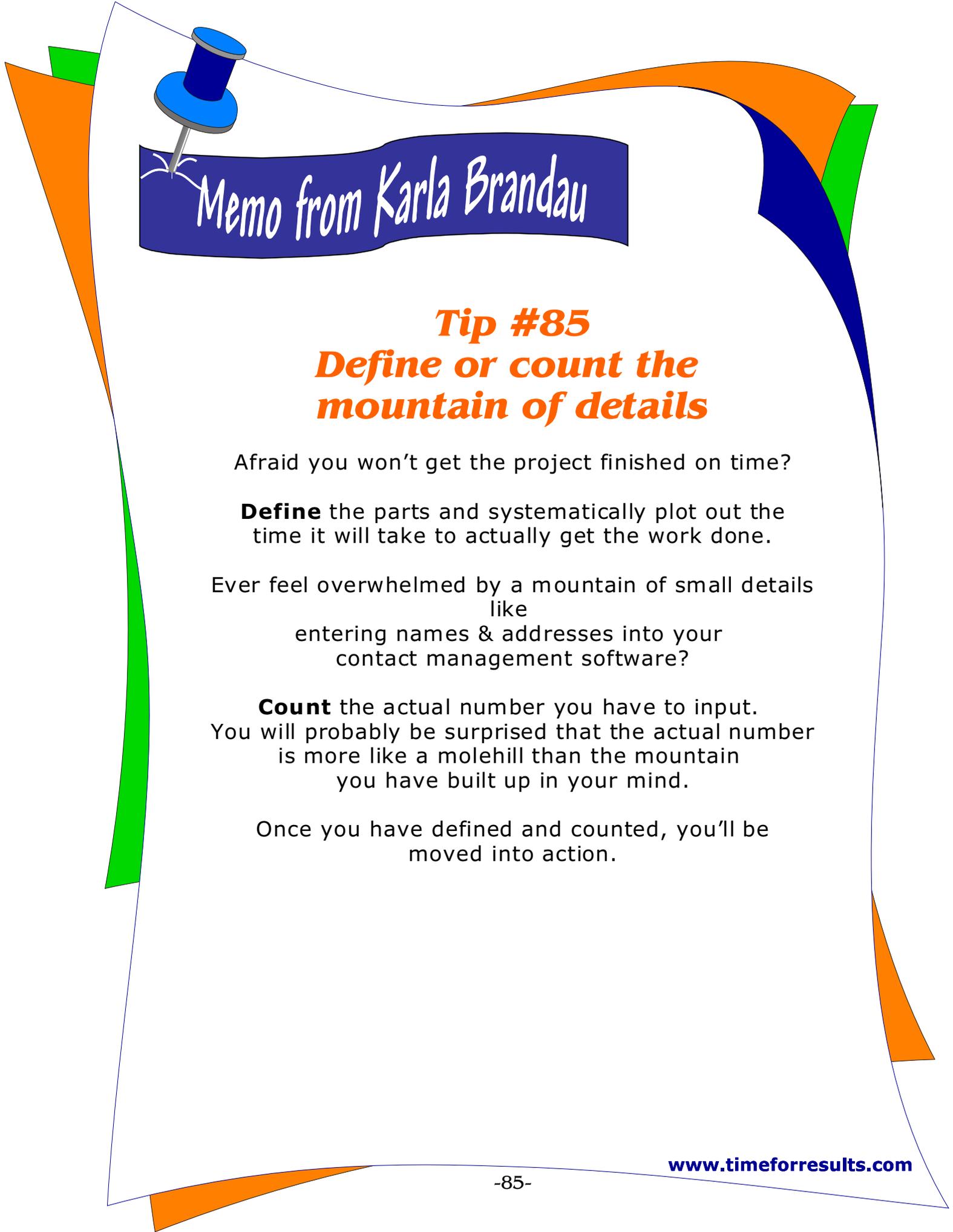
It is estimated that in your life time you will spend 6 years waiting in grocery lanes.

Reduce your waiting time by analyzing your schedule and making a commitment to minor changes such as:

Grocery shopping at a time when the chances of the lines being shorter are good, perhaps 7:00 a.m. or 7:30 p.m.

Going to the Post Office at "off" times: not 4:30 p.m.

Eating lunch early or late.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #85**  
***Define or count the  
mountain of details***

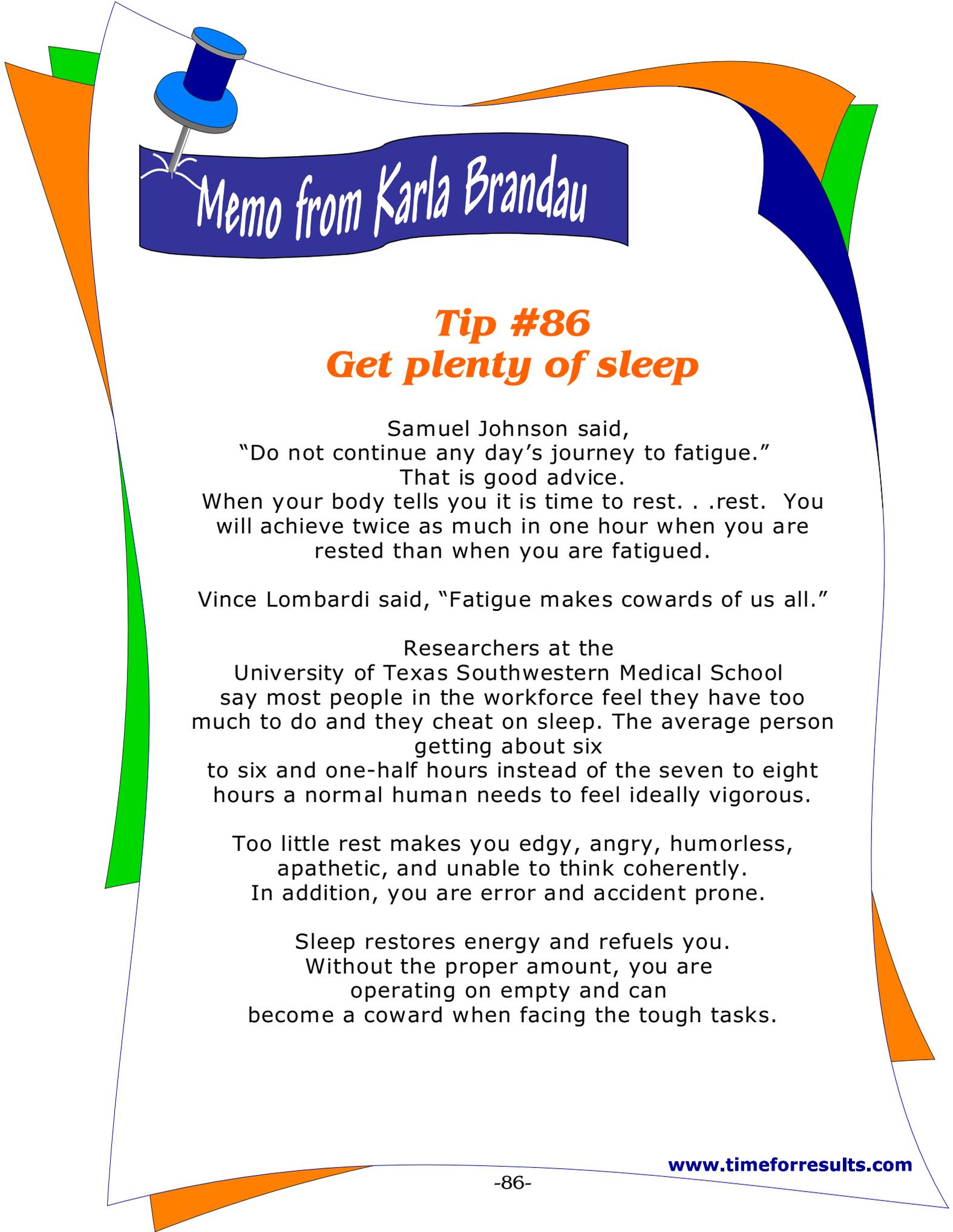
Afraid you won't get the project finished on time?

**Define** the parts and systematically plot out the time it will take to actually get the work done.

Ever feel overwhelmed by a mountain of small details like entering names & addresses into your contact management software?

**Count** the actual number you have to input. You will probably be surprised that the actual number is more like a molehill than the mountain you have built up in your mind.

Once you have defined and counted, you'll be moved into action.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #86**  
***Get plenty of sleep***

Samuel Johnson said,  
"Do not continue any day's journey to fatigue."

That is good advice.

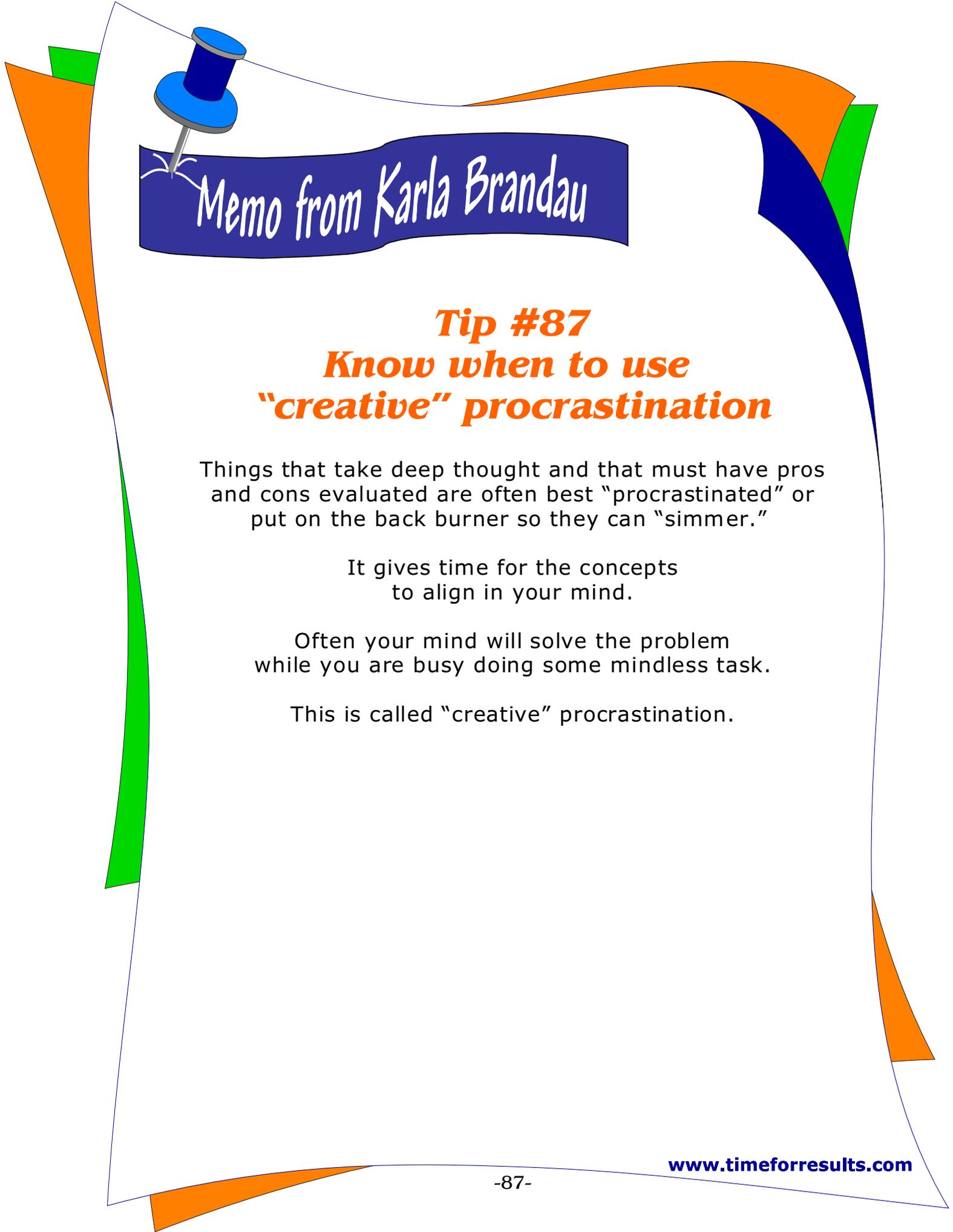
When your body tells you it is time to rest. . .rest. You will achieve twice as much in one hour when you are rested than when you are fatigued.

Vince Lombardi said, "Fatigue makes cowards of us all."

Researchers at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School say most people in the workforce feel they have too much to do and they cheat on sleep. The average person getting about six to six and one-half hours instead of the seven to eight hours a normal human needs to feel ideally vigorous.

Too little rest makes you edgy, angry, humorless, apathetic, and unable to think coherently. In addition, you are error and accident prone.

Sleep restores energy and refuels you. Without the proper amount, you are operating on empty and can become a coward when facing the tough tasks.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #87**  
**Know when to use**  
**"creative" procrastination**

Things that take deep thought and that must have pros and cons evaluated are often best "procrastinated" or put on the back burner so they can "simmer."

It gives time for the concepts  
to align in your mind.

Often your mind will solve the problem  
while you are busy doing some mindless task.

This is called "creative" procrastination.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

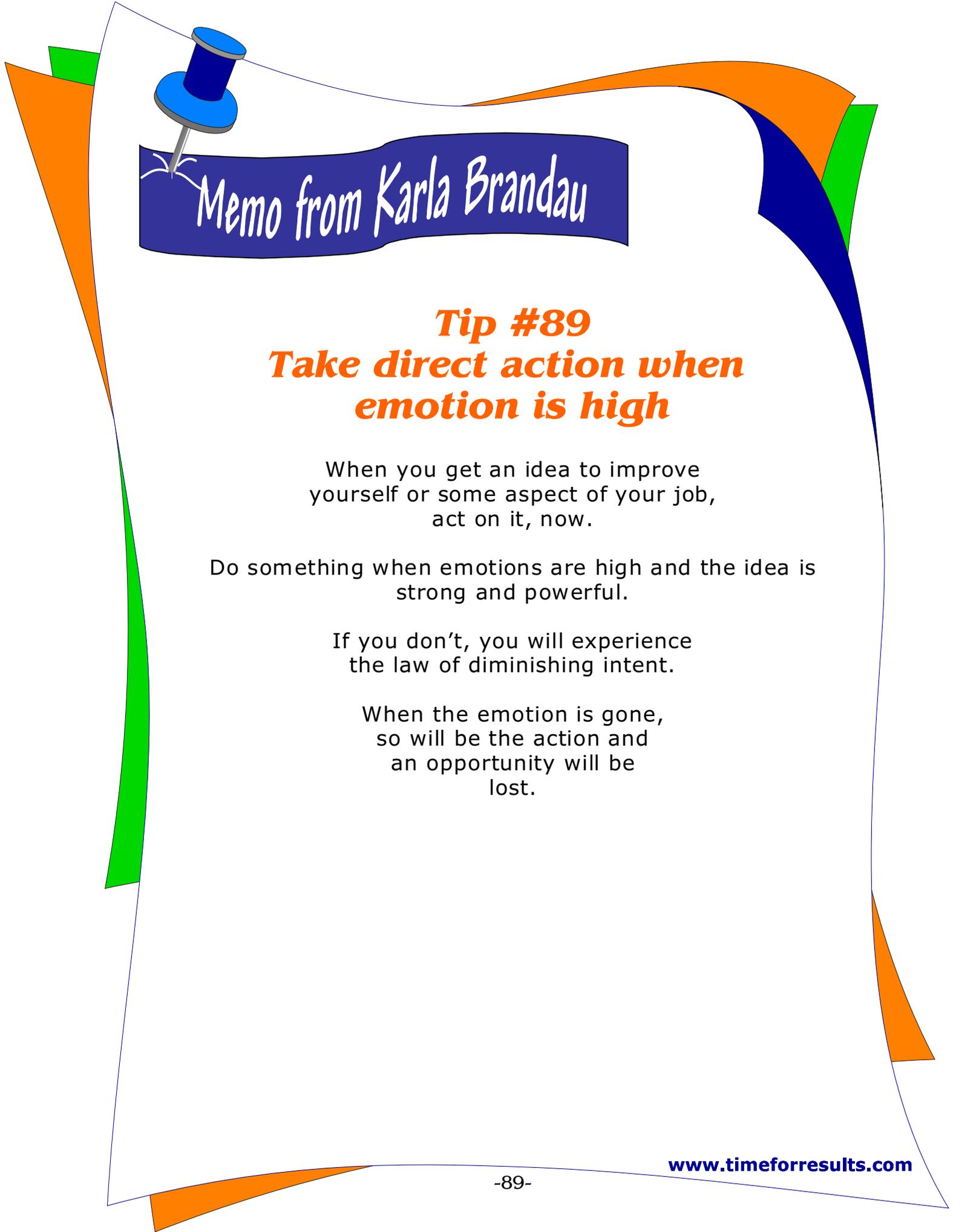
**Tip #88**  
***Play the "time warp" game***

If you are puzzled over an issue, are having a hard time deciding which path to take, or you're worrying that you made a wrong decision, ask yourself:

Will this matter in a year?  
Will it matter in two years?  
Will it matter in five years?

If not, don't waste emotional time and energy on it now.

Playing "Time Warp" helps you gain needed perspective, laugh at yourself, and save time spent spinning your wheels and wondering what to do.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

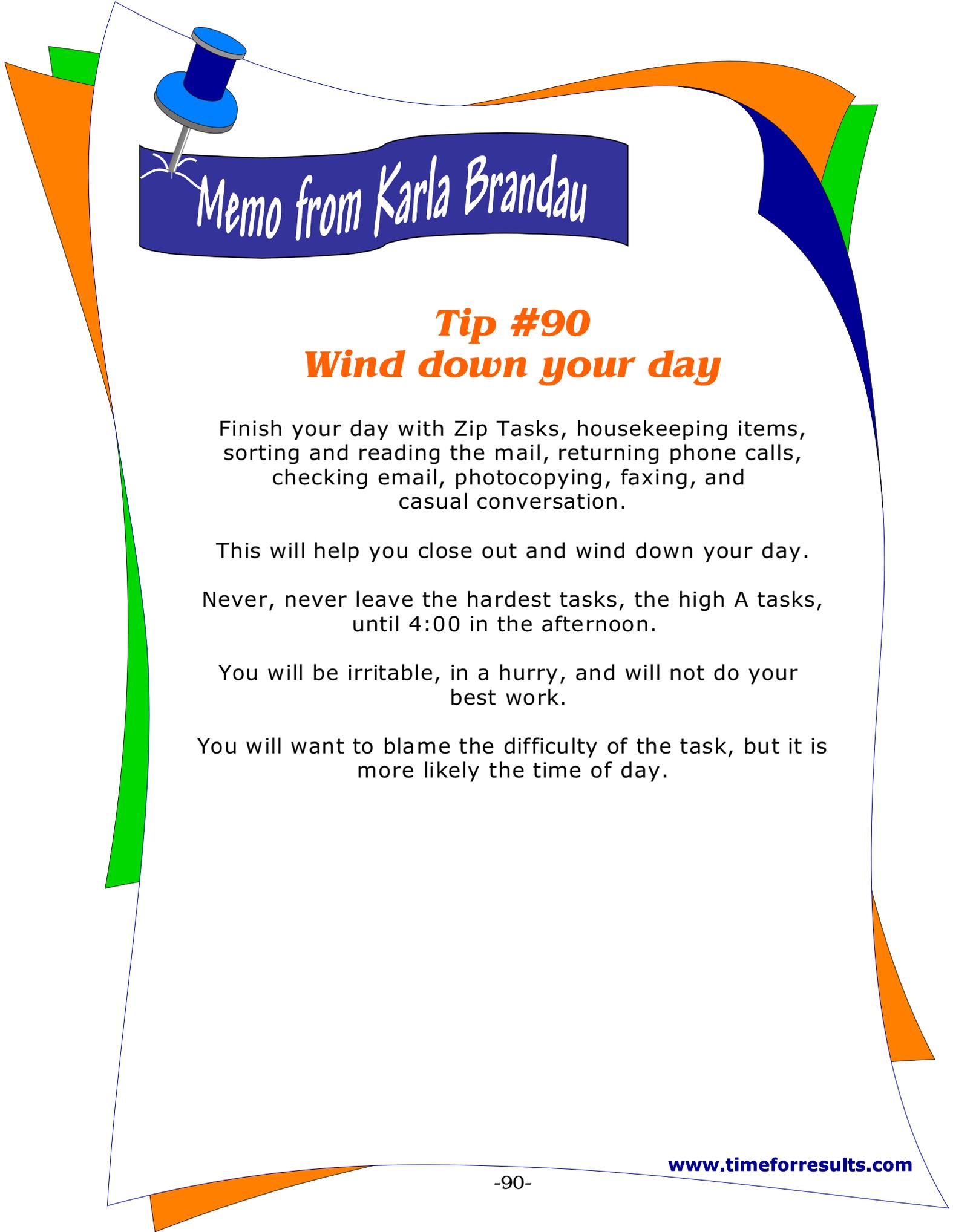
**Tip #89**  
***Take direct action when  
emotion is high***

When you get an idea to improve  
yourself or some aspect of your job,  
act on it, now.

Do something when emotions are high and the idea is  
strong and powerful.

If you don't, you will experience  
the law of diminishing intent.

When the emotion is gone,  
so will be the action and  
an opportunity will be  
lost.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #90**  
***Wind down your day***

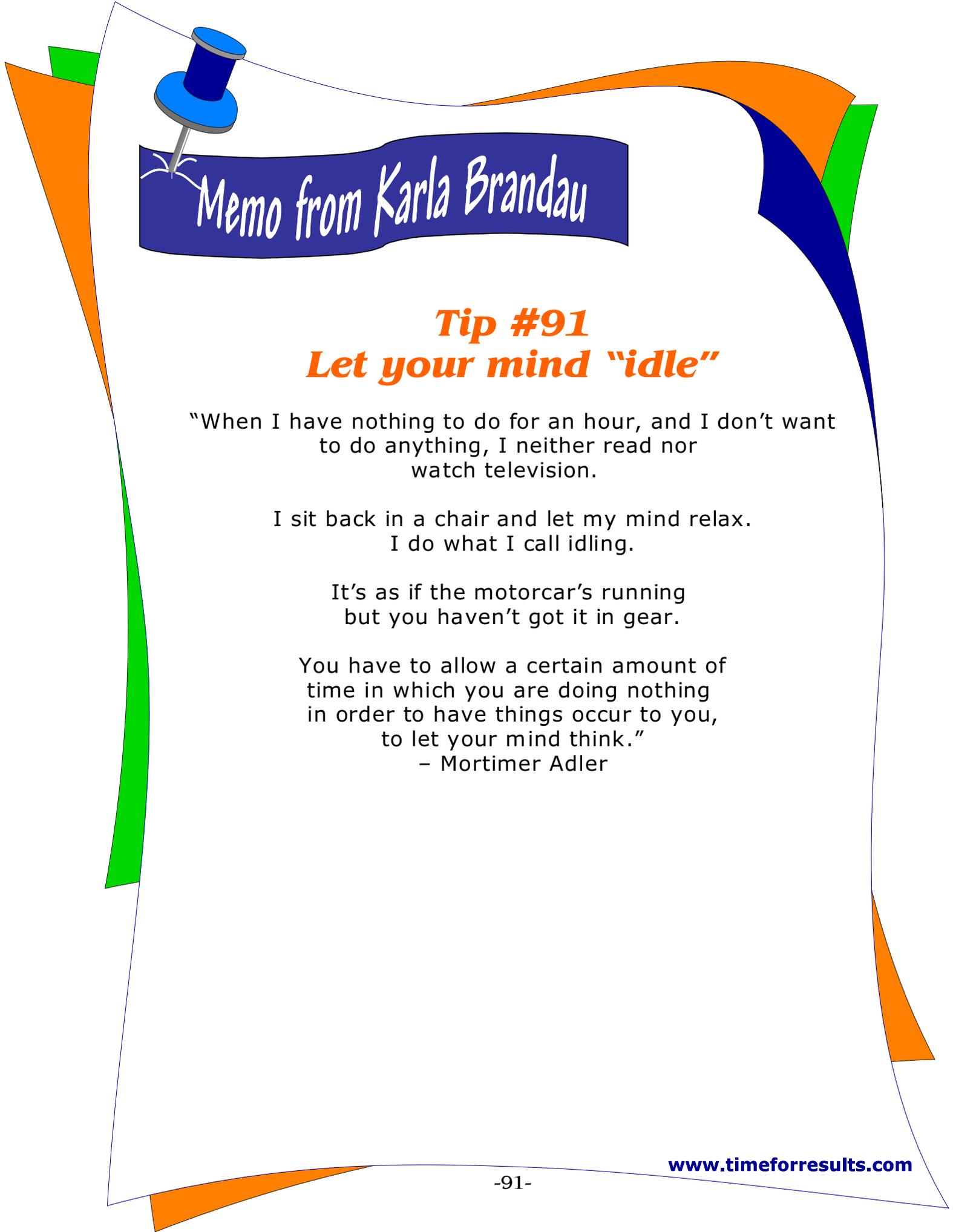
Finish your day with Zip Tasks, housekeeping items, sorting and reading the mail, returning phone calls, checking email, photocopying, faxing, and casual conversation.

This will help you close out and wind down your day.

Never, never leave the hardest tasks, the high A tasks, until 4:00 in the afternoon.

You will be irritable, in a hurry, and will not do your best work.

You will want to blame the difficulty of the task, but it is more likely the time of day.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #91**  
***Let your mind "idle"***

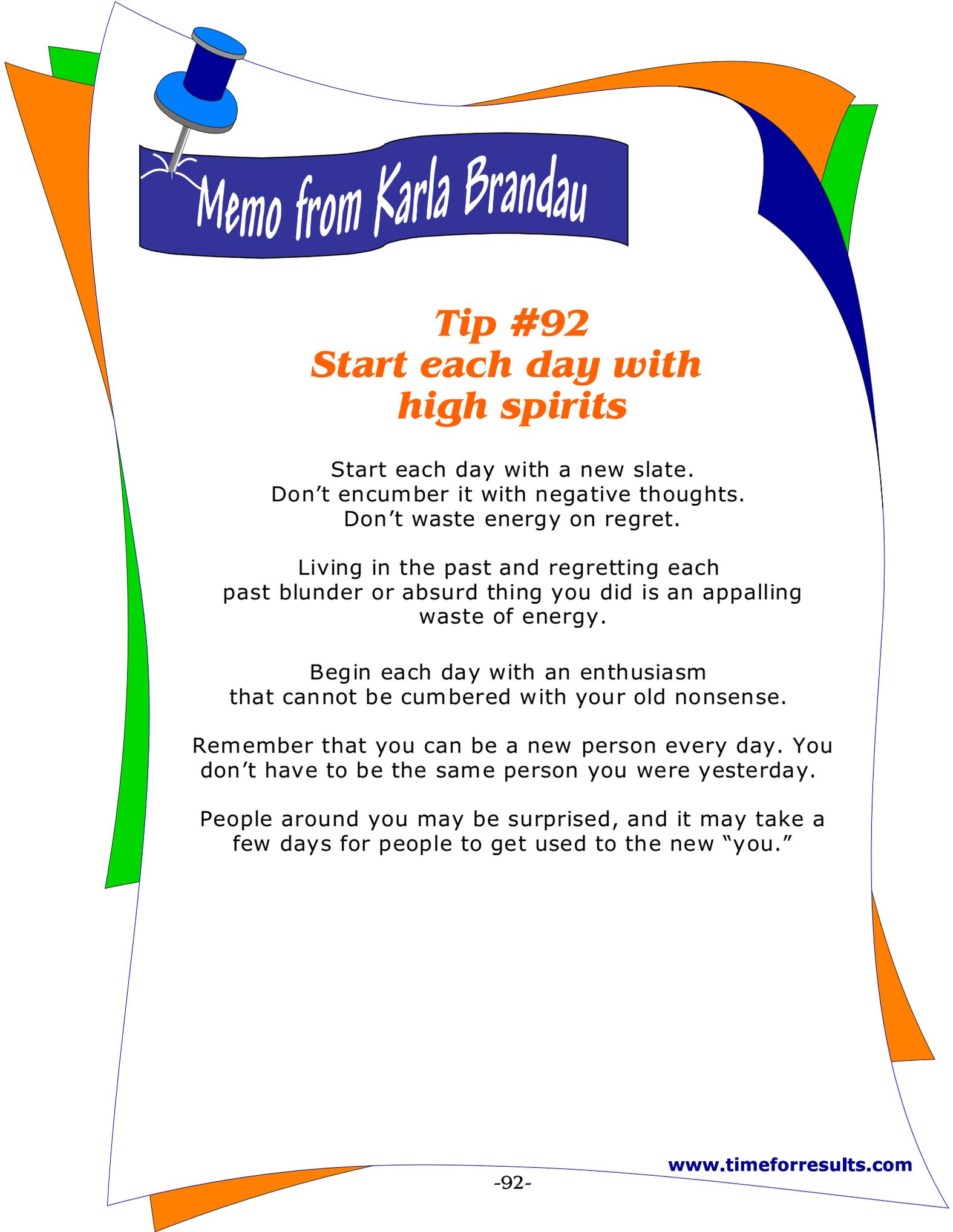
"When I have nothing to do for an hour, and I don't want to do anything, I neither read nor watch television.

I sit back in a chair and let my mind relax.  
I do what I call idling.

It's as if the motorcar's running  
but you haven't got it in gear.

You have to allow a certain amount of  
time in which you are doing nothing  
in order to have things occur to you,  
to let your mind think."

– Mortimer Adler



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #92**  
***Start each day with  
high spirits***

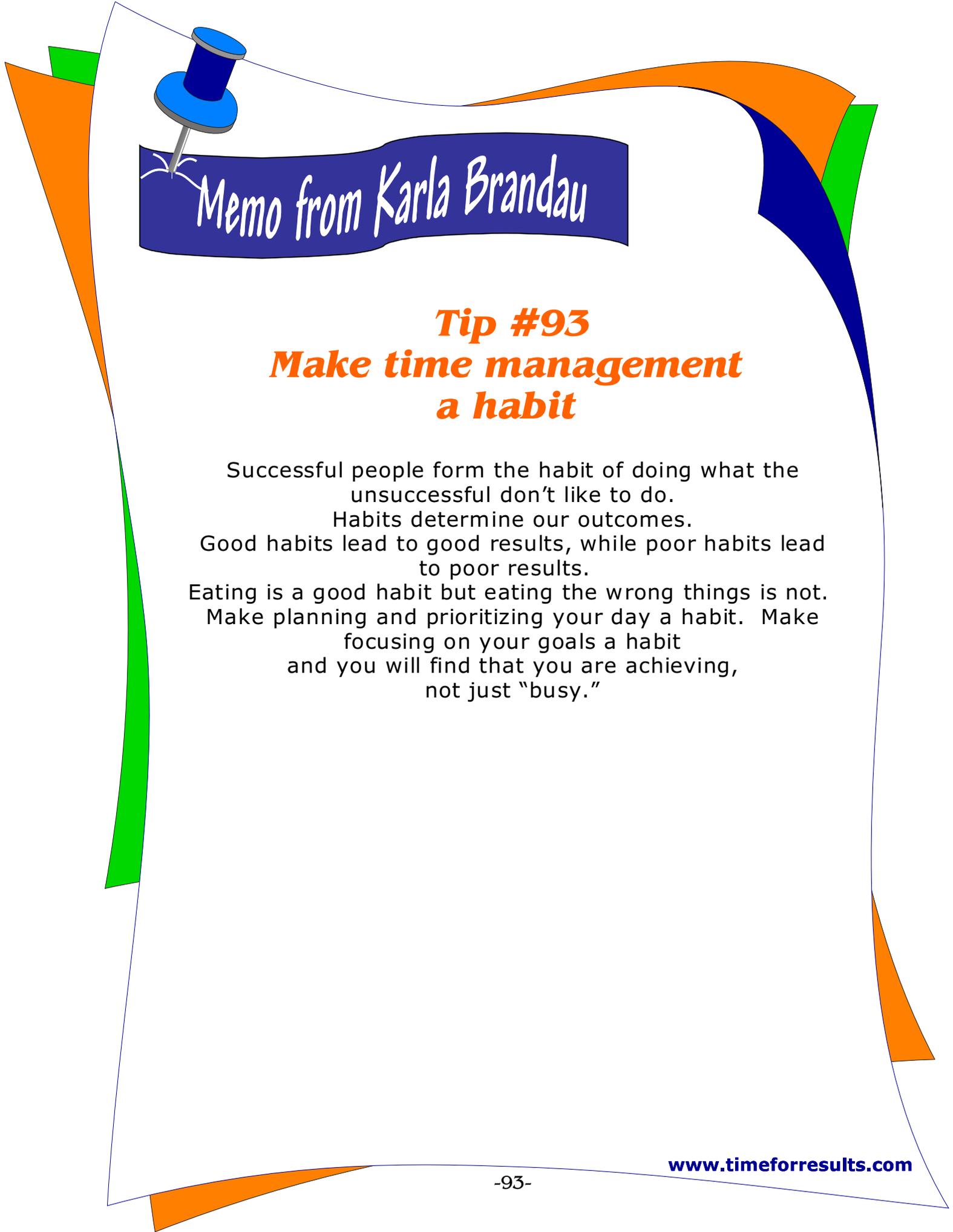
Start each day with a new slate.  
Don't encumber it with negative thoughts.  
Don't waste energy on regret.

Living in the past and regretting each  
past blunder or absurd thing you did is an appalling  
waste of energy.

Begin each day with an enthusiasm  
that cannot be cumbered with your old nonsense.

Remember that you can be a new person every day. You  
don't have to be the same person you were yesterday.

People around you may be surprised, and it may take a  
few days for people to get used to the new "you."



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #93**  
***Make time management  
a habit***

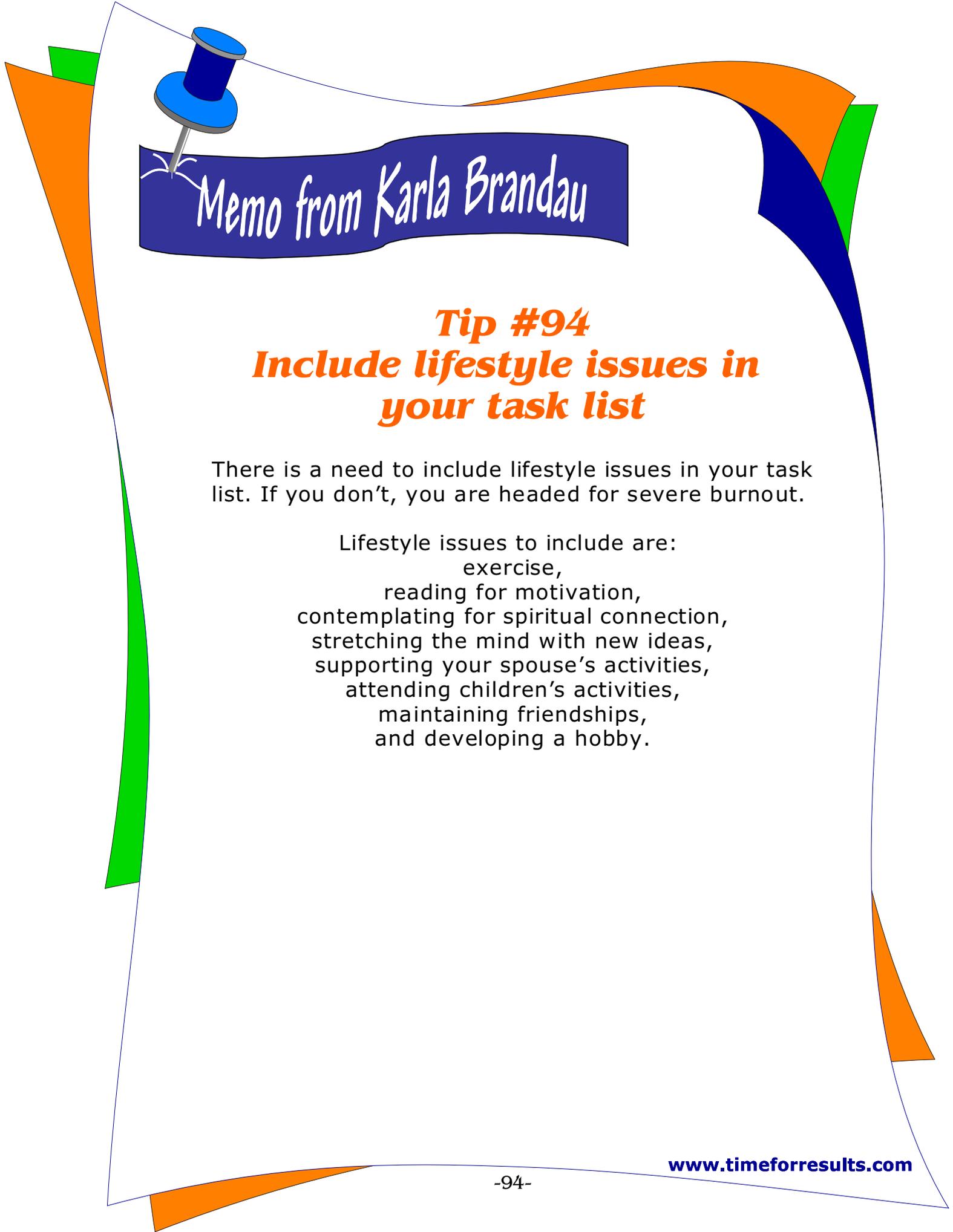
Successful people form the habit of doing what the unsuccessful don't like to do.

Habits determine our outcomes.

Good habits lead to good results, while poor habits lead to poor results.

Eating is a good habit but eating the wrong things is not.

Make planning and prioritizing your day a habit. Make focusing on your goals a habit and you will find that you are achieving, not just "busy."

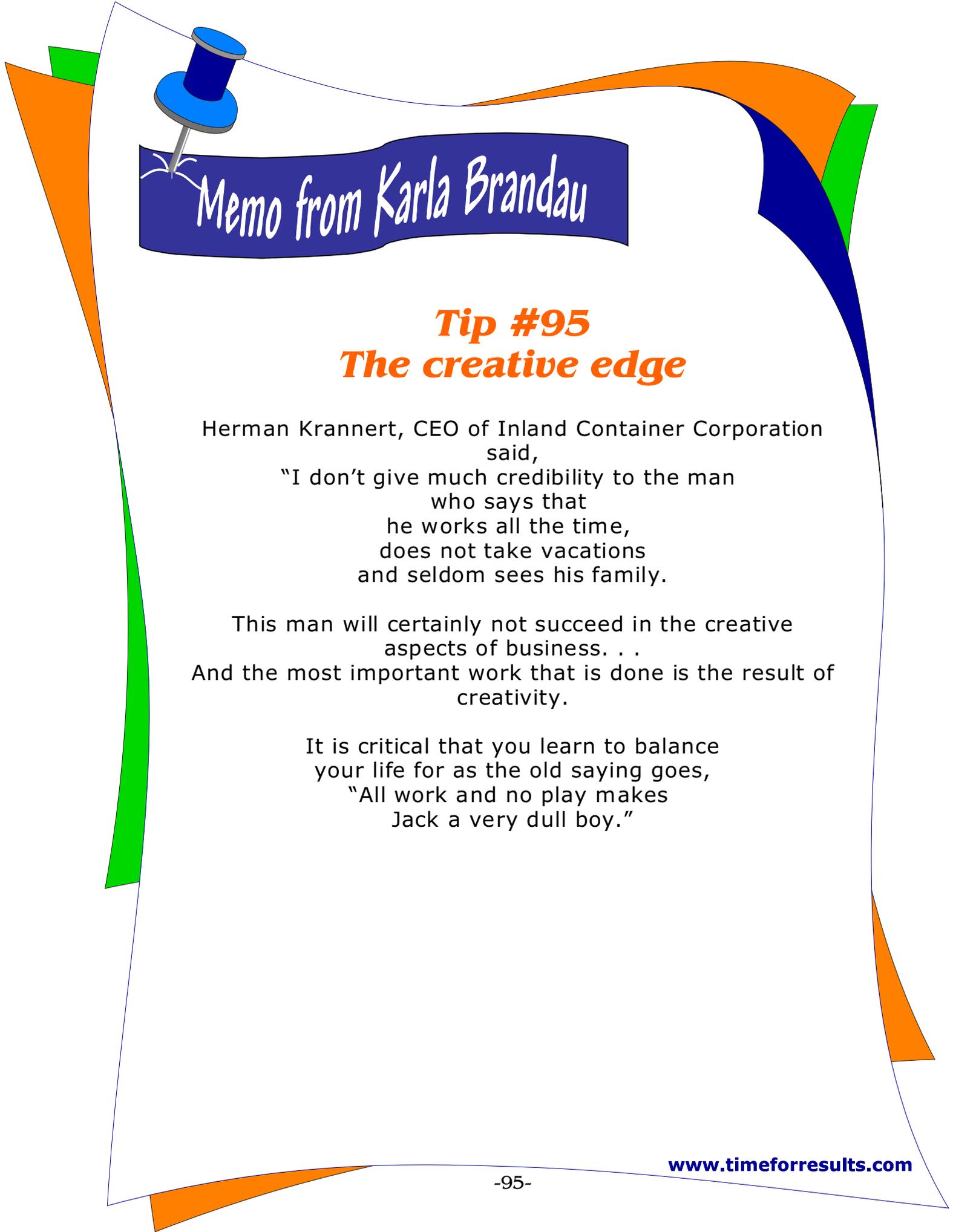


*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #94**  
***Include lifestyle issues in  
your task list***

There is a need to include lifestyle issues in your task list. If you don't, you are headed for severe burnout.

Lifestyle issues to include are:  
exercise,  
reading for motivation,  
contemplating for spiritual connection,  
stretching the mind with new ideas,  
supporting your spouse's activities,  
attending children's activities,  
maintaining friendships,  
and developing a hobby.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

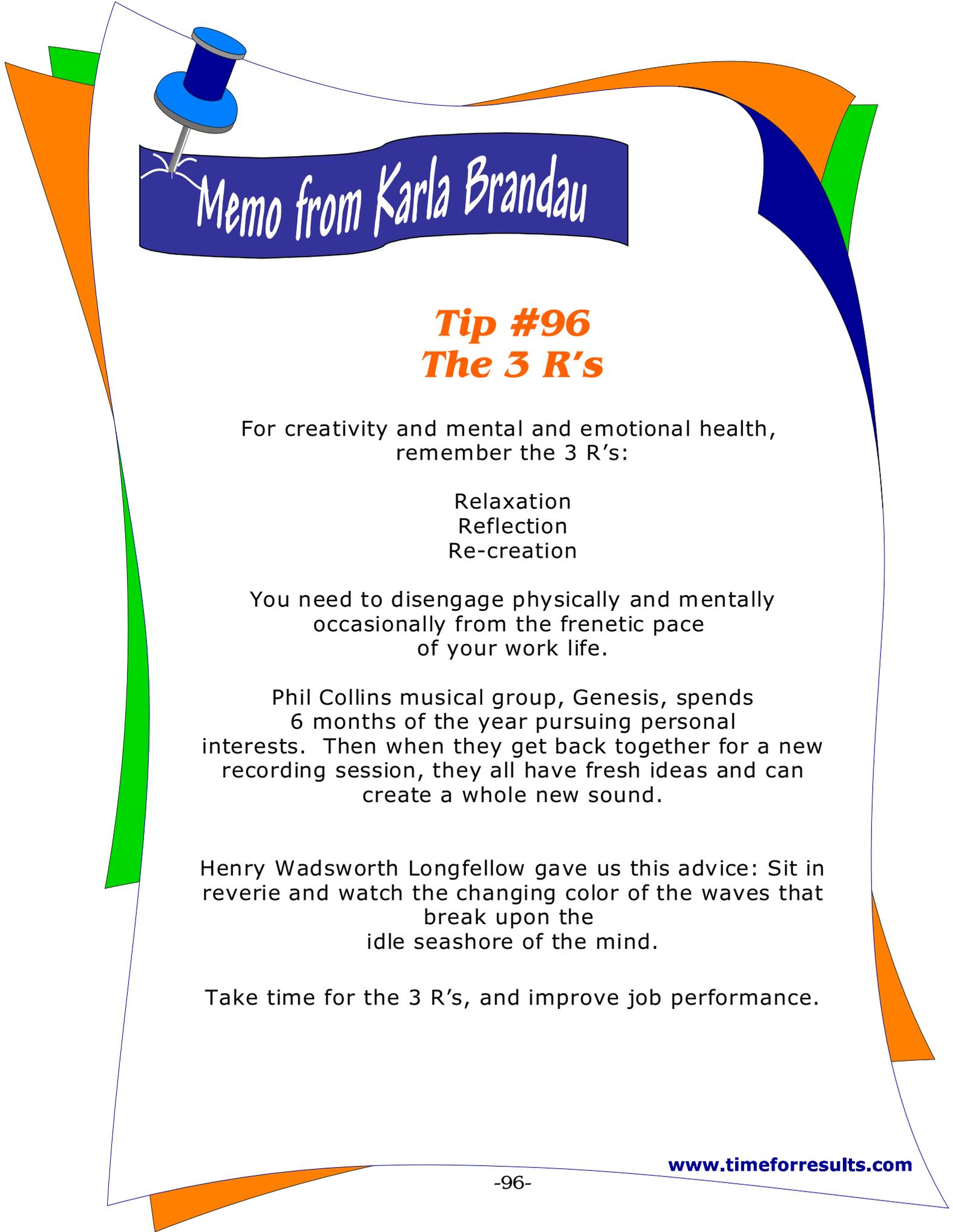
**Tip #95**  
***The creative edge***

Herman Krannert, CEO of Inland Container Corporation  
said,

"I don't give much credibility to the man  
who says that  
he works all the time,  
does not take vacations  
and seldom sees his family.

This man will certainly not succeed in the creative  
aspects of business. . .  
And the most important work that is done is the result of  
creativity.

It is critical that you learn to balance  
your life for as the old saying goes,  
"All work and no play makes  
Jack a very dull boy."



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #96**  
**The 3 R's**

For creativity and mental and emotional health,  
remember the 3 R's:

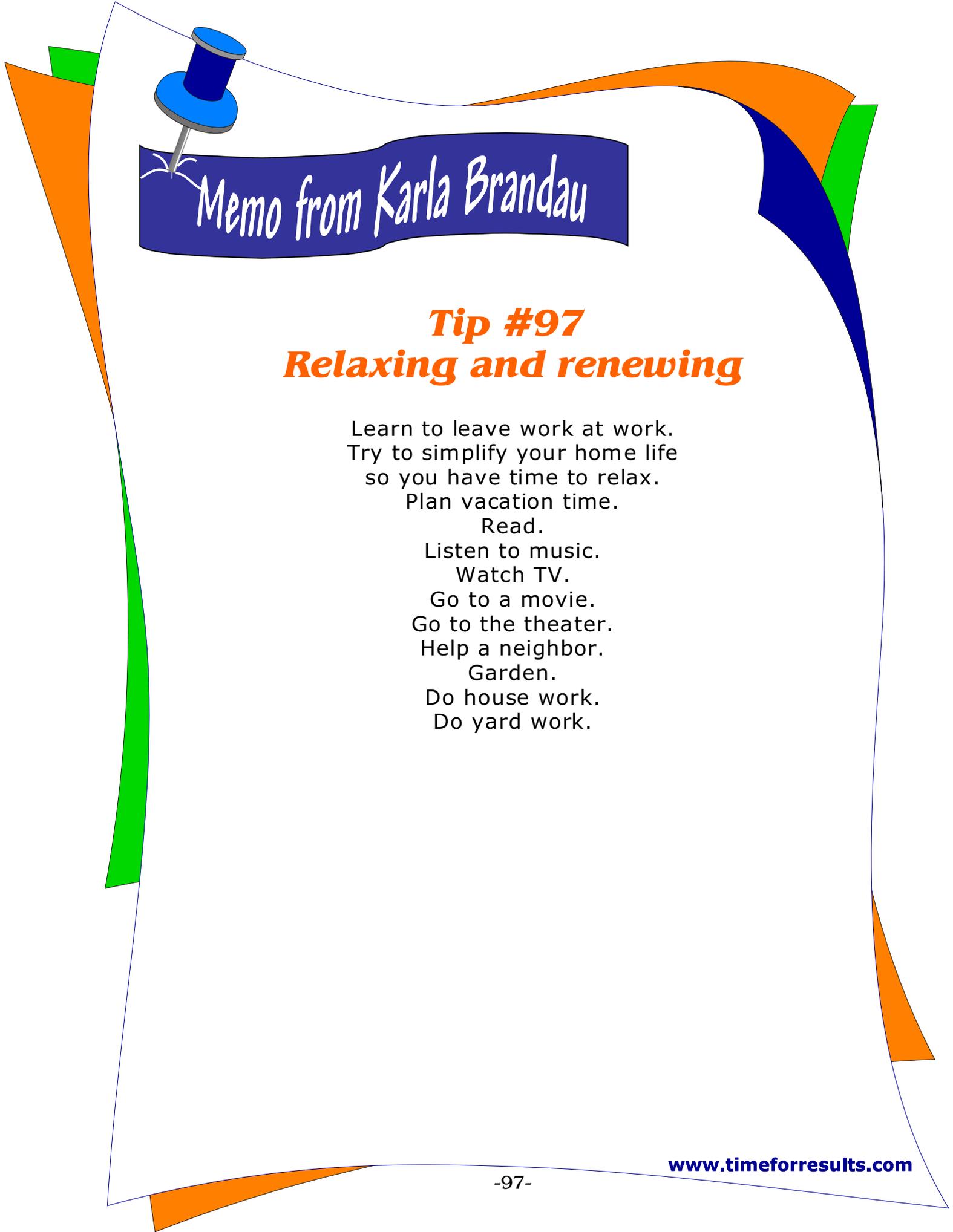
Relaxation  
Reflection  
Re-creation

You need to disengage physically and mentally  
occasionally from the frenetic pace  
of your work life.

Phil Collins musical group, Genesis, spends  
6 months of the year pursuing personal  
interests. Then when they get back together for a new  
recording session, they all have fresh ideas and can  
create a whole new sound.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow gave us this advice: Sit in  
reverie and watch the changing color of the waves that  
break upon the  
idle seashore of the mind.

Take time for the 3 R's, and improve job performance.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #97**  
***Relaxing and renewing***

Learn to leave work at work.  
Try to simplify your home life  
so you have time to relax.  
Plan vacation time.

Read.

Listen to music.

Watch TV.

Go to a movie.

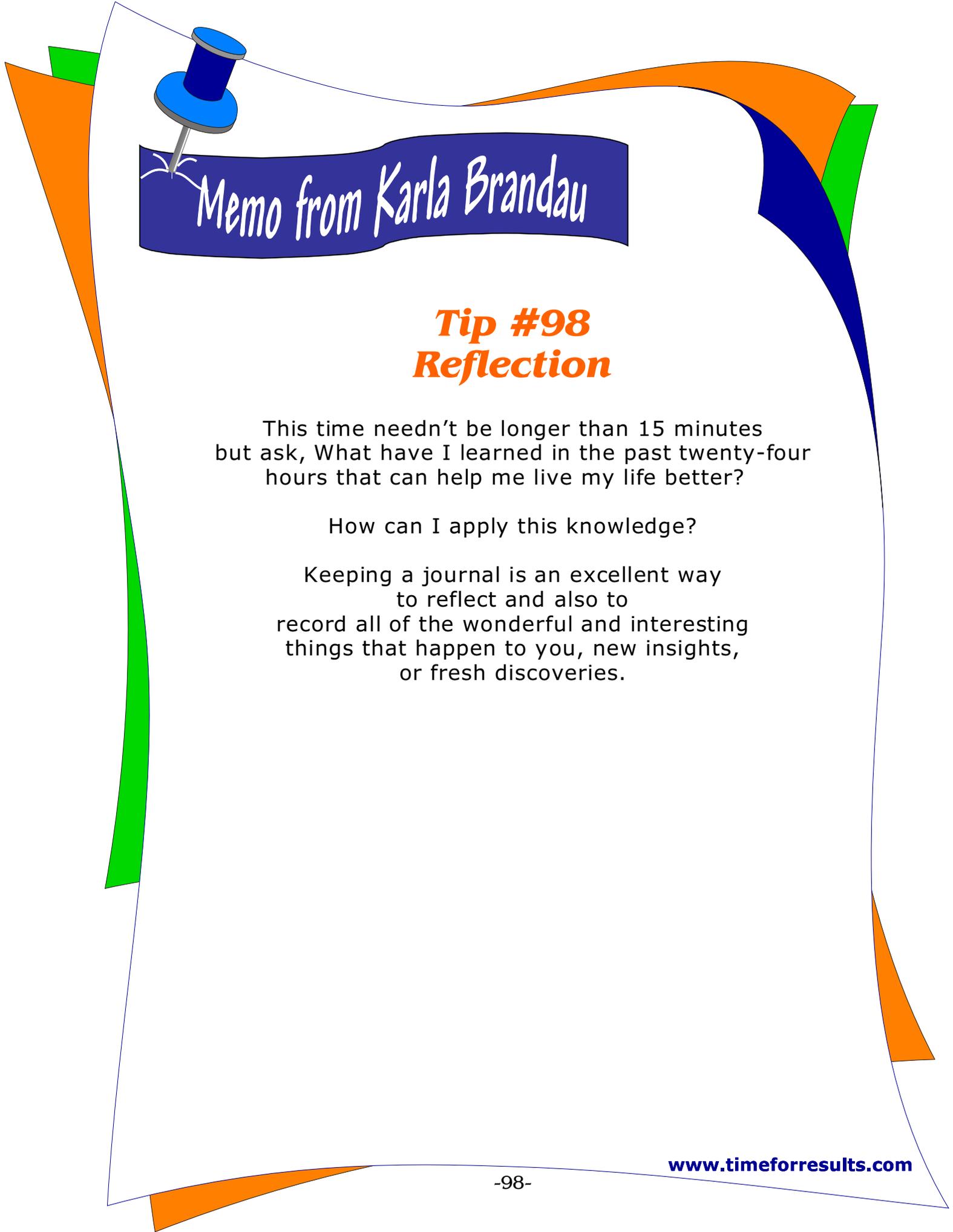
Go to the theater.

Help a neighbor.

Garden.

Do house work.

Do yard work.



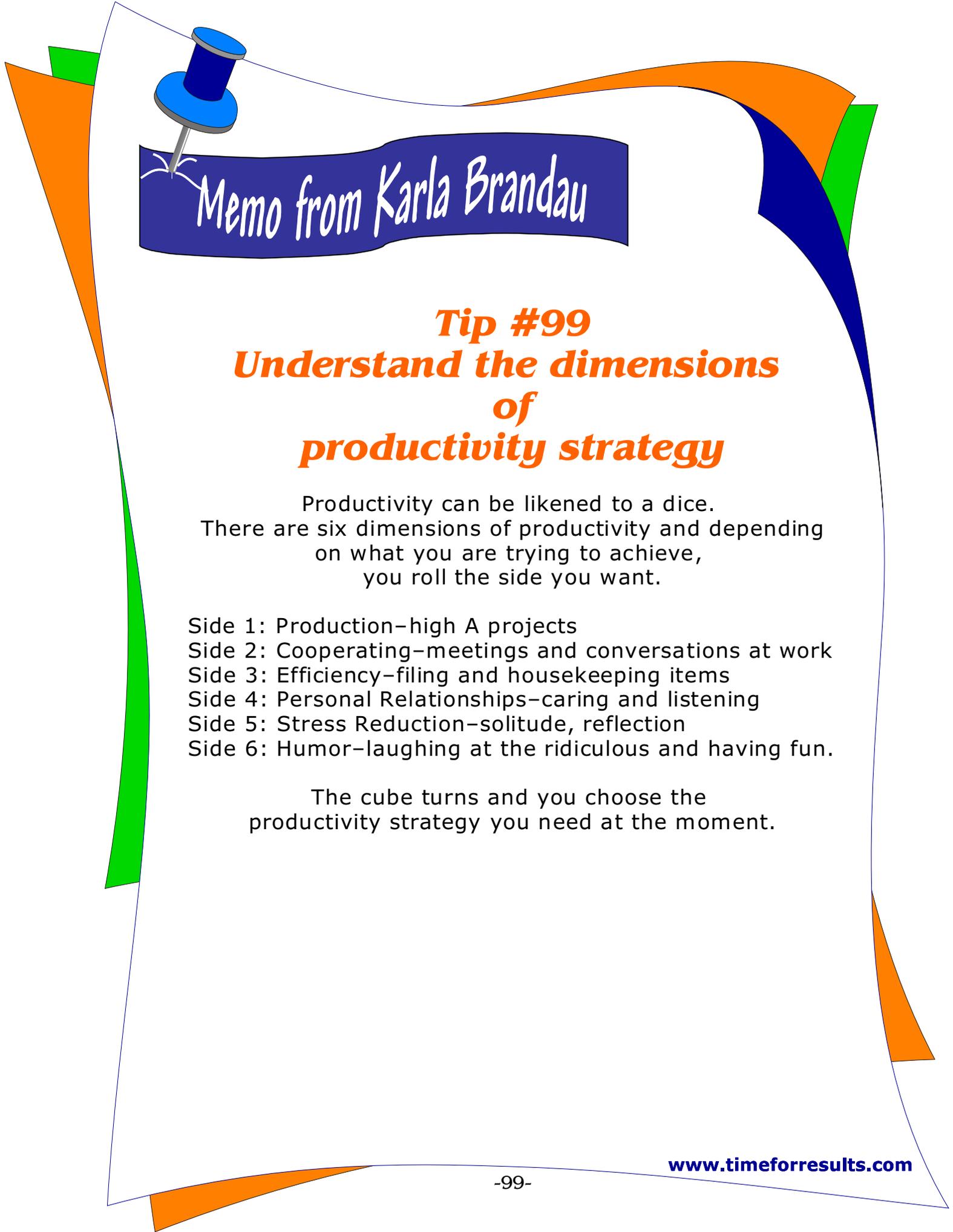
*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #98**  
**Reflection**

This time needn't be longer than 15 minutes but ask, What have I learned in the past twenty-four hours that can help me live my life better?

How can I apply this knowledge?

Keeping a journal is an excellent way to reflect and also to record all of the wonderful and interesting things that happen to you, new insights, or fresh discoveries.



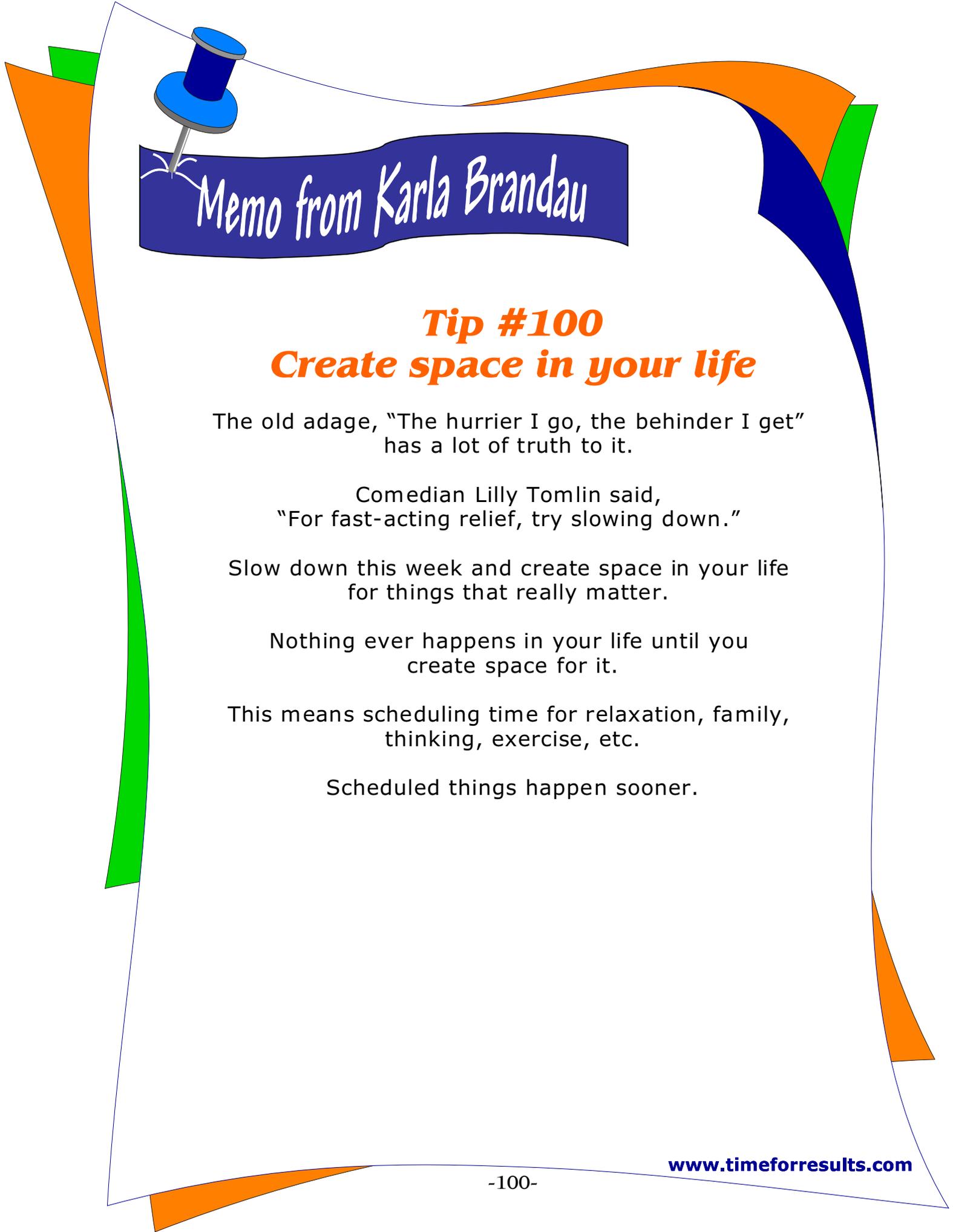
*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #99**  
***Understand the dimensions  
of  
productivity strategy***

Productivity can be likened to a dice.  
There are six dimensions of productivity and depending  
on what you are trying to achieve,  
you roll the side you want.

- Side 1: Production–high A projects
- Side 2: Cooperating–meetings and conversations at work
- Side 3: Efficiency–filing and housekeeping items
- Side 4: Personal Relationships–caring and listening
- Side 5: Stress Reduction–solitude, reflection
- Side 6: Humor–laughing at the ridiculous and having fun.

The cube turns and you choose the  
productivity strategy you need at the moment.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #100**  
***Create space in your life***

The old adage, "The hurrier I go, the behinder I get" has a lot of truth to it.

Comedian Lilly Tomlin said,  
"For fast-acting relief, try slowing down."

Slow down this week and create space in your life for things that really matter.

Nothing ever happens in your life until you create space for it.

This means scheduling time for relaxation, family, thinking, exercise, etc.

Scheduled things happen sooner.



*Memo from Karla Brandau*

**Tip #101**  
***Someday is a myth***

Henry Ford said that "Time waste differs from material waste in that there can be no salvage."

Yesterday is history  
Tomorrow is a mystery  
Today is a gift. . .that's why they  
call it the present.

Absorb it.  
Soak it up.  
Capture it.

Take pictures in your heart and soul.

Wherever you are: Be there!



## Memo from Karla Brandau

### **About Karla**

Karla Brandau has been a business owner, speaker and consultant since 1986 when she founded her own business.

As the president of Time For Results!™, her mission is to help individuals and corporations fight through the deluge of tasks in today's work world and focus on what will bring results, thus increasing profits. She accomplishes this goal through keynotes and programs on:

- Managing Multiple Priorities
- Time Management and Microsoft Outlook®
- Goal Setting and Life Balance
- Optimizing individual performance



Her topics are customized for:

- Teams
- Managers and supervisors
- Sales professionals and customer service personnel
- IT professionals and project managers
- Administrative staff

Other products include:

- Audio CD: Time for Results audio
- Goal Setting Workbook: Invent Your Future
- Book: Wake Up the Winner Inside

Karla has earned the Certified Speaking Professional designation from National Speakers Association and is a past-president of Georgia Speakers Association. Her client list includes Motorola, Nortel Networks, IBM, BellSouth, Coca-Cola Enterprises and Mirant.

For information on bringing Karla to your organization, contact her at:

770-923-0883  
[www.TimeForResults.com](http://www.TimeForResults.com)  
karla@TimeForResults.com