

The Account of Personal Time

Time is our greatest treasure. Time rewards everyone equally, it cannot be bought or lost and hence, there is never enough of it.

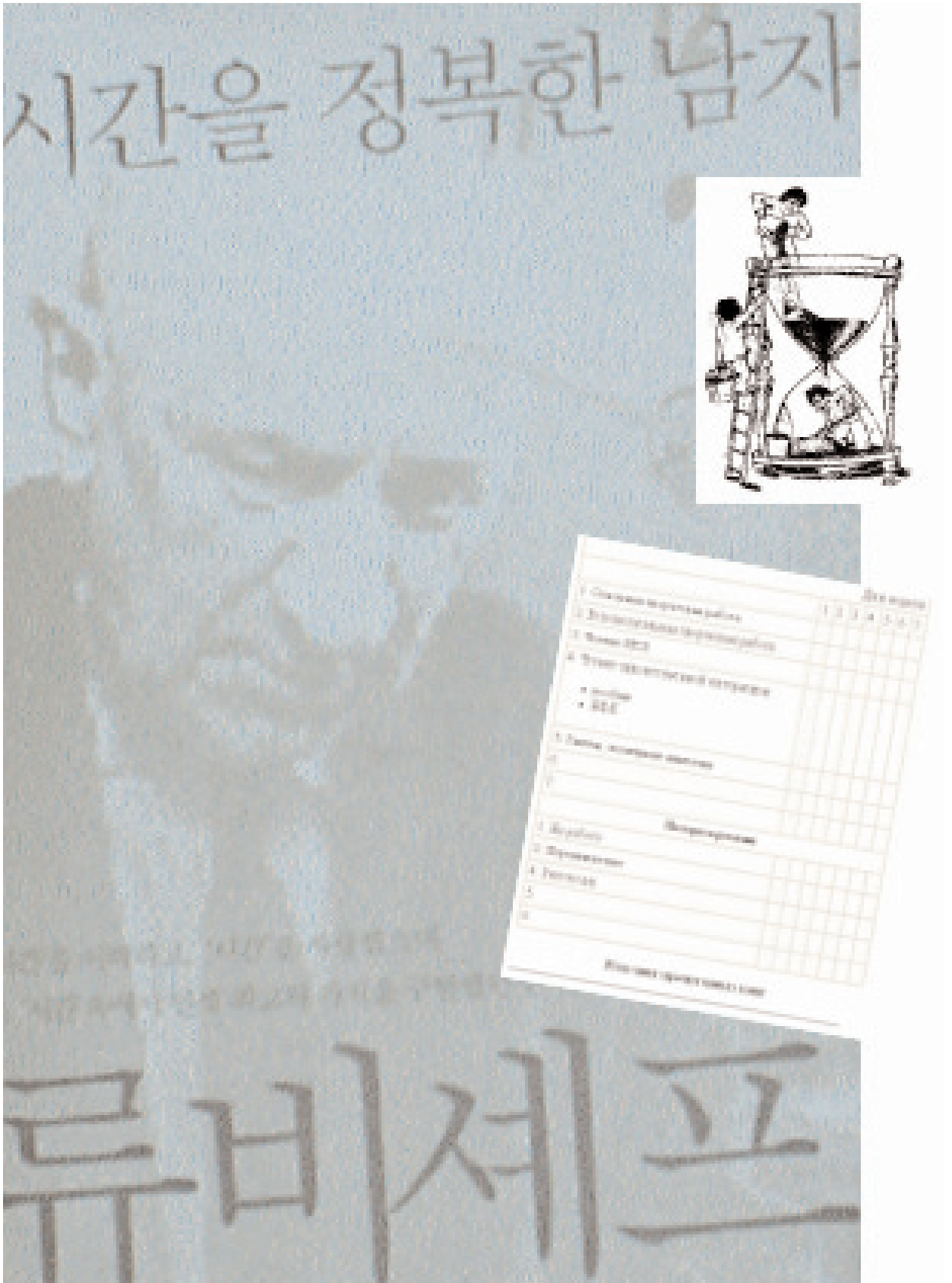
Collection of the information, analysis and systemization of the information cards are all time consuming processes. Tens of thousands of selected inventions mean years of constant daily cumbersome work. Such work requires not only determination and talent but also precise organization, or *account of personal time*.

Since 1975 the account of personal time is a must for everyone who studies or applies TRIZ. This account of time is done using a technique first introduced by Alexander Alexandrovich Lubishchev, hence, it is often called *Lubishchev System*. This is described in more detail in a book by Daniel Granin «This Strange Life»..*)

The idea behind the account of time is to constantly keep track of used personal time. Every day is digested by the minute, as to what the time was spent on. However, this is only the first step in creating the information fund about personal time. Afterwards, comes the analysis process.

The time spent on main (scientific) work, on additional supportive work, on reading various literatures and obtaining other information is recorded in separate sections in a specifically designed cumulative chart.

*) *This book is translated to some languages, including on Korean.*



Just as important is to account for lost time. Here, one indicates the time that was not spent productively: repeated work, waiting time or «empty» conversations...

Such track keeping over a few days, weeks and months shows the correlation between positive, productive time usage and unproductive losses. These losses may be in the future turned into a particular «reserve» of time and partially or even fully use it for main (scientific) work.

The cumulative table over a week must contain a list of all read books and articles along with their short abstract overview.

It is interesting to see the practical application of this system. Here is what Altshuller has to say about it:

«For quite some time I was following a bad system. It started back in school, in grade 9 when I started to keep track of read pages. Eventually I brought the plan from 100 to 300 pages per day. I discovered that too much quantity over quality; there was too much «light» reading. I switched to recording the number of hours... and the system worked right away. So I had to give some thought to what is «useful time» and what are «losses», and they cannot be identified without formulating the life goals and without a system of plans.

Very soon it was clear that the system does not allow taking away or adding time. So you either have to give up the system and admit your defeat (and then you cannot profess to anything), or start fighting the time losses... and go deeper into the system. I kept track of time (even the details of this track keeping was similar to the form proposed by Lubishev) for about 15 years, until 1956. This also included the 4 and half years up north. During the good years, the wasted time added up to 12-13 hours per day, which is a lot. Up north it was on average 7 hours a day and this was incommensurably more difficult the usual 12-13 hours. After this I have no sympathy for complains about lack of time. I stopped keep-

*ing track when I felt that I no longer need to write things down. I developed a quality to simply **feel** the flow of time. I know how much one or another job «costs». I can feel to what extent the time is productive and if this extent is not great enough I associate it with physical discomfort.»*

By itself, keeping track of time is an **organization instrument**. At first glance it does not have a direct effect on the process of solving problems, but only helps to control one's action (via psychological factors).

Accurate account of personal time makes it difficult and even impossible to waste time. An individual unwillingly feels necessity to plan ahead the use of time, and thus, plan ahead his or her work. At the beginning such planning forecasts the next few days or weeks, but with time the planning extends to months and years ahead. Eventually it comes to a moment when the whole life needs to be planned out. Though for this the Lubishchev system is not enough, but the whole complex of *qualities of a creative person* must be used.

