



# Your quick guide to: Managing Time and Efficiency

There seems a relatively obvious solution to the ideal work/life balance: a four day week.

If we all had three days off we could use the extra day to catch up on life admin, doing the washing and housework (and perhaps some form of exercise) so the first two days could be completely dedicated to relaxing and enjoying oneself.

Of course it may be a little difficult to implement such a potentially economy-ruining strategy so, as it stands, we are forced to fit all of the above into a mere two day window.

During the week we've all had those days that are more hectic or stressful than others, although there aren't many where we're been left a hollow shell of a person by the end, rocking gently back and forth, eyes twitching, wondering how we're ever going to get everything done.

However, like anyone with a full time job, very occasionally these days can and do occur. If you feel everything is getting on top of you at work and spilling out into your weekend, here's how to manage your time effectively so that things don't spiral out of control.

## 1. Lists

Writing a 'to-do' list not only helps to create a physical manifestation of your thoughts but also acts as an almost contractual promise to get these things done. When it's all down on paper it also seems less intimidating and far more structured than the thoughts that had been whirling around in our heads.

If you'd rather not carry around a notepad and pen, there are many apps you can download onto your phone that will do the same job. 'To do list' is very easy to use and with an upgrade to the premium version you can even share your lists with your boss.

## 2. Prioritise

Prioritising is a great skill to cultivate. When you're swamped, determining which task to perform first without wasting vital minutes of your day could make a world of difference.

However, always examine deadlines to establish the true situation - people asking you to do things will often say 'now' when 'later today' would be perfectly acceptable. Appeal to the other person's own sense of time management: it's impossible for anyone to do a good job without the opportunity to plan and prioritise.

## 3. Time Log

What seems more efficient: setting one day aside to complete a task or splitting it into smaller chunks and finishing it over two days? Some believe that dedicating a single period of time to a project is more productive, but how much work would you actually be doing by chaining yourself to your desk for so many hours? There will inevitably be some moments of staring into space and clock-watching, whereas if you break down a task you will invariably be using your time far more economically and will probably produce better quality work as a result.

# Your quick guide to: Managing Time and Efficiency



Really think about how you currently spend your time. If you're not sure, keep a time log for a few days to find out. There are plenty of time management apps available to help you do this. By discovering what your week really looks like, you can determine what the first steps to improving it should be and truly make the most of your time.

Challenge anything that could be wasting time and effort, particularly habitual tasks, meetings and reports where responsibility is inherited or handed down from above. Don't be a slave to a daft process or system. Know your deadlines. When do you need to finish your tasks? Mark the deadlines out clearly in your calendar and organiser so you know when you need to finish them.

## 4. Learn to say "No"

Saying 'yes' is a positive thing and something we are all programmed to lean towards saying. However, turning something down or saying no to something that you know deep down you don't have time for can be a really liberating and indeed positive experience. Don't take on more than you can handle. For the distractions that come in when you're doing other things, give a firm no. Or defer it to a later period.

## 5. Be early

When your target is to be on time, you'll either be on time or late. Most of the times you'll be late. However, if you try to be early you'll most likely be on time. For appointments, strive to be early. For your deadlines, submit them earlier than required. And thus it should all pan out.

If you would like more information on this guide or would like to know more about the roles we have available, contact our consultants today.