

Time management

Effective time management is essential for productivity and success in business

Put simply, time management is the ability to manage time effectively by allocating specific time to particular tasks based upon their priority, in order to achieve a desired outcome.

Many people and businesses find it difficult to manage their time, which can have a detrimental impact on employee wellbeing, employee turnover, company reputation and ultimately, a company's bottom line.

Did you know that

- Between emails, phone calls, social media alerts and meetings, a Manager spends an average of 3 hours per day dealing with interruptions.
- A typical office employee checks email 50 times and uses instant messaging 77 times per day.
- Productivity drops to as much as 40% when employees try to do two or more things at once.
- Maximum productivity occurs at no more than 40 hours a week and eight hours a day.
- 20% of the average workday is spent on "crucial" and "important" tasks, whilst 80% of the average workday is spent on tasks that have "little value" or "no value".
- It takes almost twice as long to complete a task than originally thought.

**Research by Cornerstone Dynamics*

A survey by Proudfoot Consulting found that in the UK alone, wasted time costs businesses around £80bn per year. How do you know if you are contributing to the

wasted time cost and what are some of the signs that you may not be managing time as effectively as you could?

Signs of Poor Time Management

- **Procrastination** – you put off or delay tasks that need to be completed from fear of not being competent enough, an overwhelming workload, to finding the task boring.
- **Poor performance** – you are not meeting the standard target or level of performance required of your skill or job level, even though you are capable.
- **Frequently rushing** – you are frequently rushing from one meeting, appointment or task to another, or worse...forgetting or cancelling them.
- **Perfectionism** – you set yourself extremely high targets and/or have unrealistically high expectations of yourself (and sometimes others).
- **Saying “Yes” to everything** – you find it difficult to say “No” and take on tasks and projects even when you don’t have the time or resources.
- **Lack of delegation** – you don’t like to ask for help or worry that others won’t complete the task as well as you, so avoid delegating.

5 Quick Tips to Have More Time

According to research, working time has increased by 15% and leisure time has decreased by 33% during the last 20 years. How do you change this to be more successful in business as well as increase your leisure time?

1. Work with your body’s natural rhythm

We all have certain times of the day when we are at our peak performance. For some, it’s first thing in the morning, whilst for others it could be mid-morning or later in the afternoon. Aim to do the work that challenges you most, or that you tend to procrastinate over, during your most productive time of the day.

2. Time yourself

Set yourself a deadline to complete a task (if one’s not already been given). Set a timer for an allocated period of

time and start. Whilst this takes some practice, over time you can train your brain to work within the time allocated.

3. The power of three

Set yourself three priority actions that you must complete each day (your non-negotiables) and then three non-priority actions. Your mission is to accomplish the three priority actions only. If you get to the non-priority actions, it's a bonus!

4. Group tasks together

Group similar tasks together in blocks of time, to avoid multitasking. For example, schedule time in the morning and afternoon to review emails and not periodically throughout the day. Group administrative tasks such as invoicing and payments together once every two weeks or once a month, instead of as and when they come in.

5. Plan for known disruptions

If you need to and can, work from a different space. Alternatively, put your headphones on or put a “**do not disturb**” sign on the door if you work from home, so that you have minimal disruptions.

Future Proofing Your Time and Success

Most productive people are extremely focused and use their calendars to plan and prioritise their actions, in order to achieve goals in their business and personal lives. Not only that, they are very protective of their time and are firm about not being distracted.

Setting short and long term goals is critical for success. Decide what your long term goal is and create a plan every three months with smaller goals that will help you to achieve it. Break the three month goals into individual tasks, decide which day, week or month you are going to take the actions and schedule them in your calendar.

Who / what can help

- Engaging a Time Management coach

you?

- Undertaking Time Management with a training company
- Utilising your team's time more productively
- Outsourcing time consuming tasks to qualified partners

Relevant Links

> Wellbeing in the workplace

> Stress

> Resilience

> Physical exercise

> Healthy Eating

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