

Managing your time

Ever had a day at work when you felt like you achieved nothing, even though you were working flat out or when it seemed like there were not enough hours in the day to get everything done?

Days like these can be very stressful and leave you feeling unable to cope, overwhelmed and overloaded. Learning how to manage your time can really help. Good time management can help you to achieve your goals, reduce stress and tension and get a better work life balance.

What is time management about?

Managing your time well helps you to deal with the demands of your work and your home life. By successfully managing your time you become better organised and will feel more in control of your work. This helps you to feel positive about your life, less stressed and better able to cope. Time management isn't about ruling your life with a stopwatch and accounting for every minute - that's likely to make you even more stressed! Good time management is about effective planning, focusing on what is important and being realistic.

Ever heard of Pareto's Principle?

Otherwise known as the **80/20 rule** – Of the things you do in your day only **20%** really matter.

That **20%** produces **80%** of your results. So focus on the most important areas of your job!

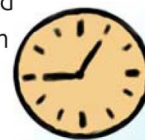
Top tips to help you tame time

- Write down a list of things you need to do each day or each week. Prioritise these, putting the urgent and most important things first. Tackle these first, don't put them off.
- Set yourself deadlines so that you have something to aim for.
- Be realistic and set yourself goals that you feel you can achieve.
- Everybody has a time when they feel at their best. Think about when your best times are and plan your work around these. If, for example, you are a morning person make sure you carry out important tasks that need the most energy and concentration before you have your lunch.
- Don't plan every minute of your day. Aim to plan around half of your day and leave the rest of the time free for interruptions and breaks.
- Plan ahead - give yourself time to get to appointments, keep a diary.
- Set blocks of time aside for long term planning and bigger tasks.
- Variety is a good idea. If you can, vary your tasks each day like mixing dull jobs with interesting tasks.

Work smart!

- Take regular breaks
- Be active during your working day
- Get plenty of sleep
- Talk to your colleagues - share problems and discuss solutions
- Learn some relaxation techniques to get you through crisis moments

Managing your time is a powerful tool in helping you to reduce your stress levels and to cope with the demands of your work and day-to-day life. So take charge of your time, put yourself in control and take the first step towards a calmer and more focused day!



For more information

Health and Safety Executive
Work related stress web site
www.hse.gov.uk/stress

International Stress Management Association
A voluntary association that promotes knowledge about stress management **07000 780430**
www.isma.org.uk