

Special Management Series

Better Time Management

This is a series of Training for your
Management TEAM

Presented by J.W. Owens



A Management
Perspective 303 Series



Management - JWO 370

How to Plan Your Day



- **Visualize** your long term picture of success and put it in writing.
- **Review your goal frequently.** Your goal should be specific, measurable, achievable and compatible with where you are now.

There should be an end date as well.
"Begin with the end in mind."

How to Plan Your Day



- Try to **do your planning at the same time** every day.
Use this time to review **past** accomplishments as well as **future** things to do.
- **Use only one planner** to keep track of your appointments. Keeping a separate business and personal planner creates confusion.

How to Plan Your Day



- **Write out a To Do list every day.**

Include items that can be completed, such as "Prepare exhibits for monthly report", rather than just "Work on report."

Separate your To Do list into A, B and C priorities.

- **"A"** items are **important** to your long term success,
- **"B"** may be **urgent** but not as important
- **"C"** are those that would be **nice to do** if you get the time.

How to Plan Your Day



- **Start** with the **A** items.
- **Don't work on a C** just because it's easy to do.

Also, **break your A items into small manageable chunks**, so they're easy to accomplish.

- **Check off items** as you complete them to give yourself a sense of accomplishment.

How to Plan Your Day



- **Block off time** in your planner for major activities.

This might include a block of time for working alone on major tasks. If someone wants to meet you during that time, say *"I'm sorry, I already have an appointment."*

- **Don't jam your day full of activities.**

Leave time for emergencies, special opportunities and thinking time.

How to Plan Your Day



- **Be your own manager.**

Ask yourself if you have **met your goals**, and what **changes** you plan to make to achieve them.

- **Do it now.**

People will often say "***Call me next week, and we'll book an appointment then.***"

Respond by saying, "***Let's save ourselves a call and do it now.***"

How to Plan Your Day



- **Always plan time for balance;**
include family, fitness, recreation, social and spiritual activities.
- **Conduct a time study** to see how you're doing and where the opportunities for improvement lie.

Many people are only able to spend one quarter of their time on top priority activities. **Moving this up** to one third of the week means almost 4 more hours per week on key activities.

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Stop Procrastinating

Recognize that **procrastination stems** from habit. New habits will be needed, and these take time and commitment to develop.

- **Understand the cause** for procrastination, then develop strategies to fix it.
- **Recognize the difference** between an appropriate decision to delay, and an irrational postponement without justification.
- **Fix procrastination** by working on
 - a) tasks
 - b) your environment

Unpleasant Tasks

- **Unpleasant tasks** rarely turn out to be as bad as you think
- **Complete these tasks first.**
Schedule them for **early** in the day.
Give yourself a **reward** for doing them.

Complex Projects



- **Something looms ahead of you:**

Starting a small business, getting a job, preparing the annual budget. **The job is too big or will take too long to do now, so you put it off.**

- Break large jobs into **smaller**, more manageable tasks.
- **Plan and complete** a start-up task, no matter how small.

Indecision

- People delay because they **can't make up their minds.**
- **Determine a time** for making a decision and the criteria for making it. Share your deadline with someone else.

Fear of failure (lack of self confidence)

- People **don't want to face the consequences of failure**, so they delay. (Some people suffer from fear of success too!)
- **Develop a clear mental picture** of the completed task and how you will feel at that time. **Maintain a focus** on the end result, not just the process. **Remind yourself** how good you'll feel when you're finished.

Lack of Interest

- **You are tired or lazy.** You're just not very interested in the task.
- **Reward yourself** for accomplishments.
Go out for special lunches when major projects are completed.
If you don't earn the reward, don't take it.
- **Schedule the task** for when you will be at your peak.

Perfectionism



- **People delay because** they want to get the project perfect.
- **Set deadlines** for yourself.
Tell other people your deadlines and encourage them to check up on you.
- **Maintain your high standards**, but recognize that sometimes 80% for you may well be 100% for someone else.

Don't spend hours conducting a detailed cost breakdown when a rough estimate would suffice.

Hostility towards a Boss

- People delay because **they don't like the person** who assigned the task.

- **Review with your boss** what exactly is needed.

Clarify the expectations.

- **Make a game out of unpleasant tasks.**

Give yourself points, or do a running commentary on yourself as you do the task.

Distraction, lack of Focus

Sometimes losing concentration causes delays.

- Create a to-do list **with priorities.**

- **Block your time** for projects.

As you get distracted from a work project, **make a rule** that you are not allowed to move out of your chair, make a call, surf the net, pick up a book etc. until you return to your task.

- **Complete something.**

Make a very small task for yourself and finish it. Very small. Then, make another one.

Environment Strategies

- Tailor your environment for work. **Close your door, clean up the clutter on your desk.**
- **Remove distractions** such as water coolers, snacks, in-boxes, coffee machines and magazine racks.
- If you work at home, **treat your office as an office.** Don't go out to lunch before lunchtime or watch television before the end of the day.
- Tell your family that you are **not to be disturbed** in your home office.

Prepare for Meetings

Plan agenda in advance

- Determine **what items** you want to cover.
- **Communicate** to participants what is to be considered and what is expected of them.
- **Create order and control** at the meeting.
- **Establish standards** by which the success of the meeting can be measured.

Prepare for Meetings

- **Circulate your agenda** in advance. If you can't, write it on a flip chart or white board before participants arrive.

The agenda should include:

- The **purpose** of the meeting, stated in one succinct sentence; e.g. "To review and agree details of the annual budget".
- The **start time and finish time**.
- **Meeting location**, including street address, floor, room number and map if necessary;
- A **list of who will be attending**, and their titles.

Prepare for Meetings

- **Individual items to be covered**, and action items on each
- **Put simple announcements** at the beginning of the meeting, to warm up the group.
- **Start and finish the meeting** with positive items.

Prepare for Meetings

- If someone else is preparing the agenda, approach them before hand to **make sure your items are on the list for discussion.**
- **Consider starting meetings at oddball times, such as 10:08 am.**
- **Schedule a meeting for late in the day if you want it to be short.** Business has a tendency to move quickly as it approaches five o'clock

Handle Paperwork

- Create a **block of time** during **non-prime hours** to handle paperwork.
Schedule this in your planner and stick to it.
- Sort through and handle the papers in your in-basket **no more than twice a day.**
- **Never handle a piece of paper more than once.**
Avoid the "I'll just put this here for now" habit.
- **Throw away previous drafts.** They serve no purpose.

Handle Paperwork

- **For items that will reach you,**
 - a) sort it according to urgency,
 - b) highlight important aspects, such as magazine articles and
 - c) attach relevant files or information.
- Ask subordinates to **submit recommendations** along with important reports.

Nothing should be sent to you without a summary or indicated action.
- **Limit the length** of letters, recommendations, responses, meeting requests and other correspondence to one page.

Handle Paperwork

- **Try not filling out redundant sections of forms**, to see if anyone is really using them.
- **Ask people if reports they prepare (or you prepare) are really necessary.** Prepare them only when needed, not as a regular routine.
- **Don't keep copies of all your requests to others**, unless there are legal or personnel reasons to do so.
- **Do something with every piece of paper that reaches you** and put it in its proper place not just back on the pile.
- Handle routine requests or tasks **immediately** whenever you can.
- **Cut back on sending memos.** Use a phone call or emails instead.

Handle Paperwork

- **Reduce the number of memos you keep.**

After all, memos are primarily for short-term information. Record the information you need and toss the memo.

- **Don't keep business cards tucked away in a drawer.**

Enter them on a contact manager database, and then throw out the card.

- **Create different file folders:**

Reading files for long reports and magazines. If you read everything when it arrives, you will never get through your in-basket.

- **Personal file**

for those wacky inter-office jokes you want to keep (but will probably never look at again)

- **Training file** for useful items on personal or professional development
- **Supplier file** for information on products and services
- **Files for each subordinate** for items to pass on or discuss

Handle Paperwork

- **Upcoming events to attend**
- **One folder for each subordinate and for your manager**
- **One for each major project you're working on**
- **Throw out last month's copy of a magazine when this month's copy arrives.**

If you must save them, only keep a year's worth.

Stop subscriptions to magazines and newspapers you don't read anymore. This saves you money as well as time and guilt.

- **Schedule major reading for twice a week during non-priority times.**

Try reading on the subway, bus or train, while waiting for appointments, or at breakfast instead of reading the paper.

Handle Paperwork

- When you find **items you keep putting off reading**, ask ***"How likely am I to read this and how valuable is this information?"*** Throw it out.
- **Extra storage space ends up getting filled up quickly.**
Try reducing or throwing out extra paperwork collectors. Limit your stacking trays to two: one for incoming papers and the other for outgoing papers.
- **Reduce your credit cards** to one per adult, two if you use one for home and one for work. This reduces statements and bill-paying time.
- **Reduce your bank accounts**, if you have several. If you find yourself dealing with multiple bank statements every month, this is a good place to start.
- **Pay bills by automatic deduction.** Most utility bills can be handled this way.
- **Put all your receipts in a small envelope.** Sort through them every month or every quarter.

How to Delegate

People use many excuses for not delegating.

Their reasons are usually unfounded. You'll get more done through delegation if you assume the opposite of the following statements is true:

- I could do it better myself.
- I don't know if I can trust her to do it.
- He isn't qualified to do it.
- She doesn't want any added responsibilities.
- I don't have the time to show anyone how to do it.
- There is no one else to delegate to.
- He already has enough to do.
- I don't want to give up this task because I like doing it.
- I'm the only person who knows how to do this.
- She messed up last time, so I'm not giving her anything else to do.

How to Delegate

- **Assume** that most people want **added responsibilities** (don't you?).
- **Assume they are keen to learn.** Recognizes that the short term training investment will pay off in the long term.
- **Look around.** Even though you're not the boss, there are people who will help you if you approach them in the right way.

What to Delegate

- **Don't delegate what you can eliminate.** If you shouldn't be doing an activity, then perhaps you shouldn't be giving the activity away to others. Eliminate it.
- **Delegate routine activities**, even though you don't want to:
 - **Fact-finding assignments**
 - **Preparation of rough drafts of reports**
 - **Problem analysis and suggested actions**
 - **Collection of data for reports**
 - **Photocopying, printing, collating**
 - **Data entry**

What to Delegate

- **Delegate things that aren't part of your core competency.**

For small businesses, these include accounting, web site design, deliveries, hardware upkeep, software help, graphic design, travel arrangements, patenting, legal issues and even HR functions such as payroll.

- **Some things you can't delegate:** performance reviews, discipline, firing.
- **Create a plan to delegate.** Don't give out assignments haphazardly.

What to Delegate

- **Invest short term time in training** to gain a long term increase in productivity.
- **Others may end up doing a better job** than you can or finding new ways to complete a task.
- **Delegate, don't abdicate.**

Someone else can do the task, but you're still responsible for the completion of it, and for managing the delegation process.

Delegation Instructions

- **Make sure the standards and the outcome are clear.**

What needs to be done, when should it be finished and to what degree of quality or detail?

- **Delegate the objective**, not the procedure. Outline the desired results, not the methodology.
- **Ask people to provide progress reports.** Set interim deadlines to see how things are going.

Delegation Instructions



- **Delegate to the right person.**

Don't always give tasks to the strongest, most experienced or first available person.

- **Spread delegation around** and give people new experiences as part of their training.
- **Obtain feedback from employees** to ensure they feel they're being treated appropriately.

A simple ***"How's it going with that new project?"*** might be all that's needed.

Delegation Instructions

- **Be sure to delegate the authority** along with the responsibility. Don't make people come back to you for too many minor approvals.
- **Trust people to do well** and don't look over their shoulders or check up with them along the way, unless they ask.
- **Be prepared to trade short term errors** for long term results.
- **When you finish giving instructions**, the last thing to ask is, *"What else do you need to get started?"* They'll tell you.
- **Give praise and feedback** at the end of the project, and additional responsibilities.

Cooperation from Other Departments

Other departments may appear to slow you down.

In dealing with them, begin with an assumption that they are as competent as you are.

Everyone is doing his or her best, and everyone is busy.

Remember that ultimately, you're all on the same team.

Your positive attitude will get better results than antagonism. Treat them as you would like to be treated.

Cooperation from Other Departments

- Handle your **special requests of other departments** as you would handle a task that you would delegate:
 - Clarify the task to be done and the standards to be met.
 - Establish a timetable.
 - Ask if there is anything else that the person needs to complete the task.
 - Confirm the commitment that they made (don't make it for them).

- **If others let you down;**

be careful not to react with one of **two opposite emotions**;

Aggression and Passivity

Aggression is fighting back, yelling, name calling, threatening to go to a higher authority, becoming impatient and being forceful.

Passivity is giving in, ignoring an issue, procrastinating, apologizing or running away.

Cooperation from Other Departments

- Be assertive instead. Use the person's name. Say please and thank you. Ask, don't tell.
- Be straight forward with your request. "Our department needs this delivered to us by tomorrow."

Adding an explanation helps to validate the request. Then ask if there's anything else they need, or anything you can do to help the process. Clarify the agreement made.

If the person objects, repeat the request, stating it slightly differently each time. *"Jillian, I'd like to get a copy of that report by tomorrow."* She answers that she's too busy. *"I can understand how you've got a big workload. (Avoid the dreaded **but**) I do need the report finished by tomorrow so can we find a way to complete it somehow?"*

- Ask ***"Would it be helpful if I..."*** Sometimes they can do a better job if you help first. Your offer also displays genuine empathy.

Cooperation from Other Departments

- Use the phrase, ***"What would have to happen..."***

For instance, ***"I understand most of the staff have left for the day, but what would have to happen for this to be finished by tomorrow morning?"***

Sometimes the person might suggest a solution that you can help achieve: ***"Well I'd have to send it over in a taxi and we're not allowed to do that."*** Maybe they can't authorize a taxi, but you can.

- **Don't appeal to a higher authority.** If you say ***"I need this done, and I can get my boss to speed things up if I have to,"*** you may not be successful. Instead, build a relationship. Take an interest in things that are important to them.

If problems persist, **keep a log of transactions.** Include the date you sent something to another department and the date you got it back. Use this to support process improvement, not to blame someone.

Cooperation from Other Departments

- **Create routines for standard requests** from other departments that are repeated.

For instance, automate your expense report.

This isn't bureaucracy, it's efficiency.

On the other hand, **remove routines** that were created for occasional exceptions that no longer occur.

Old routines may be slowing other departments down.

- **Ask what the holdups are.**

Convene a meeting to outline your concerns.

The other department might identify blocks that can be removed.

Use Email Effectively

- **Block off times to process your e-mail.** Twice per day should be enough. Avoid the temptation to check e-mail more frequently.
- **Check the spelling of your e-mail** before sending it. Spelling errors seem generally accepted in e-mail. But go beyond acceptable. Aim for excellence.
- **DON'T TYPE IN ALL CAPS.** This is perceived as shouting.
- Re-read your e-mail before sending it. Writing quickly often results in awkward grammar.
- **Don't copy documents from other programs,** such as MS Word. Odd characters such as apostrophes can show up as gibberish. Special formatting will go wonky. Instead, send the original document as an attachment.

Use Email Effectively

- **Use the edit and paste commands** as you would in word processing. This is helpful in repeating information or creating a type of form letter to be sent to various participants.
- **Just say no.** If you're on a mailing list for which you have no interest, reply by writing "**unsubscribe**" or "**remove**" in the comment box.

Be careful though. Sometimes mass-mailers use your response to confirm that you have an address, and send you more stuff. Use a filter to prevent mail with features that are repeated from being downloaded.

- **Use a stacking tray or file folder labeled "E-MAIL"** to store paper items associated with e-mail you plan to send. Then you can batch them more efficiently.

Place items in separate e-mail folders as you would with paper items. Don't use your Inbox or Sent Mail as catchall holding tanks.

Use Email Effectively



There is a convention to intersperse someone else's original message with points of your own when you reply. Consequently, it takes a while to figure out what is original and what is new. Avoid wasting people's time. Create a proper response as you would a business letter. Instead of leaving an entire message that you received intact, just make a reference to it. They don't need to read everything they wrote when you respond to them

- **Consider carefully what you write;**

It's a permanent record and can be easily forwarded to others. Never accuse people, call them names, suggest they aren't being smart or criticize their spelling. **Assume their intentions are genuine. Avoid sarcasm. Be polite** and assertive if necessary (i.e. to spammers) but not vindictive.

- **Don't attach large files without getting permission from your recipient first.**
- **Write descriptive subject lines.** Many busy people will only open messages with captivating subject lines. **Think creatively.**

Use Email Effectively



- If you must forward a message, **put your comments at the top.**
- **Learn how to keep** an address book to save e-mail addresses, automatically insert them into a new message and maintain groups of contacts.
- **Use auto responders** to offer frequently requested information. These e-mail bots will automatically respond to the sender with a prewritten message. They are often used for brochures, price lists, directions, etc.
- **Delete all unnecessary mail.** Old messages congest servers. Delete old, duplicate or reply version copies and free up space for new incoming mail.
- **Do not keep all of your messages in your mail box folder.** Create new mail folders with names that categorize your mail and move messages into them. This way new mail is not only easier to find but quicker to load (which is especially true when dialing in remotely).

Use Email Effectively



- **Delete messages with attachments after you have saved them to your hard drive.** They take up a lot of space on the server.
- **When replying to a message, be sure you reply to just the person you want.** Be careful not to accidentally reply to an institute wide message.
- **Be careful with punctuation.** A lot of periods can separate thoughts..... but use a lot of exclamation marks and it looks like you're angry!!!!!!!!!! How does a line of question marks look ??????? You might not intend strong emotion, but the other person might think you do.
- **Use the blind carbon copy (bcc) feature for your own mailing lists.** You can send out periodic announcements to a list of people. By using the bcc feature, recipients won't be able to copy other people's names and addresses.

Use Email Effectively



- **Do not forward personal e-mail** to a discussion group without the author's permission.
- **Don't attach files when posting to discussion groups.** Refer participants to a web site where they can find the information.
- **Don't send entire web pages to a discussion group,** just post the web address.
- **Don't blatantly promote your business by posting an advertisement to a discussion group,** unless it is clearly an accepted use and you have cleared it with the moderator (if there is one) first. Otherwise, you are "spamming." Offering information of value, rather than simply inviting people to your web site.
- **Avoid cyber-speak.** Not everyone is familiar with the cute acronyms used in E-mail correspondence, such as IMHO (in my humble opinion) or FWIW (for what it's worth). Performing a mental translation each time slows down the reader. Don't make reading difficult for them.

How to Say No



- **We say "yes" to others because we want to please them.** But when eventually we can't continue, we let them down and we feel guilty. Both parties suffer. Recognize that a desire to please often prevents us from saying no.
- **Stick to your plan.** If you have a written set of goals and strategies, this gives you a reason to stick to your course. (*"Thanks, but I already have an investment plan, so you don't need to send me a newsletter about stocks."*)
- **When someone persists, repeat your position,** perhaps in a slightly different way. (*"As I already said, our policy is to donate to charities that help children only."*)

How to Say “No”

- **Make sure you understand exactly what is being asked of you before you respond.** Perhaps the task is more time consuming than you thought. On the other hand, it may not take much effort at all.
- **Excel at just a few things,** rather than being just average at many. Don't try to do everything.
- **You have a right to say no.** Remember that others may take you for granted and even lose respect for you if you don't.
- **Be polite, but firm in saying no.** You only build false hopes with wishy-washy responses. For instance, the phrase ***"I'll try to be there"*** in response to a party invitation is giving yourself an excuse to avoid a commitment. It doesn't do anyone any favors.

How to Say “No”



When a superior asks you to do a new urgent task;

- Remind her that you are **working on other projects** that she has already identified as top priorities
- **Ask for help** in deciding where the new task should fall on the list of priorities
- Ask ***"What you like to give up in order for me to do this?"***

Point out that you might be able to do everything, but not to the usual high standards that are expected.

- Some experts recommend keeping your answer short. This way, you can say no without feeling the need for a lengthy justification. (***"I'm sorry, I'm not available that night."***)

On the other hand, others say that giving a longer answer with reasons reinforces your credibility. Let the situation decide.

- **Provide suggestions or alternatives** to the person who is asking. (***"I can't do that task today, but how about next week," or "How about asking John instead?"***)
- **When in doubt, it's easier to say no now**, then change your mind to a yes later, rather than the other way around.

When you Have to say "Yes"



Sometimes, saying no is simply unavoidable. Here are some techniques to use:

- **Tell the person you can agree to their request this time, but ask how the two of you might plan better for the next time.**
- **Tell them yes, but remind them they owe you one.** For example, they might cover you for a shift next time you need time off.
- **Tell them yes, but take control by saying you'll come back to them with a timetable.** For instance, say, "I expect I'll be able to do that for you by the end of the week."
- **Put a tough condition on your agreement.** *"If it would only take an hour, I'd be able to help, but I can't give you more than that."*

How to Simplify Your Life

Think about your values and write down those that really matter to you.

What is most important? Spending time with family? Accumulating great wealth? Achieving powerful influence? Acquiring possessions? Expressing yourself? Learning new ideas? Experiencing adventure and travel? Maintaining excellent health? Socializing with friends? Contributing to the community?

You can't do them all.

Cut out activities that aren't consistent with your core values.

- **Write a list of goals you'd like to achieve.** Focus on doing a few really well, rather than a lot in a mediocre way. You can't add hours to the day, but you can cut down on activities.

How to Simplify Your Life

- **Say no instead of yes.** People agree to requests from others because they like to please them. Instead, realize that you have a right to say no. Creating plans or policies makes saying no easier. (*"I'm sorry, I already have a financial planner."* *"I'm sorry, we already have a plan for giving to charities."*)
- **Stop being a slave to communication tools.** Do you really need an office phone, a home phone, a cellular phone, pager, fax, e-mail and internet ICQ technology?
- **Give away clerical tasks to others** who can handle non-priority activities.
- **Stop spending time to save money.** Instead, spend money to save time. Don't drive across town to save a few cents on a grocery item. It's not worth your time. Do hire someone to do chores you're not fond of.

How to Simplify Your Life



- **Cancel subscriptions to magazines** you never get around to reading. Only read one newspaper per day.
- **Cut back on television time.**

Only watch those shows you decide on beforehand. Circle them in the television-listing magazine. Then turn off the television when the program is over. Cancel extra cable television packages for channels you rarely watch. Go for broke. Give up watching television altogether.
- **Clean out your basement or your office.** If you're not using something, get rid of it. Put an expiry date on items when you can't decide to keep them or not. Get rid of them when the expiry date arrives.
- **Quit organizations that aren't contributing to your advancement, your network or your fun.**

How to Simplify Your Life

- **Automate repetitive, clerical, mechanical tasks.** For instance, set up automatic bill payments. Include your automatic savings plan as part of your monthly spending.
- **Make a plan for the weekend that doesn't involve work.** Plan to spend more time with your family or with people who make positive contributions to your life. Stop spending time with people who are a drain on your energy or vitality.
- **Carry a smaller wallet or purse.** Start by cleaning out the one you've got. Get rid of unnecessary credit cards and other clutter that you don't use regularly.

How to Simplify Your Life



- **Stop checking up on your financial portfolio every day.** Most people invest for the long term. Checking your results daily adds to stress and might lead to expensive and unnecessary changes.
- **Make time for yourself.** Set aside time each day to reflect quietly, go for a walk, plan for your future or meditate. Visit the park instead of the mall.
- **Cut back on debt. Consolidate your different debts** into one and pay it off. Put your credit cards in a spot where you won't be able to use them until you're debt-free. **Track your expenses** for a month, then cut back your spending on items you don't need. For instance, pack a lunch rather than buying one at work. Mix and match your outfits rather than constantly buying new ones.
- **Consider renting a vacation home rather than buying.** You won't be burdened by time (and money) spent in maintenance. Also, this allows you to visit a different spot each year.

How to Simplify Your Life



- **Plan time for a vacation every year.** Some people claim *"I haven't had a vacation in three years"* as if it was a badge of courage. It isn't.
- **Cut back on your children's planned activities.** If they have to use a time planner to schedule their activities, and you spend all of your time taxiing them around, they're probably too busy.
- **Live closer to your work** so you don't have to drive.
- **Take a moment each day to be grateful.**

How to Reduce Stress



*with the **SPARKLE** Formula*

S – Sleep well.

- Your bed is for sleeping, reading and intimacy.
- When your head hits the pillow, it's time to sleep, not think
- Your bed should NOT be for: watching television, balancing your checkbook, planning the next day, arguing with your spouse, checking your e-mail, or making phone calls.
- When in bed, books are OK, laptops are not.

How to Reduce Stress



P – Plan every day.

- **Create a to-do list every morning.** This gives you a) a roadmap of what you need to do at the beginning of the day, b) a reminder of what still needs to be done throughout the day and c) a place to check off your accomplishments at the end of the day

How to Reduce Stress



A – Anticipate less.

- **Recognize the false assumptions you make that lead to anxiety.** Will things really turn out to be as bad as you think? Probably not.
- **When you look to the future, visualize success rather than failure.** After all, you really don't know which it will be. So why not expect the best?

How to Reduce Stress

R — Relax.

- **Breathe deeply when you feel stressed.** Get up and change your environment, if only for a short time.
- **Go for a walk at lunch.**
- **Relaxation means taking a break from what you were doing, not just “vegging out.”** For instance, watching television isn’t always relaxing; it can be dumbing and dulling. Find activities that calm your body and stimulate your mind.
- **Create a time for your own kind of meditation.** Find a quiet space and a quiet time that’s just for you.

How to Reduce Stress



K – Keep Anger under control.

- **Be empathetic and forgiving** to others when they make mistakes. Like you, they're trying to do their best.
- **Learn to give constructive feedback** rather than destructive criticism.
- **When someone makes you angry, remember that you have a choice in how you react.** Instead of yelling at that bad driver who cut you off, do a running play-by-play on his erratic driving techniques. It's more fun.

How to Reduce Stress

L – Laugh

- Use **positive affirmations** to keep yourself on track.
- Affirmations should use the **4 P's**; **personal, positive, passionate and present.**

For instance, ***“I am a confident and successful manager who always runs an amazing team.”***

- **Find time to share a joke.** Laugh at the curves life throws at you rather than fretting over them.

How to Reduce Stress



E – Eat Well and Exercise

- **Your body needs to be a well-tuned machine** to manage all of the stresses that act on it.
- **Avoid eating packaged snacks** – anything that comes in a wrapper or plastic bag. Try natural fruit instead.
- **Add more colored vegetables** to your meals.
- **Reduce caffeine in your diet.** It's a stimulant and can exacerbate physical symptoms of stress that you may already have. Choose water instead.
- **Avoid the escalator or elevator** and take the stairs.
- **Find opportunities to go for a walk.** Ideally, get exercise that causes you to sweat for twenty minutes at least three times per week.

How to Prevent Interruptions

- **Prevent interruptions from walk-in visitors by isolating yourself.** Close your door. Put up a sign. Work in a conference room. If you work in an office, take a day to work on important projects at home if necessary.
- **Don't feel obliged to have "an open door policy."** This allows people to manage your time on their terms, not on yours. "Open door" means you're generally available for honest communication from any level. It doesn't mean "always" available.
- **If you have an assistant, establish clear guidelines as to what kinds of interruptions are appropriate,** so they can screen visitors. The assistant should have the authority to schedule a subsequent meeting, or divert the inquiry to someone else.

How to Prevent Interruptions

- **Block off your time for priorities.** Handle larger, important projects early in the morning, before you read your e-mail and before interruptions are likely to occur. Schedule a quiet hour to create essential private time.
- **Inform co-workers or subordinates** that you generally like to come in at perhaps 8:00 am, and work on your own until 9:30 am. Only then do you accept meetings.
- **Change the layout of your desk** so that you're not facing traffic.
Otherwise, you encourage interruptions.
- **If you're storing materials or files that people have to access frequently,** move them to another area.

How to Prevent Interruptions

When They Walk In

- When someone asks for a few minutes of your time, respond with ***"Sure, how about if I come by your office at 2 o'clock this afternoon?"*** This gives you more control.
- **If they insist that it's urgent**, ask them how many minutes they need, then agree to that time (or tell them how much time you can give them).
- Stop people from telling stories. Interrupt them and say, ***"Can you summarize how I can help you in one sentence?"*** If they ramble on, say ***"OK, so how can you sum up what you need from me?"***
- **If they're asking for help**, ask them what solution they propose?

How to Prevent Interruptions

- **Agree to help them with their request**, but schedule a specific time to do it.
- **Prevent Them From Staying**
- **When someone walks into your office or cubicle, immediately stand up.** That way, your visitor is less likely to sit down and get comfortable.
- **If you must**, place a binder or a briefcase on visitors' chairs, to discourage people from sitting down if they happen to drop in. (Or remove chairs altogether.)
- **Invent a meeting** that you have to go to. Confess that you promised to call someone back about a confidential matter at exactly this time.

Go make some photocopies. This will bring a meandering discussion to an end.

How to Prevent Interruptions

- **Set a time limit.** Then check the time in an obvious way, and make sure to announce the end of the allotted time when it occurs.
- **Ask subordinates to "save up" items of importance** and deal with them in a bunch at an appointed time.
- **Be careful that your tactics aren't counter productive to the organization.** What may benefit you as an individual may be detrimental to the team. Isolating yourself might frustrate others, or cause them to waste their own time because you weren't available for help.

Activity Logs



How you really spent your time

How to Use Tool:

- **Activity logs help you to analyze how you actually spend your time.**

The first time you use an activity log you may be shocked to see the amount of time that you waste! Memory is a very poor guide when it comes to this, as it can be too easy to forget time spent reading junk mail, talking to colleagues, making coffee, eating lunch, etc.

- **You may also be unaware that your energy levels may vary through the day.**

In fact, most people function at different levels of effectiveness at different times. Your effectiveness may vary depending on the amount of sugar in your blood, the length of time since you last took a break, routine distractions, stress, discomfort, or a range of other factors. There is also some good evidence that you have daily rhythms of alertness and energy.

Activity Logs



How you really spent your time

Keeping an Activity Log

- Keeping an Activity Log for several days helps you to understand how you spend your time, and when you perform at your best.

Without modifying your behavior any further than you have to, note down the things you do as you do them. **Every time you change activities**, whether opening mail, working, making coffee, gossiping with colleagues or whatever, note down the time of the change.

As well as recording activities, **note how you feel, whether alert, flat, tired, energetic, etc.** Do this periodically throughout the day. You may decide to integrate your activity log with a **stress diary**.

Activity Logs



How you really spent your time

Learning from Your Log

Once you have logged your time for a few days, analyze the log. **You may be alarmed to see the length of time you spend doing low value jobs!**

You may also see that you are energetic in some parts of the day, and flat in other parts. A lot of this can depend on the rest breaks you take, the times and amounts you eat, and quality of your nutrition. The activity log gives you some basis for experimenting with these variables.

How you really spent your time

Key points:

- **Activity logs are useful tools for auditing the way that you use your time.**

They can also help you to **track changes** in your energy, alertness and effectiveness throughout the day.

By analyzing your activity log you will be **able to identify and eliminate time-wasting or low-yield jobs**. You will also know the times of day at which you are most effective, so that you can carry out your most important tasks during these times.

Thank You
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