



SkillSnax SkillSheet

Some useful tips for getting more time in your day!

Every day at midnight, whether we are the richest or the poorest, we all receive a new purse full of 1440 minutes. We cannot earn extra minutes or carry over saved minutes. Therefore, we cannot save time; we can only spend it. How you spend your minutes is key to your worklife balance.

Plan each day's work in advance - make a simple action plan that includes:

1. What has got to be done?
2. How will it be done?
3. Who will do it?
4. How will you know when it's done?
5. How much time will it take?
6. What is the deadline?
7. When will I leave work today to be with my family and friends?

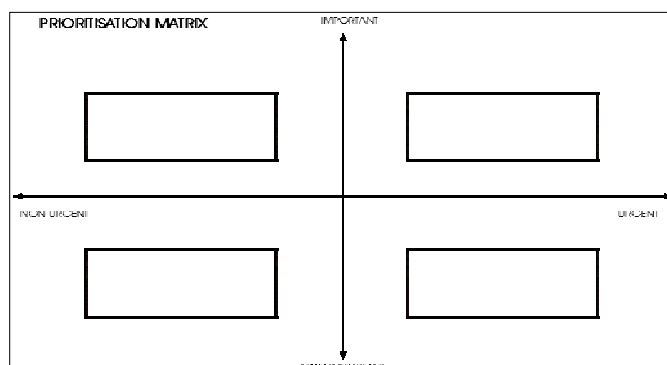
- Prioritise the tasks that you want to accomplish
- Delegate some tasks to others - developmental ones!
- Learn to concentrate fully on the task in hand. When possible do only one job at a time and give it your full attention
- Deal with your mail the first time you handle it - don't push piles or stock pile!
- Have standard reply to routine letters and emails
- Make decisions quickly - avoid procrastination.
- Work on important tasks when you are at your peak

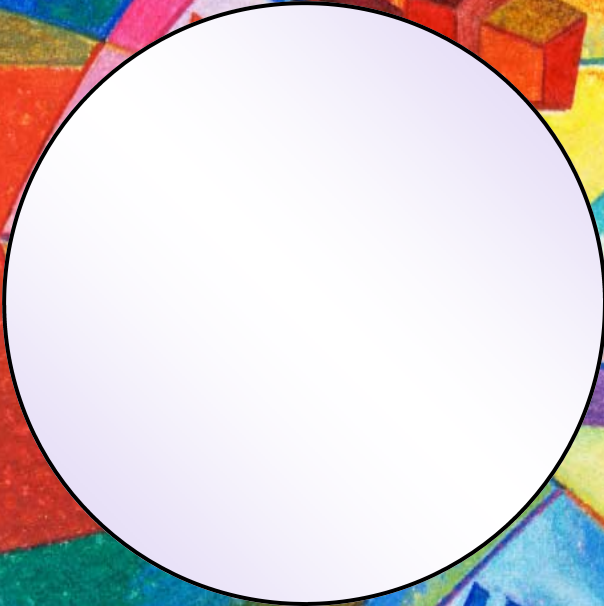
- Set deadlines for yourself and others, make your own public.
- Do not spend more time on a job than it deserves - concentrate on important tasks.
- Don't put off the jobs you don't like doing - it takes a lot of energy and it is stressful to keep worrying about uncompleted tasks use the prioritisation matrix below.
- Schedule appointments to avoid interruptions. Set aside a time each day when you are not to be interrupted except in emergencies.
- Improve communication in order to prevent constant questions.
- Take courses in speed reading and mind mapping.
- Clear your desk of anything you are not currently working on.
- Bin as much paper as possible. Don't hang on to things on your desk! File it, bin it, action it lose it! Arrange to have it recycled if this helps you to feel better. Read and pass on.
- Write notes on the bottom of messages or letters instead of writing a whole letter.
- Highlight important parts of documents and reports so that you don't have to read the whole thing again.
- Make your filing system efficient.
- Plan your telephone calls. Have necessary information to hand. Make notes.
- Never "hang on". Arrange a time to ring back or leave a message and number.
- Let people know how much time you can give them and manage your boundaries well.
- If you receive an unwanted interruption stand up and remain standing throughout.

If you can't get them to leave, leave yourself.

- Set up a decompression chamber - that is an activity like going swimming, listening to music in the car, walking - anything! As long as it is not work and not quite home. It allows the brain time to wind down and switch off!
- Keep a log of how you spend your time. Every half hour or so, write down what you have been doing in the last half hour. At the end of the day, highlight in green those things that add value and in red, those things that don't. At the end of the week you should have an idea of the waste in the process.
- Don't do email first thing, leave it until just before lunch. Our brain's are at their most creative and best at problem solving 3 hours after we get up, so don't waste that time on admin! Do admin just before lunch when you will whiz through it to get it out of the way because you are hungry!
- Never work beyond 10pm, our bodies and brains need time to do physical and psychological repair.
- Eat well, rest well and exercise. If you continually wake in the night, it could be due to stress. Make sure that you deal with the adrenaline!
- Laugh, do a laughter workshop, watch a funny film, be with funny friends - laughter reduces stress by releasing endorphins into our system that make us feel good for a long time.

Remember: You cannot SAVE time, you can only SPEND time!

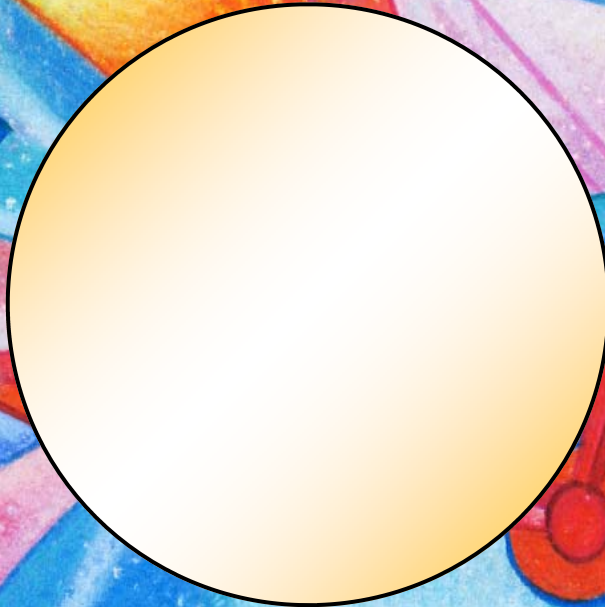




Your Actual Time

Spend a few minutes thinking about a typical day in your life (24 hours). Imagine that the circle next to this box is a 24-hour pie chart, divide it up into portions of time and have a guess how much time you spend doing things. Start with sleep (how many hours do you sleep?), then eating, washing, working, hobbies etc until you have filled up your day.

What takes up most of your time? What do you have very little time for? What is missing? What can't you fit in?



Ideal time

Now draw a pie chart of your ideal day (be realistic, you haven't won the lottery yet! So please include work!). How would you spend your day? What things have you added that are not in your pie chart above? What have you left out? What takes up your time at the moment that you would choose to leave out in an ideal day of work and home life?

Below, make a list of your goals, what will you do differently? What do you need to make time for? What do you need to stop doing? What do you need to let go of to make time for important things?

My Goals for Managing My Workload and Time

Blank space for writing goals.

What I have learned



"Every day at midnight, whether we are the richest man or the poorest beggar we all receive a new wallet full of 1440 minutes. We cannot earn extra minutes or carry over saved minutes. Therefore, we cannot save time, we can only spend it. How you spend your minutes is key to your worklife balance." Lynne Copp, Managing Director, The Worklife Company



Managing Interruptions

We can accomplish more than double the amount of work if we are uninterrupted. In the UK we are interrupted on average every 7 minutes; by telephones, email and of course people. This is a very interrupt driven environment and everyone wants to be seen as friendly and helpful but there is nothing wrong with this happening at times that are appropriate and respectful of the commitments of others.

- Keep a log of interruptions for one week. Approximately 80% of your interruptions will come from 20% of your contacts.
- Put up a big 'write on' board for questions and answers. Post up answers to questions you are repeatedly asked.
- If someone keeps

asking the same questions ask, "What have I told you so far? What can you do to remember this information in future?"

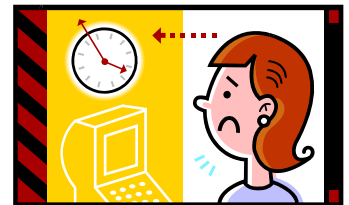
- There is nothing wrong with asking for information that you need. The only stupid question is the one that you don't ask. It is OK to say, " I don't know the answer to that question can you give me time to find the information you need?"

- Turn routine work into check lists. Do routine work when a high level of interruption is likely or when your energy levels are low. Put time into the things that really matter.

- Have notice for your office door "At the moment I am in a meeting with a deadline,

unless your interruption is an emergency or very urgent, please come back later when this sign has gone away. I will be happy to talk to you then".

- Protect yourself from interruptions - try "she returns telephone calls between 11.00 - 11.30 and 4.00 - 4.30. Which would be the best for you?"
- Schedule your own return calls to increase the chance of the person you want to speak to being there. On average the person you want will only be there one fifth of the time.
- Set aside times when no one can interrupt. Signal that you are busy or have a crisis. Put up a 'DO NOT DISTURB' sign.



I have a deadline to meet, please come back later when I am finished and we can have quality time together!

Keep a log of what your interruptions are for! Some are unavoidable, but most are due to things that are not necessary!



Set aside "ME time" at home too!





Cut this out and pin it on your door or stand it on your desk!



At the moment I am in a meeting with a deadline, unless your interruption is an emergency or very urgent, please come back later when this red flag sign has gone away. I will be happy to talk to you then - thank you for being understanding!