



Top Ten Tips for Time Management

1- Set and clarify Objectives

Set yourself objectives for each day or, depending on your role, an objective to be achieved by the end of the week. Recognise the difference between what you must do and what you want to do. Focus on the objective and not the activities; your most important activities are those that help you accomplish your objectives.

2- Analyse your own activities

Record how you use your time, and analyse the findings to understand when you have the most energy and when you accomplish the most. Use this information to plan your day; for instance, if you have the most energy in the morning then schedule in key tasks such as client meetings, brainstorming sessions or long-term planning.

3- Plan and Prioritise

Plan your time based on your objectives that you have set for the day or week. Take the first 30 minutes of each day to plan your day; don't start until you have completed your time plan. Give each activity or task a time limit, this prevents work from dragging on and eating into time allocated for other activities or tasks. Prioritise the tasks and activities on your plan in the order of importance and allocate your time accordingly. Any activity that is important to your success should have a time assigned to it.

4- Use a Calendar / Diary

Create a system that works well for you to manage your diary. Whether it is Outlook, Google Calendar, Lotus Notes or a hard copy diary, ensure that this is always kept up-to-date and includes all scheduled appointments and commitments. Using multiple tools can cause confusion and can lead to double booking, especially if others have access to your diary and make appointments on your behalf. Your calendar or diary can also be used as your time log, to monitor your own activities and time, which will help with your future planning.

5- Get organised

Being organised can help reduce the time spent looking for items and can help keep you on track when implementing agendas. This may mean planning in time to complete filing, update notes or getting on top of your emails.



6- Take breaks

Taking breaks restores energy and may provide you with more as you move through your day. Even when you are working to a tight deadline, it is impossible for anyone to focus and produce high quality work without giving their brains some time to rest and recharge. If it is difficult for you to stop working, then schedule breaks for yourself or set a reminder. Use breaks as a reward, once you have completed an activity.

7- Avoid disruptions

Do you know that some of us can lose as much as two hours a day to distractions? If you have a large project or need to focus your attention on a particular task, reduce the chances of being disrupted which can break your thought flow and waste time. Shut your door, turn off email notifications, log out of instant messengers and social media, put your phone(s) on silent and move them out of your eye-line to avoid possible visual distractions. These are the times to spend time getting a job done correctly, so that you do not need to go back and repeat work. (Digital detoxing can improve your productivity and well-being immensely!)

8- Learn how to say 'no'

If you find it difficult to say no to others, then you may end up taking on too much, which will not leave enough time or energy to complete each task or activity to the best of your ability. When you are asked to complete an additional task, refer to your plan and realistically think about whether you have time to do it and whether it will have an impact on achieving your daily or weekly objectives. If you do not have time, then you may need to say 'no' in an assertive manner.

9- Finish what you have started

Develop the habit of finishing what you have started. Don't jump from one thing to another, leaving a string of unfinished tasks behind you. If you find this difficult, then rewarding yourself every time you complete a task can help get you into the habit of completing one task at a time.

10- Look after yourself

A healthy lifestyle can improve your focus and concentration, which will increase your efficiency so that you can complete your work in less time. Taking time out to exercise and get enough sleep will give you the energy to get through your day more effectively and productively.

If you or your organisation would be interested in learning more about managing conflict & dealing with difficult issues, please call 01937 579649 or email

info@dicksontraining.com