TIME MANAGEMENT AND PROCASTINATION GUIDE

In reality, time management isn't about finding more time, it's about making the right choices and prioritising. It is also about putting a <u>structure in place and an approach and making yourself stick to it (form new habits)</u>. Pareto's Principle – The (80/20) Rule, applies to time management too: most of us spend just 20% of our time achieving 80% of our income or getting 80% of the work we need to done.

Your effectiveness makes you money, your efficiency saves you money and none of us can give 100%, 100% of the time. Identifying and making use of your personal biorhythms is a great way to increase your productivity. When in the day are you most creative? When are you most tired?

<u>**15 TOP TIPS TO BE MORE STRUCTURED**</u>

1. **Take the first 15-30 mins to plan your day**. Don't start any work (or answer any emails) until this is completed and you have a realistic plan and have allocated time to do each task.

2. **Complete the most important tasks first** – keep to just 2/3 a day. Prioritise all your tasks in terms of urgency and importance.

3. **Devote your time to the task in hand**, switch off your phone or put it out of sight, close your browser and email, find a quiet place or just have some background music.

4. **Time constrain tasks** and stop them when the time is up, even if you haven't finished them (you can finish them off later) but it will make you more efficient as you get more used to working this way.

5. **Turn key tasks into HABITS** – do them at the same time every day – if you write/design/paint allocate specific hours to do this. If you need to meet/reach out to people, also do this during specific hours.

6. **If you procrastinate, do something about it** – see exercise about Eating Frogs below.

7. **Don't allow unimportant details to drag you down** (a perfectionist trait). Do the bulk of the work in the time allocated and refine it later.

8. **Check emails/texts/Whatsapp just a couple of times a day** and allocate time to respond to people.

9. **Add things you must do regularly to your calendar** (lunch!, a walk, yoga, running, gym, emails, status updates) and repeat them for the whole year.

10. **Build in time for thinking/to be creative/do research** and don't feel guilty about this – It probably contributes to the 20% in the 80/20 rule.

11. **Are all your meetings worthwhile?** Do you have to go to all your meetings? Do you have all your meetings face to face? It's much more efficient to speak on the phone/via video and agree how long you will meet for before you start.

12. **Take 5 mins before each call or meeting** to decide what you want to achieve and 5 mins after to note down what you achieved/need to action.

13. **Learn to say NO**. Do you have to take on every piece of work that comes your way? Do you have to accept every invitation? Weed out any time wasters.

14. **Do less that creates more value** and eliminate the non-essential => you will have time for yourself / to exercise / to get fresh air!

15. **Catch yourself drifting off and bring our focus back** by asking yourself "What is the most important thing I should be doing right now?"

USEFUL RESOURCES

1. **Watch: TED Talk: "How to Gain Control of your Free Time" | Laura Vanderkam**

   https://www.ted.com/talks/laura_vanderkam_how_to_gain_control_of_your_free_time

2. **Read:** "**8 Causes of Procrastination & Why People Put Things Off**" here:
   https://www.developgoodhabits.com/causes-of-procrastination/
   (**This website is a BRILLIANT resource)**

3. **Read:** "**How the Frog Rule Can Help You Stop Procrastinating**":
   https://curiosity.com/topics/the-frog-rule-can-help-you-stop-procrastinating-on-important-tasks-curiosity/

   Or read the Book! 'Eat That Frog! 21 Great Ways to Stop Procrastinating and Get More Done in Less Time' by Brian Tracy
   https://www.amazon.co.uk/Eat-That-Frog-Great-Procrastinating-ebook/dp/B001AFF25W

4. **Exercise: Track and Evaluate How You Spend Your Time**

   Write down how you spend every (working) 10 minutes for a week (or longer if needed).

   Then evaluate:

   1. How much time do you spend in service of income?

   2. How much time you spend procrastinating?

   3. How much time do you spend looking at your email/phone needlessly?

   4. How much time do you spend on non-work tasks?

   5. How much time do you spend daydreaming/thinking non-work thoughts?

   6. Can you carve out some time for exercise/important things that you put off?

   7. Time box your working time into 90 mins stints and give yourself a reward of a 15 mins break every 75 mins (for 10 mins an hour).

5. **USE: Time Saving Tools /Apps**

   - **YourHour App (Phone) –** monitors your phone, email and app usage

   - **Nozbe App / https://app.nozbe.com –** List and Task Management

   - **https://trello.com/** - Task and Project Management