

Ways to Improve your time management

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Time management is a critical skill for boosting productivity, reducing stress, and achieving personal and professional goals. Irrespective of whether you are a student, an employee, an employer, or managing a project - refining how you organise your day can make a world of difference.

Establishing clear priorities

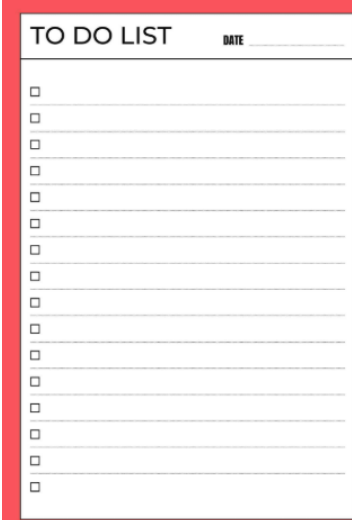
A suggestion is to start each day by identifying your most important tasks (priorities) The 'Eisenhower Matrix' is a useful approach to distinguish between what is urgent and important

The Eisenhower Matrix: Prioritize tasks based on their urgency and importance.		
	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	Quadrant 1: Do "The Fire-Fighting Zone" Tasks are both urgent and important, demanding immediate attention.	Quadrant 2: Schedule "The Visionary Zone" Tasks are pivotal for long-term success, but don't require immediate action.
Not Important	Quadrant 3: Delegate "The Delegation Zone" Tasks here seem pressing, but may not align with your larger goals	Quadrant 4: Eliminate "The Elimination Zone" asks here neither serve an immediate need nor align with long-term objectives.

By focusing on high-priority items first, you ensure that essential jobs get done – and in a timely way.

Forward planning

It is always a good idea to spend a little time planning your schedule. This might be best achieved at the end of the day (planning for tomorrow) or at the very start of the day (planning for the day ahead). 'To-do lists' are very effective – whether paper based or digital can be most effective.



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The use of a calendar (digital or otherwise) helps to block out time for specific activities. Planning helps anticipate potential bottlenecks and allocate time appropriately.

Minimising distractions

Distractions can eat into your productive time. Identify what commonly interrupts your workflow - be it your mobile phone, emails, electronic messages and/or noisy environments. It is essential to take steps to minimise the disruption caused. Simple things like turning off unnecessary notifications, setting boundaries with colleagues, and creating a dedicated workspace – are all very useful and effective strategies.



Breaking tasks up into smaller pieces

Large projects can often feel overwhelming and (believe it or not) lead to procrastination. Break big tasks into smaller, manageable steps and tackle them one at a time.



This approach keeps you motivated and makes progress visible, helping you stay on track.

Reviewing and reflecting

At the end of each day/week it is important to take time to review what you have accomplished – and, equally important, what did not go as planned.



Reflecting helps you spot patterns, adjust your methods, and continuously improve your time management strategy. Admitting 'missed targets' is (actually) a positive approach to effective time management.

Improving time management is not simply about doing more - it is about doing what matters most – and doing it more efficiently. By establishing clear priorities; forward planning, minimising distractions, Breaking tasks up into smaller pieces; and regularly reviewing and reflecting – you will find yourself more productive and better organised than you have ever been.

Emeritus Professor Greg Whateley is currently Chief Executive and Executive Dean at the *Australian Guild of Education* (Melbourne).