

Tip Sheet: How to Manage Your Time

Tips for Improving Your Organization's Time Management

1. Set a clear agenda and time limit for meetings: Using specific language in describing the goal of each meeting and making clear that only a certain block of time is available can shift the meeting focus from being discussion-based to being action-based ([3 Proven Ways to Stop Wasting Time on Unproductive Meetings, Inc.](#), March 2016).

2. Reduce Workplace "Cyberloafing": A study from the University of Wisconsin found that workers who exhibit signs of conscientiousness and feel that their workplace is empowering and just with its policy applications are less likely to "cyberloaf," or use the Internet during work hours for non-work-related purposes. To reduce cyberloafing, researchers recommend ([How to Reduce 'Cyberloafing' in the Workplace, University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Business](#), May 2015):

- Screen candidates for emotional stability and conscientiousness during job interviews.
- Foster justice by implementing fair policies and communicating effectively to prevent perceived injustices.
- Use organizational norms and policies to discourage cyberloafing. Previous studies show that employees engage in more minor forms of cyberloafing when they think their supervisor or co-workers support norms that discourage cyberloafing.

3. Update and Automate Outdated Processes: When possible, invest in technologies and systems to replace paper-based working, automate communications and tasks, and filter data into useful forms. Evaluate legacy systems and business platforms regularly and replace them as needed ([Top eight ways businesses are wasting time and resources, The Telegraph](#), March 2017).

4. Outsourcing: Delegate elements of your business in which the company is not an expert and is not the most efficient player. When using the right partners, outsourcing can reduce costs and boost efficiency in the long-term ([Top eight ways businesses are wasting time and resources](#)).

5. Improve Collaboration: Workers who are siloed also silo the information they are using. Increasing workforce collaboration with improved communication methods and a collaboration-based company culture will improve information sharing, reduce repeat work, and increase overall efficiency ([Top eight ways businesses are wasting time and resources](#)).

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Tips for Improving Your Own Time Management

1. Track your time: For a day or two, keep a “time journal” that details your activities/ tasks throughout the day and the amount of time spent on each one. Doing so will help you gain a better understanding of how you are allocating your time and how much time you are spending on distractions or non-priority action items ([2 Essential Time Management Practices to Get More Done in the Office, Forbes](#), May 2017).
2. Try the Pomodoro Technique: Rather than working through a single project non-stop and its attendant distractions, try to break up your time into smaller, more manageable blocks with regularly scheduled breaks. The Pomodoro Technique is one method of doing so- Using a timer, work uninterrupted for 25 minutes and follow with a five minute break. After four 25-minute blocks, take a longer break for 15-20 minutes and repeat the process ([2 Essential Time Management Practices to Get More Done in the Office](#)).
3. Pre-Plan: Each morning, your first task should be to write out a to-do list for the day and integrate each task into a comprehensive daily schedule. For the long-term horizon, use a physical or digital calendar to track all of your appointments in the coming week(s) ([25 Time Management Hacks That Actually Work, Inc.](#), August 2017).
4. Schedule Work in Batches: If feasible in your work setting, allocate certain types of work as the main focus for certain days. This so-called “batching” allows you to move more seamlessly between tasks on a given day because your mind will not have to “switch gears” as you move from project to project ([25 Time Management Hacks That Actually Work](#)).
5. Limit Distractions: Turn off your phone, email, and social media notifications. When you are working on something intensive, shut your door or put up a “Do Not Disturb” sign ([25 Time Management Hacks That Actually Work](#)).
6. Implement shortcuts: Even small changes, like composing pre-written email responses for common queries, using standard email signatures, and learning keyboard shortcuts, can save you time and frustration in the long-run ([25 Time Management Hacks That Actually Work](#)).

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7. Take a break: When you need a break, take one. Get a cup of coffee, go for a short walk, do some stretches at your workstation. Take the time to eat your lunch, rather than eat as you work ([25 Time Management Hacks That Actually Work](#)).

8. Meditate and Exercise: Meditation can help you prioritize what is important so that your time is spent where it needs to be and not on non-essential tasks. Meditation also helps you to focus and concentrate better during the work day. Exercising regularly can improve your energy levels and put you in a positive frame of mind for the day ([Forget Time Management. Do This Instead, Inc, November 2015](#)).

9. Declutter and Organize: Maintaining an orderly workspace will help you feel more organized and decrease the amount of time spent searching for things. Frequently rid yourself of items you do not need or use and take the extra moment or two to put things back in their place each day ([25 Time Management Hacks That Actually Work](#)).

10. Conduct a Personal Weekly Review: David Allen, author of Getting Things Done, recommends doing the following at the end of each week ([25 Time Management Hacks That Actually Work](#)):

- Get clear by tidying your workspace and emptying your inbox. Review your projects and organize them by priority.

- Get current by going over your upcoming calendar, projects, action lists, and checklists.

- Get creative by reviewing projects you have wanted to get to and find ways to slowly slip them into your schedule. Take this time to also consider ways to be more time-efficient, such as introducing time management apps into your daily life.