



We live in an age of significant technological advancement, which has undoubtedly made our daily lives easier and more productive in many ways. Tablet devices and smartphones mean that news, books, research and people are accessible within seconds. So why, despite having the support of modern technology, are we more stretched for time than ever before?

The words 'hectic', 'busy' and 'stressed' are used all too often in the 21st century but modern life wasn't predicted to be so frantic. Economist John Maynard Keynes talked of a 15-hour working week by 2030. Then, in the United States in the 1950s, economists reported a post-World War II productivity hike, which coincided with increased household income and living standards, leading them to believe that by 1990 people would work just 22 hours a week, six months of the year and retire before 40. A bit off track, right?

In reality, a recent study in the journal Psychological Science found that people are, in fact, far happier undertaking multiple activities than being idle. This is a cultural shift manifested in the fact that people feel fulfilled and important when they are busy. However, as much as we enjoy multitasking, in the workplace there is a fine line between busy and brick wall. If you are not in control of your time at work, issues arise and escalate quickly, leading to missed deadlines, inefficiency and ultimately stress, which will only perpetuate the problem. How do you avoid getting into this vicious cycle? Use our easy acronym TIME to help you remember key principles of effective time management.

## T take control

To master personal time management, you ultimately need to take back control. Focus on tasks that are productive and conducive to achieving company objectives and targets. A rule of thumb is that roughly 20% of our effort produces 80% of our results. That means that on a task list of 10 items, 2 of those tasks are likely to produce greater results than the other 8 combined. Identify which tasks really move you toward your goals and give those the priority they deserve.

## I it's time to delegate

Sometime we are so caught up in 'doing' we leave no time for strategic thinking or measuring performance. In order to delegate effectively, select the best person for the task based on their strengths and skill set. Provide clear instructions and be sure to establish a specific deadline, with milestones. This means you can check progress before the final deadline.

## M map out your time

Planning is a key characteristic of effective time management. Mapping out your time over the weeks and months ahead is crucial to staying in control and achieving long-term goals. Break projects down into tasks and give each one a realistic time estimate. Don't be tempted to cram too many tasks into one day as this will only result in frustration later, focus on what is important, realistic and achievable. This exercise will help you see the road ahead more clearly and strike the optimum balance of time across multiple priorities.

## E eliminate the unnecessary

Start by evaluating your monthly meetings schedule. Filter out ones that are not vital for you to attend in person or ones that are time-consuming and non-productive. Also, try to eliminate the use of multiple calendar or planning tools. Many of us often have an electronic calendar, a daily planner, a wall calendar, and a handheld device and they all need to say the same thing. Too many calendars and planners can lead to confusion and become time consuming to update. Try to rely on just one and ensure that your electronic devices are synchronized to avoid duplication of effort and errors.

If this article has struck a chord, you are not alone. HNI's Stress and Time Management course is a bestseller for a reason. If you wish to relieve yourself of stress and regain control, [CLICK HERE](#)



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Hanan Nagi is an International Trainer, Executive Coach, Personal Development Expert, Writer and Inspirational Speaker. She is the producer and presenter of the first coaching and human development TV show, 'Develop your Life', on DMTV. With more than 16 years of corporate experience in the corporate world in various industries, she has been helping organisations achieve their goals through their people, using training and coaching programs. She has been recognised for her contribution to excellence and achievement in the people's field by H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Makhtoum, UAE Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, when she won the Dubai Government Excellence Award.