



Time Management

Quick Reference Guide

Goals of Time Management

Time management is learning to plan out your available time and control the amount of time you spend on specific tasks in order to work more efficiently. Time is the most valuable resource you have. Once it's gone, it's gone forever, so learning to manage it is a critical skill.

Managing your time well allows you to:



Identifying tasks that are unimportant or can be delegated allows more time to focus on what's essential.



Eliminating tasks that waste time and aren't critical creates more time for things that are enjoyable.



When tasks are prioritized, you can focus on what needs to be done, know how much time is available to complete them, and put your mind at ease.



When necessary tasks can be completed during the workday, work doesn't have to be brought home.

The Four Quadrants

Former president Dwight Eisenhower realized most urgent things in life aren't important. He developed the 4-quadrant matrix to illustrate where we spend our time.



Quadrant 1: Tasks that are important and urgent, things like putting out fire fires and completing a report on time.

Quadrant 2: Tasks that are important but not urgent. These tasks require commitment to complete over time.

Quadrant 3: Tasks that are urgent but not important, like unimportant phone calls or unnecessary meetings.

Quadrant 4: Tasks that aren't important or urgent, things like working on an unnecessary report or watching TV.

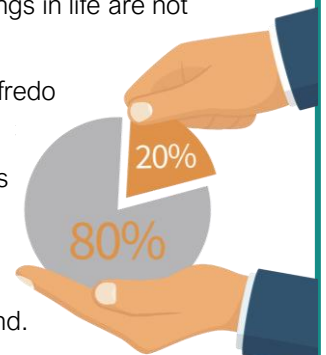
Aim to spend as much time as possible in Quadrant 2.

The 80/20 Rule

The 80/20 rule, also known as the Pareto principle, is the observation that most things in life are not evenly distributed.

In 1895, Italian economist Vilfredo Pareto noticed:

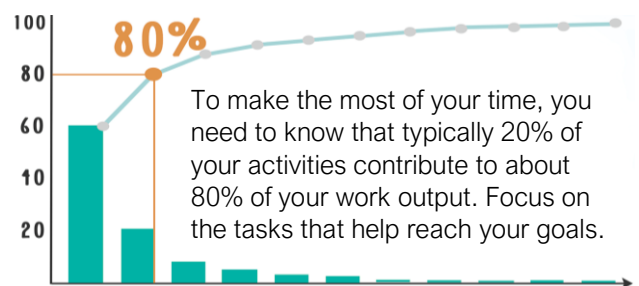
- 20% of the pea pods in his garden produced 80% of the peas.
- 20% of the population in Italy owned 80% of the land.



The theory, although not an exact science, appears everywhere. In the workplace:

- 20% of the workers produce 80% of the results.
- 20% of the customers create 80% of the revenue.

How Does It Apply to Time Management?



Minimize Time Wasters

Procrastinating

Fact: 20% of people identify themselves as chronic procrastinators.

Fixes:

- Set an effective schedule.
- Prioritize your work.
- Take breaks.
- Learn to say no.

Meetings

Fact: Executives spend an average of 23 hours a week in meetings.

Fixes:

- Only attend meetings where your attendance is needed.
- Get permission to leave early if a meeting only partially applies to you.

Interruptions

Fact: It takes an average of 23 minutes to get back on track after you've been interrupted.

Fixes:

- Don't check your phone every time you get a notification.
- Schedule time throughout the day to check your phone and email.
- Designate "busy" time on your calendar.
- Work somewhere other than your desk.

Multitasking

Fact: It takes 20-40% more time to complete a list of tasks while multitasking than if completing tasks sequentially.

Fixes:

- Make a task list and prioritize work.
- Complete one task before starting the next.

Not Saying No

Fact: Many people falsely believe saying "no" implies they are rude, selfish, or unkind.

Fixes:

- Be assertive, but courteous.
- Decline without a long explanation—it's not needed.
- Offer a realistic alternative.



Time-Saving Techniques

Use the 4 D's of Time Management

The four D's of time management are a way to determine if a task is worth your time. They help you decide if a task is something you should do now yourself, defer until later, delegate to someone else, or delete from your schedule and never do.



Do

Do the tasks that only take a few minutes to complete, like answering an email.



Defer

Defer anything that doesn't need to be done immediately, like a request from a colleague. Do it when it fits your schedule.



Delegate

If you have an essential task that can be completed by someone with extra availability, **delegate** the task.



Delete

If the task isn't needed, **delete** it. Don't waste time on things that don't need to be done, such as attending unnecessary meetings.

Take Control of Your Email

- Designate time for email throughout the day.
- When it's time for email, take immediate action.
 1. Delete junk.
 2. Read and delete items that don't require a response.
 3. Respond to the remaining emails.
- Organize your inbox with folders and labels.
- Unsubscribe from promotional emails.

Use Tasks and Notes

- **Write everything down.** Get everything out of your head, then organize and prioritize later.
- **Prioritize tasks.** Start with time-sensitive items and those that will reduce your workload the most.
- **Keep everything in one place.** Store tasks and notes in an app that's accessible anywhere.
- **Dedicate time to keeping task lists and notes.** It saves a lot of time in the long run.

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