

The adage, “*work smarter, not harder*” has become a staple in the way we often find ourselves thinking and going about work of any kind. Managing our time isn’t about squeezing in as many tasks into our day as possible, but rather simplifying how we work, doing things efficiently and achieving our goals in a less stressful manner as possible. Here are a few suggested tips that can help manage our time effectively:

### Complete the most important tasks first

Each day identify two or three tasks that are the *most crucial* to complete and do those first. Once we are done, the day has already been a success and we can move on to other things.

### Delineate a time limit in which to complete task

Instead of just sitting down to work on a project and thinking, “I’m going to be here until this is done,” try thinking, “I’m going to work on this for three hours”. The time constraint will push us to focus and be more efficient, even if we end up having to go back and add a bit more time later.

### Leave a buffer-time between tasks

Avoid rushing from task to task as it makes it difficult to appreciate what we are doing and to stay focused and motivated. Allowing ourselves down-time between tasks can be a breath of fresh air and allows us to re-commit our concentration levels to the task at hand. While taking a break, engage in a mind clearing exercise such as going for a short walk, reading, listen to music or meditation.

### Minimize interruptions

Identify activities that tend to be distracting and use mitigating strategies. For example, avoid answering the phone or browsing social media in the middle of important tasks. Practicing self-discipline while we work single-mindedly on a task until it is completed helps ensure interruptions are minimized.

### Exercise and eat healthy

Numerous studies have linked a healthy lifestyle with work productivity. Like getting enough sleep, exercising and eating healthy can boost our energy levels, clear our mind and allow us to focus more easily.

***Remember, it’s about clearing away space in our lives to make time for people, play and rest.***



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