Mind

The To-Do List vs Scheduling Which is the right time management tool for you?

THE TO-DO LIST:

What is it?

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The To-Do list is a compilation of all tasks you need to accomplish in a certain period (usually daily or weekly). Typically, these tasks are listed in order of priority, and you mark them off as you complete them.

What are the benefits?

- You get the satisfying feeling of marking items as done which, even if it's a small item, is an accomplishment.
- You can see everything you need to do in one place and have a better understanding of your full spectrum of responsibility.
- You can prioritise your tasks by importance and understand what needs to be actioned first.
- It keeps you accountable.
- Having everything on a list helps make sure that nothing falls through the cracks.

How do you make it work for you?

- 1. First, where is your To-Do list? On a piece of paper? Having a digital version means you can't lose it, can add additional information or context to it, attach documents, reorder it in terms of priority and add timelines, reminders and deadlines.
- 2. Break tasks into smaller projects to make them easier to accomplish and less daunting.
- 3. Batch tasks that are similar so that you don't need to adjust your thinking between tasks.
- 4. Always keep your list updated. Having items floating round your head but not on your list can cause you to feel overwhelmed and that can lead to being unproductive.
- 5. Set your deadlines and add reminders/notifications for them. Without deadlines your list will continue to grow, and you'll never feel like you're getting through anything.
- 6. Include verbs. This sounds odd but here's why it's important, an item on your list called "Online App" tells you nothing about what needs to be done, especially if it's something that sits on your list for a while, where "Update colours on the online app" is descriptive enough to help remind you exactly what your task is.
- 7. Update your list every afternoon so that the next morning you can immediately get started on your projects.
- 8. Watch out for items that have been on your list for a while. Ask yourself why they're still on there. Are they too daunting? Are they not important? Are you not the right person for the task? This will help you figure out if you're just procrastinating or need to delegate.



SCHEDULING

What is it?

Instead of writing a To-Do list, you break down your diary into time slots to perform certain tasks/projects. These can be single tasks, a portion or whole of a project, replying to emails, thinking time, meetings, eating lunch, practically anything that requires time in a day.

What are the benefits?

- There are only so many working hours in a week. Unlike a To-Do list that can grow continuously, when time slots run out a few weeks in advance you are forced to start making decisions about what items are important and what needs to be negotiated, removed, delayed or delegated.
- So, you know how much time to spend on a task, and you don't get drawn down the rabbit hole and spend an hour on a task that should take 30min.
- · Get the important things done AND keep control of your time.
- There are only so many hours in a day and using them wisely and strategically will destress you and help you achieve your weekly goals.

How do you make it work for you?

- 1. Start by using your outlook calendar (or whichever calendar you look at most often)
- 2. Add in your tasks that you repeat every day (like reading and replying to emails) in a timeslot that makes sense. Some tasks may need two or more time slots per day).
- 3. Add in lunch, rest time, coffee breaks, walking breaks etc. Time off actually makes you more productive when you're back at your desk.
- 4. Make these tasks/meetings/breaks repeat weekly so you don't have to add them in every week.
- 5. List your projects and allocate durations and deadlines to them- then break up larger projects into shorter tasks (this makes them less daunting and helps prevent procrastination)
- 6. Mark the tasks as either, Important and Urgent, Important but not Urgent, Not Important but Urgent and Not Important and Not Urgent.
- 7. Now start filling your diary with these tasks.
- 8. Schedule "contingency" time to give you flexibility for unforeseen tasks and meetings.
- 9. Can you fit everything in? Yes? GREAT! No? Now it's time to prioritise. What can be

delayed, deleted or delegated. Sometimes you may need to discuss this with your manager.

10. Now stick to it. It's going to take discipline to adhere to the schedule, but this is a good way to ensuring you complete each task or project and if you run out of time, can prioritise strategically.

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	05/21/20XX	05/22/20XX	05/23/20XX	05/24/20XX	05/25/20XX
8:00 AM	Organization / Planning	Email	Email	Email	Email
8:30 AM		Design	Design	Editing	Editing
9:00 AM	Email				
9:30 AM	Strategy Meeting			Presentation to Stakeholders	Design
10:00 AM					
10:30 AM	Campaign Research				
11:00 AM					
11:30 AM	Lunch	Lunch	Editing	Lunch	
12:00 PM					
12:30 PM	Campaign Research	Marketing Meeting	Lunch		Lunch
1:00 PM					
1:30 PM			Campaign 3	Design	
2:00 PM	Design		Copy Meeting		Editing
2:30 PM		Design and Copy Spring Campaign Presentation	Design		
3:00 PM			Team Leader		
3:30 PM			Meeting	000 Appointment	Company-Wide Meeting
4:00 PM			Peer Review		
4:30 PM		Email			
5:00 PM	West Coast Campaign Meeting	see as manage		West Coast	
5:30 PM				Campaign Meeting	

