



January 2023: Time Management



***“The key is in not spending time, but investing it.” –
Stephen R. Covey***

Welcome to the **January 2023 edition of TotalWellbeing**, your guide to the **8 dimensions of wellbeing**. This month we are looking to start the year off right with a skill that we could all make use of, better time management.

Time management is not about how much (or little) time you have, it’s all about how you use the time you do have. Using your time well can be tricky as we all have a tendency to inadvertently waste time doing things like procrastinating, worrying about how little time we have to do something, overthinking things, and other bad time habits. Some time wasters are even out of our control. Unexpected phone calls, a flat tire, or an urgent family need are all examples of times when our time may be out of our hands. How do you overcome these things? Check out the tips and resources below to help manage your time and even help remove some of those external time wasters.

Remember that your EAP is here for you if you need to address time management issues, work/life balance needs, or just need to talk to someone. You have access to free and confidential counseling, wellness coaching, work/life concierge services to save time finding daily resources, and more! Plus, an online resource library full of proactive self-help tools! Visit [PersonalAdvantage](#) for helpful articles, personal development tools, a free mindfulness app, and more!

To your total wellbeing,

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Tips for Better Time Management

When daily tasks build up and you feel overwhelmed, it's difficult to know where to begin. To make things more complicated, you may find yourself easily distracted by activities that are more fun or help you avoid doing what must be done. You may also be struggling to focus on completing one task at a time, instead trying to accomplish too much all at once, which can prevent you from succeeding.

There are many fast and easy ways to help you reorganize, prioritize, and start being productive. If you incorporate even a few of the recommendations below into your attempts to better manage your time, you'll start creating small successes that lead to big changes and even more time to spend on the things you enjoy most!

For better time management:

- Create a list of priorities on a daily, weekly, and/or monthly basis.
- Be sure your list is organized so that the most important and time pressing items will be completed first. For example, before you decide to do a task, think to yourself, "What should I be doing right now?" Let that thought be your guide as you look for which task to do next.
- If you're having trouble getting started, pick an easy task and when you're done, check it off your list. After one or two of these, you will begin to feel the accomplishment that comes with completing a task and will have the motivation to approach the more difficult items.
- Arrange your workday so that you can keep interruptions to a minimum. Try to turn on your voicemail at certain times to avoid getting off task.
- Schedule a specific time to check and reply to emails to avoid frequent interruptions.
- Set deadlines and create a daily/hourly workflow schedule to ensure your task will be completed before that deadline.
- Be realistic about your daily energy patterns. Complete important tasks when your energy is at its peak, and then save more routine tasks for when your energy is lower.

Factors that can hinder productivity:

- Don't be too much of a perfectionist as you move through tasks. Focus on getting the task done, rather than always getting it done perfectly.
- Don't take on everything yourself; delegate duties to appropriate coworkers or people in your life, when possible.
- Don't get off track. Learn to say "no" instead of sacrificing valuable time.
- Don't spend too much time on minor decisions. Save nit-picking for bigger things.

- Don't burn yourself out. Take breaks and go for a quick walk, talk to a friend, eat a nice lunch, etc. Giving your brain a rest and rejuvenating your body will make you more productive in the long run.

Try out the tips and see which ones help you most. Do you recognize any that have helped before? Mix and match or add your own; either way, it's time to increase your productivity, knock those items off your to-do list, and let go of unnecessary stress.

If you or a household member needs additional information or assistance around time management, stress reduction, or anything else, please call MINES and Associates at 1-800-873-7138 or visit www.minesandassociates.com today. You have access to work/life concierge services, life coaching, and stress management tools. Also, [PersonalAdvantage](#) has a ton of great resources and FREE [webinars](#) on a variety of topics including time management and work/life balance.

Managing Your Biggest Time Wasters

Reducing outside interruptions is crucial to premium performance at work. But what can you do if phone calls, visits from co-workers and rambling meetings waste hours of your work time every day?

"You can defend yourself by learning simple techniques that will help you manage time-wasters," says Stephanie Winston, president of The Organizing Principle, a management consulting firm in New York, and author of "The Organized Executive." "And you can establish greater control without being rude or shutting yourself off from others' needs."

The following suggestions will help you gain control of your worst time-wasters:

On the phone

Keep calls brief. Get to the point immediately when you're making or returning a business call. Develop strategies for dealing with long-winded people, such as beginning calls with, "This is Mary. I have a meeting in 10 minutes. What can I do for you?"

Consolidate call-backs. Return all your calls at a given time each day. Begin with priority calls and work down the list.

Return calls when people are less likely to chat. For example, call right before lunch or near the end of the day.

Develop a message-tracking system. If you're disorganized, you may spend more time looking for your messages than returning them. Avoid putting message slips under a paperweight or in your in-box; they tend

to get lost. Instead, use an old-fashioned desk needle or add important calls that must be returned to your master to-do list.

Drop-in visitors

Interoffice visits are a part of office life. The following strategies can help you regain control if you're constantly interrupted:

Send a clear message. Close your office door or post a note on the entrance to your cubicle saying you're busy until a certain time. You'll deter all but the most insistent visitors.

If your desk faces the door or a corridor, reposition it so a passerby can't easily catch your eye.

Consolidate visits. Limit appointments to a specific block of time each day or week.

Set time limits. Limiting spur-of-the-moment sessions without being rude requires tact, but it can be done. When someone asks if you have a minute, you can respond with, "Could it wait until this afternoon? I'm really swamped right now."

Confer in colleagues' offices. When co-workers want to discuss projects with you, offer to meet in their offices. "It's much easier to excuse yourself than to ease someone out of your office," Ms. Winston says.

Endless meetings

Eliminate unnecessary meetings. Before calling a meeting, ask yourself if the issue could be handled by a memo, telephone call or informal conference.

Distribute an agenda in advance. List the topics to be discussed and note any papers, figures and information people should bring.

Set time limits. Try to schedule meetings just before lunch or quitting time. Doing so will curb a tendency for attendees to ramble on.

Take control. If you're the moderator, limit the discussion to topics on the agenda. Unstructured meetings are usually unproductive.

"By learning to define your time as your own," Ms. Winston says, "you are then free to enthusiastically speak and meet with co-workers, clients and other contacts without compromising your own productivity."

If you or a member of your household needs assistance or guidance on any of these wellbeing topics, please call MINES & Associates, your EAP, today for free, confidential, 24/7 assistance at 800.873.7138.

To access past issues of *TotalWellbeing* please visit our [newsletters page](#). This newsletter is aimed at providing helpful information about various aspects of your wellbeing and then connecting it all back to

important and relevant parts of everyday life. If you have any thoughts, questions, or content you would like to see covered here please get in contact with us. You can email us directly by clicking [here](#).

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