



## Needing a Time Management Boost?

Making Every Day a “Do” Date,  
Not a “Due” Date

**T**he problem with time management is not time: It is what we do with the time we have. We all know what to do but sometimes we slip. In order to help ourselves, we need to take the following actions:

### Step One – Create a Time Management Habit

First you need to decide to change your habit.



### Step Two – Take action

1. List what you have to do.
2. Use a time table/calendar or a productivity app.

Here are a few to consider – Although I have recently gone back to using an old fashioned diary as it does not need to be charged, doesn't get infected with viruses, and does not require me to use the screen which gets me hooked into other activities while I am using it.

- Evernote
- Focus Booster
- 30/30
- Remember the Milk
- And.do
- Listastic
- Finish
- 2Do
- Epic Win

Once you have decided that you are going to make managing your time a habit again, you are ready for step two.

6. Use tools to help you think through when you get stuck:

- Task/time: Think of doing things in relation to the task and keep going until it is done, not the amount of time you want it to take.
- Think smarter: Find quicker, more efficient ways to do the things you are doing: use mind mapping, pictures, talking to others as a way of helping you to think. Put away your phone and give yourself some true focus time.
- Urgent/Important: Ensure you give time to the important things before they become urgent. A table such as the one below may help with this.

3. Be flexible and realistic: things change and you need to be able to reflect that in your day to day expectations. Notice when you are not concentrating and take a break.

- Breathing
- Dancing
- Singing
- Exercise
- Return to work/task

Schedule times for fun, relaxation and laughter, as well as time to be with friends and family.

4. Allow time for planning: Take five mins right now and think about what is the best time for you to plan your year, month, week, day: include this planning time in your calendar.

5. Notice when you are putting things off: What gets in the way?

- Listen to “Ted Talk” by Adam Alter about the amount of time we are giving over to screen time.
- Lack of sleep: The light from devices suppresses the production of melatonin (the sleep hormone) by sending a message to the brain, via the retina, that it’s not night time.

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT		
NOT IMPORTANT		

· Chunk: Separate out the pieces of work into smaller pieces and plan for when you will accomplish each one. Step by step you will complete the big task.

· Reward: Ensure you give yourself some reward time for accomplishing the tasks.

· Create a Leading Task: When a hard task is coming up, do something small that is easy to do and that will help you step into the harder task. For example, write in your calendar that you are going to ring someone. That way when it comes up in your diary you can take action.


· Start by Saying Only Five Minutes: To help you get over procrastination, begin for just five minutes. Often this leads to us getting more of the task done and our emotional hurdle out of the way.

· Make Decisions: Make daily decisions about every piece of paper, task, email that comes your way. Do not read and ignore: Instead, read and decide what the next action will be.

· Listen to yourself if you don’t want to do something. That part of yourself needs to be addressed or you will end up sabotaging yourself.

· Take Care of Yourself: Ask yourself, What do you need to help you to keep going? What is getting in your way? Notice the feelings you are having and bring them to your attention. Then ask yourself, Do I need to pay more attention to this or less attention? Trust yourself to know.

Of all the ideas and the ones you have had on the way though reading this article,

What are you going to take action on now? Nothing will change until you “do.” 

*The problem with time management is not time: It is what we do with the time we have.*

Madeleine Taylor is a parent of three grown sons and works as a People Skills Consultant. Madeleine is an accomplished workshop facilitator and long-time trainer of negotiation, influencing skills and managing difficult conversations. Madeleine is a parent educator exploring how to grow resilient children in this complex world. More information can be found at [www.peopleskillsconsulting.co.nz](http://www.peopleskillsconsulting.co.nz)