

Your Employee Assistance Program is a support service that can help you take the first step toward change.

Prioritizing and Time Management

Work overload can happen to anyone. When overload hits, it’s important to prioritize tasks and manage your time wisely. It isn’t difficult to create a time management plan. The challenge lies in internalizing the habits of monitoring time and regularly analyzing and revising your time management plan until it works for you.

Tips and Tools You Can Use

You can gain extra time by:

- Doing tasks in less time than usual
- Using time that you previously wasted
- Carrying work materials with you for when you are waiting or have extra time
- Planning your schedule in advance and keeping a planner or date book
- Using a daily to-do list
- Avoiding procrastination

To better manage your time, try to:

- Clarify and write down your long- and short-term objectives in all major areas of your life.
- Break projects down into smaller tasks, updating plans as necessary.
- Set priorities and estimate the time required for each task. Be aware of what needs to be done first and when things are scheduled.
- Create, maintain and use to-do lists and calendars with scheduled tasks and appointments on them.
- As you work, focus on your top priorities and on completing tasks in the time allocated.
- Periodically ask yourself, "What is the best use of my time right now?" Change tasks as appropriate

Time Management Techniques

Try the following techniques to increase your productivity:

- Clear your desk at the end of each day and plan your activities for the next day.
- List time-specific items, such as meetings, followed by the items you must accomplish for that event.
- Once you have prioritized your tasks, make a to-do list. Work through the items in priority order.
- Be sure to give yourself sufficient time to complete your list, taking into account normal daily interruptions.

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- Do difficult jobs first, when you are at your best. Don't postpone important, but unpleasant, tasks. Jobs rarely get more enjoyable by being postponed.
- Set deadlines for jobs and stick to them. A task should take only the amount of time set aside for it.
- Try to set specific times for routine jobs such as going through mail, talking with your manager, checking e-mail, etc.
- Take your breaks at times when you are not able to work effectively.

Setting priorities and managing time more effectively are essential skills for work. They will help you complete projects with ease, reduce your stress and make you a more valuable employee. It’s a positive cycle!