

My Calendar

Self-Coaching Guide

How can I manage my calendar?

Our time is a precious gift so we should use it wisely. Ensuring we manage our work calendars to get the most from our working week is important. Realising that aim will require us to adopt some healthy principles, such as:

- Putting something on a calendar makes it more likely to happen (including rest/lunch breaks and time for focused work), rather than just hoping it will happen.
- Scheduling appointments and free time for ourselves (just like we would with other people) makes it more likely we will get this time and it won't be taken by others for other things.
- Challenging the need for us to attend some meetings, rescheduling a meeting to a more suitable time, or just giving ourselves permission to say 'no' to some meetings is acceptable.
- Giving ourselves time to breathe and recover between meetings is really necessary.

Managing our calendars will need us to set boundaries on our time, schedule meetings responsibly, and work with others productively. Here are some suggestions for doing that:

Setting boundaries

- Set your working hours in your calendar (i.e. start and end times)
- Schedule and protect your lunch breaks
- Schedule your leave so you can take long rest breaks when you want them
- Schedule focus times in your calendar when you want to work
- Be agile with your working hours, but keep to your contracted hours and resist the urge to multitask

Scheduling meetings

- Schedule meetings during people's working hours when everyone is available
- Respect people's lunch breaks and avoid scheduling meetings during that time
- Schedule meetings in 15 or 30-minute increments, if possible, rather than 1-hour increments
- Schedule meetings for 25 or 50 minutes to create short rest breaks between meetings
- Include time for comfort breaks if a meeting has to be over 1 hour
- Encourage people to move and stretch during meetings, if possible, and between meetings
- Space out meetings to avoid back-to-back meetings for you and other people

Working with others

- Respond to meeting invites as quickly as possible to help meeting organisers
- Group similar activities together to reduce you shifting between meetings and focused work
- Propose alternative days/times to meeting invites if they clash with rest breaks or focus times
- Consider whether you need to be at some meetings and discuss this with meeting organisers
- As a team, agree a policy to have half/full days free of meetings so you can all focus on work (and possibly also adopt some of the above suggestions)

PTO.

More Information

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Regularly review your calendar and ask: 'Does it accurately reflect how I want to use my time?' and 'Does it seem balanced between meetings, rest breaks, and focused work?' If 'no', then you need to remind yourself of the above healthy principles / suggestions and change your calendar to regain a balance.

"If you don't plan your time, someone else will help you waste it." Zig Ziglar

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