

Participant's Booklet

How to manage my time to be more efficient and serene?

Take your time to win some!

Sociological laws of time management

Parkinson Law “Setting short deadlines”

Parkinson Law is a simple principle. Whether you have one hour or one day, you will have done the same amount of work at the end of the time given. It is a principle based on efficiency. The less time you have, the more you prioritize by setting a clear course of action in order to finish the work in the allotted time.

Pareto Principle “Focus on the essential”

The Pareto Principle, or Pareto Law, is also called the 80-20 principle, or 80-20 law. It is an empirical phenomenon noticed in certain areas: about 80% of the consequences are the product of 20 % of the causes. In a system, a few elements (20%) have a high influence because it impacts 80 % of the system. This relationship has often been observed. For example: 80 % of the benefits comes from 20 % of the clients.

Laborit Principle “Always start with the most difficult activity”

Our behavior often leads us to do:

- What we like before what we dislike
- What is easier before what is hard
- What is quick before what takes time
- What we know before what is new
- What is urgent before what is important
- What other ask us to do before what we have chosen to do

Always start with the most important task, even if it seems tedious.

Murphy principle “Evaluate risks and allow room for flexibility”

We often under-estimate the time needed to complete a task, which ends up in a race against time. What can go wrong will go wrong, which is why a task always takes us longer than what we had planned for. When you plan for a task, always include some extra time for the unexpected, and set limits.

Carlson Law “Limit interruptions”

Carlson law explains that if your work is interrupted, it will take longer to complete. Tackle interruptions: avoid interruptions as much as possible by finishing a task that you have started. Limit outside interruptions as much as you can.

Illich Law “Built-in breaks”

Illich law explains the principles of personal balance:

- Beyond a certain amount of time, stop and do something else
- Know how to persevere without overdoing it, refuse perfectionism
- Be aware of your own limitations

Fraisse Law “Look at your watch...or don’t ”

Paul Fraisse is the creator of what is called chrono-psychology. He wrote: “the main psychological aspect of time is that it connects to the interest given to the task”. Which means, the more you are interested in your current task, the more it seems short, the more you dislike it, the more time seems to go slowly.

Our own perception of time is never unbiased, which is why we need to switch from pleasing tasks to unpleasing ones and to give them specific durations so as to avoid imbalance.

Swoboda-Fliess-Teltscher Law: “Respect your own biorhythm”

Hermann Swoboda, Wilhem Fliess and Alfred Teltscher have discovered biological rhythms and their implication in our day to day life. Because we do have a rhythm. Or more accurately, we live according to our environment’s rhythm, of the planet, of our bodies, of our brain.

It is essential to get to know them and to get to know yourself, to determine when your most efficient moment is: are you a morning, afternoon or evening person? How long does your ideal work cycle last? For how many work cycles can you remain focused? How does hunger and sleep affect your productivity?

Douglas Law “Tidy up your desk”

Douglas Law is to space what Parkinson Law is to time: nature abhors vacuum, so files and documents tend to pile up until it completely fills up the space.

So, sort through your documents, tidy up your desk, organize your emails and don’t let piles of paper (or post-it notes!) overwhelm you. Prioritize the information and never hesitate to throw out whatever is unnecessary to you.

Why make lists?

Source : My Happy Job. Fabienne Broucaret

Fear of forgetting things, permanent rush, feeling of being stressed and overwhelmed. You want to make your life easier? In her book Listful Thinking, Paula Rizzo shares her tips to make efficient to-do lists (1). Here is why you should start doing so, ASAP:

1) Lists help lower your anxiety

Making a list will help reduce your concerns and your mental load. By writing, you take the things you need to do, and remove them from your mind. The result: reduced stress. In a professional environment, Paula Rizzo recommends to make your to-do list in the evening for the next day. This will allow your mind to be freer during the evening and will help you start the day more efficiently. To make it even more effective, prioritize your tasks by highlighting your priorities, and remain realistic.

2) Lists help you focus

Making lists makes us more careful to the information that we must remember. They strengthen our ability to focus. When you are interrupted, and we know this can happen a lot during a work day, referring to your list will allow you to quickly remember where you were when you got interrupted.

3) Lists help you gain self esteem

There is nothing more satisfying than crossing out an item on your list. "Seeing a task disappear gives me an exceptional feeling of fulfillment", says the author, "I even sometimes add items that I have already completed to my list, for the sole pleasure of crossing them out! This renewed self-esteem increases my motivation and my productivity." Don't hesitate to congratulate and to reward yourself when a task is completed. Another lead given by the author: write a gratitude list, which means, write down everything that makes you happy (including at work!)

4) Lists help organize your thoughts

Laying your ideas on paper help you see things more clearly, including when you face a difficult decision. The author recommends to make a pros and cons list in case you are thinking of changing jobs or positions. This is a way to take a closer look at your situation.

5) Lists help you gain perspective

Make a list about your life, with your dreams, big and small. This is a brilliant idea to go beyond everyday worries and give you a sense of direction. "This step reflects an intention, conscious or not, to implement your projects and aspirations." You can then break it down into mid and long term goals.

The Mind Map

Source : mindmapping.com

Software : Xmind offers a great, free service.

A mind map is a very effective tool to extract and memorize information. It is a creative and logic method to take notes and document your ideas, it helps you “map” your thoughts on a topic.

Every mind map has common elements. It is created around a central core, with lines, symbols, words, colors, images, all illustrating simple and easy to remember ideas. Making a mind map helps you go from a long list of off-putting data to an eye-catching, colorful, logical and highly structured diagram, which aligns with the functioning of your mind.

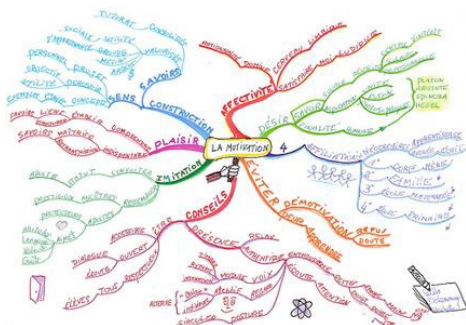
In order to better understand a mind map, you can compare it to a city map: the center of the city is the dominant topic, the main streets starting from the center represent the main ideas of your train of thought, the secondary streets represent the smaller ideas, and so on. The images or the symbols represent the milestones or the things which bear a certain importance.

The mind map is a mirror of your own personal thinking, rendered easy by a powerful graphic process, which gives you a universal key to unlock the full potential of the human mind.

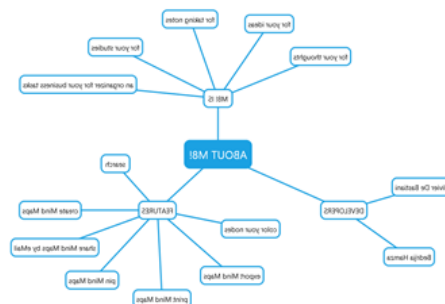
The 5 main characteristics of a mind map are:

- The topic or the subject of the mind map is symbolized by a central picture
- The ideas or the main sections are laid out around the central picture, in the form of branches
- The branches carry a key image or a word, drawn or printed on the associated line
- The sub-topics are represented by “twigs” coming from the main branch
- The branches form a connected nod-like structure

It can be done in the form of a drawing:



Or with a software (for example, Free Mind):



The Eisenhower Matrix

The Eisenhower Matrix is a time management and analysis tool which helps you categorize the tasks you need to complete by order of urgency and relative importance¹.

It was designed following a statement by Dwight David Eisenhower: "What is important is seldom urgent, and what is urgent is seldom important."

The Eisenhower Matrix was developed from this quote, as a way to help people prioritize their tasks.

This matrix is a double entry table.

- Vertical : urgency of tasks
- Horizontal : importance of tasks

Thus, the matrix has 4 sections:

- A- Activities which are important and urgent: tasks to be completed immediately, by yourself
- B- Activities which are important but not very urgent: tasks to be planned and completed by yourself
- C- Activities which are urgent but not important: tasks you can quickly delegate
- D- Activities which are not urgent and not important: useless tasks to be dropped

This method is found in different software

THE EISENHOWER MATRIX

<p>B. NOT URGENT / IMPORTANT To be scheduled and completed</p>	<p>A. URGENT / IMPORTANT To do as a priority</p>
<p>D. NOT URGENT / NOT IMPORTANT To be placed somewhere else in the matrix or eliminated all together</p>	<p>C. URGENT / NOT IMPORTANT Requalify or renegotiate</p>

The basics of my schedule

Source : Dominic Sicotte. Success Zen

« *Time is money* », meaning it is precious and limited. The organization of this resource is a real challenge, but knowing how to use it is a crucial tool, and having a diary or a planner is key. There is a real difference between using your planner and knowing how to efficiently use it. We have created 5 tips to help you manage your schedule efficiently to save a few extra hours a week.

1. Choose the right organizer for you

Paper or electronic organizer? From the start, you need to think about the type of organizer you will use for optimal time management. Nowadays, people are more and more attached to their smartphone or their computer, so if this is your case, if you are very comfortable with new technologies, then the electronic organizer is for you! There are very popular and free tools online, such as Google Calendar, which lets you to synchronize several calendars among all your devices.

However, if you are among those who need to feel paper and prefer to use a pen, then use it, this is not a problem. The tool needs to suit the person using it, and not the other way around. If you are uncomfortable with electronic organizers, don't force yourself. If you prefer to handwrite, keep using a paper organizer.

Anyway, chose your planner according to how comfortable you are using it, if you do the opposite, you might have a harder time.

2. Make the difference between urgent and important

We all know that a planner must hold all of your meetings and everything you need to do during the day. However, you can anticipate and prioritize your tasks according to 2 criteria: important tasks and urgent tasks. This will help you better organize your schedule. You should choose your priorities starting with those 2 criteria, you will thus ensure that your daily tasks will be in the right order.

3. Group one category of activities on one time slot

The point is to do the tasks that are similar at the same time. So, as soon as you start planning for your week, first, take time to think and have a global vision of your schedule. For example, save your Mondays for meetings, internal meetings in the morning, outside meetings in the afternoon.

Every day, try to refrain from doing a lot of different tasks, instead, gather similar activities for one time slot. Your mind will only focus on one thing at a time, and you will save energy. Your mind will be able to rapidly sort through all the information, and you will save precious time.

4. Plan your meetings according to your own rhythm

We sometimes forget that our schedule depends on ourselves, on our own rhythm. For example, we will work better if we know in advance, at what time during the day we are more efficient for a certain task. For example, if you feel more concentrated in the morning, then use that time to plan for the activities that require you to be more focused. If you feel that you will be more comfortable handling your external meetings on a Tuesday afternoon, then plan them accordingly.

To help you achieve that, learn to know yourself first and foremost. Then, organize your schedule according to your own rhythm.

5. Self-evaluate

Last but not least, self-evaluation is crucial since learning how to manage your time every day is fundamental for any entrepreneur. First, at the beginning of each week, set specific objectives. At the end of each week, you will be able to have a quick evaluation of your weekly schedule. Take the time to look back on your week, check the things that went well, and the things that didn't, to be able to adjust your schedule in the future. Keep in mind all the previous tips when you do that. You will be able to have a better schedule for the following week. By keeping up with the self-evaluation, you will always improve your schedule, and thus, save more and more time.

In short, no one should get up in the morning with no idea of what the day is going to look like, of the tasks and activities to be done. So, if you want to handle your schedule and save more hours, keep those 5 tips in mind. Properly handling your agenda also means preparing for unforeseen events. It is important to maintain a certain flexibility in your schedule and to plan for a margin of error of 20 %. Now, it is your turn to apply those tips and we promise, you will not waste time, it is quite the opposite!

My schedule

In order to appreciate how you use your time and to be able to adjust it if needed, look at what your days are like, ideally for 2 weeks, by coloring the time slots according to the following categories :

- Black: sleep
- Red: time you spend in training/at work
- Orange: travel time
- Blue: time you spend doing the household chores
- Green: recreational activities
- Yellow: all the rest

Do not hesitate to change the categories according to what you want to appreciate. Do this work again (once or twice a year) to check on how you use your time.

My schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
5h							
6h							
7h							
8h							
9h							
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Night							

