

# Plan your day — claim back your life!

Modern life seems to get increasingly hectic every day. We seem to have more and more tasks to do, either at work or in our personal lives, and less and less time to do them. How often do you realise that you've run out of time, missed a deadline or simply can't cope with all that is being asked of you?

One way to deal more effectively with this situation is to stand back and look at the way you organise yourself and see if there are ways to improve what you do or find new ways to create more time for some of these tasks.

Personal development expert, **Margaret Burnside**, has provided her top ten tips for getting organised.

## Margaret's top ten tips for organising your time

1. Plan your time: don't let it control you. It is too easy to do all that is requested of us only to find we've missed a deadline or have too much to do by not being organised.
2. Make appointments with yourself in your diary - this is the personal time you must have during the day. It gives you the chance to focus on what's important and gives a clear message to others that it is time you have set aside for YOU.
3. Select your personal and work 'best' times to get things done and plan to do your most important work then. Too often we react to the needs of others without thinking about priorities only to find that our workload has increased.
4. Break a big task down into smaller, more manageable chunks. Imagine you have a project to do like building an extension to your house. You can't do it in one day but you could consider all the aspects of the build, determine how long each part of the project might take and then you would have a much better idea as to how long the entire project was going to take.
5. Use a 'To Do' system – identifying deadlines, priorities and outcomes. This gives you a chance to look at issues that are important now as well as those in the future.
6. Write it down - don't try to keep your 'To Do' lists in your head. It is said that our brain can only focus on 9 activities at any one time. By not writing down all of the activities we need to, it will be too easy to lose sight of some activities – especially if you have lots to remember.
7. Leave some time for the unexpected. As we know in life, things rarely go to plan as unexpected events can and do happen. By being prepared not only will you deal with the situation better but it will also demonstrate to others that you have considered the situation and dealt with it more effectively.
8. Stop being the 'nice guy'; all the time - learn to say 'No'. By saying 'Yes' all the time you will simply increase the tasks being asked of you. Too often it is easier to say Yes and do the task rather than say No and be more in control of your own time.
9. Do one thing at a time – focus – don't 'butterfly', By focusing on one thing at a time, you will do a better job and will be able to give it 100% attention. If you jump from one task to another you are likely to miss an important part of what you are doing and may not be as effective as you would have wanted.
10. Finally, **Plan, Plan, Plan:**
  - **what** you have to do
  - **who** is going to do it
  - **how** it is going to be done
  - **where** it is to be done
  - **by when** it has to be done
  - **why** it has to be done

If you organise yourself more effectively in these ways you will have more time to do something well rather than less time to do lots of things badly!

Margaret Burnside is Managing Director of the Centre For Personal Development Ltd, an independent training, coaching and development organisation. Margaret's career spans over 22 years and she has worked in a wide range of industries from retail to the charity sector including a number of years as Managing Director of a training/publishing company.

Margaret's expertise lies in the areas of coaching and mentoring. She passionately believes that coaching is one of the most effective ways to help people make significant transitions in thinking, attitude and behaviour.

Margaret is a Fellow of the Institute of Leadership and Management and a Graduate in Management of the City and Guilds Institute of London.

Margaret is also a volunteer business mentor with The Prince's Trust, supporting young people in starting, developing and growing their own businesses.

For more information visit [www.centreforpersonaldevelopment.com](http://www.centreforpersonaldevelopment.com)



[www.pitman-training.ie](http://www.pitman-training.ie)

pitman training | freedom to progress

CALL FREE ON 1800 532632