

Leadership and Management

Time management



Time management is all about making the most effective use of your time and working smarter, not harder. It requires planning, and then sticking to the plan – and that takes discipline. Time efficiency involves two issues: your priorities and your schedule.

- Plan ahead when possible
- Leave time open to deal with the unexpected.
- Schedule time regularly to deal with important but not urgent tasks.
- Delegate tasks where possible.
- Where activities/tasks are required to serve others, be sure to set clear boundaries to ensure that productivity is not negatively impacted.

Time management is a skill and like any new skill it takes time and commitment to develop. Knowing how to make the most of your time is essential to you as a leader of an early years setting, to be able to lead it successfully.

Other Q cards that you might find useful are Staff routines and Delegation.

TASK 1

Off to a good start - How do you start your morning?

Being relaxed and prepared when you begin your day, can carry through your working hours.

Start by spending five to ten minutes planning your activities and tasks for the day ahead.

Write a list, prioritise, and take a moment to collect your thoughts.

Reflect at the end of the day.

- How did it go?
- How did you feel?
- Was the morning preparation beneficial?
- What were the obstacles?
- How can these be better prepared for tomorrow?

TASK 2

This matrix is a useful way to visualise your thoughts. Section a piece of paper with the four headings below and take some time to think about all the things you do in a day. Allocate each of the tasks you think of to one of the headings.

Quadrant 1: Urgent/Important (crises, pressing problems, deadline-driven reports, meetings)

Quadrant 2: Not urgent/Important (preparation, prevention, planning, building relationships)

Quadrant 3: Urgent/Not important (needless interruptions, unnecessary reports, phone calls, other people's issues, emails)

Quadrant 4: Not urgent/Not important (trivia, busy work, timewasters)

- Review your plan and identify what tasks are really urgent/important.

Often, we allow less important tasks to become a priority, when they could potentially wait. This will help you to be less overwhelmed and manage your time more effectively.

TASK 3

Here is some further reading including top tips that you may find useful.

[Effective Time Management In The Early Years - Early Years Careers](#)