

Feeling overwhelmed? Here are some **tips on how to free up time**



Time saving tips from Virtually 24/7

You can become more efficient

As office and management procedures become faster and more efficient it is not surprising that some people are becoming overwhelmed by the resulting increase in information flow.

As we all know, time is an increasingly valuable asset, and savvy businesses look for ways to better manage their workflow.

Sometimes out of date and inefficient processes persist simply because no one has questioned the alternatives.

Out of date practices do become overlooked when people are busy trying to meet their deadlines.

One way to improve this situation is to encourage individuals to take control of their work processes and suggest change based on their own results.

Here are three tips which can help to free up time.

1. Reduce your Paperwork

There has been much talk in the past about offices going completely paperless but walk into any office and it becomes evident how few people have really adhered to this.

Just one example of how you could make a start to send your invoices electronically.

In the past, paper-based management ensured tasks were done, contained information for managers and, established an activity trail which could always be referenced in the future.

We are fortunate today in that the IT systems available to us are capable of creating automatic records of activities. However, sadly, out of date paper-based processes linger because they've been passed on from one person to another because we are creatures of habit, and in response to a suggestion for change, people frequently say "but this is the way we have always done it." Paper-based documentation is now surplus to requirements so be bold and get rid of the paper - automate the process and enjoy utilising the electronic alternatives to save you time.

2. Be ruthless with your E-mail

E-mail is invaluable as a form of communication but it can also be such a time waster!

To reduce the possibility of becoming distracted, decide to check your email just three times a day when you can review them, delegate them, and, when necessary, respond to them.

3. Delegate

Redundancies have sadly meant the number of PAs and secretaries are now fewer within many businesses. Middle management may no longer have the in house support they once did. Therefore tasks such as sending out proposals, tracking and logging expense reports, and managing records have become each individual's responsibility. However, bosses beware of leaving your paperwork in piles which you (with the best intentions no doubt) think you will "sort out later." Often a task will be overlooked as even if you think you will complete your filing or chase your pending items "later" or "when I have time" it is quite likely you may not ever find the time.

Instead, outsource these tasks to a Virtual PA, Business Assistant or VA, or if you really can't afford one, pop a reminder into your calendar and carry out your administrative tasks on a regular daily or weekly basis. For example, you could set aside half an hour each day to do your filing. This will not only keep your other office hours free from distraction and will help to avoid potential issues later on, but will also mean you have a clutter-free work area in which you will be better able to concentrate.