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FOR WOMEN**

Time Management and Productivity Essentials

Introduction

As an entrepreneur, your time is one of your most valuable resources. Managing it effectively can help you grow your business, reduce stress and maintain a balance between work and personal life. Mastering time management and productivity allows you to maximise efficiency, set clear priorities and make the most of each day.

This guide will help you develop essential strategies to stay organised, focused and in control of your time.

The foundations of time management

Before diving into specific strategies, it's important to understand why time management is crucial. As a woman entrepreneur, you'll have competing priorities and balance can be challenging. Effective time management helps you:

- Reduce stress and avoid feeling overwhelmed.
- Improve efficiency and accomplish more in less time.
- Increase business growth by focusing on high-impact activities.
- Maintain a healthier work-life balance.

To manage your time effectively, you need clear goals, a structured plan and disciplined execution.

Setting clear goals & priorities

Define your business and personal goals

Start by identifying what's most important in both your business and personal life. Clear goals provide direction and help you focus on what truly matters.

- **Short-term goals:** What do you need to accomplish in the near future?
- **Long-term goals:** Where do you want your business to be? Where do you want your personal life to be?

Prioritise tasks with the Eisenhower Matrix

Not all tasks are equally important. The Eisenhower Matrix helps you categorise tasks and decide what to focus on:

	Urgent	Not urgent
Important	Do now - tasks with tight deadlines and serious consequences if not completed on time.	Schedule in for later - tasks with no set deadline, or deadline which is far off, but are key for your goals
Not important	Delegate - tasks that need to be completed, but don't necessarily need you to complete them	Delete - Tasks that are not urgent and do not feed into your goals or add value to your business

Ask yourself: Is this task helping me achieve my goals? If not, reconsider whether it's worth your time.

Planning & scheduling your day

Use a daily or weekly planner

A well-structured to-do list or planner keeps you focused and serves as a visual reminder of your priorities. Choose a format that works best for you such as:

- Physical notebook or planner
- Mobile apps (e.g. Trello, Google Calendar, Todoist, Notion)

Each day, list your top 3 most important tasks (MITs) to focus on.

Time blocking: assign time for key activities

Time blocking helps you dedicate time for activities, reducing distractions.

Example:

6:30 AM - 7:30 AM - Morning routine

8:00 AM - 11:00 AM - Focused work

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM - Respond to emails/messages

1:00 PM - 3:00 PM - Client meetings or networking

3:30 PM - 5:00 PM - Administrative tasks, accounting

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM - Family/personal time

8:30 PM - 9:30 PM - Learning, planning for the next day

Tip: Assign similar tasks together (batching). For example, respond to emails once or twice a day instead of constantly checking them. You can find more on time blocking and a template in the [e-library](#).

Boosting productivity: work smarter, not harder

The 80/20 Rule (Pareto Principle)

The 80/20 rule states that 80% of results come from 20% of efforts. Identify which 20% of tasks bring the most value and focus on them.

Example:

- **High-value tasks:** Reaching out to customers, improving product quality, learning new business strategies.
- **Low-value tasks:** Over-editing social media posts, attending unnecessary meetings.

Use the pomodoro technique

This technique helps you stay focused by working in 25-minute sprints, followed by a 5-minute break. After four sessions, take a longer 15-30 minute break.

How it works:

- Set a timer for 25 minutes – Work without distractions.
- Take a 5-minute break – Relax.
- Repeat the cycle four times, then take a longer break.

This method keeps your energy levels high while preventing burnout.

Tip: Avoid multitasking. Multitasking reduces efficiency and increases mistakes. Instead, focus on one task at a time before moving on to the next.

Managing distractions & staying focused

Minimise interruptions

Common distractions include phone notifications, social media, and unplanned meetings.

- Turn off non-essential notifications while working.
- Set boundaries with family or colleagues—let them know when you need uninterrupted time.
- Use productivity tools like Freedom or StayFocusd to block distracting websites.

Learn to say no

Not every opportunity is worth your time. Politely decline activities that do not align with your goals.

Example: If someone asks for a meeting but it's not urgent, suggest discussing it via email instead.

Take care of your well-being

Productivity isn't just about working harder—it's about maintaining mental and physical health. Without your health, you won't be able to complete any of your priorities well. Understand what you need to feel well. Some starting points may be:

- Get enough sleep (at least 7 hours per night).
- Exercise regularly to boost energy and focus.
- Take breaks with activities that are restorative to avoid burnout.

For more guidance on taking care of your well-being, see [this resource here](#), and more in [the e-library](#).

Leveraging technology for productivity

Useful productivity apps & tools

- Trello / Asana / Notion – Task & project management.
- Google Calendar – Scheduling & time blocking.
- Canva – Quick design & marketing materials.
- WhatsApp Business – Customer communication.
- Wave / QuickBooks – Easy accounting & invoicing.

Automate repetitive tasks

Instead of doing everything manually, use automation tools:

- Schedule social media posts (Buffer, Hootsuite).
- Automate invoices & payments (PayPal, Stripe).
- Use email templates for common customer inquiries.

Automation saves time so you can focus on growing your business.

Overcoming time management challenges

Even with the best strategies, challenges arise. Here's how to tackle common ones:

Challenge	Solution
Feeling overwhelmed	Break tasks into smaller steps, focus on 3 key tasks per day, and be kind to yourself.
Lack of motivation	Set rewards for completing tasks, remind yourself of your long-term goals.
Too many distractions	Find a quiet space or time to work, use website blockers.
Unexpected distractions/ tasks	Build buffer time into your schedule for emergencies

Conclusion: take control of your time

Time management and productivity are essential skills for success. By using the above steps, you can maximise your time, reduce stress and grow your business effectively. Start with small changes; implement one or two strategies today. Over time, these habits will become second nature, helping you stay focused, productive and in control of your business journey.