



**Class 1**

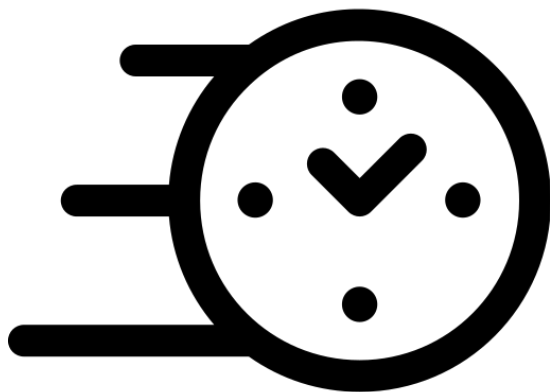
# **Time Management**

# Learning Objectives

- 01.** Understand the value of time management
- 02.** Understand the 5 principles of effective time management
- 03.** Adopt tools and techniques to enable better self-management

# In order to effectively manage time, we must understand - *what is time?*

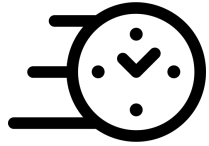
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Time is **free**, but it's **priceless**.  
You can't keep it, but you can **spend** it.  
Once you've lost it, you can **never** get it back.

Everyone has the **same amount** of time, but different ways of using it.

No one knows how much time they have, but we live as if it's **unlimited**.



## Why is *managing* our time so important?

- ✓ Every task is **contextualized** by the time required to complete it.
- ✓ Every second is an **opportunity** to realize our true potential and our life's purpose.
- ✓ Improving productivity and balancing your goals while maintaining your well-being.

# How do we **assess** if we are managing our time properly?



- ✓ Can we describe in detail how we spent our time for the day/week?
- ✓ How satisfied do we feel with the tasks we were able to accomplish within the day/week?
- ✓ Can we identify which tasks are high priority for us to be completed within the day/week?
- ✓ How frequently do we complete the list of tasks we set ourselves every day/week?
- ✓ How frequently do we miss deadlines on the tasks we seek to accomplish?
- ✓ Are we aware of the importance to allocate our time to ensure our tasks are completed within the agreed deadline?
- ✓ Do we spend enough time on those people, practices, places that bring us joy?

# Exercise: How do **you** personally **quantify** good time management?

It can be ...

- ✓ Updating GitHub daily/weekly
- ✓ Learning a new skill-set or getting certified on a specific skill
- ✓ Allocating 7 hours each week for physical exercise
- ✓ Completing 1 book each month
- ✓ Spending 1 hour quality time with your family each day
- ✓ Accomplishing 90% of your daily task
- ✓ What other indicators do you set?



# What are the common *challenges* in achieving time management goals?

## Internal factor:

- ✓ Procrastination
- ✓ Lack of discipline
- ✓ Didn't create plan and deadline
- ✓ Set the deadline too easy
- ✓ Didn't have clear priority
- ✓ Fail to predict how long one task could be done
- ✓ No excitement to do the task

## External factor:

- ✓ Distraction from social media
- ✓ Sudden request from other people
- ✓ Unpredictable changes

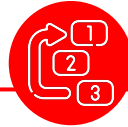
# How may we *cultivate* better time management skills?

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The 5 pillars of time management



**Discipline**



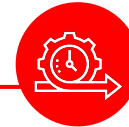
**Prioritization**



**Focus**



**Capacity planning**



**Agility**



## Section 1

# Discipline

# Discipline

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## Benefits of being disciplined:

- ✓ Reducing the possibility of unexpected outcomes
- ✓ Ensuring balanced time allocation across personal and professional responsibilities
- ✓ Preventing stress created by rushing to achieve “last minute” deadlines

# Lack of discipline leads to procrastination

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## Factors that result in lack of discipline:

*"You may delay,  
but time will not."*

- **Benjamin Franklin**

- ✓ Weak sense of ownership/responsibility
- ✓ Inability to manage multiple tasks
- ✓ Inability to manage available resources
- ✓ Limited understanding of the task/requirements
- ✓ Performance anxiety

# Discipline

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## How to become more disciplined:

- ✓ Identify what is **important** and **meaningful** in life
- ✓ Create **checklists**, **daily agendas** and **deadlines** to allocate how you spend your time on your priorities
- ✓ Use **reminders** and **alarms** to keep you on track with your goals
- ✓ Surround yourself with **people** that share the same priorities and support each other to stay on track
- ✓ **Reward** yourself once you have hit your deadlines and use your weekends/holidays to give yourself time to refresh

## Example of being disciplined in real life:

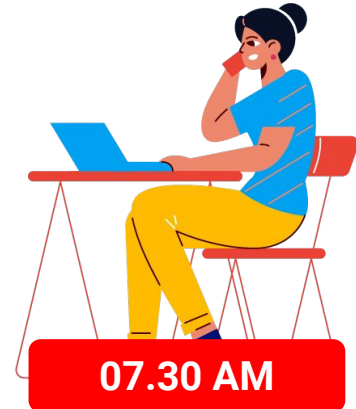
Kirana's alarm goes off at 5.00 a.m. every weekday morning. By 5.15 am she is ready to run her daily 5 KMs.

By 7 a.m. she has already finished her run, showered, eaten breakfast and prepared her work desk at home so she can start working at 7.30 am. She spends 15-minutes creating a check-list of the priority tasks she needs to complete for the day along with an estimate of the time required to complete each task. She works on completing her tasks from 8.00 am to 5.00 pm with 1-hour lunch break in between where she catches up with her work friends virtually. These are friends with whom she can discuss podcasts/books that are interesting.

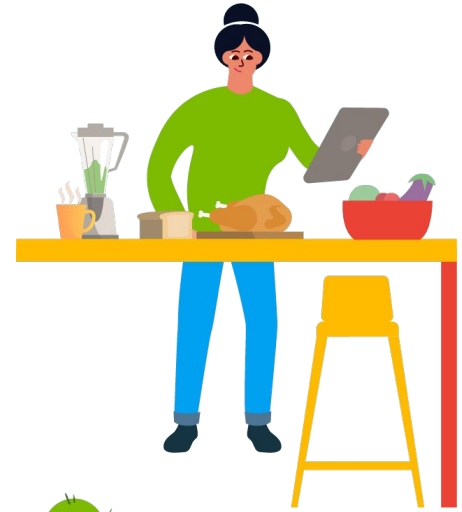
With her priority task, she manages to finish her work and deadlines by 6.00 pm, and she proceeds to cook dinner, called her parents, and finished her Kotlin programming online courses, listens to a podcast/reads a book. She goes to sleep by 9.30 pm to ensure she wakes up fresh at 5.00 am the next day.

Once Kirana completes her key tasks for the week, she rewards herself with a nice spa treatment. On the weekends, she treats herself with a new game she bought.

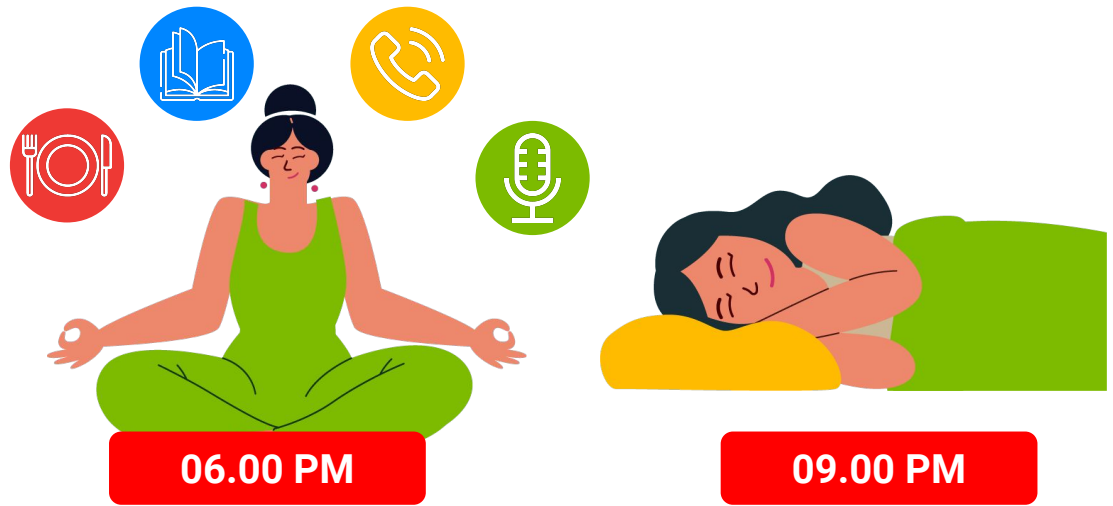
Example of  
being  
disciplined **in**  
**real life:**



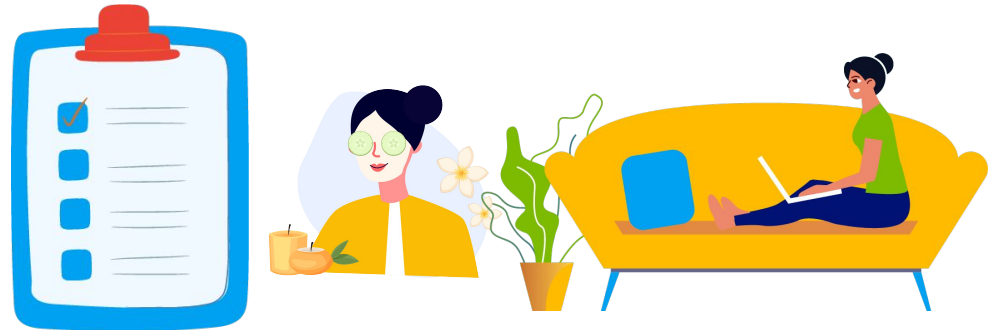
**Example of  
being  
disciplined in  
real life:**



Example of  
being  
disciplined **in**  
**real life:**



WEEKEND





## Example of being disciplined in real life:

**What are the specific examples of Sarah being disciplined?**

1. **Identifying what is important/meaningful** in life for which she wants to allocate time every day - exercising, eating healthy, working effectively, spending time with friends
2. **Creating daily agendas and checklists to organize tasks** that she needs to complete based on their deadlines and level of importance e.g. reaching work 15-minutes earlier to plan priorities
1. **Setting alarms and reminders** to ensure she has time for her priorities e.g. waking up at 5.00 a.m to run or completing her day-to-day job by 6.00 pm so that she can spend time to prepare dinner
2. **Surrounding herself with people** that share the same priorities and interests e.g. running in the morning with her neighbor or eating lunch with friends that like reading
3. **Rewarding herself** to ensure she stays motivated and refreshed e.g. going to the spa when she successfully completes meaningful tasks or using weekends for socializing etc.

## Section 2

# Prioritization

# Classic analogy for **how we use time**

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## The Rocks, Pebbles, and Sand Analogy

Suppose that you have a jar and a bag of rocks, pebbles, and sand. You are expected to fit all materials into the jar.

Which material would you put in first?



# Classic analogy for **how we use time**

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## The Rocks, Pebbles, and Sand Analogy

In relation to time management, the jar symbolizes the time you have everyday. When you start filling in the jar, the general idea is to fill it with rocks first, then pebbles, and finally sands.

The materials represent your highest priority projects and deadlines with the greatest value and importance. Plan each day to accomplish your most important tasks that will propel you toward achieving your goals.

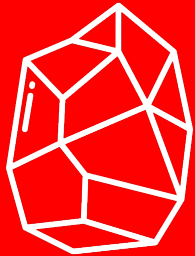


# Classic analogy for **how we use time**

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To illustrate this analogy, take a look at the following example.

Evan is a mobile developer at a technology company. In his role at work, there are several activities that represent the rock, pebbles, and sand:



**Rocks**

These are the activities that are measured by his Key Performance Indicator metrics that need to be completed in the short-term.

**Example:** Completing his mobile developer assignment by writing Python scripts to perform automatic actions to be completed in 4 days.

# Classic analogy for **how we use time**

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Evan is a mobile developer at a technology company. In his role at work, there are several activities that represent the rock, pebbles, and sand:



**Pebbles**

These are the activities that are outside of his core Key Performance Indicator metrics, however, indirectly boost his performance in the workplace.

## **Example:**

- ✓ Completing the cloud security training that is assigned by his company's learning team
- ✓ Preparing presentation slides for a monthly meeting that is due in 3 days

# Classic analogy for **how we use time**

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Evan is a mobile developer at a technology company. In his role at work, there are several activities that represent the rock, pebbles, and sand:

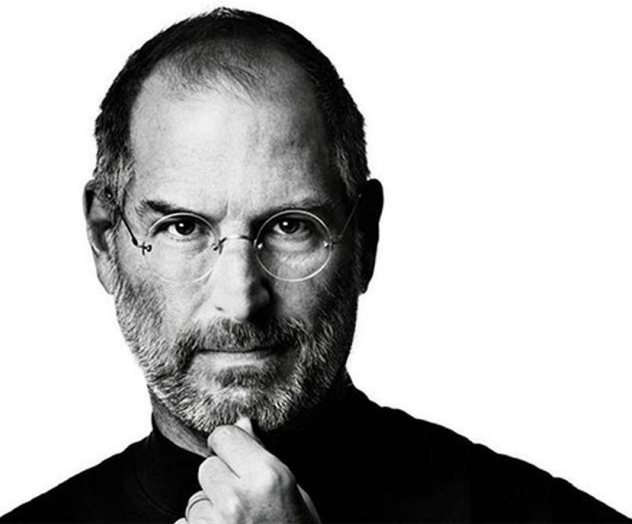


**Sands**

These activities refer to trivial time-wasters, which are neither important or urgent, and distract you from working towards high-return activities and your goals.

**Example:**

Listening to his favorite podcast while he still has several key deadlines pending.



## Why do we **prioritize**?

To ensure that we **decide on doing what's truly important** for us and those that count on us and **determine the time** to complete them.

“Deciding what not to do is as important as deciding what to do”

- **Steve Jobs**



# Prioritization

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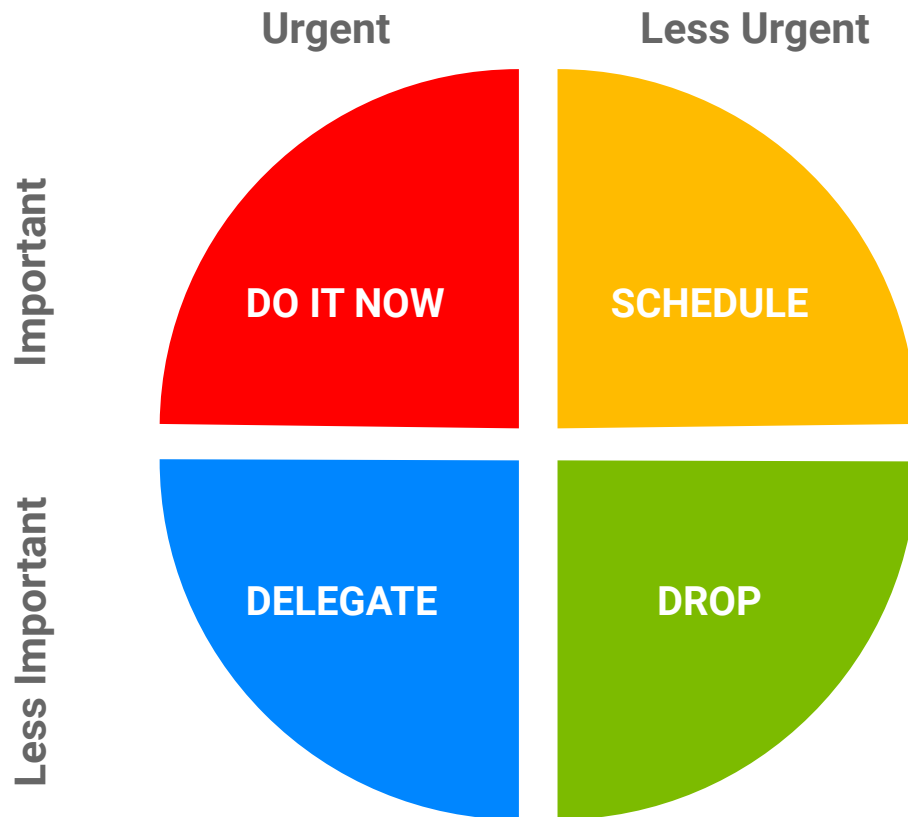
The way you spend your time reflects the values that are most important to you.

## **Skills you need to prioritize better and stick with it:**

1. Ability to determine what's important and what's urgent
2. Skills to reducing and delegating task. Less is more!
3. Skills to say “no” to others and yourself

Ability to  
determine  
**what's**  
**important** and  
**what's urgent**

## Four Quadrants of Time Management



# Skills to reducing and delegating tasks.

**Less is more!**

## What should I reduce or delegate?

- ✓ Tasks where the outcome would be better if someone else did them, as they would do it better, cheaper or faster
- ✓ Tasks that do not significantly impact your goals

## Examples of how to reduce or delegate tasks:

- ✓ Requesting help of your team e.g. to schedule meetings and organize meeting rooms
- ✓ Using service providers to optimize your time e.g. using “food delivery apps” to reduce time spent in buying food
- ✓ Automating tasks that are repetitive/administrative e.g. setting up auto-payments for your monthly bills

# Skills to say “NO” to others and yourself!

## You can say NO when:

1. **The demand being made is unreasonable** e.g. a business user asks for a feature that was not agreed upon by your team leader; or someone asks you to complete a task within an unreasonable timeline
2. **The person making the demand lacks authority** e.g. a business user tries to directly assign tasks to you and other engineers in your team, instead of going through your direct supervisor
3. **The demand goes against company policy** e.g. your team lead asks you to help her with her personal project; or has your working on non-official tasks during company hours

# The art of saying **NO** using the **PLEASE** framework

1. **Polite** - Always be polite when you say no
2. **Listen** - Listen to what the other person has to say or ask about why you say no
3. **Explain** - State the reasons and explain why you have to say no
4. **Assist** - Assist the other person to understand the explanation by providing any supporting data
5. **Solutions** - Help the other person find a solution or an alternative, if possible
6. **Enable** - Enable the other person to avoid any impact, for example by directing them to someone else who can help them



## Section 3

# Focus

# Focus

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Focus is the ability to disengage our attention from one thing and move it to another.

Multitasking is a myth. The truth is, we actually **switch our focus** rapidly.

## Why the need to focus?

As you focus on something, the brain creates new neural connections. The better your focus, the stronger your neural lock-in, which results in more impactful **learning for yourself**.

## 2 sources of distraction:

### **Sensory** (External)

Things that happen around us that are captured by our senses

### **Emotional** (Internal)

Thoughts or feelings that divert our attention away from what we are doing

# Focus

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## 2 sources of distraction



**Sensory**



**Emotional**

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## What distracts you?

### Sensory

1. People talking
2. People moving around
3. Loud music or noise

### Emotional

1. Anxiety due to tight deadlines
2. Thinking about an upcoming presentation



# Focus

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## Tips to reduce sensory distraction

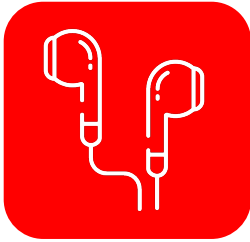
1. Turn-off notifications from your email, chat and social media platforms
2. Switching your mobile phone to Airplane or Do Not Disturb mode
3. Scheduling activities that require high focus early in the morning or when you're in a quiet place

# Focus

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1. When you feel lost and you're unsure what to do, seek to understand the problem by ask yourself, what was my goal?
2. Display your goals somewhere that is highly visible e.g. listing your goals down on a sticky-notes and sticking them onto your work desk
3. Intentionally find a reason to be grateful e.g. if you're anxious to present your ideas, remind yourself to be grateful for the trust and opportunity you received. Gratitude for this trust will shift your mindset from "can I do it?" to "I can do it."
4. Find a mentor or trusted person with who you can share your goals and objectives, who can help you stay on track, and who you can speak to whenever your emotions distract you from your goals

## Tools you might consider to help you focus:



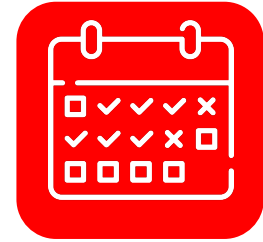
**Earphones**

Play your favorite music that can help you to stay focused or simply to eliminate the noise around you



**Sticky Notes**

Write down your urgent tasks and stick them to your laptop, so you can keep track of them within your line of sight



**E-Calendar**

Begin each day by creating an agenda with reminders for the various tasks you wish to complete before the end of the day

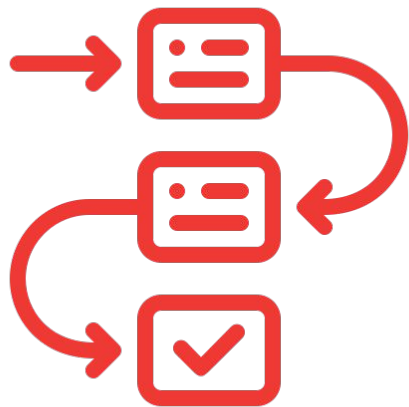
## Section 4

# Capacity Planning

# Capacity **planning**

The ability to measure how much time you require to **accomplish** a task while taking into account your skill and capacity is critical for success in the workplace.

## Failing in capacity planning results in us:



### 1. **Overpromising**

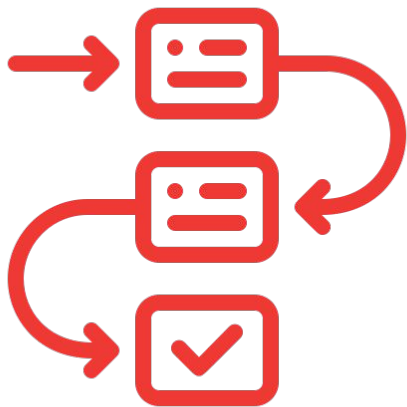
A manager asked Ruben, a full stack developer, whether he can finish up widgets and notification development in 2 days. Fico is afraid that if he says no, the manager will believe that he's not capable for the work. As such, Fico decides to say "yes" and hopes that he can complete this newly assigned task, in addition to his other assignments by putting in extra hours of overtime. Fico ends up not being able to complete the task, which results in the manager missing the deadline committed to the business users.

### 1. **Consistently missing deadlines**

If Ruben continues to overpromise and inaccurately estimate his ability to complete tasks; it is highly likely that he will consistently miss agreed deadlines and earn a reputation of being unreliable.

# Capacity **planning**

The ability to measure how much time you require to **accomplish** a task while taking into account your skill and capacity is critical for success in the workplace.



**Failing in capacity planning will make us:**

### **3. Playing safe – avoiding risk without considering others' needs**

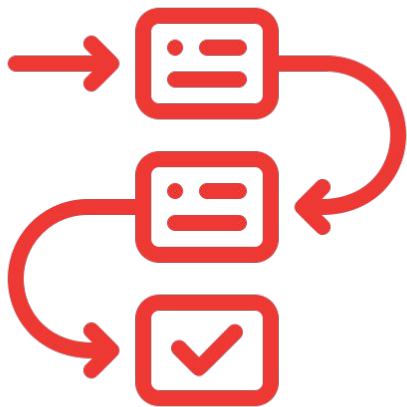
Tika asks for your help to QA the new feature she's working upon, however, you immediately inform her that you don't have the time, as you are 1-hour away from going home. Tika is now stuck without help. If you had checked how long it would have taken to test the new feature, perhaps you could have solved Tika's problem.

### **4. Putting ourselves into stressful situations**

Imagine if you missed your work deadlines over and over again. By the end of the day every task in your list would become urgent and important. This would likely lead you to feel stressed and anxious, which would be counterproductive in your time management.

# Capacity **planning**

The ability to measure how much time you require to **accomplish** a task while taking into account your skill and capacity is critical for success in the workplace.



**Failing in capacity planning will make us:**

## 5. **Lacking in spare time to complete delayed tasks or new tasks that require attention**

Niko has 3 tasks he planned to complete today: coding the new product update, preparing the documentation, and finalizing a weekly presentation. He predicted that he can complete all these assignments today with the coding requiring 4-hours, the documentation requiring 3-hours, and the presentation requiring 1-hour.

Niko ended up requiring 5-hours to complete the coding, 4-hours to complete the documentation, and the presentation is still incomplete. Failing to plan his capacity and time properly created a cascading effect, which resulted in all subsequent tasks being delayed as well.

# Capacity **planning**

## Using Google Calendar to plan your week

As you're getting ready for work in the morning, you find yourself listing down the activities you need to complete for the week. They seem unorganized and you question whether you can complete them all.

At times, it may be overwhelming to begin your day when you don't know where to start. One way to address this is by having a **personal calendar** that helps you order and manage your tasks effectively. These include time for your commute if you need to come to the office, prayer, grocery shopping, banking, and so forth.



# Guide to using Google Calendar

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## 1. List down your tasks and activities

Before you start using the Calendar, it is important to list down the tasks that you need to complete within the day (or any time frame you wish to use) on a piece of paper. Allocate the time (hours) required to complete each task based on their complexity, and determine when you need to start working on them based on their urgency.



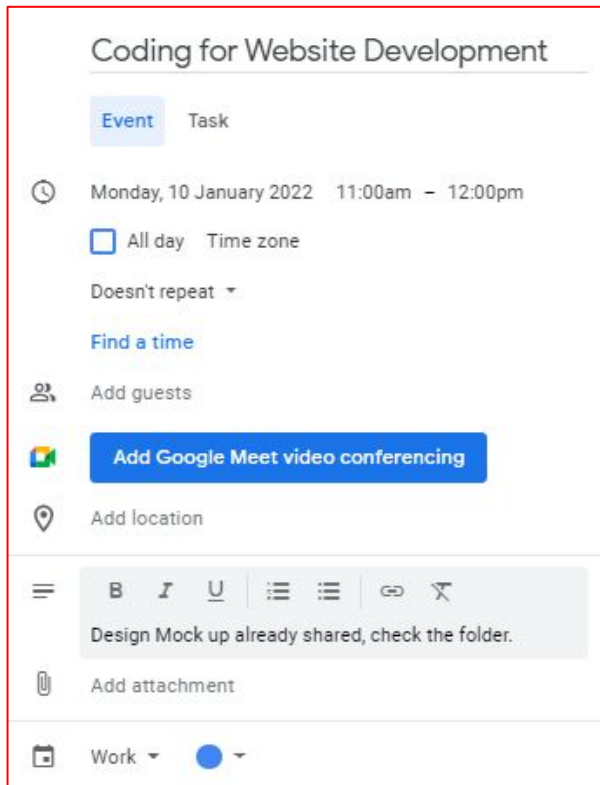
# Guide to using Google Calendar

## 2. Set the tasks into Calendar

Create the schedule for each task by clicking the “Create” button and completing the form. Write down a clear title and description that details the information of the job. Arrange the starting time and when you expect to complete it. If you’re setting up a meeting, invite the relevant guests to the schedule so they may notify you of their availability.

## 3. Color code your tasks

Group your activities by unique colors. Your personal and professional activities should have different colors so you can instantly differentiate them. You may add more colors to indicate which activity group (meeting, seminar, etc.) the tasks fall under. Introduce new colors sparingly to keep it simple. Only create new colors if you think that you are unable to group the activities under existing color options.



The screenshot shows the Google Calendar 'Create Event' interface. At the top, the title 'Coding for Website Development' is entered. Below the title, there are tabs for 'Event' (selected) and 'Task'. The date and time are set to 'Monday, 10 January 2022' from '11:00am' to '12:00pm'. There are checkboxes for 'All day' and 'Time zone', and a dropdown for 'Doesn't repeat'. A blue button labeled 'Find a time' is visible. Below this, there is a section for 'Add guests' with a plus icon. A prominent blue button says 'Add Google Meet video conferencing'. Below that is a section for 'Add location' with a location pin icon. A rich text editor is present with a toolbar containing icons for bold, italic, underline, bulleted list, numbered list, link, and unlink. The text 'Design Mock up already shared, check the folder.' is entered in the editor. Below the editor is a section for 'Add attachment' with a paperclip icon. At the bottom, there is a calendar icon, a 'Work' category dropdown, and a blue color selection circle.

# Guide to using Google Calendar

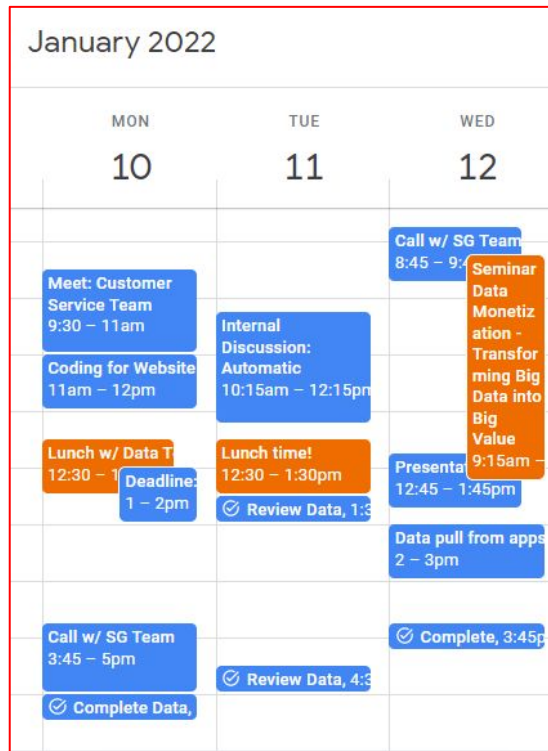
## 4. Adjust the calendar if schedules are overlapping

Google Calendar is there to help you review your schedule and availability for the day or week. You can assess if you're committing to too much in a single day and whether you can move tasks/appointments to ensure a manageable schedule.

By seeing your entire schedule, it will enable you to make adjustments and plan your capacity effectively, especially if a new task/project is introduced suddenly.

## 5. Don't spend too much time on your Calendar

Google Calendar is there to help you manage your time, not to overcomplicate it. Be careful not to create too many codes, as you may find yourself wasting precious time trying to manage them all. Aim to organize your calendar in the morning, ideally spending less than 15 minutes on it. Avoid making unnecessary changes and spending too long adjusting your schedule throughout the day.



# A sample of a Machine Learning Engineer's Calendar

**Calendar Interface:**

- Header:** Calendar, Today, January 2022
- Left Sidebar:** Create, January 2022, Search for people, My calendars (Personal, Reminders, Tasks, Work), Other calendars
- Main View:** Weekly view for January 16-21, 2022. Time slots from 8 AM to 7 PM. Events include: Morning Jog, Daily Stand Up Meeting, Meet: Data Insight, Lunch w/ Andrew, Data Collection and Review, Start working on business, Product Improvement, Continue working on business, Customer Behaviour Data Analysis and Modelling, Pick up Mom at the Airport, Meet: Automatic Response Development, Seminar: Data Monetization, Gym, Dinner w/ Mom, Meet: New Data Sources and Data Gathering Techniques, Sprint Meeting, Tech O'Clock: Sharing.
- Right Sidebar:** My Tasks. List of tasks with checkboxes: [Deadline] Data Collection and Review for CS Team, [Deadline] Business Deck, [Deadline] New App Feature ideas for tomorrow's Scrum Meeting, [Deadline] Data Collection and Review for CS Team, [Review] Customer Behavior Accuracy.

**My calendars**

- ☒ Personal
- ☐ Reminders
- ☒ Tasks
- ☒ Work

**Other calendars** +

**To Do List tools:**  
You can list down your tasks and cross them out as you completed the respective task

**Color code your activities**  
Personalize your calendar with description and colour so you can instantly identify your work

# Capacity **planning**

**Keep it simple and manageable**

Using too many productivity tools may create more work, given the time required to manage them all. It may also add further confusion if they are not properly reconciled, as you might see your calendar as empty, whilst you have other tasks/deadlines that you have listed on other task/project manager applications.

**Using too many productivity tools can be counterproductive.  
Focus and optimize around one tool to manage your schedule.**

# Capacity planning is **a continuous learning process**

## Tips to plan your time effectively:

### 1. **Use past experience to predict your speed of work**

Take notes on the amount of time you required to complete a specific task. Did you manage to complete it within the time predicted? Or did you significantly exceed your estimated time? Being mindful of your speed will allow you to adjust whether you need more or less time to do similar tasks in the future.

### 1. **Avoid setting deadlines using assumptions**

Predicting your work capacity should not merely rely upon a “I think I can do this” mindset. You should have a track record that you can refer to. Next time you allocate time for a task, let it be based on calculations to ensure that you do not overpromise and underdeliver.

# Capacity planning is **a continuous learning process**

**More tips so you can plan your time effectively:**

**3. Stretch yourself by setting challenging deadlines**

Recording your speed of work is not enough. In order to grow, you want to ensure you're not stuck doing the same tasks at the same speed — otherwise, it will difficult to move onto more complex tasks with stricter time requirements. If the normal speed for you to complete a data analysis report is 2-hours, then aim to have it done in 1.5 hours. The important takeaway here is to push yourself to improve continuously and strive to break new records in completing your task.

**4. Don't assume that everyone works at your speed**

Remember that your work is connected to the work of others in your team. By the same token, their work is also connected to yours. Before setting any deadline, identify how long they will take to complete the tasks that are linked to yours. Discuss and agree on specific deadlines.

## Section 5

# Agility



# Agility

We may already be disciplined, be good at prioritization, be able to focus and plan well. However, sudden changes can happen anytime and we need to adjust ourselves to unpredictable scenarios.

Especially during and after the pandemic, a strong time management also means having the **ability to cope and adapt** to sudden changes.

# Agility

## How to be agile without sacrificing your main goals:

1.

### Focus on goals, not on activities

**Example:** your goal is to exercise daily for which you have registered to a gym. Because of a pandemic, by being agile, instead of going to the gym, you decide attend an online exercise at home that the gym provided, saving yourself time whilst achieving your goal and staying healthy.

Be creative in finding new ways to achieve your goals.

2.

### Negotiate and ask for help

**Example:** You're working to achieve a deadline to finish a business proposal. Suddenly your boss asks you to complete a different, more urgent task. Before agreeing to the task, it's important to communicate to your boss that you'll need an extension for the deadline on the business proposal if you accept this new assignment.

# Agility

3.

## Speed to decide quickly

**Example:** You are currently working on your own project that is due in 3 days, but your peer is feeling overwhelmed and behind schedule on their app update, which is due to be launched tomorrow. You need to decide whether you are willing to assist your team by letting go of your own work for the moment to help the team complete the project on time. Your decision may impact the performance of the team and reputation of the product, which will be linked to your own in the long run.

4.

## Allocate buffer time for the unpredictable

**Example:** You allocate 60-minutes for a 45-minute task. You have a buffer of 15-minutes spare in case there are any unanticipated delays or for you to work on additional unplanned tasks.

# Thank You