# WR5 Managing Time Transcript

This is video five of the working remotely be connected module. And in this video we're continuing looking at what we can do around creating physical structure and boundaries and looking specifically now at managing your time.

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We're now going to look at how can you manage your time, especially in a way that builds up your energy rather than just draining that energy bank, so that you can work much more effectively, while you're working remotely, and create a structure and be really focused on your intention for the day.

So managing time is as much about what you value, and how you value your time as actually the, the tools and techniques that we can use for breaking up and planning the time itself. But planning is going to be the first step before we can actually manage time. And the very first thing we want to do is to think about what are our priorities, focusing on your priorities. How clear are you about your priorities? And scheduled those in first into your diary. While working from home, you're going to have many many conflicting demands on your time, you may need to actually think a bit more flexibly about your schedule for the day, and how do you how do you honour all the really important priorities in all parts of your life in a way that will make sure that you can be there for the most important things.

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So, to focus on your priorities you actually need to know what your priorities are. Can you identify the top three priorities? And that means … there are a number of ways that you need to do that. I've got a handout that you can download, which will have a lot more detail. So, what you need to do how clear are you (with your, with your) on the task, and with your manager and with the team as to what is the most important thing you need to do. So part of your daily planning will be to identify what are my top three things that I must get done today. And then the rest of it would be “nice to haves”. For example, you might have heard the phrase “Eat That Frog” which basically is saying “Look at your top, top priorities, which is the one that you least want to do. If you focus on that and get it out of the way first, it's not hanging over you. And it actually takes, probably much less time than it does for all the procrastination that you have thinking about how much you don't want to do it. And it means that it's much less of an energy drain to get it out of the way, early, and then you can have more energy for dealing with the rest of the things on your list.

Also have a ‘Don’t list’. This is quite useful. So you've got your list of priorities, but also you've got the things that actually you want to NOT do because they are not priorities. These are the things that maybe you need to delegate or put off to a later date.

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You've probably heard of Covey and the Important, Urgent and Unimportant quadrants. This is an extremely useful tool to help you identify: What's a priority? What needs to be done right now? What's very urgent? What is important to do, but is not urgent? Now when you're doing your scheduling and putting all the big rocks into your schedule, (you need to include some of the ) make sure you put in first, all the important things that are not urgent, because if you can deal with them before they become urgent, again it will manage your energy a lot better as well. And you're more likely to get it done in a better way.

We are going to look a little bit of goal setting. So thinking about what is your purpose and your project goals, and how to break it down. So we talked about the urgent and important quadrants. You've probably heard the phrase, “How do you eat an elephant?” and heard the answer “well one slice at a time”. But the trouble is that actually we tend to not make them in quite small enough slices. As you can see these are rather large slices. So once we've sliced it we actually need to break it down into smaller chunks, and the chances are that when we've broken it into a smaller chunk it's probably still quite a big chunk, and there going to be times where we need to break it into even smaller chunks as well. And think about how can you make some really small steps? What are some of the things that you could do that would only take five minutes? What are some of the things that could take 10 minutes? So these might be five or 10 minutes - send an email, make a phone call. And we're not used to plan to take advantage of small units of time. So there's a number of different tools and techniques that are in the handout which you can get into more detail about, but how do you break your goals and break your task down into small steps, have clarity in conversation first about what's important? And then break it down in. And in your planning, schedule in the most important stuff first. And put in the smallest steps, and where you've got the opportunity to, you could also say well, when I've got five minutes slots, these are some of the things to do. Have the five minute to do list, so that when you get a spare minute you can start taking some of those off.

One thing that can help an awful lot is to create a dedicated block of absolutely undisturbed time.

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It might be amount of time of the day. For example, if you were someone whose best energy is, early in the morning, or is it late at night? Do you get best into flow early as an early bird or are you a night owl? When is the best time for you to work at your most focused? And then break the day into units and try to have a dedicated one hour, or one and a half hours where it's a Do Not Disturb time. And this is the time, which is when you focus on the most important things that you need to get done, your top priorities.

And this is what you need to then create boundaries with other people and manage expectations and say that this is a particular time then please do not disturb me. Out with that time then I can be available, and on call if you need me, and have more of an open door policy, perhaps. But just thinking about how do you protect a certain amount of time that works for you to be in flow.

When we're thinking about breaking into units you might have five minute and 10 minute unit, and you perhaps you've heard of the Pomodoro technique which is another very useful technique for managing your time so you can have concentrated moments, so 20 or 25, minutes, you set a timer, and you work uninterrupted for that time of 20 to 25 minutes, and keep your concentration going. And then when the timer goes you give yourself a five minute break. So some people find that technique works extremely well for them. I find that it tends to break up my flow because my flow is more often, an hour or 90 minutes. So the point is there's no single right way to do this. It's about managing your own energy and recognising what works for you to maintain focus and concentration, and then have a break.

Then put these into your schedule and try to inform other people about your schedule. Protect the plan so that your uninterrupted time is uninterrupted, and then work with other people about planning in meetings that need to happen. Also very very important in your schedule: schedule in the break time. This is something that tends to get left out. Most of the time, and is a more critical part of our planning of the day than most of us realise. Having back to back meetings is exhausting, but especially exhausting when it's all on Zoom and or online and you're getting screen fatigue. So build in at the very minimum five minute breaks between things. Make sure that you are hydrating and moving, and making the most of that moment of a break to re energise your body. And that's re energising mentally, as well as re energising physically so you need to be thinking about movement, about good hydration. Good nutrition. And then something that can still your mind, or something that makes you laugh, something that gets you into a really positive emotional state, and breaks state from what you were doing in that work, and that you will find is much much more renewing of your energy and refreshing, so that you can be your better self again for the next block of work or the next meeting that you need to go into.

So - protecting your plan and ensuring that you have really good breaks. So these are all the really key things to think about and creating a structure, and the boundaries to ensure that you manage your time and manage your energy, so that you work effectively from home.