



Career Elevator

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Time Management Tips to Boost Productivity

Effective time management is crucial for enhancing productivity and achieving career success in today's fast-paced work environment. As workers juggle multiple responsibilities and deadlines, mastering the art of managing time can transform their professional lives. However, staying on track and focused can be especially hard given daily distractions in workspaces.

Slack's latest State of Work report revealed that 43% of employees find it hard to stay motivated, and 29% have difficulty keeping focused.

Time management is defined as the process of organizing and planning how to allocate your time between different tasks and activities. When you're intentional about how your workday is spent, you may be cutting down on unnecessary tasks, deprioritizing work as needed, breaking bad habits (e.g., procrastination) and completing tasks quicker. As such, proper time management can lead to increased productivity. Here are some practical tips that can help you boost productivity while managing time better:

- **Prioritize your tasks.** Spend a few minutes at the beginning of the day planning, creating a to-do list and prioritizing tasks. Use a project management tool or handwritten list, whichever suits your working style. A good rule of thumb is to start with the most challenging,

important or tedious tasks first so you don't waste time avoiding the big one all day. Also, try to complete important tasks when you are most productive (e.g., early morning, midday or evening).

- **Utilize time blocking.** Time blocking involves dividing your day into blocks of time, each dedicated to a specific task or group of tasks. For example, schedule meetings on certain days or designate times to respond to emails or complete other administrative tasks.
- **Delegate tasks.** Many workers want to demonstrate dedication, but it may not be the best use of their time. If a task distracts you or doesn't fully take advantage of your skill set, try delegating it to someone better suited.
- **Eliminate distractions.** University of California, Irvine, researchers found that employees are interrupted every three minutes and five seconds, and then it takes 23 minutes to refocus. If you're having trouble refocusing on work, turn off your phone or instant message notifications or set them to "do not disturb" mode.

Overall, it comes down to managing your focus and attention instead of just time.

Takeaway

Time management is a skill that requires commitment and practice. Remember, the key to successful time management is working smarter, not just harder. Talk to your manager if you have concerns about your workload and time management.



Mentoring and Coaching: What's the Difference?

Coaching and mentoring are often used interchangeably when it comes to professional development. However, they are distinct approaches, each with its own unique applications. Coaching and mentoring yield a wide range of benefits for both participants. Those who receive mentoring or coaching may experience increased employee engagement, boosted performance and professional growth. Understanding the differences between coaching and mentoring can help you leverage these practices more effectively to achieve your specific goals.

Purpose

With mentoring, a senior employee (mentor) forms a relationship with a junior employee (mentee) and has frequent one-on-one sessions to train on soft and hard skills, provide guidance and influence the mentee's growth. It's mutually beneficial to both parties. Mentors can develop leadership skills and gain a sense of satisfaction from helping someone, and mentees can expand their knowledge and skills and build their professional network. The aim of this partnership is to provide guidance and support.

Coaching is a method of training, counseling or instructing an employee or group of employees—or coachee(s)—to unlock potential and maximize personal and professional performance. A coach can teach new skills, help solve problems or answer training-related questions. This partnership is focused on achieving goals.

Skills Development

Mentoring emphasizes skill development and broader personal growth from sharing experiences and knowledge. It's often up

to the mentee to ask questions and drive the focus of the development.

Conversely, coaching focuses on specific skills, competencies and behaviors. These are often needed to improve to meet professional goals.

Structure

Mentorship doesn't need to be a formal initiative in the workplace, as the relationship between the mentor and mentee may often develop naturally.

Coaching is often more structured and rigid, as the focus is on learning topics or skills. Coaches will follow a set process, and feedback is often direct and constructive to facilitate learning and improvement.

Time Frame

Mentoring focuses on long-term career development and may include conversations about career choices, personal growth and work-life balance.

Coaching is often short-term and is meant to have an immediate impact on performance and productivity. It's often completed through structured sessions over a period of time.

Summary

Both coaching and mentoring are invaluable tools for professional development, each serving different purposes. If you're wondering how to get started, ask your manager about available resources.