

Time Management

How well do you manage your time?

To find out, complete this quick questionnaire. Think of the way you work, and from the pairs of statements below, tick the box against the one that is most like you, most of the time. Be honest!



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|-----|---|--------------------------|
| 1 a | I rely on other people to remind me of things | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b | I keep a to do list | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 a | I prioritise according to urgent v important | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b | I do things as they arise, first on the list gets done first | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 a | I use 'down time' productively when travelling | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b | Travelling is a waste of time | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 a | I consider whether someone else could do what I'm doing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b | I do my tasks myself to make sure they're done right | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 a | I build the long term up from the short term | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b | I plan the long term before the short tem | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 a | I use a diary or similar to note what I've done up till now | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b | I use a diary or similar to note what I intend to do in future | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 a | I cross things off my list as they get done and see what's next | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b | I don't look at my list until the end of the day | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8 a | I get on with the daily routine as I always have | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b | I know which tasks need doing and which I do out of habit | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9 a | I read reports and spreadsheets thoroughly | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b | I can speed read documents sufficient to get the sense of them | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10a | I review what I've achieved at the end of the day | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b | I don't do this; it's too depressing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11a | I keep a separate list of long-term goals or projects | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b | These don't even get on my list | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12a | I allow time for interruptions and time-wasters when planning | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b | I schedule myself to the minute | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Self-Checks

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| 13a | I start at the beginning and go on till I'm finished | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I know what times of day I am at my most productive | <input type="text"/> |
| 14a | I probably waste a lot of time but I don't know where | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I know which of my activities produce results | <input type="text"/> |
| 15a | I plan for contingencies such a sickness, absence, and leavers | <input type="text"/> |
| b | These things take me by surprise and throw my plans out | <input type="text"/> |
| 16a | I decide whether a task is right for me to do or someone else | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I do all my jobs myself | <input type="text"/> |
| 17a | I put everything that needs doing on my list | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I only put what I intend to do myself on my list | <input type="text"/> |
| 18a | I don't have any leisure time to speak of | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I do what I need to but allow myself time to do what I want to | <input type="text"/> |
| 19a | I write long words and jargon wherever possible for business | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I write as briefly as possible | <input type="text"/> |
| 20a | I know which short cuts I can take and which I cannot | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I do everything the long way to get it done properly | <input type="text"/> |
| 21a | I categorise tasks into Do, Delegate, Diarise, and Dump | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I just have one long list of jobs | <input type="text"/> |
| 22a | I believe that meeting are a necessary evil I must attend | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I avoid spending times in meetings unnecessarily | <input type="text"/> |
| 23a | I am assertive to protect my time | <input type="text"/> |
| b | Other people manage my life for me | <input type="text"/> |
| 24a | I read documents in the order they're presented | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I read the beginning and end of a document first | <input type="text"/> |
| 25a | I do difficult or unpleasant jobs first to get them out of the way | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I leave difficult or unpleasant jobs until last | <input type="text"/> |
| 26a | I redirect calls to the best person to deal with the issue | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I deal with anyone who phones for 'the manager' myself | <input type="text"/> |
| 27a | I prioritise my tasks into As, Bs, Cs, or Is, 2s, 3s | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I do things in the order they get added to my list | <input type="text"/> |
| 28a | I welcome interruptions as a break form the task in hand | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I avoid interruptions wherever possible | <input type="text"/> |
| 29a | I regularly check and re-read what's on my desk | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I handle each piece of paper as few times as possible | <input type="text"/> |

Self-Checks

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|-----|--|----------------------|
| 30a | I use a highlighter to mark important parts of documents | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I can never find the bit I'm looking for again | <input type="text"/> |
| 31a | I do everything that's on my list myself | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I get other people to do jobs that are on my list | <input type="text"/> |
| 32a | I get frustrated at the amount of time I spend hanging on | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I keep a low priority job by the phone to do whilst on hold | <input type="text"/> |
| 33a | I keep a clear desk to help my efficiency | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I've not seen my desk for weeks | <input type="text"/> |
| 34a | I spend more time managing than doing | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I spend more time doing than managing | <input type="text"/> |
| 35a | I am totally approachable at any time | <input type="text"/> |
| b | My team know when I have time to see and talk with them | <input type="text"/> |
| 36a | I read everything that comes through the post | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I scan the post and bin junk mail unread | <input type="text"/> |
| 37a | I always stay later than I planned to | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I generally leave for home on time | <input type="text"/> |
| 38a | I know tips with software to make it do tasks quicker for me | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I have yet to learn how to do more than the basics | <input type="text"/> |
| 39a | I'm a pragmatist – if it does the job, that's OK | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I seek perfection at all times | <input type="text"/> |
| 40a | I read documents cover to cover | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I read selectively from a document or spreadsheet | <input type="text"/> |
| 41a | I have an efficient, labelled filing system | <input type="text"/> |
| b | It's all in one heap, most recent on top | <input type="text"/> |
| 42a | I batch my outgoing telephone calls together when possible | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I make calls between tasks to give myself a break | <input type="text"/> |
| 43a | I break large tasks down into small pieces | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I keep large tasks intact | <input type="text"/> |
| 44a | I delegate parts of my job to others | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I'm responsible so I do it myself | <input type="text"/> |
| 45a | I like to relax and chat on the phone | <input type="text"/> |
| b | I make my phone calls as brief as possible | <input type="text"/> |

Scoring

Award yourself a point for each of the following answers you ticked:

1. a	2. a	3. a	4. a	5. b	6. b	7. a	8. b	9. b
10. a	11. a	12. a	13. b	14. b	15. a	16. a	17. a	18. b
19. b	20. a	21. a	22. b	23. a	24. b	25. a	26. a	27. a
28. b	29. b	30. a	31. b	32. b	33. a	34. a	35. b	36. b
37. b	38. a	39. a	40. b	41. a	42. a	43. a	44. a	45. b

35 – 45: You appear to have a good grip on your time, but don't get complacent about it!

25 – 34: You maybe know what you should be doing, but aren't doing it often enough, or enough of it.

Under 24: You really should work on your time management. Start now – and make time for it! Start with the Top Tips listed below.

Further development

Consider the following questions and note your thoughts. There are no right or wrong answers, this is just to give you food for thought.

- Was there a similarity between the questions for which you scored no points?
- What parts of time management were your weakest?
- How does this match your own thoughts on the subject?
- What are the implications of this for the people that you work with?
- Do you need to change anything, and if so, what?
- How will you make the change?

For related topics see Top Tips:

- **Delegating**
- **Planning**
- **Prioritising Tasks**
- **Time Management**