

Discover how to control your day
and unlock 30 hours of lost time a month

SMART

TIME MANAGEMENT
FOR DOCTORS

WORKBOOK



KATE CHRISTIE



SMART Time Management for Doctors

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Step 1

SELF-AWARE

Before you score, you must first have
a goal — Greek Proverb

EXERCISE 1.1

Diagnostic – My Key Time Management Challenges

Examine the statements below and tick each one you can relate to as a Time Management Challenge. This is not an exhaustive list so include additional challenges which are of significance to you.

Time Management Challenge	Yes, that's me
It annoys me that I don't have enough time	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have too many competing priorities which frustrates me	<input type="checkbox"/>
My hours are unpredictable which makes it hard to plan my day	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am constantly interrupted which makes for a longer day	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can't find the time to grow my practice and this plays on my mind	<input type="checkbox"/>
I manage multiple teams and it's a constant juggle	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't spend enough time with my family which makes me feel guilty	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being on-call adds a layer of complexity and results in fatigue	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't get enough sleep and feel constantly tired	<input type="checkbox"/>
I struggle to say No which means I take on too much	<input type="checkbox"/>
It's hard to find the time to research and write papers	<input type="checkbox"/>
I work all of the time, and enough is enough!	<input type="checkbox"/>
I juggle work with study which leaves little time for other pursuits	<input type="checkbox"/>

I am constantly jumping from one task to the next and back again	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am not well organised and this frustrates me/my team	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't spend enough time with my partner which worries me	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am too busy to stop, and if I do, everything piles up	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am overwhelmed by governance requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diary management is not a strong point for me	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am a bit of a procrastinator, so it takes me a while to get started	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't have time for myself and I always put myself last	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have way too much on my plate	<input type="checkbox"/>
My To Do List has its own heartbeat	<input type="checkbox"/>
I struggle to stay on top of key medical developments which troubles me	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't have time to review and update my business processes, so I don't even know how inefficient I am	<input type="checkbox"/>
I lie awake at night worrying about what might have fallen through the cracks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parental responsibilities mean I don't have the time I need to focus on my career	<input type="checkbox"/>
I ...	<input type="checkbox"/>
I ...	<input type="checkbox"/>

EXERCISE 1.2

My Key Time Management Challenges

Of the statements ticked or written above, the three things I find *most* challenging when it comes to managing my time are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

EXERCISE 1.3

How do I feel right now?

After reflecting on your answers in Exercises 1.1 and 1.2, how do you feel about this life you are living? Are you stressed, guilty, tired, happy, calm, annoyed, frustrated, overwhelmed, worried, resigned, motivated? Are your work relationships strong? Are your non-work relationships strong? Are you healthy?

How do you feel?

.....

I feel ...

.....

EXERCISE 1.4

What one thing would I change?

If you could fix just one of the challenges identified in Exercise 1.2, which one would you choose, and why? This is important. There is no point in drafting a long laundry list of all the things you need – and want – to change. Why? Because the longer the list, the more likely it will be to join the other mundane, onerous tasks currently sitting in your *Too Hard Basket*. To set yourself up for success, choose just one thing to be your immediate point of focus:

My one focus: _____

Why? _____

EXERCISE 1.6

What is most important to me?

Consider your day-to-day behaviours. These are the things an observer would see you focussing on over the course of many weeks. Complete the sentences in the *Your Response* Column in the Table below providing as many examples as you can. Do not complete the *Value* Column at this point; that comes shortly.

Sentence	Your Response	Value
<i>I am happiest when ...</i>		
I am happiest when ...		
I get a deep feeling of pride when ...		
I would spend a free hour on ...		
I feel most energised when I am ...		
In my favourite room I surround myself with ...		
When I daydream, I dream about ...		
If I was to receive a compliment I would want it to be about ...		

When I initiate a conversation, I like to talk about ...		
The things I won't compromise on are ...		
I worry most about ...		



Common Value

- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Adventurous | Discreet | Innovative |
| Ambitious Assertive | Efficient | [Of] integrity |
| Balanced Brave | Empathetic | Intelligent |
| Calm | Enthusiastic | Just |
| Career-oriented | Entrepreneurial | Kind |
| Caring | Ethical | Knowledgeable |
| Charitable | Expert | Loving |
| Committed | Fair | Loyal |
| Community-minded | Faithful | Original |
| Compassionate | Family-oriented | Patient |
| Competitive | Financially-secure | Positive |
| Consistent | Focussed | Powerful |
| Contented | Frugal | Practical |
| Cooperative | Fun | Private |
| Courageous | Generous | Professional |
| Creative | Good | Prudent |
| Curious | Happy | Reliable |
| Dependable | Hard-working | Resilient |
| Determined | Healthy | Resourceful |
| Diligent | Helpful | Respectable |
| | Honest | Responsible |
| | Independent | Self-controlled |

Selfless Self-reliant

Sensitive Spiritual

Spontaneous

Strategic

Strong Successful

Supportive

Talented

Team-oriented

Thoughtful

EXERCISE 1.7

My Values

Review each of *Your Responses* in Exercise 1.6 and then, in the *Value Column*, assign the Value from the *Common Values List* which best describes each of *Your Responses*.

From a time management perspective, you need to get this right because having absolute clarity over what drives you is central to deciding exactly where you should – and shouldn't – spend your time.

EXERCISE 1.8

My List of Values

Read over the Values you have identified in Exercise 1.7 and list them below. Group together those which are obviously similar.

My List of Values:

➤ _____

➤ _____

➤ _____

➤ _____

➤ _____

➤ _____

➤ _____

➤ _____

➤ _____

➤ _____

➤ _____

➤ _____

➤ _____

➤ _____

➤ _____

➤ _____

➤ _____

➤ _____

➤ _____

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

EXERCISE 1.9

My Core Values

Based on your List of Values in Exercise 1.8 distil the list down to your 6 to 8 non-negotiable Values. This can be hard. You may have identified 20 Values all of which on first glance resonate strongly with you. If so, you can undertake the exercise in two parts: boil it down to 12 to 15 Values now, and then revisit your list in a few days, after you have had time to mull it over, and then have another cull to get your list down to 8 or less.

My Core Values:



Step 2

MAP

You'll never plough a field
by turning it over in your mind
— Irish Proverb

EXERCISE 2.1

3 Typical Days

For 3 days (including one weekend day) take note (in Column 1 Task) of everything you do from getting up, making breakfast, showering and getting dressed, kids stuff, travelling time, time spent on social media, emails, client consults, liaising with colleagues, researching, studying, having lunch, every interruption, every phone call, every pager alert, and everything you do at home from the dishes, washing the clothes, supermarket trips, making meals, eating meals, cleaning, tidying, socialising and so on. You get the picture. It's all about the detail. Be honest. If you spend an hour on Facebook on the commute to work then record it. Now is not the time to fudge the data.

Record the amount of time you spend (in Column 2 Duration Minutes) on each task. Do not estimate your time or write down the time you *wish* you had spent on the task. That is ultimately unhelpful.

Take your Time Sheets with you when you are on the go and fill them out in real-time. It is a mistake to get to the end of the day and try to recreate your day. You will forget the filler tasks you undertook, the interruptions you received, and you will generally under-estimate how long you spent on tasks.

At this stage you only need to complete Columns 1 and 2 of the Time Sheets (the other Columns will be completed in subsequent Steps and as such are shaded below).

DAY 1

	1	2	3	4	5
Time	Task	Dur Mins	Must/Want/ Delegate/Reject	Financial Cost	Oth er Cost s
5am					
6am					
7am					
8am					

	1	2	3	4	5
Time	Task	Dur Mins	Must/Want/ Delegate/Reject	Financial Cost	Oth er Cost s
9am					
10am					
11am					
12 noon					
1pm					
2pm					
3pm					

	1	2	3	4	5
Time	Task	Dur Mins	Must/Want/ Delegate/Reject	Financial Cost	Oth er Cost s
4pm					
5pm					
6pm					
7pm					
8pm					
9pm					
10pm					

	1	2	3	4	5
Time	Task	Dur Mins	Must/Want/ Delegate/Reject	Financial Cost	Oth er Cost s
11pm					
12 midnight					
1am					
2am					
3am					
4am					
5am					

DAY 2

	1	2	3	4	5
Time	Task	Dur Mins	Must/Want/ Delegate/Reject	Financial Cost	Oth er Cost s
5am					
6am					
7am					
8am					
9am					
10am					
11am					

	1	2	3	4	5
Time	Task	Dur Mins	Must/Want/ Delegate/Reject	Financial Cost	Oth er Cost s
12 noon					
1pm					
2pm					
3pm					
4pm					
5pm					
6pm					

	1	2	3	4	5
Time	Task	Dur Mins	Must/Want/ Delegate/Reject	Financial Cost	Oth er Cost s
7pm					
8pm					
9pm					
10pm					
11pm					
12 midnight					
1am					

	1	2	3	4	5
Time	Task	Dur Mins	Must/Want/ Delegate/Reject	Financial Cost	Oth er Cost s
2am					
3am					
4am					
5am					

DAY 3

	1	2	3	4	5
Time	Task	Dur Mins	Must/Want/ Delegate/Reject	Financial Cost	Oth er Cost s
5am					
6am					
7am					
8am					
9am					
10am					
11am					

	1	2	3	4	5
Time	Task	Dur Mins	Must/Want/ Delegate/Reject	Financial Cost	Oth er Cost s
12 noon					
1pm					
2pm					
3pm					
4pm					
5pm					
6pm					

	1	2	3	4	5
Time	Task	Dur Mins	Must/Want/ Delegate/Reject	Financial Cost	Oth er Cost s
7pm					
8pm					
9pm					
10pm					
11pm					
12 midnight					
1am					

	1	2	3	4	5
Time	Task	Dur Mins	Must/Want/ Delegate/Reject	Financial Cost	Oth er Cost s
2am					
3am					
4am					
5am					

EXERCISE 2.2

My Energy Flow

Consider your Time Sheets, and with your knowledge of your personal energy flow each day (*are you a morning person? a night owl?*) note below your high energy times of the day and your low energy times. You will come back to this data point later.

Energy Levels	Times of the day
I have High Energy	
I have Low energy	

EXERCISE 2.3

Design a Better Day

Below is a Better Day time sheet where you only include what would make your day better: from a half-hour sleep-in, a morning jog, a day where each patient turns up and all consults run on time, no emergency scenarios, home in time to say goodbye to the cleaner who has left the house spotless, the washing done and the family meal cooked, your partner is happy, the kids aren't fighting, and you all sit down to eat together. It still requires work tasks and home tasks, nicely integrated for your current situation.

Your Core Values are key here. Make sure you reflect back on these (they are pinned on the wall next to your Wants List, right?) and only incorporate into your Better Day tasks which reflect your Values.

Time	My Better Day
5am	
6am	
7am	
8am	
9am	

10am	
11am	
12 noon	
1pm	
2pm	
3pm	
4pm	
5pm	
6pm	
7pm	
8pm	
9pm	
10pm	

Step 3

ANALYSE

Jobs are like pumpkins in water:
one pops up while you try to hold down
another — Chinese Proverb

EXERCISE 3.1

My Task Categories

Work down Column 3 of your Time Sheets and quickly label each task which is clearly a Must, Want, Delegate or Reject. Leave any task which requires more thought and then address that task after you have dealt with the no-brainers.

EXERCISE 3.2

My Summary Tasks and Time Spend

After completing Column 3 of your Time Sheets, it's time to consolidate. Pull the data from Column 3 of your Time Sheets into the Table below noting each task under its relevant Task Category.

As you consolidate, add up the total amount of time you have spent on each of the Four Task Categories across the 3 days - your first time cut - which will give you a picture of how many hours you could reclaim if you Delegate and Reject every task you have earmarked as up for grabs.

Print out your completed Summary Tasks and Time Spend Table and post it next to your computer for easy reference. This will be much easier than constantly referring back to 3 days worth of Time Sheets.

Task Category	Tasks	My First Time Cut (with the time mapped in 3 days extrapolated over to 7 days)
Musts		
Wants		
Delegates		
Rejects		

EXERCISE 3.3

How many hours could I reclaim each year?

Following your First Time Cut in Exercise 3.2, it's interesting to look at the time you could reclaim each year if you ultimately Delegate and Reject every task you have identified as a Delegate or a Reject.

		Your answers
A	Delegates: The number of hours I would save each week if I Delegated everything I have identified as a possible Delegate	
B	Rejects: The number of hours I would save each week if I Rejected everything I have identified as a possible Reject	
	Calculation: $(A + B) \times 52$ weeks = the number of hours I could reclaim each year	

EXERCISE 3.4

The dollar value of my time

Contact your Accountant and ask them to calculate your personal hourly rate based on last year's tax return. Like Dr Kayne, round the figure to make your calculations simple.

My hourly rate is \$.....

EXERCISE 3.5

Costing the tasks I perform

Quickly work your way down Column 4 of your Time Sheets and calculate the financial cost of each task you have performed over the 3 days you Mapped.

Next, return to Exercise 3.2 and using your hourly rate complete the Financial Costs Column below for each of the Four Task Categories over 7 days. Once you have this data, complete the Annual Financial Costs column.

	Your time spend (extra-polated over to 7 days)	Your Financial Cost	Annual Financial Costs
Musts			
Wants			
Delegates			
Rejects			
Total			

EXERCISE 3.6

Bring my costs together

Your Financial Costs are already listed as Column 4. Review Column 1 of your Time Sheets and reflect on whether any of the tasks you perform are exacting another cost you are no longer prepared to accept. Complete Column 5 using the following legend for simplicity:

OC: Lost Opportunity Cost

EC: Emotional Cost

PC: Physical Cost

For any task you initially identified as a Must or a Want, but which you now feel is costing you too much (either in a Financial, Lost Opportunity, Emotional and/or Physical sense), consider whether you can change these tasks to a Delegate or a Reject. Mark up any changes to Column 3.

EXERCISE 3.7

A quick stress test of my tasks against my Core Values

If the majority of your time spend does not reflect your Core Values you need to adjust where you spend your time.

Keeping your Core Values in mind, cast your eye down Column 3 of your Time Sheets and against each task you have identified as a Must or a Want, consider whether you are being true to your Core Values. Circle any task which is inconsistent with your Core Values.

Next, make sure you have not earmarked for Delegation or Rejection a task which is strongly aligned to your Core Values. If you have, the task is actually a Must or a Want and you need to realign it. Circle these anomalies as appropriate.

On completion of Exercise 3.7, you may decide to move some of your Musts to Rejects or move some of your Musts to Delegates or vice versa. That's OK; this is what a quick stress test is all about.

EXERCISE 3.8

My Second Time Cut – are you serious?

With all Columns of your Time Sheets now complete, revised and stress tested, calculate the number of hours you have identified as lost hours you can reclaim.

Write your Second Time Cut here, carrying across from your First Time Cut in Exercises 3.2 and 3.3.

	My First Time Cut (transfer your answers from Exercise 3.2)	My Second Time Cut (extrapolated over to 7 days)
Musts		
Wants		

	My First Time Cut (transfer your answers from Exercise 3.2)	My Second Time Cut (extrapolated over to 7 days)
Delegates		
Rejects		

EXERCISE 3.9

How many hours will I reclaim over a year?

Take the data from your Second Time Cut and calculate below how many hours you will reclaim over the course of a year:

	Total Time Reclaimed
The number of hours I would save each day if I Delegated everything I have identified as a possible Delegate	
The number of hours I would save each day if I Rejected everything I have identified as a possible Reject	
Total Hours Reclaimed	

EXERCISE 3.10

How do I feel?

Write down a few thoughts about how you feel right now:

I feel:

Step 4

REFRAME

Time longa dan rope — Jamaican Proverb

EXERCISE 4.1

SMART Delegation at Work

Using your Summary Task and Time Spend Table from Exercise 3.2 complete the Delegation List below, by identifying every task you know you would derive a benefit by Delegating it at work. It might be because you don't enjoy the task, it takes too much time, or someone else can perform it faster, better and more economically than you. For each task you identify, select the date (deadline) by which you will have Delegated the task and to whom.

Delegates at Work	Date	Who	Time Reclaimed

EXERCISE 4.2

Outsourcing at Home

Using your Summary Task and Time Spend Table from Exercise 3.2 list every task you have identified as one you can Delegate via outsourcing at home.

When you transfer the data into the table below, group 'like' tasks together and prioritise those tasks that take the greatest amount of your time. Remember, these are the tasks which you will derive a time benefit from outsourcing. It could be that you don't enjoy the task, that it takes too much of your time, or someone else (an expert) can perform the task faster, better and more economically than you. Next work down the Date column and nominate the date (deadline) by which you will have outsourced the task. Keep a running record of the time you reclaim.

Reference Dr Alex's example in the *Doctors Workbook* for additional guidance.

Outsourcing at Home	Date	Time Reclaimed

EXERCISE 4.3

Inourcing at Home

Inourcing will allow you to reclaim a huge number of lost hours. You can see how this can become addictive.

Using your Summary Task and Time Spend Table from Exercise 3.2 prepare a draft Inourcing List. This is just a first cut so you have something to work from when you tackle the Inourcing discussions with the kids. Keep a running record of the time you reclaim.

Reference Dr Alex's example in the *Doctors Workbook* for guidance.

Delegates to Insourced – Daily	Who	Time Reclaimed

Delegates to Insourced – Daily	Who	Time Reclaimed
Delegates to Insourced – Weekly	Who	Time Reclaimed

Delegates to Insourced – Daily	Who	Time Reclaimed

EXERCISE 4.4

Rejects at Work and Home

Using your Summary Task and Time Spend Table from Exercise 3.2, identify each task you currently perform which is a Total Reject and each which is a Partial Reject. Remember, these are the tasks which you will derive an immediate time benefit from by rejecting. When you transfer the data to the table below, group ‘like’ tasks together and then prioritise the table with those tasks that take the greatest amount of time. For each task, identify the date (deadline) by which you will have Rejected (Total Rejects) or modified (Partial Rejects) the task. Keep a running record of the time you reclaim.

Wants	Priority	Date

Step 5

TAKE ACTION

All things are difficult before they
are easy — Chinese Proverb

EXERCISE 5.1

My Action Plan

Refer back to the Exercises in Step 4: Reframe and transcribe as an Action the activities you have identified as Delegates (work and home) and Rejects (work and home) into the Action Plan below. Note the deadline, lock the deadline into your Calendar, then complete each Action by your identified deadline. Keep a running record of the time you reclaim to be allocated to your Wants.

You need to keep yourself accountable; you have come this far, it's time to implement. Refer to Dr Alex's example in the *Doctors Workbook* for additional guidance.

Action Plan	Date	Action Completed	Time Reclaimed
Delegates at Work			

Action Plan	Date	Action Completed	Time Reclaimed
Delegates Outsourced at Home			

Action Plan	Date	Action Completed	Time Reclaimed
Delegates Insourced at Home			

Action Plan	Date	Action Completed	Time Reclaimed
Partial Rejects at Work			

Action Plan	Date	Action Completed	Time Reclaimed
Total Rejects at Home			

Action Plan	Date	Action Completed	Time Reclaimed
Partial Rejects at Home			

Action Plan	Date	Action Completed	Time Reclaimed
Total Time Reclaimed			