

Although the *Infobulletin* is intended for plan administrators, the following article could be particularly helpful for your plan members. We encourage you to share this information with them.

Time management file (3 and 4 of 4)

Simple ways to save time

Whether at home, at work or on the road, we are constantly trying to find more time. This race against the clock often causes worry, fatigue, frustration, and especially, stress.

In our society, time management is a major concern for most people. That is why we have prepared a special file on the subject. To make it easier to read, this file is spread over four editions of the *Infobulletin*, with three tips per edition. This *Infobulletin* combines the third and fourth articles (six tips) in one special edition. We hope that you and your plan members will find these time management tips helpful.

Here are six easy ways to help you save time:

1. Set up relaxation breaks

To boost your productivity, it's recommended that you take around 10 minutes of downtime between intensive activities. This might mean a short walk around the floor or outside, picking up a document at the photocopier, having a coffee, eating your snacks, chatting with a coworker, etc. In other words, giving your neurons a break!

2. Organize your workspace

A disorganized desk can make you feel overloaded and spoil your concentration. Start by organizing your desk, leaving only active files or documents you need to access quickly on a daily basis.

Then adopt a simple, basic filing system so you don't need to wonder where to file a document (e.g. project, client, department, etc.). The filing system should meet your needs, first and foremost, while remaining accessible to coworkers who may need to access your files when you're away.

Finally, ensure that your office supplies are close at hand and strategically placed so you can access them quickly without having to move around.

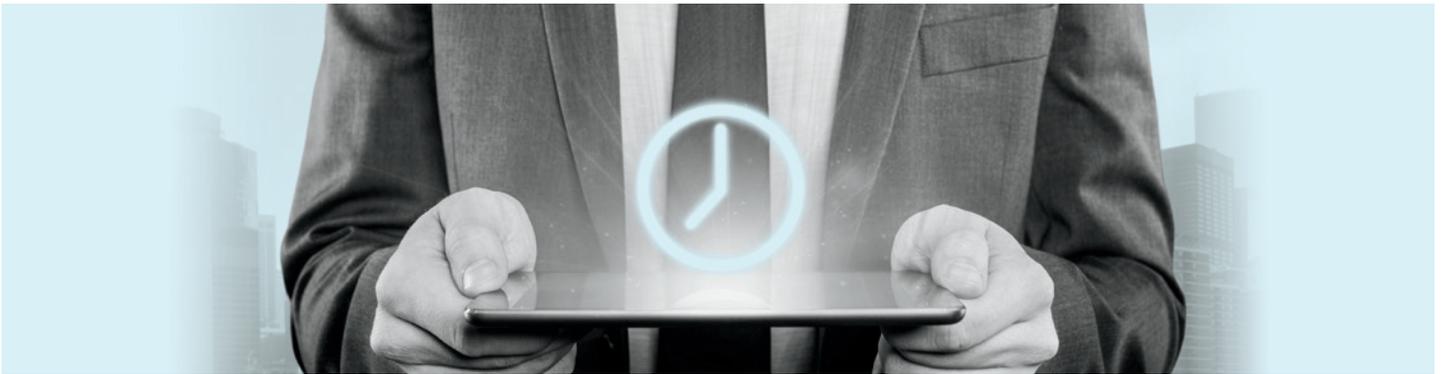


3. Structure communications with your coworkers

As friendly as your coworkers may be, they can often eat up a lot of your time. To cut down on the interruptions, you can set certain parameters:

- Specify your preferred means of communications (phone, email, meeting, etc.)
- Block out times in your schedule when your coworkers can come speak with you
- Use your breaks for “non-office” discussions

What matters is communicating your preferences clearly and respecting them.



4. Organize your emails

Effective email handling can save you time and energy. As in the case of your desk, your email should also be organized. Here's what management specialists suggest:

- Empty your inbox every day
- File processed emails in folders or archives
- Use tasks or colour coding associated with the action item
- Deactivate new email alerts to avoid distractions
- Unsubscribe from irrelevant mailing lists
- Schedule periods specifically for reading emails, if possible

5. Stop meeting marathons

Effective time management means meetings must be well planned. An agenda must be sent out ahead of the meeting so participants can be properly prepared. The agenda should specify the amount of time allotted to each topic so the meeting doesn't go over. The meeting should start when most of the attendees are present. An alert should also signal when there are 10 minutes left in the meeting. This will let you recap the meeting and review the deliverables. Minutes specifying these deliverables and responsible persons should be sent out after the meeting and used as a follow-up tool at the start of the next meeting.

6. Plan out of the office meetings wisely

Going out for a meeting in the middle of the day can eat up a lot of time. One solution is to plan on going out at the start or end of your workday. This strategy limits any waste of time, giving you more time to do your other work.

When you have a packed schedule, fitting in a work lunch can be stressful. Choose a restaurant that's close to your work. This will cut back on your travel time and will help you avoid traffic and other unforeseen circumstances.

Also, take along a few documents and/or your tablet. You might be able to get something done while waiting for your lunch companion(s).

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Sources (French only):

- “Gagnez 1 heure par jour en 20 actions simples”; *JDN*, September 2014
- “Comment organiser une réunion de travail efficace”; nutcache.com blog

About iA Financial Group

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