

<p>"If I plan too much, I can not react flexibly." Or: "Time management is only effective if I really implement everything."</p>	<p>These are two extreme positions of one and the same thing. You either believe time management is totally unnecessary or only effective if you put everything into action.</p>	<p>Avoid perfectionism. The attitude of doing everything, or nothing at all, does not get you anywhere. Keep in mind that even small improvements are a success.</p>
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<p>I've tried a few techniques, but I'm not sure if that makes sense.</p>	<p>You have no way to verify your success. This could make you lose your appetite.</p>	<p>Check if something has already improved - for example by checking whether you have complied with the contract with yourself (see below). Or ask someone else for feedback. Important: If you notice any improvements, you will continue.</p>
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Write down your plan carefully

If you are still unsure about whether you will consistently implement your plan, you will resort to an unusual tool: Write down exactly how you envisage the implementation of your personal self-management program over the next four weeks. Terminate as exactly as possible when you want to have reached which specification. Do not take yourself too much. When writing down, make your personal goals clear once again, imagine where your strengths and weaknesses lie and which methods and tools you want to use.

Now you can look for someone else - such as a partner or friend - who uses this plan to check that you have followed the intentions. You can also arrange minor sanctions and rewards. Maybe this pressure from outside will motivate you to stay on the ball. Or maybe it's just enough if you just get together with someone who also wants to improve their work organization, and they'll motivate each other from now on. But you can also formulate your requirements as a contract with yourself: Make clear agreements and set the date and signature below. But also agree on smaller sanctions if you become in breach of contract.

Sometimes say "no!"

You should leave 40 percent free in your schedule for unforeseen events. Nevertheless, these 40 percent free time may not be enough. This can happen because you can not beat other people's requests and wishes. Behind it can be in the daily dealings with other people very emotional motives, such as. the fear of offending someone with a rejection, the desire to please or the need to help others. What you do in such a situation is shown in the tips below.

The sound makes the music - especially with the "no" saying. When they feel pressured or overwhelmed, many people tend to say "no!" In an overly fierce and rude way. Always stay courteous and pack your "no!", As the examples below show.

Especially self-employed people face a particular problem: they have to earn money and therefore accept as many jobs as possible. At the same time, you want to establish yourself on the market and offer every customer the best possible service, which, however, usually does not initially bring them any additional income (even if good service pays off in the long term through customer loyalty and word of mouth). However, you do not do yourself a favor when you try to accept all orders and fulfill all the wishes of your customers; Do not do anything thoroughly and reliably any more, miss appointments and eventually have to cancel because you simply have no choice. However, your customers are more dissatisfied than if you had immediately declined, because the customers also have specifications and plans that they want to comply with and that, thanks to you, may no longer be able to do so. You lose confidence in your company and you soon count as someone who undecidedly does everything a bit but does nothing right. It is better to remember his purpose (see above) and to say "no!" Resolutely at the right moment.

Typical problems with the "no" saying

The following examples show situations that you may typically find in self-employment. The tips explain how you can solve the particular dilemma.

Dilemma	Solution	The tip for you
Mrs. W. is a communications consultant. A customer is bullied in the office. Ms. W. feels overwhelmed because psychological conflict resolution is not her domain. But the customer is sorry for her, she wants to help her and even spends sleepless nights.	Ms. W. explains to her customer exactly what she can do for her: Analyze communication and train repartee. For the psychological problems, however, Mrs. W. refers to a suitable specialist. The customer is satisfied and is looking for a psychologist in addition to the communication advice.	Do not make the personal problem of your customer your own if it has nothing to do with your business. They are not responsible for everything. Look for the best alternative for yourself and the customer!
Journalist P. is already sitting at a large article when he is offered a second, which is very important to him. He will not manage both at the same time. Either	Journalist P. explains the situation to his client. Together you will find a solution: The second project can be split into a series of articles, so that initially	There are more and more alternatives, not just "yes" or "no". If you offer the customer alternatives, you can find alternatives

he takes the second or not.
Or?

less effort is required. The
second part will come later.

together. You can talk
to most customers if
you only explain the
situation.

Mr. G. has specialized as an
antique dealer and restorer
on the Spanish Art Nouveau
style. A potential new
customer wishes the
restoration of a
Bidermeierkommode. The
job would bring good
money, but Mr. G. is not a
specialist for this: He would
have to first re-work and
under this time would suffer
other orders.

Mr. G. rejects the order. But
tells the customer that his
profile does not fit the job and
refers to another small business
that specializes in ... The
customer will keep Mr G. as
trusted contact person in mind
and recommend it to others

Do not just say "no",
because this is
repellent, but justify
why you have no time or
someone better suited
for the task.

Schreiner C. has built and
delivered a cabinet. The
customer now asks how
much the installation still
costs. At the same time he
mentions that in the near
future he also wants to order
a large dining table with
chairs if the price is right.

Schreiner C. has the choice: he
offers the assembly for free or
for a small price, in order to
bind the customer to himself.
But he does not have a guarantee
on the follow-up order, at the
same time he neglects important
work that directly brings money.
Or he demands the regular
installation price. If the
customer does not pay, he
waives the assembly order.

Decide deliberately.
Think about what your
initial goal was (good
service, low prices, fast
work or the like) and
then prioritize. And just
because you can say
"no!" You do not have to
do that. You have the
free choice of what you
accept and what you do
not - always!

Ms. H. is a web designer and
network administrator. But
her main client is always
coming to her with minor
computer problems.

Ms. H. offers the customer a
special training as a computer
service, as unfortunately, as she
states, she will often be
traveling in the coming months
due to an important project.

Offer help for self-help.
Explain to the customer
how it works. When
they come to you again
and again, it is clear that
the customer, who
should know it better
now, is only
comfortable. Then you
can charge the extra
service with a clear
conscience.

A clear, close-knit performance pro will help you say no. It makes clear to other Menschen from the outset, which services you are specialized in and which service you do not offer. If someone asks, "Do it too ..." you can say "no" with a clear conscience. In this case, the "no" even creates confidence because others know exactly what you can expect and what you are about.

Do not get bogged down

Maybe you know that: They just wanted to quickly write a few bills, search the Internet for the latest news from your industry or bring a new program on the computer. You do this and that - and suddenly, without you realizing it, the day is up and you have not done your actual work. Instead, you have messed around with little things and do not know where your time is.

However, if you have analyzed what activities you have spent your time with, as described above, you can understand where your time is left: review your listing and do not just focus on how much time you spend have reasonably worked effectively or relaxed in breaks, but also how much time you have wasted unnecessarily. You can now proceed methodically against this loss of time.

Do you need to do this work this way now?

First, question the meaning of your time-consuming activities. The following diagram once again shows you how to do this systematically. Some activities turn out to be necessary after a thorough analysis, but need to be organized differently (as shown in step 2). However, you can relieve yourself of many other tasks. These include routine tasks that you only do out of old habit, just because you have always done so.

Example: Mrs. K. is the owner of a gift shop. In the run-up to Christmas season is full. Despite the stress, every year she writes Christmas cards to all customers in her file. Some customers have not bought anything from her for years, here are the Christmas cards simply lost effort and an unnecessary cost factor. Ms. K. would do well to sort out the old customers.

Find a better time

But even if a job should be necessary - it certainly makes sense, for example, to send a Christmas greeting to good customers - the question remains whether you really have to take on this work yourself. In many cases, you could have simple tasks done inexpensively, efficiently, and quickly by someone else (more on that in the next chapter). For example, Ms K. could transfer this small work to a student. But you might also ask yourself if you really need to do this work in the run up to Christmas. In the

summer, during the holiday season, you often have nothing to do for days and are bored in your shop.

The holiday season would be a much better time to write the Christmas cards before. And you certainly also have one or the other idle periods in which you can do such work in between. Your personal analysis will show you where these are. Now plan these rather unimportant tasks specifically in such phases. In addition, to save time, you should also analyze whether you are performing the tasks efficiently. Make sure that you are not working out of habit in a cumbersome way, and how you can simplify this process and make it more efficient without sacrificing the result: Use technical tools such as software or a better computer, or automate workflows. For example, by setting frequently used functions on your computer directly (for example, this works in macros with Office applications). In our example, Mrs. K. writes all Christmas greetings by hand and then folds the homemade cards by hand. It would save a lot of time if you previously bought folded paper and then printed the greetings on the computer. Then you would have to write the greeting only once, instead of many times again and again, would need not be afraid of spelling mistakes and would end up only to sign and put the cards in the envelope. Only if, at the end of your analysis, you realize that you really need to do the work yourself, and now and in this way, should you do so.

Organize work

The best way to organize smaller work and routine activities is to group them in blocks. The idea behind this is as follows: You need preparation and a start-up time for every work you start: for example, you must find and correct documents, read yourself, think about the subject, start up your computer, and much more.

Example: Mrs. M. starts the working day with a customer call. She first looks for the documentation of the project, then the address of the client and puts forward the arguments with which she wants to convince. After the conversation, she unpacks all documents, writes invoices on the PC and prints them out. For this she has to turn on the appropriate equipment and then turn it off again. In the afternoon, another customer discussion leads you to the same topic as in the morning. Again, it brings out project and address documents. Finally, in the evening, she writes an offer, again on the PC.

If Ms. M had summarized the phone calls and the work on the PC into one block at a time, she would have gained an estimated half an hour, which she lost when she took two copies of the documents and started up and shutting down her computer. Therefore, always combine such smaller tasks into blocks and save unnecessary startup times with this "series production". You then need to prepare each activity only once and then perform it routinely. Once again, analyze the activities that usually fill your day. Now think carefully about which operations can be summarized into blocks and when on the