

HOW TO REDUCE YOUR ADMIN IN 5 EASY STEPS



AND SPEND MORE TIME WORKING IN
YOUR ZONE OF GENIUS

THE 5 STEP PROCESS

1

Eliminate

2

Systemise

3

Delegate

4

Automate

5

Measure

YOUR TIME AUDIT



The reason high performing businesses and leaders can be extra efficient isn't because they have some secret high-performing time management tools up their sleeve. They're time savvy!

A time audit lays the solid foundation needed to make informed decisions toward achieving your goal. You are more inclined to make rational rather than emotional decisions.

Before our 5-step process can work its magic, we need to see how you are spending your time now.

1. CHOOSE A TOOL

Choose how you are going to track your time over the next week. A couple of options are:

- A spreadsheet
- Your diary
- Time management tools ([Toggl](#) is one we've used)

2. PLAN YOUR CATEGORIES

Create project categories around the activities that (you think) make up your workday. Some examples could include "Emails," "Meetings," "Client calls," "Lunch," or "Me time." These will probably change after you've completed your audit and see what you really spend time on, but start with the areas where you ideally would have the majority of your time focused.

3. TRACK YOUR TIME ON TASK

Set your time tracker or alarm to ring at 15, 30, or 60 minute intervals, whichever suits your workday the best. Each time the alarm sounds write what you're working on in your manual log or change between projects in your time tracker. Re-set your alarm for the same interval and jump back into work.

4. ANALYSE YOUR TIME AUDIT

Now it's time to review how you've spent your time this week. If you used a diary, ask your VA to transfer your data into a spreadsheet so you can easily total and see how you've spent your week. If you chose a time tracking tool, you'll have the benefits of pre-made reports to view your data.

Any surprises?

This clear picture is critical to the following 5-step process. Often our perception of how we spent our time is quite different to the reality. And the numbers don't lie!



Use the tasks you've tracked time for to work through the following process. As new tasks, particularly repeatable tasks, find their way to your desk ... use the same process to keep admin from finding its way back to you.

STEP 1: ELIMINATE

Identify the tasks to eliminate by working through your audit and marking those that:

- Aren't essential to your business
- 'That's the way we do things' tasks that are obsolete
- Meetings that could be emails
- Emails that you shouldn't be copied in on, or could be replaced by a quick call
- Reports that aren't read

You get the picture. Be ruthless!

You can't do it all. Learn to say no, and value your time. If you've already said yes, it's still possible to say no. Just be honest with people and tell them that you have a high number of urgent projects to complete and cannot commit to this any longer. Slowly, you can eliminate your commitments to a very small number — only have those tasks in your day that are in your zone of genius. More on that later in this guide!

QUICK ACTION: WHAT TASKS ARE ON YOUR TO-DO LIST RIGHT NOW THAT COULD BE ELIMINATED?



STEP 2: SYSTEMISE

People can't be running to you every time they need to do something, asking for explanations on how to do it. If that's how you spend your time, how do you expect your business to ever grow, expand or succeed?

Identify all repeatable tasks in your time audit that have to be done. This means everything from answering emails, conducting meetings to cleaning up the office at the end of the week.

Write up standard operating procedures for each task that you expect staff to complete in your business. Go into as much detail as possible. If done correctly, you should be able to pull someone in off the street, hand them a page with the procedure on it and have them complete the task themselves.... ok maybe not but you get our drift!

These procedures are the bread and butter of the systemisation process. Even if someone has never done a task before, in theory if your task checklists are thorough enough, they should simply be able to follow the right steps and do the task themselves.

TIP: Use Loom or Vimeo to record your screen the next time you carry out one of these tasks. You can then simply send the video to your VA or team member and they can write up the instructions as a documented procedure.

STEP 3: DELEGATE

Which tasks in your audit have to be done, but don't have to be done by you? In order to reduce your admin and spend time on those tasks that are the best use of your time, you're going to need to delegate.

Use the following principles to delegate successfully:

1. Clearly articulate the desired outcome. Begin with the end in mind and specify the desired results.
2. Clearly identify constraints and boundaries. Where are the lines of authority, responsibility and accountability? Should the person:
 - Wait to be told what to do?
 - Ask what to do?
 - Recommend what should be done, and then act?
 - Act, and then report results immediately?
 - Initiate action, and then report periodically?
3. Match the amount of responsibility with the amount of authority. Understand that you can delegate some responsibility, however you can't delegate away ultimate accountability. The buck stops with you!
4. Provide adequate support, and be available to answer questions. Ensure the project's success through ongoing communication and monitoring as well as provision of resources and credit.
5. Focus on results. Concern yourself with what is accomplished, rather than detailing how the work should be done: Your way is not necessarily the only or even the best way! Allow the person to control their own methods and processes. This facilitates success and trust.

- Avoid "upward delegation." If there is a problem, don't allow the person to shift responsibility for the task back to you. Instead, ask for recommended solutions and don't simply provide an answer.
- Build motivation and commitment. Discuss how success will impact financial rewards, future opportunities, informal recognition, and other desirable consequences. Provide recognition where deserved.
- Establish and maintain control.
 - Discuss timelines and deadlines.
 - Agree on a schedule of checkpoints at which you'll review project progress.
 - Make adjustments as necessary.
 - Take time to review all submitted work.

In thoroughly considering these key points prior to and during the delegation process, you will find that you delegate more successfully ... with successful results.

DON'T BE THIS GUY



STEP 4: AUTOMATE

AND/OR SCALE

Carefully examine your repeatable tasks. If you know a recurring task is operating at peak efficiency, consider adding a tool to automate the task, then consider adding an additional resource such as a freelancer or virtual assistant, which will allow the business to scale.

TIP: YOU CAN ALSO DELEGATE THIS STEP TO YOUR VA. FROM DOCUMENTATION OF HOW THE TASK IS CARRIED OUT NOW THROUGH TO REVIEW OF THAT PROCESS TO IDENTIFY WHERE AUTOMATION CAN BE USED.



STEP 1: IDENTIFY TASKS THAT ARE REPETITIVE AND CONSUME MOST OF YOUR TIME

You've done this in your time audit! Proceed to step 2.

STEP 2: CHECK IF / HOW IT CAN BE AUTOMATED

Now that you know which tasks need to be automated, the next step is to find out *how* you can automate it. An example of a repetitive task perfect for automation is scheduling appointments. Instead of emailing back and forth with your clients to find the best time that works for both of you, use an online appointment tool which can also send reminders, allow for rescheduling and a range of other features which make the experience even better for your clients.

STEP 3: SET UP THE AUTOMATION AND NEVER DO THE TASK AGAIN!

Once the automation is set up, test it to check it works perfectly and make any necessary changes.

While automation saves time and can improve your process, the best automations glitch from time to time.

We recommend a check list (delegated) where your automations are tested regularly.

STEP 5: MEASURE

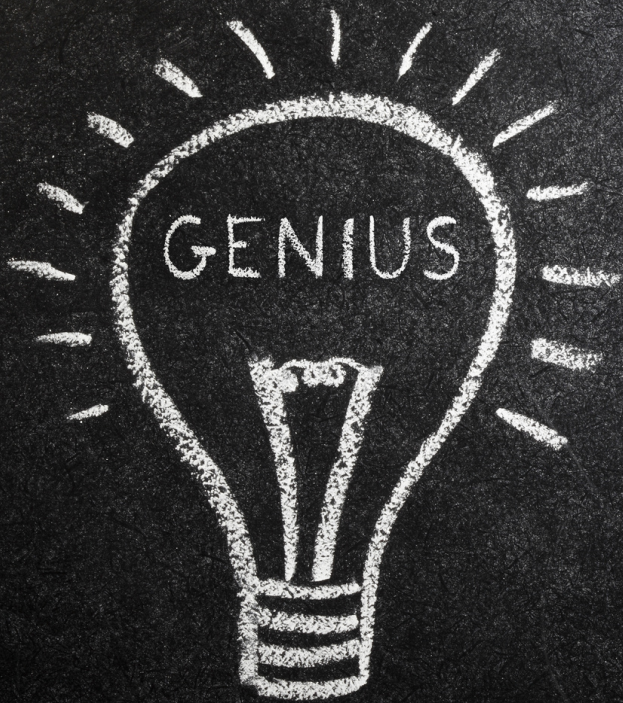
The most important step of all!

Going back to your time audit, total the time you'll save once you've delegated, systemised and automated the tasks you can. This is time you need to guard with your life, not letting 'noise' sneak back in. This is time you'll now have free to work in your zone of genius.

You're not going to be perfect ... and habits die hard. A great way to stay on track is to carry out your time audit again, one week in one month's time. Follow this same 5-step process to make sure you're only working on tasks that are the best use of your time.

YOUR ZONE OF GENIUS

Now that you have more time it's important you spend it working in your zone of genius. Here's an exercise to help you identify which tasks you should be working on.



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USING THE GRID ON THE NEXT PAGE, FILL IT IN AS FOLLOWS:

SQUARE 1: What are you doing in your business that you WANT TO DO?

SQUARE 2: What are you NOT doing in your business that you WANT TO DO?

SQUARE 3: What are you doing in your business that you DON'T WANT TO DO?

SQUARE 4: What are you NOT doing in your business that you DON'T WANT TO DO?

The goal of this exercise is to honour your own time and how you prioritise it. By seeing the tasks categorised you can now plan.

- Circle the tasks in squares 1 and 4. Those tasks are what you should be doing, they are contributing to your business.
- Now circle the tasks in squares 2 and 3. These are what you want to see removed from your box the next time you do this exercise, these tasks are not contributing to your business ... or your passion in what you do.

By identifying and delegating tasks in square 3 you'll free up the time, energy and motivation to do more of what's in square 2.

Pin the square where you see it every day as a reminder that the quality of how you spend your time is in your hands.

DOING NOW

NOT DOING

WANT TO DO

DON'T WANT TO DO

THE WISH LIST

If a to-do list is everything you need to get done in the next 7 days, then a wish list is everything else.

A wish list is a list of those tasks you:

- Don't get around to
- Can't do
- Deem low priority
- Create noise in your head
- Often (sadly) are in your genius zone
- Think too hard
- Make too big

If you keep them in a list on your phone, in your project management system or just in a doc, then you can add to them as other tasks come to mind.

TIP: If you categorise the tasks by the amount of time they'll take, when you get a spare 5 minutes, 10 minutes or an hour you'll know which task to choose to tick off.

Imagine if you committed to completing one wish list item per week ... how would that feel!

NEXT STEP: BOOK YOUR DISCOVERY CALL

DISCOVER HOW WE CAN GIVE YOU YOUR TIME BACK

LET'S DO THIS!

"Most of us spend too much time on what is urgent, and not enough time on what is important."

~ Steven Covey

