

# Stress coping strategies

## ***Manage your time***

Time management means consciously planning and controlling your time – setting an amount of time, or a time limit for each task and putting tasks in the best order. Good time organisation helps you to increase efficiency or productivity and get things done in the **best possible** time. It's not just at work but at home too, you work much more efficiently if tasks and activities are completed in a logical manner!

You need to think about:

- Planning and organisation, consider the most efficient order of doing things
- Allocation of time – consider prioritising, delegating, and looking at how much help may be needed
- Monitoring and analysis – keep an eye on time – you need to know if unforeseen factors are causing time to slip; or if less time is spent than expected

Time management is something we do, often without particularly thinking about it – if you've got to catch a train or arrive somewhere on time, you mentally calculate when you need to set off, building in a bit of leeway just in case, and you work out what you can reasonably do before setting off too!

At work you are continually estimating when tasks will be done, you usually need to have an idea yourself, but often this has to be a bit more formal – the time required to complete a job will be needed to calculate the cost of the job or provide a completion date to customers, managers or colleagues.

Without proper time management you can easily end up with no real idea of where you are as far as getting the job done is concerned and you can find yourself spending time on everything, even on things that are not important. Without adequate time planning, it's harder to cater for the unexpected and if things start to go wrong, it's difficult to work out what to do next. Lack of planning leads to inadequate preparation, unexpected problems and poor execution.

Good time planning gives you structure, defining a path for you – and it's easier to see if you stray from the path!

The [mindtools](#) website has lots of help on time management have a look for more information.