

## QuickTakes



### Make a to-do list!

Make a list and be sure to allow time to complete each item. At the end of each day, schedule the time in your calendar to accomplish each to-do.

### Make sure:

- Each occasion occurs in your calendar at a specific time
- The occasion duration is sufficient to complete what there is for you to do or handle
- You begin and end your occasion at a specific time
- You have an alarm set to alert you to the beginning of the occasion
- At the end of each day all of the items on your to-do list are occasioned in your calendar.

## SMART Goals

Every waking hour you are making decisions. The decisions can be as minor as what to eat for breakfast or as major as buying a house. All decisions require time to think but some take much longer than others. Often you will make the right choice but sometimes you won't. This process is continuous, and the goal is to use your time effectively in order to decrease the amount of stress and increase rewarding results.

So let's develop a plan of action. To start, you should identify the blockers in your life. What is causing you to waste time and slow down your decision making process? Here are few symptoms of ineffective time management. Do any of these apply to you?

- Missed deadlines
- Constant interruptions during the day
- Procrastination of tasks

Once you have identified your specific blockers, the next step is to identify the barriers and to set goals to overcome them. To key to setting your goals is to make sure they are **SMART goals**—**S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ctionable, **R**ealistic and **T**imely.

- A **specific** goal lets you clearly see what you want to achieve and has standards for that achievement. For example, a non-specific goal would be "I want to get in shape." A specific goal would be "I want to workout 30 minutes a day, 3 days a week." Writing down your goals is crucial. Unwritten goals tend to be vague and easy to forget.
- A **measurable** goal needs to have a way to measure progress and an endpoint so you know when you have achieved the goal. Progress is important in motivating you to continue. It allows you to stay on track, reach your target date(s), and give you the feeling of accomplishment as you move towards your final goal
- An **actionable** goal must be something you need to do yourself in order to accomplish it. For example, you don't want to say that you're going to make more money this year by winning the lottery because you have no control over it. Your goal would be that you are going to make 10 sales by setting 15-20 sales meetings.
- A **realistic** goal needs to be challenging but not too easy as well as something you are willing and able to reach. This doesn't mean that you set the bar low to make sure you are successful.
- A **timely** goal is one that has a specific end date/time but does not necessarily end with a particular event or action. It's important to remember that while this particular goal may be completed, that doesn't mean that it can't be repeated or used again for another set time period.

The best SMART goals are specific, focused and short-term targets that are under your direct control. Take the time to start off the New Year on the right foot.

# 9 Ways to Get Back on Track!

Do you often wish there were more hours in the day? Do you wonder how some people appear to get everything done in just 24? You're not alone. There are many others like you who are trying to balance their time between to work, family and friend obligations. It's important to learn how to prioritize your life, manage your time, reduce stress and still find time for yourself.

One way to start is to learn to say "no" to uninvited interruptions and find ways to be more efficient in your current activities. Read the following suggestions on how to manage your time more effectively. Concentrate on correcting those areas that waste the most time for you.

## Think of the 80/20 Principle.

Carefully choose where you will concentrate your efforts. The 80/20 principle states that 80% of the most valuable results come from 20% of the tasks you do. Concentrate your working time on just these important tasks. Avoid the trivial.

## Distinguish between activity and productivity.

Are you wasting time on busy work (activity) that may not lead to a goal, or are you spending time productively, in a way that will produce results? Concentrate on productive time. Ask yourself often, "Am I just keeping busy, or am I really being productive?"

## Make a To-Do List.

Make this list every day! Write it down and keep it at your fingertips. Having a list of activities that can be checked off is gratifying. It also give you some idea of progress. Be sure to clear what's left on your list at the end of each day by scheduling time in your calendar for them.

## What is the best use of my time right now?

Ask this question when you are uncertain about your use of time and to get you back on track in the following situations:

- o after an interruption
- o when distracted
- o when procrastinating

## Avoid over-commitment.

This can be caused by inflexible scheduling or overbooking. Know your personal limits and time frames and have realistic expectations.

## Follow the A, B, C priority system.

Categorize your activities under A, B, C priorities, with "A" being the top priority. Focus your energies on completing the A's. Perhaps B's and C's could be delegated to others. Some C's may never even have to be done.

## Schedule quiet time.

Establish a regular quiet time for yourself. Inform key interrupters, and don't take telephone calls. Allow yourself quiet time to restore your energy.

## Balance quiet time and activity time.

Too much quiet time can reduce the productivity of those around you. They may depend upon your input – emotionally and otherwise. Ask your co-workers/family if your quiet time is a problem for them.

## Tuscan Beans and Greens Soup

If you like, garnish each bowl with a few curls of Parmesan cheese.

Photo source: Ellen Silverman/Matria Healthcare

### Ingredients:

Olive oil cooking spray  
4 large plum tomatoes  
2 carrots, peeled and quartered lengthwise  
1 onion, cut into 8 wedges  
6 cloves garlic, unpeeled  
6 cups low-sodium chicken broth  
8 ounces kale or spinach, stemmed and sliced  
3/4 cup uncooked Barilla PLUS elbows or other multi-grain pasta  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 15-ounce can white beans, rinsed and drained  
Freshly ground black pepper

### Preparation:

1. Preheat the oven to 400° F. Spray a baking sheet with sides with cooking spray.
2. Cut tomatoes in half lengthwise. Spread tomato halves, onion wedges, carrots and garlic on the baking sheet. Spray the vegetables with cooking spray. Roast for 30 minutes or until the vegetables are tender, stirring occasionally.
3. Slice carrots and set aside. Peel garlic cloves and place in a food processor along with tomatoes and onion wedges. Pour 2 cups of the broth onto the baking sheet to loosen any browned bits clinging to sheet; pour this liquid into the processor. Process until roughly pureed, but not smooth. Transfer to a large saucepan.
4. Add the remaining 4 cups broth, the kale, macaroni and salt to the saucepan. Bring to a simmer over medium heat. Cover, reduce the heat and cook for 10 minutes. Stir in beans and carrots and cook until heated through. Ladle the soup into bowls, sprinkle with pepper and serve.



**Nutrition Facts:** (PER SERVING) 162 Calories, 0.7g Fat, 0.1g Saturated fat, 9.0g Protein, 30g Carbohydrate, 5.3g Fiber, 551mg Sodium