

Scheduling First Things First



Purpose

If, like me, you work-from-home and have a constant challenge juggling work, home-life, priorities and *to do* lists, then this scheduling exercise is for you. It will help you prioritise things so that you end every day/week feeling like you've achieved most, if not all, of the *really* important things without compromising your values.

What you'll need

- At the end of this short note is a blank Weekly Schedule Template, with one hour slots of time from 5 am to 11pm, and a sample of one I have completed.
- You will need six or seven different coloured pens, depending on the number of roles / priorities you need to highlight.

Thinking time

- Spend time giving real thought to the things that are important to you that you want to reflect in your schedule on a regular basis. It's so easy to go through life fire-fighting and spinning plates. If you could schedule your *ideal* week, what would you do, when and with whom? Once you start allocating time you will be forced to decide which things you need to drop, even if they are all "good things" to do.
- **Quick tip** – If, like me, the idea of planning and scheduling makes you feel like you've been put in a straightjacket, here is the trick that works for me. I quite often escape to a beautiful hotel for a morning or afternoon where my sole mission is to get the planning done before I leave, while the beautiful surroundings feed my soul and the waiters are on hand to feed my body 😊



Put pen (highlighter!) to paper

- Use different coloured highlighter pens to physically highlight where in the week you will invest the time to live the values important to you. So, in the example, I colour in 5-6:30am as quiet time for building my faith, feeding my soul and planning ahead. On a Tuesday afternoon and a Thursday evening I colour in a pink heart to show time to spend one-on-one with my husband, Jon and our date night, giving my relationship priority in my diary and so on, as reflected in the colour code at the bottom of the schedule.
- Think about your peak periods and when you are most creative. For me, “thinking and writing” or more creative work is scheduled in before lunch.
- Once you have created the schedule of your ideal week, the trick is to plan each week’s appointments and activities following the template as closely as possible. Have a sense for what general commitments for the month look like so you can balance time across the priorities if any particular week is out of kilter, as happens when I have “full day” consulting assignments.
- For each key role, jot down the things you need to get done that week and work out when those things will be scheduled, so everyone gets considered.
- Instead of having an unending *to do* list that keeps rolling, I suggest having one “big thing” that must be done each day and a handful of other things that can be fit into nooks and crannies. So, for me, a big thing might be a client workshop, presentation or article that must be written and I focus on that to the exclusion of everything else until it’s done. Then I fit the smaller things like making a handful of calls, sending a specific email or popping to the cleaners or the local shop, into nooks and crannies.
- Depending on your lifestyle, expect that your ideal week might only be relevant for a couple of months. Mine changes often around school holidays.

Remember why you’re doing this

- Commit to putting first things first by scheduling them into your diary so that in the inimitable words of Bob Marley, you can “**love the life you live and live the life you love**”. 😊

I really hope you find this exercise as helpful and beneficial as I have. Good luck implementing it and finding the balance that works for you.

Andrea

Need help? Let us know if you would like to join in our next online workshop to clarify your goals, create your schedule and plan your diary. Send us an email to <mailto:info@soulmates.academy> for details of the next one.

Weekly Schedule Template

For the period: mm / yy to mm / yy

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
5:00							
6:00							
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							
12:00							
13:00							
14:00							
15:00							
16:00							
17:00							
18:00							
19:00							
20:00							
21:00							
22:00							
23:00							

COLOUR CODE: Quiet Time/Planning Partner Children/Family Work Exercise Passion/Hobby/Charity Other

© Andrea Taylor-Cummings, Used with permission.

FOCUS: LAUNCH RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION WEBSITE
 WORK = PASSION !!



Weekly Schedule Template

For the period: Oct 17 to Dec 17

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
5:00	Partner	Partner	Partner	Partner	Partner	Partner	Partner
6:00	Children/Family	Children/Family	Children/Family	Children/Family	Children/Family	Children/Family	Children/Family
7:00	Children/Family	Children/Family	Children/Family	Children/Family	Children/Family	Children/Family	Children/Family
8:00	Exercise	Exercise	Exercise	Exercise	Exercise	Exercise	Exercise
9:00	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work
10:00	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work
11:00	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work
12:00	Partner	Partner	Partner	Partner	Partner	Partner	Partner
13:00	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work
14:00	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work
15:00	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work
16:00	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work
17:00	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work
18:00	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work
19:00	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work
20:00	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work
21:00	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work
22:00	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work
23:00	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work	Work

COLOUR CODE: Quiet Time/Planning (Pink), Partner (Purple), Children/Family (Blue), Work (Green), Exercise (Orange), Passion/Hobby/Charity (Yellow), Home-based business (Red), Other (Grey)

© Andrea Taylor-Cummings, Used with permission.