

PRIORITISATION

The Scenario: Susan's Monday

Meet Susan

Susan works in a mid-level role at a marketing agency. It's Monday morning, and their list is a mix of hard deadlines, social pressures, and low-value noise. Using different methods allows Susan to manage both their expectations and their energy levels.

The Brain Dump List

01. Prepare slides for a client pitch on Friday
02. Respond to 23 unread emails
03. Post a company update on LinkedIn
04. Book annual leave for next month
05. Update timesheet (due by 5pm today)
06. Write performance review for a team member (due next week)
07. Finish reading a report for tomorrow's team meeting
08. Call the IT desk about laptop glitches
09. Proofread and send a blog draft to the comms team
10. Buy a birthday card for a colleague's surprise lunch today

Method 1: The Task Matrix

Susan uses the Urgency-Importance matrix to manage deadlines and external expectations.

URGENT & IMPORTANT

DO NOW

- Update timesheet (5pm deadline)
- Read report for tomorrow

NOT URGENT & IMPORTANT

DECIDE / SCHEDULE

- Prepare pitch slides (Due Friday)
- Write staff review
- Respond to critical emails

URGENT & NOT IMPORTANT

DELEGATE / DEFER

- Buy birthday card (Social pressure)
- Post LinkedIn update
- Proof blog draft

NOT URGENT & NOT IMPORTANT

DROP / BATCH

- Book annual leave (Can wait)
- Call IT (Not critical now)

Result: Susan focuses on hard deadlines like the timesheet first.

Method 2: The MoSCoW Method

M MUST HAVE (DO TODAY)

- Submit timesheet (Due 5pm)
- Read report for tomorrow's meeting
- Buy birthday card for surprise lunch

S SHOULD HAVE (IMPORTANT)

- Start preparing pitch slides
- Write performance review (Due next week)
- Respond to important emails
- Call IT (Annoying but needs sorting)

C COULD HAVE (HELPFUL)

- Proof blog draft
- Post LinkedIn update
- Book annual leave

W WON'T HAVE (POSTPONE)

- *Non-urgent emails / Extra admin noise*

"If everything is a priority, nothing is a priority."

Method 3: The ABCDE Method

A ABSOLUTELY MUST DO

- Submit timesheet (Due today)
- Read report (Needed for tomorrow)
- Start pitch slides (High impact)

B IMPORTANT BUT NOT CRITICAL

- Write performance review
- Respond to important emails
- Call IT desk

C NICE TO DO

- Proof blog draft
- Post on LinkedIn
- Buy birthday card (Nice gesture)

D DELEGATE

- Shared inbox emails
- Blog proofing (if assistant available)

E ELIMINATE

- *LinkedIn post (if energy is low)*

By sorting the noise, Susan protects their focus for the high-consequence tasks first.