



# solutions



You can feel like you are gaining time when you plan in advance. Taking the initiative to have everything in order for a project, for example, can make things run a lot more smoothly and efficiently — opening up your time for other things. This certainly beats being in crisis mode and constantly feeling under pressure.

**Organize yourself by using the tips below to reach your goals to prevent being overwhelmed.**

## 1. MAP IT

Get started by breaking down a project into digestible units. This can relieve the anxiety of tackling something that may initially feel complex or overwhelming.

Decide which steps you need to take first and what tools you will need to successfully complete a given project. Map it out in a simple handwritten diagram or spreadsheet. Once you can see all the components laid out and how they fit together, you can more easily formulate a plan to complete it in the most efficient way.

## 2. PRIORITIZE

Decide what goals are most important to you for a given day, week, and month. Take a big picture view. After you have put your plan together, you will

want to rank the steps in order of importance. You can map out the time and importance of each component of the project. You will also want to see where a given task or project may fit in order of importance with other things that you and your team need to accomplish.

## 3. SCHEDULE FOCUS TIME

Schedule a meeting for a project or a recurring task. Set aside devoted time on your calendar to work on a particular goal. This not only gives you uninterrupted time to work on something, it can also concentrate your focus, which can make you more efficient — and ultimately save you time.



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## 4. TAKE A BREAK FROM EMAIL

You can set aside specific blocks of time to review and answer your email. And, try to be disciplined about avoiding other distractions, too. The nature of email feels like it requires a quick response, so try to stay focused on using only the time you scheduled for email, if at all possible.

## 5. DELEGATE

If there are some lower priority tasks or projects on your plate, consider delegating them to another team member. This may be a temporary fix, until you get a larger project completed or you may just need some extra time for a day or part of your day. Delegating is a natural extension of organizing — you can more clearly see what is important and urgent. There are some things that need your personal attention and others that may not.

## 6. SCHEDULE DOWNTIME

Just as you schedule time for concentrated work on a task or project component, you need to schedule downtime, too. Try to walk away from your project in order to return with a fresh perspective. Some recent research recommends five-minute walking breaks to help reset your mind. Even a brief visit with a colleague can free your mind for a new start with refreshed energy.

## 7. CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESS

Make sure that you pat yourself on the back and praise your team members after you have successfully completed your project. This is an important part of the process. When you acknowledge how well you have done, this sets you up for future success. Celebrating also helps you better remember your success and the next time you have a big project presented to you, you will be less likely to feel anxious about whether you will complete it easily or how to get started. You will also have the knowledge of past organizational strategies that usually bring future success.

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Being more efficient with your time can often give you the extra time to focus on other things that might help you get a head start on your future goals. You will also have extra time to organize and prepare for bringing yourself to other triumphs.



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