

## Personal Time Management Chart and Exercise: 4 Steps to Better Work-life Balance

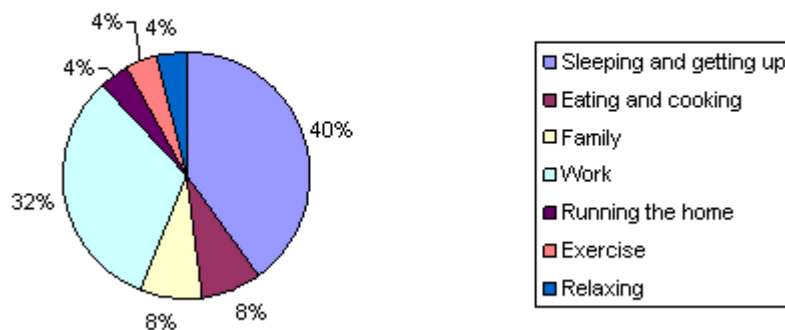
Time waits for no one. But the conundrum is that you need to spend time to make time. So spend a little time on creating your personal time management chart and free yourself to do what you really want to do instead.

### Time Management Exercise Step 1 - I'll tell you what I want, what I really, really want.....

What do you want to do? Really, really want to do? Write down how you want to spend your time, and make an estimate of how much time that will take.

Your ideal personal time management chart might look like this, or might not, depending on your age, circumstances and desires, but either way, you get the idea.

### Personal Time Management Chart

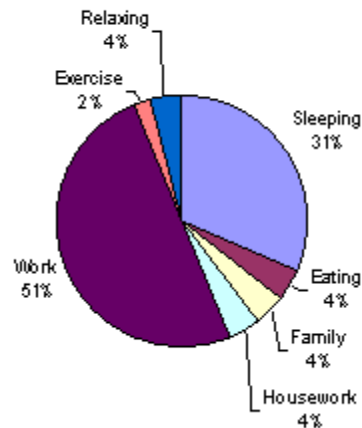


### Time Management Exercise Step 2 -

When you think you've got no time to exercise but spend 2 hours a day in front of the TV, we need some facts to separate perception from reality. Make a diary of what you do from dawn until dusk. Yes, all of it - eating, sleeping and everything else in between - and you'll find out what you're really up to. So, every hour, on the hour note what you've been up to, and keep recording for at least one "normal" week.

Tallying things up at the end of the week, your actual personal time management chart might look something like this.

## Actual Personal Time Management Chart



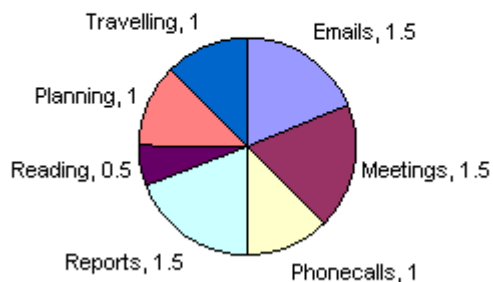
Bet you didn't realize how much of your life is dedicated to one or two activities! In the example, work takes up 51% of your life - that's more than everything else combined, including sleeping! And see how everything else gets squeezed - no wonder you're struggling to get on top of things.

### Time Management Exercise Step 3 - Work Life Balance

In this example, you might want to tackle the biggest time drain - your work. Go back to step 1 and do it all over again, this time focusing on your ideal working day. Figure out how you should be spending your time at work, and then create your ideal work time management chart.

### Ideal Work Time Management Chart

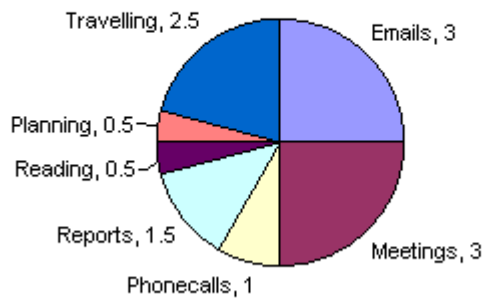
(Total Time = 8 hours)



### Time Management Exercise Step 4 - The devil is in the detail

Repeat step 2 for your work, and record how you spend your work life. This will give you an insight into where your energy is directed, and give you a starting point to [Do, Dump, Delegate or Defer](#) work.

## Actual Work Time Management Chart (in hours)



Can you be more creative about how you work - is there a chance to reduce traveling time by moving closer to work? Or does it make more sense to work from home more often? Or can you take the train instead and do your reading and planning then instead. (Or as most commuters do, catch up on missed sleep!)

Spend time to make time by creating your ideal personal time management chart and testing it against reality. You'll be surprised how much time you can free up and how much energy you'll recover by doing what you really, really want to do.

By Lyndsay Swinton  
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