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Illustration by Laura the Drawer

Lists a good way to keep on track

Dr Jobs

There are too many balls in the air! As a mum who works full time, I'm used to juggling business and family life but things are spiralling out of control. How can I get back on track?

We've all had those frenzied periods from time to time where we're working long hours against tight deadlines while life keeps charging full-speed ahead.

I know you know exactly what I mean.

Taking time out worked a treat for me and it got me thinking about what I could not do next time as the workload and pressure is building, and be more effective. Rather than write a list of all the things I need to do, I came up with a not-to-do list. Here it is:

1. I'm not going to take on stuff that's not my stuff. If people are being difficult or simply playing princesses for no reason, I'm out. It's just too hard. And while I'm happy to play politics if it makes the wheels go round, there's a difference between being connected and being a gossip. I don't

have any time for the latter and to be truthful, I really don't want to work with gossips any more.

2. I'm not going to do things that my team could do at least as well. I reckon if I get out of their way and just let them do it, we'll get heaps more done together.

3. I'm not booking back-to-back meetings any more. I'm going to schedule free time each day to think strategically and creatively about my current business priorities. And the meetings I do have will be for 30-45 minutes max, with a gap in between so I can complete any actions straight away whenever possible. I'll take my Mac with me to meetings and email information and intros then and there, which should have a huge impact on my to-do list and efficiency levels.

4. I won't send emails if I can avoid it and I'll unsubscribe to emails I don't want to receive. I'm not a total slave to my emails, but for the next month I'm going to scrutinise my emails even more. Unless there's an easy yes/no answer or it's just a quick info email, I'm going to use the phone instead. Let's see what impact this has on my time.

5. I'm not going for coffee meet-

ings unless I've had a tele-coffee first. This is an idea from a great friend. It's just so much more efficient to apply this filter first, and then follow up only if necessary with a face-to-face meeting.

6. I won't forget to follow up prospects just because there's so much to do, because I know it's so much easier to close a warm lead than to start with a cold one. It's unforgivable that I've not delivered on all the requests for memberships and speaking proposals that I've received in the past fortnight.

7. Finally, I'm not going to stop exercising just because I'm busy. It's me that suffers and everyone else around me, because I get tired and stressed and cranky. So I will not be skipping the morning walks any more, and I'm not going to let a week go by without a decent yoga practice!

Jen Dalitz is a business consultant, farmer, mother and founder of the network for women in leadership, sphinxx.

She will be in Brisbane on Tuesday to host a seminar titled "Rethink Your Approach" for women in or aspiring to be in leadership roles to build their confidence as well as skills.

Visit www.sphinxx.com.au