



Step 04. Plan Your Time

Most of our schedules are crazy and we've normally got more to do than we can fit in a single day or week. At the same time, we often find a way to make room for 'urgent' things or last-minute requests - we move things around, pause activities or stop one thing so we can work on another.

When there's an emergency, we also tend to find a way to re-arrange our work and make time for something that's urgent, or for important meetings that someone says we have to be at.

Problem is, we tend not to view the important elements of leading a team as 'urgent' - they get put to the bottom of the pile and then tend not to happen...

Questions

- How much time each week gets taken up with last minute / urgent request that you have to respond to?
- What do you do to make time for those things in your schedule?
- What would it be like if you pretended the things in the list above were as urgent as your operational tasks so you made sure you gave time to them?

Actions

- Get active with your diary and take responsibility for what's in it. Make sure you plan in time for the elements above
- Plan time in your diary each week as 'blank space' where you have no meetings, no activities and no requests. It might just be half an hour and you might have to move it around from week to week, but having a few regular minutes planned for thinking and reflection will help get you back on track when you need it...and it'll make a long-term difference to the way you lead your team
- Keep a journal of your work diary for a couple of weeks and colour code the various activities. Take a look at the different colours. Notice what they tell you about the way you're working and chat it through with your own line manager - do you need to make any adjustments