



When Overwhelm is in Overdrive

Thirty days left until Christmas 2024 (assuming you celebrate). This time of year, puts overwhelm into overdrive with too much to do and a list that is a mile long. We have goals to complete before year end, budgets to approve, performance reviews to give, inboxes to clean out, friends and family to visit, shopping, and, and, and...all the while a very comfy couch, a nice beverage, and the new Netflix series to watch awaits.

Many of my clients have been talking about the constant overwhelm. I'm no stranger to this feeling. Here are a number of strategies that have been coming into my coaching conversations lately:

- **Clarify Priorities:** What is truly important right now and for the remaining weeks of the year? What absolutely has to get done, by when and by who?
- **Set Clear Goals:** What are the big goals that look challenging and hard? I encourage you to set clear, specific, and achievable goals for each task or project. Breaking tasks down into smaller, manageable steps can make them less overwhelming and easier to tackle.
- **Time Management:** Introduce effective time management techniques. I've resurrected using the Pomodoro Technique. I have the timer app on my phone and I use it to stay focused for 25 min to complete a task before taking a 5 min rest.
- **Mindfulness and Focus:** I used to think of this as one more task!! However, it has made a huge impact. I encourage you to incorporate mindfulness practices that can improve focus and reduce stress. Techniques like deep breathing, meditation, or even short walks can help you get (re)focused.
- **Set Boundaries:** Set boundaries to minimize distractions. This might involve creating a dedicated workspace, setting specific work hours, and communicating availability to colleagues and family members.
- **Delegate and Say No:** Yes, No, Not Now. Delegation and the power of saying no to tasks that do not align with your priorities is critical to getting what you need to get done, DONE.
- **Reflect and Adapt:** Try regular reflection on what is working and what isn't. Adapting strategies and making necessary adjustments can help you find what best supports your productivity and focus.

Hopefully you can apply one (or even a few) of these strategies, to manage priorities more effectively, maintain focus, and transition into a peaceful and relaxing holiday season.

Be Inspired. Be Inspiring.
Stacie

Client Story

Operations Manager at a Service Company

My client was describing his recent weeks in which he was losing track and focus with so many different priorities and tasks coming at him. It was getting to a point where things weren't getting done and the overwhelm was creating indecisiveness. A vicious circle was beginning.

We worked through the simple yet effective framework of the Eisenhower Matrix. Together, we explored how to categorize tasks into four quadrants: Urgent and Important, Important but Not Urgent, Urgent but Not Important, and Neither Urgent nor Important. My client already started to see how this would help him prioritize and manage time more effectively.

The feeling of paralysis began to lift as he could see what needed immediate attention, by him specifically, versus what could be tackled later and even delegated. He set specific goals for each week, breaking down large tasks into manageable steps. Time-blocking allowed for dedicated focus periods and regular breaks. Using this framework also allowed for break in and emergency work (which was common at his firm) to get slotted in. More importantly, my client started to ensure time was put into his week to coach and train key staff so he could delegate and give more autonomy. His vicious circle was course correcting.

An important lesson learned for me as his coach: I had first come across the Eisenhower Matrix many years ago and thought it was a common workplace tool for prioritization and time management. The simple tools can be effective and even though simple and effective, they are not always as common as I think.

*"WHEN EVERYTHING SEEMS TO BE GOING AGAINST YOU, REMEMBER THAT THE AIRPLANE TAKES OFF AGAINST THE WIND, NOT WITH IT."
- HENRY FORD*