

## Workload Management Top Tips

### Agenda

- Workload management tips and tools
- How do you feel about saying 'no'?
- Building confidence
- Internal vs external
- Building your case

### Meetings

- There has been an increase in meetings especially in Team meetings rather than sending emails. Most people having an average of 10 – 15 meetings a week.
- Seen an increase in back-to-back meetings with them being online and not needing to commute to different meeting locations.
- Try using Teams to gain answer through chat rather than another meeting. Pushing back and saying no if you don't think a meeting is needed and can be resolved over chat.
- Questioning does this meeting need to happen this week or can be delayed?
- Block out days for no meetings and can be sneaky to add 'Private appointment' so people don't try to book a meeting at this time.
- Can the meeting be shorter? Do you need that amount of time? Can you shorten it to 45/50 minute meetings to allow a slight break before next meeting?
- Outline a clear agenda for the meeting to support time management ensuring it's a list of clear discussion points.

### Managing Deadlines

- Breaking to do lists down and use Eisenhower quadrant to prioritise tasks.
- Time allocation – add tasks into diary, allocate time and create deadlines
- Use Outlook calendar to allocate the time you will use for these tasks and block out.
- Meetings with managers, rather than just saying yes, need to manage workload and whether you have capacity to this. You can then use your time allocation to discuss which tasks are more important and which can be pushed back.
- Saying no but... when can you fit it in? What can you push back if it's a priority?

### Tools for to do lists

- OneNote – meeting notes, tabs for each project
- Reminders – reminder for bigger tasks or projects a week in advance
- Share tasks with team to see if they can support. Asking your manager if anyone else has capacity to support.
- List key notes from meetings and then move action points onto main to do list straight after.
- Using whiteboards to gain satisfaction of crossing out an action.
- Block out time in a day to look at emails i.e. half an hour at the start, middle and end of the day. Let your team know if they have an urgent query, to call or message on Teams.

### Managing emails

- Block out power hours to reply to emails.
- Use different folders for emails so they can be categorised but also marked by urgency.

- Using the flagging in outlook to create your to do list but ensure it doesn't create another to do list for you.
- Turn off email notifications to stop being distracted when focusing on a task.
- Not being too speedy when replying and spending time to read through the emails correctly to ensure you don't miss anything. Also ensure you are replying to the most recent email in the chain.

#### Delegating work in teams

- Trello is a positive platform to track projects team members are working on to see an overview in one place. You can also allocate tasks to individual team members.
- Teams can be used for more than messaging. You can use the channels to split relevant project work to team members.
- Monday.com is a positive platform as an alternative to Trello.
- Raise concerns of workload within team meetings to help share the workload.
- How can you support your manager with the projects they are working on?

#### Using your time effectively

- Planning time in calendar to do nothing but focus on a single task.
- This can help reduce anxiety by allowing you to plan time to meet deadlines and not looking at your next week and see no spare time around events and meetings.
- Use 1:1 sessions to talk about issues with workload.

Task – Talk in tables for 5 minutes about the following points:

What sort of things would you like to say no to?

What sort of things have you had to say no to, that you wish you hadn't?

- Find it hard to say no and want to always to say yes.
- Don't feel like have a legitimate reason to say no.
- Example of comparing yourself with team members that have kids but need to prioritise yourself.
- Feel duped by schools when the event is not what expected e.g. sixth form open evening. This uses a lot of staff time and resource.
- Within sector, majority of sector are people pleasers and want to do all that they can to support.
- Assumptions from other teams that the recruitment team can help even though don't have time or the skill set.

#### Building confidence to say no

- Those early in career, say yes!
- Can damage reputation by saying no, always being busy, always complaining and not to be seen supporting the team.
- Do you definitely have to say no? – Explore different options of how you can say yes but finding a benefit for the person you ask.
- Use your networks within the university. Could this progress a newer member of the team, student ambassadors, careers team?
- Delegation seems to be a linear process but isn't the practice. What can you delegate sideways?

- Delegate upwards – events, tasks that the team can't complete, can you pass onto your manager?
- Development opportunities – if you have a reputation of being flexible with your diary, you could get good development opportunities.
- It's a balancing act between what to say yes and no to and what can you gain from this?

#### Saying no externally

- Manage external relationships carefully.
- Don't just think within recruitment and WP. Can you send any academic staff or PHD students that could benefit from the opportunity? Could you offer it to trainee teachers to help them gain exposure to working with students?
- Build working relationship with academics, students and student ambassadors.
- When hearing from marketing/sales calls/emails, be blunt with your answer. Asking them are you trying to sell something and then ask them to email you to save time.
- Take extra few minutes to make decision about school event not just first answer. Use professional knowledge to make an informed decision. Example if asking for personal statement workshop in December, can deliver at different time of year?
- Can regional HELOA groups support?

#### Saying no internally

- Back up with evidence
- Build business case
- Data is your friend
- Explain rationale behind saying no
- Use quantitative data as evidence

#### Building a business case

- Keep a track of working hours required for each task.
- Track volume of requests coming in and how many are you declining.
- Reactive practice – are you waiting for school requests or have too many requests coming in that you aren't seeking out relevant opportunities?
- Use this to ask for more resource, how much work missing out on?
- Ask team members that have experience of putting a business case forward.
- Look at salary structure and understand finances like how much do you cost your university? This is more than your salary due to things like national insurance, pension contributions etc.
- Include on the job costs such as travel costs, hire cars etc.
- What extra business you can create for the institution?
- Be proactive before it becomes a need.
- Have a job description written and prepared.
- Find out what are other institutions hiring for and save those job descriptions.
- Size of competitors
- Use legislation policy to support your case