



## Don't Get Bugged Down By Unwieldy To-Do Lists

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To-do lists are great, but sometimes they can get unwieldy and unmanageable. So believe it or not, you even have to manage your to-do lists.

To-do lists are important in organizing your day, so don't abandon them. "By making a list, you have a guide and when you mark off your accomplishments, you feel productive. Most importantly, it allows you to remember tasks. Finally, if you don't accomplish something today, you can move it to your list for tomorrow. If you find it still is on your list Friday, you

must choose to either do it, delegate it or realize you are not going to do it because it wasn't important and simply cross it off the list," says Suzy Wilkoff of Tasks Unlimited.

There are steps to take if you are feeling overwhelmed by your to-do lists.

Customize your to-do lists. "Separate business from any personal items on the list," suggests Wilkoff. Also divide your to-do list into priorities--what needs to be done today, tomorrow, etc.

Give some of your tasks to others. "Review your list and see if you are taking on too much responsibility, and then delegate if you are in a position to do so. It provides an opportunity to mentor others," advises Wilkoff. Here's a unique way to divvy up the tasks: "Create your delegation list by folding a piece of paper into four quarters. Label each quarter daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly. Now the fun part! In 30 seconds per quarter, write down everything you do. Do this fast--don't dwell. This time, write down things you're supposed to do or from your 'someday' list. You now have the start to a workable list for what to delegate," explains Dina Lynch Eisenberg, outsourcing strategist with Outsource Easier.

If you really want to get organized, try using a spreadsheet. "Make an all-in-one spreadsheet. Create a spreadsheet with as many of the metrics and built-in formulas you need to track or monitor so you don't have multiple spreadsheets to update every day. Consolidation and automation wherever possible are vital when it comes to paring down to-do lists," notes Monica Reccoppa, finance manager at Cardwell Beach.

Don't add everything and the kitchen sink to your to-do list. "Don't put everything on your to-do list or you'll quickly feel burdened by the list. It's meant to be a helpful, tool not a giant compendium of every possible task. Otherwise, creating the list itself becomes most of your to-do list," says Reccoppa. "As new items pop-up during the day, as much as is possible, get them done on the spot instead of adding them to an ever-expanding and unwieldy to-do list. Picking up half-finished tasks later on inevitably takes more time. There's no time like the present."