

Quick Guide: Is being perfect good for time management?

A strange question to ask you may think. But consider: while you are trying to do everything perfectly you may not be using your time as effectively as you could be. So be aware if you often find yourself checking and rechecking tasks, staying late so you can redo things or perhaps missing deadlines because you are trying to complete something perfectly. I am not advocating shoddiness but here are the **top ten tips** to consider if you have a tendency to be a perfectionist.

- 1. Good enough is good enough for things that just aren't that important.** Save your best performance for the most important things in your life.
- 2. Think about what stage of the task or project you are at.** For example, if you are at the beginning of a project, perhaps all you need is a list of bullet points to discuss which can be bashed out quickly. However, if it is the final draft of a document then it does need to be typed and proofread perfectly.
- 3. Consider why something has to be perfect.** Match the time investment with the value of the task or project.
- 4. Set a deadline for completion of a task** and allocate smaller amounts of time to individual tasks within a larger project – and stick to them! The extra time you spend on a task is rarely worth the extra pay off.
- 5. Start the task** and then you will find the achievement of some of it will encourage you to continue. At the end, accept what you've done – 80% is often good enough.
- 6. Give yourself a break and delegate when possible.** Just because you *can* do something better than someone else doesn't mean that you *should*. You may be able to do things better than anyone else, but are you making the best use of your time?
- 7. It takes time to be perfect.** Adopt the belief that *progress* is more important than perfection. Over time you will progressively improve. Think of it as a process rather than a destination. No matter how good you get, you can always do better.
- 8. Don't take yourself too seriously.** Learn to laugh at yourself. Life is too short *not* to have fun! Develop your sense of humour.
- 9. Strive for perfection but don't make it a must** or you'll be heading for trouble.
- 10. Still need more encouragement?** Then think about 'if I spend too much time on this task then **what other tasks am I not completing perfectly?**' This will get you started.

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