

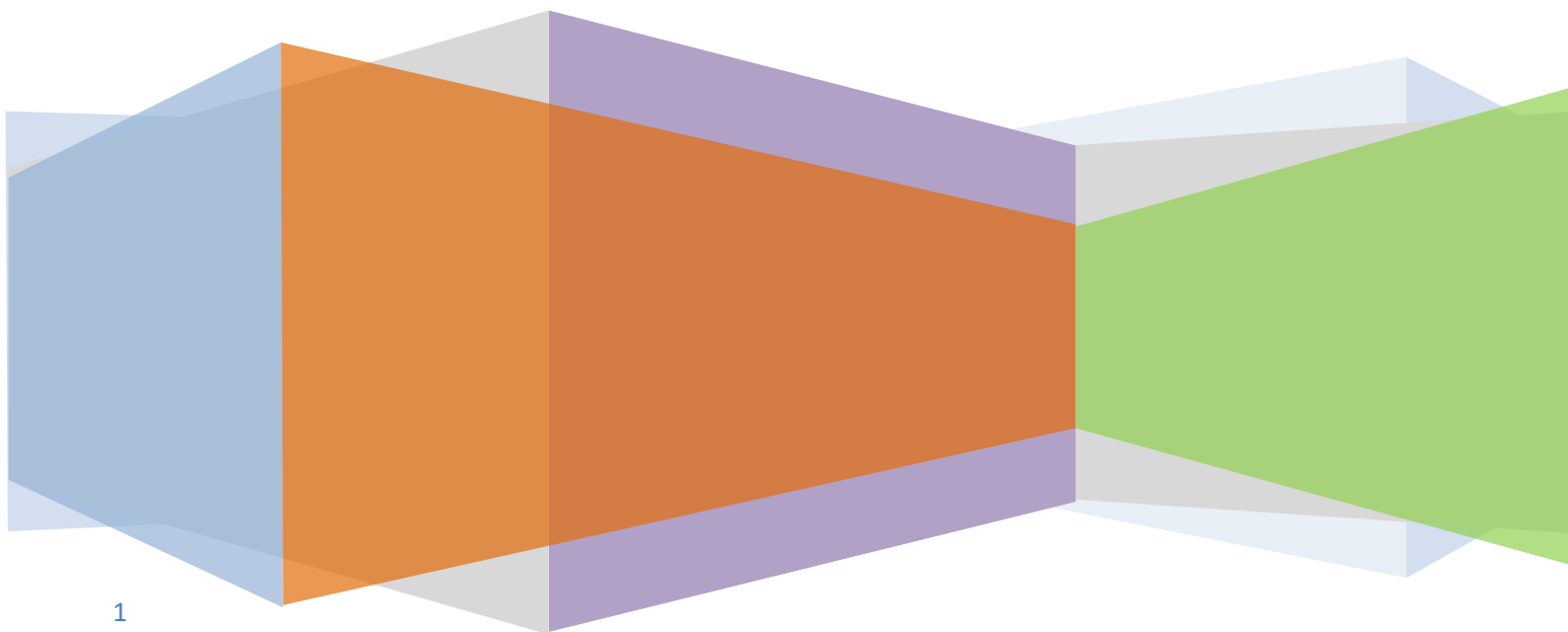


# IO2. Task 2.2

## Work slowly, work better

### Training toolbox

### Self-organisation and planning



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## NAME OF THE TOOL: Your work in a jar

### ORGANIZATION AND COUNTRY:

Online  Face to face

### Overview (What I am going to learn?):

With this exercise, participants will be encouraged to think about the importance of proper planning and organising one's work as well as scheduling the priority tasks first.

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### Objective (What am I going to learn it for?):

The participants will be able to define more easily what their important tasks are and learn that distractions, when not properly prioritized, can usurp all your energy and leave little or no time for more important things. Participants will also learn that one needs to select the tasks wisely for them to be realized in one day or a certain time.

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### Materials:

- a jar for each group
  - some golf balls
  - some marbles
  - some sand
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**Time:** 30 minutes

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**Target group:** Workers or SMEs

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### Instructions for facilitators

Bring the materials to class and divide the participants into teams. Demonstrate the activity to the participants or (if you have enough material) encourage them to do the activity on their own.

### Tasks and procedure

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Start the activity by asking the participants the following two questions:

Do you know the story about filling up a jar with golf balls, marbles, and sand?

What do you start with to fit them all in?



Continue by demonstrating them the story and providing them an explanation:

Firstly, place the golf balls in the jar. The golf balls represent those major time commitments at our workplace: writing a report, finishing a very important task, doing major work projects. Most often, these rocks take up most of the space in the jar.

Secondly, place a handful of marbles into the jar. The marbles will most likely represent other work commitments that are relatively less important than the larger golf balls.

Thirdly, try to finish filling up the jar with the sand. Sand represents all the distractions at our work – unproductive meetings, social media distractions, helping co-workers, etc. These distractions have the propensity to fill every gap of free time throughout the workday.

Can you see what would happen if we started with the sand or the marbles?

If you start with the sand, i.e., the “thousand” little things you know you must do, the marbles and the golf balls will never fit in.

Continue with a series of steps for “filling your jar”. Use the Eisenhower matrix (Annex 1) to plan your week and become more organised. Keep in mind that urgent tasks are those requiring immediate action, while important tasks are focused on long-term goals and allow the necessary planning and self-organisation.

### **Step 1: List your work priorities**

Focus on a specific period, e.g., a week and think of three “golf balls” you want to make time for in that specific period. Use the table below to distinguish between the urgent/important and not urgent/import work commitments.

### **Step 2: List the interruptions**

List the not important work commitments, for example interruptions, helping co-workers, taking part in other not-work-related activities etc.

### **Step 3: Make the time for the priorities you have identified**

Do you start by saying: “I don’t have the time!” instead, ask yourself: “What can I do to make the time?”

Be positive and take action. Take a good look at what you are currently doing and make sure you do not over-promise and do not tend to do not important things according to the Eisenhower matrix.

### **Step 4: Take a calendar and book the priorities**

Making your activities regular will help with setting your and others’ expectations and keeping you going. Be realistic while doing it and find a balance for all the activities in your weekly Eisenhower matrix.



With this exercise, the participants will eventually realize the importance of planning and focusing on important work responsibilities. Weekly to-do lists, prioritized by importance, will help establish a non-multitasking mindset and help you becoming mindful to eliminate distractions.

### **Adaptation to online implementation**

If the activity is carried out in an on-line environment, the facilitator should first make sure that the demonstration of the story is carried out slowly and properly for all participants to see it well. Before starting to demonstrate the story, try to use the word cloud possibility available at [www.mentimeter.com](http://www.mentimeter.com) to collect answers to the following two questions (one on each slide):

- 1) Name one tasks that you would like to finish this week?
- 2) Name one distraction that is most commonly getting in your way when trying to finish this particular task?

Encourage a debate after receiving the answers about the importance of self-organisation and planning at work.

Continue with the demonstration of the story.

After that, give instructions and put participants into break-out rooms to work on the Eisenhower matrix. Encourage them to share their weekly plans according to what they have written in the Eisenhower matrix with the break-out room partner.

Provide the participants with the link to the tool called Tweek Calendar and encourage them to put their most important tasks they would like to finish into the calendar. They can mark the importance. Once they have their weekly task list ready, they could print it out.

[Tweek Calendar](#) is a free personal and shared to do list app to organize your tasks and collaborate on them online with your team or family.

Stop the break-out rooms and encourage a short group debate, finishing with most valuable conclusions the partners have come up with.

### **Connection with the skill**

The activity is connected to the self-organisation and planning skill as it encourages the participants to do a weekly plan and focus on the most important work responsibilities. A participant with good planning and self-organisation can easily adapt to new problems and readjust as needed to complete an assignment.



The planning and self-organisation will involve:

- Knowing what you want to achieve and have a clear vision of the end result.
- Setting regular objectives along the way and keep track of them.
- Making an action plan based on priorities.
- Drawing up a work schedule and setting deadlines while communication them to the others.

### Conclusion and evaluation

Conclude the activity by listing down the most important conclusions the participants have come up with regarding the importance of planning work commitments in an organised way while focusing on the importance of prioritising activities.

Evaluate the activity with the following questions:

- How interesting was the topic to you? (1 – not interesting, 5 – very interesting)
- What did you find most helpful about this continuing education activity? (open question)
- What one thing will you do differently after participating in the activity? (open question)
- What one thing did you learn today that everyone in your organization needs to know. (open question)

### **References:**

[Filling the Jar: Lesson in Time Management \(diaglobal.org\)](http://diaglobal.org)

[The Jar of Life: How Rocks, Pebbles and Sand Can Help You Take Control of Your Time | Life's Too Good \(lifestoogood.net\)](http://lifestoogood.net)



## ANNEX 1

### The Eisenhower Matrix

<b><u>1) Urgent/Important</u></b>	<b><u>2) Not Urgent/Important</u></b>
<b><u>3) Urgent/Not Important</u></b>	<b><u>4) Not urgent/Not Important</u></b>



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