

effective environments

designing innovative solutions for success



MANAGING “OVERWHELM”

- Handle all true emergencies. You can't think or act effectively when you are in “emergency mode.”
- Make a complete list of everything that needs to be done and by when it needs to be done. [Be specific. It is far more useful to list items or assignments than to write “finish correspondence” or “update files.”]
- Identify “trimtab” (critical) actions that will create some freedom and breathing room for you. Take time to identify what really is a key action! For example, can you ask someone else to do some of the tasks? Are some of the items/tasks actually the responsibility of someone else? (If so, turn them over responsibly.) Could some of these items be done in a less time-consuming way? Are some of the deadlines negotiable?
- Establish priorities for the items on your list. Take time to re-visit your vision and your commitments and confirm that the items you have taken on are consistent with them. If not, rethink whether you should be doing them. Schedule the time when you will do them. If the time you allocate is not the same as the time you originally promised someone else it would be done, communicate this change promptly.
- If you have an agreement with someone else to produce a particular result, stay in communication with that person. Keep that person informed of the status of the project and if the project is in jeopardy. Look with that person (or another) at what is needed to fulfill on your promise. Get clear on whether you will make it happen. Communicate either way.
- Forgive yourself. Deny yourself the indulgence of self-invalidation.
- Get to work. Do the next thing, and then the next thing
- “Just do it!”
- Regroup periodically, and begin to structure your day, week and month in light of the priorities you have created for yourself.