TOP TEN TIPS

For managing time

1 To help you identify the areas that you want to change, keep a diary of how you spend time at work for five days – from the moment you arrive to the moment you leave. Be honest... include the time spent at the coffee machine or checking your Facebook page! You can then see your work patterns and identify your top time-wasters. These are the things to focus on.

2 Write yourself a 'To Do' list detailing all of the tasks you've accepted and commitments you've made. In order to make it more motivating and therefore increase your chance of successfully completing each task, make a note against each one detailing when you have to complete it by and why.

3 List the 3 most important things that you must do today and tackle them first.

4 Prioritise the rest of the tasks into:
a. Immediate Attention Required
b. Attention Required Today
c. Can be put off.

5 Allocate the time you are prepared to spend on each task and use a timer to keep yourself to that time. Make it short periods of up to 10 minutes. This will help to focus you on the task in hand....and may even speed up your work practices as you try and beat the clock.

6 Be realistic about what you can do – if your 'To Do' list is endless, talk to your manager. If you work for yourself, review your list and focus on those tasks that are really leading you towards your business goals.

7 Take charge of your email. Turn your email bleep off. Make a plan for times when you will check your emails and for how long. Create an effective system for dealing with your Inbox.

8 Clear backlog by putting it aside until you have finished today's tasks, then tackle a little of it at a time. Again, give yourself a fixed amount of time for this task.

9 Set meetings to start just before natural breaks, like lunchtime, so your body clock helps you to end on time.

10 Decide what time you are going to leave the office and stick to it.