

Freelancing in a World of Distractions

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What you will learn

01

How distractions
affect your
business

02

How to make
better use of your
freelance hours

03

How to shift from
urgent to
important

01

How
distractions
affect your
business



Productivity Challenges for Freelancers



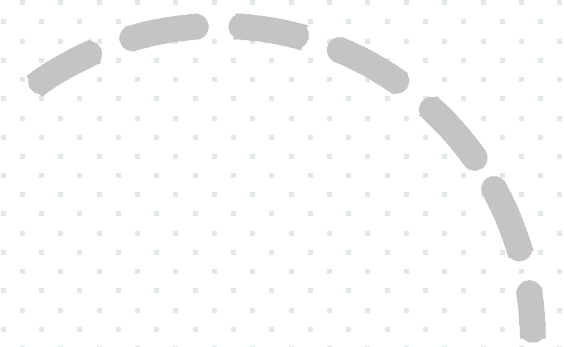
Top 10 challenges

Request your summary after the
conference!

dorothee@takebackmyday.com



4-6

- 
- **Efficient client management**
 - **Building manageable habits**
 - **Task overload**

Beliefs and facts about distraction

What we believe

- Doesn't affect me
- I can easily bounce back after ...
- I am an expert multitasker
- Single-tasking is boring

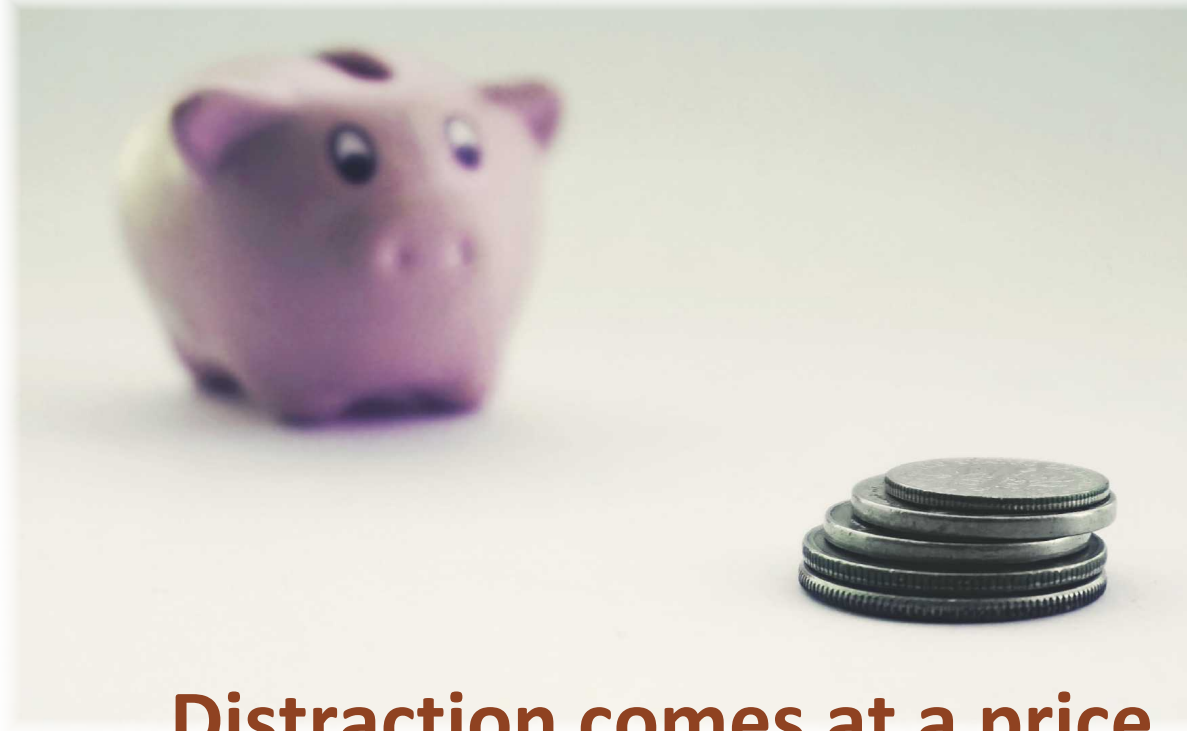
Established facts

- 15-20 minutes to regaining full focus
- Half of distractions are self-chosen
- Multitasking affects outcomes

Why is distraction a problem?

Short term

Long term



Distraction comes at a price.

Key effects of distraction

After a distraction, it **TAKES LONGER** to complete a task

Disruptions affect the **QUALITY** of your work

Distractions affect **PROSPECTIVE MEMORY**, the capability to follow through on additional tasks



Effects of distraction on demanding tasks

Less time to...

Research

Edit and polish texts

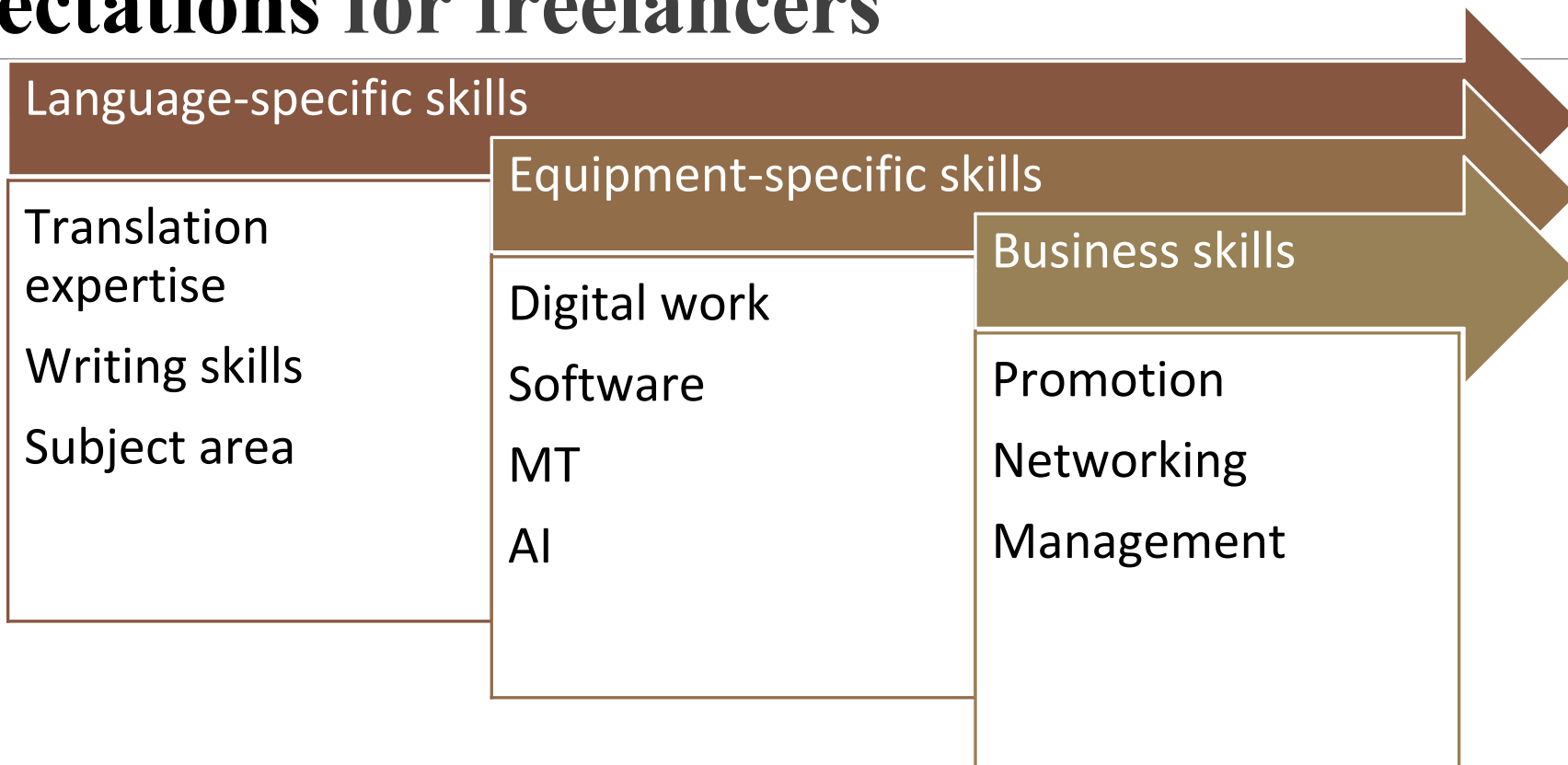
Correct errors

Fully understand a document

Explore the PURPOSE of a text

Curiosity

Expectations for freelancers

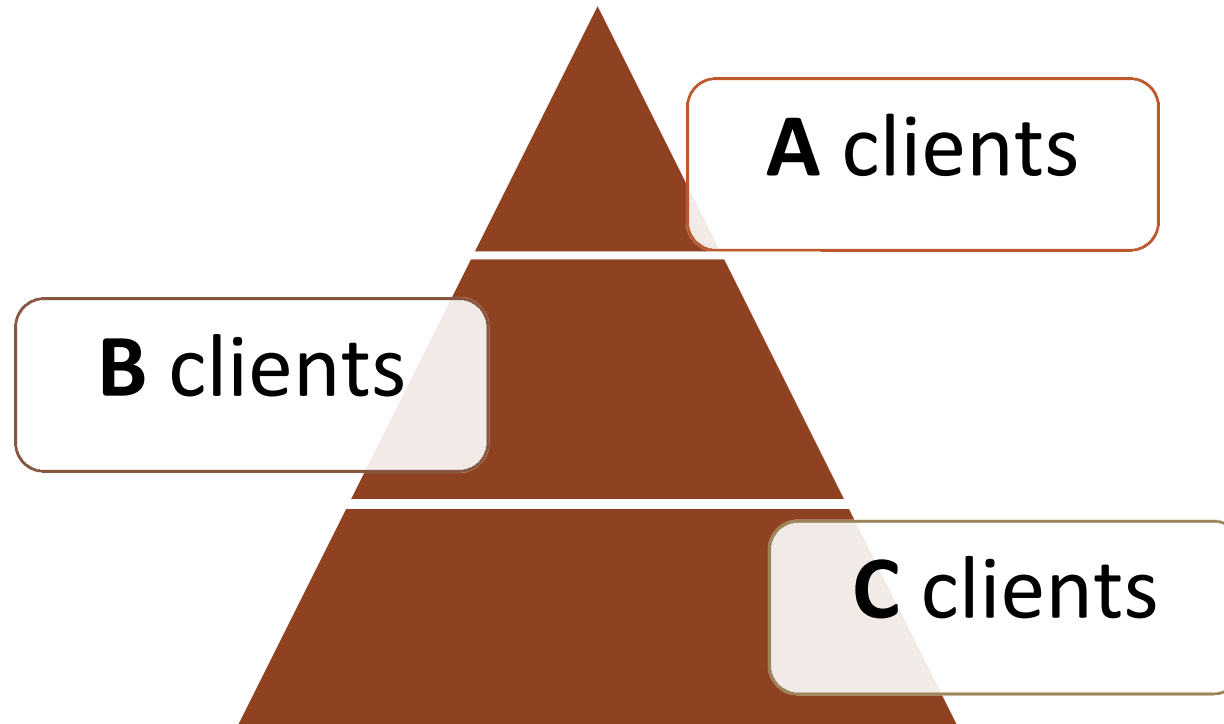


Characteristics of excellent translations

Well written, thoughtful
Syntax, word choices appropriate for target language
Carefully researched
Error-free, consistent
Thorough understanding of subject matter

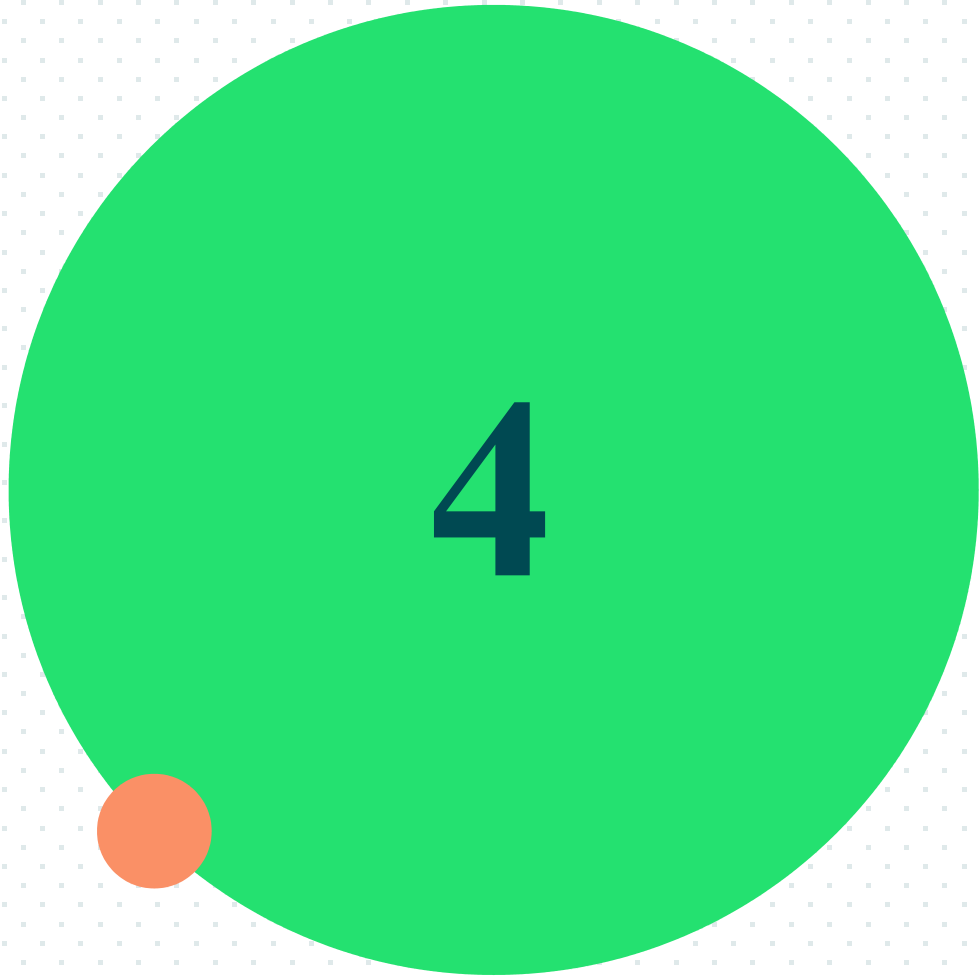
Premium work requires full attention.

Client categories

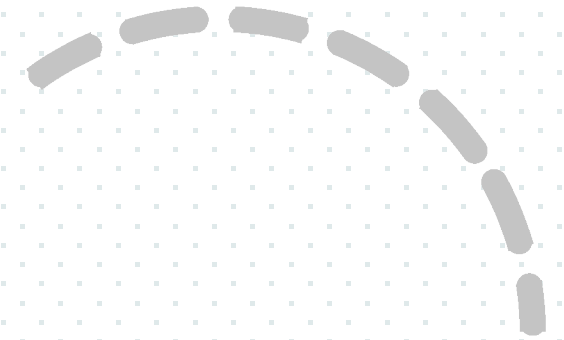


Category characteristics

A	B	C
Excellent terms	Acceptable terms	Flawed terms
High expectations	Comfortable expectations	Some expectations
Large professional development potential	Some professional development potential	Little learning and growth



- **Efficient client management**



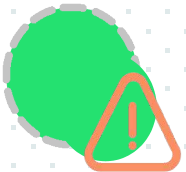
Efficient client management



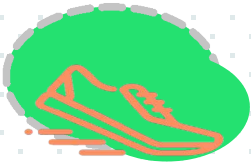
Communicate preferred channels



Set availability boundaries



Clarify expectations



Organize client resources

**Business is
“happening to
me”**



**I choose what is
“best for me”**

02

How to make
better use of your
freelance hours

FORCING YOURSELF DOESN'T WORK

Sticking to your New Year's resolutions isn't about having fun
not about willpower

6. Being lazy isn't fun

Top 12 Ways To Increase Willpower NOW
Self-Control Is an Incredible Tool for Success...

How to Boost Your Willpower
Willpower is like a muscle—in more ways than one.

The Truth About Willpower Can Help Make You Much Stronger
Believing you have everything you need is the first step to accomplishing your goals.

Why willpower matters - and how to get it

Willpower is a mental muscle, and the more you use it, the stronger it gets. People who are more likely to succeed are those who have a strong willpower.

Time awareness

- When do you do your best/most creative work
- When does the bulk of your work arrive
- How many channels do you have to watch for incoming work
- When are you least likely to get interrupted
- Family commitments/pets etc.



Time parameters of your freelance work

Change your environment, not yourself

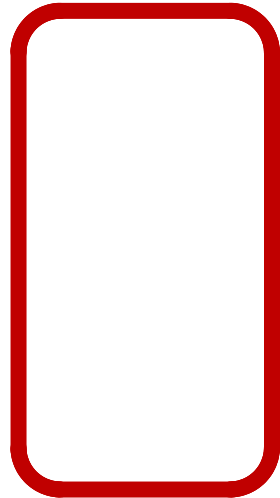


CHALLENGES

- Busy, creative mind
- Focus on small (not always relevant) details
- Time blindness

Circadian rhythm

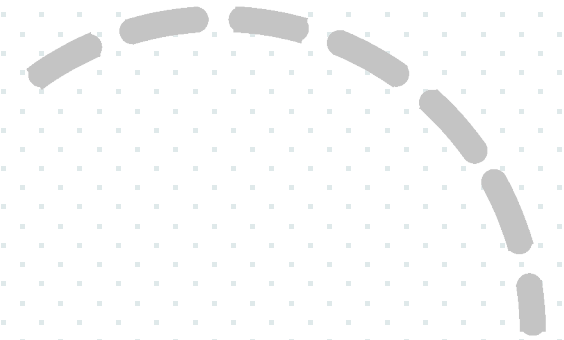
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Time of day



- **Building manageable habits**



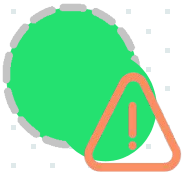
Building manageable habits



Habits exist to save energy



Consistency matters more than intensity



Start smaller than you think is necessary



It's okay to adapt habits

1. Understand what gets your attention



Sources of distraction

External

- On-the-job/off-the job
- Random
- Allowable
- Not anticipated
- Self-chosen

Internal

- Physical sensations: sights, sounds, smells ...
- **THOUGHTS and IDEAS**



2. Create a roadmap

- Daily milestones (with check-in points)
- Handwritten itinerary
- Transition times



3. Self-care routines matter



- Exercise
- Sleep
- Meals
- Breaks
- Outdoor time

4. Create artificial time pressure

Time boxing:

- Single-focus activity
- 20-30 minutes
- Shut everything out

Hourly routine:

- Use the last 5 minutes of every hour for check-in, cleanup, stretching



5. Set time rules

I don't ...

Work long hours every night

Eat at my desk

Accept work I don't have time for

Take on additional tasks I can't accommodate

I do....

Deserve evening time without freelance work

Get time to exercise and take care of
important chores

Have the right to speak up when other people
distract me

6. Functional work environments



7. Use distractions to your advantage

Virtual background noise
Coffee shop simulation
Busy environments

Set incentives:
News, social media,
music as a reward



7 effective ways to utilize your most productive hours



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Premium work requires full attention.

Premium work is best done in prime hours.

Adult ADHD

- Underdiagnosed in women
- “Why can’t I learn this?”
- Trouble completing tasks and frequent procrastination
- Time distinction between “now” and “not now”
- Distractibility



Source: ADDitude Magazine

03

How to shift from
urgent to
important

Assessing priorities

	Urgent	Not urgent
Important	Day-to-day business	Business building
Not important	Industry interactions	Gadgets

Now versus Not now

URGENT (REACTIVE)

- Project correspondence
- Deadlines
- Research
- Terminology work
- Schedule management

IMPORTANT (PROACTIVE)

- Building administrative structures
- Updated resume
- Contract language
- Website
- Networking

Trap: Getting stuck at the “C” client level

Large project volume

International locations

Frequently unreasonable demands

Impersonal

Taking up bandwidth/energy you need for other business tasks



'Urgent mode' as a permanent mindset?

- Learning to say 'no'
- Communicating with clients
- Setting boundaries

Reaching long-term goals



- Top 3 long-term tasks
- “End game”
- Break down to manageable scale
- Use a portion of prime time for outlines, planning

Routines

Steps to start your workday

Every time I have one hour (30 minutes) ...

Folder structures (electronic, hard copy)

Weekly marketing/networking/banking ...

Every time I finish an assignment (admin, billing, organizing) ...

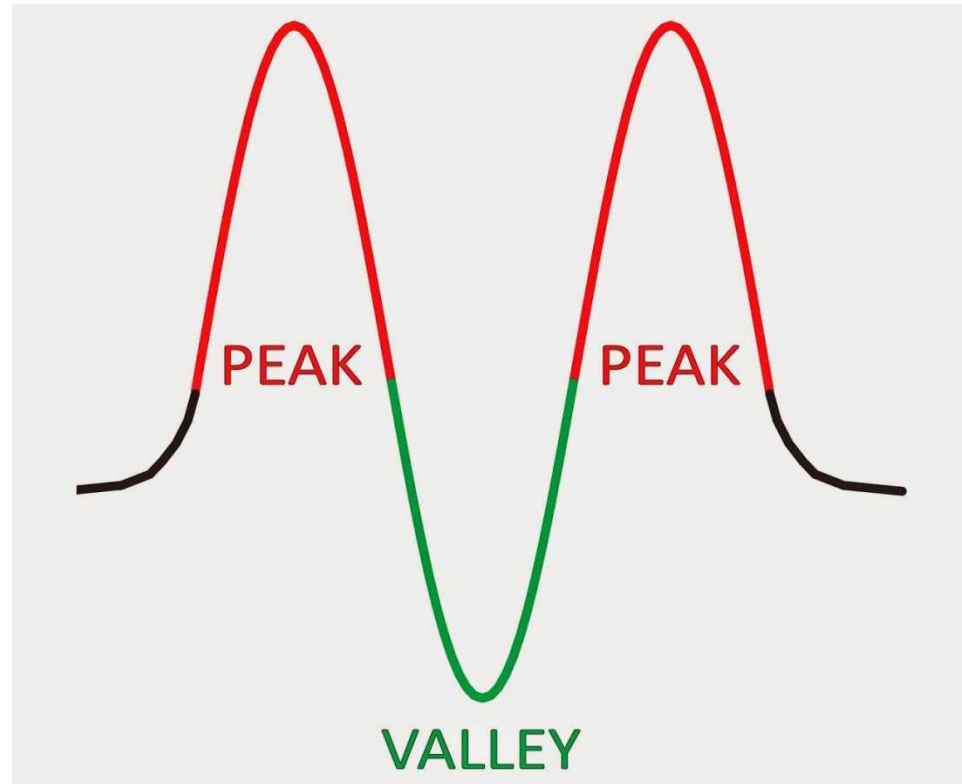
Accountability

- Team up with a colleague
- State your goals to someone
- Mentoring
- Coaching



“Feels like homework”

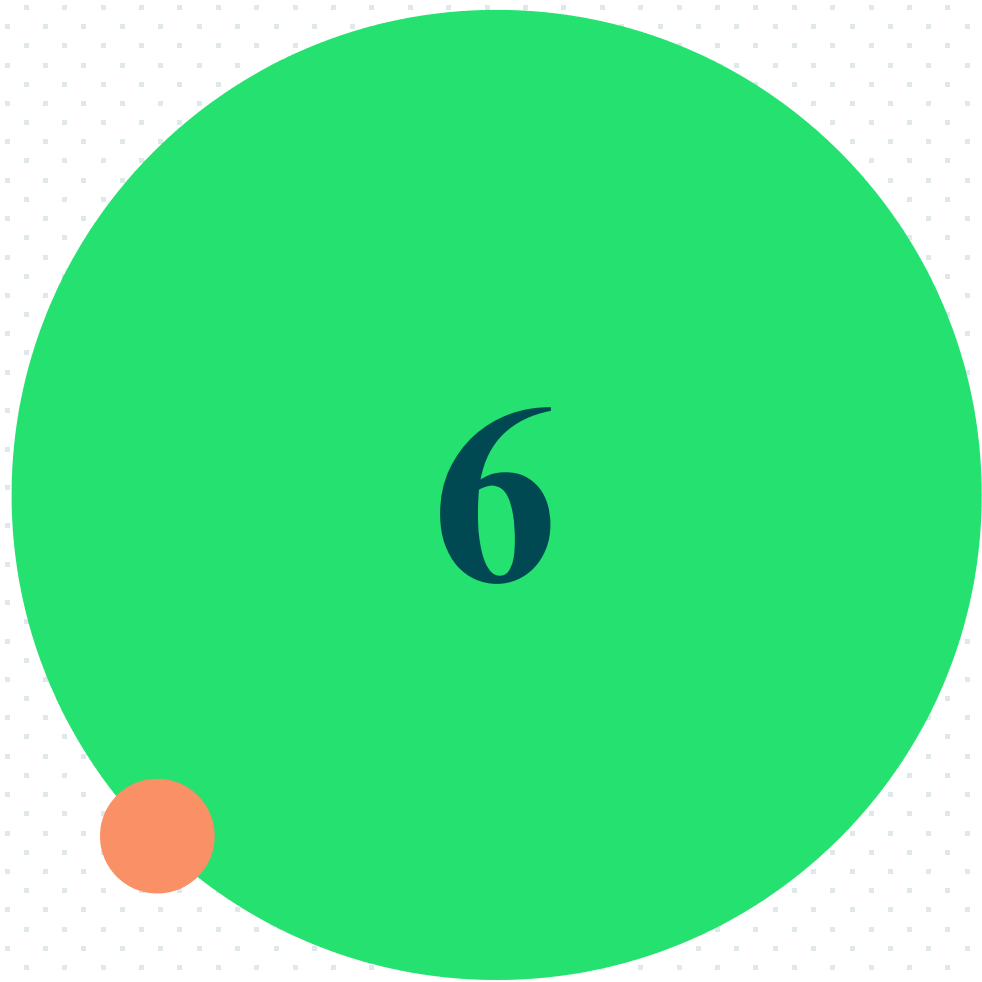
Feast and famine cycles



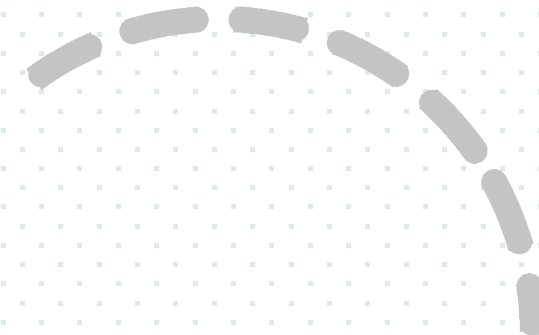
Work to do in a VALLEY phase

- Address long-term concerns
- Training
- Organizing
- Updating
- Research new prospects
- Network communication





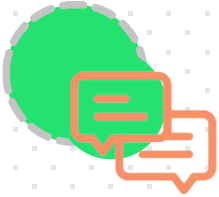
- **Handling task overload**



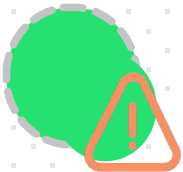
Handling task overload



Overload interferes with prioritizing



Use ONE trusted place for remembering tasks



Break tasks down into doable steps



Not all tasks require equal energy

Slow-day productivity

Warm-up:

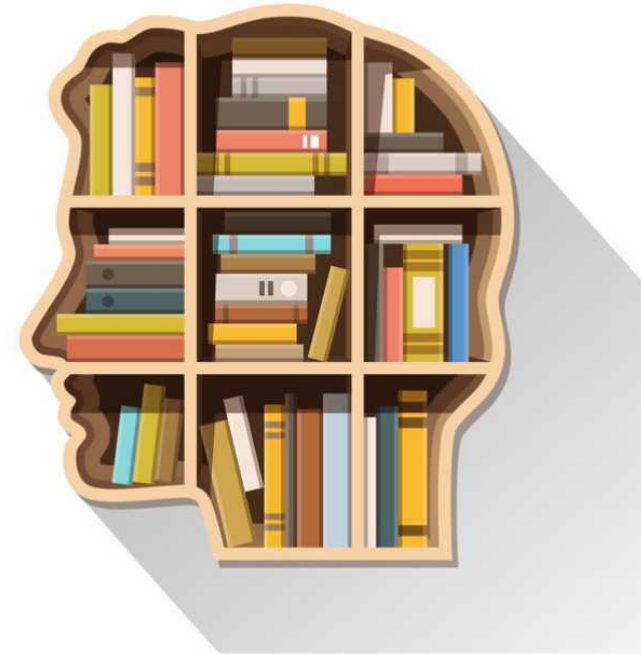
- Declutter, file backup ...

Task work:

- Long-term goals
- Writing

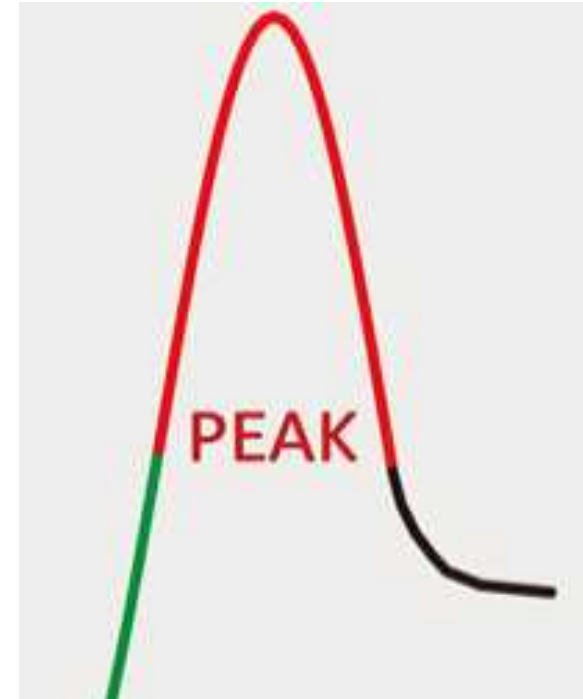
Cool-down:

- Network, inbox ...



Work to do in a PEAK phase

- Focus on short-term concerns
- Post about your work
- Set limits
- Make notes



Rushed-day productivity



Warm-up:

- Day planning, communication

Task work:

- Project work

Cool-down:

- Exercise, reflection

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Questions?

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glasbergen.com



**“It’s a new time management app.
When you click the icon, your
calendar disappears!”**

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