

*Thought for the day – 22*

**‘Stop doing other people’s work’**

If you are looking to save an hour a day you might find that 60 minutes can be found in tasks you do that other people should be doing for themselves. Whilst it is nice to help people, and we should be as accommodating as possible, we have to strike a balance between protecting our own time, goals and ambitions and helping others achieve theirs. It does not mean saying ‘no’ all the time. It just means looking very objectively at the tasks that people are asking for help with. Is it something they should, or could, be doing for themselves? If so:

1. Politely say ‘no’, explaining that you cannot deal with that as you think it should be them doing it and not you.
2. Redirect them to somebody else who you think is more appropriate to help them.
3. Explain to them how to do it for themselves, giving them the confidence to go away and try it. (The reason they may be asking you is because they do not feel competent or confident themselves to complete the activity well enough.)
4. Say you will do the task but then don’t complete it. This is particularly useful if you feel it impossible to say ‘no’. Whilst it may be embarrassing and uncomfortable when they come back and find the task or activity not completed, the chances are they will not ask you again, as you have let them down once. When they do come back make sure you explain why and apologise!

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*This thought has been taken from Graham’s book ‘Working Smarter’. Graham has developed an outstanding course to go with the book – click [here](#) for details.*

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