

Personal planning and effectiveness

Working in emergencies is challenging. To maximise your effectiveness you need to find ways to stay motivated, confident and organised around the chaos.

Increase your personal effectiveness

1. Understand what motivates and inspires you

What do you want to gain from this experience? How realistic is that? Focus on what's important to you and maintain a positive frame of mind. Stay in touch with family and friends by phone/email and carry photos/mementos.

2. Keep learning and improving yourself

What are your strengths and areas of development? How can you maintain a balance between hard work and achievement of objectives, and leisure and/or family? Develop skills of listening, empathy, clear communication and relaxation.

3. Get organised

Everything is urgent in emergencies, but an organised approach will help manage the most important priorities and minimise time wasting and stress. Develop a clear work plan and filing system. (See *'Time Management' in sidebar*)

4. Maintain your health and fitness and manage your stress

A balanced diet, regular exercise and 6-8 hours sleep a day are key. Ensure regular Rest & Relaxation breaks. (See *'Staying Healthy and Managing Stress' page*)

Personal planning for emergency assignments in the field

Before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider how you will cope with conditions in the field, and ensure that you have prepared things like insurance, finances, travel and health, including vaccinations Ensure a clear briefing from the organisation, clarifying your terms and conditions, where you will be working and who will be working with you. (See <i>'Briefing and Handover' page</i>)
During	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure clear briefings in the field including security briefing Clarify your tasks, expectations and reporting lines Set up your work space and communications – email address, Internet access, telephones, Skype, filing etc. Get to know your team in the office and in the field Set up day-to-day living e.g. food, accommodation, transport, exercise, leisure Find local medical, dental, banking, postal, telephone facilities Think about handover; what will you need to record and how?
After	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure a debriefing and thorough medical check up is arranged Maintain contacts that are important to you Plan talking about your work in public e.g. in meetings or press Give yourself time to adjust back to life and work

Personal Contingency Planning

Plan ahead for future disasters. Prepare a checklist of equipment to have ready, whether it is an evacuation or staying at home with limited services:

- laptop; internet access; printer; cell phone; chargers; battery powered radio; full tank of gas; essential cash
- back-up important business documents and keep them safe and accessible
- keep personal documents safe and accessible for identification and finances

Additional resources on All In Diary website

Time management handouts, InTuition Consultancy, 2011
How to Make Time to Think, 3D HR, 2009

Web links for further information

Training courses: <http://disasterready.org>
General Tools & Tips: <http://www.mindtools.com/fulltoolkit.htm>



Time Management

Work More Efficiently

- Ensure meetings have a clear purpose and format
- Don't put things off
- Tackle important matters when alert
- Set deadlines, and reassess only if the situation changes
- Concentrate on issues both urgent AND important

Work More Effectively

- Plan your work
- Make 'to do' lists
- Build thinking time into your day
- Take regular breaks
- Plan meetings and phone calls
- Keep a neat desk
- Be patient
- Ask a buddy to give you feedback

Do more with less

- Delegate when and where necessary
- Be clear when requests are impossible
- Avoid unnecessary meetings
- Don't take on other people's problems
- Remember:

80% of your work is done in 20% of your time