



# How to manage multiple deadlines with a small team

By Cynthia J. Young

As a manager, your team looks at you to manage multiple tasks with multiple deadlines. They don't want you to do the work for them. Your team also wants the opportunities to prove themselves, to upskill and take on more challenging tasks.

No matter if you work in a large or a small business, there will be times where you have limited resources and manpower and meeting the deliverables may seem overwhelming and stressful. Below are some tips to get through these challenging situations without stressing you or your team out.

**Prioritize tasks.** The first step in managing multiple deadlines is to prioritize tasks. Identify which projects or tasks are most critical and require immediate attention. Consider the impact of each project on the overall business goals and rank them accordingly. Once you have prioritized the tasks, set realistic deadlines for each of them. Avoid overcommitting or underestimating the time required to complete a task. Break down larger projects into smaller, manageable milestones to help track progress and maintain focus.

**Communicate clearly and effectively.** Clear and open communication is vital for a small team handling multiple deadlines. Ensure that everyone on the team is aware of their responsibilities and the deadlines associated with each task. Use team meetings to have your team members update each other while discussing any challenges or roadblocks they may be facing.

**Delegate wisely.** Delegation is a crucial skill for managing multiple deadlines with a small team. Assign tasks based on each team member's strengths and expertise. Don't overwhelm your more productive employees. Distribute the workload evenly and encourage team members to collaborate and support each other. This also offers a great opportunity for mentoring between team members.

**Utilize task management practices.** Leverage task management tools and software to streamline workflows and keep track of deadlines. There are numerous project management and collaboration platforms available that can help small teams stay organized and focused. These tools offer features such as task assignment, progress tracking, deadline reminders and file sharing, making it easier for team members to work together.

**Distribute the workload evenly and encourage team members to collaborate.**

**Foster a positive work environment.** A positive work environment can significantly impact a team's ability to manage multiple deadlines effectively. Encourage a culture of mutual support and understanding within the team. Recognize and celebrate individual and team achievements, no matter how small. Provide regular feedback and acknowledge the hard work, which can motivate your teams and open the lines of communication.

**Learn from experience.** After successfully managing multiple deadlines, take time to evaluate the team's performance and identify areas for improvement. Post-project reviews can provide valuable insights into what worked well and what can be done differently next time. Use this information to refine your strategies and processes for handling future deadlines effectively.

In the end, managing multiple deadlines with a small team may seem like an impossible task, but has many benefits. Prioritizing tasks, communicating effectively, delegating wisely, fostering a positive work environment while practicing good time management are essential components of successful team and deadline management.

By implementing these strategies, small teams can enhance their productivity, meet deadlines consistently and achieve business objectives even in the face of multiple tasks. Every challenge is an opportunity for growth to support team building and offer upskilling opportunities for the entire team. ❖

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