



VIDEO SUMMARY

A Practical System for Managing Time

Resource person: Ali Abdaal | Physician, entrepreneur and productivity educator | Curated from Ali Abdaal
A Practical System for Managing Time | Time and Resource Management | careers

Ali Abdaal offers a set of small decisions that make a busy day easier to steer. He begins by translating 'I do not have time' into a question about priorities. That reframe is useful wherever a person has discretion, though academic schedules, care work, disability and institutional workload still set real limits.

His planning system has two layers. Choose one daily highlight: the task that would make the day feel worthwhile. Capture the remaining tasks in a visible list, then reserve calendar time for the highlight. The calendar commitment turns a vague intention into a specific appointment. Shorter, credible deadlines can also contain work that would otherwise expand, an application of Parkinson's Law.

The system then protects execution. Identify a part of the day when attention is strongest and keep that period clear for demanding work. Decline low-value commitments early. Delegate work only when the handover is ethical, affordable and supported; this option depends heavily on role and resources. Automated scheduling can remove repeated email exchanges, although it should leave room for people who cannot use the offered slots.

The final move is psychological. At the end of a day, decide consciously whether the meaningful work completed was enough. This helps separate useful review from an endless sense of backlog. A practical trial is simple: choose tomorrow's highlight, block one realistic session for it, protect that session, and review what changed after a week.