



Information Overload

How quickly we've changed the way we look for and share information in such a short time. The speed and convenience of online information and communication definitely has its benefits. However, the endless stream of information that we face everyday can also feel overwhelming. The key is to identify tips and tools that work for you so that you can effectively navigate through information overload.

What you can do

- **Limit Yourself.** A quick five minute glance at a website can quickly turn into an hour long browsing period if you aren't careful. In order to keep yourself from getting sucked in to endless browsing, set a time limit for yourself before you even start. Avoid using vague language, such as "a few minutes" – instead, look at the clock or set a timer for a specific timeframe.
- **Prioritize.** Identify what information or sources are most important to you and try to stop there. For example, perhaps checking your e-mail and Facebook accounts are most important, followed by your local and national/international news sources. Try to get into a habit of checking these sources and then moving on with your day.
- **Manage e-mail.** For many people, e-mail has become one of the main sources of communicating and sharing information. However, it can quickly turn into a black hole of spam and unanswered e-mails if you don't keep up with it. In order to keep it manageable, try to go through and sort or delete e-mails daily. Take the time to block spam, and unsubscribe to listservs or RSS feeds that you are not using or reading.
- **Keep tabs on your personal info.** Share your personal information sparingly! Just because your e-mail or other personal information is requested, doesn't necessarily mean you need to provide it. For example, a salesperson may request your e-mail address while processing a sale, which is then used to deliver store promotions and may also be shared with other vendors. If you are asked for any personal information outside of what is necessary for a transaction, ask how it is to be used and decide if you want to provide it or not.
- **Step away.** Perhaps most important is taking time to unplug. Carve out time in the day, perhaps in the evening, when electronic devices are turned off. Use this time to reconnect with your own thoughts. Spend some quality time with family and friends. Read a book. Participate in a community event. Go outside. Or simply relax (without feeling guilty about it!).

For more tips on managing information overload contact your Employee Assistance Program via the toll free number or website listed below.



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