MODULE OVERVIEW

Why we always take on more: Ego, fear, and control

Adaptive module | ~20 min

Fifty years ago, people already had plenty to do, yet the days did not rush by as fast. So the issue is not the workload but what pushes us to accept more and more meetings, tasks, and commitments. This module traces the three inner drivers behind this race and offers simple steps to help team members take back control of their calendar and what they say yes to.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

01 Recognize the three forces behind taking on more at work: the quest for recognition, fears, and the need for control.

02 Distinguish work commitments you choose, which energize you, from those you endure, and dare to step back from the latter.

03 Expose the fear behind an “I have no choice”—what am I really risking?—then dare to say no or ask for help.

04 Set aside a short slot of empty time for creativity each day, with no meetings or tasks: this is often where the best ideas emerge.

WHO IT’S FOR

Managers and team members who keep taking on more and sense that workload alone does not explain it.

- **Prerequisite:** none

HOW THE MODULE WORKS

Self-paced, with practice tailored to each learner.

1 **Self-assessment**: on 9 dimensions, to gauge current habits and guide the practice.

2 **Expert video**: 10 minutes, with 3 pauses for reflection.

3 **Practice scenarios**: the first 2 chosen from the self-assessment, then 16 optional ones. Every answer gets feedback: what it leads to, and one way to improve.

4 **Dated commitment**: one action to try, written by the learner or picked from the suggestions.

5 **Memo to download**: key takeaways, questions, commitment, personal notes and checklists.

ASSESSMENT AND COMPLETION

Pass mark: 80%

The score takes into account your answers to the practice scenarios, your commitment and, where relevant, any additional learning activities. Passing requires a commitment and a score of at least 80%.

METHODS & MODELS

- The “3 forces that keep us rushing” model (quest for identity/ego, fears, need for control) – Afthonios method, in the tradition of Brené Brown
- Embracing vulnerability as courage, not weakness (Brené Brown, Daring Greatly, 2012)
- Drivers in transactional analysis (Taibi Kahler)
- Reframing “obligation = fear in disguise” – Afthonios method

SOURCES & REFERENCES

- Brené Brown (University of Houston), Daring Greatly, 2012, and a 2010 TED talk: vulnerability is an act of courage, not a weakness
- Wilson et al., Science: the discomfort of being alone with nothing to do
- Bellezza, Gino & Keinan, Journal of Consumer Research: “busyness” displayed as a status symbol
- Sonnentag & Fritz (2007) – detachment from work and recovery

Module created by Afthonios.com.

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