MODULE OVERVIEW

Why your week falls apart: Six laws of time

Adaptive module | ~20 min

Six laws explain why weeks go off track despite careful planning: Murphy and Parkinson for estimating deadlines, Carlson and Illich for sustaining effort over time, and Pareto for choosing where to direct energy. The sixth, the Jevons paradox, names a recent trap: the time AI frees up fills up on its own unless someone decides to protect it.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

01 Adjust margin and deadlines to the task: generous for new and complex work, tight for familiar work.

02 Protect continuous blocks of time by grouping similar tasks, rather than constantly switching from one to another.

03 Recognize your own focus threshold and stop before your effectiveness drops, even sooner when supervising AI.

04 Identify the 20% of tasks that produce most of the value, and cut back on the rest.

WHO IT'S FOR

Anyone who wants their weeks to deliver what was planned and to keep the time AI gives back for themselves.

- **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

- Pareto's law / the 80/20 rule – Vilfredo Pareto
- Parkinson's law – Cyril Parkinson
- Carlson's law – Sune Carlson
- Murphy's law – Edward Murphy

SOURCES & REFERENCES

- Pareto's law – the 80/20 rule, applied to time management
- Parkinson's law – Cyril Parkinson, "The Economist" (1955): work expands to fill the time available
- Carlson's law – Sune Carlson, "Executive Behaviour" (1951): uninterrupted work is more efficient than interrupted work
- Murphy's law – a safety margin for the unexpected

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