

Make your move.

Enjoy the freedom to work your way every day with hybrid working.



Meet Alison Edgar MBE. Then make your move.

I'm Alison Edgar MBE, also known as The Entrepreneur's Godmother. I have been supporting start-up businesses for over 10 years, including some of the world's leading entrepreneurs. I've worked with some of the biggest names in business, I'm a global motivational speaker, and I was awarded an MBE on the 2020 Queen's Birthday Honours List for my services to Entrepreneurship and Business. I've always been passionate about helping organisations overcome their challenges and grow, no matter what shape or size they are.

There's always one overarching hurdle for every business I have worked with - time. Time is a struggle for most people. Menial tasks can pile up and snatch away our ability to do what is meaningful to us. Unfortunately, despite hybrid and flexible working, there is no way to add hours to the week, nor can we just abandon our responsibilities. So, this leaves us with one option - managing our time better.



Tool rationale.

When I first started out in business, I came across the Eisenhower Quadrant. It categorised tasks into how urgent and important they are, but for me, it was mind-boggling. There had to be a better way to organise my tasks. And that's when it hit me – The Juggling Method!

I began to organise my tasks into basketballs, tennis balls, and ping pong balls, based on their order of urgency and importance.

These balls weren't only beneficial for organising my own time - they're also great for when communicating with my team. When I talk to my team members, I'm able to quickly explain which tasks should be completed in what order, and there's no room for interpretation. This works especially well when some of the team is remote, and some are in the office. We all know where we stand, despite our working environment.

In this new world of hybrid working, it does become difficult to manage our tasks when we change our environment. That's why I suggest we break our tasks down into 'Home balls' and 'Office balls'. This can work fantastically well for those projects where you have half a dozen basketballs which you are solely responsible for, and really need to dedicate focused time to. You can allocate these as 'Home balls'. For those tasks where you need the collaborative aspect and input from others, it makes sense to allocate these as 'Office balls'. This means you can really hit the ground running, no matter if you're in the office or at home – you know what needs to be done and how to spend your time most effectively.

But how do you determine if you should complete this task at home or in the office? Just mark whether the following statements are true or false.



STATEMENT	TRUE	FALSE
I need to collaborate with others in order to complete this task	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can work with some distractions while completing this task	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I don't need quiet to complete this task	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I need to access equipment or tools only available at the office	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I work better when I am surrounded by my team	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If most of the above statements are true, you'd be more productive completing this task at the office.

If most of the above statements are false, you'd be more productive completing this task at home.

You may be thinking, that's great! I now know whether I need to complete this task in the office or at home, but how do I know which task correlates to what ball? It's true, something that may be a ping pong ball for you, may be a basketball for someone else or vice versa. I always ask the voice in my head a simple set of questions to determine how to allocate a ball. After completing these, it should help you to feel clear on what size ball you're dealing with.



BASKETBALL

TENNIS BALL

PING PONG BALL



Are other people relying on me for this task?



Very much so

To some extent

Not at all

Are other tasks dependent on this one being completed first?



Very much so

To some extent

Not at all

When does this task need to be completed by?



Immediately

In a day or two

A week or more

How large is the impact of completing this task?



Huge

Medium

Small

Will completing this task provide value to my clients?



Very much so

To some extent

Not at all



Basketballs: important and urgent.

Imagine getting a basketball launched at your face! Well, that's kind of how it feels if you forget one of these tasks. These are the most critical tasks that need to be done and demand the most immediate attention. If you don't complete them, the damage might be long-lasting. You can't juggle too many of these at once, so it's important to tackle these first.

Task: Think about your workload and identify any basketballs. Identify whose court the task is in and where it will be done most effectively. Add any key details or notes about the task as well as a deadline to really make sure get it over the line (or in the net!).

HOME

OFFICE

TASK:

DETAILS:

OWNER:

DUE DATE:



Tennis balls: urgent.

These may not be the most important but must be done sooner rather than later. If you leave them, they can gradually build up until you have an absolute mountain of work to deal with. We'd rather avoid that. And if you leave them, they will eventually become basketballs.

Task: Think about your workload and identify any tennis balls. Identify whose court the task is in and where it will be done most effectively. Add any key details or notes about the task as well as a deadline to really make sure get it over the line (or over the net!).

HOME

OFFICE

TASK:

DETAILS:

OWNER:

DUE DATE:



Ping pong balls: important.

These can be some of the things that are important to you but are not urgent. They linger in the background while you focus on more urgent tasks. Be careful though, just because they're ping pong balls, doesn't mean that they will always stay that size. Don't fall into the trap of always putting these off - try to deal with a few when you have some spare time.

Task: Think about your workload and identify any ping pong balls. Identify whose court the task is in and where it will be done most effectively. Add any key details or notes about the task as well as a deadline to really make sure get it over the line (or over the net!).

HOME

OFFICE

TASK:

DETAILS:

OWNER:

DUE DATE:



Neither important nor urgent.

This is the final category and the tasks here do not get assigned a ball because they don't deserve one. If these things are not important or urgent to you, you should be considering why these tasks are even relevant. If you're juggling too many of these, it's time to make a strategy to overcome them!

Task: Use this space as a general to-do list that you can tick off as and when you get a little time and space to do them.

HOME

OFFICE

TASK:

DETAILS:

OWNER:

DUE DATE:



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