

Close your eyes, and you can almost hear the chat between two rival white collar workers:

Worker #1: "You know I'm really busy."

Worker #2: "Busy? Tell me about it, I'm sooo busy."

Worker #1: "No, no seriously, I am so, so busy, it's crazy."
and so on. Ad nausea.

But are they/we really busy?

One CAN be busy, but in the sense of this being a *passing* phase. We all get busy, for periods of time. Maybe a busy half an hour, or a busy morning, or even on the odd occasion, a busy few days. But to be permanently busy? Well, then something is wrong.

Aid workers who are rescuing people from a natural disaster can be busy for many days at a time. Junior doctors in a lot of NHS hospitals seem to be permanently busy, especially in a pandemic. And, if you are fighting a major fire, or involved in an ongoing emergency, you would be **truly** busy for even longer periods of time.

If we are permanently busy, something is *very wrong*. Either:

- We're in the wrong job
- We're failing to manage our manager, i.e. we should be delegating upwards
- We're not managing our own staff i.e. we should be delegating downwards
- We have too much to do, in which case we need to speak to someone to sort it out

You see "being busy" is humble-brag and a smokescreen. As well as claiming importance by saying 'I'm busy' they are actually blocking any more work coming their way. Saying you are busy is not only designed to indicate:

"Look, I've got so much to do, therefore I am really important" but also, "Hey, I'm really busy, pay me more money and get me some perks, like more staff" and, it can also be used to indicate "Listen I'm so busy, you really don't want to be giving me any more stuff to do, since I won't be able to do it, will I?" *In reality this is being 'Fake Busy.'*

It's time to drop the glorification of "busy" and start focusing on time management and productivity. *"Busy" is not a virtue.* You don't get bonus points for being stressed out, exhausted and depleted. No one gets gold stars for putting more busyness in their business.

Here are some time management tips to reclaim your time, your productivity and your peace of mind:

Prioritize and complete your tasks You can help yourself by focusing on one thing at a time. Hopping between priorities is disruptive and time-consuming.

Write down your tasks Thinking about your list of things makes you feel exhausted and burnt out. But *is* your list really 20 items long? Or is it only five items long, but you keep thinking about those same five things over and over again, so it feels like more?

Plan ahead When you fail to plan ahead, you end up scrambling around at the last minute, and often the results are less than satisfactory.