

## Pippa's Guide to Weekly Reviews and When to Have Them

What's your favourite day of the week? I'd imagine a large percentage of the British population would cite a Saturday or a Sunday but for me it's Friday. I genuinely love going into work on a Friday. The week is nearly done, people are usually more relaxed and the promise of the weekend inevitably seems to put most people into a good frame of mind. My boss certainly takes longer lunches on a Friday and, depending on how much wine is drunk, has even been known to let me finish early.

Yes, I love that sense of anticipation that comes with a Friday, knowing that the whole weekend lies ahead – two full days of down time, no commute, wearing what I want, sleep, relaxation and fun. These are all things I look forward to greatly. That's the general idea anyway. Of course, in reality, all the above is 'in an ideal world' stuff. Three weekends ago for instance my mother came to stay in my tiny flat, meaning I had to sleep on my sofa which in turn meant feeling like Quasimodo for days after. Then, on the Saturday, I found out that my latest Tinder date was still married and had lied about pretty much every small detail of his life. I was far more gutted than I could or would let on and my teeth were quite gritted all day because I didn't want to bore mum with the depressing details thus ruining her trip to the big smoke to see 'Dream Girls' in London's glittering West End. Then on the Sunday, the boiler packed up and my friend's cat puked on my rug. So *that* weekend was pretty dire admittedly, to the point where it was a huge relief when Monday came around.

But you know what I mean of course. We worker bees relish and look forward to our time off because it's our chance to recuperate and reenergise for the next busy week ahead. Without it we would be shadows of our former selves and frankly, if I was Prime Minister, I'd be gunning to make a standard weekend a three day affair. That way you'd have one whole day for life admin (bill- paying, cleaning, doing the washing, dentist, shopping etc,) a day for fun activities and exercising and/or imbibing alcohol with friends and, a day to do NOTHING and just recover. Obviously this will never happen of course because I won't ever be Prime Minister. Plus my plan would probably plunge the country into the darkest recession ever seen at which point I'd be usurped or deported. Still, it's nice to dream and it's why these days I try to view Monday's almost as an extension of my weekend. Sort of like that admin day is that otherwise missing. You see Sunday's used to be tinged with dread for years as I experienced that common back to school feeling. But that's no way to live so recently I've tried to improve and change my mind-set toward the much beleaguered first day of the week. Now I see Mondays as my day to take stock and to focus on what I want to happen in the coming week. If I have lots of personal admin, I'll do it on a Monday during my lunch hour rather than during my precious weekend. Monday is my chance to get organised, to reflect and to get ready. I also use it as my work weekly review day. Here are a few tips on why having one of these on a Monday (or any other day) is a good idea.

### Be prepared

Weekly reviews are a great way to make sure you're prepared for upcoming projects, and to stay organized. Schedule in an hour each week, ideally on a Monday during which you can really absorb what the plan is for the next few days, get your diary fixed and go forward feeling prepared and sure about what it is you're doing. This way nothing will get missed, forgotten about or overlooked.

### Be Focused

Of course I've suggested having a Monday review session assuming you've made great use of your Friday and Saturday nights then had an early one on a Sunday. The theory behind this fairly standard way of operating is that after a chilled out Sunday you'll be feeling refreshed and able to focus on figuring out what the coming week's big tasks are. However, if you are the kind of person who might spontaneously find

themselves at a gig, in a bar, or on a raucous date on a Sunday night then perhaps you might want to reconsider and book your review session in for a Wednesday.

I'm not judging by the way, in fact if anything I'm envious. I'm only too aware that my own Sunday nights are fairly pedestrian, (though if you did want to reconsider your social planning there's usually quite good telly on a Sunday night). Anyway, for a multitude of reasons a mid- week slot might be preferable and suit you better. As long as you plan your review for when you tend to be in a focused mood it really doesn't matter when it is as long as you have this useful and productive pause for thought.

### **Be Organised.**

Why have a weekly review at all? Mainly for the above mentioned feeling of control and awareness it gives you. But in practical terms it's so that you can use the time to see if you have any important meetings or projects that you need to prepare materials for. If prep time is required it gives you a chance to schedule that in so you're not scrambling around last minute. You can book all meeting rooms for the week ahead too, or make reservations for your boss. Basically you can get lots of the finer detail done and dusted before the week has even begun.

### **Be Calmer.**

As much as I love my weekends, sometimes those two days can interrupt the flow of your working mind to the extent where an hour spent at your desk quietly taking stock and planning can be the most invaluable and productive of the day.

Head straight into back to back meetings on a Monday, or organise a day of frantic activity and in some ways you're on the back foot and will have needed to prep on the Sunday before. This eats into your leisure time which long term is a recipe for resentment.

So, if you have any control over your diary at all, make Monday your catch up day. Keep it relatively free if possible and start the week in a pleasant and non- stressful way, leaving you to be a pro- active dynamo for the rest of the week. And before you know it you'll have that wonderful Friday feeling all over again.

Lots of love,

Pippa x