



Time-Wasters

HOW TO SET BOUNDARIES IN YOUR WELLBEING BUSINESS

SET LIMITS

ASSERTIVENESS

TAKE CONTROL



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How To Spot Potential Time Wasters

We use the term 'time waster' - but what we really mean is someone or a scenario that eats away at your precious time (intentionally or unintentionally) just because you're not clear on your boundaries!

To help you get a head start with boundary management we've put together six types of potential time wasters most of us have faced at some point in the wellbeing industry.

We've detailed their traits, together with the ways in which you can handle them in a professional manner whilst keeping your boundaries intact!

We've also thrown in help scripts for you to use to reduce the possibility of being put in a similar scenario, time and time again! **You can thank us later!**



1. The Serial Cancellers.

Who Are They?

Have you been lucky enough not to experience this type of client within your business, or do you know exactly who we're talking about?

Either way, these individuals can feel hard to manage within your business, as they book with you - but cancel regularly!

We know life happens, things come up out of the blue and people can be forgetful too! But this can have an affect on your earnings and your professional relationships, especially if you start to begrudge your client for constantly cancelling.

Let's be honest, even if your feelings are justified, when you feel like this you're no longer working from the best place possible.

Okay, so let's explore a good way to get you back in the driving seat when managing 'serial cancellers' . . .



How To Manage 'Serial Cancellers'

In A Nutshell: Don't be afraid to be straightforward!

- ✓ Firstly, don't take their cancelling personally - you've heard the cliché - "It's not you, it's me"? Their cancelling is a reflection upon them, not you.

Suggested Action:

Now some people confuse being 'straightforward' with being rude, but if done right, it won't be!

You can get your point across without coming off as rude. Simply explain that on a number of occasions there has been last minute cancellations (state this as a general statement, without directing it personally at them).

Share with them the implications this has on your business e.g. unable to fill spots at short notice & lost revenue. Go on to explain that as a consequence moving forward you will be implementing a deposit or full payment system (whatever works best for you) with a 24/48 hour policy.

Make it clear that if notice is not given, full payment will be due.

Then get to it - sort out the paper work, make it official!

2. The Virtual Therapist Lovers.

Who Are They?

You know who we're talking about!

You try to help them and answer their questions regarding their symptoms or situation via email or messenger over a long period of time - could be months, even years (taking up a huge chunk of your time)!

Then you realise they've never actually ever booked an appointment or seen you in real life! Yet you've invested countless amounts of hours on them.

Virtual Therapist Lovers are usually looking for a freebie. **They never have, nor are they ever likely to book an appointment with you** – and why would they need to?

When you're already helping them for free!

We of course know that what you're doing is coming from a good place, but when you look at it, you're depriving yourself of your time and money!

So let's get down to business and explore some simple responses you can use to manage 'virtual therapy lovers' on the next page . . .

How To Manage 'Virtual Therapist Lovers'

In A Nutshell: Be polite, yet firm!

- ✓ Don't feel bad, remind yourself that the continual help & support they are seeking for free is actually paid for by your other clients/customers.

Suggested Response:

Hi . . .

I'm sorry you've been feeling this way, I'm extremely busy at the moment and as you are aware I have happily given up a lot of my time and knowledge already free of charge. Due to the current demands of my business, I only have time to conduct sessions for my paying clients, are you looking to book?

Should they come back still wanting attention try . . .

I hope you can appreciate that my time is precious and I have many responsibilities. I'd love to help you and if you'd like to book a session, we can discuss what you've got going on at your appointment time.



3. The Night Owl Texters.

Who Are They?

Have these people no sense of time?

It can be midnight, 1, 2 o'clock in the morning and you can hear your phone pinging away!

You check to see if it's something important and there waiting for you is a message from a client, asking to book an appointment? Really? It's not that you are not grateful, it's just - you're still half asleep!

We completely understand that the century and industry we work in can result in 24 hr messaging. However, that doesn't mean you need to be disturbed by it!

So here's some helpful tips and suggestions to manage those 'night owl texters' . . .



How To Manage 'Night Owl Texters'

In A Nutshell: Be Proactive



Some people believe “always on” is the way to stay ahead of competitors, but it can harm your health and work quality. How can you give your best to a client if they’re calling you/messaging you in out of hours or in the middle of the night? You’ll most likely become resentful of it!

Suggested Response:

The best time to deal with this situation is at the start of your working relationship. Explain what your working hours are and that you’re not available in the evenings or weekends (or whatever time schedule suits you). Here's some other helpful tips:

- **Turn on your mobile's 'Do Not Disturb' feature.** Your clients may only just remember late at night to get in touch, messaging you without expecting to disturb or receive an immediate reply. Let your 'Do Not Disturb' take care of it and get back to them when you’re working next. Answering instantly every time gives the impression, you’re “always available.”
- **Turn your phone off.** Especially if you struggle to ignore a pinging phone!

How To Manage 'Night Owl Texters' Cont:

- **Turn off instant messaging** on Facebook chat and similar tools. If clients contact you by instant messaging or on other platforms, remember to turn off the service at night.
- **Invest in a business phone you can switch off.** There are many 'pay as you go' phones available that can stop this becoming a problem, without a big expense.
- **Post your business hours.** List your hours on your website/social media and on your voicemail/ instant reply message, or indicate the best time to reach you. Most prospective clients will respect your hours if they see your schedule.



4. The Tooing & Froing Peeps.

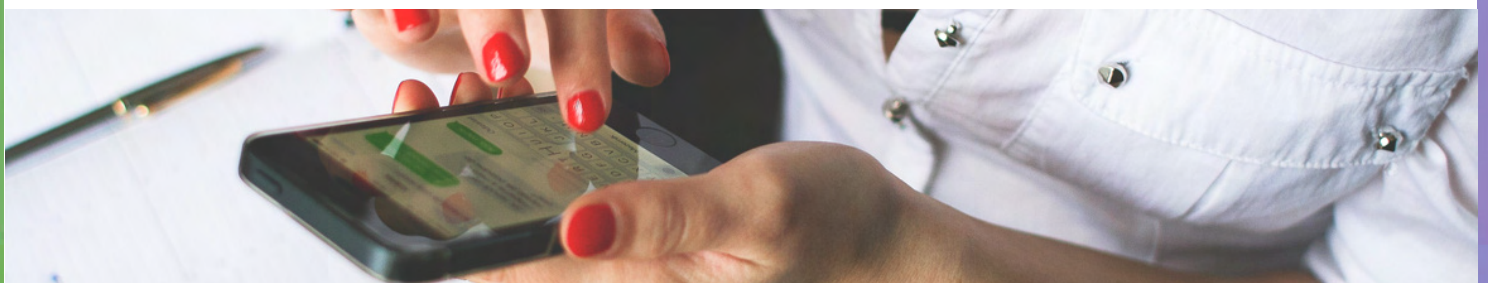
Who Are They?

These are usually your dependable clients, but boy can they take up a lot of time, with endless amounts of back and forth messaging.

Arranging an actual appointment, can stretch over a few days! These can be the clients you've built up a good relationship with over time. Of course you're interested in their progress and what's been going on with them, but you're aware it takes up huge chunks of your time.

If we're not just talking one client that does this in your business, but instead one of many, when you add all the time up you'll be looking at hours and hours of lost time!

If you've not got time to waste it's time you put some actions in place to better manage 'the tooing & froing peeps' in your business . . .



How To Manage 'Tooing & Froing Peeps'

In A Nutshell: Hand It Over!



Remind yourself that keeping a professional distance doesn't mean that you don't care. It just helps to make it clear to clients/customers that any discussion around support etc needs to take place when they see you in person.

Suggested Action:

This is where booking management systems and similar structures work wonders for your businesses.

They help to cut down on the tooing and froing, so you can focus on what you do best (you know the actual practice!). Plus they help you create a healthier work/life balance, as you don't have to manage this side of your business.

With a booking management system your potential or returning clients will be able to see your available times for themselves. Meaning they don't need to get in contact for appointments or to re-arrange them, as they'll have access to your calendar.

Of course there are many booking software available, but in case you're not in the know, we'll soon be offering this facility at Wellbeing Umbrella too :)

5. The Slow Payers.

Who Are They?

First of all, where appropriate, we hope you're taking deposits and payments upfront in your business.

If you're not, you could seriously risk finding out the hard way why you should do. Taking a deposit or upfront payment increases the likelihood of getting paid in full and reduces the risk of no shows.

For those that do take deposits or payments you'll be fully aware that 'Slow Payers' are the ones that have no sense of urgency!

No matter how much advance warning of deposit/payment time you give them, there are always those you have to chase time and time again.

To help with this here are some helpful tips and suggestions to manage those 'Slow Payers' . . .



How To Manage 'The Slow Payers'

In A Nutshell: Prevention Is The Cure.

- ✓ Assert yourself and remind yourself that a deposit or payment keeps your client invested in the process/treatment and you fully/partially covered.

Suggested Response:

Warning: we're going to pipe on about a booking system again!

But seriously, having an automated booking system in place would save you the headache of chasing people for deposits and final balances. As gaining monies when a client/customer books or shows interest in your offerings (i.e. workshop, service or retreat) will all be taken care of at the outset.

However, if you prefer to contact them directly, maybe a prepared script like the one below will do the trick.

Hi . . .

This is a gentle/friendly reminder that your deposits/final balance of £... is now due for [state the service/product].

This requires settling by [state deadline date]. Once this is taken care of we can move on to the next stage [state what that is i.e. sending out information, welcome pack etc]. Please be aware that failure to settle payment by date stated, will result in [state the consequence i.e. the cancellation of your appointment, space on the retreat etc].

6. Foul-Weather Folk.

Who Are They?

These people are usually your last minute bookers and don't need you when the sun is shining!

They say they need an appointment for the same day or a.s.a.p. Yet, even though your diary is fully booked for weeks and they will need to wait, they still take a slot.

However, what tends to happen with Foul-Weather Folk is that by the time their appointment comes round, they feel better!

Great, a free appointment slot for those that need it we hear you say! However, foul weather folk don't cancel nor show up.

Yet, they'll happily get back in touch again when in need of your service's 'ASAP'.

If 'Foul-weather folk' sound familiar in your business it's time to sort that, here's some tips and suggestions to manage them . . .



How To Manage 'Foul-Weather Folk'

In A Nutshell: **Have confidence and be assertive!**



Firstly, don't feel bad for having to address this as an issue with clients/customers. If they've genuinely forgotten to cancel, they'll most probably understand the action you'll need to take in the future.

Suggested Action:

It's helpful to have a policy/system in place that allows you to gain payment in advance to prevent you losing out from a clients non-attendance of a booked appointment.

If you don't have this in place, make clear to new clients/customers that you require a deposit or full payment upfront before you can confirm their booking. If they've let you down prior, don't be afraid to call them out on this (politely of course)!

For instance – *'yes of course I can book you in, however unfortunately you failed to make it to our last scheduled appointment, therefore moving forward I will require payment in full prior to our sessions'.*



And Finally ...

Get Some Policies In Place

To help avoid any confusion within your business have your own policies in place (clear and in writing). Whether it's a lateness and no show policy, refund policy or payment policy, they're so important and will help you effectively reduce and manage time wasters.

Have everything clear in writing and give this to your client in advance for them to agree to the terms BEFORE you start working together. It helps you and your client know exactly what's going to happen and prevents any misunderstandings in the event of cancellation/lateness.

Not only will your policy prevent people from stating things like *'you never told me about having to pay for missed appointments'*, but in the long run any fears you have about sounding harsh in the event you have to hold someone to account for their actions

or inactions will be minimised.

For instance if your client is running late they will already be aware this will be cutting into their time and payment, as you've made them aware already via them agreeing to your policies. So make sure you have a clear policies page on your website.

Don't worry about it being all fancy, for lateness/no shows a policy could be something as simple as . . .

My time is valuable as is yours, please note if you're late for your appointment, you will lose that time allocated to you. For instance if your appointment is 11am -12pm and you arrive at 11.20am you will lose 20 minutes, but still be charged in full for the hour.

If you fail to show up for your appointment you will be charged in full.

In turn, I will honour our appointments and be on time as well.

Should you prefer a ready made copy, there are also plenty of legal companies such as *Simply Docs* you could use for template policies and agreements.

Wellbeing Business Network Facebook Group

Remember you can always tap into the pool of knowledge within our *Facebook group* and ask others in the field who have most probably been there and done it already. Everyone's always willing to help!



Hello Fellow Wellbeing Devotee . . .

Great to see you've downloaded our **FREE** practical resource and eager for more support and wisdom in your inbox to quash biz overwhelm and unleash your individual offerings to the world!

Who Exactly Are We . . .



We're Alexis & Ursula, and we are dedicated to connecting people to a world-full of choice and variety, whilst supporting small wellbeing businesses who care and raising wellness resources for charities. We run our [all-in-one wellbeing platform](#) and wellness events to achieve this!

Come And Join Our Group . . .



Feel free to come join our active and continually growing [Wellbeing Business Network Facebook group](#) that provides peer-support, monthly guest speaker lives, business advice & much more.

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