Why you should add a "Scary Hour" to your morning routine

From Google docs to old school paper notebooks, there are many ways to approach to-do lists. But for those of us who find that no amount of shiny new stationary can put a stop to the perils of procrastination, productivity hacks are an essential tool to deploy when all else has failed.

The hack of the moment? Enter "scary hour", the productivity concept coined by San Francisco-based copywriter Laur Wheeler, which has since gone viral on TikTok.

Facing the fear

So, what does "scary hour" involve?

According to Wheeler, all you have to do is set a timer for 60 minutes and in that time, only work on the tasks you've been avoiding or putting off because they make you feel more stressed or anxious. Then when the 60 minutes are up, move on to something else.

While Wheeler performs her scary hour at various times during the day, others advocate that incorporating it into your morning routine and prioritising it

within the first hour of work is most effective and efficient.

Why it works

This idea of focusing your attention during a specific timeframe isn't new. The Pomodoro Technique, a time management method developed in the 1980s, advises 25 minute intervals of work followed by five minutes of rest.

"Power hour" involves getting up one hour earlier than normal, ideally at sunrise, to focus on something that make you feel happy, fulfilled or mentally charged for the day ahead.

The concept of putting things off because they stress you out isn't new either. In fact, there's _scientific evidence_ that proves the human brain is hardwired to prioritise activities that we find more enjoyable, and avoid tasks that feel difficult.

And scary hour's current appeal highlights just how prevalent stress at work is for so many Brits.

According to recent _YouGov_ data, just over half (52%) of British workers say they feel stressed at work, and 88% say they spend time thinking about work outside of working hours. Only 10% of workers say they don't feel stressed by work at all.

If your current role is making work-life balance impossible, adding to your anxiety or draining your motivation away, one Zoom meeting at a time, a career refresh is another great option.

And there's no time like the present to start your search as the _Maddyness Job Board_ has thousands of openings in companies that are currently hiring, like the three below.

Senior Software Development Engineer – Growth, GoCardless, London

GoCardless is seeking a _Senior Software Development Engineer_ to join its product growth team in London. The main goal is to drive product-led growth through user acquisition, activation, revenue and retention and as such, you will be working on business problems that have a direct impact on company growth and revenue so will need to have a growth mindset, be motivated by driving concrete business outcomes, be able to adapt to new technologies and processes quickly and thrive in a collaborative environment. _View more details here_.

UX Researcher, Zilch UK, London

London-based fintech Zilch is hiring a _UX Researcher_ to work on problems from their definition stage, using the appropriate qualitative or quantitative research and discovery methods, through to evaluation of interfaces and interactions for digital products and services, on a global scale. The role is an amazing opportunity to learn and grow your UX research craft through strategic and hands-on work. Day-to-day you will be involved in research through the product life cycle, champion user centred design created via customer insights and facilitate workshops to explain these outputs and insights. _See the full job description here_.

Senior Data Scientist, Platform, Spotify, London

As a _Senior Data Scientist_ at Spotify, you will work closely with cross-functional teams of skilled engineers, data scientists, user researchers, designers, and product managers who are all passionate about providing an outstanding product experience. You will be required to define metrics, build dashboards, create reports and key datasets to empower data-informed product development and communicate insights and recommendations to key partners, helping activate data best practices in the client platform teams. _You can access more information about this role here_.

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Article by AOIBHINN MC BRIDE