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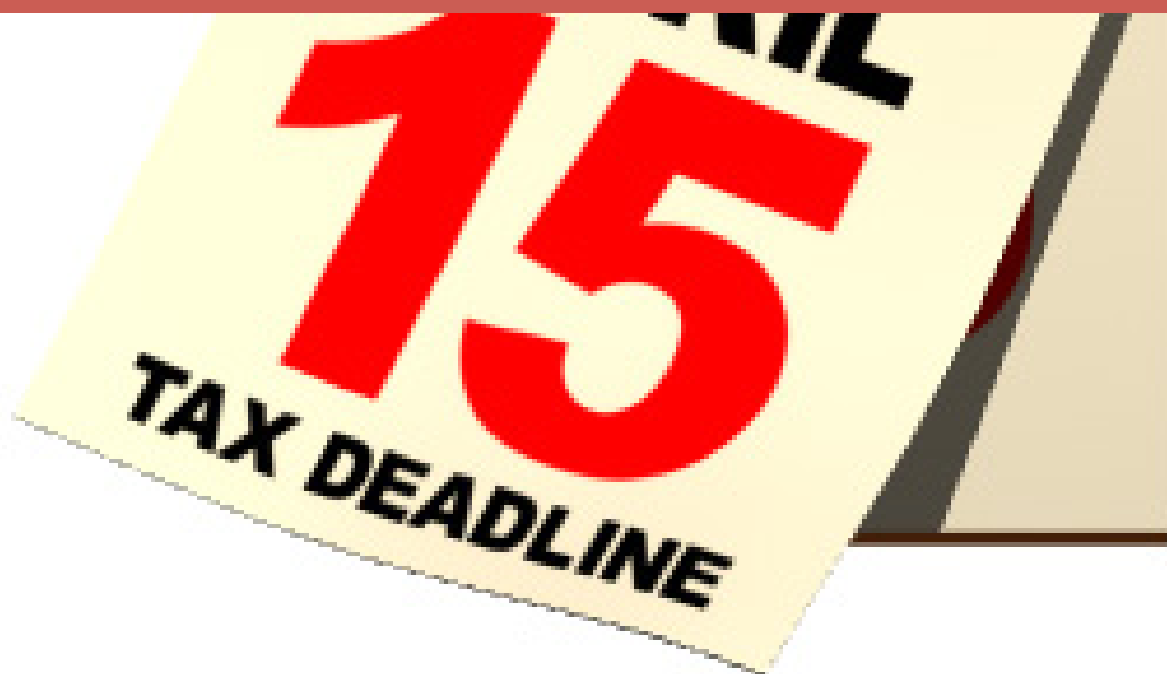
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Mar. 27, 2015

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Accountants and CPAs are in the middle of the industry's hottest season, and staying above the stress in a time of relative chaos can be a challenge to say the least. Long hours, looming deadlines and mountains of data can drive people to the edge, but that doesn't mean it's too late to make 2015 the best—and smoothest—tax season yet.

Get as much as you can out of the process.

Instead of sprinting through tasks, invest in the experience. Many financial professionals just want to log their tax seasons and move on, but those who are interested in learning the nuances of a project will stand out to both the boss and the client. Differentiate yourself and your work ethic by being fully engaged instead of just trying to get it over with.

## **Emphasize your training.**

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even the most experienced professionals, and because tax laws are always changing, there is always something new to learn. If you don't know the answer, find out the truth rather than guessing your way through. Time may be tight, but taking a few extra minutes to learn the right answer always pays off.

### **Make your peak times work harder for you.**

Most people work better under certain circumstances over others, whether that means we're morning people or night owls. Do a self-evaluation to assess when you are most productive, then make your internal clock work harder for you. Whether you can happily work for five hours straight or need a break every 90 minutes, work as hard as you can through those most productive windows, then take a five to 10 minute breather to walk, stretch or grab a cup of coffee. To get the most out of your potential and stay sane doing it, pay attention to your own patterns and work with them, not against them.

### **Remember that breaks aren't bad.**

Tax season is always going to be busy for financial professionals, but a packed schedule shouldn't mean skipping life for a fourth of the year. If you shut out every facet of a personal life, you're going to get stressed faster and shut down more quickly, and the season will feel endless. Carve out snippets of personal time to do what you love most, whether it's eating away from your desk, catching a happy hour bite with friends before heading back to the office or going for a 30-minute walk or run. If you don't make recharging your batteries a priority from time to time, you risk burning out.

### **Focus on the soft skills.**

Being an ace tax preparer is about more than knowing the rules cold. A successful tax season is also about how you managed relationships. How did the client feel about the process? Did you work well alongside your coworkers and make your boss's life

easier? The technical matters are always going to be paramount, but as the

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