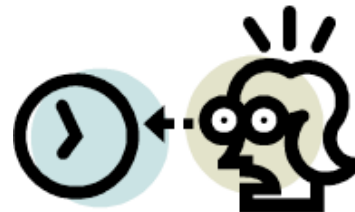


The Time Management Skills We All Need



Have you ever wished the day had more than 24 hours? Do you *run out of time* all the time? Are you reading these questions thinking, “I don’t have time to read this!”? If you answered yes to any of these questions you are not alone. For many people, *time is the enemy*. But the real enemy is mismanaged time. Time management helps you work more efficiently. With time management tools you can use your time well. You can work smart. Learn how to manage your time and you’ll soon have the time you need!

People who have trouble managing their time often fall into one or more of these categories.

- **Procrastinators:** Do you wait and wait and wait before you do the job that needs to be done? People who procrastinate are often given enough time to complete their work, but they don’t even start it until the last minute. They put off the task, and delay and delay. Then they have to rush to finish the task.

- **Disorganized People:** Are you an organized person or a disorganized person? Some people work well with a messy desk. They can look at the chaos of papers, pens, books, cups, and envelopes and find exactly what they need. But many people cannot use their time efficiently when their home or work area is disorganized. The lack of organization makes it difficult for them to think clearly.

- **Non-planners:** To work smart, you need to plan. It’s also important to prioritize. Not every task has the same level of importance. When you prioritize tasks by deciding which are the most important or which have to be done right away, you can *make the most of your time*. People who neither plan nor prioritize often do not use their time well. We all have interruptions that slow us down at work. (Studies show that many people only get 6 minutes of uninterrupted work time a day.) People who plan always add time to their schedules so that interruptions are not a big problem.

- **Micro-managers:** It’s not possible to do everything. Micro-managers want to do everything themselves and they often redo the work that others do. These people need to learn how to work with a team.

Don’t worry if you are in one or more of the categories above. There are many strategies to help you manage your time. The chart on the next page shows different ways to improve the way you use your time. Read the chart and think about which strategies would work best for you.

Making the Most of the Multilevel Class
 Supplement to Podcasts 2 and 3
 Reading for Intermediate-High Learners in Multilevel Lesson on Time

Time Management Issue	Strategy
Procrastination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell yourself, “I’m procrastinating!” anytime you start to delay working on a task. • Think about why you are procrastinating. • Break the large task down into smaller tasks. • Reward yourself when you finish a task. • Ask a friend to check in on your progress by email, text message or phone call.
Disorganization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put papers in labeled folders or Put them in stacks with different color sticky note labels • Put folders or stacks in order of importance. • Put all the tools you need nearby. • Take a two-minute break and straighten your desk or work area.
Lack of Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before you start your day’s tasks, spend five to ten minutes planning and prioritizing. • Set goals for the tasks you want to do each day • Prioritize tasks to help you schedule your day. Choose the most important tasks to do first. • Add time to your schedule for interruptions. • Make TO-DO lists and prioritize the tasks on the list. • When you finish a task, check it off on your TO DO list and review your list to be sure the priorities are still correct.
Micro-management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think about each task carefully. Ask yourself: <i>What can I really do by myself on this task?</i> <i>Do I need help to do this task well and on time?</i> • Get to know the people who are on your team and bring important or urgent tasks to them. Ask the team for ideas on how to complete the task. • Ask team members to do different parts of the task. When you delegate this way, you can really save time.

Remember, it takes time to learn, practice and use these strategies. Be patient. Plan to work on *one strategy at a time*. It’s important to set goals, prioritize your tasks, plan, delegate and organize, but it’s also important to schedule time to relax and time with family and friends. So when you’re managing your time, don’t forget to plan time for **you** too!

Sources: www.mindtools.com; www.time-management-guide.com