

Time Management

A. Introduction:

1. We all are given a great gift when we are born – TIME
 - The amount given is a sovereign gift.
 - What we do with it (time) is our responsibility.
2. God put a desire in every person to know God.
 - One day we will stand accountable before God.
 - He created us in LOVE.
 - o Did we pursue Him?
 - o What did we do with our time?
 - o What did we do with our life?
3. Stewarding is a great responsibility.
 - TIME = asset
 - If we don't manage our time well it will prove unproductive in every way.
4. The Word of God tells us:
 - a. God's people are led by the Holy Spirit - Romans 8:14
 - b. His word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path – Psalm 119:105
 - c. He speaks to us – John 10:4
 - d. He puts His desires in our hearts – Psalm 37:4
5. When I taught at Purdue as a Teacher's Assistant, I saw a great need in my students:
 - I cared about them and wanted to see them succeed.
 - I taught various management classes related to camp management and recreation.
 - Time management is very important in that field so personal time management was a necessity.
6. Time management is for everyone, not just students.
 - I will approach the subject by and large as to a student.
 - Many students discover the need to develop or hone their time management skills when they arrive at college.
 - In high school, teachers frequently structure assignments and classes fill the day.
 - In college, students have less in-class time, more outside class work, and a great deal of freedom and flexibility.
 - The need arises to develop new skill sets.
7. The advantages of time management.
 - Gains time
 - Motivates and initiates
 - Reduces avoidance
 - Promotes review
 - Eliminates cramming
 - Reduces anxiety

B. Keys To Successful Time Management

1. Set goals – specific academic and personal goals.
 - a. Awareness of goals
 - b. Prioritize your activities
2. Develop and maintain a personal, flexible schedule.
 - a. Create a schedule that works for you, not for others.
 - b. Allows you the flexibility to include things most important to you.
3. Create a term calendar, creating major events.
4. Create a weekly schedule of classes, labs, meetings, etc.
5. Decide on specific times to work on each course.
6. Make a to-do list for each day the night before or during breakfast.

C. Set Goals

- Include things most important to you in every area
 - o Personal goals
 - o Academic goals
 - o Career goals
 - o Ministry goal
- Areas to consider
 - o Family
 - o Friends
 - o Work
 - o Church
 - o School
 - o Study
 - o Recreation/leisure
 - Camping
 - Painting
 - Listening to music, etc.
- Consider the things God has put in your heart.
- Build a ladder to get to your goals.
 - o Practical steps
 - o Implement one day at a time

D. Where Is Your Time Going?

- The time we've been given.
 - o 24 hours per day
 - o 7 days per week
 - o 168 hours per week
 - o 52 weeks per year
 - o 8,736 hours in a year
 - o 628,992 hours in a lifetime (72 years)
- Find out: Where is my time going?
- To improve your time management, you need a clearer view of how you use your time.

- Keep track of your time for one week.
- Estimate the amount of time spent on each item, then multiply it by seven.
 1. Number of hours of sleep each night _____ x 7 = _____
 2. Number of grooming hours per day _____ x 7 = _____
 3. Number of hours eating & preparing meals _____ x 7 = _____
 4. Number of hours on chores & errands _____ x 7 = _____
 5. Number of hours per day socializing _____ x 7 = _____
 6. Number of hours spent on media (TV, music, video games, surfing the net)
_____ x 7 = _____
 7. Number of hours spent on communication (phone, e-mail, text messaging, Facebook)
_____ x 7 = _____
 8. Travel time weekdays _____ x 5 = _____ Total travel time weekends ____
 9. Number of hours per week for regularly scheduled activities (clubs, church, softball, etc.) _____
 10. Number of hours in class per week _____
 11. Number of hours of work per week _____
 12. Other (specify) _____

Total: _____

Subtract the number above from 168: $168 - \underline{\hspace{2cm}} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$ (potential study hours)
 Credit hours you are taking: _____ x 2 = _____ (hours you should study per week)

- Be honest!
- The very rough rule of thumb is that you should study TWICE as many hours as the number of credit hours you are taking.
 - o If the above survey indicates that you don't have as many potential hours as you need for studying, you will need to cut back on some of the activities listed above.
- You must prioritize
 - o Sleep is important
 - o Job
 - o School
 - If you are full time student, make school your job.
 - Ask: *Is what I'm doing what an employer is looking for?*
 - o Study
 - $18 \text{ credit hours} \times 2 = 36 \text{ hours of study}$
 - $36 + 18 = 54 \text{ hours per week devoted to classwork}$
 - Note: Studies have shown that late night studying is not productive.
 - o Attend every class.

E. Create A Master Schedule

- If your school offers one, get a Mortar Board (Master Calendar).
- Enter all major events, including tests and assignments due dates.
- Master Schedule is a schedule of activities that is FIXED – all other things work around this master schedule.
- Work backwards to schedule time necessary to be ready for these events.

F. How Much Time Scheduling?

- Usually a **minimum** time schedule is best. In other words, plan what you know is necessary, and add to it later only if necessary.
- Plan as your first schedule one you know you can keep and one that is important to you to keep.
 1. What courses are you taking? (List them on a sheet of paper)
 2. How many hours do you estimate you should study for each course each week to do a minimum job?
 3. What is the total minimum hours per week for all courses?
 4. List your present time schedule for the week, including all fixed times, such as classes, laboratories, club meetings, outside work, travel, eating, and times you go out for recreation.
 5. Fill in the remaining hours each week with the number of hours you need to assign to study according to your decision in step two either by
 - a. Setting up certain hours in which to study subjects, OR
 - b. Setting aside certain hours that you will study, but not deciding in advance which courses will be studied in which hours.
 6. Keep your schedule where you can see it.
 - a. Should be conspicuous
 - b. On top of desk, pinned to wall
- Keeping a calendar is not a matter of “will power,”
 - o It’s the development of a habit of referring to the schedule and following its outline.
 - o This habit may take weeks of practice.
- Deliberately scheduling your time will help desensitize you to the many distractions that come from the constant day-to-day, hour-to-hour decisions about how to spend your time.
 - o A workable time schedule can make decisions for you.
 - o Minimizes distractions
 - o Increases efficiency
 - o Reduces “time-robbers”

G. Yearly Calendar

- Keep a yearly calendar with major events and goals.
- Include family events and planned events (birthdays, etc.)

Time Tips

1. Count all your time as time to be used and make every attempt to get satisfaction out of every moment.
2. Find something to enjoy in whatever you do.
3. Try to be an optimist and seek out the good in your life.
4. Find ways to build on your successes.
5. Stop regretting your failures and start learning from your mistakes.
6. Remind yourself, "There is always enough time for the important things." If it is important, you should be able to make time to do it.
7. Continually look at ways of freeing up your time.

8. Examine your old habits and search for ways to change or eliminate them.
9. Try to use waiting time to review notes or do practice problems.
10. Keep paper or a calendar with you to jot down the things you have to do or notes to yourself.
11. Examine and revise your lifetime goals on a monthly basis and be sure to include progress towards those goals on a daily basis.
12. Put up reminders in your home or office about your goals.
13. Always keep those long term goals in mind.
14. Plan your day each morning or the night before and set priorities for yourself.
15. Maintain and develop a list of specific things to be done each day, set your priorities and then get the most important ones done as soon in the day as you can. Evaluate your progress at the end of the day briefly.
16. Look ahead in your month and try and anticipate what is going to happen so you can better schedule your time.
17. Try rewarding yourself when you get things done as you had planned, especially the important ones.
18. Do first things first.
19. Have confidence in yourself and in your judgment of priorities and stick to them no matter what.
20. When you catch yourself procrastinating, ask yourself, "What am I avoiding?"
21. Start with the most difficult parts of projects, then either the worst is done or you may find you don't have to do all the other small tasks.
22. Catch yourself when you are involved in unproductive projects and stop as soon as you can.
23. Find time to concentrate on high priority items or activities.
24. Concentrate on one thing at a time.
25. Put your efforts in areas that provide long term benefits.
26. Push yourself and be persistent, especially when you know you are doing well.
27. Think on paper when possible – it makes it easier to review and revise.
28. Be sure and set deadlines for yourself whenever possible.
29. Delegate responsibilities whenever possible.
30. Ask for advice when needed.

"Time Tips" was Adapted from A. Lakein. *How to Get Control of Your Time And Your Life*
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More Time Management Tips:

You Are Not A Machine

- **Get 7 to 9 hours of sleep.**
 Researchers have found that you won't be able to work at top efficiency if you are sleep deprived.
- **Eat right and get exercise.**
 A little exercise can help you stay healthy, happy, and more alert.
- **Plan to something fun every weekend.**
 If you deprive yourself of recreation you may find yourself getting way off track.

Reality Check (Prioritize)

- **You only have 24 hours each day and you can't do everything.**
 You may have to cut back on some activities to avoid getting burned out.
- **Prioritize**
 What's most important to you? If school is your top priority, reduce amount of time spent on other things.

- **You can't learn *everything*.**
Identify what's most important in your lectures and books. If you try to learn everything, you won't know anything in depth.

Face the Facts

- You will need to study at least 2 hours per week per credit hour. If you don't put in enough time, you reduce your chances of getting a top grade.

Tell Yourself

- **I will put a week in my pocket.**
During the first week of class, do the reading for the first two weeks – then you will have a week in “reserve” to draw upon later if problems arise.
- **School is my 9 to 5 job.**
- **My PRIME TIME is precious and I won't waste it.**
Experiment with studying at different times of day. Late night studying is not the most effective.
- **I'll start with the hardest.**
Do your most difficult homework first each day – or at least start it. You will be more alert and the task won't seem so insurmountable.
- **All those minutes add up.**
Take advantage of every bit of time available – commuting, waiting in line, taking a break at work. Carry flashcards that you can utilize, or reading that you can chip away at.

Break It Up

- **Break up big jobs into small, very specific tasks.**
- **Review your lecture notes within 24 hours of the lecture.**
- **Take study breaks.**
Don't study longer than 2 hours without a break of at least 20 minutes. Some people do better studying for one hour, then a 15 minute break.
- **Don't let a study break lead you astray.**
Eating a snack, a short walk is fairly safe. Watching TV, checking Facebook or email can easily lead to a two hour “break”.
- **If your book is huge, break it up – literally.**
As long as you don't plan on re-selling the book, have the binding removed and put the pages in a binder, only keeping a chapter at a time with you to read. It's lighter, easier to transport, and you're more likely to actually do the reading.

OVERCOMING PROCRASTINATION

- Ecclesiastes 11:4 (NAS)
He who watches the wind will not sow and he who looks at the clouds will not reap.
- Dictionary definition of Procrastination:
To put off intentionally something that should be done until a future time.
- The term technically refers to the avoidance of a specific task of which needs to be accomplished.
 - o However, the word triggers many emotions.
 - o Reminds us of past experiences where we felt guilty, lazy, inadequate, anxious, or stupid
 - Also implies a value judgment: “If you procrastinate you are bad, and as such, you lack worth as a person.”

A. Procrastination and Its Causes

- You must carefully analyze those situations where your work is not being completed.
 - o Determine if cause is poor time management.
 - o If so, learn and develop time management skills.
 - o If you know how to manage your time but don't make use of those skills, you may have a more serious problem.
- Many cite the following reasons for avoiding work:
 - o **Lack of Relevance** – if something is neither relevant nor meaningful to you personally, it may be difficult to get motivated to even begin.
 - o **Acceptance of Another's Goals** – If a project has been imposed or assigned to you and is not consistent with your own interests, you may be reluctant to spend the necessary time to see it to conclusion.
 - o **Perfectionism** – having unreachable standards will discourage you from pursuing a task. Remember, perfectionism is unattainable. Pursue excellence (from God), not perfection.
 - o **Evaluation Anxiety** – Since other's responses to your work are not under your direct control, overvaluing these responses can create the kind of anxiety that will interfere with work getting accomplished.
 - o **Ambiguity** – If you are uncertain of what is expected of you, it may be difficult to get started.
 - o **Fear of the Unknown** – If you are venturing into a new realm or field, you don't have any way of knowing how well you'll do. Such an uncertain outcome may inhibit your desire to begin.
 - o **Inability to Handle the Task** – If through lack of training, skill, or ability you feel that you lack the personal resources to do the job, you may avoid it completely.

B. Forms of Procrastination

- **Ignoring the Task** – Your midterm exam or the bill that needs to be paid will not vaporize, no matter how much you ignore it.
- **Underestimating the Work Involved in the Task** or **Overestimating Your Abilities and Resources**

- **Mediocre Performance or Lesser Standards** – for example, if you deceive yourself that a 2.3 GPA will get you into the medical school of your choice, you may be avoiding the decision to work harder to improve your grade point average and thus may have to alter your career plans.
 - o This form of avoidance can prevent you from consciously making choices about important goals in your life.

C. Effective Planning

- The larger, more involved, the project, the more difficult it is to plan effectively to carry it out. These steps may be helpful:
 - o Segment the task – smaller segments are more manageable. Small steps.
 - o Distribute the small steps reasonably within the given time frame.
 - Allot sufficient time for each step.
 - Don't fool yourself by believing you can do more than is humanly possible.
 - o Realize that humans periodically need variety and relaxation.
 - o Monitor your progress on the small steps.
 - Access problems when they arise and do something about them quickly.
 - Keep track of the segments and how they fit together to form the whole picture.
 - o Be reasonable in your expectations of yourself.

D. Reducing Distractions

- **Find a good place to study** – make the library your friend. Condition yourself to the quiet by starting with short periods of study there. Trying to study at home usually leads to distractions.
- **Don't put temptation in your path** – Stay away from TV, turn off phone. Continually facing temptations can wear down your resistance.
- **Notify your friends** that they should not call you about going out on certain nights and/or days that are reserved for study.
- **As you study, keep a "to-do" list nearby** – Write down any reminders to yourself that are distracting you. Don't get up in the middle of studying to take care of these tasks.
 - o This is also true for prayer time – write down things that come to your mind that need to be done so you know you won't forget them. Then you can focus on prayer.
- **Don't try to "get everything else done" before you study** – you will never begin.
- **Get enough sleep** so you can work at top efficiency.
- **Don't get too comfy** – so you can stay alert.

E. Increasing Motivation

- **Reward yourself at the end of each task, day, and week.** Decide ahead of time something to look forward to at the end of the task.
- **Form a study group** to make study time for active and interesting.
- **Positive Thinking: post inspirational words** above your desk or in your notebooks.
 - o Surround yourself with positive, successful people.
 - o Keep your distance from negative people.
 - o Give yourself positive self-talk.
- **Call your voice mail and leave a reminder or motivational message.**
- **Link your schedule to someone else's** – to help you get out of the house on time, or to study together.

- **Build your interest in the subject** – Talk to your professor and ask why he/she went into the field and why he/she loves it.
- **Visualize yourself in your future career** – Post pictures, things you plan to do or buy with your future earnings.
- **Create artificial deadlines** – Promise a friend you will finish reading a chapter by 9:00 and then email to confirm you've done it.
- **Tell your friends** your study goals for the week. Telling others helps pressure you to stick to them.
- **Calculate what salary you hope to make after you graduate.**