

TIME MANAGEMENT

LESSON PLAN

Warm-Up Activity

At the beginning we ask students to close their eyes for 30 seconds and after that to open it. Nobody can watch the clock and we don't measure the time. All we ask of participants is to open their eyes after what they believe has been 30 seconds.

Of course, they all open them at different times...

Afterwards, we talk about our understanding of time.

Even though everyone has an equal (24 hours a day or 30 seconds for example), in fact, we experience it and use it in different ways. Some of us experienced it as a short period, other as a long .

So... HOW LONG IS A MINUTE ?



2nd ACTIVITY

How Good is Your Time Management?

Instructions

For each statement, check the box in the column that best describes you. Please answer questions as you actually are (rather than how you think you should be), and don't worry if some questions seem to score in the 'wrong direction'. When you are finished, please calculate your total.

15 Statements to Answer	Not at All	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
1 The tasks I work on are the ones with the highest priority.					
2 I find myself completing tasks at the last minute, or asking for extensions.					
3 I set aside time for planning and scheduling.					
4 I know how much time I spend on each of the various task I do.					
5 I find myself dealing with interruptions.					
6 I use goal setting to decide what tasks and activities I should work on.					
7 I leave contingency time in my schedule to deal with "the unexpected"?					
8 I know whether the tasks I am working on are high, medium, or low value.					
9 When I am given a new assignment, I analyze it for importance and prioritize it accordingly.					
10 I am stressed about deadlines and commitments.					
11 Distractions keep me from working on critical tasks.					
12 I have to take work home in order to get it done.					
13 I prioritize my To Do list or Action Program.					
14 I confirm my priorities with my boss.					
15 Before I take on a task, I check that the results will be worth the time put in.					

Calculate your total :



Statements	Not at All	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
1	1	2	3	4	5
2	5	4	3	2	1
3	1	2	3	4	5
4	1	2	3	4	5
5	5	4	3	2	1
6	1	2	3	4	5
7	1	2	3	4	5
8	1	2	3	4	5
9	1	2	3	4	5
10	5	4	3	2	1
11	5	4	3	2	1
12	5	4	3	2	1
13	1	2	3	4	5
14	1	2	3	4	5
15	1	2	3	4	5

Score Interpretation

Score	Comment
15-30	Ouch! The good news is that you've got a great opportunity to improve your effectiveness at work, and your long term success! However, to realize this, you've got to fundamentally improve your time management skills.
31-45	You're good at some things, but there's room for improvement elsewhere. Focus on some serious issues and you'll most likely find that work becomes much less stressful.
46-75	You're managing your time very effectively! Still, you can make this even better ...!!!

The following is a quick summary of the main areas of time management that were explored in the quiz, and a guide to the specific tools you can use for each.

Goal Setting

(Questions 6, 10)

To start managing time effectively, you need to set goals. When you know where you're going, you can then figure out what exactly needs to be done, in what order. Without proper goal setting, you'll fritter your time away on a confusion of conflicting priorities.

People tend to neglect goal setting because it requires time and effort. What they fail to consider is that a little time and effort put in now saves an enormous amount of time, effort and frustration in the future.

Prioritization

(Questions 1, 4, 8, 13, 14, 15)

Prioritizing what needs to be done is especially important. Without it, you may work very hard, but you won't be achieving the results you desire because what you are working on is not of strategic importance.

Most people have a "to-do" list of some sort. The problem with many of these lists is they are just a collection of things that need to get done. There is no rhyme or reason to the list and, because of this, the work they do is just as unstructured. So how do you work on To Do List tasks – top down, bottom up, easiest to hardest?

To work efficiently you need to work on the most important, highest value tasks. This way you won't get caught scrambling to get something critical done as the deadline approaches.

Managing Interruptions

(Questions 5, 9, 11, 12)

Having a plan and knowing how to prioritize it is one thing. The next issue is knowing what to do to minimize the interruptions you face during your day. It is widely recognized that managers get very little uninterrupted time to work on their priority tasks. There are phone calls, information requests, questions from employees, and a whole host of events that crop up unexpectedly. Some do need to be dealt with immediately, but others need to be managed

Procrastination



(Questions 2)

"I'll get to it later" has led to the downfall of many a good employee. After too many "laters" the work piles up so high that any task seems insurmountable. Procrastination is as tempting as it is deadly. The best way to beat it is to recognize that you do indeed procrastinate. Then you need to figure out why. Perhaps you are afraid of failing? (And some people are actually afraid of success!)

Once you know why you procrastinate then you can plan to get out of the habit. Reward yourself for getting jobs done, and remind yourself regularly of the horrible consequences of not doing those boring tasks

Scheduling

(Questions 3, 7)

Much of time management comes down to effective scheduling of your time. When you know what your goals and priorities are, you then need to know how to go about creating a schedule that keeps you on track, and protects you from stress.

This means understanding the factors that affect the time you have available for work. You not only have to schedule priority tasks, you have to leave room for interruptions, and contingency time for those unexpected events that otherwise wreak chaos with your schedule. By creating a robust schedule that reflects your priorities and well as supports your personal goals, you have a winning combination: One that will allow you to control your time and keep your life in balance.

..and now let's watch a video about :

How to Manage Time - 10 Tips That Work



3rd ACTIVITY

In groups indicate 5 common time-management mistakes.
You have approximately 4 minutes to complete your thoughts.

Compare your answers with the following list :



10 Common Time Management Mistakes

- ❑ #1- Failing to keep a to-do list
- ❑ #2- Not setting personal goals
- ❑ #3- Not Prioritizing
- ❑ #4- Failing to Manage Distractions
- ❑ #5- Procrastination
- ❑ #6- Taking on too much
- ❑ #7- Thriving on “busy”
- ❑ #8- Multitasking
- ❑ #9- Not taking breaks
- ❑ #10- Ineffectively Scheduling Tasks

The infographic features a blue background with a sunburst effect. On the right side, there is a black silhouette of a person with their arms raised and a large exclamation mark above their head, suggesting stress or a realization. The text is in a bold, sans-serif font.

4th ACTIVITY

Many students are able to remain completely focused while they are studying, but most of us allow ourselves to be distracted from a task at least some of the time.

Our brain seems to let us know when we need a break, so we stop what we're doing to make a phone call, talk to someone in person, eat something, have a coffee or something else.

This has always been the case, but in the 21st century there are more potential distractions than ever before. We are constantly bombarded with emails, text messages, tweets, instant messages and other electronic distractions.

An important part of being an effective student is to learn to manage those distractions to get the best out of the time you spend studying.



A. Complete our quiz to get an idea of where you might have problems dealing with distractions.

Tick the statements that are true for you.

Then estimate how much time you spend every day doing each activity you ticked.

When I am studying or working ...	YES	NO	min / h per day
I check my personal email			
I answer my mobile phone			
I answer text/instant messages.			
I chat online			
I use social networking sites			
I read messages on Twitter, etc.			
I surf the internet			

B. Work in pairs. Compare your answers to the quiz.

Which of you is more easily distracted?

Discuss the questions :

What are your three main electronic distractions?

How much time do you spend doing each one every day?

What effect do these distractions have on your life?

Do they make you less effective when studying?

C. Read the following text. Discuss the suggestions the writer makes.

Make a list of your ideas and then compare it with another pair.

Most people have personal rituals associated with their study habits. For example, some people can't even think about starting to study if their desk isn't organized. Others are used to studying with music on, and they say it helps them stay relaxed while they work. Others always end their day by answering email. These are the normal types of routines that make us feel comfortable. The problem is when rituals or routines become distractions. For example, studies show that most people check their email at least once every 15 minutes. This type of constant distraction disrupts concentration and can make a task longer and more difficult. For many people, email has become more of a bad habit than a useful tool. If you allow yourself to become distracted too easily, you will have to work to break the habit.

Our suggestions :

Top Ways to Defeat Distractions and Get Your Work Done

No matter how zen you are, it can be hard to focus on the work in front of you—especially when it's something you don't want to do. Unfortunately, even a quick distraction can derail your productivity, so here are **10 tips** to help you get down to business when it matters most.



10. Schedule Your Day

We all have certain hours of the day in which we get "in the zone" a little easier. Schedule your most important work for these times to give yourself the best advantage. I've also found that scheduling out my to-dos can help me stay on task, whether it's meeting a deadline or remembering to eat lunch before the clock strikes 3pm.

9. Go Full Screen

We don't multitask as well as we think we do. So, when it's time to put your nose to the grindstone, try to block out any other distractions on your screen if possible. Use a distraction-free writing tool like Q10 that goes full screen, and if you can't, at least get rid of the extra icons, windows, and other desktop clutter that you don't need. The fewer things you have open, the more you can focus.

8. Block or Hide Distracting Web Sites and Apps

Parental controls aren't just for naughty kids—they're pretty handy for us distracted adults, too. Having trouble staying off Facebook while you're working? Remove the bookmark from your browser, or even uninstall it from your phone. You can even create a separate browser profile for work, or—if you need more drastic measures—use an extension like Leech Block (Firefox) or StayFocusd (Chrome) to block the sites that distract you.

7. Silence Your Excessive Notifications

For the apps you can't uninstall, like email, you can at least decide whether you really need a notification for every little thing. Consider turning off notifications for your email—you shouldn't be checking every time a new one comes in anyway. Or, at the very least, give them a silent ringtone (or silence your phone entirely) when it's time to work.

6. Track How You Spend Your Time

Certain tasks are less important than others, and if you're spending more time on those tasks, then you should treat them like a distraction from the work you *should* be doing. If you're wondering where all your time in the day goes, try a time tracker like Rescue Time—it'll tell you how much time you spend in a given app or on each web site you visit, and you may find that you're wasting time in the wrong places—even if it feels like work.

5. Keep Distracting Co-Workers at Bay

If you work in an office, you've probably dealt with the occasional chatty coworker, people with questions that can wait, and other distracting issues. A good pair of headphones can go a long way in saying "I'm working hard right now," but if that doesn't help, you may have to be more



direct and tell them you're busy (or, if that doesn't help, give them something to do—and make them think twice about visiting you in the future).

4. Offload Your Distractions for Later

If you can't stop the distractions from catching your eye, you can at least stop them from wasting your time right this second. Keep a "procrastination pad" by your desk (or on your computer) where you jot notes about distractions as they come—that way, you can forget about them and come back to them later on. Alternatively, you can move more distracting elements to another device, like a tablet.

3. Break Down Your Tasks

It's easy to get distracted (or avoid getting started) when the task at hand seems impossibly huge. So, if you're trying to get motivated for the long project ahead, break it down into smaller pieces. It's a lot easier to motivate yourself to do small, concrete tasks, than it is to jump into one big one. The Pomodoro Technique is particularly great for this, if you have a timer handy.

2. Train Your Brain to Focus

No matter how much you block out external stimuli with headphones, or block distracting web sites, your own brain can still be your worst enemy. So, if your brain keeps jumping from thought to thought when you have work to do, you need to learn how to control it. Sometimes it's just a matter of "paying attention to your attention" and catching the wrong impulses before they take hold. Often, just getting started on a task is all you need to gain momentum. And it may sound silly, but regular meditation can go a long way.

1. Don't Go Overboard: Distractions Are a Necessary Part of Productivity

A distraction at the wrong time can really derail the task at hand. However, that doesn't mean we have to have zen-like focus 24/7—in fact, distraction and procrastination are vital to healthy living, and even encourage creative thinking. Studies have even shown that browsing the web at work can make you more productive—as long as it's done at the right times. So, instead of letting your brain distract you in the middle of something important, schedule specific times for your procrastination along with everything else (see #10). Not only will it help you get those distractions out of the way and take a break from work, but it'll give you something to look forward to as you push through that last, pre-break task.

C. Help each other make a plan for managing the three main distractions you identified in Exercise B.

Write down the changes you plan to make for each distraction.

Use suggestions from Exercise C and your own ideas.

For example :

A: *I always answer text messages immediately, even if they're not urgent. I'm constantly interrupting what I'm doing to go through my messages. I feel nervous if I don't check them.*

B: *Well, why don't you check them once an hour? You can answer any that are important and answer the rest after work.*

A: *Yeah, I'm going to force myself not to check them every ten minutes!*



Synopsis

“Don't say you don't have enough time. You have exactly the same number of hours per day that were given to Helen Keller, Pasteur, Michaelangelo, Mother Teresa, Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Jefferson, and Albert Einstein.” — H. Jackson Brown Jr.

Inspirational Video - The Value of Time

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ue8RSDMZVOQ>

