

Do you manage time...or does time manage you?

For many of us, it seems as if we are bouncing from one crisis to another. How can we get ahead when we can't even keep up? We need to ask ourselves how we can make the best use of the time that we have rather than saying that we do not have enough time to do things that we need to do. We all have 168 hours in our week.

Effective time management is a conscious decision where we decide what is important and then plan our time and our lives around these things. The key is to use proactive thinking. Don't wait and let time make its demands on you; instead, put yourself in the driver's seat and decide what you will do with your time.

There are no time management tools that work for everyone all of the time. Instead, we need to decide what works best for us, as an individual, at this point in time. Do we need to schedule better? To prioritize more effectively? Do we work more productively in the morning? Are we trying to complete an entire project at one time instead of breaking it into more manageable chunks? What will work for me...now? Here are some ideas to get you started.

TIPS FOR SAVING TIME

Don't be a perfectionist.

Trying to be a perfect person sets you up for defeat. Nobody can be perfect. Difficult tasks usually result in avoidance and procrastination. You need to set achievable goals, but they should also be challenging. There will always be people both weaker and stronger than you.

Learn to say NO.

For example, an acquaintance of yours would like you to see a movie with him tonight, but you made social plans for tomorrow with your friends and tonight you were going to study and do laundry. You want to say no, but you hate turning people down. Politely saying no should become a habit. Saying no frees up time for the things that are most important.

Learn to Prioritize.

People do not know how to prioritize often become procrastinators. A "to do list" places items in order of importance. One method is the ABC list. This list is divided into three sections; A, B, or C. The items placed in the A section are those needed to be done that day. The items placed in the B section need completion within the week, and those in the C section need to be done within the month.

Combine several activities.

Combine several activities into one time spot. For example, when you watch a sit-com, laugh as you pay your bills. Be creative, and let it work for you.

BENEFITS OF TIME MANAGEMENT

Being an effective time manager has several benefits:

- ➔ Reduce procrastination—if you schedule specific periods of time to complete activities, you will be less likely to put tasks off until tomorrow.
- ➔ More control, less stress—good time management means not waiting until the last minute and rushing to complete tasks. Always feeling behind increases anxiety.
- ➔ Complete more tasks—being a good time manager means that you can complete more tasks and be more successful in what you do.
- ➔ Enjoy your free time—knowing that you have completed your tasks and met your deadlines can make you feel less guilty about taking off some time for yourself.

For more information or details contact the
Office of Student Life
Room 800A / 439-2181 ext. 3266

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