

Leadership Tip Series

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

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.

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.

Tips for Saving Time

- ⇒ **Be detail-oriented. Not a perfectionist** — Being detail-oriented is a good trait. Trying to be perfect sets you up for defeat; nobody can be perfect. Difficult tasks usually result in avoidance and procrastination. Set achievable goals that can also be challenging.
- ⇒ **Assert yourself**—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 who 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 A, B, or C. Section A needs to be done that day. Section B needs to be completed within the week, and those in Section C needs to be done within the month. Some work best with a simple list. Choose a style that works best for you.
- ⇒ **Combine activities**—Being distracted is different from multi-tasking. Combine activities into a time spot (i.e. Doing homework while doing laundry; not playing video games and studying). Let it work for you. This should not be another source of stress.

Benefits of Time Management

- ⇒ **Reduces procrastination**—if you schedule specific periods of time to complete activities, you will be less likely to put tasks off until the last minute.
- ⇒ **More control, less stress**—this means not waiting until the last minute and rushing to complete tasks. Always feeling behind increases anxiety.
- ⇒ **Completing more tasks**—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 time for yourself.

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