Time Management

Managing time means investing your time to get what YOU want out of life, including what you want to get out of being a member of a student organization or out of taking a class. Carefully considering how you spend your time helps you to focus on your values and goals for work, family, school, social activities, and most importantly, yourself.

How Well Do You Manage Your Time?

- Good time management is made up of many habits.
- Which of the following statements can you honestly say that you do?
  - I do things in priority order.
  - I accomplish what needs to be done every day.
  - I am on time with assignments.
  - I use my free time efficiently.
  - I tackle difficult tasks without procrastinating.
  - I am working up to my potential.
  - I spend enough time planning.
  - I prepare a daily "To Do" list.
  - I prioritize my "To Do" list.
  - I keep an up-to-date schedule book.
  - I meet deadlines without rushing at the last minute.
  - I am up-to-date on my personal paperwork.
  - I don't let interruptions sidetrack me from my tasks.
  - I don't spend too much time on trivial matters.
  - Items that you didn't say "yes" to are areas for improvement.

Time Management Tips

- Plan
  - Start each day by making a general schedule with specific emphasis on one or two things you would like to accomplish, including things that will help you to achieve long-term goals.
  - The more time we spend planning a project, the less there is to do at the last minute. Use a calendar or a planner.
  - Break tasks down into manageable parts and tackle them one-by-one.
- Concentrate
  - The amount of time spent on a project is not what counts; it is the amount of uninterrupted time.
- Take Breaks
  - Working for long periods of time decreases energy and can increase tension and boredom.
  - Switching from a mental task to a physical task, resting or exercising for a while can reduce tension and improve your attitude.
- Avoid Clutter
  - Clutter hinders concentration and increases tension.
  - When your work space becomes chaotic, take time to organize.
  - You can only work on one thing at a time, so concentrate all of your efforts on the most important one.
• Organizing your desk (and book bag?) nightly helps.
• Avoid Perfectionism
• Unlike striving for excellence, which is committing to being the best you can be, perfectionism is seeking the unattainable and is frustrating.
• No one is perfect, so don't beat yourself up!
• Learn to say "NO"
• Learn to politely decline requests that don't fit with your goals.
• If you explain that your motivation is not to get out of work, but to save time to do a better job on the really important things, you'll have a good chance of avoiding time-wasters.
• Don't procrastinate
• Just do it.
• Give yourself a reward when it's done!
• Delete
• Get rid of time-wasting activities and habits.
• If you're wasting your time in activities that bore you, divert from your real goals and sap your energy, make positive change and delete them from your schedule.
• Delegate
• Learn to delegate challenging and rewarding tasks, along with authority to make decisions.
• Avoid "Workaholic Syndrome"
• Don't let work interfere with the really important things such as family, friends, and the pursuit of happiness.

Common Causes of Procrastination

• Low tolerance for frustration
• Fear of failure
• Fear of success
• Perfectionism
• Distaste for a particular task
• Self-doubt
• Feeling overwhelmed by the whole task
• "I work best under pressure."
• Waiting to "get into the mood."
• Loss of motivation to complete the task
• Inability to see the task as important

"To Do" List Tips: The Charles Schwab Priority List Method

• Write down upcoming tasks.
• Write a number beside each task to show its priority.
• Do each task in order.
• Don't go on to the next task until you finish the preceding one or when you have done as much as you could for now.
• Any uncompleted tasks at the end of today become tomorrow's top priority.
**Time Budget Formula**

The following is a formula for budgeting the number of hours in a week against the amount of predictable uses of your time. There are 168 hours in a week.

Here is a sample of how one person spends his/her time:
- # of hours of sleep/week @ 8 hours for 7 nights = 56 hours
- # of hours for meals/week @ 3 hours a day for 7 days = 21 hours
- # of hours for classes/week = 16 hours
- # of hours for homework @ 4 hours a class for six classes = 24 hours
- # of hours for job/week = 12 hours
- # of hours for travel time = 2 hours
- # of hours for personal hygiene = 7 hours
  
  Total # of hours used = 138 hours

Subtract the total number of hours/week used for predictable activities (138) from the total number in a week (168). There are still 34 hours to be budgeted towards discretionary activities. Everyone's schedule is different, so take a few minutes to figure out where your time goes.

There are two rewards you can expect from effective time management…

A decreased amount of stress and an increase in accomplished goals!