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Communication: Setting Goals

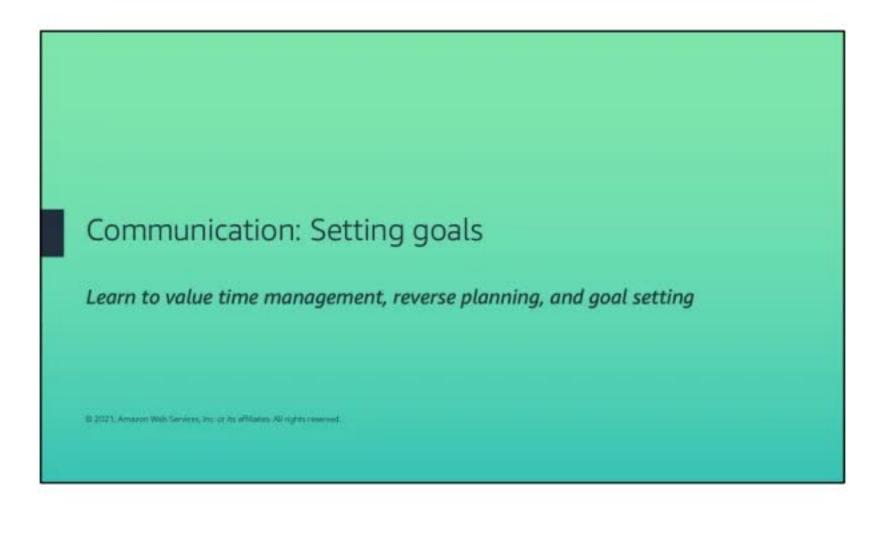# Communication: Setting goals

Learn to value time management, reverse planning, and goal setting

What you will learn

At the core of the lesson

You will learn how to:

- Describe time management and why it's important
- Explain strategies that you can use to manage your time effectively
- Use reverse-planning to outline how to reach (learning) goals
- Explain the responsible, accountable, consulted, and informed (RACI) model and how it's used
- Set a learning goal and plan backwards to achieve it

Key terms

- Time management
- Goal setting
- Reverse planning
- Milestones
- Accountability
- Responsible, accountable, consulted, and informed (RACI) model

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Time management is the ability to plan and control how you spend your available time to effectively accomplish your goals.

Goal setting is a process of thinking about your ideal future, and motivating yourself to achieve your goal.

Reverse planning is planning by starting with your end goal and then working backwards to develop a plan of action.

Milestones are specific, important points along a project timeline. These milestones form a sequence of events that lead to the achievement of your goal.

Accountability is the responsibility of a person to complete their assigned tasks and be answerable for their actions.

The RACI model is a tool to clarify roles and responsibilities within project teams. RACI stands for responsible, accountable, consulted, and informed.

Time management

Definition

What is time management?

- Time management is the ability to plan and control how you spend your available time to effectively accomplish your goals.

- It's the collective name for everything that's related to work habits, instruments, and techniques that help you use your time as effectively as possible.

- Time management is a skill that can be improved.

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Time management, continued

Importance

Why is good time management important?

- Good time management skills –
    - Help you achieve your goals faster.
    - Enable you to do more with less time.
    - Help you achieve balance between work and your private life.

- The most important question of time management is which goal to pursue.
    - What is your goal?
    - Which activities do you undertake every day to get there?

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Time management, continued

Essential skills

What skills are essential for time management?
- Setting goals
- Prioritizing tasks
- Planning
- Organizing

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Time management, continued

Example strategies

- The following items are examples of time-management strategies –
    - Using a task list to track the tasks that you need to do
    - Minimizing distraction (for example, putting your phone away)
    - Minimizing interruptions or finding a quiet space to work
    - Limiting multi-tasking
    - Understanding priorities

- What other time-management strategies do you know?

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Time management: Individual activity

Ways to manage time effectively

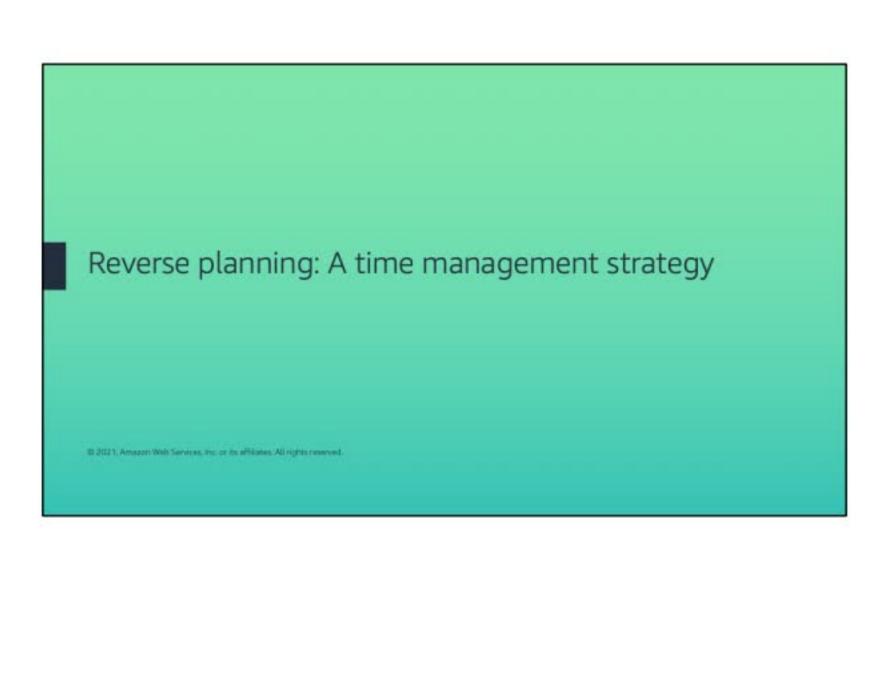Time management strategies are techniques to help you achieve your goals in less time.

- Individual activity
- Time: 10 minutes
- Activity
  - Write down two time-management strategies that you can start using in your professional life
  - Explain why you believe that these strategies will be helpful.
- Evaluation
  - You will share your strategies and explain how the strategy will help you use your time more effectively.

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More examples of time-management strategies include –
- Managing your email messages by responding to them only at the start and end of your day
- Using an agenda for meetings

Reverse planning: A time management strategy

Reverse planning

What is it?

- *Reverse planning*, or *backward planning*, is the opposite of forward planning.

- Begin with the final goal or end-state, and identify what action you must do immediately before the final step to achieve it.

- Then, continue to identify each *milestone*, or key activity, and work backwards until you reach the starting point.

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Reverse planning

Example: Painting a Room

Suppose that you want to repaint your interior walls. Your goal might be four, perfectly painted living-room walls. If you open a can of paint and start applying it to the walls without a plan, you might not achieve the desired result.

If you plan in reverse, your plan might look like this list:

8. Remove the tape from the walls.
7. Let the paint dry.
6. Apply the paint.
5. Let the primer dry.
4. Apply a primer.
3. Cover the light switches and adjacent surfaces with tape.
2. Lay down a cloth to protect the floor.
1. Cover or store your furniture.

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Reverse planning: Individual activity

Designing a plan with backward planning

Consider a learning goal that's based on the AWS re/Start training. For example, you could explore a subject that you already learned about to deepen your understanding. You could also consider a technical goal that you want to achieve.

- Individual activity
- Time: 15 minutes
- Activity
  - Set a learning goal that's based on the technical content of this training. An example might be, "I can configure a private network."
  - Working backwards from the goal to your starting point, identify the series of milestones that you need to complete.
- Evaluation
  - You will work in groups to present your plans.

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Accountability: Taking ownership

Accountability

What is it?

Accountability is the responsibility of a person to complete their assigned tasks and be answerable for their actions.

- Example: You were assigned a task. You take responsibility to complete the task. Unfortunately, because of poor planning, the result of your effort won't meet the expectations of your supervisor. You decide to admit your errors (poor planning) to your supervisor.

- When you can't rely on your team member for help, or when you're forced to handle the unfinished tasks of a fellow team member, the underlying problem is often a lack of accountability.

- When you are given a task and you will bear the responsibility if it goes wrong, you are said to be *accountable* for the task.

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Accountability is the responsibility of a person to complete their assigned tasks and be answerable for their actions.

Accountability, continued

Illustrating accountability

- When someone on your team admits that they made an error, they are showing accountability

- You can show accountability by –
    - Communicating your goals
    - Being honest about your capabilities
    - Keeping your commitments
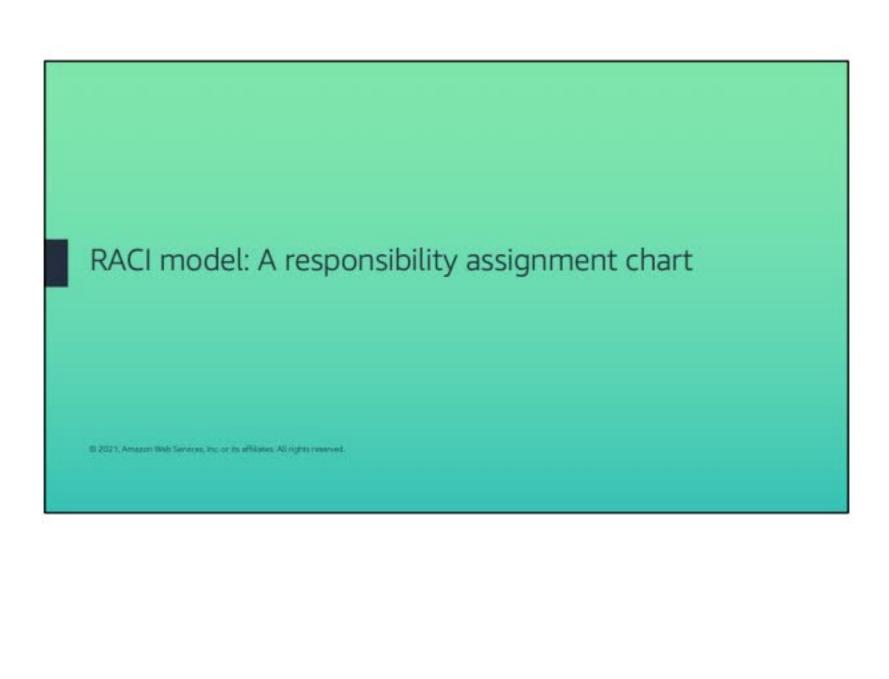   - Admitting your mistakes

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Accountability: Individual activity

Demonstrating accountability

- You can demonstrate accountability in a professional environment in several ways, including:
    - Being on time
    - Communicating your progress on your assignments and any issues that you might have
    - Asking for feedback on your work

- Individual activity
- Time: 15 minutes
- Activity
    - Use a search engine to research ways to demonstrate accountability.
    - Make a list of at least five ways that you can demonstrate accountability.
- Evaluation
    - You will work in groups to present your results.

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RACI model: A responsibility assignment chart

RACI model

Scenario

Imagine that you are a junior engineer. In your work, you take on more responsibility than you can handle. This situation might mean that you have too many tasks to work on, or that you took on tasks that are outside your role. As a result, you might experience a very large workload.

It can be useful to discuss the responsibilities on your team with your colleagues and your manager by using a RACI matrix.

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RACI model: Activity

RACI categories

- Individual activity
- Time: 15 minutes
- Activity
  - Use a search engine to learn more about each category in a RACI chart:
    » Describe the difference between R and A.
    » Describe the difference between C and I.
  - Can one person's name appear in more than one category? Why or why not?
- Evaluation
  - You will work in groups to present your results.

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