TIME MANAGEMENT AND STRESS

SUBTOPIC 1: UNDERSTANDING TIME MANAGEMENT

"Time management" is the process of organizing and planning how to divide your time between specific activities. Good time management enables you to work smarter – not harder – so that you get more done in less time, even when time is tight, and pressures are high. Failing to manage your time damages your effectiveness and causes stress.

1.1. What Is Time Management?

"Time management" refers to the way that you organize and plan how long you spend on specific activities.

It may seem counter-intuitive to dedicate precious time to learning about time management, instead of using it to get on with your work, but the benefits are enormous:

- Greater productivity and efficiency.
- A better professional reputation.
- Less stress.
- Increased opportunities for advancement.
- Greater opportunities to achieve important life and career goals.

Failing to manage your time effectively can have some very undesirable consequences:

- Missed deadlines.
- Inefficient workflow.
- Poor work quality.
- A poor professional reputation and a stalled career.
- Higher stress levels.

Spending a little time learning about time-management techniques will have huge benefits now – and throughout your career.
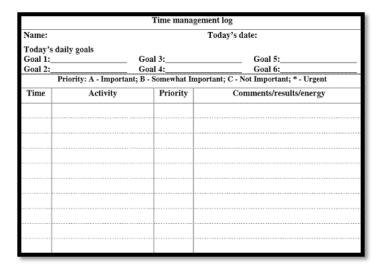
1.2. Time robbers

- A Time Robber is a task which takes up valuable time which should be spent elsewhere.
- Some of these are self-inflicted, others are from external factors.
- Self-inflicted Time Robbers include checking emails, unnecessary meetings (called by you), procrastination, and over-committing.
- External Time Robbers include poor communication, excessive workload, and unclear job definitions.
- Time Robbers can be easily quenched by simply planning, saying no, and delegating.

1.3. Time management forms

These forms include a:
- Time management log to track your time

- Time management worksheet to ensure you are spending adequate time in each area of your life
- Printable to do lists to capture all of your tasks
- Weekly planner tools to take control of workflow
- Goal setting form to weave a life that is aligned with your priorities.

Time management log			
Name:		**Today's date:**	
Today's daily goals			
Goal 1:_____	Goal 3:_____	Goal 5:_____	
Goal 2:_____	Goal 4:_____	Goal 6:_____	
Priority: A - Important; B - Somewhat Important; C - Not Important; * - Urgent			
Time	**Activity**	**Priority**	**Comments/results/energy**

1.4. Effective time management

1.4.1. List of Tips for Effective Time Management

After considering the benefits of time management, let's look at some ways to manage time effectively:

1. Set goals correctly

Set goals that are achievable and measurable. Use the SMART method when setting goals. In essence, make sure the goals you set are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely.

2. Prioritize wisely

Prioritize tasks based on importance and urgency. For example, look at your daily tasks and determine which are:

— Important and urgent: Do these tasks right away.
— Important but not urgent: Decide when to do these tasks.
— Urgent but not important: Delegate these tasks if possible.
— Not urgent and not important: Set these aside to do later.

3. Set a time limit to complete a task

Setting time constraints for completing tasks helps you be more focused and efficient. Making the small extra effort to decide on how much time you need to allot for each task can also help you recognize potential problems before they arise. That way you can make plans for dealing with them.

For example, assume you need to write up five reviews in time for a meeting. However, you realize that you'll only be able to get four of them done in the time remaining before the meeting. If you become aware of this fact well in advance, you may be able to easily delegate writing up one of the reviews to someone else. However, if you hadn't bothered to do a time check on your tasks beforehand, you might have ended up not realizing your time problem until just an hour before the meeting. At that point, it might be considerably more difficult to find someone to delegate one of the reviews to, and more difficult for them to fit the task into their day, too.

4. Take a break between tasks

When doing a lot of tasks without a break, it is harder to stay focused and motivated. Allow some downtime between tasks to clear your head and refresh yourself. Consider grabbing a brief nap, going for a short walk, or meditating.

5. Organize yourself : Utilize your calendar for more long-term time management. Write down the deadlines for projects, or for tasks that are part of completing the overall project. Think about which days might be best to dedicate to specific tasks. For example, you might need to plan a meeting to discuss cash flow on a day when you know the company CFO is available.

6. Remove non-essential tasks/activities: It is important to remove excess activities or tasks. Determine what is significant and what deserves your time. Removing non-essential tasks/activities frees up more of your time to be spent on genuinely important things.

7. Plan ahead: Make sure you start every day with a clear idea of what you need to do – what needs to get done THAT DAY. Consider making it a habit to, at the end of each workday, go ahead and write out your "to-do" list for the next workday. That way you can hit the ground running the next morning.

------End of the lesson------