Managing Work (includes Time Management)

Effectively managing one’s time and resources to ensure that work is completed efficiently.

Key Actions

- **Prioritizes**—Identifies more critical and less critical activities and tasks; adjusts priorities when appropriate.

- **Makes preparations**—Ensures that required equipment and/or materials are in appropriate locations so that own and others’ work can be done effectively.

- **Schedules**—Effectively allocates own time to complete work; coordinates own and others’ schedules to avoid conflicts.

- **Leverages resources**—Takes advantage of available resources (individuals, processes, departments, and tools) to complete work efficiently.

- **Stays focused**—Uses time effectively and prevents irrelevant issues or distractions from interfering with work completion.

Quick Tips

- Keep a running to-do list and spend a few minutes updating it at the beginning of each day.

- Record all your activities—work and personal—in one calendar to avoid conflicts.

- Spend a few minutes before you leave to organize your work area for the next day.

- Schedule a block of time each day to handle interruptions and emergencies.

- Whenever possible, act on an item the first time you hear about it or read it.

Developmental Activities

*Self-Directed*

- Prioritize your tasks and commitments using an ABC system. When appropriate, adjust priorities or eliminate tasks based on changing conditions or needs (customer, organizational, departmental, personal).

- Use a to-do list, task plan, calendar, tickler file, work log, or similar planning tool to note future events, action plans, deadlines, etc.
• Evaluate requests, tasks, and issues as they happen; determine if they will interfere with completing an important assignment, and act accordingly.

• Organize materials, files, and required resources within your work area to maximize efficiency.

• Organize your use of the phone. Make calls early or late in the day or in batches.

• Whenever appropriate, use voice mail, e-mail, and fax to communicate in order to minimize lengthy discussions.

• Before meeting with others or making a presentation, make sure you are well prepared.

• Establish and communicate time limits for meetings, discussions, etc.

• Schedule regular times that others know are good times for them to contact you.

• Develop schedules and timetables for all your projects. Share them with others to ensure that everyone is aware of, understands, and agrees to the stated deadlines.

• Keep an activities log. Analyze it for frequent interruptions and look for ways to reduce them.

• Look for patterns in your workday (e.g., when specific tasks are done, breaks, lunch, etc.) and compare the timing with your “energy curve” for the day.

• Go to a business supply store and research different types of planners, filing systems, Personal Digital Assistants (PDA’s), self-management software, etc.

Partnerships

• Ask others (e.g., an administrative assistant, coworker, or manager) for assistance so that you can make more efficient and effective use of your time.

• After a project has been completed ask people you’ve worked with for feedback on your work management skills.

• Observe coworkers, associates, or managers who are effective time managers. Discuss their methods with them.

• Work on a project with another person who effectively manages time. Ask for feedback on your time-management skills.

• Review vision, values, and mission statements and organizational, departmental, and individual goals and objectives as a basis for setting priorities. Discuss them with your manager.
Targeted Assignments

- Identify your major tasks and break each into subtasks. Question each detail, trying to determine more efficient ways to accomplish it.
- Learn how to use planning software for managing your use of time, planning projects, and tracking progress toward milestones and goals.

Workshops

Look for a workshop that addresses the following:
- Determining how you allocate your time.
- Targeting top priorities.
- Identifying barriers to effective job management.
- Developing the right strategies for meeting your objectives.
- Identifying a planning need, developing an information base, establishing a schedule for action, and establishing contingencies.

Readings

Books


The author shares his tips and techniques for becoming organized and highly efficient. He provides a one-page work-flow management chart for easy reference. The plan described in this book helps the reader stay focused on the task at hand instead of wasting time and energy on distractions.


The author explains how to begin work management efforts by eliminating mental and physical clutter and creating a system that keeps it at bay. After clearing away the clutter, one is able to focus on the author’s techniques for goal setting, delegation, and process improvement.


The organizational processes in this book are meant to simplify everyday work tasks, leaving more time to deal with more important issues. The author addresses today’s more flexible, complex work environments and appropriate technology use.

This concise guide to time management presents practical advice and planning aids that address prioritizing, identifying time wasters, and creating a customized regimen for being organized that will lead to improved job performance.


This book is filled with examples, quizzes, and worksheets to help readers learn to manage time, information, and stress. Especially useful are the chapters titled “Managing Your Time and Your Information Flow” and “Productivity Skills.”


This book demonstrates how effective managers really work and how strict, traditional time management practices can reduce efficiency.


This ready-reference guide provides specific tips and tools readers can use every day to enhance performance and increase effectiveness. The book covers 18 topics to help get work done better and faster. These include getting organized, handling interruptions, gaining support from others, avoiding procrastination, and more.


The author addresses home, virtual, and alternative office organization, how to make the most of technology, and information overload. This book also details how to create a tailored time and information management system, as well as how to clear away clutter and make the most of workspace.


Time management consultant Yager provides practical suggestions for using time management to improve the balance of different aspects of life. This book describes specific principles of time management and gives practical examples to help readers implement them and avoid wasting time.

**Articles**


This article mines the brain of productivity expert David Allen for tips on remaining productive in the face of paper stacks, loaded e-mail boxes, and constantly blinking voice mail lights. The author includes 11 tips along with a few other tricks to help workers remain focused on important tasks.

This article lists 12 steps to help workers deal with the information overload brought on by technology. They address the proper, efficient use of technology and promote adherence to good time management habits to limit distractions.


This three-step plan for allocating time is designed to ensure that readers give attention to the right goals, reduce unproductive time, and make the most of their time at work.


The author explains several approaches to time management, including using technology effectively, setting priorities, and filtering incoming information.


Experts in the field of work management offer their best tips for increasing productivity.


This article, featuring advice anyone can use to manage disorganization, focuses on space management, scheduling, prioritizing, and filing skills.