



# MANAGING YOUR PRIORITIES – THE KEY TO TIME MANAGEMENT

A 90-minute Webinar

Why is managing your priorities important to you? \_\_\_\_\_

1) We can't really manage time, but we can manage

\_\_\_\_\_ and our \_\_\_\_\_.

2) Remember the 80/20 rule:

\_\_\_\_\_ of what you accomplish is a result of \_\_\_\_\_ of your efforts.

3) Be sure you know the difference between being busy and

being \_\_\_\_\_.

4) Jot down as many tasks/routines/chores/jobs/assignments that you can think of that are part of your typical work day:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5) Which ones can you give away?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Activity Log: Are You Using Your Time Efficiently?

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
6am					
7am					
8am					
9am					

**\*\*Which items on the "timeline" do you do because you "HAVE TO"? Because you "SHOULD"? Because you "HAVE ALWAYS DONE IT"?**

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***To Do or Not To Do...***

1) What kind of to-do list do you have? How often do you update it? How often do you **look** at it?

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2) How do you prioritize\* what is on your to-do list?

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3) How do you actually WORK your to-do list?

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4) Do you use a weekly calendar? What is written in it?

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5) Where and how do you keep track of your long-term goals and projects?

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\*If you deal with the expectations of more than one person, it may be necessary to get them involved in prioritizing the workload.

***PLANNING FOR RESULTS/SCHEDULING FOR ACCOMPLISHMENT***

1) **Know thyself.** How much can you really get done in one day? Are you setting yourself up for failure?

2) **Are you using your calendar or to-do list to schedule...**

- \_\_\_\_\_ High-priority items
- \_\_\_\_\_ "Management" time
- \_\_\_\_\_ Project due dates
- \_\_\_\_\_ Meetings
- \_\_\_\_\_ Routine tasks – daily and weekly
- \_\_\_\_\_ Outgoing phone calls
- \_\_\_\_\_ Checking and returning email

- \_\_\_\_\_ Contingency time
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lunch!
- \_\_\_\_\_ Planning time
- \_\_\_\_\_ "Regular" work
- \_\_\_\_\_ Social networking

**3) When you are planning a project,**

- a) visualize the \_\_\_\_\_
- b) know who will be \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_ as necessary
- d) understand the \_\_\_\_\_
- e) establish \_\_\_\_\_ for yourself
- f) work \_\_\_\_\_ in your calendar
- g) determine what \_\_\_\_\_ you will need
- h) what steps can the project be \_\_\_\_\_ into?
- i) what are possible \_\_\_\_\_?
- j) how will you \_\_\_\_\_ progress?
- k) \_\_\_\_\_ the steps of the project.
- l) begin the project right away so it is fresh in your mind, even if all you do is  
\_\_\_\_\_ the steps you want to take.

What "project" are you currently working on? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What can you do to make it flow better? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Obstacles in Our Way

### ***NOT NOW – I DON'T HAVE TIME - THE PLIGHT OF THE PROCRASTINATOR***

- 1) Why do we procrastinate?

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2) When might procrastinating be a good thing?

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3) Why is procrastination a big deal?

- a) \_\_\_\_\_ time
- b) \_\_\_\_\_ opportunities
- c) \_\_\_\_\_ performance
- d) increased \_\_\_\_\_
- e) \_\_\_\_\_ energy

4) How can you tell when you are procrastinating?

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5) How can we overcome procrastination? Recognize it, understand why we all do it, and then:

- a) \_\_\_\_\_ to overcome it
- b) use your \_\_\_\_\_
- c) work \_\_\_\_\_ in your calendar
- d) be \_\_\_\_\_
- e) eat the \_\_\_\_\_!
- f) reward \_\_\_\_\_
- g) be aware of \_\_\_\_\_ consequences

6) Realize that \_\_\_\_\_ is not necessarily procrastination.

## ***DON'T INTERRUPT ME!***

- 7) Consider whether you are using the interruption as an \_\_\_\_\_ to stop what you are doing.
- 8) Interruptions are inevitable, but you CAN deal with them. Which of these tips might work for you?

### ***In person:***

- \_\_\_\_\_ Ask at the beginning why someone has come to see you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Stand when they enter the room.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Suggest a later meeting and give time limits.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Suggest a meeting in their office.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Avoid, or at least limit, chit-chat.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Get up and leave!
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make sure your chairs aren't too comfortable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Check your watch or the wall clock.

### ***On the phone:***

- \_\_\_\_\_ Stand during the phone call.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have an agenda when you make a call.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Don't prop your feet up or get "real comfortable."
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have something in front of you that needs to be done.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Always have a pen and paper ready.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make an appointment to return calls when possible.

### ***Comments/actions you can use on the phone or in person:***

- \_\_\_\_\_ "I'm in the middle of something right now – can I get back to you at ...?"
- \_\_\_\_\_ Begin with "I have about 5 minutes before I..."
- \_\_\_\_\_ In the middle of a conversation that has gotten off track: "You were saying..." or "Now what was that you mentioned about..."

### ***Email:***

- \_\_\_\_\_ Turn off the incoming-mail alert. YIKES!!!
- \_\_\_\_\_ Schedule specific times to deal with your email.

## ***HELP FOR MARATHON MEETING MADNESS***

\_\_\_\_\_ Decide if there really needs to be a meeting; could this be handled by email, memo, one-on-one, a phone call? Items that require interaction are the most likely candidates for meetings:

- \*items that need input for decisions to be made
- \*interactive training information
- \*policies and procedures that need in-depth explanation
- \*brainstorming new ideas
- \*updating progress on a project
- \*updating employees for "rumor control"

\_\_\_\_\_ Attend the meetings you really need to attend.

\_\_\_\_\_ Invite only those people who really need to be there.

\_\_\_\_\_ Distribute an agenda before the meeting, noting topics to be covered and time allotted to each, so people can be prepared.

\_\_\_\_\_ Know the goal/objective for the meeting before it starts – and how you'll know you achieved the objective.

\_\_\_\_\_ Start and end on time. PERIOD.

\_\_\_\_\_ Have one person make sure you are addressing the issues on the agenda and not getting off track.

\_\_\_\_\_ Assign a timekeeper.

\_\_\_\_\_ Assign someone to take notes as to what is being discussed, what is to be done, by whom and by what date.

\_\_\_\_\_ Deal with the most important issue first.

\_\_\_\_\_ Establish rules if necessary. For example:

- \*no sideline conversations
- \*only one person speaks at a time
- \*if someone has a concern about what is being discussed, it needs to be brought up at the meeting, not after the meeting
- \*work on one issue at a time
- \*brainstorm first, analyze later
- \*decide how a decision will be made if participants don't agree on a particular item

\_\_\_\_\_ Keep everyone involved so they are invested in the outcomes. Ask for input from less senior people first so they aren't intimidated by others who have more experience. New people often have fresh ideas, but don't always feel comfortable sharing on their own.

\_\_\_\_\_ Allow time for discussion or a Q & A period if appropriate.

\_\_\_\_\_ If one is needed, at the end of the meeting, schedule the follow-up meeting.

\_\_\_\_\_ After the meeting, send a memo summarizing who attended, major points and ideas, decisions reached.

\_\_\_\_\_ Reiterate who is to do what by when. Include the date and time for the follow-up meeting.

***A THIEF IN THE NIGHT – OR DAY! TIME ROBBERS BY ANY OTHER NAME...***

Which of the following items **rob you of your time** on a typical day?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Personal visitors
- \_\_\_\_\_ Phone calls – including cell phone/text messaging
- \_\_\_\_\_ Chit-chat
- \_\_\_\_\_ Meetings
- \_\_\_\_\_ Work you should have delegated
- \_\_\_\_\_ Obligations you shouldn't have taken on
- \_\_\_\_\_ Unclear goals
- \_\_\_\_\_ Not enough information
- \_\_\_\_\_ Disorganized work area
- \_\_\_\_\_ Putting out fires
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lack of planning
- \_\_\_\_\_ Social media
- \_\_\_\_\_ Procrastination
- \_\_\_\_\_ Email including IM
- \_\_\_\_\_ Surfing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Trying to remember things
- \_\_\_\_\_ Carelessness
- \_\_\_\_\_ Failure to listen
- \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

***EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED***

- 1) Whatever has happened unexpectedly, decide what \_\_\_\_\_ it should have in your workday.
- 2) The unexpected will be much less frustrating if you have \_\_\_\_\_ for it.
- 3) Don't try to \_\_\_\_\_ time from somewhere else. \_\_\_\_\_ it.
- 4) Set aside time that is \_\_\_\_\_ if necessary.

What is one "unexpected" in your workday?

\_\_\_\_\_

What might you be able to do to handle it differently? \_\_\_\_\_

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### ***TIME TIPS & TECHNIQUES***

1. Develop note-taking skills – you *can't* remember it all!
2. As much as possible, handle paperwork only once. Also realize that, for some of us, this is NOT always possible, no matter what the “experts” say!
3. Don't keep copies of things someone else will have on file.
4. Dispose of paperwork that isn't relevant to your job.
5. Keep a “last chance” file for paperwork you aren't sure how to handle. Schedule a time to check it and ***clear it out*** every 30 days.

**Notes:** \_\_\_\_\_

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6. Make a habit of finishing a “main” job or “1 more thing” before you leave.
  7. Understand the value of teamwork in managing your time.
  8. Don't do work that could/should be done by someone else. Delegate or suggest someone who could do the job better.
  9. Ask people who come to you with problems to come up with solutions.
  10. Remember that stress and tiredness usually come from things left undone rather than what you have already accomplished.

**Notes:** \_\_\_\_\_

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11. Use lists whenever you can. \_\_\_\_\_
  12. Make templates for often-used forms and information. \_\_\_\_\_
  13. Whatever system works for you ***is the system you should use***, no matter what everyone else is using.
  14. Become aware of your most productive times and schedule around them. \_\_\_\_\_
  15. Acknowledge that time management isn't really a “system”; it's a process that has to be done every day to be effective.

**Notes:** \_\_\_\_\_

16. Make sure you are including your personal goals when you are scheduling your time and priorities. What is important to you? Are you moving toward those goals? \_\_\_\_\_

17. Balance is important in both your work life and your personal life. Don't over-schedule to the point you have no meaningful contact with others. Review your work and be aware of the parts you enjoy. Find a way to do more of those things. \_\_\_\_\_

18. Commit to making time for something **you** want to do. \_\_\_\_\_

**Notes:** \_\_\_\_\_

### ***LET'S GO TO TECH/SYS***

1. Use the technology available to you – if it works for you. Again, don't let the “experts” decide what works for you.
2. Don't let technology run your life. Remember – balance. **YOU** have control.
3. Take advantage of systems such as calendar alerts, etc., to remind you of due dates, deadlines, appointments, and other important dates and times.
4. Learn how to use features more efficiently, like “folders” for your email.
5. Consider using a desk clock to keep you on schedule.

***How might you make technology and systems work for you?***

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### ***BLOCK & TACKLE***

1. If you usually have several phone calls to make or emails to send during the day, schedule specific blocks of time to handle those.
2. Block off chunks of time to work on larger projects, but usually not more than 2 hours at a time, so you don't get “stale.”
3. Block off time during your most productive time to work on your most challenging items.
4. Check email, read mail, etc. during those times you are not as fresh.

***In what areas can you use a “block and tackle” approach?***

\_\_\_\_\_

**GOOD JOB!**

1. Check items off your to-do list as you accomplish them. The feeling of achievement will motivate you to move on to the next item.
2. When you've finished a large project or a particularly difficult, frustrating or boring task, reward yourself.

**How might you reward yourself?**

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**THANKS, BUT NO THANKS!**

1. Learn how to say "no" to things you aren't good at. Ask yourself – and others, "Am I the right person for this job?" \_\_\_\_\_
2. If you say yes to something new, decide what you are willing to **give up** to allow for the new task/project/activity. \_\_\_\_\_
3. When someone gives you an estimate of how long the requested job will take, double the estimate before deciding if you have time.

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**What might you consider saying "no" to?**

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And the **BIG** question is...what **WILL** I do differently as a result of what I've learned today?

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**WHAT IS ONE AREA I WILL LOOK AT DIFFERENTLY AFTER TODAY?**

- To-do list?
- Scheduling?
- Planning?
- Saying no?
- Blocking and tackling?
- Procrastination?
- Interruptions?
- Meetings?

**What specifically will I do differently?** \_\_\_\_\_

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