PROGRAM OVERVIEW

About the Training Program

The time in any given day is one of the few things that is given to us equally. Yet it feels totally different when we are using time in a way we choose for ourselves than it feels when our time seems to loom out of our control. We must ask the larger question of what is valuable in our lives, integrating personal and professional goals. Without a strong desire to live out certain values, time management goes unused. A strong motivation to use one’s time to accomplish what one truly wants is necessary to bring about behavioral changes. This program is for anyone who wants more out of life, at Work and at home.

A study of a thousand business people reported that 89 percent take work home, 65 percent work more than one weekend per month, and 53 percent spend less than two hours per week looking after their children. It is not likely that these people are happy with these choices. Time management is a process of constantly asking what is more important and arranging priorities to reflect each choice.

Training Objectives

Participants will have the following opportunities:

• To increase awareness of their attitudes toward time;
• To identify their procrastination patterns;
• To assess personal “clutter styles”; and
• To learn to plan time by setting priorities and developing action plans.

Designed by Gretchen Castle.
# PROGRAM OUTLINE

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I. Opening Activities

A. What Is “The Time of Our Lives”? (Presentation)

1. Introduce yourself, briefly delineating experience and qualifications. Describe the personal benefit of leading a time-management program, emphasizing that it forces you to observe your own process in managing (or not managing) time. In a humorously exaggerated way, describe your own procrastination, clutter style, etc., illustrating that what we know we should do and what we actually do may be quite different.

2. Share this statement: “No one has enough time, yet everyone has all there is.” Ask participants what the statement means and field some interpretations. Point out that our time is our life. What we do with our time determines what we do with our life.

B. Prioritizing (Icebreaker; Materials: Prepared Index Cards)

1. Make up index cards in advance with one question per card, using the sample questions below:
   - What would you do if you had a free day off from work?
   - What do you spend the most time on at work?
   - What do you spend the most time on at home?
   - What would you do if you had a month off from work?
   - What would you do if tomorrow were the last day of your life?
   - What would you do if you were told you had one year to live?
   - If you could be anywhere right now, where would you be and what would you be doing?
   - How does what you do reflect what is important to you?
   - What is the most important thing you did yesterday?
   - What is the most important thing you will do tomorrow?

2. Give each participant a card. Ask participants to mill around, quickly find a partner, introduce themselves, and ask the person the question that is on his or her card. Allow two minutes for the exchange.

3. Then ask participants to go and find another partner and repeat the introduction
and ask the same question on the card. This continues until most people have been partners.

4. Reunite the full group and initiate a discussion by asking, “Which questions stood out for you and why? Did any of your answers surprise you? Are there questions you would like to explore further or think about?” Point out that how these questions are answered indicates what you want to do with your time that you are currently not doing.

5. Indicate that the crux of time management is to avoid the tyranny of the urgent and concentrate on the important. Time, the great equalizer, is managed by continually setting priorities. From the biggest picture (career and personal long-term goals) to the smallest choices (whether to finish writing the report or return phone calls), each choice places a relative priority order on what we do. This leads us to ask, “Do my current choices actually reflect what is of greatest value to me?” and “How can I clarify what is of greatest value to me?” and “How can I clarify what is of greatest value to me and have my time usage reflect my priorities?” Stress that these two questions are crucial to time management and will be addressed in this training program.

■ C. Needs Assessment (Small Group Discussion; Materials: Newsprint, Marking Pens)

1. Divide participants into groups of four and invite them to briefly share problems they have with time management. Ask them to write their responses on newsprint. Give a couple of examples to help them start

2. Reassemble the full group. Ask someone from each small group to share the group’s time-management problems. Make a composite list of the problems on a flip chart and put an asterisk beside a problem each time it is repeated.

3. State that the group will review this composite list near the end of the day to be sure that the concerns were covered adequately or that provisions for further training are made. Promise that each person will leave with several solutions to a current time-management problem.

■ D. Choose a Cliche (Writing Task; Materials: Form A)

1. Have participants look at the following list of cliches relating to time (on flip chart or overhead):
   a. A stitch in time saves nine.
   b. If I could save time in a bottle . . .
   c. Time flies.
d. Time is money.
e. Why put off till tomorrow what you can do today?
f. There is never enough time.
g. Time is the only equal-opportunity employer.
h. Make every moment count.

2. Read down the list and ask participants to write down one or two that stand out to them or catch their attention.

3. Ask participants to think for a couple of minutes about the influence their past had on their choice of phrase. Ask, “What gives this phrase meaning for you? Why did it stand out? Are there any memories of family events or people that you think of?”

4. Pair off participants and distribute Form A. Ask them respond to the first two items by discussing and then writing down key phrases and brief comments about their relevance.

5. Reassemble the full group and ask for two or three participants to share their insights from this activity.

**II. Setting Goals and Planning Time to Achieve Them**

**A. Your 100th Birthday (Dyadic Discussion; Materials: Form A)**

1. Introduce the next activity by asking if others share the belief that the true test of living is to be able to look back after a long life and to be able to say, “Yes, I have done what I wanted to do in my lifetime.” Point out that the activity participants are about to do is an alternative to writing out goals in a dry manner; it is more fun and adds a bit of realism in terms of looking back on one’s life and taking stock in what one has accomplished.

2. Pair off participants again and have partners sit facing each other anywhere in the room. Request that one person act as interviewer for the first ten minutes and the other act as himself or herself on his or her one-hundredth birthday. The interviewer is interested in asking specifically:

   • What have you accomplished in your lifetime? (Four accomplishments.)
   • What lifestyle have you enjoyed?
• What advice would you give to others?

The above questions should be listed on a flip chart.

3. After ten minutes, have participants switch roles. Instruct each person to use the bottom of Form A to summarize his or her answers from the interview.

4. Reconvene the full group and ask several participants to share their accomplishments. Ask if anyone was surprised with his or her answers.

■ B. Setting Goals (Writing Task; Materials: Form B)

1. Introduce the next activity by making two points: (a) Setting goals is simply a way to make dreams concrete, and (b) goals are fluid and should change as life changes. Give a personal example of how you have accomplished a dream by setting a goal, and, more importantly, tell participants how you had to revise or drop a goal as a result of changes in what was important to you.

2. Distribute Form B and point out that this sheet is designed to move participants from broad goals to more concrete objectives and from specific action plans to items for their “to-do” lists. By breaking goals down, we begin to accomplish them today, rather than letting them loom large in front of us just out of reach. Suggest to the group that each person should have a daily to-do list and a long term to-do list with priorities and deadlines. This assists in breaking larger tasks down into daily tasks and in feeling accomplishment when a larger task is complete.

3. Ask participants to complete Form B independently, giving them approximately twenty minutes. Walk them through the form before they begin.

4. When all participants have finished, have them form groups of four. Instruct them to share what they wrote, one person at a time, allowing five minutes for each person. As each participant shares his or her goals, ask others to play the important role of consultants, providing clarification, questions, or challenge. Maximize the role of the consultants by pointing out how rare it is to receive constructive feedback.

5. Reassemble the full group and ask for questions and responses to the activity. What did participants learn about themselves? Were the consultants helpful in this process?

■ C. Time-Management Tips (Lecturette; Materials: Form C)

1. Distribute Form C and encourage participants to use it to record any information that is useful to them during the lecturette. Tell them it is not necessary to write everything down. Of all the information about to be offered, indicate that probably
20 percent will be truly useful to any one person. This estimate is based on the Pareto Principle: 20 percent of effort produces 80 percent of the result. Mention that the key is to focus on the critical 20 percent and not allow the other 80 percent to crowd it out or get in the way. The same is true of time management: the critical 20 percent of a person’s well-used time will produce 80 percent of the results. One could get the same results in less time if the focus remains on the critical 20 percent.

2. Present these key points:
   - Only 25 to 50 percent of a manager’s time is controllable, and the average manager is interrupted every nine minutes.
   - This fact suggests the need to minimize interruptions but also to plan them into your day.
   - An effective way to isolate and manage the 20 percent is to use the ABC’s. On your daily to-do list, mark the important and essential things to be done today with A, the secondary items with B, and the marginal items with C.
   - Have corresponding places on your desk or in files for these three categories.
   - Often the C items will end up in the “circular file.”

3. Continue the lecturette with these tips:

   **Paperwork:** Handle materials once. Choose one of the four D’s: *dump, do, delegate, or delay*. Add it to your to-do list and assign it a letter. Keep a list of the longer-term projects that do not need your immediate attention, but refer to the list periodically to decide if any items need to move to your to-do list.

   **Reading Materials:** Scan the index and tear out articles of interest. If you keep a reading pile, schedule time to read the materials; otherwise you may as well throw them away immediately.

   **Writing:** Once the outline is done, 70 percent of your work is completed. Word processing is wonderful for putting in the outline and simply filling in the details. Ask yourself, “Is this letter informing or influencing?” It will help focus your letter. Allow one-fourth more time than you think it will take. Use the phone where possible. Remember that paperwork is a means to an end; it is an activity that should merely focus your objectives.

   **Personal Organization:** Write your to-do list at the end of the day. It gives you the chance to review what you have accomplished, to look at it fresh in the morning, and to keep you on track for the day. A recent study showed that while 80 percent of managers reportedly keep a to-do list, only 40 percent prioritize the items and only 10 percent do it every day. While 70 percent of managers report that they have goals, only 10 percent write them down and only 3 percent feel their goals are accomplished. Block out your prime time for the A items. Remember that planning equals
“what” and scheduling equals “when.” View your desk as a tool that shows your priorities. Conversation pieces invite conversation, candy invites others to share your office, excessive personal items invite people to move in with you. Place chairs away from the door to give you a chance to stand if you want to keep the interaction brief.

■ **D. More Tips (Read-and-Discuss Group; Materials: Form D)**

1. Distribute Form D.

2. Pair off participants and invite them to process the list of additional tips together, sharing the ones they think would be helpful and identifying the ones that need further clarification.

3. Take a brief survey of the most helpful tips in the full group and entertain questions of clarification.

4. Ask participants if they have other tips to add.

■ **III. Procrastination**

■ **A. Thinking That Promotes Procrastination (Lecturette)**

1. Ask participants to think of a time when they put something off. Encourage them to think of the reasons why they procrastinated.

2. Observe that it is sometimes easier to do low-priority tasks rather than high, because they are often easier and faster. We often go for the short-term pleasure rather than the long-term joy.

3. Point out that another important factor that contributes to procrastination is ineffective thinking. We tend to make statements to ourselves such as the following (list on newsprint):

   • I want it to be perfect.
   • My worth is equal to my performance.
   • Everything should work for me.
   • There is a simple, right answer for any problem.
   • The more I do, the better person I am.
   • It creates excitement to race toward deadlines.
   • I am avoiding feelings of success.
4. Ask participants to identify which of these self-statements they tend to make. Request other ineffective self-statements that participants make.

### B. Kicking the Procrastination Habit (Experiential Activity)

1. Instruct participants to write down (on a blank sheet of paper) ineffective thinking that causes them to procrastinate.

2. Request participants, one at a time, to read what is on their paper to the group, then tear it up or wad it up and throw it in the waste basket. Explain that this action is a symbolic way of releasing the behavior that is preventing success. (The more dramatic the group is by cheering, the more cathartic the experience will be.)

3. Conclude with these suggestions (listed on newsprint) for combating procrastination:
   - Set acceptable standards but avoid perfectionism.
   - Schedule the difficult, the important, the unpleasant tasks first.
   - Set guidelines. “Go public” by announcing them.
   - Handle a task just once. When you pick it up, dispose of it.
   - Reward yourself after the job is finished.

### C. Ridding Yourself of Clutter (Small-Group Discussion)

1. Mention to participants that a major contributor to procrastination is the clutter of mail, email, documents, magazines, etc., that accumulate on our desks. Divide into small groups. Ask groups to share advice on how to reduce clutter. Indicate that the collective wisdom of the group should prove beneficial.

2. If you wish, add these tips:
   - Clear your desk of everything except the project you are working on.
   - File only what you must. Toss out the rest.
   - Delegate all possible paperwork.
   - Don’t leave tasks unfinished.
IV. Closing Activities

A. Final Questions (Writing Task; Materials: Index Cards)

1. Review the composite list of time-management problems made at the beginning of the program. Ask participants to identify which problems were covered and which ones were not.

2. Distribute index cards to everyone and ask participants to write a question they would still like to raise about time management.

3. Collect index cards and review questions while participants work on their contracts. Prepare to answer as many questions as possible in the closing.

B. Contracting (Dyadic Discussion; Materials: Form E)

1. Form pairs and distribute Form E. Ask participants to help each other complete Form E in duplicate.

2. Ask partners to sign each other’s contracts and keep a copy, implying accountability for follow-up after the training.

C. Ending Event (Full-Group Discussion)

1. Answer questions submitted on index cards.

2. Invite several participants to share their contracts.

3. End with this frequently quoted story:

   A Story About Time Management *

   The utility of planning the day’s work is seen clearly in a well-known story concerning Charles Schwab. When he was president of Bethlehem Steel, he presented Ivy Lee, a consultant, with an unusual challenge. “Show me a way to get more things done with my time,” he said, “and I’ll pay you any fee within reason. Handing Schwab a sheet of paper, Lee said, “Write down the most important tasks you have to do tomorrow and number them in order of importance.

   When you arrive in the morning, begin at once on No. 1 and stay on it till it’s completed. Recheck your priorities; then begin with No. 2. If any task takes all day, never

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mind. Stick with it as long as it’s the most important one. If you don’t finish them all, you probably couldn’t do so with any other method, and without some system you’d probably not even decide which one was most important. Make this a habit every working day. When it works for you, give it to your men. Try it as long as you like. Then send me your check for what you think it’s worth.” Some weeks later Schwab sent Lee a check for $25,000 with a note saying that the lesson was the most profitable he had ever learned. In five years this plan was largely responsible for turning Bethlehem Steel Corporation into the biggest independent steel producer in the world.

Schwab’s friends asked him later about the payment of so high a fee for such a simple idea. Schwab responded by asking what ideas are not basically simple? He reminded them that for the first time not only he but his entire team were getting first things done first. On reflection Schwab allowed that perhaps the expenditure was the most valuable investment Bethlehem Steel had made all year.
THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE
FORM A

Time Planning

Key Phrases:

Personal Relevance:

100th Birthday:

1. In my lifetime I want to accomplish

2. I want my long-term lifestyle to be

3. The advice I want to remember for myself is
Goal Sheets

Identify Goals:

Job: (e.g., become consultant)

1. 

Personal: (e.g., spend quality family time)

1. 

2. 

3. 

Establish Objectives (Specific, measurable, achievable, and compatible with goals; e.g., attend 2 seminars/year; spend 2–3 evenings/week at home.)
Action Plans (For each objective, deal with questions of who, when, how, and cost.)

Put these items on your daily to-do list or on your long-term to-do list.

- Prioritize each with A, B, or C.
- Schedule concentration tasks for your prime time.
- Delegate when possible. Group items into sequences.
Notes on Time-Management Tips

Overview:

Paperwork:

Reading Material:

Writing:

Personal Organization:
THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE
FORM D

More Time-Management Tips

1. Plan for rewards after unpleasant tasks.
2. Do the most unpleasant tasks first.
3. Learn to say no.
4. Plan for change (involve others and ask for help as needed).
5. If you are too busy, ask, “What is my objective? What is essential?”
6. When you are indecisive, remember you can rarely be 100-percent sure.
7. Waiting is inevitable; plan for it.
8. Let someone else do it where possible.
9. Use special names (e.g., “Operation”).
10. Finish fully; it leaves you energized and motivated.
11. Do one thing at a time.
12. Watch out for the tyranny of the urgent.
13. Let others make the smaller decisions.
14. Model, ask, and observe.
15. Planning for one minute saves four or five minutes in the execution of a task.
16. Once you have found the extra time, enjoy!
Contract

From the training on time management, I want to incorporate the following new ideas into my life:

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

Signed ________________________________

I will follow up with the above person in one month.

Signed ________________________________