

The FIT/UCE Employee Assistance Program

Tips for Improving Time Management

- 1) Recognize what is working, what is not. Begin plan to address “what’s not” now.
- 2) As Steven Covey, author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* says, “The key is not to prioritize your schedule, but to schedule your priorities.”
- 3) Identify what your priorities are. Miami productivity expert Michelle Villalobos suggests you write down each day the one thing that would make a huge difference in your life. Do that task first.
- 4) Understand your resistances and emotional things that are getting in the way and make a plan to deal with them.
- 5) Write things down – frees your brain for more creative endeavors. Make appointments to do things in calendar or notebook. Be realistic so as not to disappoint yourself or others, and to ensure success.
- 6) Every January, enter all dates for the year that occurs repeatedly – i.e., birthdays, deadlines, regularly scheduled meetings, etc.
- 7) Whenever project is assigned, set interim deadlines so that you are sure to meet the ultimate deadline with a minimal amount of anxiety.
- 8) Fill in high stress seasons, i.e., dates budgets are due and performance evaluations. Then work backwards indicating when you need to prepare for each of them.
- 9) On Fridays, review the master list of everything that must be done the following week. Delegate tasks to others where possible, but plan to do the most complex tasks during your peak periods. Then put these matters out of your mind.
- 10) Each evening, make a list of the things that must be done the following day. Divide the activities into low and high priority by

designating A and B next to each item. For each listing, ask, “Must I be the one to accomplish this?” If the answer is no, then pass it on to someone else. On low priority items, ask, “What will happen if I eliminate it?” If nothing, eliminate it.

- 11) Have a good filing system. Misplaced, misfiled information or mess creates more anxiety for us and is a time waster. For high priority items, put in brightly colored To Do file.

Use the TRASH test:

Toss it – if you don’t need it

Refer to it – if you need it, but know where it is

Act on it – don’t procrastinate or let fears get in the way

Save it – keep what is important

Halt it – Eliminate what is not necessary or stop unproductive behavior

- 12) Break large, time consuming tasks into smaller tasks. Work on them a few minutes at a time until you get them all done.
- 13) Practice the 10 minute rule. Work on a dreaded task for 10 minutes each day. Once you get started, you may find that you finish it.
- 14) Limit distractions. Block out time on your calendar for big projects. During that time, close your door and turn off your phone, pager and email. Figure out what or who is interrupting you (e.g., emails, instant messages, pop-ups on the computer), and plan to deal with the problem.
- 15) Get plenty of sleep, have a healthy diet and exercise regularly. A healthy lifestyle can improve your focus and concentration, which will help improve your efficiency so that you can complete your work in less time.
- 16) Remember that you can always call the EAP at #7-5600 if additional help is needed.

Some of the preceding was taken from:

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/time-management/WL00048>