

# TIME MANAGEMENT

Time management is important to any person, but particularly to busy student organization members and leaders. Involvement in co-curricular activities means that in addition to classes, homework, jobs, and socializing, a significant amount of time is spent on organizational obligations. This handout is designed to provide you with some suggestions on how to more effectively manage your time, so that your organization runs smoothly and efficiently.

## Five Steps to Effective Time Management:

1. Plan
2. Assess
3. Organize
4. Prioritize
5. Schedule

### *Plan*

- Determine and set on paper exactly what you would like to achieve and how you would like to get there.
- Make your goals realistic, believable, and achievable.
- Evaluate your progress and make necessary changes on a regular basis.

### *Assess*

- Assess how you are currently using your time by keeping a time log for three days from the time you get up until the time you go to bed. Describe your activities in 15 minute time blocks.
- Prioritize your activities: A-important to you; B-Important to others; and C-basic human needs.
- Analyze your time log and answer the following questions:
  1. Were there any surprises?
  2. Would you judge this to be a typical week?
  3. What patterns could you identify in your time as a waste? Interruptions?
  4. What part of the week would you consider most productive? Least productive?
  5. What time of the day do you feel was most productive? Least productive?
  6. What activities would you like to eliminate totally? What would be the cost of doing so? What is the cost of not eliminating them?
  7. Which activities during the week do you deem most rewarding? Would you like to spend more time doing them in the future? What is your plan for doing so?
- Have someone review your time log. An objective observer may be able to point out discrepancies or patterns that you did not see.

### *Organize*

- Make a list each morning of everything that you need to accomplish for that day. However, do not plan out every minute and do not even think about which task is most important.
- Do not worry if you don't accomplish everything, just include the uncompleted tasks on your next day's list and get them done.

### *Prioritize*

- After you have recorded these "things to do," go over the list and rewrite with the most important things you need to do at the top and less important tasks at the bottom.
- Keep in mind due dates, commitments you have made, and whether or not these tasks involve other people. If the items are for class, it is important to consider how much of the final grade they are worth.
- You must be responsible with your priorities. Review your personal goals. How do these priorities fit with your goals?

### *Schedule*

- Take your list and begin to work these "things to do" into your schedule.
- You cannot plan every minute of the day. Leave some room for breaks, socializing, and those unexpected things that pop up. There is no use making a schedule that is impossible to follow.
- Keep a schedule book for the year. Write down your class times, assignment due dates and exams, and other commitments.

***Learning effective time management now  
will help you throughout your personal life  
and professional career.***

» See the *Effective Meeting Strategies* handout for tips on time management in meetings.

This is one of many handouts available to you. Feel free to meet with any Student Activities staff member for more details about this topic or any others related to leadership or your student organization. We also have open advising hours every Wednesday from 3 p.m to 6 p.m. The Office of Student Activities is located in the University Center, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, or by telephone at (503) 370-6463. Visit our website at [www.willamette.edu/dept/osa](http://www.willamette.edu/dept/osa) or email us at [wustudentinvolvement@gmail.com](mailto:wustudentinvolvement@gmail.com). Adapted from the Office of Student Activities and Leadership, University of Michigan.

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