
Assessment 11-2**Time Management Self-Assessment**

Instructions: The purpose of this activity is to help you learn about what you need to be a good time manager and to help you create an action plan to improve your time management skills. Place a ✓ in one of the boxes to the right of each item, depending on how you see yourself today. No one will see your ratings unless you share them, so please be honest with yourself.

TIME MANAGEMENT BEHAVIOR	ALWAYS	FREQUENTLY	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER
When working with time, I...					
1. Know my priorities and use them to focus.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Schedule my week, noting important tasks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Use the first 5–10 minutes of the day to plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Use organizational tools effectively.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Have my calendar, tasks, and contacts in one place.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Keep a notebook handy to capture information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Multitask at work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Make time for exercise and fitness.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Eat lunch at my desk more often than not.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Am late to meetings and activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Take time to listen to coworkers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Am able to say “No” when necessary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Frequently feel exhausted or stressed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Spend a lot of time in unnecessary meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Have clear goals and a plan to achieve them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Know exactly where my time goes every day.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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TIME MANAGEMENT BEHAVIOR	ALWAYS	FREQUENTLY	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER
17. Accurately estimate how long tasks will take.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Have a system for prioritizing tasks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Delegate effectively to avoid doing everything.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Procrastinate on large projects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Feel overwhelmed by email.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. Can effectively handle interruptions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. Process email and voicemail at specific times.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. Manage paper effectively.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. Have an orderly workspace.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Analysis: If you responded “always,” “frequently,” or “sometimes” for items 7, 9, 10, 13, 14, 20, or 21, these may be areas in which you need to improve your time management skills, especially your focus on what is important. You may also wish to address any of the remaining statements if you responded with “sometimes,” “rarely,” or “never,” particularly for items 1, 2, 4, 12, 15, 18, and 24, which directly relate to how you plan your time and handle your days.

Study this information and the following pages to see why those 25 behaviors are important to be a good time manager. Then outline an action plan for self-improvement on the last page. Make sure it is a realistic plan to which you can fully commit yourself.

Why These Behaviors Are Important

The 25 behaviors that comprise this assessment are of particular importance if you would like to improve your time management skills. They represent areas you may need to address to become a more effective time manager. Further explanations of some of the behaviors that warrant additional emphasis follow:

- ♦ **Know my priorities and use them to focus.** If your priorities are unclear in both your work and home life, it will be difficult to achieve goals and make progress. Setting priorities provides direction for how you spend your time.

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- ◆ **Schedule my week, noting important tasks.** If you have a good idea of your fixed appointments and important tasks during any given week, it will provide a clear picture of when time is available to work on important projects and goals.
- ◆ **Use organizational tools effectively.** It is important to have a personalized, mobile, and easy-to-use system to keep track of contacts, appointments, tasks, and notes for productivity and efficiency.
- ◆ **Keep a notebook handy to capture information.** Rather than have notes scattered in multiple locations on individual pieces of paper, use a notebook to capture important ideas, notes from meetings and conversations, or other information. This allows you to spend less time searching for vital details.
- ◆ **Multitask at work.** Although many people multitask and it is common to do so, we are at our best and most effective when we focus on one task at a time and fully concentrate on what needs to be done.
- ◆ **Take time to listen to coworkers.** Building a good relationship is critical to working well with others and getting things done. Take the time to listen to colleagues, which leads to greater trust, teamwork, and productivity.
- ◆ **Am able to say “no” when necessary.** Learn the art of saying “no” when appropriate; this prevents unnecessary time and energy spent on unimportant tasks or activities rather than on our priorities and goals. The more we can politely say “no,” the more time we will have.
- ◆ **Frequently feel exhausted or stressed.** It serves no purpose to be run down and in a state of anxiety. We cannot perform at our best and be productive if we neglect our physical and mental health. Long-term thinking rather than short-term thinking will lead to greater focus and enable us to be more efficient, which will benefit ourselves and the workplace.
- ◆ **Have clear goals and a plan to achieve them.** Without goals to drive us, we can easily lose focus. Similarly, without goals broken down into action steps and specific timelines, there is a greater chance that we will not achieve them.
- ◆ **Know exactly where my time goes every day.** A log of how we spend our days and weeks gives us a clear picture of where we waste time and where there are pockets of time available. This leads to effective planning and better choices for effective time management.
- ◆ **Have a system for setting priorities.** Set priorities for tasks, such as with an “AC” system, which allows effective scheduling and flexibility when plans change and high-priority actions need to be taken. Lower priority tasks can be dropped when it is necessary to focus on more important items.

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- ◆ **Delegate effectively to avoid doing everything.** Some who need help with their time management skills may think it is necessary to do everything themselves. More often than not, this makes them feel overwhelmed and causes them to spend time on tasks that are unimportant in relation to goals and projects. Delegating also helps subordinates take ownership of work and develop their skills.
- ◆ **Procrastinate on large projects.** Procrastination is one of the primary barriers to effective time management. Break project steps into smaller pieces and schedule them out to help prevent problems with deadlines; this also allows for greater productivity.
- ◆ **Feel overwhelmed by email.** Email is one of the greatest communication tools at our disposal, but it can sometimes be one of the hardest tools to handle. Learning how to sort, manage, and communicate effectively via email is a critical skill for good time management; it can help alleviate feelings of being out of control or bombarded with information and things to do.
- ◆ **Manage paper effectively.** A system for managing paper and other physical items in the office will alleviate stress and increase efficiency. It's important to know where important documents are located, both for personal productivity and for others who may need to find information when we are unavailable. Although some may think it necessary to save everything, doing so only slows down work and causes inefficiencies in time management processes.

Plan for Self-Improvement

1. In which two or three time management behaviors do you need to improve the most?
 2. What steps can you take to improve these behaviors?
 3. What are the first two or three steps you will take?
 4. How will you measure your results and know whether you are improving your time management skills?
 5. How will you personally benefit from improving your time management skills?
 6. What support do you need from others to improve?
 7. Who needs to know you are trying to improve your time management skills?
 8. How will you share this information with him or her?
 9. Which behaviors are particularly important for your work life? Which are particularly important for your home life?
 10. When would you like to see noticeable improvement in your time management skills?
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