

Structured Experience 12-2: A Waste of Time



GOALS

The goals of this experience are to

- ◆ Reinforce the idea that typical time wasters can interfere with productivity.
- ◆ Help participants focus their attention on how they can stop wasting time.
- ◆ Build relationships among participants.

MATERIALS

The materials needed for this structured experience are

- ◆ Writing instruments
- ◆ Blank paper for taking notes
- ◆ Whiteboard or flipchart with markers



TIME

- ◆ 5 minutes for introduction and setup
- ◆ 15 minutes for brainstorming time wasters and solutions
- ◆ 10 minutes for debriefing

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Ask participants to take out a sheet of paper and a writing instrument.
2. Divide participants into small groups, each with four or five people.
3. Explain that for the next 15 minutes their task is to discuss how they commonly waste time in a workday (for example, procrastinating, unnecessary meetings, interruptions, Internet, email, and paper-work) and brainstorm some solutions to managing time wasters. When the time is up, a spokesperson from their group will then share their solutions with the rest of the participants.
4. When ready to start timing, ask participants to think about the different roles they play at work and the activities in which they typically participate.

5. Once the 15-minute brainstorming period is over, ask the participants to begin the debriefing session. One spokesperson at a time should share the solutions from each small group.

DEBRIEFING

Ask one spokesperson per group to lead a discussion of approximately 10 minutes in which they share the solutions from the brainstorming period. Write the responses on a whiteboard or flipchart paper for the large group to see. Ask the following questions for further discussion:

1. What did you observe about when and how you waste time? Did others in your group have similar experiences?
2. What are one or two solutions that you think you can incorporate into your workday?
3. What impact do other people have on your use of time?