



The Herculean Task of Time Management: An Activity of Mythic Proportions!

Introduce the topic of time management to the group and use the following three activities to actively demonstrate and discuss the topic.

1. Time Management is Not a Myth!

Preparation

- Ask participants to take [this online quiz](#) prior to the training.
- Have participants bring their result to the training.

Activity

1. Discuss the quiz. Use [this description of the four styles](#) in the debrief discussion. Possible discussion topics:
 - How well did the quiz identify or match your own perception of your productivity style?
 - How well do you think the suggested “Productivity Boost” strategies work for you?
 - Is there anything about your approach to work or your style of productivity that the quiz missed?
2. Transition to the team activity. Encourage participants to think about their productivity style and whether they see it in action in the next activity.

2. Titans of Tasks Team Competition

(Adapted from an activity at Office Oxygen’s [“Time Management Activities”](#) page.)

Preparation

- Create team scorecards (template below).
- Prepare two pieces of chart paper (one for each team) with the numbered list of tasks on it, including the points offered for completing each task.

Activity

1. Divide participants into two teams—Team Chronos and Team Phoebe.
2. Give each team a score card and their chart paper list. Designate a trainer for each team as a score keeper.

3. Explain that each team has ten minutes to complete these tasks and collect as many points as possible. They must be safe and they only have ten minutes!
4. Enjoy the show (and take photos).
5. After ten minutes, add up team points using the score cards and announce the winner.
6. You may want to tape the lists of tasks to the wall for the rest of the training as a reminder of both time management and the value of fun and laughter.

Debrief

After the activity, discuss learning points. Possible discussion topics include:

- How did teams decide what tasks they wanted to do?

Most groups will analyze the time the task will take and/or the difficulty level, compare it with the value (possible number of points), and prioritize as a result. We do this when managing our time, too: we often choose the high-yield, low-effort tasks over the low-yield, high-effort tasks (and rightly so!).

- Are any decisions based on task dependencies?

For example, for the name card task, teams received bonus points if they used team nicknames. Performing these two tasks together would triple the points received. This often happens in life, too. Batching tasks increases your results exponentially.

- What group dynamics came into play?

If participants knew each other before, they may have felt more comfortable performing a personally risky activity, such as singing a song. This comes into play when prioritizing tasks, too; we're more likely to stay within our comfort zone, especially if we're working in a team.

3. The Balancing Act of Time Management Techniques

Preparation

- Prepare one copy of the worksheet "The Balancing Act of Time Management Techniques" for each participant (see below).
- Have a plain postcard for each participant.

Activity

1. Ask participants to review the list of time management strategies and techniques on their worksheet and identify how much they use each one.
2. Then ask participants to identify two new techniques they are willing to try.

3. Ask participants to turn to a partner and discuss their worksheets. How did they choose the two new activities to try?
4. Hand out postcards. Ask participants to write the two techniques on a postcard and address it to themselves. Let them know you will mail the postcard to them in a month as a reminder.
5. Be sure to mail the cards!

Titans of Tasks: Team Score Card

| TASK | Points | Completed |
|--|---|-----------|
| 1. Do a lap around the room | 5 points | |
| 2. Count the number of chairs in the room | 5 points | |
| 3. Create something for the trainer to wear, such as a hat or tie | 10 points + 5 bonus points if trainer wears it | |
| 4. Find out something unique about each person on the team | 5 points | |
| 5. Sing a song together | 15 points | |
| 6. Make a paper airplane and throw it from one end of the room to another | 10 points | |
| 7. Recite the alphabet backwards together | 10 points | |
| 8. Get everyone in the room to sign a single piece of paper | 5 points | |
| 9. Count the number of pets owned by your group | 20 points | |
| 10. Assign a nickname to each member of the team | 5 points | |
| 11. Add up the years of experience in the field of the team | 5 points | |
| 12. Create name cards for each team member | 5 points + bonus 5 points if you use team nicknames | |
| 13. Make a tower out of the materials owned by your group | 10 points | |
| 14. Flip a coin to see who will be the team spokesperson | 5 points | |
| 15. Convince a member of another team to join you | 20 points | |
| 16. Name your team and come up with a slogan | 5 points for the name + 5 points for the slogan | |
| 17. Re-create the sounds of the Amazon rainforest with the sounds of your voices | 10 points | |
| 18. Conduct all tasks on this list while standing on one foot | 10 points for each team member who does it | |
| 19. Make a list of what your team wants out of the workshop | 15 points | |
| 20. Form a conga line and conga from one end of the room to another | 5 points + bonus 10 points if anyone joins you | |

Worksheet: The Balancing Act of Time Management Techniques

| | Often | Sometimes | Never |
|---|-------|-----------|-------|
| • I accomplish what needs to be done during the day | | | |
| • I always get assignments done on time | | | |
| • I feel I use my time effectively | | | |
| • I tackle difficult or unpleasant tasks without procrastinating | | | |
| • I force myself to make time for planning | | | |
| • I know where to find the information, documents and tools I need to complete tasks | | | |
| • I prepare a daily or weekly "to do" list | | | |
| • I prioritize my list in order of importance, not urgency | | | |
| • I do things in order of priority | | | |
| • I am able to meet deadlines without rushing at the last minute | | | |
| • I keep up-to-date on my reading and research assignments | | | |
| • I prevent interruptions from distracting me from high priority tasks | | | |
| • I avoid spending too much time on trivial matters | | | |
| • I spend enough time on work-related activities | | | |
| • I plan time to relax and be with friends in my weekly schedule | | | |
| • I have a weekly schedule on which I record fixed commitments such as work hours | | | |
| • I try to do the most important tasks during my most energetic periods of the day | | | |
| • I make constructive use of my commuting time | | | |
| • I use the talents, time and expertise of other people on my team to help get work done | | | |
| • I periodically re-assess my activities in relation to my goals | | | |
| • I have a clear plan for dealing with disruptions and interruptions | | | |
| • I have discontinued any wasteful or unprofitable activities or routines | | | |
| • I screen and group my telephone calls to allow for control over telephone interruptions | | | |
| • I judge myself by accomplishments of tasks rather than by amount of activity | | | |
| • I delegate tasks appropriately | | | |
| • My actions are determined primarily by me, not by circumstances or by other people's priorities | | | |
| • I have a clear idea of what I want to accomplish during the forthcoming quarter | | | |
| • I am satisfied with the way I use my time | | | |

Two new time management techniques I'm going to try:

1. _____
2. _____