

## TIME MANAGEMENT

Do you have problems meeting deadlines or commitments? Do you find yourself wishing for extra hours to the day or an eighth day to the week? If so, you are not alone; but you can learn how to make the most out of that precious resource, **TIME**. Time management is an important tool that can help you succeed in school, work and other personal endeavors. By learning how to manage your time, you will be able to:

- \* achieve more
- \* have more free time
- \* overcome procrastination
- \* lead a balanced life
- \* meet deadlines
- \* reduce stress

It is important to learn to set priorities in order to decide how much time to devote to each task you must accomplish. In so doing you'll be in control of your life and you won't have to miss out on the social/recreational activities that are important to you. By using good time management techniques and setting priorities, you will be better able to avoid spending too much time on activities that are less important, thereby reducing wasted time.

The first step to effective time management begins with monitoring how you use your time. Do this by keeping an activity log for a week. Evaluate your results by asking yourself, "Did I accomplish what I was supposed to? Was I often pressed for time? At what time of the day was I most productive, or least productive? Did I spend too much time on low priority tasks? How much time was allotted for personal activities?"

Your next step is to make a list of everything you plan to do, dividing the list into fixed commitments and flexible commitments. Fixed commitments are those tasks that you absolutely must complete by a specific deadline. Flexible commitments are obligations you can meet on a time available basis. Assign priorities to your list and set aside enough time to do the designated tasks.

Learn how to schedule. We all have best times to work and play, so plan your work schedule around your peak energy times. Also, there are additional steps that you can take that will help you accomplish your goals:

- \* Compile a "to do" list each day (and week) of tasks that must be completed.
- \* Prioritize the tasks on your list in order of importance and according to deadlines.
- \* Try to complete tasks with a minimum of interruptions.
- \* Don't over commit your time. Learn to say "NO."
- \* Delegate responsibility, when appropriate.
- \* Allow time for breaks, relaxation, rest, and social activities.
- \* Make the "to do" realistic! Avoid the common mistake of putting too many tasks on your list since this creates more stress and procrastination.

By incorporating time management techniques into your work and personal routine, you can learn to be more productive and efficient, with less stress and procrastination. Put an end to that race against the clock!