



## 4-H Organizational Skills **Time Management**

VRKC: Volunteer Research Knowledge Competency Taxonomy

### Intended Audience:

4-H volunteers

### Learning Outcomes:

- Volunteers will understand the importance of time management.
- Volunteers will learn to develop and use a system for organizing time and tasks.
- Volunteers will manage their 4-H club or group's time more effectively.

### Time:

20 – 30 minutes

### Supplies Needed:

- Pencils, Markers and Flip Chart
- Power Point, Computer and LCD Projector
- Handouts and Evaluations

### Do Ahead:

Copy evaluation

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### Volunteerism for the Next

#### Generation:

<http://nextgeneration.4-h.org/volunteerism/>

### 4-H National Headquarters:

<http://www.national4-h.org/headquarters.gov/>

### INTRODUCTION

Time can be thought of as a non-renewable resource. Each day we are granted 24 hours to spend. None of that time can be kept or banked for a later date. We must determine how we will spend our 24 hours, and this is done through time management. (Power Point Slides 1, 2)

Time management is an important life skill because it can:

- Contribute to our physical, mental, and spiritual health
- Offer benefits to our family, business, and organizations
- Increase our productivity through organization, preparation, and delegation

In 1906 Italian economist V. Pareto developed a math formula that illustrated the unequal distribution of wealth in his country. Eighty percent of the wealth was owned by 20 percent of the population. This formula has become widely recognized as the “80/20 Rule” and is found to be applicable in other areas of life as well. For example, in business it is said that 80% of your sales come from 20% of your clients. We can also apply the 80/20 Rule to managing our time—that is, focus 80 percent of our time and energy on the 20 percent with the highest priority. (Power Point Slide 3)

### Assessing Your Spending Habits

Have you ever thought about the old adage “If you need something done, give it to a busy person?” Busy people have no more time than anyone else. They are just more practical in using their time and prioritizing tasks. (Power Point Slide 4)

### Activity 1: How Do You Spend Your Time?

Before you can become a better steward of time, you must learn how you are actually spending your time. This can be done by keeping a simple log which includes work, home, volunteer work, extra-curricular activities, meals, exercise, school, sleep, and personal time (socializing, computer, television, etc.). Set up a simple table with half-hour increments and record what you do using key words. For blocks of time at work, volunteering, or school, record productive/constructive activities completed. You must be honest about tracking how your time is spent. (Handout 1)

	Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
1:00 pm							
1:30 pm							
2:00 pm							



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**VRKC: Volunteer Research Knowledge Competency Taxonomy for 4-H Youth Development:**

<http://www.national4-h.org/headquarters.gov/comm/vrkc.pdf>

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**References for this lesson:**

- Campbell, K.N. and Ellis, S. J. (1998). *The (Help!) I-Don't-Have-Enough-Time Guide to Volunteer Management*. Energize, Inc., Philadelphia, PA.
- Fritz, S., Brown, F.W., Lunde, J. P. and Banset, E. A. (2005). *Interpersonal Skills for Leadership*. Pearson Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ.
- Skinner, R. D. *22 Leadership Principles*. (1997). Horizon Publishers, Bountiful, UT.

At the end of the week, circle necessities such as sleep, cooking, eating, homework, housework, yard work, and exercise. Then circle all of your noteworthy accomplishments— significant things that you “got done.” With what remains, look at how much time is spent on fluff. Are patterns emerging in the necessary and the fluff? Are they good or productive patterns or do they need some evaluation?

Each of us has different priorities in work, life, and family. No one can tell you what your priorities are. This is a personal choice with consequences— whether they are good, bad, or indifferent. Once you decide where your priorities lie, you can use them to guide and allocate how you spend your time each day or week.

**Establish a “To Do” System (Power Point Slide 5)**

Allocating your time or utilizing a “To Do” list allows you greater control over your productivity. A “To Do” list is a written acknowledgement of what needs to be done and provides a means for prioritizing importance. It can be done on a calendar, computer, or piece of paper. Skinner (1997) says that by setting clear and specific priorities in writing, the individual moves from the stationary “what” mode to the “when and how” modes of action. Don’t use the excuse that you are “too busy to take time to make a ‘To Do’ list.” Simply spending 10 minutes each day planning or prioritizing your day will make you 10 percent more efficient (Fritz, Brown, Lunde and Banset, 2005).

Each of us must find and establish some suitable system or procedure for managing tasks. Campbell and Ellis (1998) insist a successful system is simple, efficient and effective, but most importantly, works for you. A system needs structure, but cannot be so rigid as not to provide flexibility for the unexpected. The unexpected will happen and requires shifting priorities. A practical system will have flexibility and unplanned time. This “flex” time is then available for emergencies, unexpected pressures, telephone or email, visitors, travel, tasks taking more time than planned, or creative activities. In the end, the unscheduled or “flex” time helps you accomplish your tasks and goals.

Do not shortchange the need for time to do activities that bring you joy, relaxation, comfort, or rejuvenation. Your physical and emotional health benefits from scheduled personal time. Campbell and Ellis (1998) tell us that this time is a personal investment in future productivity and can minimize burnout and procrastination. Skinner also reminds us not to cheat on rest; this only shortchanges our effectiveness the next day.

There are a variety of ways you can track your priorities in writing, including:

- Daily Calendar – each hour or half hour is blocked out.
- Week-at-a-Glance Calendar – each page provides a quick visual perspective of the week’s schedule and due dates.
- Month-at-a-Glance Calendar – each page provides a quick visual perspective of the month’s schedule and due dates.
- Electronic Calendar – transfers information easily between a computer and a PDA or phone.
- Master To Do List – organized list of what needs to be done over a period of time. Items are assigned by priority or due date.



- Daily To Do List – paper or 3” x 5” card with one date and each task listed in order of priority for that day.

### Organizing a “To Do” List

In the book *Interpersonal Skills for Leadership* (2005), the authors make the statement: “Manage procrastination through concentration.” Skinner encourages starting the day early before interruptions begin, and allowing time at the end of the day for hobbies, family, exercise, and relaxation. He encourages completing creative work or unpleasant jobs early in the day when the mind is clear and fresh. Save routine work for the end of the day when you’re more tired. Most authors on time management agree that the following steps will help you develop a productive “To Do” list. It’s up to you to “use” the list, as well as remember that it’s a flexible document that can change. (Power Point Slides 6 & 7)

1. **Identify priorities each day** – Determine the sense of urgency in relation to yourself and/or others, and then prioritize your tasks.
2. **Set long and short term goals** – Work on things that count. Break large projects into smaller, more manageable pieces. This makes the goal easier to accomplish and less overwhelming. Another school of thought is to plan large blocks of time for big projects. This is often more productive than small blocks of time where momentum is slowed and concentration broken (Skinner, 1997).
3. **Establish deadlines** – Most people need some pressure or sense of urgency to stay focused on the end goal. Self imposed deadlines tend to keep us focused and completing tasks in a timely manner (Fritz, et al, 2005). Skinner suggests working towards the earliest possible completion date rather than the actual deadline.
4. **Make yourself work** – Tackle priorities with enthusiasm, drive, and determination. For those unpleasant tasks, think about how once they are done you can move on to more pleasant things!
5. **Group similar tasks** – Combine like tasks and/or trips in consolidated blocks of time. It will help you accomplish the same amount of work but with less effort and/or in less time. Fritz, et al. and Skinner suggest: a) to set aside a block of time for reoccurring tasks and activities; b) consolidate tasks such as returning phone calls, correspondence, creativity, program development, reading, etc. Make electronic communications work for you – screen and respond to timely phone calls and email. Save social communications for later in the day when priorities are accomplished; c) consider seasonal obligations and complete assignments and tasks due during that season in advance. Or plan for the seasonal obligation by not scheduling other activities or tasks during that timeframe.
6. **Delegate** – Critically review your list to decide what can be delegated and delegate wisely. Don’t find yourself falling into the time trap of micromanaging the lives of those for whom you have or feel responsibility. Micromanagement consumes both productive and personal time. Become an enabler by empowering others to be responsible and accountable for their time. Just as you have, they will become more respectful and grateful of time’s value.

### Managing 4-H Committees and Clubs (Power Point Slide 8)

In Skinner’s book *22 Leadership Principles* he lists ways to manage a group or organization’s time effectively. These include:

1. Delegate
2. Job descriptions
3. Train key people
4. Commit people – hold individuals accountable for a standard of performance
5. Keep people informed – provide clear and concise information and instruction
6. Key people take the initiative to report back
7. Follow-up on assignments
8. Use resources inside and outside the group or organization to accomplish goals or projects



9. Show appreciation for accomplishment
10. Invest the time needed for successfully completing a project, event, or activity – Investing too little time for successful completion wastes time, talents, and resources.
11. Use an agenda to plan meetings carefully – “Agenda” is Latin for “things to be done.” Write, print, and distribute thorough minutes immediately. Minutes can be an effective reminder of decisions, assignments, and due dates between meetings.
12. Develop procedures for gathering data – Be prepared by setting aside time to do research, finish homework for projects, and meet deadlines. Doing something well the first time saves time, develops confidence, and earns respect.

**Conclusion:** (Power Point Slide 9, 10)

In conclusion, we’ve learned that good managers of time:

- Apply the 80/20 principle. Focus 80 percent of your time and energy on the 20 percent of tasks or goals with the highest priority.
- We each have 24 hours to spend or allocate each day. It cannot be saved or banked for the future, so assess your spending habits, determine your priorities, and wisely invest your time every day.
- Establish a priority system or “To Do” list. Rank the things that need to be done and remain focused on completing a task.
- Delegate. Do not micromanage. Instead, enable others; nurture their time management skills and hold them accountable.
- Plan personal time. It is a personal investment in future productivity and can minimize burnout and procrastination.

**TALK IT OVER**

Reflect:

- Why is time management important for personal, work, and 4-H volunteer roles?
- What tools and strategies have you learned for managing time?

Apply:

- How can you assist 4-H members in time management?

**EVALUATION**

Ask each participant to complete the evaluation tool (Handout 1).

**ENHANCE or SIMPLIFY**

4-H Club Management: Time Management. Lesson plan for 4-H volunteers from Wisconsin’s 4-H Community Club Central: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/pubs/showdoc.cfm?documentid=3115>

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Handout 1:

### Assessing Your Spending Habits

Take a few moments and complete a log of how you spent your time this last week. Include work, household duties, volunteer work, extra-curricular activities, meals, exercise, school, sleep, and personal time (socializing, computer, television, etc.). For this activity, we will use 1 hour blocks. For your personal log, half-hour increments are recommended. Use key words to record your activities. Set up a simple table with half-hour increments and record what you do using key words. You must be honest about tracking how your time is spent.

Once your time log is complete, circle necessities such as sleep, cooking, eating, homework, housework, yard work, and exercise circle all of your noteworthy accomplishments— significant things that you “got done.” With what remains, look at how much time is spent on fluff.

	Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
6:00 am							
7:00 am							
8:00 am							
9:00 am							
10:00 am							
11:00 am							
12:00 Noon							
6:00 pm							
7:00 pm							
8:00 pm							
9:00 pm							
10:00 pm							
11:00 pm							
12:00 Midnight							



## Evaluation

Please complete the following evaluation. The results of the evaluation will be shared with those who work with the program. Your participation in this evaluation is voluntary. Your responses will be combined with the responses of all other participants and you will not be individually identified on any report prepared.

Please answer the questions by circling the number that indicates your level of understanding of the topics listed before and after the training.

1 = Very little understanding      2 = Understand somewhat      3 = Clear understanding

	NOW – After the training			THEN – Before the training		
1. I can describe the importance of time management.	1	2	3	1	2	3
2. I can develop and use a system for organizing time and tasks.	1	2	3	1	2	3
3. I can manage my 4-H club or group's time more effectively.	1	2	3	1	2	3

- Please list at least two ideas or skills that you learned as a result of this presentation.
  
- How will you use what you learned in this presentation?

