

### WHERE DOES THE TIME GO?

- Do you often wish you had more time?
- Do you worry that you haven't got things finished?
- Do you rush around trying to do a lot of things at once?
- Do you put the 'hard stuff' off until later, then get into a panic about it?
- Do you find it hard to juggle your time between work, family, friends and hobbies?

We all have the same amount of time. There are 24 hours in every day, and 7 days in every week.

That's 168 hours every week to do everything we need or want to do.

Good time management will help make your life more:

- Fun
- Productive
- Free of stress.

To make the most of your time, you need to be well organised. Set your goals, then plan out your hours, days, weeks and months, so you know what tasks you have to do and when by. Here are some tips to help you manage your time and achieve your goals:

- Set goals
- Take a step at a time
- Get organised
- Do the most important things first
- Stay focused
- Be kind to yourself - congratulate yourself when you finish a task.



### SET GOALS

We all have goals, or things we want to achieve. For example:

- My goal is to have a holiday in Australia next February.
- My goal is to finish my Skills Active qualification by the end of the year.

A goal should be **clear** and specific. It should state **what** you want to do, and **went by**. You can then start planning **how** to get there.

### TAKE A STEP AT A TIME

You can manage your time and reach your goals if you plan ahead.

1. Write down all the tasks (steps) you need to take to achieve your goal, in the order they need to be done.
2. Write down when each task needs to be done by and how long it will take. Be realistic. Remember all the other things you have to fit in.
3. For long-term goals, such as something you want to achieve by next year, it is easier to plan backwards.

Write down the finish date (deadline), then write in each step backwards from there, with dates and timeframes. This will help you see when you need to get started to reach that goal.



## GET ORGANISED

Ticking off each step or task as you complete it is a great way to keep yourself motivated.

- Use a diary, notebook, calendar or wall chart, and a clock or watch to help you keep track of progress and dates.
- Make a 'to do' list for each day and week. Don't have too many tasks for each day - you will feel stressed if you think you can't get through them.
- Get ready for the next day before you go to bed. Write your 'to do' list for tomorrow when today is still fresh in your mind.
- Tick off each task as you complete it and congratulate yourself for having done it.
- Don't start a new task until you have completed the one before.
- Tidy up after each task. Big messes start with little piles.
- If you are studying, work out whether you work best in the morning or at night, and plan around that.
- When you need to concentrate, find a quiet place away from people, TV or other distractions.
- Team up with someone who has similar goals. You can help each to stay motivated.

## DO THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS FIRST

- Set your priorities. A priority is something that needs to be done first.
- Don't put off important tasks while you deal with the easy ones. Some people spend so much time getting little things done that they never reach their goals.
- Just do it! It is easy to put off doing something new or that looks difficult.

But once you get started, you will realise that it wasn't as hard as you thought.

## STAY FOCUSED

**Your** time and **your** goals are just as important as anyone else's. If you want to reach your goals you need to stay focused.

Look at how you spend your time over one week. Write down **everything** you do in that week (including talking on the phone, watching TV, texting friends, eating, going out with friends or family, travelling to and from work or sports etc). When you see it all written down, you will see how easy it is to waste time.

You need to manage the things that interrupt and distract you. Here are some tips to help you stay focused:

- Put your mobile phone on silent unless you really need it on for work. People can leave a message and you can ring them back at a time that suits you.
- Don't drop everything to answer text messages while you are working or studying.
- Turn off the sound on your email and only check it after you have done your important tasks for the day. Or filter emails so you know which ones can wait until later.

Let people know when you don't want to be disturbed, especially when you are trying to study or complete an assignment.

Learn to tell the difference between important things and 'time wasters' - such as people just popping in for a chat.

- Ask people whether they can come back later - explain that you are trying to get something finished. Of course, this does not apply when dealing with customers!
- Learn to say 'no'.
- Decide what is urgent, and what can wait until later. Urgent means something that can't wait. People often say things are urgent because they have left them until the last minute.

Whenever possible, don't let other people's poor time management distract you from your own tasks and goals.

**Ki te hamama popora te tangata e kore a mau te tika.**

**He who yawns catches no fish.**



## KEY POINTS

To manage my time effectively I will:

- Set clear goals and timeframes
- Plan ahead
- Write down all the steps to be taken, in the right order
- Use a diary, calendar, clock and other people to help me
- Break down big tasks into smaller ones
- Do the most important things first
- Stay focused
- Manage interruptions
- Learn to say no
- Celebrate my successes
- Eat well, sleep well and stay healthy so I have the energy I need to achieve my goals.

## WORDS TO REMEMBER

**Concentrate** focus, think about carefully

**Deadline** target, cut-off date, closing time

**Distraction** something that disturbs you or takes away your focus

**Effective** achieving the result you want, good

**Focused** giving your full attention to, concentrating

**Goal** aim, goal, objective

**Interruption** disturbance, stoppage, something that distracts you

**Motivated** inspired, excited, enthusiastic

**Priority** importance, significance

**Productive** fruitful, producing a good result

**Specific** precise, exact, detailed

**Have a go! Think of a goal you want to achieve (work or personal) and the date you want to reach it by.**

In a diary, calendar or notebook, or on your computer, note down all the things you will need to do, in the order they need to be done, to reach this goal.

Work out how long each step or task might take and when you will fit it in.

Then make a note of the tools you will use to track your progress, and what could distract you or throw you off track along the way (for example, remember to work around things like public holidays, work conferences and so on).

Does what you have planned look realistic and possible? If so, that's great - just get started.

If not, look at each task and your timeline and see what you might need to change. For example, you might need to adjust when you will achieve your goal, or change your priorities along the way so all the necessary steps get done.

You can use the same method of time management for anything you need to achieve, in your work, in any clubs or organisations you belong to outside of work, or in your own personal family life.

This fact sheet will be useful when you are being assessed for **Unit Standard 12349** *Demonstrate knowledge of time management* (Level 2, 3 credits)

or in organising your own life, at work or home.

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