

**Tip of the Quarter February 2023 – TIME MANAGEMENT**

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How efficiently do you manage your time? We all regularly encounter time crunches created by ­multiple patients, projects, meetings, or assignments with the same due date. Improved time management skills can pay off in big ways to prevent you from burning out. Five key benefits of time management include 1) maximizing your working time/efficiency, 2) overcoming indecisiveness, 3) clearing your mind, 4) improving your overall work products, and 5) helping your team grow.

Here are some ways to improve your time management:

1. **Evaluate your day:** If your day is cluttered with meetings and assignments, take 5 minutes before you start your day to evaluate your most important tasks (MIT), simplest tasks, and most time-consuming tasks.
2. **Create a daily schedule:** If it is not on the schedule, it can wait! Last minute items may pop up randomly, but it is very important to schedule your notable deliverables.
3. **Prioritize your MITs:** Try and schedule your MITs first thing in the morning. “Mark Twain once said, ‘If it's your job to eat a frog, it's best to do it first thing in the morning. And If it's your job to eat two frogs, it's best to eat the biggest one first.’ Gross? Sure. Nonetheless, the point that Twain was making is that you should take care of your biggest and most-challenging tasks in the morning, aka your most important tasks of the day.”
4. **Group related tasks together:** By grouping activities together that are similar in nature, your brain does not have to shift from one thought process to another. The transitions become seamless. You can gain momentum as you work through related tasks!
5. **Eliminate half-work:** How often do you start an assignment and then suddenly look at your phone? When was the last time that you were speaking on the phone and your mind wandered to your emails? Regardless of where and how you fall into the trap of half–work, the result is always the same: you're never fully engaged in each individual task. Focus on one thing at a time and your mind won’t feel split between two thoughts.
6. **Eliminate distractions:** The truth is that we all face distractions at work every day. Distractions lower our overall productivity and energy. Top distraction culprits include smartphones, internet browsing, social media, co-workers dropping by, snack breaks, email, and meetings.
7. **Stay organized:** Stay on top of your assignments, documents, emails, phone numbers, patients, and files. By keeping organized, you will save time looking for things and will have more time to work on important tasks. As organization can improve the flow of communication between you and your team, you can also make your team more productive. Better communication leads to better results.
8. **Pace yourself:** Do you have time to complete all you want to do on any given day while also finding time to relax and enjoy the work? Are you overworked one week and then have a lull in your schedule between crushing deadlines? There is a lot of importance in pacing ourselves in this profession so that we excel and sustain our careers, while also enjoying our days.

References:

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