

# 4

## "Time Management" Lesson Plan





## Learning Objectives

1. Youth will describe the importance of time management.
2. Youth will define a strategy to set priorities.
3. Youth will identify steps to overcome barriers to effective time management.
4. Youth will apply time management tips to completion of a 4-H project.

## Intended Audience

This lesson is designed for use with 4-H Club members.



## Supplies & Resources Needed

- Lesson plan with instructional objectives
- Notes pages of PowerPoint presentation with talking points
- LCD projector and laptop with PowerPoint presentation loaded
- Copies of PowerPoint slides printed as a three-slides/page handout for each participant
- Flip chart paper/dry erase board and markers to record responses for discussion from participants
- Copies of "Daily Activity Chart"
- Empty glass jar with lid, large rocks, pebbles, and sand
- "Steps for Completing a 4-H Poster for Fair" activity cards
- Copies of lesson plan quiz for each participant
- Pencils or pens for volunteers to take notes and complete the quiz
- Copies of "Time Management" fact sheet



## References

Begun, Ruth Weltmann. (1996). *Social Skills Lessons & Activities for Grades 7-12*. West Nyack, N.Y.: The Center for Applied Research in Education, 178-179, 184.

Bolton, Elizabeth B. (1999). *Time Management*. (Lesson 7). Elder Companion, University of Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Gainesville, FL.

Bouslog, Lori A. (2002). *Getting More Done*. Sullivan County Office of Purdue University Cooperative Extension, Sullivan, IN.

Culp, Stephanie (1986). *How to Get Organized When You Don't Have the Time*. Writer's Digest Books, 51-53, 54-57, 61-62, 68-69. Cincinnati, OH.

Fox, Janet S. (2006). *Get Organized Without Losing It*. Free Spirit Publishing Inc., 41-42, 63-65, 78-79. Minneapolis, MN.

McKinley, Steve. (2002). *Time Management*. Purdue University Cooperative Extension, W. Lafayette, IN.



Mietlicki, Shirley. (1995). *Balancing Family and Work*. University of Massachusetts Cooperative Extension, Amherst, MA.

Wisconsin 4-H Community Clubs. (2005). *Time Management. Activity Plan – Wisconsin 4-H Leader Training Series*. University of Wisconsin Extension, Madison, WI.

Mind Tools Ltd. (2008). *Procrastination – Time Management Training*. Retrieved November 24, 2008, from [www.mindtools.com](http://www.mindtools.com).

Mind Tools Ltd. (2008). *To-Do Lists from Mind Tools – Learn How to Plan Your Time Intelligently*. Retrieved November 24, 2008, from [www.mindtools.com](http://www.mindtools.com).

## Projected Length

1 ½-2 hours, depending on length of time spent on activities

## Instructor Notes

- If you will be using the PowerPoint presentation to share this lesson with the volunteers, set up the laptop and LCD projector prior to the start of the program and test the equipment to be sure it is working properly.
- Welcome the group and thank them for their participation.
- Begin the “Time Management” PowerPoint presentation.
- Utilize the talking points found on the notes pages of the PowerPoint presentation to guide you during the presentation.
- Review the purpose and objectives for this lesson plan.
- Provide a brief introduction of the lesson, including its importance to the 4-H Youth Development Program.
- Proceed with the lecture portion of the lesson.
- Distribute the quiz to the participants; following its completion, review the answers.
- Distribute “Time Management” fact sheet to each participant.
- Conclude the lesson with a time for questions from the participants.

## Methods/Content



*Information found on Slides #1-2.*

## Introduction



*The wise use of time is an important skill for both 4-H Club volunteers and members. By learning to set priorities and use their time most effectively, 4-H members develop skills and confidence for leadership and self-discipline. They also learn that their decisions and actions (or inactions!) can directly influence their lives for better or worse; they begin to see themselves as active participants in their futures (Essential Element – Independence).*



*These are the objectives that we will focus on in this lesson.*

1. Youth will describe the importance of time management.
2. Youth will define a strategy to set priorities.
3. Youth will identify steps to overcome barriers to effective time management.
4. Youth will apply time management tips to completion of a 4-H project.

## Objective 1

Youth will describe the importance of time management.



**Information found on Slides #3-8.**



*Does anyone have any idea of the significance of this number? It designates the number of seconds in each day (24 hours/day, 60 minutes/hour, and 60 seconds/minute). 86,400...*

*Each person has the same number of seconds available in a day. However, it is up to each of us to determine how we are going to use (or manage) our time.*

Why should we learn to manage our time? Effective time management will help us:

- ✓ **Get more done-** once you have established a list of tasks and prioritized them, you will find that you can get much more accomplished. No more running around attempting to do tasks and feeling as if you have not completed anything at the end of the day.
- ✓ **Gain control over your life-** It might seem like your never-ending list of “things to do” runs your entire life. Until you create your list and prioritize your tasks, it is very possible to feel this way.
- ✓ **Add time to your daily life-** By getting more done and gaining control over your life, you are without a doubt able to add time to your life. When you have prioritized and gotten tasks completed, you have more time for things that you want to do.
- ✓ **Reduce stress-** Procrastination and constant chaos leads to stress. Stress leads to long-term health problems. Why put yourself through this?

**Do what you have to do, so you can do what you want to do!**

### Keeping a Time Log - Daily Activity Chart

Distribute the “Daily Activity Chart” to the participants.





*How do you currently spend your time? One way to help you get a handle on how you spend your time is to keep a time log or a daily chart of your activities. It will help you know where time goes and identify the time-wasters. You may be amazed at what you learn! Use this handout to record what you do every ½ hour. Do this for a week, at least! Use the “Comments” column to make notes to yourself. These might include: required, optional, waste of time, etc.*

### **Questions to Ponder**

Did you spend too much time on some activities? Too little on some?

Which of your activities was really important? Put a star by those activities.

Were there times that you could have used more efficiently? Put an “X” by those times.



*This lesson will give you several ideas for ways to manage your time; however, this is not a “cookie cutter” approach. You truly need to figure out what method works best for you. Begin by at least planning your daily activities. From there, you can begin planning farther in advance.*

### **Creating a Daily “To Do” List**

(See example on Slide #8.)



*Start by writing down all of the tasks that you need to complete on a given day. If the tasks are large, break them down into smaller parts. If these still seem large, break them down again. Do this until you have listed everything that you have to do, and until tasks will take no more than 1-2 hours to complete.*

## **Objective 2**

Youth will define a strategy to set priorities.



**Information found on Slides #9-19.**

### **Setting Priorities**



*Accept the fact that learning to set priorities is a necessary skill for success at home, in school, and on the job.*

*Now that you know what tasks need to be completed, it is time to prioritize them.*



## Rocks in a Jar Activity

**Empty glass jar:** The glass jar in the demonstration is the amount of time available in a typical week. Now remember that no matter how powerful, famous, rich, or insignificant any of us are, we all have the same sized jars; hence, we all have the same amount of time in a given week to get things done. One of the things that we tend to forget is that we have a finite amount of time to work with. By visualizing our time as an empty container, it can help us better understand and, more importantly, better fill that container with the things that matter the most.

**Large rocks:** The large rocks represent those activities that matter most in our lives and that have the most profound consequences, either good or bad, that result from their completion or non-completion.

**Pebbles:** The pebbles are the little tasks that might add up to be something significant, but if we miss one or two, it's typically no big deal.

**Sand:** The sand represents all the non-essential things that tend to fill up our days and our lives. Sand in this demonstration represents wasteful, non-value-producing activities that fill up our jar and prevent us from fitting in the large rocks that are meaningful for our lives.

### Try this activity two ways.

1. First, put in the smallest items (the sand); then try to get the pebbles to fit; finally, see if you can fit any of the large rocks into the jar (be sure there is not enough room in the jar when done this way).



*This is what happens when we allow all of the least important priorities to fill up our day instead of focusing on what's really important – we don't have room for the biggest things (or time for the most important priorities). Now, let's try this activity a different way.*

2. Put in the biggest items first (most important priorities), then the next biggest, and finally, the smallest (lowest priorities); in this order, everything should fit in the jar.



*Look at how much fits into the jar this time! By focusing on the most important things first, we were able to get a lot more accomplished! Let's look next at some questions that will help us set priorities.*

Answering these questions will help you to prioritize your activities.

1. What is most important to me?
2. What are the activities that I value most?
3. What is the most valuable use of my time right now?
4. How long will it take to complete this task?
5. How difficult is it to accomplish this task?
6. Do I need the help of others to get the task done?
7. What are the consequences of not completing this task?
8. Will my decision affect others?
9. Is there a deadline for any of the tasks?





*There are several different methods for organizing your priorities; this lesson shows one example. However, the secret to being efficient is finding the method that works for you.*

Assign each task a value.

- Rank each task from 1 to 3, with 1 being the most important and 3 being a task that can wait.
- You will have several tasks with each number.

Now rank the tasks within each number.

- Rank each of the 1s with an *a*, *b*, or *c*.
- The *a*'s are the most important, and the *c*'s are the least important.

Accomplish those tasks.

- You can now accomplish your tasks in this order: *1a*, *1b*, *1c*, *2a*, and so on.
- What happens if you have two *1a*'s? Do the one you want to!



*There is nothing better than recognizing your hard work and celebrating your accomplishments. By crossing completed tasks off of your list, you will have the greatest sense of accomplishment. Warning: this can become addicting and you will want to keep working away to see that list get smaller and smaller so that you can move on to bigger and better things. Just remember, one bite at a time.*

### Objective 3

Youth will identify steps to overcome barriers to effective time management.



**Information found on Slides #20-28.**



*There are a number of things that may keep us from effectively using our time. Next, we'll take a look at ways we can identify and overcome some of these barriers.*

*All of us have these barriers. Name some barriers to effective time management in your life. Are these barriers that can be removed or avoided?*

### Barriers to Effective Time Management

- Distractions
- Interruptions
- Procrastination



### Group Discussion

- Name some barriers to effective time management in your life.
- Are these barriers that can be removed or avoided?



*The goal of eliminating distractions and interruptions is to help you make the most of the time you have set aside to complete a certain task.*

*Some are obvious, such as turning off the TV, closing the door, or filtering noise. However, daydreaming and random thoughts that often pop into your head (What's for lunch? / I need to call a friend) while we are trying to concentrate also should be controlled. One suggestion is to jot these thoughts down quickly on a piece of paper, then return to the task at hand. This way, you will remember these thoughts and can act on them after you have finished with your assigned task. Let's move next to procrastination.*

### Procrastination

Procrastination is defined as postponing action, especially as a regular practice.

Step 1: Recognize that you're procrastinating; be honest with yourself.

Step 2: Work out WHY you're procrastinating; usually one of two main reasons:

- You find the task unpleasant, or
- You find the task overwhelming.

Step 3: Get over it!

- Do the worst task first. If you get the tasks that you don't like or want to do out of the way first, you'll enjoy the rest of your day more!
- Break things up into bite-sized pieces. Tackle a project by working on it for an hour or two each day, instead of trying to complete it all at once.
- Consider your energy level. Are you a "morning" person, or do you have more energy in the evening? Use your prime time for tasks that require the most concentration and time. Save routine tasks for lower-energy times. During high-energy periods, reduce or eliminate interruptions.
- Reward yourself. After completing some of your top priorities, reward yourself. For example, tell yourself, "I'll work on this for two hours, then I'll watch television."

### Valuable Time Management Hints

- The obvious way to use time better is ELIMINATION. Cut out those things that aren't necessary and those you don't really enjoy anyway.
- Do it right the first time to save a lot of time.
- Develop the habit of finishing what you start. Don't jump from one thing to another, leaving a string of unfinished tasks behind you.
- Learn to say "No."
- Consider utilizing a planner/calendar





*Nine great reasons have been included. These might make you think the next time you pass up that planner/calendar! Next we'll look at some steps to help you plan for and accomplish those long-term projects.*

#### Plan for Long-Term Projects

1. Start early. Don't wait until the last minute.
2. Write the project due date in your planner.
3. Make a list of all the things you need to do for the project. List everything you can think of – don't worry about putting them in order yet.
4. Now decide what steps you'll do first, second, third, and so on. Number your list.
5. Assign a date in your planner to each step/task. By establishing a timeline, you will be able to stay on track and complete the project on time.
6. Figure out how much time you'll need to do each task. Write the times in your planner.
7. Stick to your plan. If you miss a day, get back to work the next day.
8. See step #1.

#### Objective #4

Youth will apply time management tips to completion of a 4-H project.



**Information found on Slide #29-32.**



*So why is time management important to us? How does managing our time make us more independent people?*

(Allow time for responses).

*To close this lesson, we're going to look at how effective time management can help you with a task such as completing a 4-H project.*

#### Steps in Completing a 4-H Poster for Fair Activity

At 4-H enrollment time, we don't think twice about signing up for 20 different 4-H projects; however, when the night before judging is upon us, a simple 4-H poster can seem overwhelming. This activity will allow us to utilize what we have learned and put our goal-setting and prioritizing skills to the test.

#### Scenario #1

It's 10 p.m. on the day before 4-H project judging begins. Steven is frantically searching his house for supplies so he can start working on his Health poster. He also needs to find some graphics on his computer. But first, he has to decide which topic he will cover: First Aid for Poisons or First Aid for Burns. And he just remembered that he forgot to buy a plastic sleeve for the poster.



## Scenario #2

Three houses down, Mike checks his Photography, Scrapbook, and Geology exhibits one final time and takes them out to the car. He wants to get to bed soon so he will be well-rested and sharp for 4-H judging tomorrow.

### Discussion Questions

- What is the difference between Steven and Mike?
- What time management tips do you think helped Mike complete his projects in plenty of time for the fair? What would you recommend Steven do in the future to avoid this last-minute stress?
- Who do you want to be more like, Steven or Mike?
- Is this a reasonable goal for you? Why or why not?

## Activity



**Information found on Slide #33.**

Distribute “Steps for Completing a 4-H Poster for Fair” activity cards to members.



*Each of these cards includes a step needed to create a 4-H poster exhibit for the 4-H Fair. Your task is to work together to place these cards in sequential order. Estimate how long each activity or task will take. Then, assign each activity a date (or dates) on your planner.*

## Conclusion and Quiz



**Information found on Slides #34-37.**



*Make better time management a daily habit. Let's review some of the key points from this lesson.*

- Use a log of daily activities to determine how you are spending your time.
- Create a list of tasks to be accomplished.
- Set your priorities.
- Plan and schedule your time.
- Do first things first.



- Resist distraction, interruptions, and procrastination.
- Review each day.



*Developing time management skills is a journey that may begin with this lesson plan; however, much practice and other guidance along the way is crucial for success.*

*As you can tell, there is no “cookie cutter” method to time management. The resources that have been presented to you are examples and can be modified to fit your lifestyle. What matters is that you find a way to be successful and efficient with your time and that you get more done, gain control over your life, add time to your daily life, and reduce stress.*

It is the policy of the Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service that all persons have equal opportunity and access to its educational programs, services, activities, and facilities without regard to race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, disability or status as a veteran.

Purdue University is an Affirmative Action institution. This material may be available in alternative formats.



## “Time Management” Quiz

1. Effective time management will help us:
  - a. Get more done
  - b. Gain control over our lives
  - c. Add time to our daily lives
  - d. Reduce stress
  - e. All of the above
  
2. What are some steps you can take to overcome procrastination?
  
3. What questions can you ask yourself to help you prioritize your tasks?
  
4. A planner/calendar is a useful time management tool.

TRUE      or      FALSE



## KEY -

**“Time Management” Quiz****1. Effective time management will help us:**

- a. Get more done
- b. Gain control over our lives
- c. Add time to our daily lives
- d. Reduce stress
- e. All of the above

Answer is e - effective time management helps with all of these items.

**2. What are some steps you can take to overcome procrastination?**

Any of the following steps would be acceptable answers:

- Do the worst task first.
- Break things up into bite-sized pieces.
- Consider your energy level – use your prime time for tasks that require the most concentration and time.
- Reward yourself.

**3. What questions can you ask yourself to help you prioritize your tasks?**

Any of the following answers would be acceptable.

- What is most important to me?
- What are the activities that I value most?
- What is the most valuable use of my time right now?
- How long will it take to complete this task?
- How difficult is it to accomplish this task?
- Do I need the help of others to get the task done?
- What are the consequences of not completing this task?
- Are there deadlines for any of the tasks?

**4. A planner/calendar is a useful time management tool.**

TRUE or FALSE

Answer is TRUE – a planner/calendar is definitely a useful time management tool.

