



Time Management for Teamster Leaders



Training and Development Department
International Brotherhood of Teamsters

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Introduction and Assessment

“As we shared experiences and further researched the issue, we came to understand that overwork, over scheduling, and time poverty threaten our health, our marriages, families and friendships, our community and civic life, our environment and even our security.”
Take Back Your Time

The quote above is not an overstatement. At one point or another we all deal with conflicting priorities, disorganization, and overcommitting ourselves. There just isn't enough time during the day to get everything done! Managing our time wisely is more than just having a to-do list and getting through the work day; it's about taking control of our lives and CHOOSING how we spend our time. Setting priorities and figuring out what's urgent and what could be handled later are essential components of an overall plan for controlling your time and ultimately your life!

Regardless of what role you have in the Teamsters Union, your day will be composed of a multitude of activities. Although you may not be able to control external factors such as increased assignments, changes in schedules and spontaneous interruptions you do have a choice in how you think about these challenges. Your attitude, mood and organizational skills can make the difference between a frustrating, unproductive day or one that feels as if you are on top of everything and successful in what you are doing. If you have tasks that are monotonous and boring develop a specific time to do those or delegate them to someone who may have a skills set that will streamline the process and alleviate you from the technical aspects of the task. You will then be free to simply review the final product and spend your time on other priority issues.

Time management is a necessary skill for highly effective and successful people. Managing time well provides an opportunity to choose options that work for different situations. You can achieve these skills and take control of your time and life by following suggestions that have been tested over time by effective Teamster representatives. This manual includes these suggestions, but you are encouraged to reach out to people you work with and gain their knowledge of balancing work and family.

Following is a “Time Management Assessment” questionnaire with two parts. Fill out both parts and give yourself 2 points for each of the habits you have.

TIME MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT

Part 1: How Well Do I Save Time?

1. I take advantage of my learning style. I know the strategies that help me learn new information or skills and I use them. _____
2. I have a monthly calendar to help me keep track of my activities and obligations. _____
3. I have weekly calendar to help me keep track of my activities and obligations. _____
4. Every morning I write down a list of things I have to do. _____
5. Any time I feel that there are too many things I have to do, I take a few minutes to sit down and organize myself. _____
6. When I first get to work, I take a few minutes to figure out the things I have to do throughout the day. _____
7. I have all of my phone numbers in one place. _____
8. I have specific stacks of papers which represent things I have to do. _____
9. I use self-stick note papers to remind me of the things I have to do. _____
10. I carry a calculator, so I can do math faster. _____
11. I am not afraid to ask people for information that I need. _____
12. I chose to do my work at times when I'm most alert. _____
13. I schedule the tasks I don't like to do between the tasks that I like, so that I work faster on the things I don't like to do in order to get the tasks I enjoy doing. _____
14. I do two tasks at the same time when one of them requires waiting. _____
15. I make a budget to manage my money. I know how much money to put in the bank and what bills to pay off right when I get paid. _____
16. I know my environmental preferences and make sure I work under those conditions whenever possible. _____
17. I get enough sleep, exercise and eat healthy food. I'm in good health. _____
18. I often review my future work obligations. _____

Total, Part One: _____

Part 2: Do I Throw Time Away?

1. I am often sleepy at work. I'm more of a night owl than a morning person. _____
2. I get to work and get busy. I don't have time to think of my daily obligations or plan ahead. _____
3. I like to do just one thing at a time. If it requires some waiting, I relax for a bit. _____
4. I watch television at least 3 hours a day. _____
5. When I have a personal or professional problem, it occupies my mind. I can spend hours worrying about something. _____
6. I'm not the most organized person in the world. My drawers are a disaster area and it seems that I spend a lot of time hunting around for things. _____
7. I don't use a calendar to schedule my time. _____
8. (If you smoke or drink coffee) I usually spend a good five minutes relaxing with my cigarette or cup of coffee every time I get a chance. _____
9. I often take personal calls at work. _____
10. When someone wants to meet with me, I often agree, only to find out late that I'm busy at that time. Then I have to call up and reschedule. I just can't keep it all in my head. _____

Total, Part Two: _____

FINAL SCORE:

Part One Points: _____

Part Two Points: _____

(Subtract Part 2 from Part 1.)

Grand Total: _____

What your final score means:

- If you scored 30-36 you are excellent at managing your time.

- If you scored 22-28, you are like most people. You're pretty good at managing your time; however, there is definitely room for improvement.

- If you scored below 22, you should take a close look at how you spend your day and use this manual to help develop time management skills.

So how did you do? If you found that you are excellent at managing your time, you are encouraged to continue reading because you may find some of the ideas and suggestions beneficial as an added value to your well managed time. If you are like most people, you do pretty well but could use some improvement. If you lack time management skills, take the time to study and commit to changes that will reap high valued benefits and literally change your life.

Everyone is different and so some of the suggestions may not fit your style or situation; however, their value has been proven effective by thousands of people just like you. Pick and choose which advice fits your needs and lifestyle, try it, tweak it, or come up with new and innovative time saving ideas of your own. Have fun with the process and do not judge yourself. Time management is a serious issue, but some of the methods for organizing and streamlining tasks are fun.



Review and Record Your Tasks

To start an effective time management plan you will need to record your daily tasks so you can identify patterns that exist in your schedule. Recording or establishing a “big picture” of your tasks will allow you to set priorities and map out self-imposed deadlines. Getting the big picture will also provide you with a sense of what activities bring the greatest results and what activities are necessary, but routine, and could be delegated.



Pick a starting point and begin recording exactly what you do. Even though this will take more of your time initially, in the long run it is the only way to see what you are doing with your time, i.e., what is working and what is not. You will have to pick times throughout the day to stop and record your activities because you may forget something if you wait until the end of the day.

You may be tempted to skip recording interruptions such as coffee breaks, but it is important to record everything. You may be surprised at how much time goes to activities that do not contribute to your effectiveness.

There are some typical office time wasters most of us can relate to:

- Running late (try to switch to being on time or a little early)
- Eating at your desk (think spills and smudges as well as indigestion)
- Poor organization & clutter Interruptions (the unexpected and the social aspects of the job)
- Unnecessary meetings or ones that don't start on time or run late
- Web-surfing, social media
- Chatting too much, gossiping

Planning Your Day

A good plan for managing your time starts the night before.

Each evening take a few minutes to either write down or mentally list the tasks you need to complete the next day. Think about your time frame and arrange the tasks within your time frame based on their priority and the normal flow of your day. You know that certain activities take place every day like driving to a specific location, lunch or attending a meeting. Try to take advantage of these permanent activities by arranging fluid activities (phone calls, record keeping, email review, etc.) during the free time. Always factor in extra time so that you can compensate for the unexpected.

If something is **urgent**, make that task your priority, then arrange less important items around it.

For example, if you're a business agent and one of your members has been suspended, speaking to him/her and their supervisor becomes your first priority. Mentally, you may know that you cannot meet with them before 10:00 a.m. on the following day; however, go ahead and set that meeting as a priority and then plan other tasks before and after the meeting. You could prepare talking points for the meeting, make phone calls concerning similar situations, and speak to stewards about what happened to cause the suspension. If you go to the meeting prepared, it will actually cost you less time than if you have to back track for information.

Once you have determined the tasks that are of the greatest importance, arrange them in an order that makes sense then think about lower priority items and how they can be worked into the day. Also, if you have to go to several locations on one day, map them out so that you travel in the most efficient manner.

Plan to get a good night's sleep. Getting a good night's sleep will give you the energy you need to tackle multiple problems as they arise. According to an article in *health.com*, the following are eleven benefits of a good night's sleep:

1. Improves memory
2. Longer life expectancy
3. Helps curb inflammation
4. Spurs creativity
5. Improves winning (in athletes)
6. Improves grades (in students)
7. Sharpens attention span
8. Helps to maintain a healthy weight
9. Lowers stress
- 10.Helps to avoid accidents
- 11.Helps to stay clear of depression

It is clear from the list above that a good night's sleep should not be taken for granted. But, what if you find this challenging, and in some instances impossible. It may be beneficial to visit your physician if getting enough sleep is a problem. Whatever the situation, getting rest and enough sleep needs to be at the top of the list in managing your time and life.

In the Morning

Prepare your day by getting up early enough to start your day in a relaxed manner. Have enough time to get yourself ready and enjoy a healthy breakfast. If you are finding that you are rushed every morning, it may be that you need 30 minutes to an hour additional time to start your day.

You have the ability to set yourself up for the day by intending to do so and choosing your mood right from the start. Have you heard the saying, "I woke up on the wrong side of the bed and everything went downhill from there"? Intend to wake up on the right side of the bed and have a productive and enjoyable day.

Plan

You already manage and plan your time in some way. Planning is merely thinking about your tasks and then preparing a sequence of actions to achieve those tasks. Planning is mapping things out. Without a map you can get lost. A plan allows you to see your progress and to eliminate unnecessary, unfocused and inefficient steps.

To-Do List

The first step to having a plan is to make a to-do list of the tasks you need to do to reach your goals. It doesn't matter whether your list is on your computer or a note pad, in pencil or colored markers, but you must have one.

The list helps you remember to do things and reduces stress because you don't worry about trying to keep everything in your head. Having a to-do list allows you to look at everything you need to do before deciding which task should be done first.



Use Your Lists to Decide What to Do Today

At the end of a day when things are quiet or first thing in the morning before the phones start to ring, think about what you need to do. Go through and make a list of the things you will try to get done during the upcoming work day. If you know that unexpected tasks often come up, then set aside time on your daily to-do list to deal with them. It doesn't help to plan out a perfect day when you know there will be disruptions.

Evaluate your plan

Focus on the results of what you get done, not just how many things you cross off your to-do list or how much time you spend on a task. Look at what you are accomplishing and whether you are advancing your goals. Make adjustments and/or changes, if necessary. Many plans evolve through experience and you will find what works for you. Pat yourself on the back for what you are accomplishing and be easy on yourself when you miss the mark. Have a positive attitude about it all and have fun doing it, every day is a new day and an opportunity to start again.

*Planning is preparing a sequence
of actions in order to achieve
some specific goal.*

Vision and Goal Setting

The first step in planning is to determine your specific long term goals. Some experts call this your “vision.”

Many of us envision how we want our life to be and what we want to accomplish. We may fantasize about something that we want, or a place we would like to visit. Other times our desires are about achieving better relationships, learning new things, and being more productive at home and at work. Sometimes, thinking through how to make your vision happen can be a bit overwhelming. You may not know where to start.

The vision may be cloudy and the thoughts scattered and random. This is where personal goal setting can be powerful. Goal setting is a process to help map out the future and take control of your time. It is the first step in motivating yourself and giving you a clearer picture for achieving your vision.

Goal Setting

Goal setting is the key to making an effective plan and achieving your vision. Effective leaders refer to goal setting and planning actions to achieve those goals as one of the most important skills for success. Goals need to be very specific and attainable. You should be able to know when you have attained your goal and what the result has accomplished. Also, your work goals should match the mission of the Teamsters Union and be discussed with your principal officer to insure you work in unison with the objectives of the union.

It might help to think about your goals using an acronym: **SMART**.

SMART stands for:

- S Specific (or Significant)
- M Measurable (or Meaningful)
- A Attainable (or Action-Oriented)
- R Relevant (or Rewarding)
- T Time-bound (or Trackable)

Short Term Goals Support Long Term Goals (Vision)

Achieving balance in all aspects of your life requires both long term goals/vision and short term goals. Long term goals are the big picture or the vision; such as, where you see yourself in five or ten years in family life, career, personal achievements. Short term goals are what you can accomplish right now that will ultimately contribute to your long term goals.

For example: Say your long term goal is to negotiate the best contract for members in a particular company you represent. Short term goals might include becoming more knowledgeable in that industry, reviewing other contracts with the same employer, understanding past interpretations, editing and overseeing the typing of language, and teaching members about contract enforcement.

After brainstorming and writing down your long term vision and short term goals, you should write what is called “an action plan.” An action plan should include a statement of your vision. That vision should be broken into specific goals that are manageable with the tasks, time required and resources needed for each. Also, splitting your goals into easily manageable pieces by scheduling them daily, weekly and monthly may help. Below is an example of how you can analyze your goals:

Goal	Timeframe	Tasks	Obstacles	Opportunities	Benchmarks	Costs
Review other contracts with employer throughout nation	6 months	1 - Letter to other locals 2 - Call to IBT 3 - Assemble contracts	-Politics -Unknown contracts -Company structure	- To gain knowledge of company - Understand language -Work with other locals and IBT	-2 contracts from every region, or more -Establish language comparison chart -Earmark weaknesses	Mailing

When considering your goals think of the following points:

State each goal as a positive statement. For example, it is better to phrase the goal as "Become a seasoned negotiator who maintains control of the bargaining table" instead of "Quit jumping to conclusions and losing my temper."

Be precise. Set precise goals, putting in dates, times and amounts so that you can measure achievements. If you do this, you will know exactly when

you have achieved the goal and can take satisfaction from having achieved it.

Set priorities – When you have several goals, give each a priority. This helps you to avoid feeling overwhelmed by having too many goals, and helps to direct your attention to the most important ones. Write goals down – This crystallizes them and gives them more force.

Keep operational tasks small – Keep the tasks for achieving your goals precise and in chronological order, if possible. If a desired task is too large, you lose the ability to delegate and coordinate activities. Keeping tasks small and incremental gives more opportunities for building team work and delegating to others.

Your goals and specific tasks for completing your goals can be interrupted unexpectedly by any number of variables. For example, you may have a good plan in place for visiting several plants when the principal officer asks you to attend a rally. You need to incorporate flexibility into any of your plans.






Set realistic goals – It's important to set goals that you can achieve. If you set goals that are too difficult because of unforeseen obstacles, or you find the result you are seeking requires a more intensive analysis than you can provide, you will feel frustrated. Succeeding breeds success. The more you accomplish, the more you will want to take on. Start with known targets and gradually raise the bar.

Setting Priorities

All the work you do making lists is a waste of time unless you manage and prioritize the list first. Every time you find yourself doing something that is not on your list or if you are doing low priority tasks, stop and ask yourself, "Is what I'm doing now more important than the high priority tasks on my list? At the end of the day will I be satisfied with what does and doesn't get done?"

Deciding which goals and tasks are most important is not easy to do, but it is the key to good time management. It requires making some difficult decisions. Everything is important to someone, so making choices sometimes seems like an impossible task.

Don't try to complete too much all at once. By prioritizing your tasks you create a calm, low stress atmosphere. Evaluate your goals and arrange them using either 1=first level priority, 2= second level priority, 3=third level priority. You can also use color coding to organize your work into priority categories such as color folders for letters, notices and forms. And, color markers can create the same meaning on a wall calendar. The same colors can be applied on your computer calendars. You can even extend the color system into your representational work with members. If they learn the coding system, you can post something on the work bulletin board in red, for example, and members will realize that it is something extremely important.

Routine Info	Urgent	Continuing	Meetings	Done
				

Inform office staff of your color coding system and ask them to use it for anything coming in to you. You may want to ask someone to check each folder at the end of the week to make sure you have not overlooked something.

When planning your day, give each task a realistic time frame. Don't push things off into the next day if you don't have to, but be flexible if you must. Re-evaluate the amount of time and resources it takes to execute and complete the task and make any adjustments accordingly. However, if you

don't make the difficult decisions but instead use your time based on who walks into your office first, who yells the loudest, or other random method you will not be very effective. If you spend all your time on issues that have very little chance of success you will feel like you are spinning your wheels.

Teach your priority system to those with whom you work, such as members and other local union staff.

Once you have determined what your priorities are you will need to educate the members and other staff members about your system.

For example, suppose you decide to read and respond to urgent emails between 8 and 9 a.m. Let members and others know that you will respond to non-urgent emails within 24 hours. Most people will respect your system if you let them know about it. You will not have them calling and asking why you have not responded.

Likewise, you can let those whom you work with know that you go through all of your folders first thing Monday morning and that it usually takes an hour. You can close your door and request messages and inquiries to be posted to your email or inbox.

Whatever system you use it is important to let others know so they will understand your behavior.

Multi-Tasking

Multi-tasking: is it beneficial or not?

You may already be multi-tasking in many instances such as combing your hair or eating while listening to the morning news. Many activities are repetitive and can be done in combination with other activities with no problem, but not all multi-tasking is productive.

Because we have multi-tasked successfully, we think we can do it all the time. We believe multi-tasking is getting ahead - a fast and easy way to get more than one thing crossed off the to-do list. The reality is, when you multi-task, your attention is divided between two or more tasks; your focus is diluted and you're not giving 100% percent to anything. Many tasks and projects at work require your undivided attention to be done well. Furthermore, when you are dealing with members, they know if you are reviewing email on your phone or texting someone while they are talking. It is insulting and leaves a bad impression on everyone.



Multi-tasking does not make you more productive. Studies have shown that multi-tasking can result in 20-40% of your time being wasted because you cannot focus on two things at the same time, it's that simple. You end up either having to redo one or more of the tasks or you create a bigger problem for yourself. Writing an e-mail and having a conversation with someone is impossible...you can type it, but will it make sense? Both of these activities require communication and thus your undivided focused attention.

At times you just need to stop what you're doing to focus on something else. Make a note of where you left off so that you may return to it later. If you are on the phone when a member approaches, try to immediately respond to the member instead of having the member wait while you finish a conversation. The member is more important.

It is much more productive and satisfying when you're able to dedicate time and focus effort on one project, action or task at a time. The quality of your work will be superior and you'll have fewer mistakes that will take time to correct. You will also feel organized and have a sense of accomplishment because you were able to cross items off your to-do list.

Time Robbers

Getting bogged down

Sometimes you get stuck, feel overwhelmed or cannot seem to get started on anything. This is a normal part of work. Try one or more of the following suggestions:

- ✓ Shift activities, clear your mind and think about something you can accomplish
- ✓ Stretch
- ✓ Review your goals
- ✓ Review your to-do list
- ✓ Ask someone you trust for advice
- ✓ Talk to positive people
- ✓ Clean and organize your office
- ✓ Do something you enjoy
- ✓ Listen to soothing music

Distractions and Interruptions

No matter how well you plan you will most likely face distractions or interruptions from time to time. It is how you handle such time zapping situations that makes the difference between two hours being wasted or two hours of productive to-do list check offs.

- ✓ Close your door (this only works if your door is opened most of the time and you have a door).
- ✓ Let the phone go to voice mail*. Re-route calls or have someone take messages for you. Have several time slots throughout the day when you check messages, return calls, read and respond to e-mails.
Note: Sometimes with members it is better to take their calls as they come in so you may want to assign ring tones to folks that you know well and can answer at a later time.
- ✓ Turn off the chat feature on your computer otherwise it is assumed you're available.



- ✓ Do not read and respond to every e-mail that pops up on your monitor unless it is urgent.
- ✓ Block out distractions like Facebook and other social media unless you utilize it for work.
- ✓ Politely tell people who want to chat that you that will be available at a certain time and will catch up with them then.
- ✓ Let people in the office know that you will be working on something that is time sensitive and, therefore, unavailable until the task is complete.
- ✓ Do not be too rigid. Flexibility is the key to a balanced, manageable life. Some distractions may be your excuse to take your eyes off of the monitor and rest your eyes. You may be stuck on a train of thought and need to step away and clear your mind.

Procrastination:

When you put off tasks you procrastinate. Although you might feel guilty for procrastinating, you excuse your procrastination by telling yourself that you work best under pressure or your best work is achieved at the last minute. In reality, procrastination puts unnecessary pressure on you. You become stressed, feel overwhelmed and rushed, forgetful, and sometimes never follow through with the task at all. Now you really feel guilty.

Procrastination is a universal productivity killer, a time-robber and the enemy of any professional serious about meeting deadlines. What's more, procrastination is a trap that forever keeps you from doing your best work because you end up rushing around at the last minute. It's also a huge cause of stress when you're forced to get the job done "under the gun."

Members will begin to mistrust someone who continually says, "I'm gonna" do something and then doesn't get it done or gets it done at the last minute. Your members are your constituents so constantly telling them you are "gonna" do something is a trust killer.

So why do so many of us procrastinate, putting off what we need to do or are supposed to do until later...and later...and later? The answer is complex, but basically, there are five causes of procrastination.

5 Primary Causes of Procrastination

1. Fear of failure.

Do you consciously or subconsciously fear your work won't be good enough? That's the case with many professionals who procrastinate, experts say. So you put off whatever needs to be done until the last minute and then, if results aren't perfect, you have the built-in excuse that you had to rush. If this sounds like you, understand that by procrastinating, you never test your true abilities – or enjoy the success you're truly capable of achieving.

2. Fear of success – which is really fear of change.

On the other hand, you may procrastinate because you secretly fear the change that will come with success. Success often means promotion, more responsibility, and a new job – in other words, change. So you avoid it by putting things off until it's too late to succeed in a major, impressive way. If this sounds familiar, you're not being honest with yourself about what you really want in your career.

3. Need for control.

If you work from an inner need to control everything, it's likely you also procrastinate. By putting off whatever you know you've got to do, you can tell yourself you're still in control – and not succumbing to the wishes and timetable of whoever imposed the deadline on you. It's your subtle way of saying, "I'm in control." If this is you, know that co-workers and managers form an increasingly negative opinion of you each time they have to wait for you to show up, turn in work, or do what's required.

4. Lack of understanding.

If you don't know how to do what you've been asked to do, or aren't sure what's expected or don't know where to start, it's very likely you'll put off the project or task. In this case, you can easily avoid procrastination by asking more questions up front. There's no shame in asking for the information you need.

5. Love of the adrenalin high.

'Fess up, are you an adrenalin junkie? Some people are hooked on the rush of adrenalin that comes from living on the brink of disaster. By putting everything off until the very last minute, you get a surge of adrenalin when panic sets in – and that motivates you to fly into action. Curing the

procrastination habit will be tough for you, according to time management experts, because you thrive on pulling yourself out of a crisis at the last possible minute.

Do yourself a favor: End procrastination!!

Regardless of the cause, procrastination is a bad habit that adds unwanted stress to your life; it gives others a negative opinion of you and sabotages your success. The good news is that procrastination, like any bad habit, can be eliminated from your life if you really want it gone.

Below are a variety of techniques to help you kick the procrastination habit. Choose the one(s) that will work for you.

- **Determine why you're procrastinating**

This point is essential, because it forces you to recognize why you're choosing a negative behavior time and again. Are you afraid you'll make a mistake or not do the job perfectly? Do you feel intimidated by the responsibility? Are you irked that you have to do the task? Worried you don't know how to do it? Once you're clear on why you frequently postpone what you know needs to be done, you can face up to the choices you're making – and understand what procrastination is really costing you professionally.

- **Ask yourself: "What's the best use of my time right now?"**

One definition of procrastination is "delaying the essential by doing the trivial." If you're doing everything except what you need to be doing, ask yourself this simple question and the answer will get you moving. If you're top priority at the moment is to work on this task, then get in front of it and do it.

- **Break the task into smaller, manageable chunks.**

Large or complex projects can seem overwhelming, but if you break them down into a series of smaller tasks, you can focus on completing one at a time, and then the next, and the next.

- **Write out a step-by-step plan.**

This method helps you see exactly what you need to do to complete the project. Make an outline with a checklist for whatever it is you're postponing, and you'll feel a surge of accomplishment each time you check off a step.

- **Give yourself a pep talk.**

Sometimes all it takes to get moving on a project you've delayed is a positive pep talk or mental kick in the pants.

- **Go Public.**

This method is drastic, but it works! Set a deadline for completing the task you're postponing, and then commit to it by telling others you can't afford to disappoint. Peer pressure will give you the incentive you need to get going.

- **Last-ditch method: "5 Minutes and a Watch"**

If all else fails to get you working on whatever you're procrastinating over, put your watch on the desk in front of you and, no matter what happens, work diligently on the project for five solid minutes. Then quit. Obviously, you won't be finished, but you will be started. When it comes to ending procrastination, beginning the task is half the battle.

Time Savers

Declining additional work

Learning how to politely decline additional work is a big part of managing your time. Taking on an increased workload may not be a wise thing to do. By trying to do too much, you do nothing well. Make sure you're only taking on what you can comfortably handle. Remember the quality of the work is equally important as the quantity. Poor quality or partially done work is neither the result you want nor the impression you want to make.

You may not have the option of saying no if the work is assigned by your principal officer, but maybe have a discussion about why you feel the added task would not be beneficial and would have a negative effect on work you are currently handling.

If it's a co-worker, nicely but firmly regret not being able to take on more. Offer to help in the future if your work schedule permits. It is better to be upfront with people and state the situation as it is rather than to say yes and not be able to do it at all or to do a bad job.

Delegating

Delegating is a smart way to manage time. It accomplishes several positive things at the same time: frees up your time to focus on the big picture, builds teamwork, increases the skill level of others, and provides a way to structure tasks and activities.

When you delegate, you instantly increase time you have available. Delegation is absolutely necessary for anyone who has a vision of leadership. You don't have to do everything yourself. Do you find yourself thinking, "If I want something done right, I have to do it myself!"? This is common and a trap to reaching your potential. Such thinking overloads you with work you can train others to do.

Also, when you include others in completing your tasks and goals they have a sense of ownership in the success of the goal. They will celebrate the completion as much as you will.

First determine the right person for the job. Thoroughly explain the task, your expectations, deadlines, and how you'll monitor their progress. Be very clear by putting these points in writing and go over it with the person. Then ask them to summarize the assignment so you'll know that you clearly communicated what's been delegated.

By assigning a task and responsibility to others you build their confidence. You help others learn new skills, expand the concept of team work and you show that you trust your colleagues. Delegation takes faith in others and tests your own skills in training and articulating what you want.

For delegation to work, make sure that the time spent training and monitoring the progress of the assignment is worth the effort. If you are saving time and getting ahead then it was worth it. If you are spending more time than you anticipated explaining and training, or you are redoing someone's work, this may be the point where you want to evaluate the job you are delegating. Delegating in itself is an important skill to utilize but done wrong, and you may be adding more to your work load.

Be careful not to delegate to the wrong person. For example, there may be someone who seems to have extra time on their hands. You may think the person needs more work, but when you delegate the task you find that it is not done correctly or timely. It is an art matching tasks to individual skills in your co-workers. Think through what talents people have and consider those when you delegate.

Delegating responsibilities to chief stewards, stewards and assistant stewards is not only a smart time saving strategy, it accomplishes several positive by-products:

- Mentors stewards to become stronger in the workplace
- Trains the next generation of leaders
- Forces management to operate according to the contract (*first step of the grievance procedure should be where grievances are resolved at the steward and supervisor level*)
- Re-establishes your role as leader
- Builds power in the bargaining unit

Decision Making Techniques

Decision making skills are an important component of time management. Being decisive in a course of action is managing time wisely and effectively. Since you're going to make a decision why not develop techniques in order to help you decide in a way that nets you the results you want.

1. Identify the purpose of your decision. Is there a problem to be solved? Is there a task that needs to get done?
2. Gather information. What factors are involved?
3. Brainstorm a list of possible solutions or alternatives.
4. Evaluate each choice in terms of the pros and cons.
5. Determine the best alternative.
6. Make a decision and put it into action.
7. Evaluate the outcome of your decision.

The situations you face often dictate how much time you will have to make decisions. In a crisis you have to make decisions fast! Even these decisions are made based on your past experience, training or intuition. Most decisions and consequential actions can be re-evaluated and used for preparation in the future.

Organization

Some of the organizational aids that can save you time include:

- Yearly wall calendar—use color code for activities
- Filing system for membership, cross referenced with grievances
- Notebook for each plant with all policies in chronological order
- Grievance tracking system—computerized with flags on time limits
- Contract in notebooks double spaced large margins for referencing
- Colored folders, pens and stickers for your color code system
- Forms for standard activities, letters, notices, or inquiries
- Plant diagrams for internal organizing efforts
- Structured filing system on your computer.
- Standardize computer file names
 - For example, create folders for major activities
 - Arbitrations
 - Bargaining
 - Grievances
 - Legal Issues

- Members
- Plants
- Within each folder designate stem words to differentiate documents
 - Arbitration
 - Case.doc
 - Case.witnesses
 - Case.evidence

Utilizing all of the technologies available to organize your tasks is a task in and of itself. There are smart phones, computers, calendars, web sites, conference calls and virtual meetings. These technologies are “aids.” That means if you are spending more time learning about the technology than using it, it is not an aid.

Each new technology has a learning curve, but once you make it through the curve you should be able to use the aid with ease.

Recap of Time Management Tips

1. Start the night before by thinking through tasks for the next day and getting a good night's rest.
2. Begin your morning by having a healthy breakfast and plenty of time to get ready.
3. Spend at least thirty minutes planning out your work day and dealing with any changes in schedule, meetings or assignments.
4. Carry a schedule and record your conversations and activities for at least a week.
5. Jot things down on your to-do list and make sure you have deadline dates.
6. Use a calendar, organizer, or outlook/other online calendar.
7. Have a clock where you can see it and set an alarm, if necessary.
8. Take five minutes before every call and task to decide what result you want to attain. Take some time after the call to decide if you achieve the wanted result.
9. Block out time and find a place to work without interruptions. When you have work that requires quiet time, schedule in that time just like you would schedule a meeting. Avoid picking times when you know that you will get lots of calls; you will notice patterns in the time you are interrupted. For privacy, if you have a door, close it and tell others you have to work uninterrupted.

10. Delegate. Train people who can help you save time in the future. Other office staff and colleagues can help you if you invest time in the beginning to show them how things should be done.
11. Schedule the best time to do different tasks. Learn your own work patterns and use them to your advantage. Deal with complicated matters when you are most alert, do paper work when the phones aren't ringing, and return calls when people are most likely to be in.
12. Deal with problems at the source.
13. Review how you use time. Whenever possible look for the source of your most time consuming problems and see if you can devise a strategy that will cut down in those areas.
14. Divide big projects into smaller more manageable ones. Some projects are so big that you tend to wait until you have a big block of time before starting them. Look for parts of the projects which you can do now and in a short amount of time.
15. Don't fuss about unimportant details. You will never get everything done and unexpected things come up all the time. Learn how to be flexible and rearrange your time line and or calendar.
16. Recognize when you are not productive---Don't fret. Sometimes, usually late in the evening you might find yourself struggling to get work done. You may task two hours to write something that should take twenty minutes. At those times it is often better to go home and get some rest so you can be more productive the next day.
17. Recognize and eliminate your time wasters such as unnecessary e-mail, social media and chatting with coworkers.

18. Leave a buffer of time in between scheduled tasks, appointments and meetings - 10 to 20 minutes or more if you need to travel or prepare for a meeting.
19. Schedule a time to read e-mails and do not let them sit in your in box. Delete spam and unsubscribe to e-mail listings you don't need or want.
20. Prioritize your e-mails and mark them so that you may go back to them, if necessary.
21. Record any contact information you may need in the future and mark important web-sites as favorites, but be careful the favorite list does not become an overwhelming chore itself. Clean it up once in a while.
22. Refrain from multi-tasking. Whenever your attention is divided, the results suffer. Whether it is a relationship or a project the outcome will be negatively impacted if you are multi-tasking.
23. Remember your deadlines and do the most important things first.
24. Leave time for FUN.
25. Bulldozing nonstop through a project may get it done but it may get you down. Take short breaks, drink plenty of fluids, eat well and envision positive results. Think about the end result and the satisfaction of having a wonderful completed project at the end.

TIME SAVING TIPS

Paperwork

- ✓ *Sort mail by importance*
- ✓ *Handle each piece of paper once*
 - ✓ *Have a good filing system*
 - ✓ *Use forms and model letters*
- ✓ *Read key parts of reports and articles*
- ✓ *Organizer your desk and paperwork*

Computers and E-mail

- ✓ *Schedule a time to read/answer e-mails*
- ✓ *Delete spam and unsubscribe to personal web-sites*
 - ✓ *Organize your contact list*
 - ✓ *Keep your PC uncluttered*
 - ✓ *Delete unwanted files*
 - ✓ *Have a good filing system*
- ✓ *Have a good anti-virus program*

Phones

- ✓ *Prioritize your call backs*
- ✓ *Have a time frame for each phone call*
 - Leave detail messages*
 - ✓ *Leave a text message*
- ✓ *If you're busy let the call go into voice mail*