



14: The Power of Time Management

A Lesson on Focus, Prioritization, and Building a Competitive Advantage Through Intentional Planning



Introduction for the Facilitator

Time is one of the few resources we can't create more of. Whether someone is balancing college classes, hands-on training, shift work, caregiving, or side hustles, how they manage time directly impacts how far and fast they move toward their goals.

This lesson helps students and workforce learners view **time management** as a **professional skill** that fuels their **personal competitive advantage**. It emphasizes planning, prioritization, and intentional routines...not just being "busy," but being on purpose.

Effective time management helps learners reduce stress, increase follow-through, and show up with consistency. How learners handle their time is one of their most visible skills.

This lesson will showcase the power of time management for busy adult learners and help them practice it. It includes:

- **A relatable Scenario to underscore the need for good time management**
- **8 Guided Group Discussion Questions with follow-up questions**
- **8 Journal Prompts to enhance understanding of this skill**
- **8 personal Skill-Building Strategies**
- **A printable Action Planner for reflection and application**



Scenario: Always Out of Time

Darren, 22, is in school and works nights at a warehouse. Between shifts, commutes, and class, he's constantly behind—missing assignments, skipping meals, and falling asleep during lectures.

When his instructor pulls him aside, Darren says, “I’m just out of time.”

Together, they look at a weekly calendar and create a plan: meal prepping on Sundays, 15-minute study blocks after class, and a sleep window that works with his shift.

Two weeks later, Darren's still tired—but he's back on track. Darren realizes time management isn't about doing everything. It's about owning what matters most.



Guided Group Discussion Questions

1. **What does time management look like in your life right now?**
Follow-up: What's one thing that's working and one that's not?
2. **What's the difference between being busy and being productive?**
Follow-up: How can we tell the difference?
3. **What time-wasters show up in your day?**
Follow-up: How could you reduce or manage them?
4. **Why is time management a professional skill, not just a personal one?**
Follow-up: What does it say about you in school or on the job?
5. **How does strong time management affect your personal competitive advantage?**
Follow-up: What opportunities could it open up?
6. **What mindset or belief gets in the way of better time management?**
Follow-up: What belief could you replace it with?
7. **How do sleep, food, and breaks affect your time use and focus?**
Follow-up: What small change would help?
8. **What's one system, app, or habit that's helped you manage your time in the past?**
Follow-up: Could you bring it back or use it differently?



Journal Prompts

1. **Describe your current relationship with time: is it a tool, a stressor, a blur?**
2. **When are you most focused and productive and what helps that happen?**
3. **What's your biggest time challenge each week?**
4. **What would your ideal week feel like (not just look like)?**
5. **What's one thing you've been saying "yes" to that might need a "no"?**
6. **How do you handle interruptions or last-minute requests?**
7. **What's one belief about time or productivity that helps you stay grounded?**
8. **What lifestyle or career goal makes it worth improving your time habits?**



Skill-Building Strategies

1. **Time Audit:** Track a full day or week to see where your time actually goes. Highlight gaps, surprises, or opportunities.
2. **The Big 3:** Each day, list your top 3 priorities. Do those first. Let the rest follow.
3. **Calendar Block Practice:** Use a calendar to assign time blocks for school, work, rest, and key habits.
4. **Pomodoro Method:** Work for 25 minutes, then take a 5-minute break. Repeat. Use timers or apps to stay on track.
5. **Weekly Planning Session:** Choose a 15-minute time each week to map out what's coming, where you'll focus, and what to drop.
6. **Buffer Blocks:** Leave small open windows in your day to handle the unexpected without falling behind.
7. **One-Touch Rule:** If a task takes less than 2 minutes (like replying or scheduling), do it immediately.
8. **Visual Tracker:** Use a whiteboard, sticky notes, or app to track progress visually. It creates momentum and motivation.



14: THE POWER OF TIME MANAGEMENT

Your Action Plan for Focus and Competitive Advantage

Action Planner

Reflect and Prepare

Name: _____

What Is Time Management?

Time management means planning your hours, tasks, and energy with intention. It helps you stay on track, reduce stress, and grow your personal competitive advantage.

Why This Matters to Me

Why is managing your time well important for your school, job, training, or future lifestyle?

Where I'm Winning and Struggling

Time habit that works for me: _____

Time habit I want to improve: _____

What usually throws off my schedule: _____

Belief Shift

Circle or write a belief to guide your time decisions:

"I control my time—it doesn't control me."

"Being busy isn't the same as being effective."

"Small habits shape big outcomes."

"I protect my time because my goals matter."

Other: _____



14: THE POWER OF TIME MANAGEMENT

Your Action Plan for Focus and Competitive Advantage

Action Planner

Time Plan + Progress

Name: _____

My 28-Day Time Focus

What will you practice to improve your time use this month?

Where will this habit show up (home, school, work, etc.)? _____

How will you reflect or track progress?

☐ Weekly review ☐ Planner or app ☐ Habit tracker

Restart Plan

When I fall behind (because I will), I will:

☐ Reset my top 3 goals

☐ Forgive myself and refocus

☐ Use my anchor phrase: "One step forward counts."

☐ Other: _____

Weekly Reflection Prompts

1. What time habits worked well this week?

2. What challenged my focus or plans?

3. How did I adjust or respond?

4. How did my time habits help (or hurt) my goals?

28-Day Time Tracker

Focus habit: _____

Week 1 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

How did week 1 go? Circle one word:

☒ Focused ☒ Scrambling ☒ Confident
☒ Tired ☒ Strategic ☒ Growing

Week 3 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

How did week 3 go? Circle one word:

☒ Focused ☒ Scrambling ☒ Confident
☒ Tired ☒ Strategic ☒ Growing

Week 2 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

How did week 2 go? Circle one word:

☒ Focused ☒ Scrambling ☒ Confident
☒ Tired ☒ Strategic ☒ Growing

Week 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

How did week 4 go? Circle one word:

☒ Focused ☒ Scrambling ☒ Confident
☒ Tired ☒ Strategic ☒ Growing