



**Health Workforce Initiative**

**Hi-Touch Healthcare: The Critical Six Soft Skills**

*Grab-N-Go Independent Training Module:*

# **Time Management**

HEALTH WORKFORCE INITIATIVE STATEWIDE ADVISORY COMMITTEE, CALIFORNIA  
COMMUNITY COLLEGES CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



# Time Management

## Grab-N-Go Independent Training Module

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# Time Management

## Background Information

Today’s healthcare workers increasingly face greater demands on a vital yet limited resource... time. The U.S Department of Health and Human Services (2016) reported the *Affordable Care Act* (ACA) has increased healthcare coverage by an estimated 20 million people since the law was passed in 2010.<sup>i</sup> In addition, not including ACA impact, “primary care workload is expected to increase by 29% between 2005 and 2025,”<sup>ii</sup> while at the same time the primary care workforce is diminishing.<sup>iii</sup> These trends result in greater numbers of patients and fewer healthcare workers.

Furthermore, the Mayo Clinic (April, 2016) reports that there is “an association between burnout and declining professional satisfaction with physicians reducing the number of hours they devote to clinical practice.”<sup>iv</sup> An American Nursing Association’s (2011) survey of nurses’ working environments reported the number one concern was the “effects of stress and overwork” and that the “chronic nursing shortage exacerbates problems of fatigue and burnout.”<sup>v</sup> More work, fewer workers, but the same twenty-four hours in our day leads to job stress.

Not all stress is bad and people frequently face job stress but stress is also associated with a number of well-known health challenges, one of which is job burnout. Not everyone succumbs to burnout, yet among the groups of workers most likely are those in the healthcare professions.<sup>vi</sup> “Job burnout is a special type of job stress — a state of physical, emotional or mental exhaustion combined with doubts about your competence and the value of your work.”<sup>vii</sup> The Mayo Clinic (2015) states that burnout stems from a variety of factors including loss of control, unclear job expectations, dysfunctional workplace dynamics, and work-life balance.<sup>viii</sup> These factors may be of greater significance with the increased expectations at every level of today’s healthcare organization. From hospital administrators to grounds crews,



healthcare employees work to manage and maintain efficiently run, top-level facilities and to deliver quality patient-care. At a growing rate and faster pace, these intertwined complexities charge healthcare workers with learning about, responding to, and keeping up with advances in medicine, emerging best practices in patient-care delivery, new technologies, government regulations, and policy changes. And, it all takes time.

Two such specific efforts aimed at improving patient-care and efficiencies, but which are of concern for increasing factors of burnout, are the broader use of technology and effective participation with interprofessional collaboration.<sup>ix</sup> These two particular issues complicate both the working and the learning environments of the healthcare worker: “The more healthcare professionals must train to integrate knowledge vertically and grasp the complexity of their specific profession, discipline, or field—digging deeper as they specialize—the more challenging it is for them to integrate knowledge horizontally to collaborate.”<sup>x</sup> The competition for and demands on one’s time has, for healthcare workers, become as complicated as the industry they serve.

Therefore, it is important for healthcare employees to mitigate the factors of stress associated with burnout. According to the Center for Disease Control (n.d.), one way to do so is with effective time management practices.<sup>xi</sup> This module will address effective time management practices.



## Training



**Overall Goal:** To introduce methods that address five causes of burnout and lead to effective time management practices.

**WIIFM: What's in it for me?** “Heavy patient loads, changes to healthcare via the Affordable Care Act, EMR requirements, smaller staffs, and higher stress levels are leading to burnout for medical professionals,” says stress and resilience expert Paula Davis Laack.<sup>xii</sup> She also cites the related patient safety concerns related to burnout.<sup>xiii</sup> Burnout has become a focus at the Mayo Clinic (2015) and according to Careerbuilder (2013), “sixty percent of health care workers say they are burned out on their jobs.”<sup>xiv</sup> One way to decrease the chances of job burnout is through implementing effective time management strategies.



### **Materials Provided:**

1. Time Management PowerPoint
2. Activity #1: Job Stressors Quiz
3. Activity #2: Who? Me? Stressed? Role-Play
4. “Who? Me? Stressed?” worksheet
5. Activity #3: Planning Activity
6. “Planning Activity” worksheet
7. “Planning: Interpretation, Scores & Next Steps” Handout
8. Activity #4: How Many Fit?
9. Activity #5: We Got the Power!



## ACTIVITY #1

### Job Stressors Quiz Activity



**Goal:** To acknowledge the link between external stressors and time management as one method of reducing negative impacts of stress.



**Materials Needed:**

- PowerPoint Slide #4



**Procedures:**

*(Note to trainer: Depending on the participant make-up of your groups, you may find value in adding the comments about burnout associated with nurse and physician professionals noted in the introduction to this training document.)*

- Reveal only the title of PowerPoint slide 4 until prompted.
- Ask participants to form small groups of 3-4 people (or join pairs if few participants) and that one person is the designated “contestant.” When prompted, the contestant will provide the responses on behalf of the group.
- Explain that groups are about to be shown four answers, similar to the game show Jeopardy. Groups will be given a few minutes to discuss and determine an answer. The contestant for each group will be called on to give the group’s response to each question.
- Working with one question at a time, give all contestants a chance to answer before revealing the correct response. Once answer has been revealed, briefly discuss.
- Debrief this slide by noting that not all stress is bad and that not everyone who encounters job stress will succumb to burnout. Mention other groups who encounter burnout such as police officers and teachers.
- Conclude by explaining the reason this session on time management began with an activity about stress and burnout is because according to the CDC (n.d) and others, one way to combat both is through effective time management practices.<sup>xv</sup>



## ACTIVITY #2

### Who? Me? Stressed?



**Goal:** This activity encourages laughter in dealing with daily stressors because laughter is linked with both stress reduction and learning.



**Materials Needed:**

- PowerPoint Slide #5
- Copy of the “Who? Me? Stressed?” worksheet
- Pen/pencil



**Procedures:**

*(Note to trainer: Advise participants that this is an individual and small group activity.)*

- Distribute a copy of the worksheet to each participant. Each participant should independently review and complete the seven questions on the worksheet. (3-5 minutes.)
- Have participants form groups of 3-4 people and briefly discuss their responses (for small number of participants in a session, this can be a partner activity).
- Next, tell them they will have 10 minutes to create a “stress-skit” which is an overly dramatized (and humorous) role-play of a stressful situation that one or more has encountered. Encourage creativity, imagination, and suggest formats such as musicals (GREASE, Hamilton...) soap operas, or Shakespearean plays.
- After 10 minutes (and they will probably want more), invite volunteers (or each group depending on the participant feedback) to perform their stress-skits in front of the large group.
- (During the creation and delivery of the stress skits, there will be laughter!)
- Conclude this activity by reminding participants of the many health benefits of laughter, including stress reduction.<sup>xvi</sup> In addition, there are a number of studies supporting the link between laughing and learning.<sup>xvii</sup>



## ACTIVITY #2

### Who? Me? Stressed?

#### “Who? Me? Stressed?” Worksheet

1. How often do you feel stressed?
  - a. Often
  - b. Sometimes
  - c. Seldom
  
2. How do you know you are stressed? Briefly describe what happens.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. List some of the things that are making you feel stressed right now.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What are some ways that you deal with stress in your life?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Which of these ways of dealing with stress do you think are negative or unhealthy?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Which of these ways of dealing with stress do you think are positive or healthy?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. Describe one “take-a-way” from today’s session important to you. Or, what do you hope to accomplish as a result of today’s session.

Adapted from CDC (n.d.) Lifestyle Coach Facilitation Guide: Post-Core





## ACTIVITY #3

### Planning Activity



**Goal:** Participants will identify their planning style. This activity is designed to demonstrate that there is always room for growth.



**Materials Needed:**

- PowerPoint slides 8-10
- One copy of the “Planning Activity” worksheet (includes SIDE A and SIDE B) for every participant
- One copy of the “Planning: Interpretation, Scores & Next Steps” handout
- Pen/pencil for each participant



**Procedures:**

*(Note that this is a three-part activity. However, if reduction in activity time is needed, modify the procedure to create an individual activity and ask participants to only complete the survey and disregard the paired activities.)*

Part One:

*(Note to trainer: The first part of the activity invites participants to think about and engage in discussion about effective and ineffective planning efforts. This step sets the stage for part two of the activity which is SIDE B of the “Planning Activity” handout.)*

- Reveal PowerPoint slide 8. Explain that this activity provides opportunity to look at an area for reducing stress and to increase time-management effectiveness.
- Inform the group that this is the first of a three-part activity and hand out one copy of the “Planning Activity” worksheet to each participant. Advise participants that the first part of the activity will use SIDE A of the worksheet.
- Next, ask participants to find a partner (triads can also be used).
- Read aloud the directions on the worksheet listed below:
  - Directions: With your partner, discuss your personal planning style and effective/ineffective planning outcomes from your recent history.
  - After, circle the label below that you believe is most representative of your planning style.



## ACTIVITY #3

### Planning Activity

- Instruct participants to quickly review the planning styles listed on SIDE A of the worksheet and, using that information as a guide, discuss with which planning style each identifies and why. Ask them to be specific and to use examples as rationale for their selection.
- After a few minutes, invite volunteers to share.
- Finally, ask participants to take their seats again. To begin part-two of the activity, transition to the next PowerPoint slide.

#### Part Two:

- Ask participants to turn over the “Planning Activity” worksheet to SIDE B. Working independently and quietly, have individuals complete the survey.
- After a few minutes verify that total scores are being documented.
- As worksheets are completed and scores totaled, ask participants to turn over the worksheet to SIDE A and to sit quietly while everyone finishes.
- To begin part-three and conclude the activity, transition to the next PowerPoint slide, revealing *only the title*.

#### Part Three: Activity Conclusion

- Do not bringing up the chart on this slide until the next step has been completed: For credibility of the survey instrument as a valuable assessment, explain that this planning activity and quiz was adapted from the work of Hyrum Smith, time management and planning expert associated with FranklinCovey.
  - See [frankincoveyspeakersbureau.com](http://frankincoveyspeakersbureau.com) for additional information if desired.
- Next, reveal the chart on the PowerPoint slide which shows the scores and next steps and review each planning style.
- Remind participants of the first part of the activity and ask them to review their actual scores and planning style from SIDE B. Then, return to SIDE A of the “Planning Activity” worksheet to compare what they circled on SIDE A to what their survey scores indicated.



## ACTIVITY #3

### Planning Activity

- Provide a copy of the “Planning: Interpretation, Scores, and Next Steps” handout to each participant and ask them to independently review it.
- Invite participants to share their experiences with the larger group as time allows.
- Conclude the activity by emphasizing that while planning is an important function, becoming overly rigid with planning, not planning effectively, and/or focusing our time and energy on matters that do not align with our priorities can lead to stress and burnout. Emphasize that we can’t control everything but “we can plan to control what we can.”



## ACTIVITY #3

### Planning Activity

#### “Planning Activity” Worksheet (SIDE A)

**Directions:** With a partner, discuss your personal planning style and effective and/or ineffective planning outcomes from your recent history. After, circle the label below that you believe is most representative of your planning style.

Label	Description	Leave Blank
Terrible Planner	You should consider using new tools and focusing on time management tips and techniques.	
Below Average Planner	You probably already have a planner or system but need to use it more effectively.	
Average Planner	Your planning system is working.	
Above Average Planner	Your planning system is working well.	
Excellent Planner	You have mastered planning and should be feeling good about having control of your life.	



# ACTIVITY #3

## Planning Activity

### How Well Do You Plan? Worksheet (SIDE B)

**Directions:** For each question, circle the number that best describes you. Total columns for your score.

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
How often do you plan in an effort to keep on top of your life?	1	2	3	4	5
Do you write out daily plans ?	1	2	3	4	5
Do you allow flexibility in your daily plans?	1	2	3	4	5
How often do you accomplish everything you planned for that day?	1	2	3	4	5
How often do you plan time for what matters most to you?	1	2	3	4	5
How often does your daily plan get destroyed by urgent matters?	5	4	3	2	1
COLUMN TOTALS					

Adapted from quiz written for US Weekend by Hyrum Smith

Total all columns for your score: \_\_\_\_\_



## ACTIVITY #3

### Planning Activity

#### “Planning: Interpretation, Scores & Next Steps” Worksheet

Label	Description	Scores and Next Steps
Terrible Planner	You should consider using new tools and focusing on time management tips and techniques.	<b>6-10: Terrible Planner.</b> A great first step would be to take a time management course.
Below Average Planner	You probably already have a planner or system but need to use it more effectively.	<b>11-15: Below average planner.</b> You may already have a planning system, but using it more effectively will help to reduce the stress and lack of control you feel in your life.
Average Planner	Your planning system is working.	<b>16-20: Average planner.</b> Your planning system is working, but you can do better. You may need help focusing on priorities, dealing with urgent interruptions, or writing your daily plan.
Above Average Planner	Your planning system is working well.	<b>21-25: Above-average planner.</b> Your planning system is working well. Keep up the good work, with periodic reviews to be sure you’re planning around what matters most in your life.
Excellent Planner	You have mastered planning and should be feeling good about having control of your life.	<b>26-30: Excellent planner—or candidate for burnout?</b> You have mastered planning and should experience the serenity that comes from taking charge of your life. But make sure you’re in control of your planning rather than letting it control you.



## ACTIVITY #4

### How Many Fit?



**Goal:** To introduce principles for intentionality in thinking through the interplay among core values, planning, and time management in order to reduce two causes of burnout: mismatch in values and work-life balance.



**Materials Needed:**

- PowerPoint slides 12-14
- 1 clear glass vase or jar large enough in size to be seen throughout the room but small enough to be manageable
- Large rocks, small rocks (gravel or pea gravel), sand and water
- The large rocks must be able to fit in the glass jar
- The other rocks and water should be sufficient in quantity to fill the glass jar as detailed in the procedure
- A box or covered tub to hide the objects until used in the procedure



**Procedures:**

*(Note to trainer: It's important to the outcome that the rocks, sand, and water remain out of site until prompted below.)*

- Put the glass container on a flat and sturdy surface, easily seen by all participants. Keep the other materials hidden. (It would be prudent to ask those participants who know the outcome to remain silent.)
- As indicated on Ppt slide 12, state that there is a quiz. Bring out and show the participants, ONLY the large rocks and ask, “How many of these rocks will fit into this jar?” Ask them to quickly write down the number. Then say, “Let’s find out” and begin to put as many large rocks as you can into the glass container. Then ask, “Is the jar full?”
  - Most respondents will say “yes.” (Be aware if participants have seen this activity before they will say “no” ---remind folks to remain quiet if they know the outcome already.)
- Next, take out the small rocks (gravel) and dump as much into the same container with the big rocks. Ask again, “Is it full?” Some will be wiser and respond “Maybe not” some will still say that it is full.



## ACTIVITY #4

### How Many Fit?

- Take out the sand and repeat the above step. By now when asked “Is the jar full?” Respondents should reply, “NO!” Praise this response. Or, if they say think it is full, prompt with “Are you sure?” and then move to the next step.
- Now take out the container of water and fill the jar until it is full. Then proclaim enthusiastically, “Now it’s full!” Then ask, “Can anyone explain the point of this quiz?” Because this is a time management presentation, the expected response will be: “You can always squeeze more into your day/schedule/life.” Respond by stating that is incorrect. Clarify, “The point of this illustration is to put the big rocks in first or they won’t fit.”
- Transition to Ppt slide 13 and explain the Pareto Principle.

The Pareto's Principle (Pareto's Law), frequently called the “80/20 Rule,” means that in anything we do a few aspects (20 percent) are vital and many (80 percent) are trivial. This principle applies to business (80% of the work is done by 20% of the people) and is critical in time management. In order to determine one’s “big rocks” in life, it’s important to understand this principle.

- This activity concludes on Ppt slide 14.
- Read the idea prompts aloud on Ppt slide 14 and ask participants to make a list of their own “big rocks.” After a few minutes, invite volunteers to share with the group.
- Conclude by explaining that this activity introduced principles for being intentional in thinking through core values and determining what is most important. When we put into practice that our plans and schedules align with our values and what matters most in life, we are reducing the effects of the two causes of burnout that started this activity: **mismatch in values and work-life balance.**

*(NOTE: This activity was adapted based on the work of Stephen Covey.)*





## ACTIVITY #5

### We Got the Power



**Goal:** To provide demonstration and practice of controlled responses to varied communication situations.



**Materials needed:**

- PowerPoint slides 15 - 17



**Procedures:**

- Stay on the title of Ppt slide 16 until prompted. This slide introduces the background knowledge needed to continue to the activity.
- Explain some of the complications occurring in today's healthcare environment with regard to complexities including increased use of technology and greater demand for teams to work effectively. These complexities add stress and strain on everyone. **Unclear job expectations** and **dysfunctional workplace dynamics** are on the rise due to the rapid pace of change in healthcare. Even if one doesn't consider "power" in their interpersonal communications at work, according to interpersonal communication scholar, Kory Floyd (2017), power is consistently present in any relationship.<sup>xviii</sup> Sometimes the dynamics are equal but usually one person has more power than another.
- There are three specific types of verbal messages we use and power dynamics influence them all. Explain that the term "verbal" means it might be written (i.e. emails, texts) or it might be spoken (i.e. telephone or face to face). The three types of verbal messages are:
  - A one-up message expresses dominance and takes the form of a command. Such as, "Enter that patient data."
  - A one-down message communicates submission or acceptance of the other person's decision making ability. This is expressed in statements like, "Wherever you think we should move the gurney is fine with me." Or these messages might be in the form of a question, such as, "Where would you like to have the gurney moved?"
  - A one-across message conveys neutrality in the relationship. These are expressed in the form of factual statements, such as, "There are many brands of scrubs to choose from."



## ACTIVITY #5

### We Got the Power

- Transition to the next slide (17) to begin the activity.
- First review the slide then ask participants to begin the role-play.
- Conclude by reminding participants that we can't control everything but we *can* control how we respond. We demonstrate our control with how we communicate our responses. Have the large group respond to these prompts:
  - With whom and in what circumstances would each type of “power style” be most effective or least effective?
  - How will this type of communication know-how positively impact working relationships?
  - How might this reduce some work related stress associated with unclear job expectations and dysfunctional workplace dynamics?
  - What does this have to do with time management?

*(Note to trainer: If participants don't get the point about solving some of the causes that lead to job burnout which then impacts time management and vice-a-versa (which came first the chicken or the egg cycle), below is a list of consequences of burnout according to the Mayo Clinic website. These negative outcomes would necessarily limit effective time management effectiveness.)*

- Excessive stress
- Fatigue
- Insomnia
- A negative spillover into personal relationships or home life
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Alcohol or substance abuse
- Heart disease
- High cholesterol
- Type 2 diabetes, especially in women
- Stroke
- Obesity
- Vulnerability to illnesses



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