

# Managing Time

Discussion Guide for Independent  
Activities



**ATHLETE  
LEADERSHIP**

## Facilitators Instructions

This discussion guide provides an outline of how to host virtual discussions utilizing the independent activities. Use the following guide to complement independent activities with interactive group discussions.

It is recommended that sessions are hosted via video webinar and should be conducted over multiple sessions. Alternatively, the independent activities and this resource can be adapted for delivery via other platforms like WhatsApp or Facebook.

Prior to each virtual session be sure to complete the following actions to prepare for each discussion:

1. Review the PowerPoint and adapt it to fit the virtual session.
2. Review the independent activities and complete each activity yourself to be familiar with the activity and have examples to share. Additionally, think about what information you can add from the Program perspective.
  - a. Lesson 1: Thinking About My Time
  - b. Lesson 2: Scheduling My Time
  - c. Lesson 3: Managing and Adjusting My Time
3. 1-2 weeks before the virtual session send out the independent activity and instructions for how to connect to the virtual session.

The independent activities should be used as a starting point for your virtual sessions. We encourage you to use the supplemental activities throughout the discussion. We also suggest adding Program specific content to make it more relatable to your particular group of athlete leaders. It is recommendation that module lessons are facilitated in order and each session be no longer than 2 to 2.5 hours in length. If needed, sessions can be divided into multiple sessions to allow for highly engaged discussions.

## LESSON 1: THINKING ABOUT MY TIME

### Discussion Outline

1. Begin session by giving a short overview of the time diary activity and the purpose behind it. This will help athletes reflect on how they spend their time.
2. Debrief some of the reflection questions from the activity. If the group is large, use breakout groups to let them share and discuss in smaller groups and then bring them back together to share a few examples of what each group discussed.
  - a. Ask athletes to share one thing they learned or realized as they completed their time diary. Were they spending a lot of time on something they did not realize (i.e., watching five hours of television each day)? Did they not do something at all that they really wanted to do (i.e., they love to read but did not pick up a book all week)? Prepare your own response to share with the group.
  - b. Ask athletes to share one thing they did not do during their week that they would like to add in the future. Do they have a goal, hobby, etc. that they want to add to their schedule?
  - c. Highlight a couple of similarities and differences among answers (i.e., do many say they are spending too much time watching tv or texting or say that they did not work on a goal that they have?).
3. Discuss how we often live life as it happens but planning your time can help you accomplish more. The reflection questions in Lesson 1 are good questions to ask yourself when you are planning your week. This is a good way to improve your time management skills.

## LESSON 2: SCHEDULING MY TIME

### Discussion Outline

1. Begin the session by giving short overview of the calendar activity and the purpose behind it- to work on prioritizing and time management.
2. Ask for volunteers to share the following:
  - a. What big changes did you make to your calendar in Lesson 2?
  - b. What did you add that you did not originally do when you made your time diary? Why did you add it?
  - c. Do you like using the calendar template to plan your week? Why or why not? How can it help you be more productive?
3. Play [this video](#) from 0:26 to 1:50. Introduce it by mentioning that time management paired with prioritizing is how people accomplish the most out of each day and that you are going to watch a video now that talks about prioritizing everything on your to do list.
4. Debrief video by using the Rock, Pebble & Sand worksheet.
  - a. Rocks- these are our goals for the week, like finishing up a project. What are the rocks on your calendar? Fill them in on the rocks section of your worksheet.
  - b. Pebbles- these are the urgent tasks that must get done that week. What are the pebbles on your calendar? Fill them in on the pebbles section of your worksheet.
  - c. Sand- it is the small, daily activities that take up our time, like texting or watching tv. What makes up your sand? Fill them in on the sand section of your worksheet.

5. Apply rock, pebble, and sand concept to create a new calendar.
  - a. Explain the following: As you saw in the video, if you did all of your small things first, your jar gets full of sand and you don't have room for your goals and urgent tasks, or the rocks and pebbles. However, if you put your rocks in first, your pebbles in second, and then your sand in last, you have room for everything. Let's apply this to creating our schedule. When you are making your schedule for the week, it is important to block out all your rocks, or your goals for the week, on your calendar first. Then you can fill in the urgent tasks since they must get done during that week as well. Once you have your goals and urgent tasks scheduled, you can then fill in your calendar with your sand, which could be things such as watching tv, going to dinner with a friend, or reading a book.
  - b. Show an example of this by asking for a volunteer to share what they wrote down for their rocks, pebbles, and sand. Share your screen and show a blank calendar template. Using the rocks, pebbles, and sand of the volunteer, recreate the first couple of days filling in first the rocks, second the pebbles, and third the sand.
  
6. Review other ways to enhance your weekly calendar. Explain that everyone has their own way to stay organized and manage their time, but one or more of these examples might help them. The only way to find out what works best for you is to try the different techniques. Have athletes use the Advanced Calendar template for this section.
  - a. Start with having them choose one day to schedule. Give them time to fill in the first two columns (time and activity). Tell them to keep the rock, pebble, and sand technique in mind as they fill it in.
  - b. Urgent vs. Non-urgent
    - i. You can also label your tasks as urgent or not urgent. This will help you identify your pebbles versus your sand for the week and as unexpected activities come up, you can then easily move the tasks you have marked as not urgent. Urgent tasks include things that are

necessary to be done (i.e. personal care or meetings) or have a deadline coming up soon.

- ii. Give them time to fill in their Urgency column, marking each activity as either urgent or non-urgent.
- iii. Debrief
  1. What do you notice about your labeling?
  2. Do you have more or less urgent tasks that you thought you would?

c. Color coding

- i. You can add color coding. You can use one color for personal tasks, another color for work tasks, or break it down even more using one color for meetings, another color for physical activity, another color for SO activities, etc. (If you use this method with your work calendar, share your screen and explain how you do it).
- ii. This is important because it also helps you identify if you have a good work-life balance. While it is important to accomplish all the tasks for your leadership roles, it is also important that you have time for your personal life so that you can relax and re-energize. If you color code your calendar and realize that the majority of your calendar is one color and that color identifies work tasks, then you'll know you need to readjust and add some personal tasks in there as well.
- iii. Let's practice doing this with your calendars. We'll start with the basic two colors to start. Choose one color for personal and a second color for professional and color code each of your activities you've listed on your advanced calendar template.
- iv. Debrief
  1. What do you notice about your calendar?
  2. Do you have an equal number of each color or do you have a lot more of one color?
  3. Looking at the color coding, what adjustments do you need to make to your calendar?

d. Notes Column

- i. Often times there are supplies, etc. needed to complete a task. To help your time and task management even more, you can add a column to your calendar to help keep track of these things. In this column you can list materials you might need (what do you need to work on this task? If it is a meeting, what do you need to bring to it? etc.). You can also add any notes that you do not want to forget when you are working on the task.
- ii. Let's practice doing this with your calendars. Write down any notes you need for each of the activities you've listed.
- iii. Debrief
  1. What kinds of notes did you add?
  2. While you were writing your notes, did you think of other activities you need to add to your calendar? For example, did one of your projects need supplies and then you realized you needed to add going to the store to your calendar?

7. Optional questions for discussion

- a. Which techniques do you like best?
- b. Does anyone else have any other techniques they've used when managing their time?

## LESSON 3: MANAGING AND ADJUSTING MY TIME

### Discussion Outline

1. Begin the session by giving a short overview of the unexpected event activity and the purpose behind it which is the importance of being flexible.
2. Debrief questions
  - a. When you had to add in the Special Olympics meeting and doctor's appointment, how did you do it?

- b. What was your thought process for making the decision you did?
- c. Would any of the tips we just went over (i.e., rocks, pebbles, and sand; color coding; urgent vs non-urgent) have helped you?

### 3. Call to Action

- a. Over the next couple of weeks, work on managing your time using the techniques we used today. You can use the templates provided, use the calendar on your phone, or whatever works best for you. Follow up with your mentor to talk about successes and challenges that you're having and work together to identify how to overcome those challenges.
- b. Think about your leadership journey. How can you schedule your calendar to give you time to accomplish your leadership goals?