

# Time Management In Nursing

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- Time Management
- Nursing isn't so much about getting things done as getting the most important things done. You have to prioritize and learn how to be assertive in your dealings with managers, patients and colleagues.
- Time management is a technique designed to assist with completing tasks within a definite time period
- Learning how, when, and where to use one's time
- Requires the ability to anticipate the day's activities, to combine activities when possible, and to be uninterrupted by nonessential activities
- 5 Time Management Strategies
- Plan your workday
- Focus on your important and urgent activities
- Reduce and manage interruptions in the workplace
- Organize yourself and your workspace
- Delegate
- Plan Your Workday
- Research published in the *The Australian Journal of Advanced Nursing* shows that when nurses planned their time they felt they got more done with less stress.
- Nurses felt a greater sense of control and achievement when they planned.
- Identify all the tasks and activities that you should do on your shift and write them down
- Anticipate needs and gather necessary supplies before beginning the task
- Getting your tasks down on paper and out of your mind reduces your stress and improves your focus.
- Focus on Urgent and Important Activities
- Prioritizing tasks improves time management for nurses.
- Once you have a list of tasks you need to accomplish, put them in order of priority.
- Focus on those tasks that are top priority.
- This means you are putting first things first, an important skill for good nursing time management and stress relief.
- The 5 minutes of time that it will take you to prioritize your tasks saves you time and reduces your stress.
- When you complete your tasks tick them off. This gives you a sense of achievement and closure on the task.
- Make a new to do list at the end of the day for work and home.

- Obviously time management for nurses revolves around the most important part of the job -- patient care.
- This is where prioritizing becomes much more immediate. Patient care priorities can alter almost immediately, so decisions have to be made in a matter of seconds.
- A good question to ask yourself if you have to pick what to do is... "*What are the likely consequences of me **not** dealing with this?*"
- This could mean immediately, the next few minutes or during the shift, but, whatever the time frame, it's an effective way to improve time management for nurses under pressure.

## ■ Reduce and Manage Interruptions

- It can be hard to focus on your top priorities with the many interruptions that nurses face.
- Some of these are essential - emergency situations or the valid demands and requests of patients.
- But other interruptions are of less importance!
- An important question ask yourself is: "Are these interruptions more important to me than the task that I am doing now?"
- While interruptions are a fact of working life, you can manage interruptions and improve nursing time management by:
  - **Planning for interruptions**
  - **Blocking your time for high priority activities**

## ■ Organize Your Workspace

- Being organized saves you time.
- Organize paperwork and continuously document task completion and necessary client data throughout the shift
- Having an organized workspace, whether it is a desk or a storage area will save you time in trying to find things.
- Being organized also reduces stress!

## ■ Delegate

- Delegation is an important skill that boosts your nursing time management.
- The process of transferring a selected nursing task in a situation to an individual who is competent to perform that task
- Only the task- not the ultimate accountability- may be delegated to another
- Always follow your state's nurse practice act and agency policies regarding delegable tasks

## ■ 5 Rights of Delegation

### ■ *Right Task*

### ■ *Right Circumstances*

### ■ *Right Person*

### ■ *Right Direction/Communication*

■ *Right Supervision*