

TIME MANAGEMENT

Many students are at first reluctant to create a time management schedule for a variety of reasons. For one, many might find them too restrictive, or others may find them too difficult to stick with and that they are never able to stick with a time management schedule 100%. In regard to them being restrictive, while that can be true, please keep in mind this is medical school now and you will have to make many sacrifices and changes to your normal habits and pattern of doing things. As far as not being able to stick with it 100%, no one ever can, the idea is to do the best you can with it and make notes and changes where you found challenges. It is also a good idea to build some flexibility into your schedule when possible to account for last minute changes and disruptions.

Here are some advantages to creating a time management schedule:

- Helps you to identify goals
- Enables establishment of priorities
- Allows you to practice decision making skills
- Allows you to take responsibility for the outcome
- Assists you in monitoring your progress
- Can produce feelings of accomplishment
- Helps to reduce stress level
- Helps to avoid work overload or burnout

Steps to a Creating a Time Management Schedule:

1. First, you want to start with a blank worksheet. There are various templates you can use, but a basic chart or table indicating the times and days will do.

2. Second, build in anything into your time management schedule that is required/mandatory, such as lectures, labs, etc.
3. Next, make sure you include routine activities that are often easy to forget to include such as daily grooming, transportation to and from school, meals, meal prep, grocery shopping, preparing next week's time management schedule, etc.
4. After that, include previews, reviews, time for condensing notes, practicing questions, meeting with your study group, reading text and going back over lecture notes, doing multiple reviews of particularly challenging content, etc. Please make sure you are as specific as possible, are you previewing a particular topic, are you reviewing action potential, etc.
5. Finally, don't forget to include anything else that will take up time in your schedule, such as a half-hour long phone call with your parents, hanging out with your friends on a relaxing Sunday afternoon, etc.

Note:

- As part of your study time you should include previewing, quick review, basic study time, practicing questions, review of "hard or challenging topics," study group time, TA sessions, and anything else that is imperative to your success as a medical student.
- Your studying can and should encompass textbooks, notes, videos, other lecture materials, or other resources.
- Use your time during the week (M-F) when practicing questions to focus on the current content, then at the end of the week do a timed review.
- Please make sure you build short 10 minute breaks in between topics when studying.
- Flex study time is designed for you to "catch up" on any areas where you might be behind or need to fill in gaps.

My final recommendation when it comes to a time management schedule is to have an accountability partner. This does not have to be a study partner necessarily, can really be anyone, although another student is preferred. This is someone who will ask you frequently throughout the week how your time management schedule is going and help to keep you on task.