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A Minute Too Late

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Abstract

Time management is a tool that everyone should learn to use. Tutors must manage time in the tutoring center for a successful session as well as in their everyday life. When tutoring sessions are rushed because time isn't watched, there are many consequences. Relationships built between students and tutors are damaged, anxiety begins to build up, and an overall feeling of complete exhaustion begins to rule our bodies. It begins affecting individual lifestyles in and out of the workplace. It creates extreme stress levels which can impair abilities to control our emotions. There are several tactics we can turn to and learn from to help us manage our time in a more efficient manner. It is important to realize how much time we have and how to control it.

A Minute Too Late

I glance at the clock on the computer screen and back at my student. My leg begins bouncing in a rapid motion. His mouth is still moving, and words are still spilling out. I glance at the clock again. It's nearly 10:30. We should've finished our tutoring session almost five minutes ago. My attention returns to him. I offer a kind smile as I try to think of a polite way to cut him off in the middle of his story and send him on his way. Suddenly, a knock on the door captures both of our attention. It's my supervisor. I slump into my chair and let out an uneasy breath. I had done it again. I kept the student too long.

As my sessions continued, I tried my very best to watch the clock but found myself stressing about the time limit and ending too early. I couldn't find a safe place in between. I am an extravert, but being a social butterfly has its downfalls. I jump at every opportunity to go out of my way and build new relationships. It's something I enjoy, but when it comes to being social and managing time, I struggle. In the tutoring center, time management is a very important factor. During tutoring sessions, opportunities arise to bond and build a relationship with the student. When my time isn't managed, I find myself having to cut the student off in the middle of a potentially passionate conversation, which causes damage to the trusting relationship we have developed throughout the session.

The time spent with a student to socialize and go over the paper is limited. If it isn't used well, the student and tutor will feel rushed as they try to quickly wrap up the session. The session should end on a light and happy note, making the student walk away feeling accomplished and desirous to eventually return to the writing center for more help. A happy student makes a tutor feel more successful. As much as the students need the validation on their papers, tutors need validation during the sessions. When a session is ends abruptly in the middle of a good

conversation, it can make the student, as well as the tutor, uneasy and unhappy with the session as a whole. One minor mistake can create negative feelings toward the tutor and writing center as a whole. Every student wants to be heard and have their ideas listened to. However, the fact that students are staying past due time says a lot about the tutor. They are opening up and treating the tutor like a peer. That is exactly what every tutor wants. A successful session revolves around an open student who is willing to share thoughts, feelings, and ideas with the tutor. If they are going over the time limit, it means they are comfortable. But being too comfortable can cause problems with time, health, and the relationships between the tutor and student. The student and the tutor must be aware that there is a limit.

Time is one of life's most valuable possessions. It is something you can't get back. A 2013 study conducted by neuroscientists found that, "even mild stress, such as that encountered in daily life, may impair the ability to use cognitive techniques known to control fear and anxiety" (Krans). Not managing time wisely can cause stress and overwhelming feelings toward a workload. There is so much to do yet so little time, leaving us in a constant state of rush and overwhelming exhaustion. Stress-related tension is caused when the body is overworked. Matt Mayberry, the CEO of Matt Mayberry Enterprises and one of the most read columnists for *Entrepreneur Magazine*, claims that mastering time management does more than just increase productivity. It can yield important health benefits as well. When time is managed wisely, it minimizes stress and improves the overall quality of your life (Mayberry). As tutors, and as humans in general, we need to manage our precious time for an overall healthy future. If we learn to how to manage our time, we also learn how to manage our emotions.

The more I looked into time management, the more I realized how much it was truly affecting me, inside and outside of the workplace. Managing time has never been a strength.

Procrastination sneaks up on me like a lion ready to pounce on its prey. Ridding yourself of procrastination takes a great deal of self-discipline. While it is important to have good time management in the tutoring center, I found that I needed to have better time management in general. I began to wonder what I needed to change to manage my time better within the writing center and in my everyday life. I asked advice from a fellow co-worker. She informed me that it is okay to let the student know how long they have. As the session gets closer to ending, she informs them of their time limit before addressing any last issues in the paper. She almost always ends on time. I took this advice to heart and began using it in my own sessions. I noticed a quick change in my time management in work and school. I began writing things down and giving myself specific time limits for different activities to help me be more aware.

I can proudly say that my time management has improved drastically. Being forced to watch the time and keep to a limit has helped me not only in the tutoring center, but also in my everyday life. I fervently keep track of time which has also improved my procrastination behavior. While it may have been a weakness at the beginning of the year, it has slowly, over time and with much practice, become a strength. My anxiety and stress about time has decreased exponentially. Managing my time wisely helps me feel healthier and in better control of my life. Matt Mayberry also says, “when you operate your life in a healthy, organized fashion, and are able to execute daily tasks efficiently, stress is reduced, productivity increases and overall satisfaction manifests.” In the tutoring center, I have a more positive outlook on tutoring as a whole and look forward to tutoring. I’m confident in what I’m doing because I know my limitations. But overall, managing my time makes me feel happy.

Time is precious and should never be taken for granted. Better time management makes for an easier and more relaxing lifestyle as a whole. It creates healthier and less-stressful

situations allowing everyone to be in the moment. Time is a non-renewable, critical resource, and once it is lost, it can never be regained. Managing your time well isn't something that you should do; it's something that you must do. Strive to never be that person who is always a minute too late.

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