

## Setting Priorities: What's Important to You?

### [[YELLOW BAR (DESCRIPTION OF SESSION)]]

Getting the most out of your day is an art. Knowing what is important to you and being aware of time robbers can make a big difference in what you achieve in your day.

#### CATEGORY

- Life Skills
- Setting Priorities
- Goals
- Decision-Making

#### OBJECTIVES

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify the importance of time.
- Identify some specific steps they can take to help work towards getting the most out of their day.

#### SUPPLIES

- Glass or transparent plastic jar
- Rocks or golf balls
- Small pebbles or marbles
- Small beads or sand
- Three signs to post on the wall, each with one of these words: ALWAYS, SOMETIMES, RARELY

**ADVISOR NOTE:** Text in italics should be read aloud to participants. As you engage your post in activities each week, please include comments, discussions, and feedback to the group relating to **Character, Leadership, and Ethics**. These are important attributes that make a difference in the success of youth in the workplace and in life.

#### ACTIVITY

##### Introduction

Tell participants: *Think about how each of these activities robs you of the time required to complete tasks and focus on priorities—how it reduces your ability to do what you need to do.*

Then go over the list and ask the participants to quietly evaluate for themselves if the item occurs ALWAYS, SOMETIMES, or RARELY.

Tell participants: *I will say the item; then you should move in an orderly fashion to the sign on the wall that represents how often this time robber affects you: ALWAYS, SOMETIMES, or RARELY*

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| ▪ Chatting or texting                                      | ▪ Watching TV, Netflix, etc.   |
| ▪ Talking to unexpected visitors                           | ▪ Hitting the snooze button on the alarm clock to get up as late as possible                             |
| ▪ Doing tasks that others are capable of and willing to do | ▪ Shuffling materials (food, work, etc.) from one table or area to another without putting anything away |
| ▪ Doing nothing while standing in line                     |  |
| ▪ Not planning ahead for meals                             |  |

- Going to routinely scheduled meetings
- Checking email each time an alert prompts that you have a message
- Surfing the Internet
- Not planning your day
- Running errands without optimizing your drive time
- Playing video games before doing homework
- Going to social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Snapchat, Instagram, Google+, Tumblr, etc.)

Ask participants: *Who would like to share how they handle some of these time distractions? Why is making better use of time an important part of goal setting?*

### **Pebbles in the Jar**

1. Show an empty jar.  
Say: *This jar represents your time.*
2. Add medium-sized rocks to the jar until it cannot hold any more.  
Say: *These rocks are the goals and commitments that are important to you. If you believe this jar is full, stand up.*
3. Now add pebbles to the jar.  
Say: *The pebbles represent things that you want to do, but don't need to do. These things matter to you, but not as much as your goals and commitments. Notice that there is room for them in the jar because they fill in the gaps around the rocks.*
4. Next add sand until the jar appears to be full.  
Say: *This sand represents the small, much less important but still time-consuming activities that you do during a day.*
5. Ask: *What is the point of this demonstration?* Explorers may say that no matter how full your schedule, you can always fit more into it. However, this answer is incorrect.
6. Say: *The real moral of this activity is that you can make time for your big rocks, but only if you put them into the schedule first and then fit everything else around and between them. It may be easier to pour the smaller things into the jar, but if they fill too much of the jar, there will be less room for your big rocks.*
7. Ask: *So what things will fill your jar through the rest of today?*

### **ADVISOR NOTE**

Some sample questions are below. They are designed to help the participants apply what they have learned to their own interests. You are welcome to use these questions or develop your own questions that relate to the post or your specific focus area.

### **REFLECTION**

Focusing Questions

- *What are the big rocks in your life?*
- *What are the pebbles in your life?*
- *Do you know what's important to you?*
- *Do you know how to get the most out of your day?*

Analysis Questions

- *Why do we often put the pebbles in our life first?*
- *How does the time we have every day help us fill our jar to better accomplish our goals?*

Generalization Questions

- *What is a change that you can make today to help you better set your goals and priorities?*
- *How can you know when something is a “big rock” in your life...or just a pebble?*