



5 Time Management Tips for Busy Nurses

By Catherine Bynes on Thu, Jan 17, 2013

Nursing is a demanding job and it can often feel as though there are not enough hours in the day to complete all of your tasks. Unlike other jobs, priorities can change rapidly. When a patient is in urgent need of your attention, your to-do list can change rapidly. The hectic pace of the job is one of the reasons that many nurses get burned out and stressed out. Using these time management tips for nurses is one way to make your life a little easier, as well as getting more done!

Plan your day out in advance. Many nurses say that while planning is a good idea, their days are too unpredictable to plan. It is difficult to plan your day because your environment can change rapidly, and much of your day is spent responding to the needs of patients. However, nurses who do plan their day and the tasks they have to accomplish will find that they get more done with less stress.

Make a list of everything you must get done today. Then, make a note of how long it will take and rank the jobs in order of importance. Start looking at tasks and seeing when you will have time in your day to get one or two items done. When you have a few minutes, complete a task that you can get done in that time. You will also feel better knowing that you are not forgetting anything!

Focus on the most important activities first. When you make the list above, also focus on the items with the highest priority. Remember, you may not be able to get everything done. But by completing the most important tasks, you will be less stressed. Also keep in mind that if nothing is going on right now, you should be working on one of your tasks. Due to the unpredictable nature of your nursing job, you can't be sure that you will have time later. As you complete tasks, check them off on your list. It will give you a sense of accomplishment and make your stress levels drop.

Don't let interruptions disrupt your day. Nurses have to deal with many interruptions, many of which can't be helped. However, there are many interruptions that are not so important. Interruptions like long non-work related chats with other staff members, checking non-work email, or other non-essential tasks can get you off track quickly. Make time to relax, visit, and do things to lower your stress. But don't let those things become more important than your work.

Keep yourself and your workspace organized. Being organized saves time. If you have a desk, spend a few minutes at the end of the day to put papers where they belong so that you can find them when you need them. At the beginning of the day, make sure all equipment is clean and ready for use. This will lower your stress level and make your day easier.

Learn to delegate tasks. Remember that you can't do it all, nor should you have to. Remember the five rights of delegation in nursing; right orders, right instructions, right skills, right tools, and the right time frame.

Remember, time management is about making your day easier and more productive! - See more at: <http://nursing.advanceweb.com/Article/Effective-Time-Management-3.aspx>

REMEMBER TO BE:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fmV0gXpXwDU>

- Flexible & Patience
- Have Fun
- Prioritize Tasks
- Balance work with life
- Best tips for getting things right
- Quick stress relief
- Anticipation of needs

MISTAKES CAN HAPPEN:

1. Failing to keep a to do list
2. Not setting personal goals
3. Not prioritizing
4. Failing to manage distractions
5. Procrastination
6. Taking on too much
7. Thriving on “busy”
8. Multitasking
9. Not taking breaks
10. Ineffectively scheduling tasks

PSYCHOLOGY TODAY:

Write on the first line: I am a great multitasker & then on the second line write the numbers 1 thru 20. Have someone time yourself doing this. Record it here _____

Then write the same two sentences but this time alternate the lines when you are filling them out, on the first line write I, then on the bottom line write 1, then back to the top line and write a, then bottom line 2. Alternate writing the same two sentences. Time yourself again. Record it here: _____

Which one took longer? This shows you how multitasking does not speed things up

THE MYTH ABOUT MULTITASKING:

- It actually slows you down
- You make mistakes
- It can stress you out
- You miss out on life
- You memory may suffer
- It may hurt your relationships
- It can make you overeat
- Usually you're not good at it
- It dampens your creativity
- OHIO= Only handle it once
- Can be dangerous

You have 3 patients to care for today, Report is given at 0730:

Patient A: VS Q8H Daily Weight Diet as tol PT/OT at noon Med at 8, 11 I/O IV @ 55 ml/hr Dressing on Abdomen Had Emesis at 1030 Dad calls at 11 for update	Patient B: VS Q4H Ambulate X4 Diet Clears Med at 8, 10, 12 Incentive Spirometry Q2H I/O No IV Teach about crutches Pain is at a 6 at 900 Is Hungry and Lonely	Patient C: VS Q Shift NPO Surgery at 0800 Lab draw HCG I/O Med at 9 IV @ 32 ml/hr Back from Surgery at 12 NG and VAC place in OR TV in room is not working
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In order of importance, write down what you would be checking or doing:

0800
0900
1000
1100
1200
1300