Proven Tips for Managing Your Time

1. **Use the 80/20 rule, which encompasses the idea that all work is not created equal.**
   a. **20%** - This work is so vital that it is of strategic importance to you and/or the team.
   b. **80%** - This work, while it may be important, it is relatively less important than the 20%. Such work may include the more mundane or simple jobs, especially work you have to repeatedly do, or conversations that are not productive, and they should not occupy any more time than absolutely needed.
   c. Most people often spend too much time on issues of lesser importance. As a rule of thumb, never invest more than half of your time on things in the 80% pile.
   d. Be intentional with your work. Regularly evaluate your work or activities and determine whether they fall in the 20% pile or the 80% pile.
   e. Stay clear about what really matters to get more done.

2. **Discover the Einstein window, that is, the period of the day where individuals are at their peak mental functioning and can be productive on the most important issues for that day. Peak mental functioning is a highly valuable asset. Protect this window of time and proactively limit distractions to heighten productivity.**

3. **Communicate availability to limit interruptions.** Whether you use digital messages or just quick conversations, let others know when a good time their questions, conversations, or requests can be entertained.

4. **Strategically manage work to stay focused on what matters the most. Consider the following options to aid in this regard:**
   a. **Automation:** Look for ways to save time through automation.
   b. **Outsourcing:** Find someone, internal or external to the organization who is well suited to do some portion of what you do.
   c. **Delegation:** Consider delegating work that represents a development opportunity for someone else.
5. Other classic time management tips include the following:

   a. Arrive early to work. It is often quiet and peaceful and can allow for maximum productivity.

   b. Conduct a time audit once or twice ever year. Make a few notes every day for at least two weeks, hour by hour to get an idea whether time is being used wisely and productively.

   c. Use a day planner, whether paper or digital. Refer to it at the start of the day to keep planned work on track.

   d. If possible, occasionally work at home for a change of pace and quiet work environment.

   e. When stuck on a problem for a prolonged period of time, switch to another task, which may increase the likelihood of making progress after switching back to the problem.

   f. Delay an activity until finishing a prescribed goal.

   g. Take short breaks. Disconnecting and using breaks effectively can help increase productivity.

   h. Use time limits for tasks. Keep the time frame visible, to help stay focused.

   i. Work on one task at a time for increased efficiency, accuracy, focus and creativity.

6. Action Plan - Try implementing the following steps next week:

   a. Identify the top one or two most important tasks that need to be completed in the next few weeks. Choose what time of day to work on these tasks. Think about the Einstein window and put them on the calendar.

   b. Next, identify one time wasting activity and commit to stopping that behavior. It could be long lunches, too much socializing or online shopping, who knows? Be honest and choose not to indulge in that behavior next week.

   c. Finally, choose one time management tip to adopt.

   d. Over the next week, doing these small number of things will result in building a new routine.

   e. Once this new routine is comfortably in place, choose another tip or two to try to manage time more effectively and increase productivity.