

# Productivity and Academic Performance

## Time Management Exercise: Identify Time Wasters to Increase Productivity

### Purpose

This exercise encourages students to think about issues that could potentially reduce their productivity. It is an ideal exercise for students who work together as a team and aim to increase their team productivity. This exercise is simple in nature as it encourages people to think of the most important productivity issues from their *own* specific view.

### What You Need

- A deck of blank cards about 3" by 6". You can also use Post-It notes.
- A wall or board to stick the notes on.
- Any necessary materials to stick the cards to the board.

### Setup

- Make the blank cards available to all students.
- Explain that the purpose of the exercise is to identify time wasting issues or anything that reduces productivity.
- Ask each student to write a list of their top 10 typical issues that lead to lack of productivity. These could be personal, group related, or school specific issues.
- Ask each person to write each idea on a separate card. They should then arrange the cards in order of priority.
- Next have them number the cards based on priority from 1 to 10.
- Next each student should stick the cards randomly on the board.
- Once all cards are stuck to the board, the whole group can work together to read through the ideas while paying attention to priorities assigned. In particular, they should collect similar ideas together and remove duplicates.
- Ask students to compile a final list of top 10 concerns from among the whole set and record them on a separate sheet. This would act as the result of the entire brainstorming session on productivity.
- It is up to the students to use a system that leads to a final set of priorities calculated from the priorities they have assigned already for each issue.
- Follow with a short discussion to finish the exercise.

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## Discussion

What did you think of the process used in this exercise? Was there a pattern in the types of concerns raised? Was there agreement on what the critical issues are? Is it easy to address these productivity issues or are they a manifestation of much bigger problems within the organization?

Source: <http://www.skillsconverged.com/FreeTrainingMaterials/tabid/258/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/985/categoryId/112/Time-Management-Exercise-Identify-Time-Wasters.aspx>

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