Soft Skills Module 7

Prioritization:
The Who, What, When, Where, Why and How

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Summary	
Goal: Understand and differentiate between essential and non-essential tasks or functions to complete work and meet deadlines.	Instructor:
	Delivery Method(s): Discussion and Activities
SMART Objectives: *Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-sensitive* By the end of this module, students should be able to:	Length: Four Topics A total of 3 hours
Objective SS7.1: Comprehend the six major focus points of prioritizing jobs and work tasks using the "who, what, when, where, why, and how" strategy. Objective SS7.2: Understand personal or individual styles or modes of work behavior relative to prioritization.	Any Applicable Business and/or Soft Skills? Business Skills • Adhering to Regulatory Requirements
Objective SS7.3: Identify prioritization methods that might be workable when contracting/working on a project.	Corresponding NLS Lesson #?
Take Away Message(s): By the end of the module students should be able to recognize essential and non-essential tasks or functions that promote or inhibit the ability to prioritize. Students should also be able to recognize methods to address these non-essential tasks or functions in advance, warding off missed deadlines and substandard work.	

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Instructor Preparation

Title of Module: Prioritization: The Who, What, When, Where, Why and How

Instructor:

Several elements of prioritization enter into being a braille transcriber and doing contract work as a microenterprise business/sole proprietor. This module attempts to prepare students for the needs and pitfalls that could occur given the substantial change from a regimented environment to one that is self-controlled and flexible by providing them with strategies for advance prioritization.

Agenda – *topics to be covered in the module and length of each item*

Topic: Prioritization	*Time Allotted :3 Hours*
A. Prioritization Scenarios	*(1 hour)*
B. The "Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How" Strategy	*(30 minutes)*
C. Your Styles or Modes of Work Behavior	*(1 hour)*
D. Prioritization Methods	*(30 minutes)*

Materials & Supplies – *items needed in order to carry out the agenda and classroom activities*

1. Prioritization Scenarios (7.A.1, 7.A.2, 7.A.3, 7.A.4) handouts – one per student per group

2. Handouts: Who, What, When, Where, Why, How Strategy (7.B.1), Strategies for Thinking about Your Work Behaviors and Forms of Prioritizing (7.C.1), Simple Tasks List (7.D.1), 1, 2, 3, Method (7.D.2), More Easy to Employ Methods for Prioritization (7.D.3), Back-Out Calendar Priority (7.D.4)

3. Journal or paper to create a journal

Classroom Preparation – *steps to follow when setting up the learning environment*

1. Students configured to facilitate group discussion

2. Wrting paper and pencils for students

3. Flip chart/pad with markers or board/markers for instructor

Curriculum Content

A. Prioritization Scenarios   (1 hour)

Objective SS7.1: Comprehend the six major focus points of prioritizing jobs and work tasks using the "who, what, when, where, why, and how" strategy.

📖 PREINSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The purpose of this activity is for the instructor to gauge what students already know, and how they may prioritize in the scenario given. This pre-assessment will inform the instructor on what content is appropriate and what strategies to implement when teaching this module.

Divide students into small groups of 4-6 and provide each group with a different prioritization scenario. There are four prioritization examples provided: **Prioritization 1 (7.A.1)**, **Prioritization 2 (7.A.2)**, **Prioritization 3 (7.A.3)**, and **Prioritization 4 (7.A.4)**. Provide each group with chart paper and markers.

💻 CONTENT PRESENTATION AND LEARNER PARTICIPATION

Provided with a work scenario, students will apply their skills to prioritizing the activities associated with a critical incident by documenting actions to be taken in chronological order. Each scenario will challenge students to identify the importance of using prioritization techniques for activities as the event unfolds.

Have each group select a spokesperson and scribe.

Instruct the groups that they have only 20 minutes to answer the questions and prioritize the actions to be taken regarding their scenario.

Monitor the groups as they work, and at the end of the set time facilitate discussion as each group presents their ideas to the rest of the students.

At the end, instructor and students debrief the presented scenario by discussing why it was done and how it relates or can be applied to real life or on the job.

B. The "Who, What When, Where, Why, How" Strategy   (30 minutes)

Objective SS7.1: Comprehend the six major focus points of prioritizing jobs and work tasks using the "who, what, when, where, why, and how" strategy.

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⌨ **CONTENT PRESENTATION AND LEARNER PARTICIPATION**

Review the **Who, What When, Where, Why, How Strategy (7.B.1)** and ask students how they see these six elements connecting to prioritization particularly related to the type of work required and the time it will take to complete the work.

C. Your Styles or Modes of Work Behavior   (1 hour)

Objective SS7.2: Understand personal or individual styles or modes of work behavior relative to prioritization.

⌨ **CONTENT PRESENTATION AND LEARNER PARTICIPATION**

Review the **Strategies for Thinking about Your Work Behaviors and Forms of Prioritizing (7.C.1)** with students; ask them to think about their behaviors and how they relate to the styles and modes described.

Activity

Ask students to journal about times when one or more of the styles or modes were active for them – a job or activity that they were responsible for, a situation they needed to address, etc.

Discussion:

Ask students to briefly share a scenario where they can identify one or more of the styles or modes activated…

Ask students how these styles/modes could/might interfere with contracting and work tasks…

Styles & Modes

Have students review and think about their style and mode. Have students refer back to **Strategies for Thinking about Your Work Behaviors and Forms of Prioritizing (7.C.1)** handout.

Ask:

Which of these do you think describes you? Facilitate a discussion about the positives and not-so-positive elements.

<u>Procrastinator</u> – One who puts off unpleasant, momentous, or difficult tasks.
<u>Accomplisher</u> – One who needs small victories to get through the day.
<u>Analyzer</u> – One who works objectively on most important thing possible at the moment.
<u>Crises Manager</u> – One who gets overwhelmed by a current situation leaving no time for routine matters.

D. Prioritization Methods   (30 minutes)

Objective SS7.3: Identify prioritization methods that might be workable when contracting/working on a project.

⌨ CONTENT PRESENTATION AND LEARNER PARTICIPATION

Instructor:

Have students review each of the prioritization methods on the following handouts: **Simple Tasks List (7.D.1)**, **1, 2, 3, Method (7.D.2)**, **More Easy to Employ Methods for Prioritization (7.D.3)**, **Back-out Calendar Priority (7.D.4)**.

Ask them which two they think best fit them, their styles/modes and behaviors.

Have students identify any other types of prioritization methods they might use in making sure the work they receive is done on task, on time and on track.

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Prioritization: The Who, What, When, Where, Why and How Handouts

Prioritization Scenario #1 (7.A.1)

You are working on a large project that is almost completed and your computer freezes up…

On chart paper the scribe should write the group's responses to the following as it relates to the scenario:

1. What resources will you need immediately?

2. <u>How</u> will you get those resources? (How will you contact someone or something for those resources?) What problems will you encounter in making contact (if any)?

3. What resources might you need if this extends over several hours or several days?

4. Who will you need to involve in this scenario or who will you need to notify?

5. Now prioritize your actions from the first four questions.

Prepare for someone in your group to be a spokesperson who will share your group's findings with the class.

7.A.1

Prioritization Scenario #2 (7.A.2)

A freak gust of wind knocks out the electric power substation and you are without power and have a critical deadline to meet with just enough time – that is until you lost power...

On chart paper the scribe should write the group's responses to the following as it relates to the scenario:

1. What resources will you need immediately?

2. <u>How</u> will you get those resources? (How will you contact someone or something for those resources?) What problems will you encounter in making contact (if any)?

3. What resources might you need if this extends over several hours or several days?

4. Who will you need to involve in this scenario or who will you need to notify?

5. Now prioritize your actions from the first four questions.

Prepare for someone in your group to be a spokesperson who will share your group's findings with the class.

7.A.2

Prioritization Scenario #3 (7.A.3)

It's been raining for days and the rivers are rising quickly; up and over their banks and unfortunately into the basement of your house where you do your braille transcription work. You wake to water everywhere...

On chart paper the scribe should write the group's responses to the following as it relates to the scenario:

1. What resources will you need immediately?

2. <u>How</u> will you get those resources? (How will you contact someone or something for those resources?) What problems will you encounter in making contact (if any)?

3. What resources might you need if this extends over several hours or several days?

4. Who will you need to involve in this scenario or who will you need to notify?

5. Now prioritize your actions from the first four questions.

Prepare for someone in your group to be a spokesperson who will share your group's findings with the class.

Prioritization Scenario #4 (7.A.4)

You have worked diligently on the job the school sent you – transcribing a set of workbooks a middle school student needs by next Monday. Some of your friends are going to the beach Thursday and Friday and have invited you to come along. You decide to go because you know you can finish the job over the weekend on Saturday and Sunday. On the way back late Friday night, the car breaks down 90 miles from home, your cell phone battery is dead and you find out there are no repair shops open until Monday…

On chart paper the scribe should write the group's responses to the following as it relates to the scenario:

1. What resources will you need immediately?

2. <u>How</u> will you get those resources? (How will you contact someone or something for those resources?) What problems will you encounter in making contact (if any)?

3. What resources might you need if this extends over several hours or several days?

4. Who will you need to involve in this scenario or who will you need to notify?

5. Now prioritize your actions from the first four questions.

Prepare for someone in your group to be a spokesperson who will share your group's findings with the class.

7.A.4

Prioritizing the *Who, What, When, Where, Why & How* Strategy (7.B.1)

When thinking about prioritization it is important to address these six aspects…

1. <u>Who</u> wants the work done?	2. <u>What</u> do they want done?
3. <u>When</u> do they want delivery of the work?	4. <u>Where</u> does the work fit in the schedule?
5. <u>Why</u> does it fit there?	6. <u>How</u> will this work impact deadlines for other work?

This approach should lead to a thinking process involving:

- The <u>type</u> of work required
- The <u>time</u> it will take to do the work   7.B.1

Strategies for Thinking About Your Work Behaviors And Forms Of Prioritizing (7.C.1)

Styles & Modes

Think about your styles and modes – which of these do you think describes you?

Procrastinator – One who puts off unpleasant, momentous, or difficult tasks.

Accomplisher – One who needs small victories to get through the day.

Analyzer – One who works objectively on the most important thing possible at the moment.

Crises Manager – One who gets overwhelmed by a current situation leaving no time for routine matters.

Simple Task List (7.D.1)

Use a simple task list to set priorities, plan activities and measure progress.

Create a task list using Microsoft Office Outlook or other task management software.

Outlook Task List provides the following categories for organizing:

- Importance/Prioritization
- Subject/Job
- Status/Progress
- Due Date
- Percentage Completed
- Category (type of work, customer, business tasks, etc.)

Use the 1, 2, 3 Method (7.D.2)

Style/Mode	Method Described	Activities/Rationale
Uses the Analyzer style	1. Create a Weekly Calendar	▪ Prioritize work and other activities by the week. ▪ Schedule reasonable timeframes needed to complete work and activities. ▪ Note critical dates.
Assists the Procrastinator Minimizes the Crises Manager Supports the Accomplisher	2. Create a Daily "To Do" List (Rewrite List Each Morning	▪ This list should stem from the weekly calendar. ▪ Write down things to accomplish for the day. ▪ Put unpleasant, monumental or difficult tasks at the top of list Note important tasks and critical deadlines. ▪ Check off items as finished and give praise for each accomplishment.
Applies the Analyzer style	3. Create a Monthly List and a Long-term Goals List	▪ Put down goals and work that has to be done. ▪ Record purchases or needs; a want list. ▪ List commitments. ▪ Identify any worries or concerns.

A word to the wise...

❖ Avoid Distraction
❖ Stay Focused
❖ Minimize television, internet, social networking, phones and friend interruptions during work times
❖ Address emotional blocks (boredom, stress, daydreaming, guilt, frustration, etc.)

When any of these factors interrupt task completion, the first step is to identify the problem and decide to improve. Use a priority method to focus attention together with positive self-talk.   7.D.2

More Easy to Employ Methods for Prioritization (7.D.3)

<u>Rank the Lists</u> of daily, weekly and monthly tasks

- 1 = Critical
- 2 = Important
- 3 = Routine

Work through the items on the list in the rank order identified; if some or all of the 3's do not get addressed determine whether they should be moved to 1 or 2 level tasks.

Separate tasks into <u>Priority Levels</u>

- A = High Priority
- B = Medium Priority
- C = Low Priority

Divide tasks into <u>Priority Piles</u> by Deadlines

- Today
- Tomorrow
- Next week
- Next month

Identify tasks by <u>Priority Colors</u>

- **Red = ASAP**
- **Blue = Next week**
- **Green = Specific due date (two or more weeks out)**

Use an <u>Active Priority</u> system

- Do it
- Ditch it
- Delegate it*

*Note: while you might not be able to delegate some transcribing work, there may be some chores or other tasks that can be delegated such as taking out garbage or sweeping floors.   7.D.3

Use a <u>Back-out Calendar Priority</u> System (7.D.4)

- Identify work/task
- Identify deadline
- Identify specific steps to work/task
- Identify time takes to perform specific steps to work/task
- Chunk up the specific steps to work/task in doable portions per day
- Estimate time for each chunk
- Number the chunks
- Calendar the time for each chunk starting at the end – the deadline date – and working backward until all chunks are scheduled
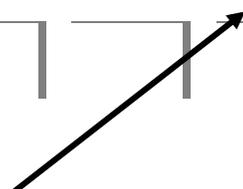
Example

Project XX – Due 28th – 12 Chunks – each chunk approximately 3-4 hours

Any Month/Any year

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3 **Chunk 1**	4	5 **Chunk 2**	6	7 **Chunk 3**	8
9	10 **Chunk 4**	11 **Chunk 5**	12 **Chunk 6**	13	14	15 **Chunk 7**
16	17	18 **Chunk 8**	19 **Chunk 9**	20	21 **Chunk 10**	22
23	24 **Chunk 11**	25	26 **Chunk 12**	27	28 **DUE**	29
30	31					

Work backwards from the Due date   7.D.4

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