

Manager Moments: Time Tips for Teams

*Are you feeling a degree of anxiety as we live in these extraordinary times? Often one can feel a sense of helplessness in the face of multiple deep fissures in our world. As we engage in new ways of working together and build a new normal, such issues remain a contextual backdrop or foreground. Helplessness can be an invisible drain on personal and shared resources. As a manager, you are faced with seen and unseen despair in addition to your own. What to do? **Sometimes a focus on a shared topic of interest can offset some of those feelings, as when we feel a sense of control, anxiety diminishes.***

***Time** can be an easy touchstone topic to bring us together.*

*Over the years a plethora of research has been conducted regarding time management. Results have informed planning and scheduling practices. Less research has focused on our emotional relationships with time, be they personal or collective. Relationships can greatly impact the overall pace of work, for instance. When workers are unhappy, they may resort to slowdowns, sickouts, and a lack of presence, thereby decreasing productivity and collective satisfaction. This approach that I call **Time Awareness** or **TA** can provide you with an easy tool to reduce your stress.*

How might you engage your group individually and collectively in new ways by a focus on TA? Here are a few ideas to consider.

Individual Moments

Aim to have at least a weekly check in formal or informal with each member of your team regardless of reporting relationship.

- *Email or text: "Just checking in to see how your day/week is going. I appreciate your efforts on this project. Do you need anything from me? How are you feeling about time this today/this week?"*
- *Group meeting: Thank everyone on the team for a completed task: highlight each person's piece. Comment on your experience of time.*

Team Moments

- *At formation stage, ask all about time preferences, pace of work, preferred schedules.*
- *Explain that you will check in on timing on a regular basis, particularly at the mid-point of the project. Research shows that checking in at that point and re-calibration of pace schedule resources allocation can greatly increase team success.*
- *Make time a standard agenda item for your meetings. Rotate topics. For example:*
 - *Ask team members to share time tips*
 - *Ask team members to describe a time style they admire*
 - *Share articles on time for group comment*
 - *Take a LinkedIn time management class TOGETEHR. There are 15-minute modules. Consider then engaging together on Zoom, to share tips. Make it a class - ask all to bring one tip to share, coffee and snacks. Remind all to add that training to their resumes.*

Remember, collaborative listening can diffuse anxiety and increase productive actions. Talking about time and staying aware of your relationship with it can bring new energy to you and your work.

Want more tips? Contact Susan! 617 620 2025 susangriegler@gmail.com