

Ask Questions to Help Others Prioritize

Want to help others prioritize? Ask questions that provoke reflection, for example:

1. What are you working on?
2. What satisfies/concerns you about your progress?
3. What do you want to accomplish in the next month?
4. Which of these things would you categorize as big priorities? Medium priorities? Small priorities?
5. What can you do to ensure that the big priorities get accomplished?
6. What do you think you'll do?
7. Would you like to talk again about your priorities?



Got a lot to do? Prioritize your tasks. Be sure to schedule time to address your key priorities first. Then schedule time to address your other priorities. This will help you get your most important tasks done.

Schedule Your Key Priorities First

You're away for a couple of days. You're reflecting on what's going on: "I'm not feeling really good. My blood pressure must be up again... I want to eventually transfer the ministry to local leadership, and I'm not spending time to develop leaders... When's the last time I had five home-cooked suppers in a week? Seems like I've been home for supper about only twice a week, so I haven't been talking with Mary (wife) and Thomas (son) as much as I used to."

You decide to take action. You establish three key priorities. One, to lower your blood pressure by going walking for 30 minutes four times each week. Two, to develop leaders by mentoring Sato-san and Fujishima-san on a weekly basis for 30 minutes each. And three, to talk more with family by eating supper at home at least four times per week.

But when you get back, you hit reality—143 emails in your inbox, 11 meetings to attend in the next week, 3 unexpected tasks to complete by Wednesday. You have to deal with these things. So, you respond to your email, attend the meetings, and complete the tasks. On Friday, you review your three priorities, only to find that you've eaten three dinners at home, walked once, and haven't mentored Sato-san and Fujishima-san at all.

This doesn't feel good.

What can you do? When planning your week, schedule your key priorities first. Then schedule time for your email, meetings, and tasks. In other words, don't schedule email before you schedule walking, dinner at home, and mentoring.

Discipline yourself to do this. Doing this will help you stay focused on your key priorities.

Michael B. Essenburg (Christian Reformed Japan Mission) serves as a coach, consultant, and trainer at Christian Academy in Japan. Time permitting, Michael works with missions.

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