Project Time Management – Time Blocking (Transcript)

Hi everyone, I'm Professor Casey Lopez. I'm going to talk to you today about project management and specifically time blocking for project management.

Now, time blocking is simply a way of scheduling your life and using a daily calendar so you can ensure that all the tasks and obligations throughout your day and your week are met. A time blocking schedule can be as complex or as simple as you need it to be. It can also be a very effective and efficient way to ensure that you are accounting for your time in a way that is meaningful to you and ensuring that things are prioritized in a way that will allow you to meet your goals and meet all the needs of your day now.

For specific different types of time blocking, there are many different ways. However, I really lean into the Pomodoro technique. This is a way that allows you to work smarter and not harder. You work in intervals in focused and distraction-free environments, and this helps increase your productivity as well as eases your stress, especially when a deadline is pending or a larger assignment is coming up. This will help you stop multitasking.

Multitasking has been proven to be inefficient and ineffective multiple times through many studies over the last several years. So we want to move away from the idea of multitasking and distraction and work focused and distraction free. This means that the Pomodoro method uses a timer, so you have a 25 minutes on and a 5 minutes off interval that works. During this time you have 25 minutes of distraction free work. You are focused on a simple task. You break down larger assignments into smaller tasks.

So for instance, you're working on a large research paper. So rather than looking at the scope of the paper from the bottom up that you have to come up with 1300 words, what you want to do is break it down into fourths. So consider 1300 words divided by 4. That's going to be something like, we'll call it 500 words. It's going to be a little less, but for an example, 500 words in 25 minutes. That's a relatively easy task to complete when you are focused. Now you will then work 25 minutes. You will write consistently during this time, and then when your timer is off, you want to use a timer that's preferably on a watch and not a device, so you're not tempted into distraction.

You'll then set another timer for 5 minutes because you're going to take a break. You want to adhere to the timer. Because this gives you the opportunity to rest and reset. You need time to process and to consume information. This allows you to avoid burnout and stress of large assignments. When you work for hours at a time, it creates mental fatigue, which then basically dulls your senses and dulls the way that your brain processes information, which can effectively mean that you're not firing on all cylinders, as they say.

Now, time blocking is really only as efficient as you are with your schedule. You want to be realistic with yourself. This means that you want to include everything that you're going to do during your day when you begin time blocking. So you want to use a daily calendar. Some people have really great sort of outcomes by using a planner or like a bullet journal. Other people, myself included, use a calendar on a

device. I love to use iCal. It's a great way to include everything that I need for my day and ensure that everything is noted out on our to-do list.

And you want to be consistent. Through consistency, you become much more streamlined. And much more able to complete things in a in an efficient and timely manner. This is an example of a time block schedule. So you'll see this is a bit complex. Not everybody will be as as complex as this. Some people may even be more complex, however, but you'll see that all days of the week are included here and that things from the morning through the evening are included.

So things like work, school, personal life, all of that is here in its own timeframes. You'll see that work noted here as business has large blocks of time put off in the middle of the day because that is something that requires several hours at a time of focus. However, this same Pomodoro technique will apply to those large timeframes. I will not be working from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM for five hours solid. Instead, I will be employing the Pomodoro technique and working those twenty-five minute intervals with those five minute rests. At the end of my business day, I will then take another 5 or 10 minutes to then work in to my schedule to sort of transition into my family time. So you'll see then that it it can become a very malleable, sort of flexible, customizable way to ensure that everything in your life is accounted for and handled with care.