



**Georgia Department of Technical
and Adult Education**

Module 7

ORGANIZATION

WORK ETHICS MODULES

LESSON TITLE: *Organizational Skills*

INTRODUCTION: Upon completion of this lesson students will understand how to become more organized and will display good time management techniques. Additionally, students will be able to better handle stress and change.

OBJECTIVES:

- Demonstrate skill in prioritizing and in management of time and stress.
- Demonstrate flexibility in handling change.

EQUIPMENT AND MATERIAL:

Module 7 Organizational Skills
Overhead Projector
Transparencies as needed

MODULE OVERVIEW:

Good organizational or time management skills are a must if one is to operate at the most efficient and productive level possible. Directly influencing one's ability to organize in order to achieve success are change/stress management and prioritizing skills. This module offers pointers and activities to assist students in attaining proficiency in these areas.

ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

When you open your toolbox, do you have to rummage around for what seems like several minutes looking for a Phillips-point screwdriver? When you open your desk drawer, do you have to scatter papers all over the desk top to find a certain sales receipt or bill? Do you have to search all through your dresser drawers looking for one missing sock to match the one you need to wear? If your answer to these questions is "Yes," then you may need some help in getting yourself organized in your personal life. This answer may also be an indicator of a need for organization in other areas of your life.

Key ingredients for your success in your new educational program or in the job that you eventually earn are effective time management and organization skills. If your life seems chaotic because you can't perform to others' or your own expectations, then you're not alone. Just notice the people around you. Do these people always have lots of different activities going on at once? Do these people never seem to accomplish what they said they would? Do they seem confused when you or someone else asks questions or requests assistance? And what about their moods? Are they short with others around them? The answer to all of these questions is probably "Yes."

Individuals whose lives are embedded with "a sense of urgency" that doesn't allow them to follow through with tasks soon learn that steps must be taken to reintroduce order to their lives. When this order is reintroduced, relations with self, family, friends, and co-workers improve, job performance is enhanced, and good feelings about accomplishments become evident.

Employers and instructors consider effective time management and organizational skills as good work habits. To begin managing wisely the time you spend in class or in the laboratory, to prepare for class or lab assignments at home, and to manage your life at home and school simultaneously, you need to know and to put into practice some good time management techniques.

Time Management Techniques

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Believe | As you enter your new program, believe that you are in control. You've got to keep telling yourself that life at home, at school, and on the job (if you work) is manageable. |
| Say No | You must learn to say "No." You're mature enough now to know your limitations. If you have an accounting or anatomy test next Wednesday, don't tell your friends or family members you can go to a local nightclub on Tuesday night. If you have a hard time saying "No," you need to consider delegating some of your work (in this case, your participation) to others. For example, ask your friends to invite another friend to the nightclub, explaining to them you have prior commitments. |

Ask For Help

Many adult students are scared to ask for help. They fear being seen as intrusive or dumb. Help comes in many forms so ask for it. If you're struggling with math, see your instructor or a tutor. If you need financial assistance, see your financial aid department. People all around you now are paid to help you so go to them for assistance or advice.

Prioritize

Let's say that next Thursday is the due date for a major lab assignment. The Wednesday before, however, your boss needs you to work overtime. In addition, you had planned to take your children to the local livestock arena for a reptile show. You're in a mess, so how do you handle it? Remember step one: Believe. Then ask yourself these questions: How critical is each activity or expectation? How long will it take from start to finish to fulfill each activity or expectation? What do you need to do to complete each activity or expectation? With whom to you need to deal?

Set Timetables

You can always measure how you're doing by establishing timetables. For example, take a pocket, wall, or desk calendar. Mark activity due dates appropriately. Prior to the activity due date, fill in other days with activities that will help you accomplish the mini steps that it will take to complete the big assignment.

Spend Time Wisely

While attending school, you can impress your instructor and yourself by spending time wisely. Perhaps you have each day a full hour for lunch or dinner. Why don't you eat and review notes at the same time? Why don't you ask your instructor to join you so that you have the opportunity to ask additional questions or receive clarification? Why don't you allow yourself 20 minutes for lunch or dinner and 40 additional minutes in the classroom, lab, or media center. By spending your time at school wisely, you allow yourself more time at home with family and friends.

Enjoy Free Time

Your physical and mental health well-being is key to successful school and job performance. Being too pushed for time causes stress, and too much stress can jeopardize your physical and mental states. Do yourself a favor: Prioritize, follow through, evaluate your work performed, and then enjoy some free time. Nobody will ever tell you to dismiss your friends, neglect your family, give up your golf game, or cancel your gym membership if you work hard to accomplish your academic and career goals.

But when you fail to put “first things first,” don’t be surprised if your own conscience, a friend, a family member, or your instructor tells you to go back and get control through reordering your priorities.

Your instructor will inevitably identify you as one who possesses or does not possess effective time management skills. In addition, your instructor will almost automatically recognize you as one who can assume additional responsibilities when you put into practice some of the time management strategies just depicted. To become truly organized, however, and to show others in your class how to control their lives better, consider the advice cited below.

- Assess your classwork, home, and job workload schedules weekly and then daily.
- Identify the most important things to be done.
- Review your schedule for appointments with instructors, friends, or other individuals.
- Reserve at least two to three days a week and large quantities of time (at least two hours a day) during these days to complete school assignments. If you’re following the time management strategies previously cited, you really shouldn’t need more than two hours per day, two to three days a week, to see your school work requirements to closure.
- Consider organizing your school requirements, your home responsibilities, and your job duties into an organized filing system that you can refer to and update at any time. If you don’t have access to a computer, try loose-leaf notebooks or file folders.
- Remember to arrive at school or work on or before your scheduled hour for arrival every day. Be flexible enough to work in your classroom or lab during lunch or dinner. In short, do what you have to do to be a successful student. If you miss days due to illness, make sure you see your instructors so that make-up time may be scheduled.

There are great rewards for you when you’re organized. There are great payoffs for you when you manage your time wisely. As a student and employee, you’re guaranteed to reduce your stress and receive greater satisfaction from your school and work experiences. Professionally, you will develop the image of a person who is serious about getting things done and moving on to the next challenge.

Handling Stress

Handling stress is more difficult than simply getting organized, although having strong personal organizational skills will go a long way in reducing many contributors to stress. The ability to deal with stress is more related to the makeup of your personality than to implementing a laundry list of sure-fire cures. However, you can improve on your stress management ability by remembering some important tips:

- Keep yourself organized as suggested earlier in this lesson.
- Break down large, complex tasks into manageable smaller segments, and attack them one by one. You will probably have to prioritize these segments or arrange them in some order of those that must be done sequentially.
- Sometimes there will be competing priorities. You will encounter occasions in which more than one requirement is due at the same time. These are likely to be the most stressful times, and you will just have to use your best judgment on which to attack first. Sometimes completing the easier item first will help with confidence by making progress and will help reduce stress levels.
- Don't beat up on yourself when your best isn't enough. All we can reasonably expect of others is their best effort.

Handling Change

The nature of life seems to be adapting to change. In just this century, barely one generation, we have seen transportation progress from horse-drawn carriages to supersonic airline transports and routine space shuttle flights. Communications progressed from primitive telegraphs to instant satellite-relay conversations world-wide. For most of us, personal computers simply did not exist for the first half of our lives or more. These parts of our lives have changed many times in only a relatively few years. You can expect more changes.

One of Charles Darwin's theories was "Survival of the Fittest." By this he meant the strongest of a species will survive the perils of life. If he were alive today, he might well change this theory to "Survival of the Most Adaptable." If you resist change and fail to get in line with the rest of the world, you may be left behind in the dust of those who succeed. If you view change in a positive manner and hold fast to a determination to make it work for you, you should be able to handle changes that life brings your way. Keep in mind that you will probably have to spend some time and energy, and perhaps some personal resources, to accommodate changes and come out on top. No guarantee . . . but rewards usually come to those who work for them.

MODULE 7

Organizational Skills

Suggested Activities For Module 7 ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Activity	Title	Time	Page No.
1	Personal Schedule	30	9
2	Personal Filing System	30	10
3	Managing Stress	15	11
4	Handling Change	15	12
5	Analyzing Tasks	10	13
6	Designating Priorities	15	15
7	Determining Your "Distress"	20	17
8	Workplace Survival Kit	10	20
9	How Lifestyle Affects Your Work	15	22
10	Six Ways to Cope with Stress	30	25
11	Time Management Tips	10	28
12	Helping Others Deal With Change	30-60	30
13	But I've Always Done It That Way	5-10	34
14	Make Changes or Lose Your Marbles	10-30	35

Module 7 ■ Activity 1 ■ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Activity: Personal Schedule

Materials Needed: Calendar for next six months

Directions:

1. Prepare a schedule of everything you will be doing tomorrow. This should be a very detailed list of what you will be doing and where you will be doing it throughout the day.
2. Prepare a weekly schedule for your activities and commitments during the next full week (Sunday through Saturday). You should have listed for each day all the major responsibilities that demand your time and presence, along with the times during the day for each responsibility/task. Although this list should be relatively detailed, do not include mealtimes or minor tasks that would take only a few minutes. The list for each day should contain both routine things you do each day as well as the items that are one-time events and tasks. You may be surprised how full each day will seem to be.
3. Prepare a schedule for the next six months using the same guidelines as in the schedule you just completed. This time, you will need to have a much more long-range thought process and will need to include additional items such as vacation plans and other events that occur on a non-routine basis. Did you remember to add some important school-related events such as major exams, due dates for assignments, and graduation?

**Time Required:
30 Minutes**

Module 7 ■ Activity 2 ■ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Activity: Personal Filing System (individual or group project)

Materials Needed: File folders and labels (at least 12)

Directions: Put together a filing system for the major areas of your life that require you to prepare documents, letters, and forms.

1. First, make a list of all the different pieces of paperwork you prepare or respond to. This will probably be a long list if you really "shotgun" this first step. That's OK. The next step will help put some order into this.
2. Now group these items into some logical areas such as bills, insurance, house or automobile repair, or perhaps even schoolwork. The key is to find a balance between too many or too few groupings, either of which will result in difficulty finding things you need to retrieve. You might want to divide some of these major areas into sub-groups such as bills or the different classes you attend if you include schoolwork in your filing system.
3. Finally, place labels on the folders for the groupings you have chosen. You now have a personal filing system. No doubt, if you continue to use this filing system, you will add new folders over time and may even have to reorganize the entire system.

**Time Required:
30 Minutes**

Module 7 ■ Activity 3 ■ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Activity: Managing Stress

Materials Needed: Paper, pen

Directions: Recall someone you have known who lives a very full life day to day and who has reached a major level of success. Write down the personal characteristics you see in this person. Some of these characteristics will be natural personality traits, which you might be able to emulate to some degree. Others will probably be learned behaviors, which you could choose to use in your life.

There's an old quote from a person from long ago: "Your reach should exceed your comfortable grasp." This person you recalled probably reached far to succeed and no doubt encountered some major stress along the way. The personal characteristics you wrote down helped that person overcome stress and might work for you. There's nothing wrong with trying to be like someone else, but be sure you're realistic in understanding your own limitations.

**Time Required:
15 Minutes**

Module 7 ■ Activity 4 ■ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Activity: Handling Change

Materials Needed: Paper, pen

Directions: Recall two or three major changes in your life. These may have been either positive or negative. These changes might have been "leaving the nest" (leaving home to marry and begin your own life), changing your lifestyle to accommodate the changes required by a baby, going back to school after being away from the academic environment for a long time, or other occasions that may have been traumatic or joyful.

For each of these events, write down the positive and negative factors involved in the changes encountered. Then think about how you handled each of them. You will probably see with hindsight how you may have handled some of them differently and might have even found a different change to have resulted. This exercise is not meant to cause you to have guilty feelings but should let you think about how you tend to respond to change. Some of us naturally resist change; others grasp change with open arms. Whichever person you may be, you can handle it if you stay cool and avoid impulsive actions and decisions, accept change as inevitable, and consider options to which you may have to respond.

**Time Required:
15 Minutes**

Module 7 ■ Activity 5 ■ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Activity: Analyzing Tasks for Improved Time Management

Materials Needed: Handouts/Transparency: Analyzing Activities

Directions: Using a transparency or handouts of the activity sheet, have your students read through the tasks completed by this inefficient secretary in one day. Ask them for their opinions on how time was wasted. Ask for suggestions on how time could be saved.

Some suggested answers are as follows:

1. Too many coffee breaks.
2. Too much time at lunch.
3. Similar tasks should be grouped together, such as typing, telephoning, filing, and so on.
4. Need to gather all supplies from supply cabinet at once.
5. Should not make so many personal calls on company time.
6. Too much socializing and "chatting."

**Time Required:
10 Minutes**

Module 7 ■ Activity 5 ■ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Analyzing Activities

Because you don't seem to be getting as much accomplished as you would like, you decide to analyze your activities for one day. You kept a record of your job routine and personal activities in 15-minute segments. Following is a summary of what you accomplished during the day:

- 9:00 Housekeeping chores (watered plants, straightened desk, made coffee).
- 9:15 Checked in with Mr. Bohlman; checked tickler file; checked calendar; made a trip to supply cabinet for printer paper.
- 9:30 Transcribed correspondence dictated yesterday; received two telephone calls.
- 9:45 Introduced to new employee and chatted for a few minutes; made one call for Mr. Bohlman; received one incoming call.
- 10:00 Continued transcribing.
- 10:15 Coffee break.
- 10:30 Coffee break.
- 10:45 Made two calls for Mr. Bohlman; took two incoming calls; made one personal call.
- 11:00 Proofread a report typed yesterday afternoon; received two incoming calls.
- 11:15 Retyped two pages of the report; made one call for Mr. Bohlman.
- 11:30 Continued transcribing; received two incoming calls.
- 11:45 Chatted with a visitor in to see Mr. Bohlman (He was on the telephone.).
- 12:00 Lunch (ate in a busy restaurant and didn't return to the office until 1:15).
- 1:15 Duplicated report typed yesterday; collated report; distributed report.
- 1:30 Made one call for Mr. Bohlman, took two incoming calls.
- 1:45 Typed filing labels; received one incoming call.
- 2:00 Trip to supply cabinet for new labels; chatted with co-worker.
- 2:15 Made two calls for Mr. Bohlman and one personal call.
- 2:30 Performed recordkeeping duties.
- 2:45 Continued recordkeeping; received three calls.
- 3:00 Continued transcribing tape from yesterday.
- 3:15 Coffee break.
- 3:30 Filing.
- 3:45 Transcribed tape; received one incoming call; made one call for Mr. Bohlman.
- 4:00 Trip to supply cabinet for stationery and envelopes; chatted with co-worker.
- 4:15 Session with Mr. Bohlman.
- 4:30 Made corrections on report edited by Mr. Bohlman today.
- 4:45 Filing; made two personal calls; housekeeping duties.
- 5:00 Went home.

Analyze the activities for the day and suggest some areas in which you might save time.

Module 7 ■ Activity 6 ■ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Activity: Designating Priorities

Materials Needed: Handouts/Transparency: Designating Priorities

Directions: Using a transparency or handouts of "Designating Priorities," allow the students to determine whether each item listed is a routine, rush, or ASAP situation. Directions are given on the activity sheet. Possible answers follow below (answers may vary because of interpretation). The important thing is that students understand that some tasks are more important than others.

1. Routine
2. Routine
3. ASAP or rush
4. Routine
5. Routine
6. ASAP or rush
7. ASAP or rush
8. ASAP
9. Routine
10. ASAP (broken into manageable blocks of time)

**Time Required:
15 Minutes**

Module 7 ■ Activity 6 ■ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Designating Priorities

INSTRUCTIONS: Designate priorities for the following activities. Write Routine if the activity is routine, ASAP if the activity should be done as soon as possible, and Rush if the activity should be completed immediately.

- _____ 1. Work completed with a minimum amount of effort.
- _____ 2. Activities that benefit the company.
- _____ 3. Important work.
- _____ 4. Does not require immediate attention.
- _____ 5. Socializing/attending meetings.
- _____ 6. Workers receive immediate gratification.
- _____ 7. Developing new product information.
- _____ 8. Should be done as soon as time permits.
- _____ 9. Expected, customary duties.
- _____ 10. Require considerable time to complete.

Module 7 ■ Activity 7 ■ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Activity: Determining Your "Distress"

Materials Needed: Handouts/Transparency: Symptoms of Distress

Directions: Give each student a copy of the handout. Using the rating scale on the handout, students should assign a rating to each of the symptoms listed in the activity. A chart is provided which helps students determine their stress levels.

After completing the activity, lead a discussion of ways that people can eliminate some of the "distress," or bad stress, in their lives.

**Time Required:
20 Minutes**

Module 7 ■ Activity 7 ■ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Symptoms of Distress

Answer the questions listed below according to the following scale:

Rating

- 0 I do not experience this symptom at all.
- 1 I sometimes (perhaps once a month) experience this symptom.
- 2 I experience this symptom more than once a month, but not more than once a week.
- 3 I experience this symptom often (more than once a week.)

An interpretation of the results is included on the next page.

Symptom	Rating
1. Do you experience headaches of any sort?	
2. Do you experience tension or stiffness in your neck, shoulders, jaw, arms, hands, legs, or stomach?	
3. Do you have nervous tics, or do you tremble?	
4. Do you feel your heart thumping or racing?	
5. Do you feel irregular heartbeats or does your heart skip beats?	
6. Do you have difficulty breathing at times?	
7. Do you ever get dizzy or lightheaded?	
8. Do you feel as though you have a lump in your throat or you have to clear it?	
9. Do you suffer from colds, the flu, or sinus problems?	
10. Are you bothered by indigestion, nausea, or discomfort in your stomach?	
11. Do you have diarrhea or constipation?	
12. Do you bite your nails?	
13. Do you have difficulty falling or staying asleep?	
14. Do you wake up feeling tired?	
15. Are your hands or feet cold?	
16. Do you grind or grit your teeth, or does your back ache?	
17. Are you prone to excess perspiration?	
18. Are you angry or frigid?	
19. Do you feel a lot of generalized pain (back pain, stomach pain, head pain, muscle pain, etc.)?	
20. Have you become aware of increased anxiety, worry, fidgetiness, or restlessness?	

(Hart, 1986)

Module 7 ■ Activity 7 ■ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Add your "score" and compare it to the chart attached. The total score will be somewhere between zero and sixty. The higher the score, the greater your level of stress.

Total	Interpretation
0-10	No stress. Are you sure you are alive?
11-20	Mild stress. You are basically healthy but occasionally bothered by stressful life events.
21-30	Moderate stress. You should be concerned about your life pressures and how you handle them.
31-40	Severe stress. Your life is out of control, and you probably need professional help.
41-60	Dangerous stress levels. You need immediate help.



Module 7 ■ Activity 8 ■ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Activity: Workplace Survival Kit

Materials Needed: One of each of the following for each student: Ziploc bags, toothpicks, lollipops, rubber bands, paper clips, caramel candies, sticks of gum, pieces of string, straight pins, buttons, pennies, and copies of the handout entitled "Workplace Survival Kit."

Directions: Before class begins, insert one of each of the materials listed into the ziploc bags. Cut the handouts into three slips and insert one slip into each bag.

Explain that the kit will help them be successful. Ask the students to open the bag and look at the items as you discuss each one.

**Time Required:
10 Minutes**

Module 7 ■ Activity 8 ■ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Workplace Survival Kit

A TOOTHPICK to remind you not to be too picky.
A LOLLIPOP to help you lick your problems.
A RUBBER BAND to help you be more flexible.
A PAPER CLIP to help you hold things together.
A CAMEL to help you be sweet and thoughtful to others.
A STICK OF GUM to give you "stick-to-it-iveness."
A PIECE OF STRING to help you tie up loose ends.
A PIN to help you pinpoint problems so that you can deal with them.
A BUTTON to remind you to not let other people "push your button" unnecessarily.
A PENNY so you will have enough "cents" to realize what a valuable person you are and what you can contribute to your job.

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Module 7 ■ Activity 9 ■ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Activity: How Lifestyle Affects Your Work

Materials Needed: Handouts/Transparency: How Lifestyle Affects Your Work

Directions: After a discussion of the materials, have students complete the checklist on "Your Lifestyle and Stress."

**Time Required:
15 Minutes**

Module 7 ■ Activity 9 ■ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

How Lifestyle Affects Your Work

A lifestyle is made up of the habits and activities that you develop for day-to-day living. It includes what you eat, when and how long you sleep, and other daily activities. Physicians and other scientists know that your lifestyle can affect the amount of stress in your daily life. Dr. Peter Hanson, physician and lecturer on stress, points out that stress affects your health and emotions. Many of the reasons people miss work are directly related to their lifestyle. Here are some ways you can mold your lifestyle to increase your success at work.

- ◆ **Get a Good Night's Sleep.** Most people need 6 to 8 hours of sleep each night. Your body rests better when you sleep on a regular schedule. Many young people make the mistake of going to parties or other social activities on work nights. This can result in less sleep. Then they often skip work the next morning or wake up late for work. Not having enough sleep will lower your energy level on the job. You will not work as efficiently or enthusiastically without sufficient sleep.
- ◆ **Eat Well.** Eat well-balanced meals on a regular schedule and avoid too much junk food. Consume plenty of fruits and vegetables. You are less likely to be ill when you have good eating habits.
- ◆ **Exercise Regularly.** The majority of jobs in the U.S. are service and information-related jobs and don't require much exercise. Regular exercise keeps a person in top physical and mental condition and aids the release of job-related stress.
- ◆ **Avoid Smoking.** A Robert Half International survey reports that one in four employers will reject a smoker who is competing for a job against an equally qualified non-smoker. There is plenty of medical evidence to prove smoking is hazardous to both smokers and non-smokers. Many organizations offer incentives and help for employees who want to stop smoking.
- ◆ **Avoid Excessive Alcohol Consumption.** Alcohol can cause health problems. The more alcohol you drink, the more you may damage your body. Drinking to excess will reduce your performance on the job the next day. Drinking during or right before work is often cause for dismissal.
- ◆ **Avoid Drugs.** Illegal drugs are harmful to the body and mind. You should not take any drugs unless specifically prescribed for you by a physician. Policies about illegal drug use vary among organizations. If you test positive for certain drugs, some organizations give you a choice of entering a rehabilitation program or being fired. Other employers will simply fire you outright.
- ◆ **Keep Good Company.** Your relationships can affect your work. For instance, if your friends don't work, they may want you to adapt to their schedule which may make you too tired for work the next day. If a conflict like this occurs, you need to establish a priority for work and social activities. Avoid people who may get you into trouble with the law. Employers do not appreciate workers who miss work because they are in jail. In fact, you could get fired for missing work for that reason if your employer finds out. Many people make friends and socialize with other employed people to avoid such problems.

Module 7 ■ Activity 9 ■ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

- ◆ **Socializing with Co-workers.** Socializing means participating in activities with other people. We all need time to socialize with friends and acquaintances. Our co-workers often become our best friends because we spend so much time with them. Relationships with co-workers can be very positive or quickly turn sour. Here are guidelines to help you avoid problems in the work relationships.
- ◆ **Avoid romances with co-workers.** They can make relationships with other co-workers awkward and often create an unpleasant situation when the romance ends.
- ◆ **Don't limit friendships to just co-workers.** One thing that can happen when you socialize with co-workers is that you spend a lot of time talking about work. You need to mentally get away from your job to reduce stress. This means not talking or even thinking about the job.
- ◆ **Don't let friendships with co-workers interfere with your work performance.** Don't do someone else's work to cover for their inability or laziness. Don't side with a friend against another worker or supervisor. Try to be neutral in work relationships.

Your Lifestyle and Stress

A moderate lifestyle will serve you well throughout your life. Moderation is avoiding excess. Rate your lifestyle using the following checklist. Check each statement that is true for you. Then, score your answers to see how you measure up to good lifestyle habits that can make you a better worker.

I do something really fun on a regular basis.

I avoid eating lots of junk food.

I rarely drink to excess.

I don't smoke.

I exercise regularly.

I average 6 to 8 hours of sleep on work nights.

I have friends I can rely on.

I do not use illegal drugs.

I gain strength from my religious beliefs.

I eat at least one well-balanced meal daily.

Count the numbers of statements you checked. Score yourself using the following guidelines.

8 or more: Reflects a positive lifestyle; effective on the job. **6 to 7:** Reflects moderate lifestyle; will assist you on the job. **5 or Less:** Reflects a vulnerable lifestyle; you may find your lifestyle may cause some job problems.

Module 7 ■ Activity 10 ■ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Activity: Six Ways to Cope with Stress

Materials Needed: Handouts/Transparency: "Six Ways to Cope with Stress"

Directions: Give out handout on Day 1. Instruct students to read through the first 5 ways to cope with stress for the next day. Tell them to be prepared to give examples how they personally could put into practice the recommendation.

Day 2: Spend 10 minutes having students give a sampling of their ideas for the first 5 tips. Instruct students to do the same for Tips 6-10 for the following day.

Day 3: Spend 10 minutes having students share their ideas about these tips.

On the last day of the week that this activity is used, have students write the tips that they remember, noting the ones that they think would help them the most personally.

**Time Required:
10 Minutes per
day for 3 days**

Module 7 ■ Activity 10 ■ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Six Ways to Cope with Stress

Two points about the six ways to cope with stress: (1) These changes you can make may also help with panic disorder and panic attacks. (2) Don't expect instant results. You *might* feel instant results. You might feel instant results after, for example, taking a long walk. However, most times, it's the long-term results you'll be seeking. So, stick with it, and notice how you feel over time.

1) Exercise regularly

Remember: stress is your body's reaction to change. It is an **internal** reaction although external factors (i.e. work pressures) may **trigger** stress. Exercise can help your body release pent-up stress. It will also make your body stronger and better able to cope with the ongoing stress. The best exercise for improving the way your body reacts to stress is aerobic. You have many options for aerobic exercising, from walking to racquetball. Some people with panic attacks. Indeed, as your heart rate increases and you begin to sweat, you may **feel** as if a panic attack is starting. My advice? Start slowly! Try **walking** a little bit everyday, at first. Personally, I think exercising is a good way to help yourself distinguish between a panic attack and those "false alarms" many of us experience. Of course, always check with your doctor before starting any exercise regimen.

2) Relaxation

Relaxation is mental and physical, but you'd be surprised how quickly your mind can relax if you can make your body truly relaxed. And, many of us don't know what actual relaxation feels like. My favorite kind of relaxation is **progressive muscle relaxation**. In this exercise, you systematically tense a muscle group in your body, holding the tension for about ten seconds, and then releasing the tension for another ten seconds. The contrast is a great way to teach yourself the difference between feeling tense and relaxed.

Relaxation exercise **must** be practiced, preferably once a day. It only takes twenty minutes (even less as you become more familiar with the exercise). If you practice relaxation exercise regularly, you will begin to feel more relaxed in general (not just after the exercise) over time. In addition, you will be better able to perform "mini" relaxation exercises throughout the day when you really need it.

3) Sleep Well

Not getting enough **quality** sleep can make your body extremely vulnerable to stress. If you have difficulty getting to sleep each night or staying asleep, you may have a sleep

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disorder. If you feel exhausted all day or if you actually fall asleep at unexpected times during the day, you may have a sleep disorder. You may be causing yourself problems if you don't get the correct amount of sleep for you.

If at all possible (and you might want to seriously think about **making** it possible), try to sleep the same hours **every night—including weekends**. Basically, you cannot catch up on sleep, so don't try to cut yourself short on week nights and then make it up on the weekend. Also, your body likes cycles (remember—it reacts to change). Here's one cycle you have control over: your sleep. Start by getting up at the same time each morning, and adjust your bed time as needed until you have a regular schedule. It may be rough for a week or two, but it will ultimately help. Insomnia can even be cured by sticking to a regular sleep schedule.

4) Laugh It Up

You probably don't need to be reminded that laughter can release stress—but you may need to be reminded to **do it more often!** Don't wait for humor to come to you. Sit down (right now!) and think about what makes **you** laugh. It's an individual thing, you know. Maybe you feel like you're wasting time by watching **The Simpsons** every week, but it's therapy!

5) Make Time for Fun

Somewhat related to #4, this suggestion is to give yourself some leisure time. Doing this is not always easy. However, you need to do it. Again, you need to sit down and decide what is leisure for **you**. Whatever activity you choose, you **must** do it regularly, and you **must not** feel guilty for taking the time to do it. Explore a **hobby**, play soccer with your kids, take a **drawing** class, walk in the woods . . . anything. Just devote a little time to yourself (not something you don't enjoy). You needn't spend a lot of money, and you needn't make excuses to anyone for being good to yourself.

6) Change Your Diet

There are a number of different dietary changes you can make that may help your body cope with stress. **Consider eliminating caffeine** (or, at least, reducing the amount you consume). Caffeine is a drug, and it is a stimulant. As a stimulant, caffeine can actually cause your body to react as it would to stress. Therefore, your body can be more sensitive to actual changes in your life and less able to cope with them. Like any drug, it affects each person differently, so only you can decide if you need to eliminate it. If you do decide to eliminate caffeine, do so gradually. As with any drug, you could experience withdrawal symptoms if you quit too quickly. Another good reason for reducing caffeine consumption is that caffeine may cause panic attacks in some people.

Another stimulant you may want to avoid is nicotine. If you smoke, you might consider how this drug is affecting you.

Module 7 ■ Activity 11 ■ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Activity: Time Management Tips

Materials Needed: Handouts/Transparency: "Time Management Tips"

Directions: Using either a transparency (or handouts) of the activity, discuss with students the tips to better time management.

**Time Required:
10 Minutes**

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Time Management Tips

- ◆ Plan for rewards after unpleasant tasks.
- ◆ Do the most unpleasant tasks first.
- ◆ Learn to say no.
- ◆ Plan for change (involve others and ask for help if needed).
- ◆ If you are too busy, ask, "What is essential?"
- ◆ When you are indecisive or unsure, remember that you can rarely be 100 percent sure.
- ◆ Waiting is inevitable; plan for it.
- ◆ Let someone else do when possible (delegate).
- ◆ Finish fully. It leaves you energized and motivated.
- ◆ Do one thing at a time.
- ◆ Watch out for the TYRANNY of the urgent!
- ◆ Let others make the smaller decisions.
- ◆ Model, ask, and observe.
- ◆ Planning for one minute saves four or five minutes in the execution of a task.
- ◆ Once you have found the extra time, enjoy it!

—Derived from Twenty Active Training Programs, Mel Silberman; Pfeiffer Company, 1992, p. 270.

Module 7 ■ Activity 12 ■ ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Activity: Helping Others Deal With Change

Materials Needed: Flipchart or marker board and markers, copy of Helping Others Deal With Change Handout for each participant, copy of the Helping Others Deal With Change Scenarios for each participant

Directions:

1. Tell participants that effective leaders are comfortable with change; in fact, they expect change to lead to opportunities that initiate further change. They learn from changes they made in the past and apply their experiences to future changes. Say that a good leader must be ready to help others embrace change in order to find innovative means of planning and implementing the change. Explain that the activity consists of a discussion of how leaders can help others overcome their natural resistance to change. Urge everyone to participate fully to gain the most benefit.
2. Ask participants to think back to a recent time when they observed others who were facing an unwanted change. Ask them to reflect on what those people did, for better or for worse. Ask whether there was resistance and for what possible reasons. List their answers on the flip chart.
3. Ask participants to recall a time when they had to make a change themselves. How did they introduce the change to their followers? Ask them to list what did and did not work during the introduction of the change while you list their comments on the flip chart under "worked" and "did not work."
4. Give each participant a copy of the *Helping Others Deal with Change* Handout. Give them time to read the handout and then lead a discussion, using examples from your own experience. First, describe a situation in which a leader neglected to follow all of the outlined steps and thus the followers' reactions were not positive. Then give an example of a smooth and effective change process in which all or most of the steps were followed.
5. Have participants share some of their own experiences in which using the steps has led to successful results.

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6. Form small groups, distribute *the Helping Others Deal with Change Scenarios*, and tell the groups to discuss how they would help their followers deal with each scenario.
7. After fifteen minutes, solicit suggestions from the groups and list them on the flip chart.
8. Discuss with the entire group how to use the ideas from the handouts and flip chart when leading others through a change.

**Time Required:
30-60 Minutes**

—Source: *101 Great Games and Activities*, Arthur VanGundy, Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer, 1998.

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Helping Others Deal with Change Handout

Instructions: Review the following steps for working with people and overcoming their resistance to change. Think of times when you have used these steps yourself or witnessed their use with others. Be prepared to share these experiences in some detail with the group and to suggest ways to use this list in the present change situation.

- 1. Set the stage for change by sharing personal experiences involving change.**
- 2. Provide a history of the anticipated change and the present situation, give reasons for any changes, and outline the benefits of the change for the organization.**
- 3. Help individuals to see the potential impact of the change by listing the skills and experiences they currently possess and the skills they will need to acquire in the future. Listen carefully to their questions and concerns.**
- 4. Tell people what will *not* be changed.**
- 5. List pros and cons associated with the change, identifying inhibiting forces against the change and positive forces for the change.**
- 6. Agree what resources and strategies will be needed for change. List the necessary activities and decide on a timetable.**
- 7. Celebrate by confirming the partnership for the change. Acknowledge and thank individuals for their cooperation.**

—Source: 101 Great Games and Activities, Arthur VanGundy, Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer, 1998.

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Helping Others Deal with Change Scenarios

Instructions: Discuss how you would help your followers to deal with change in each of the following situations. Be as specific as possible. Be prepared to discuss your suggestions.

1. Your department must be downsized by 5 percent.
2. Your company plans to move from a manual to a computer invoicing system.
3. Your plant is changing from a team manufacturing process in which each employee does one part of the whole assembly process to an individual process in which each employee assembles an entire product.
4. Your top client has chosen to sign with a competitor and 25 percent of sales must be replaced.
5. Your company is moving from a supervisory management system to a team system.

—Source: 101 Great Games and Activities, Arthur VanGundy, Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer, 1998.

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Activity: But I've Always Done It That Way

Materials Needed: Participants who are wearing coats or jackets

Directions: Ask one or more participants (e.g., all those wearing a suit coat, sports jacket, or even a windbreaker or cardigan sweater) to stand and remove their coats. Ask them to put the coats on, noting which arm goes in first. Next, ask them to take the coats off again, and put them on this time by putting the other arm in first.

Follow-Up Discussion:
(Answers may vary.)

1. How did it feel to reverse your normal pattern of donning your jacket? (How did it look to observers who were watching?)
2. Why was it so tough (awkward) to do?
3. What prevents us from adopting new ways of doing things? How can we make changes without old habits interfering with them?
4. How can we open ourselves to change within the program, and accept the fact that there may be equally effective (or better) ways to accomplish our tasks than we've used before?

Points to Bring Out During Discussion:

- ◆ How easy it is to develop and continue using unconscious habits.
- ◆ There are often equally effective alternative ways to accomplish an objective.
- ◆ Old ways of doing things may interfere with our acquisition of new behaviors, and therefore require "unlearning" first.

**Time Required:
5-10 Minutes**

—Source: *The Big Book of Presentation Games*, Edward Scannell and John Newstrom, McGraw-Hill, 1998.

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Activity: Make Changes or Lose Your Marbles!

Materials Needed: Ten to twelve marbles (or beads or checkers) in two different colors for each team; an empty box or container to hold all the marbles; a paper bag, a blank sheet of paper, and a pencil for each team.

Directions:

1. Place approximately ten to twelve marbles (or beads or checkers) times the number of teams in an empty box or container.
2. Instruct participants to form teams of up to five members each (the minimum number of teams required is two). Explain that teams will compete against each other in sets of two (or three) teams.
3. Distribute a blank sheet of paper, a pencil, and a paper bag to each participating team.

Explain that teams will predict the selection of marble sets from their opponents based on preliminary data. The resulting information may change as acquisitions occur, and each team will be given a brief period of time between plays to discuss decisions. Teams may use the paper and pencils to take notes during play.

4. One at a time, have each team choose eight marbles, in any color combination, from the large container. Each team will place the selected marbles in its own paper bag. One team will then tell the other competing team the number and color of the marbles in its bag; for example, "five red and three black." One team will be selected from each competing set of two to three groups to start the activity. Explain that each team, in turn, is to draw two marbles at a time from the other team's bag, but first it must predict the colors that will be drawn. Team members may discuss their strategy before proceeding with the next play. If a guess is wrong, the marbles are returned to the opposing team's bag. If the guess is correct, the guessing team keeps the marbles it drew and adds them to its own bag. Explain that a team must win all the other team's marbles in order to win the game, or the facilitator may determine a set time of play with

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the winning team being the one that possesses the most marbles at the end of the allotted time.

5. Signal for the activity to begin. Stop play at the predetermined time or when the first team acquires all of its opponent's marbles. Announce the winning team.

Follow-Up Discussion: (Answers May Vary)

This game deals with probability: the understanding of chance, greater or lesser likelihood, necessity, impossibility and equal odds.

- ◆ How did teams decide what predictions to make?
- ◆ How can we use this type of information (probability) in judging what risks to take?
- ◆ What effect did the changing composition of marbles have on your decision-making strategy?
- ◆ How can we relate this to change that occurs in the workplace? (*conditions, change, flexibility needed, review of current situations in terms of past, etc.*)

**Time Required:
10-30 Minutes**

—Source: *Working Together*, Lorraine L. Ukens, Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer, 1997.