

# Managing Priorities, Not Just Time

By Clay Frost

A quick Google search for “Time Management” will bring up over 5 **billion** results. Billion, with a B. It seems that managing our time effectively is something that we’re all striving to do better. That may have something to do with a culture of serious FOMO. How often have you heard (or said) something that made you feel like this: “I have to learn how to manage my time or I’ll never get enough done and then I’ll waste so much of my time and never be successful!”



We have an obsession with getting things done. This quantity over quality mindset can leave us and our athletes feeling frustrated and burnt out. There is a better way. That better way is Priority Management.

How many times have you seen your wrestlers just go through the motions?

How many times have you seen them go to training or a match just to check a box?

Have you ever seen your wrestlers get sluggish?

Have you seen your wrestlers not deal well with adversity?

They are putting in the time, doing the things they are supposed to be doing, and not seeing the results. Why? Because they’re not using that time to handle the right priorities.

If Time Management (TM) is making a plan for how you are going to use your time and successful TM is sticking to that schedule; Priority Management (PM) is deciding what tasks/projects will make the greatest impact on your goals and successful PM is completing those tasks/projects before moving onto anything else.

Let's talk about where TM goes wrong. Focusing on TM can drive a poor mindset. I'll tell you why, there are three main reasons:

1. When you are constantly worried about TM, you are concerned with getting things done, which means the quality of the work can drop. You'll move on without making sure your task has been effective in its intended goal.
2. Focusing on TM keeps the mind looking forward to the next thing which means you can never really keep your focus on the present moment! When our minds are anywhere else other than the present moment our ability to perform at our very best drops and our performance will take a hit!
3. TM can become outcome oriented. When we deal with time, we are just checking off boxes and just checking off boxes leads to a mindset that is concerned more with getting results rather than getting better. This will drive anxiety and pressure up, which is unsustainable in the long-term.

Here is why putting your focus into the idea of Priority Management can help your athlete make some great changes:

1. PM helps you get the most important things done first. Instead of your athlete checking off boxes when they go to practice, they can actually work on the skill they are struggling with until they get it or until they are physically/mentally exhausted. When this happens, with good coaching and good instruction, athletes improve at significantly faster rates.
2. PM will keep your athlete engaged in the process of getting better. If your athlete wants to win, help them see what they should focus on so that they can start winning. This doesn't necessarily mean that they should focus exclusively on their weaknesses, but whatever will make the biggest impact on their improvement should be their #1 priority.
3. PM will help your athlete develop the mental skill of focus. When they are training solely based on priority, their ability to focus can grow to new heights as they do their best to

stay engaged and concentrated on their priorities.

Priority Management is driven by the concept of Deliberate Practice. Deliberate practice is a unique type of practice that is purposeful and efficient. While regular practice usually includes mindless repetitions, deliberate practice requires focused attention and has the specific goal of improving performance.

If your athletes focus on their priorities, not just the time they are putting in, they will feel less anxiety and pressure and they will start to wrestle better because they are focused on improving.

Managing your time means getting things done, managing your priorities means getting the most important things done first.

### **About the author:**

Clay Frost is a mental training expert. His mission is to help elite athletes that are looking to level up to make their minds into their greatest weapon so that they can perform at their best. He grew up wrestling in Utah but unfortunately spent 14 of his 16-year wrestling career dealing with one injury after another. He thought that his injuries derailed a promising career. Instead, they helped him find the path to an extremely rewarding career in mental training. He is excited to give back to the USA Wrestling community through the newsletter. If you'd like to contact Clay or have any questions, his email is [Clay@frostcg.com](mailto:Clay@frostcg.com) or you can text him at 801-860-2267.



For more tips on how to help your athlete level-up, [Click here to check out awesome mental training resources!](#) If you're ready to help your athletes make their mind their greatest weapon, you can [schedule a free 1-on-1 mental training strategy session with Clay.](#)