

# SMART DRIVER<sup>®</sup> August 2020

## Time Management

Time management is an essential skill for any professional driver. Managing your available driving and work hours can be challenging, especially when dealing with forces outside of your control, like the weather or delays at a shipper or receiver. Skillful time management can save you precious time and reduce stress. Read the information below and ask yourself if there are actions you can take to improve your time management skills.

### TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS

#### OPTIMIZE DRIVING TIME

Get the most out of your available driving time by trying these time management tips:

- Plan routes to avoid rush hour and areas of high traffic congestion, like city streets.
- Use a GPS that is DOT-compliant to find the fastest, most direct routes to avoid wasting time and fuel.
- Budget time to allow for unexpected delays, like traffic, bad weather, loading and unloading, etc.
- Plan ahead to find and reserve a parking spot.
- Get to your appointments early and try to get loaded or unloaded ahead of schedule.

#### FOCUS ON HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Keeping yourself in good health can go a long way to helping you work more efficiently. Lost time due to burnout, illness, or fatigue can throw your schedule off. Try these health and wellness tips:

- Get plenty of quality rest by blocking out noise and light while in the sleeper.
- Avoid heavy meals, like burgers and fries, which can zap your energy.
- Exercise regularly. Try walking or jogging around the truck

during stops or doing calisthenics.

- Go to bed early so you can leave early the next morning.

#### AVOID UNPRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES

Using downtime wisely during stops is important to keep on schedule. For example:

- Do not get distracted during stops with social media, games, or idle chitchat that can cause you to lose track of time. Save these activities for your off-duty time.
- Never talk/text on the phone while driving. Pull over in a safe place to return calls, but be mindful this can slow you down. Instead, establish a call-in schedule with work and family. Instruct them to call only during scheduled stops unless it is an emergency.
- Use down time during stops to inspect the truck, finish paperwork, or get ready for the next leg of your trip.
- Arrange for traffic control and spotters in advance to reduce delays when you arrive at a location.

#### USE HOME TIME EFFICIENTLY

Home time is precious. This is your time to be with family and friends, and rest. Managing your home time is key to work-life balance. Try these tips:

- Finish chores you have procrastinated completing. Your spouse will appreciate the help and make your absence tolerable.
- Make family time a priority. Try to make your sleep schedule on the road similar to that of your family so that when you are home, you are awake and can enjoy time together.
- Resolve any conflicts before heading out on the road. Mental distractions affect your decision-making and can lead to unscheduled stops on the road to address issues.

*Note: These lists are not intended to be all-inclusive.*

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# Knowledge Verification

Driver's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Emp/Unit #: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please answer, and forward a completed copy to your Safety Department/Safety Representative.*

1. Keeping good health habits helps you be more efficient.
2. Unproductive activities interfere with good time management.
3. Resolving home conflicts before going back out on the road is best.
4. Drivers who always drive the same route do not need to plan ahead.

☐ True ☐ False

☐ True ☐ False

☐ True ☐ False

☐ True ☐ False

Answers:  
1. True  
2. True  
3. True  
4. False



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