



MGT 101: Introduction to Managing & Organizing

Screen Time Intervention

Dr. Thomas Ptashnik

Setting up today's activity

"the PRICE of
ANYTHING is
the AMOUNT
of LIFE you
EXCHANGE
for IT."

HENRY DAVID THOREAU
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Setting up today's activity

- Smartphones and social media are now a routine part of daily life
- For all their connectivity and convenience, they quietly consume far more time than most of us realize
- In the US, researchers¹ have found that college students typically spend **6 hours and 52 minutes per day** on their phones, most of that time on social media
- Over a year, this amounts to **105 full days**
 - Often spent in tiny intervals: a few minutes in line, between tasks, or whenever attention wavers

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Setting up today's activity

- The opportunity cost is not simply time on a screen
- It is what that time displaces
 - Deep focus, sleep, movement, face-to-face connection, & sustained engagement in work that matters
- Research on mental health effects is nuanced, but higher or more intense social media use is consistently linked (on average) with worse outcomes for sleep and mental health in young people in large research syntheses

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The origin of today's activity

- Developed by an undergraduate student at PC after experiencing this challenge firsthand
- During a strong summer internship, she noticed her performance slipping relative to a consistently excelling peer
 - Noticed that when bored or stuck, she reflexively reached for her phone and scrolled
- Those brief, frequent scrolling moments accumulated over time and quietly eroded her performance and the opportunity she had worked hard to secure
- She deleted social media apps and created this activity to help others spot the pattern earlier and make more deliberate choices before the costs add up



Intention of today's activity

- The intention of this activity is not to radically transform your life in one week
- It is to nudge you toward more conscious choices
 - Small, repeatable actions that build positive momentum
- Hopefully, this greater self-awareness and self-management can create positive momentum that leads to meaningful change in your life



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Individual activity

- Go to www.thenoticingproject.org
- Navigate to the Screen Time Intervention page
- Complete Part 1 before looking at your phone data
- Submit all three parts
 - Be prepared to share with your group and the class
 - Set the email reminder for one week (default)

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Share with your table

- Who had the highest screen time?
- How far off were your self-ratings and actual numbers?
- What are some small changes you came up with?

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Class discussion

- What surprised you the most about your scores?
- At what point do you think being on your phone impedes your ability to reach your potential and be the type of person/student you want to be?
- What was the most effective strategy you heard?

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Screen Time Intervention— Follow Up

Dr. Thomas Ptashnik

Individual activity

- Go to www.thenoticingproject.org
- Navigate to the Screen Time Intervention page
- Submit the follow-up and be prepared to share with the class

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Class discussion

- Who's screen time went down since last week?
- What behavioral or mindset change were you effectively able to implement?

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Closing thoughts

“Our attention is all we have, and where we choose to direct it is ultimately how we spend our lives. It’s not that we are choosing incorrectly by looking at screens; it is that we are not choosing at all. We have surrendered these choices to others—corporations, software engineers, content creators, followers. We are now riding in the backseat of our lives. Or, at least, you are. I was too, until I realized I had a choice.”

—August Lamm

