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How Good Are You at Time Management?

By MICHAEL GONCHAR



Kirsten Luce for The New York Times

Bashir Mason, the youngest Division I men's basketball head coach in the nation, also teaches elementary students at the Petrides School in Staten Island, N.Y. [Go to related article »](#)

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Little children don't have to worry about managing their time. Others manage it for them — steering them from playtime to naptime and back to more playing. But as we get older, we have more responsibilities. And one of the keys to success in high school and beyond is learning how to manage our limited time so we accomplish everything we need to get done.

¶ *How good are you at time management?*

¶ In "[A Lesson in Time Management for a Wagner Coach](#)," Zach Schonbrun writes about Bashir Mason, the youngest Division I men's basketball head coach in the nation, who also teaches elementary school students five mornings a week.

¶ The first-grade students at Public School 80 entered Room 108 single file at 8:10 on a clear and blustery morning on Staten Island, placed their book bags in cubbyholes and waited. It was time for Bashir Mason to check their homework.

¶ Sunlight still angled in through the windows, the voices were low and the announcements had not yet been read over the speaker system. "Look," a student said, "look at my new pencil case."

¶ Mason smiled. He had been awake since 6, and he never drinks caffeine, but a long day beckoned.

¶ He is a student teacher, in the final semester of a master's program in education, but in a couple of hours he would resume his more celebrated role as the men's basketball coach at Wagner College, a five-minute uphill drive away. Practices have been under way for more than two weeks to prepare for a menacing Northeast Conference schedule. The Seahawks expect to compete this season, maybe even win their conference, maybe even clinch a berth in the N.C.A.A. tournament.

¶ But first, their coach needed to read to the children. The classroom was decorated with apples made of construction paper. Two dozen students crawled onto a rug with a zoo theme, taking their spots upon designated animals. Mason folded his 6-foot frame into a rocking chair. He spread the pages of the book wide so the children could see the pictures.

¶ "Frog and Toad were reading a book together," Mason began.

¶ It takes Mason 15 minutes to make the switch from a student teacher to a Division I coach. That is all the time he is afforded.

¶ **Students:** Read the entire article, then tell us ...

- How good are you at time management?
- Do you easily get distracted, feel lazy or tend to procrastinate? Or are you a disciplined person who does what you need to when you need to do it? Explain.
- What strategies do you use to keep yourself focused on achieving your goals?