



Time Management : The Need of the Time

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ABSTRACT

Time is a special resource that you cannot store or save for later use. Everyone has the exact same amount of time each day. Time not well used cannot be retrieved. Most people feel like they have too much to do and not enough time. Some blame lack of time for their poor finances, unachieved goals, stress, bad relationships and not exercising their body. Wise time management can help you find the time for what you desire to do or need to do. Through right time management, you can "create" the time you need, and not just wait for it to come. By planning your time wisely, you can spend more of time doing things that are important and valuable. This paper highlights the points that can assist a person to manage the time effectively and productively.

KEYWORDS: Concept, Dos & DON'Ts, Tips, Effective Time Management

Time management is the act or process of planning and exercising conscious control over the amount of time spent on specific activities, especially to increase effectiveness, efficiency or productivity. Time management may be aided by a range of skills, tools, and techniques used to manage time when accomplishing specific tasks, projects and goals complying with a due date. This set encompasses a wide scope of activities, and these include planning, allocating, setting goals, delegation, analysis of time spent, monitoring, organizing, scheduling, and prioritizing. Initially, time management referred to just business or work activities, but eventually the term broadened to include personal activities as well. A time management system is a designed combination of processes, tools, techniques, and methods. Usually time management is a necessity in any project development as it determines the project completion time and scope. Time management also covers how to eliminate tasks that don't provide the individual or organization value. This is done in various ways,

Setting Personal Goals

Do you know where you'd like to be in six months? What about this time next year, or even 10 years from now? If not, it's time to set some personal goals! Personal goal setting is essential to managing your time well, because goals give you a destination and vision to work toward. When you know where you want to go, you can manage your priorities, time, and resources to get there. Goals also help you decide what's worth spending your time on, and what's just a distraction. Learn how to set clearly defined goals that will keep you motivated.

Task list

A task list (also to-do list or things-to-do) is a list of tasks to be completed, such as chores or steps toward completing a project. It is an inventory tool which serves as an alternative or supplement to memory. Task lists are used in self-management, grocery lists, business management, project management, and software development. It may involve more than one list. When one of the items on a task list is accomplished, the task is checked or crossed off. The traditional method is to write these on a piece of paper with a pen or pencil, usually on a note pad or clipboard.

Scheduling Tasks

Are you a morning person? Or do you find your energy picking up once the sun begins to set in the evening? All of us have different rhythms, that is, different times of day when we feel most productive and energetic. You can make best use of your time by scheduling high-value work during your peak time, and low-energy work (like returning phone calls and checking email), during your "down" time.

Management Distractions

Do you know that some of us can lose as much as two hours a day to distractions? Think how much you could get done if you had that time back! Whether they come from emails, chats, colleagues in a crisis, or phone calls from clients, distractions prevent us from achieving flow, which is the satisfying and seemingly effortless work that we do when we're 100 percent engaged in a task. If you want to gain control of your

day and do your best work, it's vital to know how to minimize distractions and manage interruptions effectively. For instance, turn off your chat when you need to focus, and let people know if they're distracting you too often. You should also learn how to improve your concentration, even when you're faced with distractions.

Avoid Procrastination

Procrastination occurs when you put off tasks that you should be focusing on right now. When you procrastinate, you feel guilty that you haven't started; you come to dread doing the task; and, eventually, everything catches up with you when you fail to complete the work on time. For instance, one useful strategy is to tell yourself that you're only going to start on a project for ten minutes. Often, procrastinators feel that they have to complete a task from start to finish, and this high expectation makes them feel overwhelmed and anxious. Instead, focus on devoting a small amount of time to starting. That's all! You might also find it helpful to use Action Plans. These help you break large projects down into manageable steps, so that it's easy to see everything that you need to get done, and so that you can complete small chunks at a time. Doing this can stop you from feeling overwhelmed at the start of a new project.

Are you "Busy"?!!!

Some people get a rush from being busy. The narrowly-met deadlines, the endless emails, the piles of files needing attention on the desk, the frantic race to the meeting... What an adrenaline buzz! The problem is that an "addiction to busyness" rarely means that you're effective, and it can lead to stress. Instead, try to slow down, and learn to manage your time better.

Get Rid of Multitasking

To get on top of her workload, a person regularly writes emails while she chats on the phone to his/her clients. However, while he/she thinks that this is a good use of his/her time, the truth is that it can take 20-40 percent more time to finish a list of jobs when you multitask, compared with completing the same list of tasks in sequence. The result is also that he/she does both tasks poorly – his/her emails are full of errors, and his/her clients are frustrated by his/her lack of concentration. So, the best thing is to forget about multitasking, and, instead, focus on one task at a time. That way, you'll produce higher quality work.

Take Breaks

It's nice to think that you can work for 8-10 hours straight, especially when you're working to a deadline. But it's impossible for anyone to focus and produce really high-quality work without giving their brains some time to rest and recharge. So, don't dismiss breaks as "wasting time." They provide valuable down-time, which will enable you to think creatively and work effectively. If it's hard for you to stop working, then schedule breaks for yourself, or set an alarm as a reminder. Go for a quick walk, grab a cup of coffee, or just sit and meditate at your desk. Try to take a five minute break every hour or two. And make sure that you give yourself ample time for lunch. You won't produce top quality work if you're hungry!

Avoid Taking too Much

Are you a person who has a hard time saying “no” to people? If so, you probably have far too many projects and commitments on your plate. This can lead to poor performance, stress, and low morale. Or, you might be a micromanager: someone who insists on controlling or doing all of the work themselves, because they can’t trust anyone else to do it correctly. (This can be a problem for everyone - not just managers!). Both way, taking on too much is a poor use of your time, and it can get you a reputation for producing rushed, sloppy work. To stop this, learn the subtle art of saying “yes” to the person, but “no” to the task. This skill helps you assert yourself, while still maintaining good feelings within the group. If the other person starts leaning on you to say “yes” to their request, learn how to think on your feet, and stay cool under pressure.

Try the Eisenhower Method



Figure 2

All tasks are evaluated using the criteria important/unimportant and urgent/not urgent and put in according quadrants. Tasks in unimportant/not urgent are dropped, tasks in important/urgent are done immediately and personally, tasks in unimportant/urgent are delegated and tasks in important/not urgent get an end date and are done personally. This method is said to have been used by U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, and is outlined in a quote attributed to him:

“What is important is seldom urgent and what is urgent is seldom important.”

Know your values

Begin managing time from a bigger picture. Instead of thinking in minutes or hours, view your life as a whole. Consider what that expanse of time is all about. Write a short mission statement for your life - a paragraph that describes your values and the kind of life you want to lead. Periodically during the day, stop to ask if what you’re doing is contributing to that life.

Forget About Time

Schedule “down time” every day - a period when you’re accountable to no one and have nothing to accomplish. This is time to do nothing, free of guilt. Even a few minutes spent this way can yield a sense of renewal. Also, experiment with decreasing your awareness of time. Leave your watch off for a few hours each day. Spend time in an area that’s free of clocks. Notice how often you glance at your watch and make a conscious effort to do that less. If you still want some sense of time then use alternatives to the almighty unforgiving clock. Measure your day with a sundial, hourglass, or egg timer. Or synchronize your activities with the rhythms of nature - for example, rising at dawn and going to bed at sundown. You can also plan activities to harmonize with the rhythms of your body. Schedule your most demanding tasks for the times when you’re normally most alert. Eat when you’re hungry, not according to the clock. Scrap schedules when it’s appropriate. Sometimes the vest-laid plans are best laid to rest. In summary, take time to retreat from time. Create a sanctuary, a haven, a safe place in your life that’s free from any hint of schedules, lists, or accomplishments. One of the most effective ways to manage time is periodically to forget about it.

To sum up, Perhaps you feel overloaded, and you often have to work late to hit your deadlines. Maybe your days seem to go from one crisis to another, and this is stressful and demoralizing. Many of us know that we could be managing our time more effectively; but it can be difficult to identify the mistakes that we’re making, and to know how we could improve. When we do manage our time well, however, we’re exceptionally productive at work, and our stress levels drop. We can devote time to the interesting, high-reward projects that can make a real difference to a career. In short, we’re happier! As Benjamin Franklin said,

“Do you love life? Then do not squander time, for that’s the stuff that life is made of.”

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