

Time Management

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Abstract—Today’s professionals face multiple overlapping commitments and flood of responsibilities with a pressure to perform excellently and efficiently. Despite of the fact that one has only 24 hours a day, one skill can lead to accomplishment of tasks without missing deadlines and i.e. time management. Present paper is an attempt to focus on time and activity management discussing major spheres of live such as professional management, self and study management.

Index Terms— Time Stealers, Procrastination, Positive Gumption, Self management.

I. INTRODUCTION

In this modern era people tend to do things quickly and expeditiously as they don’t have plenty of time to reflect, relax and introspect deeply. Earlier life was calm, unruffled and peaceful. Now rapid pace and progress of technique and hustle and bustle of day to day life makes one’s schedule hectic and difficult to manage.

Time management is an art to maintain balance between personal and professional life giving priority to things which are more important keeping aside irrelevant tasks in order to accomplish desired goals within period. The present paper will discuss time management, its importance from personal as well as professional angles and how management of time may lead to successful and contented life. The paper highlights the different sections on the concept of time, tasks which steal time, how to manage or organize it along with benefits which would result thereafter.

First of all this misleading myth needs to be clear that term “Time Management” means to “Manage Time”. Actually Time management refers to “Managing Activities” within available (24 hrs) or allocated time (As per schedule) effectively and efficiently. It may include specific skills, tools and techniques to accomplish projects and goals by planning in advance, organizing according to schedule, monitoring continuously and if done on priority basis. As per a survey (The American Time Use Survey by the Bureau of Labor and Statistics) most of human beings spend a day as per following schedule:

It proves that more things are being done but right things are not being done. No time is left to perform meaningful or fruitful tasks rather wasted by indulging in unplanned activities. Hence the need of the hour is to take “Time “as valuable source and adopt methods to utilize it wisely.

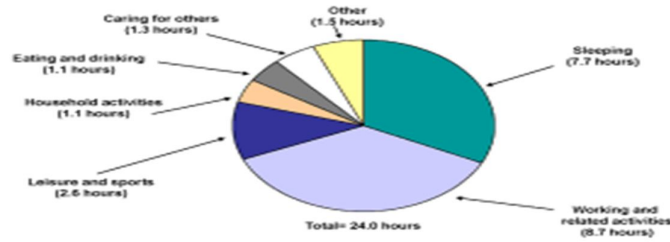


Figure 1. Time use on an average work day for employed persons age group 25 to 54

II. TIME STEALERS

TIME LOST IS LOST FOREVER as time is a unique source which can't be accumulated like other sources. It has been an issue of debate since long what actually a time stealer is- further categorized in two broad kinds- Personal and Official.

A. Personal Time Stealers

- Oversleeping/ sleeping during day time.
- Wasting time in front of idiot box.
- Excessive irrelevant use of technology/ mobile apps.
- Roaming aimlessly.
- Wasting time in criticizing people/gossiping.
- Reading newspaper too long.
- Wasting too much time on personal hygiene like shave/shower/beauty enhancers etc.

B. Official Time Stealers

- So many responsibilities on single person/hard to handle.
- Not saying "No" to irrelevant tasks.
- Lack of clarity about goals.
- Repeating same mistakes.
- Unsaved data/needs to be done repeatedly.
- Frequent visit to canteen or café.
- Sitting with colleagues purposelessly.

III. ORGANIZING OR MANAGING TIME/ACTIVITIES EFFECTIVELY

Time Management at Workplace

Effective time management at workplace reduces not only stress level but determines career success as well. Well managed activities will lead to unblock hurdles and completing assigned jobs as per highest standards. To resolve all issues and complexities following are the tips, measures to increase efficiency and success level-

A. Identify role

The first step to manage time or activities is to understand one's role and those of other colleagues. Be sure and specific about expectations of higher authorities regarding each and every project as per one's expertise which would save time and hamper's one's efficiency.

B. Prioritize task at hand

Always remember only those employees are accountable who produce quality projects. Quantity projects may or may not be efficiently accomplished. Keeping a To-Do list is advisable to make sure that all of the tasks are captured which need to complete in one place. Then same list should be sorted and planned as per priorities like giving labels from 1 (very important or urgent) to 10 (unimportant or not so urgent). If category 1 has again number of projects – break them down into their component elements. If still list continues so on-run through it and demote the less important ones and rewrite the list in priority order.

Keep a To-Do list-Prioritize task-Making list (1-10)-Review each list-Break down components Review again-Allocate Time- Final Task chart (Only those which will take 1-2 hours to complete)

C. Avoid wasting time

So called luxuries like chatting, surfing internet, long tea or smoke breaks, making groups and gossip weakens career success. Another time waster is not allocating definite time to particular task resulting in devoting too much time leaving aside incomplete other major projects. Hence stress builds up destroying and degrading one's reputation. One needs to be cautious of such time robbers.

D. Procrastination

Most of employees tend to put off tasks giving lame excuse of enough time left. The trouble begins when number of tasks pile up with a deadline of short time left. Procrastination is triggered off intentionally or unintentionally. It happens knowingly when one has no idea of how to do it perfectly (time is wasted in collecting information or links), unknowingly when a self proclaimed Mr. Perfect assumes to absorb everything and imagines to finish quickly which actually never happens. One should decide priorities allocating particular time.

E. Positive Gumption

Enthusiasm and initiative with full energy of mind & body definitely results in positive output. Decide to do something, collect courage than really start doing something opens up doors to success. Stress and time management are automatically done in a smarter way rather than harder way.

IV. SELF MANAGEMENT

A. Feel Rejuvenated

Always try to be a winner not a whiner and it is done only when situation and limitations are controlled by healthy, creative and rejuvenated intellect. Fatigue, boredom should be kept aside to get connected to work and increase the output. Time would be managed only when mind & health are managed to be energetic and full of vitality.

B. Self Evaluation

Self talk, self analysis is vital for time management as it keeps an eye on working methods and time wasters on regular basis. Time can be evaluated by maintaining time log, diary and personal time- auditing devices to check whether goals are accomplished timely or not. Such reflective sessions are for self elevation.

C. Self Management

Self management as mentioned earlier involves managing activities wisely to develop discipline and meticulousness in each & every project in hand. It means accepting and creating positive habits rejecting old, unproductive and negative ones. To manage time, self should be managed by noticing continuous fluctuating moods, anger and nature to create a rational thought process.

D. Self Motivation

Time management can happen only when challenges are considered opportunity and obstacles as stepping stones to move ahead. To get this self motivation & self encouragement one should galvanize oneself with self exhortations: "Come on", "Buck up", "The time is now".

V. TIME MANAGEMENT WHILE STUDYING

A. Projects/ Assignments on priority basis

Before initiating real work one should prioritize projects or assignments and start with the most difficult subject moving on to easier ones because complexities could be easily solved or grasped by fresh and energetic intellect.

The Bottom line- Make a list of tasks and focus on the toughest one.

B. Determination to do it “Completely”

A continuous urge to improve one leads towards perfection. Only first step causes trouble gradually journey becomes smooth. So right time is ‘Now’, draft a list of tasks to be accomplished and start working until meaningful constructive contribution is done.

The Bottom line- Identify first step of your project.

C. Postpone irrelevant tasks

This seems to be the toughest challenge of time management as there is always lot of unexpected lucrative opportunities which keep on appealing and distracting from in hand projects. Postpone such tasks paying attention to extra ordinary performance in test, paper or project.

The Bottom line- Identify such distraction and start avoiding it during study time.

D. Approach to resources

Today’s internet based digital culture offers round the clock access to sources of whole universe. Offline sources like experts, tutors, library facility, and professional organizations can also guide and empower to reorient one towards destination.

The Bottom line- Start looking for variety of sources.

E. Use Break time judiciously

Instead of fuelling mind’s dystopian fantasies during bits of time, it may be channelized towards revising or even going through once while walking or biking, riding the bus, queue waiting etc. The only thing which is required is concentration and awareness to use time judiciously.

The Bottom line- Apply this formula in routine.

F. Regular review

Just before class-Simple scanning of text in order to get an overview.

Within 24 hrs after class-Jotting down notes and re-reading once.

Weekly review-Get in the habit of donating few hours on weekend to course review for steady and swift progress towards perfection.

VI. CONCLUSION

Now moving towards conclusion it is realized that wastage of time really stresses one. Above discussed simple, practical techniques can help one to work smarter saving and utilizing a precious source- Time. The paper summarizes to manage activities by managing self and making cuts on leisure and focusing more on priorities.

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