

Times management

Arjun Kumar Gautam

Abstract

There are 24 hours in the day. This is something that will not change and we can do nothing about it. While you may not be able to control this, you can manage yourself. Once you realize this you have taken the first step towards effective time management. You must look at the things that are important to you in life and devote your time to these. Everything else should be eliminated from your life. Managing your time effectively will bring about some dramatic improvements in your life, but you must prepare to make some fundamental changes. Because of this, you need to take one step at a time. If you bite off more than you can chew at the beginning there is a chance you may fail. Time management article helping you to know yourself to take the steps in effective time management you need to know yourself. As we grow older it is easy to lose track of the things that really matter to us in life. It is amazing that we can let this happen to us, but it happens all too easily.

1. Introduction

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 is one of those skills no one teaches you in school but you have to learn. It doesn't matter how smart you are if you can't organize information well enough to take it in. And it doesn't matter how skilled you are if procrastination keeps you from getting your work done.

Younger workers understand this, and time management is becoming a topic of hipsters. One of the most popular blogs in the world is Lifehacker, edited by productivity guru Gina Trapani, and her forthcoming book by the same name is a bestseller on Amazon based so far on pre-orders.

In today's workplace, you can differentiate yourself by your ability to handle information and manage your time. "Careers are made or broken by the soft skills that make you able to hand a very large workload," says Merlin Mann, editor of the productivity blog 43 Folders.

2. Main Themes of time management

- Creating an environment conducive to effectiveness
- Setting of priorities of jobs to be performed,

- Carrying out activity around those priorities
- The related process of reduction of time spent on non-priorities

3. Approaches of Time Management:

3.1 ABC analysis

A technique that has been used in business management for a long time is the categorization of large data into groups. These groups are often marked A, B, and C—hence the name. Activities are ranked upon these general criteria:

A – Tasks that are perceived as being urgent and important,

B – Tasks that are important but not urgent,

C – Tasks that are neither urgent nor important.

Each group is then rank-ordered in priority. To further refine priority, some individuals choose to then force-rank all "B" items as either "A" or "C". ABC analysis can incorporate more than three groups.

3.2 Pareto analysis

This approach was introduced by Italian merchant. It is based on 80:20 principal. This is the idea that 80% of tasks can be completed in 20% of the disposable time. The remaining 20% of tasks will take up 80% of the time. This principle is used to sort tasks into two parts. According to this form of Pareto analysis it is recommended that tasks that fall into the first category be assigned a higher priority.

The 80-20-rule can also be applied to increase productivity: it is assumed that 80% of the productivity can be achieved by doing 20% of the tasks. Similarly, 80% of results can be attributed to 20% of activity. If productivity is the aim of time management, then these tasks should be prioritized higher.

It depends on the method adopted to complete the task. There is always a simpler and easy way to complete the task. If one uses a complex way, it will be time consuming. So, one should always try to find out the alternate ways to complete each task.

3.3 The Eisenhower Method

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.

3.4 POSEC method

POSEC is an acronym for prioritize by Organizing, Streamlining, Economizing and Contributing. The method dictates a template which emphasizes an average individual's immediate sense of emotional and monetary security. It suggests that by attending to one's personal responsibilities first, an individual is better positioned to shoulder collective responsibilities.

Inherent in the acronym is a hierarchy of self-realization which mirrors Abraham Maslow's "Hierarchy of needs".

1. **Prioritize-** Your time and define your life by goals.
2. **Organizing-** Things you have to accomplish regularly to be successful. (Family and Finances)
3. **Streamlining-** Things you may not like to do, but must do. (Work and Chores)
4. **Economizing-** Things you should do or may even like to do, but they're not pressingly urgent. (Pastimes and Socializing)
5. **Contributing-** By paying attention to the few remaining things that make a difference. (Social Obligations).

4. So here are 10 tips to make you better at managing your work

(a) Don't leave email sitting in your in box

"The ability to quickly process and synthesize information and turn it into actions is one of the most emergent skills of the professional world today," says Mann. Organize email in file folders. If the message needs more thought, move it to your to-do list. If it's for reference, print it out. If it's a meeting, move it to your calendar.

"One thing young people are really good at is only touching things once. You don't see young people scrolling up and down their email pretending to work," says Mann. Take action on an email as soon as you read it.

(b) Admit multitasking is bad

For people who didn't grow up watching TV, typing out instant messages and doing homework all at the same time, multitasking is deadly. But it decreases everyone's productivity, no matter who they are. "A 20-year-old is less likely to feel overwhelmed by demands to multitask, but young people still have a loss of productivity from multitasking," says Trapani.

So try to limit it. Kathy Sierra at Creating Passionate Users suggests practicing mindfulness as a way to break the multitasking habit.

(c) Do the most important thing first

Trapani calls this "running a morning dash". When she sits down to work in the morning, before she checks any email, she spends an hour on the most important thing on her to-do list. This is a great idea because even if you can't get the whole thing done in an hour, you'll be much more likely to go back to it once you've gotten it started. She points out that this dash works best if you organize the night before so when you sit down to work you already know what your most important task of the day is.

(d) Check your email on a schedule

"It's not effective to read and answer every email as it arrives. Just because someone can contact you immediately does not mean that you have to respond to them immediately," says Dan Markovitz, president of the productivity consulting firm TimeBack Management, "People want a predictable response, not an immediate response." So as long as people know how long to expect an answer to take, and they know how to reach you in an emergency, you can answer most types of email just a few times a day.

(e) Keep web site addresses organized

Use book marking services like del.icio.us to keep track of web sites. Instead of having random notes about places you want to check out, places you want to keep as a reference, etc., you can save them all in one place, and you can search and share your list easily.

(f) Know when you work best

Industrial designer Jeff Beene does consulting work, so he can do it any time of day. But, he says, “I try to schedule things so that I work in the morning, when I am the most productive.” Each person has a best time. You can discover yours by monitoring your productivity over a period of time. Then you need to manage your schedule to keep your best time free for your most important work.

(g) Think about keystrokes.

If you’re on a computer all day, keystrokes matter because efficiency matters. “On any given day, an information worker will do a dozen Google searches,” says Trapani. “How many keystrokes does it take? Can you reduce it to three? You might save 10 seconds, but over time, that builds up.”

(h) Make it easy to get started

We don’t have problems finishing projects, we have problems starting them,” says Mann. He recommends you “make a shallow on-ramp.” Beene knows the key creating this on ramp: “I try to break own my projects into chunks, so I am not overwhelmed by them.”

(i) Organize your to-do list every day

If you don’t know what you should be doing, how can you manage your time to do it? Some people like writing this list out by hand, because it shows commitment to each item if you are willing to rewrite it each day until it gets done. Other people like software that can slice and dice their to-do list into manageable, relevant chunks. For example, Beene usestasktoy because when he goes to a client site tasktoy shows him only his to do items for that client, and not all his other projects. (Get tasktoy here.)

(j) Dare to be slow

Remember that a good time manager actually responds to some things more slowly than a bad time manager would. For example, someone who is doing the highest priority task is probably not answering incoming email while they’re doing it. As Markovitz writes: “Obviously there are more important tasks than processing email. Intuitively, we all know this. What we need to do now is recognize that processing one’s work (evaluating what’s come in and how to handle it) and planning one’s work are also mission-critical tasks.”

5. Conclusion

Time management is a technique that tells us how to manage the time in the work place more effectively so that our efficiency and productivity can be increased. It is not a separate branch of management. It is only the tools of utilizing the time more effectively. 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. 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. Time management is usually a necessity in any project development as it determines the project completion time and scope. It has been considered to be a subset of different concepts such as: project management, attention management and personal knowledge management

Different skills are required for effective time management. Some of these skills including setting clear goals, breaking your goals down into discreet steps, and reviewing your progress towards your goals are covered in action planning. Other skills involved include prioritizing - focusing on urgent and important tasks rather than those that are not important or don't move you towards your goals; organising your work schedule; list making to remind you of what you need to do when; persevering when things are not working out and avoiding procrastination.

Reference

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