

Time Management

Managing Time for Professional Success

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'Achieve more and get ahead in life through professional time management'

“The most important principle of corporate management is Time Management.” - Thomas Watson, IBM. Time is the most precious resource. Few things are more important to us than learning how to manage time well. What is Time Management? Is it only making schedules or working faster? Often approaches to time management are very mechanistic.

To understand why there is a problem managing time we need first to understand what the problem is, then begin to look at why there is a problem. This can be achieved by examining the behavioral and attitudinal aspects of time management as well as the more practical organisation of time. Let's look at some of the important areas involving management of our time.

The Power of Goals

It's not enough to be busy. The question is: What are we busy about?

Making the most of the time does not require to keep busy, it is about making real progress towards personal and organizational goals.

It was Conrad Hilton the founder of the world famous Hilton chain of hotels who said, 'Success is made to order.' He was right for an achievement is a sum total of many things talent, aptitude, knowledge and desire. If each of our achievements are analyzed, it will be discovered that it all started with the goal that was to be achieved. Welldefined goals, tackled with competence and confidence through a proper plan of action are the building blocks of achievements.

Setting Priorities

Never before there was so little time in which to do so much. The essence of Time Management lies in the ability to see, organize and execute around priorities.

Urgent and Important

In order to make the most of the time, must understand the difference between what's Urgent and what's Important. Maintenance tasks often seem urgent and therefore give them priority. Progress tasks though very important are seldom urgent, hence often end up putting them off. Effective time management is about making sure that urgency does not cloud judgement of what is important.

To achieve proper prioritization one needs to ask the following questions

- Which activities move closer to the most important results?
- What can be done to serve the organization more?
- Which are the high pay-off activities in our life?

Understanding the Pareto Principle is also very important. "20 percent of the time spent on the vital activities give 80 percent results, while 80 percent time spent on trivial activities give 20 percent results." After having identified the high pay-off activities, it must allocate more time to them (20 percent) and reduce the time spent on trivial activities (80 percent)

Don't Hesitate Delegate

Delegation is how one can leverage our time effectively. Often one does not take full advantage of one of the greatest time savers of all delegation. A lot of time is being wasted by doing what ought to be delegated to others.

Delegation frees time for more important tasks, allows one to plan more effectively and helps to relieve the pressure of too many things to do in too little time.

A good manager must know that delegation is a master key for better time management. It is a great motivator, enriches jobs, improves performance and raises morale.

Eliminate Time Wasters

Time wasters fall in two categories. External implies factors that reduce productivity that are of our direct control. Internal implies areas it is directly responsible for wasting time.

External

External factors refer to factors that are out of control that results in the reduction

of productivity. Some examples are interruptions, poor communication, shifting priorities, mistakes of others, phone interruptions, computer problems, too many meetings, etc.

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Internal

Internal factors refer to areas where it is directly responsible for wasting own time. Some examples are poor attitude, personal disorganisation, failure to listen, indecision, socializing, fatigue, paper shuffling, procrastination, poor planning, etc.

Eliminating the leakages of time occurring through these and other time wasters is very important to enhance personal and professional productivity.

Avoid Procrastination

Ever thought up of a great idea but didn't do anything about it? Welcome to the world of procrastination. Procrastination, which comes from the Latin word for 'tomorrow' is the world's number one time waster.

Successful people do not procrastinate especially in matters they know are important to them. As someone has rightly said people don't fail because they intend to fail. They fail because they fail to do what they intend to do. 'Hard work is often the easy work you did not do at the proper time.' - Bernard Meltzer

Managing Stress


Stress has become the biggest single issue of modern life today. The existence

of modern man is challenged not as much by the atomic bomb as the 'Stress Bomb'.

At the workplace negative stress has adversely affected employee efficiency and effectiveness resulting in lower productivity and higher health care costs.

Perhaps the greatest gift one can give oneself is to learn how to manage stress effectively so that one can be happy and be fulfilled personally and more productive and satisfied on the job.

In the final analysis managing time effectively and productively means not just making temporary changes but finding ways of managing time that are long lasting. ■



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