



CAPE Assessment Center, Ahmedabad

Time is Money: Manage Your Time by Converting 24 Hours into 25

(It is a working paper by Dr. V. K. Gautam and not a Research and layout is in Army style)

Introduction:

1. Our daily lives consist of schedules and planning. Trying to fit everything into a 24-hour period can be nerve racking. Using your time efficiently to achieve your life's goals begin with good planning. Successful management of projects and tasks are based on choices you make. We need to learn how to manage the time we have not only for work but for your family as well. If you are able to manage your time, your day-to-day life will be much easier. Building a schedule helps you to plan your daily activities (being covered in the workshop). Steps to achieve efficient time management are described to help you affect the control of your time. Knowing what you have to do and where you have to be in advance can make the day less stressful and more productive.

Rules of success:

2. To get more done in less time, that is the secret of successful people. We present these three rules from Donald Wetmore (2000) to increase your productivity. First, set aside a time each morning, to make a list of all the items you want to accomplish on a particular day.

(a) As you write these items down you will begin to get a clearer picture of what you need to work on and begin to start scheduling the time necessary to complete them.

(b) Next you prioritize your items. Choose the most important item and number this one. Choose the second most important item and label it two, and so on. Complete your first item, in spite of interruptions throughout the day. Then go on to the next item. This way you will always complete the most important item every day. When we prioritize we focus on the most important items instead of skipping around and doing the least important, therefore, easier ones. Then you follow these steps every day. As you create a new to-do list every day, you re-prioritize items from the day before. You will feel in control of your day and improve your productivity.

3. One of the keys to managing your time is working smart (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time bound). If you have an organized plan for a project, you can manage your time wisely. Start by writing down all your projects in any order on a piece of paper. It is important to list as many of your projects as you can think of so you can best apply a priority list. After your list is compiled, group all similar tasks together (This can be covered during the

workshop on “Goal Setting and goal-getting” and glimpse in the Time Management).

4. It is important to prioritize the tasks in a logical sequence. This step is very critical in time management because if you start to work on a task, but you need other information, you will have to stop what you are working on and complete the other task first. This will slow down the process and waste time. A priority list will allow you to work on the projects in the most logical order, saving the maximum amount of time, as in the case of Polaris Missile by applying PERT.

5. It is very important to set goals that are achievable. Many times, goals are set too high on initial projects, and after failing to achieve them it is hard to motivate yourself and those around you. When the goals are set at proper stages of a project and they are achieved, everyone involved feels good about his or her involvement. Goals in some cases create an adrenalin boost to a project with a feeling of accomplishment and highest level of satisfaction.

6. The opposite is true if the goals are set too aggressively and are not met. People involved in the project may tend to give up on tasks, feeling they are already failing or are going to fail. Goals should be one of the last steps of a project so they can be well thought out. After gathering all the information available and input from everyone involved, goals can be set at realistic levels.

7. Be firm with yourself and make the commitment of blocking some time to complete your studies. Control your distractions by limiting their effect on you. If you need to be alone to focus on your studies then close the door to keep people from interrupting you. If you are interrupted, give the person a time limit; of course you would want to keep this time limit to yourself as you do not want to alienate your family or your co-workers. Use your voice-mail to take your calls, and do not check your e-mails until your studies are done. If you prefer the hustle and bustle of a busy environment then choose a more active setting. You can get together with other students and study. Carter, Bishop, and Kravits suggest that you need to choose the environment that will make the most of your abilities to study (In case of India, environment is good but guidance is not).

8. In many cases, you will have to rely on others to complete work in a timely manner. It is just as important to organize others that will affect the project as it is to be organized yourself. Give others as much notice as possible with what your needs are with the project, and set up times with them to update you on their progress. In doing so, you will be able to monitor their progress so they do not affect your time line. Make sure they are very clear on every detail of each step, as well as the importance of being on schedule (being covered in the workshop with schedule).

9. Critical steps may require a backup plan to ensure the tasks will be completed in an organized and timely manner. Talk through the expectations to clear up any issues prior to moving on to your next task. Remember that if they are not clear on what is required, you have to waste more time revisiting the issues left unattended (prioritizing is an important factor with delegation).

10. In our busy life other issues come up and we have to deal with them first. When an unexpected event comes up and we have to cancel a previous commitment, we now have to find time to reschedule. Many times when something like this comes up, it is hard to find the time to reschedule. If you have a schedule of your day-to-day activities, you should always have a time open in case you have to reschedule an appointment. This also gives you time to yourself when that time you set aside is not used (Remember-busy man is the one, who got time for everyone):

(a) Putting time aside for various events that might occur can take some stress off of you too. You would not have to stress because you would have the time there already.

(b) Without putting aside some free time, people tend to stress out because they do not know when they would be able to fit things in. Being able to have time management skills lets you have an understanding of time, and how to use it wisely.

(c) In order to organize your time, you must set goals in your life. Goals are certain values that you have. Values are principles or qualities that someone considers important.

11. As an example, yours religious beliefs, friends you have, relatives, authority figures, and the media. People must choose their own values and then examine them closely. Are they right for you? How will they affect your own life? Are they your choice or someone else's? After you determine which values are right for you, you then set timeframes for your goals to be completed. Times should be broken up into short-term and long-term goals.

12. Breakdown long-term goals into stages. Determine which parts of your goal needs to be accomplished in a day, in a week, or longer and prioritize them. Next a "Personal Mission Statement" should be conceived. This statement should tell you about your character, what you want to achieve in life, and the principles by which you live. A good example of this would be the Constitution of the United States. There are five basic life settings by which we all base our goals on. Personal Goals are mostly associated with our personal appearance, character, and conduct with others. Our family goals consist of our marital status, how many children we would like to have, and relationships. Financial goals involve the balancing of money amongst various bills, and preparing for the future (Remember-professional goal should not be on the cost of family).

13. Education goals pertain pretty much to the type of schooling you wish to pursue, and how far you want to go in your learning. Lifestyle goals play a part in the location of your home, which lives with you, and what you will do with your leisure time. Pick goals that allow you to live how you choose to, not what somebody else wants (Remember-differences between want and needs).

Procrastination (Laziness-soostie):

14. Procrastination is defined as the gap between intention and action, so states Timothy A. Pychyl, PhD, director of the procrastination research group at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada, Walker (2003). There are many reasons for putting off things until the last possible moment. Fear of failure that you will not complete the task successfully, fear of change, unwillingness to start an unpleasant task (Remember-there are 07 types of fears and Fear of failure is a useless one, hence, don't bother). The fear of being successful is a fear you do not associate with procrastination. If you become successful then you have added responsibilities and choices. You will not do anything if you are afraid of doing the wrong thing. You need to conquer procrastination by recognizing it and not giving in to it. Start your task right away, the quicker you do it, the sooner it is finished. If you feel overwhelmed then break your project into smaller tasks. Concentrate on each task and complete it, do not worry about the end result. Set your priorities and get motivated to finish these tasks. You will start to develop good work habits and procrastination will disappear (follow 40 rules of life given in the handout).

15. When you set a priority, you identify what's important at any given time. Look at your five life areas to determine which areas have priority over others. You do not have to include all areas. They could consist of only a few. For example, family could be a higher priority than your leisure time. By setting your priorities, you get closer to accomplishing your goals. There are two basic types of approaches to time management:

- (a) One is a factual and linear person. They organize activities around a specific timeframe. The other is a theoretical and holistic person. They focus on the whole picture while time passes them by. Other ways that help to plan your time would be to schedule your week, month, year, five years, 25 years (refer my plan-calendar 2000-2025).
- (b) Take ten to fifteen minutes before you start your day to plan your daily activities. This will save you a lot of time in the long run. Write events and important appointments down on a calendar in the home. Use a scheduling book and carry it with you at all times (As we carry our diary or daily slip system).

16. Sometimes saying "No" when you are working is difficult. Especially if you are the workaholic type or just plain run out of time because you did not plan your day. From time to time there may not be somebody around that can complete your assigned task because it needs your expertise. It is a good practice to say "No" every now and then.

Conclusion:

17. You can benefit from this by having more time to yourself, delegating your authority to others, takes stress off of you, and other people may gain experience from the way you manage your time. Set your SMART goal and accomplish them.

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