Education Support

What is Time Management?

By Channing L Bete Co- A Scriptographic Booklet

Time management really means managing yourself. It's a way to be happier, more effective, and more successful. It's about making the best use you can of that most precious resource, *Time*.

It's knowing:

-*A System* for helping you meet your goals.
-*Practical Tips* for using your time effectively.
-*How to Succeed* when facing stumbling blocks or procrastination.
-*Yourself*--your habits, goals, and times during the day when you are the most alert and productive.

Why is Managing Time So Important?

Because time management is a tool you need to succeed---in school, in your job and beyond.

-*Achieve More*, so you can get the most out of your academic career.
-*Have More Free Time*, so you can participate in social or other activities that are important to you.
-*Lead a Balanced Life*, so you can better enjoy both work and play.
-*Meet Deadlines*, so you can be firmly in control of your life and work.
-*You owe it to Yourself to Use Time Well!*

How you use your time reflects the kind of person you are and want to be. If you care about your future, then you'll care about the way you organize your time. Will time management really help me? ... *Absolutely*!!

"Won't time management make my life too scheduled and take the fun out of it?" No. The purpose of time management isn't to take away life's spontaneity. It's to give you freedom--so you can do what you want with your life!

"I've got too much to do as it is. Isn't time management just another activity that will take up time?" No, because time management will help you avoid spending time on things that are unimportant or uninteresting.

What kind of Time Manger are You?

Respond to these statements to see how well you manage your time: YES/ NO

1. I think daily planning guides are a waste of time.
2. My academic/professional goals are clear to me.
3. Leaving assignments/projects until the last is a big problem for me.
4. I organize my time very well.
5. I wish I were more motivated.
6. It's easy for me to cut short visits with people calling in while I am working/studying.
7. Visitors should feel free to see me whenever they want.
8. I know which activities in my life are important to focus on and which ones aren't.
9. I'm a perfectionist in everything I do.
10. I have enough time to pursue leisure activities.

-Scoring:

Odd-numbered statements, 1 point for each YES

Even-numbered statements, 1 point for each NO

If your score is:

1-2.....You are probably on top of things but can still improve.

3-4.....You are treading water.

5-7.....Managing your time well is a problem!

8-10.....You are on the verge of chaos.

Where does your time go?

Before you can manage your time, you need to know how you spend it now. Here's how to find out:

-Keep a time log!

Sounds crazy? Not at all!

- Carry a notebook everywhere you can go. Every 15 minutes, jot down what you are doing-- a short note will do.
- Make entries, as you go along--don't wait until later!
- Keep the time log for a week.

-Evaluate the Results

Here's the fun part! Review the log and ask yourself:

- Did I do everything I had to do? * Was I rushed for time to get things done?
- Did I meet all deadlines?
- What personal habits kept me from achieving my goals?
- At what time of day was I most productive? Least productive?

Your next step.....*Make a List* of everything you plan to do each day. Divide the list into:

-Fixed Commitments

These are risks you must do at a certain time--meetings, appointments, etc. Other examples include: classes, sleeping, meals, job

-Flexible Commitments

These are obligations you can meet on your own time. For example: study times, homework, social events, time spent with friends or relaxing

-Use the List Correctly!

List everything you have to do on paper. Unless the list is written, "Things to Do" are less likely to get done.

-Update the List Daily!

Every day cross items off the list as you do them, and add new items!

-Prioritize.....Know what is most important and what' not. This is the key to keep you from feeling overwhelmed. Assign priorities! On your list of "Things to Do" who priorities. Beside each task write a star, letter or asterisk indicating its importance. Thus you will end up with: "A" priorities (things you should work on first), "B" priorities (tasks that can wait until "A" tasks are completed, "C" priorities (tasks that can wait until others are completed).

<u>Learn to Schedule</u>

A schedule lets you pick the best times to work and play. It puts you in charge of your time. Successful people know this.....and take the time to plan!

How to Schedule

-Use a Planning Calendar: Buy or make your own weekly/monthly planning guide. Schedule key events, projects, deadlines.

-Divide and Conquer: Make your work manageable. Divide large tasks into several smaller parts and complete one part at a time.

-Focus on Goals: Don't lose sight of your larger goals and aims! Know the big picture!

<u>Know Your Peak Times</u>

If you are like most people, you probably enjoy certain parts of the day when you are at your best. Which are yours?

-High Energy Times

The time of day I:

- have the most energy
- feel the most productive
- think most clearly is during the _____between the hours of _____and_____.

-Low Energy Times

The time of day I:

- fade quickly
- have the least energy
- feel least alert is during the _____between the hours of _____and _____.

-Do the Right Thing at the Right Time!

Plan to work on your "A" priorities at peak times. Schedule less demanding or less important tasks for lower energy periods.

Control Interruptions

Interruptions can eat up massive chunks of time. The most common ones include:

- drop in visitors
- noise
- personal phone calls
- interruptions you create for the sake of distraction

But, you can control them. Here is how.....

- Find a quiet, well lit area to concentrate on your project. You will find it easier to focus on your work.
- Learn to say NO. Be assertive. Politely, but firmly, let visitors and phone callers know that you are busy.
- Schedule social time. You will achieve a nice balance between work and play knowing that you've planned enough time for both.
- Control distractions. Turn off the TV and stereo when doing a project. Don't allow interruptions. Make sure your environment is as conducive to working as possible.

More Important Tips to Help You Stretch the Clock

- Use waiting time. Think of the hours spent waiting in lines, between classes, etc. Use this time to read a book, jot down ideas, etc.
- Tackle hard tasks first. The feeling of achievement can give your day momentum. Build on success!
- Don't cram. It is ineffective and inefficient. Have an organized way to study for tests--and give yourself plenty of time!
- Avoid perfectionism. Unless perfection is called for, don't waste valuable time trying to make every project you do be letter perfect.
- Know your instructions. There is no bigger waste of time than following the wrong directions for an assignment. If you are not sure, ask your boss/instructor.
- Take care of yourself. Proper exercise and nutrition help you stay physically fit and mentally alert. Make sure that you take time for both! Drink plenty of water.
- Plan creative time. Schedule time each day to do things that recharge your creative batteries or help put your life in perspective.
- Don't over commit. Don't spread yourself too thin. Commit yourself to only those activities you can manage in the time that you have allotted.

Beat Procrastination!

Procrastination is a real obstacle to managing time well. It is one of the worst enemies of success. But, there are ways to combat it:

-*Acknowledge the Problem*: Admit it--you're stuck. You need to get moving.

-*Break Up the Task:* Divide the work you need to do into smaller chunks.
-*Do Something:* Start with the easiest part of the job and work on it for 15-30 minutes. At the end of this time, you can quit and try again, or just keep going.
-*Get Psyched:*Tell yourself how great you will feel when you have finally finished the project you are avoiding.
-*Promise Yourself a Reward:* Do something nice for yourself when you are done. Promise yourself a movie, a special meal, or anything that you consider a treat.

<u>The Techniques of Time Management Will Work for You</u>
* *Know* the benefits of time management.
* *Develop* your planning skills.
* *List* your goals and priorities.
* *Use* time management techniques to get the most out of your career.

Don't let Time be an Enemy, Make it your Strongest Ally!