Personal Time Management Skills

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The personal time management skills are to build a stronger foundation for your success. One skill at a time. With good time management skills you are in control of your time and your life, of your stress and energy levels. You make progress at work. You are able to maintain balance between your work, personal, and family lives. You have enough flexibility to respond to surprises or new opportunities.

What is Personal Time?

Who does your time belong to? When you wake up tomorrow, you'll start with exactly 24 hours of personal time. However, most of us have traded part of our 24 hours for benefits. If you work or go to school, you have traded part of your time for education or pay. Personal time is what we call "free time" or the time we haven't already bartered away.

How do we spend our time?

The average person spends the following amount of time in an average day:

1. 8.5 hours sleeping.
2. 1 hour devoted to personal care.
3. 2.5 hours on household chores (cooking, cleaning, gardening, shopping, etc)
4. 8.5 hours at work and/or school related activities on weekdays and (4 to 5 hours on the weekend).
5. 3 hours caring for others, either those who live with us (children and spouses) or those outside of our homes (elderly relatives, volunteer work).

If you add up the numbers, you'll see that "free time" is really at a premium!

Respecting Priorities

We all have many things to do. How do you decide what to do first? A very common answer is to start from what is most urgent or from what feels most comfortable. This is what you often do automatically, if you don't learn to prioritize. The truth is that the most important things are typically not urgent, and the urgent things are often not that important for your long-term success. Without solid prioritizing skills you rarely have time for what is most important, you are getting stuck where you are.

Always prepared for unplanned

In personal time management, you always face some unexpected events or unpredictable delays that leave less time to the planned activities than you initially planned. The more clear priorities you have each day, the more prepared you are for such unpredictable situations. Instead of being totally kicked out of the planned way,

you simply sacrifice a few of lower priority tasks, and you are still getting most out of your time. You know that you are prepared and you do your best.

Ability to say NO

With all good intentions of people around you, if they get a chance to put their own problems on your shoulders, they will do so. Your ability to say no is an important component of your time management skills. It determines how much of your time will be wasted on solving someone else's problems. That does not mean you have to be too selfish. You just need to see the line between helping people and simply being used by them.

Merits and Measures of Personal Time Management

Most of us do want to be more effective and efficient in our use of time. We want to be more organized; more accomplished, and feel better about how we manage time, one of our most precious resources. We want to move away from missed deadlines, late nights trying to finish things we have procrastinated about for months, lost opportunities, and strained relationships with people we care about. The following steps for effective time management can provide a guide for putting your intentions into action, lowering your stress, and helping you achieve your goals.

1. Identify your personal and work-related priorities.

This is a key step in the process. Think carefully about outcomes that are important to you. Write them down, being as specific as possible. Specify exactly what you want to accomplish and by when. If you have multiple priorities in the same area (personal or professional), try to select only one or two initially, or try to rank them as to importance. Trying to work on too many at the same time will increase, rather than lower, your stress level.

ABC analysis: allows you to prioritize your tasks into 3 categories.

 A- Tasks that is important and urgent.
 B- Tasks that is important but not urgent.
 C- Tasks that is not important and not urgent.

By prioritizing your tasks into three categories you will get an excellent overview of all your tasks, their importance and urgency.

2. POSEC method

POSEC is an acronym that stands for prioritizing by Organizing, Streamlining, Economizing and Contributing, which shall help you to focus our attention on your daily responsibilities. The POSEC method can be summarized as a method to break the main goals into smaller sub goals and tasks, which makes it easier to address one sub goal after another until the main goal is finally accomplished.

The POSEC method is comprised by the following stages:

- Prioritize responsibilities accordingly to your goals and the available time

Become a priority in your life

- Organize what needs to be achieved regularly to maintain success (financial security)
- Streamline tasks you are not fond of, but have to be done (work)
- Economize tasks you would like to perform that are not urgent/important (pastime)
- Contribute to to others. ("Giving something back", social obligations)

The advantages of the POSEC method are that it does not only focus on prioritizing tasks at the workplace but also helps you to prioritize pastime activities and social obligations. In contrast to this is it a disadvantage for people that want to prioritize their tasks and duties at work in a very precise way.

3. Translate your priorities into concrete goals, with component activities.

Break each goal into its component activities; identify what steps are needed to achieve the goal. Identify the requirements and resources you need related to each activity step. This helps you organize for success and have what you need to move forward towards goal attainment. Pinpointing resources is especially important if accomplishment of your goal requires the cooperation or assistance of other people.

4. Consider your monthly calendar or planning notebook a timesaving device.

Keep it with you and use it to schedule important activities, due dates, deadlines, and appointments. Consistent use of your calendar will provide you with a visual reminder and help you keep track of your commitments. Periodically review your calendar to assess your progress in accomplishing the steps to your goals. Highlight important dates with a marker; this will keep them visible and can serve as a colorful reminder of your planned steps towards goal attainment.

5. Eliminate distractions

Distractions of all kinds will decrease your concentration and interrupt you from performing your tasks. In order to manage your time efficient you need to eliminate distractions that prohibit you from performing your tasks or delay the completion of projects. Distractions vary from the internet, emails or the telephone up to multiple tasks that are performed simultaneously (multi-tasking).

6. Eliminate tasks

Every once in a while you might notice that you are performing tasks that have absolutely no outcome and are not even important. Sometimes you might have even "created" your very own tasks that no one else is performing and that don't need to be performed to accomplish your goals. You should try to eliminate as many of these tasks as possible, as these are simply a waste of time.

7. Identify your own barriers to effective use of time.

Discovering the motivation for your resistance to time management may assist in understanding your behavior, or lack of it. Is the task to be done boring? Do you really want to do it? Do you feel "too controlled" by the use of a calendar or planner? Reflecting on your own thoughts and feelings about using time may help identify areas you may want to explore further, especially if you aren't satisfied with your achievement of personal or professional goals.

8. Strive for a balance between "doing" and "being."

Remember to plan some "fun time" in your schedule. With better time management strategies, you can be more productive, experience improved relationships, and enjoy more "good times" with a minimum of anxiety and stress. Doing "more" is not the ultimate goal of effective time management. More is not necessarily better, and cramming your schedule full of "to do" items doesn't necessarily lead to higher life satisfaction.

9. Monitoring

Monitoring helps you to find out how much time you spend for different tasks and - which is more important - it lets you realize how much time you spend with ineffective activities. You can monitor yourself by creating an activity report where you note down your activities, the time that it took and the importance of these activities. As soon as you have monitored your own behavior for a few days you can start analyzing it and if necessary reduce or eliminate unimportant activities.

10. Time Management Tools

Modern software applications that allow us to manage time have become very popular with the technological development. These time management tools vary from simple reminders and calendars that can be used with PDAs, mobile phones and smart phones up to software products that were developed for the computer. However, the more complicated and precise such an application becomes, the more time intensive and the less useful they will probably be.

Practical Session:- Game
Jar of Life
Things required: - Jar, pebbles, sand, small balls or pieces of rock, water

Lessons Learnt
- What is personal time management?
- How to achieve personal time management?
- How can we measure personal time?
- What are the different skills to utilize personal time?

Summary

With good personal time management skills:-

- You are in control of your time and your life, of your stress and energy levels.
- You make progress at work.
- You are able to maintain balance between your work, personal, and family lives.
- You have enough flexibility to respond to surprises or new opportunities.

Quote :-

"Until we can manage our personal time, we can manage nothing else. Remember nobody is not too busy, it's all about ones priorities"