Time Management and Success in Life

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Abstract

Time is the only resource in the world which is same for everybody irrespective of his power and position. Time management is not only a basic management technique; it is also an essential life-skill. Let us see how much we live actually. If we have to live for 60 years, subtract 15 years of our boyhood where no one questions to us. From the remaining 45 years, if we sleep for 8 hours a day, we have deleted 15 years in sleeping. From the remaining 30 years, if we spend 2 hours on the television, we have 2.5 years watching what other people do and nobody pays us for that. From the remaining 27 and half years of our life, we have to earn and yet we have 2.5 years watching television. If we do not do them (Peter and Robert, 2004.). Then why can some people achieve so much and some people so less? The answer is some people know how to manage time; others do not know. Time is illusory and invisible, inelastic and inexorable. We talk of time and understand it less. We always accuse of it running away. But time is also an essential life-skill, and yet for many people 80% of achievement still comes from only 20% of the day. All managers can utilize his time effectively by delegation, prioritization and optimal personal organization (Kelly and Lencoioni, 2007).

Keywords

Time Wasters, Goal, Balanced Life.

Introduction

1. Life is nothing but time. Time is money and success. Every successful man achieves his goal just for the utilization of time. Time is the only resource in the world which is same for everybody irrespective of his power and position. None can grab more time and none can hoard it (Peter and Robert, 2004.). Then why can some people achieve so much and some people so less? The answer is some people know how to manage time; others do not know. Time is illusory and invisible, inelastic and inexorable. We talk of time and understand it less. We always accuse of it running away. But time moves at a constant rate. We manage it such a way that it seems to fly away. Time management is not only a basic management technique, it is also an essential life-skill, and yet for many people 80% of achievement still comes from only 20% of the day. All managers can utilize his time effectively by delegation, prioritization and optimal personal organization (Kelly and Lencoioni, 2007).

2. There are many things in life that we want to do desperately, but we are unable to do them due to various reasons. But, there are many things in our life which we can do, we are supposed to do, yet we do not do them (Chris, 1996). The list would be a long one. We can include memorizing of Qur'anic verses, visiting a dying relative or repaying us debt. We have chains of excuses because we don't want to do these things. Let us see how much we live actually. If we have to live for 60 years, subtract 15 years of our boyhood where no one questions to us. From the remaining 45 years, if we sleep for 8 hours a day, we have deleted 15 years in sleeping. From the remaining 30 years, if we spend 2 hours on the television, we have 2.5 years watching what other people do and nobody pays us for that.

From the remaining 27 and half years of our life, we have to earn and yet find out ways for immeasurable reward from Allah. This is an informative research paper based on secondary information and primary data on time waster factor. By indicating why and where time gets wasted this article will enable everybody, especially managers to be more productive in less time. Finally A-Z time management tips for better manager will be describe at the end of the paper.

Time Management Techniques

3. Time management is the act or process of exercising conscious control over the amount of time spent on specific activities, especially to increase 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. 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.

4. Goal setting is very important when it comes to time management. At first we need to set our goal and target. Then creating to-do lists is a great way to manage time. We can better plan our time if we know what tasks we need to accomplish in a day or a week. A prioritized to-do list is one of the best ways, to manage time (Chris, 1996). When we switch from one task to another, our mind needs time to adjust to the new task. Instead of multi-tasking, we should try single-tasking. We need to focus on one of our high-priority tasks and get it done before we move on to the next task. We only have 24 hours in a day, so we need to be realistic when we take on responsibilities.
If we feel that our plate is already full, then we need to say no to any new tasks. We should never take on more than we can handle (David, 2004). Most people can’t be an expert in every field of work. We can ask our friends and family for help around the house. We can also outsource certain work to professionals.

5. Whatever that is we are working towards, we have to make it visual. According to researches, people who write down to-do-lists are far more successful in getting things done than those people who just keep mental to-do-lists. If we are not a pen-and-paper person, we can always keep our to-do lists on our computers or smart phones. There are so many great software and apps out there that allow us to keep track of our to-do lists easily.

6. Everyone likes to be rewarded for getting things done. Especially for a job to well done. ! If we have worked really hard to accomplish a task, we should buy ourselves a small gift as a reward. We need to read selected books of success stories. We can motivate by “forcing” ourselves to just do it, our momentum will pick up gradually as we go along and before we know it, and we are done! New time management technique is related with 3-R. Such as: respecting ourselves enough to take control of our lives; respecting others enough to not add to their overload and respecting the information that comes at us enough to deal with it effectively.

7. One must plan ones daily, weekly and monthly and annual activities keeping in mind the task and role of the organization or industry. In addition to planning, one should also set priorities of jobs. Unless a job is started, it can never be finished. One should also set deadline for each job to be completed (Graham and Bennett, 1998). Once a job has been started it should not be left unfinished. To start any job, one has to take both mental and physical preparation (Maslow, 1987). If it is left half way through, the same preparation will be required again. Besides, many ideas may be lost. Attempting too many jobs at one time would lead to some of the jobs remaining not done or all the jobs partly done. Centralizing too much authority into one head leads to delay management. The best way is to delegate responsibility to utilize the subordinates.

Time Management and Balanced Life

8. We live in a very competitive and hurried world. The minute we get out of bed, we put ourselves in a “rush mode”. Proper time management allows us to live a balanced life. With proper time management, we not only get our work done, we also have enough time left to do the things we enjoy. In fact time management is a bunch of rules that involves goal settings, planning, creating to-do lists and prioritizing (Hersberg, 1971). These are some of the core time management skills. However, there are more skills involved in time management than these core skills. For example, proper time management requires good decision making skills and inter personal skills.

9. Having a balanced life should be the key goal of time management. A balanced life generally involves 6 aspects of our lives: physical, intellectual, social, career, emotional and spiritual. We have to pay attention to each of these aspects. If we focus on one aspect and forget about the others, then our life is definitely not balanced (Maslow, 1987). For example, workaholics are so focused on the career aspect of their lives that they usually overlook the social aspect (Kotlen and Armstrong, 2013).

Personal Time Management and Some Guidelines

10. Time management strategies are often associated with the recommendation to set personal goals. These goals are recorded and may be broken down into a project, an action plan, or a simple task list. For individual tasks or for goals, an importance rating may be established, deadlines may be set, and priorities assigned. This process results in a plan with a task list or a schedule or calendar of activities. It may recommend that daily, weekly, monthly or other planning periods associated with different scope of planning or review.

Time management also covers how to eliminate tasks that don't provide the individual or organization value (Das, 2003). A task list (also to-do list or things-to-do) is a list of tasks to be completed, such as chores or steps toward completing a project. It is an inventory tool which serves as an alternative or supplement to memory.

11. Parkinson’s law states, Work expands to fill the available time for its accomplishment. According to Pater’s principle for incompetent people, work expands beyond the available time for its accomplishment. Only efficient people know how to accomplish more within limited time. The most commonly used 5 Ms of management include Men, Money, Machine, Material and Moment (time). Time is referred to not merely as a resource of the manager but as a critical resource (Dilworth, 1988). This critical resource must be utilized or managed with the highest degree of effectiveness (Ivanichev, Kono and Matteson, 2008). Unless a person can manage time, he cannot accomplish his job. Pater Drucker has explained the importance of time management by saying, Time is the scarcest resource and unless it is managed, nothing else can be managed (Drucker, 1993).

Time Wasters and Probable Solutions

12. R. Allee Mackenzee has worked with managers of 15 countries for four years to identify time wasters. He could find out 153 time wasters associated with management functions. With very few exceptions, the list of time wasters of managers from diverse backgrounds in different types of enterprises and from different countries is virtually indistinguishable. The list of time wasters of armed forces officers would also be identical. The best way to identify a person’s time waster is to keep on listing what he is doing throughout the day (James, 1975). From such a time log of a week or a month, he himself can identify his time wasters. This list can be exhaustive. Once the time wasters are identified, they should be listed in order of importance and they may be attacked one by one from top.

13. E-mail is a great way to communicate with others. This is especially true for those of us who sit in front of a computer at least 6 or 7 hours a day. So e-mail is the main time waster in present days. It’s better to close our email application when we are working on a task that doesn’t require us to check our e-mails. We can also set up an auto-reply to let people who send us e-mails know that we are currently very busy but we will reply to their e-mails later.

14. Phone calls can interrupt our works too. Sometimes they are even bigger time wasters than e-mails if we have a long winded person on the other end. Designate a specific time for phone calls. In the “welcome message” of our voice mail, we can let our callers know about our specific “phone call periods”. If we have to pick up calls as they come in, then we need to learn to keep them brief (Hull, 1993). We can tell them politely that we are tied up right now but will call them back later. We should turn off our instant messenger when we need to concentrate.

15. Uninvited visitors are people who suddenly need our attention. They can be colleagues, who walked by and decided to stop and chat. They can also be people who ring our doorbell at dinnertime to try to sell/tell us something. Unlike e-mails and phone calls, we have to deal with these uninvited visitors face-to-face. A lot of people have problems saying “No” to someone face-to-face even though this is one of the easiest time management techniques. We should close the door to our office when we need to concentrate on our work (Stephen, 2004). If our office doesn’t have door, we can wear a headphone. People usually don’t talk to us when we are wearing headphones.

16. If we don’t even have time to finish all the things we want/need to do, why do we still have time to watch TV? It’s ok to watch a little TV, but excessive TV watching is a bad time wasting habit. Actually, one of the basic time management techniques is to watch less TV (Leigh, 2001). If we absolutely love the show, we can record it and watch it when we have free time. Also, instead of watching the TV on all day long, we can pick shows that we are really interested in and leave our TV off the rest of the time.
17. The internet contains loads of interesting and useful information. It’s a great place to research and learn information. We can easily spend hours surfing from website to website (Charles, 2014). If our task doesn’t require us to stay online all the time, then we have to disconnect ourselves from the internet when we don’t need to be online. We need to unplug our network cables or turn off the wifi on our computers.

18. Social networking websites such as Facebook and Twitter allow users to interact with each other. These sites can be great places to meet interesting people but at the same time, they can be big time suckers. We should stick to our goal and cut down our time gradually. We can not be discouraged if we “relapse”. We need to get back on track and try again.

**Time Management from an Islamic Perspective**

19. Time is wasted in minutes. It may be waiting for a friend, at a bus-stop, chatting on useless topics, etc. Assemble these pieces of minutes everyday and count how many hours you waste every year. Allah warns us in Quran as; Let every man know what he has sent forth (59:18): We must make a list of our time wasters even if they are a few minutes long. At the same time, we need to make a list of the things which remain unattended by us and have the potential to become a problem if we don’t give them immediate attention. Allah has not created for idle sport the heavens and the earth and all that is between them. Most common time wasters may be listed as: Sleeping more than average, Gossiping with friends on useless topics, Watching TV serials, Reading useless books, Having to wait for a long time at the bus stop, Have a list of pending work, Chatting on the internet on worthless topics, Being addicted to computer games, Free lectures due to absence of boss/teacher/guest, etc. We can take some measure to save time as: Always carry a good book to read; If we discuss, take something worthy, Help our spouse in his/her work, Visit a hospital and meet the poor and sick, Visit our relatives whom we have not met for a long time, Take our family to orphanages.

20. Allah says about the people who were before us, people who were destroyed on the account of their wrong doings, close has come to mankind his accounting. Will he still be heedless? (Surah Ambiya) Life has only one chance. If we fail in our exams, there is always a next year. If we lose our spouse, there can be a second marriage, but if we die, there is no second chance. This life is only one opportunity. Those who were before us had lives longer than us. The Qur'an talks about Nuh (AS), that he worked among his people for 950 years; whereas the average life of this Ummah is around 60 years. We Muslim are the last to come but the first to enter Paradise. With this short life, we still have the opportunity of making the best. It all depends on how we do, what we leave behind, not whatever we leave behind. There are few Islamic activities as per individual capability, skills and talents may be practice:

a) Teach someone any aspect of Islam, be it a dua, correcting hid

b) Talk to either a Muslim or non-Muslim about Islam about the
greatness of Allah.

c) Be a volunteer for any social cause in helping people.

d) Intercede for a good cause and have a share in it. (Surah Nisaa: 85) Spot an orphan/widow and find out a sponsor if you cannot

f) Perform Isha and Fajr salaah in congregation and receive a reward of praying the whole night.

g) Do ibaadah in the nights in the last odd nights in Ramadan and earn a

h) Keep aside one hour every day for self-development. Suppose you

i) We can take some measure to

**Time Management and organization leader**

21. Organization leader need to take quick and correct decision. Decision making is very important for any organization and morale of the subordinates. Effective communication and information would reduce misunderstanding, delay of work, wastage of resources and output in wrong direction. A leader must convey his intentions in clear concise and unambiguous words. In case of important decisions, oral communication may be supported by written communication. About committee there is a saying, a camel is a horse designed by a committee. A committee is a collection of the unfit, detailed by the unwilling, to do the unnecessary. However, committee decisions are very costly and time consuming. It is always advisable to avoid too many committee decisions. It is sorry to say that in a meeting, minutes are recorded and hours are wasted. This may not be always true. Besides, personality clash between members, sometimes may lead to pandemonium.

22. An inefficient boss always forms committee and calls meeting frequently to proof him as a successful organizer. But at the end of the day, he achieves nothing but keeping everybody busy. It’s well said that, a wrong decision in right time is better than a good decision in wrong time. A successful organization leader always gives quick and firm decisions to his subordinates. A confused organization leader usually uses flourish languages and avoids decision making by wasting time and jeopardizes the entire mission.

**Tips for Better Time Manager**

23. Time management can be considered to be a project management subset and is more commonly known as project planning and project scheduling. Time Management has also been identified as one of the core functions identified in project management. There are A-Z tips on how to be a better time manager.

a. We must make some daily/weekly planning. We must plan our
day before it unfolds. We should do it in the morning or even better, the night before we sleep. The plan gives us a good overview of how the day will pan out. We should have some Long
term planning also.

b. We must hook a time limit to each task. It should be clear that, we

need to finish a task by 9am, B task by 2pm, and Z task by 6pm. This prevents our work from dragging on and eating into time reserved for other activities.

c. We should have some task calendar. Because, having a calendar is

the most fundamental step to managing our daily activities.

d. The organizer helps us to be on top of everything in our life.

e. Mark the deadlines out clearly in our calendar and organizer so we

know when we need to finish them.

f. We should not take more task than we can handle. For the

distrations that come in when we’re doing other things, we must
give a firm no.

g. We should review our work. Weekly reviews and updates are also an

important strategy.
h. Since we can’t do everything, we should learn to prioritize the important and let go of the rest. Whatever the case, we must prioritize our tasks.

i. We must postpone unnecessary activities until the ongoing work is done.

j. We must plan for early. If we target to be early, we’ll most likely be on time.

k. We must restrict our work to specific amount of time.

l. Sometimes we are so engrossed in our work that we lose track of time. Having a huge clock in front of us will keep us aware of the time at the moment.

m. We must set reminders 10 to 20 minutes before. If we’ve an important task to do, we should set alarm 10 minutes before.

n. We should focus solely on what we’re doing.

o. We should block out the distracting matters in our work.

p. We should track our time spent.

q. We’re never getting everything done in exactly the way we want. So trying to do so is being ineffective. We should remember this point.

r. If there are things that can be better done by others or things that are not so important, we should consider delegating. This takes a load off and we can focus on the important tasks.

s. For related work, we should batch them together. It really streamlines the process.

t. Eliminate your time wasters. What takes our time away our work? That must be Stop.

u. We should cut off when we need to do so.

v. We should not pack everything closely together. We must leave a 10 minute buffer time in between each task.

w. We should identify resources to help us.

x. Review notes and readings just before attending any meeting or solving any problem or any special task.

y. We should use our free time wisely and meticulously.

z. We should have faith on almighty and faith on ourselves. We can’t do everything. Why we will plan for everything? We must understand our limitation and should not overact for any situation. Excessive stress and tension kill our mental peace and give us anxiety. A peaceful and happy soul can do everything.

**Conclusion**

24. Time is precious, if we want to be successful in life; we need to be spending more time on things that will move us closer to our goals. Spending hours a day watching TV, playing games in computer or chatting on net/facebook, or surfing the internet are not productive time usages. We all need downtime but we need to determine how much downtime is really necessary. To achieve organizational goals effectively all officers should learn how to manage time. The first step in the time management is to identify one’s own time wasters. A smart staff officer is like an aggressive salesman who is a communicator between a selling item and a buyer. If any human can master the techniques, time management is not at all a problem for him. He or she can accomplish his/his job in time as well as enjoy leisure.

25. Time management is the act or process of planning and exercising conscious control over the amount of time spent on specific activities, especially increase to effectiveness, efficiency or productivity. The Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said: hold yourself accountable before you are held accountable and weigh your deeds before they are weighed for you (Bukhari).

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