

## The Importance of Time Management to become efficient in the Workplace

**Mrs.Blessy Elizabeth Mathew**

Lecturer (HR), Business Studies, Salalah College of Technology  
Under the Ministry of Manpower, P.O. Box No. 608, Postal Code 211  
Salalah, Sultanate of Oman

### Abstract

*To view the importance of time management to become efficient in the workplace and to find the best steps and strategies that help in time management.*

### Methodology

*Integrative review with the following guiding question: What is time management? How to manage time to become efficient in the workplace? What are the strategies used in managing time? Searches were performed in EBSCO, WILEY, Elsevier databases. Reviewing articles from different journals and books that concerning about the topic with the following categories: Management, Leadership, Free time, Workplace.*

### Results

*The results highlight that people have to use the strategies in their works in order to become efficient in their work place as well as to develop their self's.*

### Conclusion

*Proper planning and good organization of time with the proper implementation of the plans and positive disposition towards wasting time gives us a successful and effective management of time.*

**Key words: Time management, Time strategies, Effectiveness, Time in workplace, Free time,**

### Introduction

Managers have four kinds of resources: people, equipment, money and time. Of these the time is irreplaceable, which means the time management skills are essential for success (Pearce,2007).

Time management teaches us to organize our time, so that we can become effective in our decisions and become constructive in our workplace. "It's one of the necessary conditions for managers' efficacy and one of the strategies for improving the conditions of organization survival, can be establish in an organization successfully if the appropriate cultural backgrounds have already been established for this system"(Hashemzadeh et al.,2011, p. 2536).

Understanding of time management and leisure planning principles can affect physical and mental health (Trenberth, 2005). Allowing ourselves to consciously choose how to spend our time, in the context of a holistic approach to life, rather than being dictated and constrained by a specific role, may lead to increased happiness and to a more balanced sense of self (Bresciani, Duncan & Cao, 2010).

Every organization pays its employees for their hard work and efficiency. Individuals need to achieve the assigned targets within the desired time frame. It is essential for employees to meet deadlines and deliver results on time. Employees need to get their work done on time to expect timely appraisals and appreciation from not only managers but also external clients. Delaying work leads to no solution. One needs to adopt a systematic approach to be efficient at workplace.

### Methodology

Integrative review was undertaken using the retrieval system online, EBSCO, WILEY and Elsevier databases. Key words used in the search included: Time management, Time strategies, Effectiveness, Time in workplace, Free time. The inclusion criteria used were: articles published in English. Also some books included in this review.

Discussion:

Management is the science that includes the planning, organization and coordination, guidance and oversight. Henri Fayol defined management as “planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating and controlling the work of a given set of employees” (Wren, 1972,p.9). Due to the importance of management not only in practice, but even in our daily lives, the time plays an important role and a key role in our life.

Time management is a way to develop and use processes and tools for maximum efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity. It involves mastery of a set of skills like setting goals, planning. And also its effective use of time to achieve desired results (Downs, 2008). In time management we are managing our time better, we are making our decisions better. At the end we have better performance.

If we manage and organize our time, it help us to complete our work faster with less effort. Also it gives us more opportunities.

Proper planning and good organization of time with the proper implementation of the plan and positive disposition towards wasting time gives us a successful and effective management of time.

Efficiency is the master key to true success. We need to develop love and loyalty towards what we do. Only then we can develop our personal efficiency. Efficiency is producing more with less effort. If we think that we are efficient, we should have “the good things in our life.” Good things in life means, better education, more money and things we desire. If we are not able to achieve our goals or able to have better life or good things in our life, that means that we are not efficient or we are not doing things efficiently.

Improved personal efficiency teaches us:

- How to organize our life
- How to identify the disadvantages in our life and how to overcome them.

It has been said that we need to acquire good habits because good habits are a sign of intelligence.

When we improve our principles of efficiency, we learn that nothing is impossible if we have faith to fight for it and achieve it. For this, we need to develop the art of thinking correctly and also time management. The following thought was written about Napoleon, “He planned and won battles in his mind before he won them in the battlefield.” “Think before acting” we all should practice this. Our mental capacity decides what we could be in the future.

### Pareto’s Principle

The 80/20 Rule, also known as Pareto's Principle, says that 20 percent of something always are responsible for 80 percent of the results. For example, twenty percent of the products will have eighty percent of the flaws. This Rule tells how we can use it to more effectively to manage our time and many different aspects of our life. Also another theory which is Pickles Jar Theory which deals with the aspect of creating proper balance, it helps us to visualize priorities, as well as the amount and size of tasks that can be done realistically on a given day (Brogan, 2010).

### How to manage our time?

"The essence of time management is to put some things first, others second, and still others third. Set goals and order them from most to least important. Then develop a time plan for meeting them. Control your actions in order to make the most of your time. Learning to manage time means learning to manage yourself" (Katey & Torres, 2006, p. 1). Many researchers and writers wrote and discuss the strategies for time management. Walker, Wysocki & Kepner (2012) proposed five tips for Managing Time in the Workplace:

- (1) Prioritize your tasks;
- (2) Get the job done right the first time;
- (3) Do not waste time;
- (4) Delegate tasks;

(5) Avoid procrastination".

Also they concluded that " Focusing on these common areas of managing time should reduce the amount of time spent on each task. Prioritizing is simple once a to-do-list is utilized that fits your style; this requires the ability to distinguish what is important and/or urgent during the day. Adjusting the way tasks are executed will save time and minimize procrastination. Delegating tasks to the most appropriate person will reduce wasted time for you and others. Finally, dealing with the sources of procrastination will go a long way to making you an effective manager of time".

Computers and technology allow fast processing of activities in work and life. It can even replace manpower in some areas. Even then human resources are required to operate the system and we should manage our time to become efficient in using technology. If we are not able to manage our time, whatever technology is available we cannot be efficient or effective. Most importantly, we should have the knowledge of using technology.

Studies in the USA show that efficiency in blue collar industry has improved 80% over the last decade. In the same period, however, white collar productivity has improved by only 4%. This is despite enormous advances in technology.

The key to productivity improvements in blue collar work has been a strong focus on improving processes; for example, the implementation of Kaizen. But most white collar workers are only vaguely aware of their personal work processes.

Most managers, when asked, say they were never actually taught to work. Sure, we're taught our computer systems, we attend university to learn the theory and practice of our areas of specialisation, but few of us are ever shown how to deal with the day to day 'administrivia' that crosses our desks and keeps us at work until all hours.

Almost everyone can work more efficiently and more effectively, but the realisation that they need to improve comes slowly to most.

Immediately after getting up from the bed we will become busy in our day to day tasks. Because we don't spend time to think, we forget that we have choices. By learning to control our time on a daily level, we will be successful in managing the obligations and achieving our overall goal.

We should first examine our routine activities. By studying about the activities we can have some choices like, some activities can be altered, some can be delegated and some can be deleted. So that we can develop a new routine.

When we are busy in doing something, we feel that the time is not sufficient. But when we are bored, it stretches. Only 24 hours is given for everyone. But it is different for everyone because we all perceive differently.

By trying to have balance and harmony in all areas of our life, we can alter our current perception of time thereby reducing our stress and increasing our productivity.

Nowadays everywhere we need Smart work not hard work. Being productive does not mean doing more. We should have effective production. Sometimes we should slowdown then we can become productive afterwards.

#### Pickles Jar Theory

This theory teach us the right way to manage time, it's very simple to understand and execute, it also makes us aware of the fact that distractions that lead to mismanagement that should be avoided completely in order to follow the right track (Sengupta, 2011). The basic idea is that you should schedule only your high priority tasks for the day and leave the gaps in between for less important activities (email, browsing and so forth). This is supported by the analogy of a pickle jar, where you can fit more in the jar if you add large pebbles first before pouring in smaller pebbles and sand (rather than adding the largest pebbles last when they will be unlikely to fit).

### Managing time in our workplace

In the workplace we have to face some stress and difficulties on the job, with a little planning and prioritizing, we can better manage the time we have at work, allowing us to provide better care for ourselves and our colleagues. Time management that can help us balance our professional and personal lives more efficiently and effectively, it's important to learn how to manage our time at work effectively to reduce stress and ensure us to provide efficient work activities. Time management is recognized as an important component of work performance. People are using different strategies of time management. Learning time management skills lets us work smarter instead of harder. This skill is crucial to survive the day to day busy schedule.

### Importance of time management to become efficient in our work

Most of us have a lot of things we are responsible for and to make quick decisions about many things. Improving time management plans can make us much more efficient in our work activities. Of course, better time management can also be a big stress relief for those working in advanced environment. Knowing how to prioritize the tasks can make a big difference in lowering stress and helping to manage the our work, less stress can also help us arrive to spend time relaxing or socializing with the family without feeling completely exhaustion and nervous.

### We can try the following to make our work effective:

- Consider the activities which are eating our time and energy.
- List out those activities according to priority.
- Review the list and see what choices we can make to minimize our time and energy.
- List the reasons why we are not able to make the choices in some areas.
- Modify those areas in which we are not able to make any choices.

### Free time management

Wei, Chin, Tzung, and Chung (2011) referring free time to those periods when individuals are unobligated and can decide his works. And it usually involves "killing time" if not objective this free time, also having no plans for free time can cause problems, "While time management can improve the quality of work, the management of free time can contribute to the quality of life" (p. 561-562). Trenberth (2005) concluded in her study that leisure can contribute to physical, social, emotional and cognitive health through prevention, coping and transcendence. And also she suggested that educating and counseling people on how to manage their time and plan for leisure can help people apply those skills and improve physical and mental health. In Wei, Chin, Tzung, and Chung (2011) study they recommended to have the opportunities not only for recreation, but also for leisure education to teach students how to manage their free time. Finally, it is easy to blame others or circumstances, but the human remains responsible for his time. If people do not make use of time management and its benefits, they will not be benefited from the services of science and technology (Hashemzadeh et al., 2011).

### Conclusion

Time management is the ability of person to use the time function to accomplish the tasks in the exact timing. When we are successful at time management, we are able to maximize use of every hour of the day. This means using each hour of our day to do the right things to accomplish all of the tasks that we need to in the most efficient manner. More time management more achievement, less stress. Managing time effectively, knowing when to delegate and thinking critically are essential. There is no shortcut to become effective as well as to manage time. Careful planning will enable us to reduce the number of crisis in our life so that we will have the energy and time to react when a true crisis occurs and to live a well balanced life.

### References

- Major, V. S., Klein, K. J., & Ehrhart, M. G. (2002). Work time, work interference with family, and psychological distress. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87, 427–436. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.87.3.427
- Hobfoll, S. E. (2011). Conservation of resource caravans and engaged settings. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 84, 116–122. doi:10.1111/j.2044-8325.2010.02016.x
- Brogan, J. (2010). Expand Your Pareto Principle. *Industrial Engineer : IE*, 42(11), 45-49. Retrieved from: <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/>
- Bresciani, M. J., Duncan, A. J., & Cao, L. H. (2010). Embracing the Ambiguity: Twelve Considerations for Holistic Time Management. *About Campus*, 17-21. doi:10.1002/abc.20037. Published online in Wiley Online Library ([www.wileyonlinelibrary.com](http://www.wileyonlinelibrary.com))
- Downs, L. J., & American Society for Training and Development. (2008). *Time management training*. Alexandria, Va: ASTD Press.
- Hashemzadeh, G. R., Ranjbar, V., Moosavi, S. T., & Eidi, F. (2011). The Role of Organizational Culture in the Establishment of Time Management (A Case Study: Mines and Mineral Industries). *Aust. J. Basic & Appl. Sci*, 5(12), 2536-2543.
- Jones, J. R. (2012, May 23). Time is on your side. *Nursing Standard*, 26 (38), 70-71.
- Katey, W., & Torres, N. I. (2006, August). *Time Management for Busy People*. University of Florida . Retrieved October 18, 2012. Retrieved from <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>
- Munyisia, E. N., Yu, P., & Hailey, D. (2011). How nursing staff spend their time on activities in a nursing home. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 67 (9), 1908-1917.
- Pearce, C. (2007, April). Leadership resources: Ten Steps to manage time. *Nursing Management*, 14(1), 23. Retrieved from: <http://nursingmanagement.rcnpublishing.co.uk/archive/article-ten-steps-to-managing-time>
- Rosario, P. D. (2012). 6 Nursing Time Management Skills You Should Have | *nurseTogether.com*. All About Nurses, Nurse Communication, Nurse Community | Nurse Together . Retrieved from <http://www.nursetogether.com/Lifestyle/Lifestyle-Article/itemid/3260.aspx#.UJ6pX-TqmyU>
- Sengupta, S. (2011, March 28). Time Management Theories. *Buzzle* . Retrieved from <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/time-management-theories.html>
- Trenberth, L. (2005). The role, nature and purpose of leisure and its contribution to individual development and well-being. *British Journal of Guidance & Counseling*, 33(1), 1-6.
- Walker, S., Wysocki, A., & Kepner, K. (2012, February). *Managing Time in the Workplace*. University of Florida , p.1-3.
- Source: Tony D'Arcy Published: September 2011 Wei, C. W., Chin, H. K., Tzung, C. H., & Chung, C. W. (2011). Free Time Management Contributes to Better Quality of Life: A Study of Undergraduate Students in Taiwan. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 12, 561-573.
- Wren, D. A. (1972). *The evolution of management thought*. New York, USA: Ronald Press.
- Hobfoll, S. E. (2002). Social and psychological resources and adaptation. *Review of General Psychology*, 6, 307–324. doi:10.1037/1089-2680.6.4.307