

# Time Management

**Mr. Chandrabhan Singh**

Shri G. P. M. Degree College, Vile Parle (E), Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

**Abstract:** *Time management is considered to be a skill that should be mastered by all the individuals at all levels and in all walks of life. Some people keep extremely busy schedules that arise out of their educational requirements, office work, job duties or household chores. In order to avoid feeling stressed or pressurized due to work, it is required to effectively implement time management. In this case study manuscript, the researcher has highlighted the significance of time management, time management methods, how to effectively implement time management, management of intrusions, management of procrastination and a case study of valuable time management. Time management is also considered to be the management of ones life in an appropriate manner. Good time management means deciding what an individual wants to achieve in life and how he should establish ways to attain his desires and objectives. Appropriate time management involves less stress and pressure, increased recreation, more contentment and greater completion and success..*

**Keywords:** Time Management, Methods, Effective, Intrusions, Procrastination, Tasks

## I. INTRODUCTION

Time is a finite resource, and how we manage it can greatly impact our personal and professional lives. Time Management is an essential skill that helps us make the most of our limited time, ensuring that we achieve our goals and maintain a healthy work-life balance. In this blog, we will explore What is Time Management and the various techniques and tips for successful Time Management.

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Defining What is Time Management

Before we delve deeper into the concept, we will first define Time Management. Time Management is the process of planning, organising, and prioritizing tasks and activities to make the best use of your time. It involves setting goals, creating schedules, and making conscious choices about how to allocate your time to various tasks and responsibilities. Effective Time Management helps you accomplish more in less time while reducing stress and improving your overall quality of life.

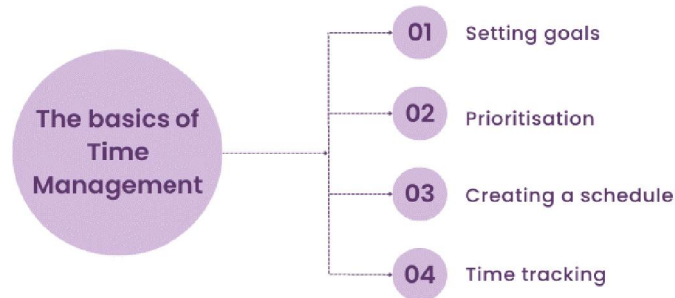
The basics of Time Management

Now that we know the definition of Time Management, we will explore its basics. This section of the blog will expand on the core components of Time Management.

### Setting goals

Setting goals is the bedrock of effective Time Management. It involves defining clear and specific objectives. Goals provide direction and purpose, helping you determine what you want to achieve in a given period. When setting goals, it's essential to be specific, measurable, and time-bound.

Specificity ensures you have a clear target, measurability allows you to track your progress, and time-bound goals provide a sense of urgency. Setting meaningful goals gives your daily tasks a purpose, making it easier to allocate your time effectively.



### **Prioritisation**

Not all tasks are the same in terms of importance and urgency. Prioritisation is the art of identifying which tasks should take precedence. One valuable method for prioritising tasks is the Eisenhower Matrix.

It categorises tasks into four quadrants: urgent and important, important but not urgent, urgent but not important, and neither urgent nor important. This approach helps you allocate your time and energy to the most critical tasks, ensuring that you tackle what matters most first.

An individual is involved in multiple tasks in his daily life such as activities of daily living, performing ones work duties, recreational activities such as watching television, listening to music, going out with friends and so forth. When an individual is involved into multitasking, especially working individuals, for example, a person who is at the position of a director in a reputed organization has multiple tasks to carry out, or a student who studies in the tenth grade, he has to take out time for all the subjects, as well as extracurricular activities, hence for all the individuals it is essential to implement effective time management. There have been certain characteristics of time; it is measured in units, every individual gets the same amount each day, the time is neither less nor more for any individual, timings are relevant for every individual in order to efficiently carry out his work duties and responsibilities. There have been myriad of activities and tasks that are implemented in accordance with the time such as meetings in the office, classroom periods in school, lunch breaks, tea breaks, working hours and so forth. Hence, it is necessary to manage time in all kinds of tasks, functions and duties for all the individuals no matter what kinds of work duties they are involved into.

### **Significance of Time Management**

Time management is a concept that deals with the effective management of time. An individual should organize all his tasks and duties in accordance with the timings; when an individual, no matter what age group he is, no matter what job he is engaged into implement all his functions in accordance with the time that makes him more disciplined, well organized and efficient. Time management provides every individual an opportunity to decide how to make use of this important source; it allows people to make the most of the least and it enhances ones knowledge about how to spend the time in a constructive manner. Individuals become aware of how to systematize and manage their lifestyles and not feel pressurized or over burdened due to any work (Time Management, n.d.). Time management is a skill and individuals should learn effective time management irrespective of their age, work, jobs, caste, class, creed or religion. It is done in a successful manner by giving priorities; things that are more important should be put into practice first and other things that are lesser important can be procrastinated. Practicing time management always prevents an individual from keeping behind in his work and studies.

### **Time Management Methods**

There have been various time management methods that have been taken under consideration: (Time Management, n.d.).

**Plan** – An individual should plan his goals, objectives and functions that he has to put into service in a particular time limit. There are certain things that are more important than the others for example, if an individual has to work on a project he has to focus upon that and going out with friends for a movie can be procrastinated, hence planning of tasks and objectives is important. One should be prepared to encounter impediments that arise and deal with them in a peaceful manner.

**Organize** – Every individual wants to achieve his goals and objectives, for this purpose, he has to organize all the activities and work duties such as making use of technology, preparing ones mindset and organizing ones working environment.

**Staff** – Effective communication and seeking support, help or assistance from the superiors, subordinates or colleagues also certainly helps in implementation of functions and responsibilities. Team work, working together in groups, seeking opinions, suggestions, recommendations from others is highly productive.

**Direct** – One should always be positive towards one self, such as rewarding one self by getting indulged in some kind of pleasurable activities; one should always work hard and be motivated towards one self.

**Evaluate** – An individual should evaluate himself; his performance, attitude and behavior; in this way, he comes to know his weaknesses and can adopt measures to improve them. Identification of flaws and inconsistencies is a must and that comes through the process of evaluation.

**How to Effectively Implement Time Management?**

Effective implementation of time management involves courses of actions: (UK Time Management, 2008).

**Evaluate Yourself** – When an individual evaluates himself, he can identify all the problems, barriers and inconsistencies that are arising in the course of his performance. He learns to figure out the relevant measures and techniques that needs to be effectively implemented in order to enhance his performance and abilities.

**Assess Your Behavior** – It is vital to keep ones behavior, conduct and demeanor positive. One should possess effective communication skills, be polite in speaking and have a good pleasing nature and attitude. These positive traits are going to prove to be extremely helpful in making a person successful.

**Setting up Short and Long term Goals** – There are certain goals and objectives that a person has to achieve; some are short term while others are long term which may even take two years or more. Goals should be SMART, specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound. Setting of goals is fundamental for effective time management and life management.

**One needs to Visualize Goals, Objectives, Tasks and Functions** – It is essential to think about ones goals and objectives as well as tasks and functions; an individual should be aware of where he is and where he wants to go. One should try to get involved into relaxation techniques, meditation and yoga so that one can effectively think about these and even formulate effective modes and procedures to put them into operation.

**Be Efficient and Work Hard** – One should be efficient, productive, conscientious and meticulous in the performance of his functions and duties. Some people are not perfectionists but they should aim at completion and render their best performance in all the activities.

**Support and Assistance** – Establishing effective communications, avoidance of disputes and conflicts, seeking help and support from other individuals around is crucial for any person to understand time management. For example, if a person is handling a big job, working on a major project then there can be some things that he cannot accomplish by himself and needs help from others; therefore, effective time management in the case of any job involves support and assistance.

**Setting Up Schedules**– For students or office employees or working professionals, it is essential to set up a schedule or a chart with important classes, or test dates, or dates of submission of assignments, or meetings or making presentations and so forth listed or marked on them. A schedule plan will enable a person to set priorities and work hard towards the most important area or the area that is first in accordance with the schedule (Making More of Your Time, n.d.).

**Management of Intrusions**

Interruptions, disturbances, barriers and obstacles are common in conducting all kinds of tasks and activities. They normally take a major form or a minor form; for example, if an individual is working on his computer or on an important assignment, the door bell rings and a friend comes, he has to take out time for his friend and postpone his assignment for the time being, this is a case of a minor disturbance. On the other hand, going to

school in the morning and a vehicular accident takes place and lands a person in the hospital is an example of a major impediment that has occurred during the course of his studies. An individual needs to effectively manage interruptions that occur; he needs to discipline himself and others around him eliminate the causes of those interruptions.

There have been ways of managing interruptions, before implementing any task, one should find out if it is extremely necessary such as calling a meeting, or whether one can communicate via email or telephone. One should plan working on any projects or assignments or tasks in accordance with the time, that way one is able to take out time for other things as well. Friends, colleagues and other relatives should be asked to give you a call before coming, if they call up, that makes you aware that they will be visiting you hence you can plan your tasks accordingly. One should keep one self stress free, calm and focused on ones job performances, because in this manner one will be able to do his best and effectively manage intrusions and disturbances (Successful Time Management, 2010).

### **Management of Procrastination**

The term procrastination means delaying, postponing or putting off work. Sometimes individuals do have a valid reason for avoiding a task and at times they do not have a valid reason and just avoid doing work out of leisure or pleasurable activities. When a person is focusing upon something other than what he should be focusing on in accordance with his own priorities or the priorities of the organization, he is procrastinating. When an individual puts off a task that is not important in favor of a task that is more important, that is not called procrastination, in fact that is good quality time management and prioritization (Successful Time Management, 2010).

There have been reasons for procrastinating and in accordance with those reasons individuals find strategies to manage procrastination. Firstly, the individuals may find their job unpleasant; in this case, they should consider the pay and the rewards that they will achieve after accomplishment of this unpleasant job. Secondly, when an individual is disorganized, in this case, he should learn to properly organize his files and other documents, check his email and respond and plan all the work duties that he has to implement in a timely manner. Thirdly, when any assignment or project is overwhelming, in this case he should try to carry out the tasks in pieces, whether it may take a little longer, doing a small part of it each day will help in accomplishing it in a fulfilled manner. Fourthly, when a person is a perfectionist he develops that fear that what would be the outcome if anything goes wrong, when one is unsure about anything, he should always seek support and assistance from bosses, colleagues, superiors or subordinates; a second opinion always helps rather than just carrying out the task solely. Finally, when an individual is facing difficulties in decision making, then it is vital to consult experienced and proficient people around, one should not become an introvert and share ones problems and difficulties in order to find their remedies and solutions (Successful Time Management, 2010).

### **Case Study: Valuable Time Management**

Valuable time management is life management; when an individual learns to manage his time effectively, he certainly learns to manage his life effectively. This is the case of a student, named Aditi, she is a final year student in Delhi University, pursuing Bachelor of Commerce, honors course; in college she is taking five classes which are extremely demanding, therefore, she even has to take private tuitions at the coaching center, in addition to her college studies she is undergoing training for an MBA entrance exam as she plans to pursue an MBA degree after she graduates and she is pursuing a program in electronic business technologies from National Institute of Information Technology (NIIT), she goes for these classes thrice a week. In the mornings she has her college and in the evenings she has her MBA entrance coaching and NIIT classes, on weekends she goes for her college tuitions. Besides education, she gets her physical exercises in the mornings. This information shows how hard she works and stays extremely busy.

Extensive work can make a person feel stressed out, pressurized and depressed; therefore, a person needs to develop effective time management skills. Aditi has organized her proper time schedule during the day that she regularly follows. In the morning she wakes up around 6: 00 am and gets her physical exercises, at 8:00 am she reaches college and attends her classes, socializes with friends and returns home around 1 or 2 pm, after taking lunch and a rest break for an hour she goes to study. At 6:00 pm twice a week she goes for MBA entrance coaching and thrice a week she goes to NIIT, these classes are for two hours, hence she reaches home around 8:30 pm, have dinner, watches a little bit of television, then she studies for a while and goes to bed around 11:30 pm.

Watching television and socializing with friends in college can be given least priorities, important tasks are attending classes, completion of homework assignments or any projects and keeping a schedule of tests, exams or submission of assignments. This college student has developed effective time management skills and is able to cope up with all kinds of demands and educational requirements. On the other hand, if an individual does not manage ones time effectively he will certainly experience difficulties in implementation of tasks. Spending hours with friends, going for a movie is fine once in a while but when one has to study and attend classes that should be given a major priority. Time management has been extremely valuable to this final year college student.

### **Discussion**

Every individual engages himself into some or the other kinds of work or performance of functions and duties. The work can be housework, job duties, studies, preparing meals, artwork, sports, or any other kind of extracurricular activities. Besides work duties and functions, there are also other routine works such as activities of daily living that comprise of eating, bathing, dressing and transferring, physical exercises or even resting or sleeping. People implement all these tasks and functions in accordance with the time such as they have to reach school or office on a particular time, they have to eat their lunch on a particular time, they have regular sleeping hours such as waking up on a particular time and going to bed on a specific time and so forth. Effective implementation of all these tasks and functions require every person to develop their time management skills and acquire knowledge about how to make the most of the time in an appropriate manner.

There have been certain methods that are required for effective time management such as planning, organizing, staffing, directing and evaluating. There are been ways about how to effectively implement time management, these are evaluating yourself, assessing your behavior, setting up goals that can be short term as well as long term, one should visualize the goals, objectives, tasks and functions, one has to be efficient and work hard, believe in seeking support and assistance from others in handling major tasks and setting up schedules. In the process of time management, disturbances and intrusions do take place but the individuals should not get upset or displease their mindset, one should try to search for solutions for any kinds of problems that might arise during the course of their performance and work. Another relevant area is management of procrastination, it is important to set priorities and tasks that are more important, these should be carried out before the others that are less important. Time management is a valuable area, this has been highlighted with the help of a case study of a college student who is undergoing four classes; college graduate course, MBA entrance coaching, NIIT course and college tuitions, in addition she does physical exercises, watches television and socializes with friends; she has effectively grasped the skill of time management and implements all her functions and duties effectively.

Time management is a set of principles, practices, skills, tools, and systems working together to help us get more value out of our time with the aim of improving the quality of our life.

#### **Common Characteristics of time**

- Time is gold. Do not litter it away.
- It is a unique resource and if wasted cannot be replaced.
- Can not be stocked/ piled for future no retrieved.
- Everybody has its same share irrespective of being rich or poor

#### **Purpose of Time Management**

Time Management is a set of tools which enables us to:

1. Eliminate wastage
2. Be prepared for meetings
3. Refuse excessive workloads
4. Monitor project progress
5. Allocate resource (time) appropriate to a task's importance
6. Ensure that long term projects are not neglected
7. Plan each day efficiently
8. Plan each week effectively

#### **Myths About Stress and Time Management**

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Myth#1 (All stress is bad)

No, there's good and bad stress. Good stress is excitement, thrills, etc. the goal is to recognize personal signs of bad stress and deal with them.

Myth#2 (Planning my time just takes more time)

Actually, research shows the opposite.

Myth#3 (I get more done in less time when I wisely use caffeine, sugar, alcohol or nicotine.)

Wrong! Research shows that the body always has to "come down" and when it does, we can't always be very effective then after the boost.

Myth#4 (A time management problem means that there's not enough time to get done what needs to get done.)

No, a time management problem is not using our time to our fullest advantage, to get done what we want done.

Myth#5 (The busier I am, the better I'm using my time.)

Look out! We may only be doing what's urgent, and not what's important.

Myth#6 (I feel very harried, busy, so I must have a time management problem.)

Not necessarily. We should verify that we have a time management problem. This requires knowing what we really want to get done and if it is getting done or not.

Myth#7 (I feel OK, so I must not be stressed)

In reality, many adults don't even know when they're really stressed out until their bodies tell them so. They miss the early warning signs from their body, for example, headaches, stiff backs, twitches, etc.

Myth#8 (There's too much to do; I can't handle it all.)

This can't be the real reason why I have a messy house. After all, other people manage. It's encouraging to hear that there are others who also have trouble with the "little" things in life.

Myth#9 (There's plenty of time; I can do that later.)

Funny. This is the exact opposite of myth#8, Yet both myths contribute to procrastinating. Rather than switch from one myth to the other, I need a specific, realistic view of how much my time is worth and how much of it is left.

Myth#10 (I'm busier than usual right now, so it makes sense to shift some tasks off to another time)

Occasionally it's really true, of course. But really, there are so many other aspects to life: dentist appointments, parties holiday celebrations, bike repairs, etc. etc. that taking all into consideration, the other days are also just as busy.

Myth#11 (Re-scheduling something to a later time is procrastinating)

No, re-scheduling is taking control and responding to new information about priorities and time available. It's only procrastinating if you don't schedule it at all, or if you re-schedule for the wrong reasons.

Myth#12 (This little task is not important.)

Some times trifling little things are of utmost importance which should be done immediately. We cannot postpone hanging the Danger board while working on live electrical lines.

Time Management Matrix

Priority

- Very urgent
- Urgent
- Important
- Not important
- Not urgent

Time Wasters

Worrying about a task at hand and putting it off, which leads to indecision

- b) Creating inefficiency by implementing first instead of analyzing first
- c) Unanticipated interruptions that do not pay off
- d) Procrastinating
- e) Making unrealistic time estimates
- f) Unnecessary errors (not enough time to do it right, but enough time to do it over
- g) Crisis management
- h) Poor organization

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- i) Micro-managing by failing to let others perform and grow
  - j) Doing urgent rather than important tasks
  - k) Poor planning and lack of contingency plans
  - l) Failing to delegate
  - m) Lacking priorities, standards, policies, and procedures
  - n) Ineffective meetings
- Time Savers
- Managing the decision-making process, not the decisions.
- Concentrating on doing only one task at a time.
- Establishing daily, short-term, mid-term and long –term priorities
- Handling correspondence expeditiously with quick short letters and memos
- Throwing unneeded things away.
- Establishing personal deadlines and ones for the organization.
- Not wasting other people’s time.
- Ensuring all meetings have a purpose, time limit, and include only essential people.
- Getting rid of busy work.
- Maintaining accurate calendars; abide by them.
- Knowing when to stop a task, policy, or procedure.
- Delegating everything possible and empowering subordinates.
- Keeping things simple.
- Ensuring time is set aside to accomplish high priority tasks.
- Setting aside time for review.
- Using checklists and To-Do lists.
- Adjusting priorities as a result of new tasks.
- Common Symptoms of Poor Stress And Time Management
- Irritability. Fellow workers notice this first.
- Fatigue. How many adults even notice this?
- Difficulty concentrating. We often don’t need to just to get through the day!
- Forgetfulness. I can’t remember what I did all day, what I ate yesterday.
- Loss of sleep. This affects everything else!
- Physical disorders, for example, headaches, rashes, tics, cramps, etc.
- At worst, withdrawal and depression

What to do?

Write things down

A common time management mistake is to try to use our memory to keep track of too many details leading to information overload. Using a to-do list to write things down is a great way to take control of our projects and tasks and keep our self organized.

Prioritize our list

Prioritizing our to-do list helps us focus and spend more of our time on the things that really matter to us. Rate our tasks into categories like “should do”, “Must do” etc.

Plan our week

Spend some time at the beginning of each week to plan our schedule. Taking the extra time to do this will help increase our productivity and balance our important long-term projects with our more urgent tasks. All we need is fifteen to thirty minutes each week for our planning session.

Carry a note book

We never know when we are going to have a great idea or brilliant insight. Carry a small notebook with us wherever we go so we can capture our thoughts. If we wait too long to write them down we could forget. Another option is to use a digital recorder.

Learn to say No

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Many people become overloaded with too much work because they over commit; say yes when they really should be saying no. Learn to say no to low priority requests and we will free up time to spend on things that are more important.

Think before acting

How many times have we said yes to something we later regretted? Before committing to a new task, stop to think about it before we give our answer. This will prevent us from taking on too much work.

Continuously improve our self

Make time in our schedule to learn new things and develop our natural talents and abilities. For example, we can take a class, attend a training program, help children make their project or read a book.

What are we giving up to do our regular activities?

It is a good idea to evaluate regularly how we are spending our time. In some cases, the best thing we can do is to stop doing an activity that is no longer serving us so we can spend the time doing something more valuable.

Use a time management system

Using a time management system can help us keep track of everything of everything that we need to do, organize and prioritize our work, and develop sound plans to complete it. An integrated system is like glue that holds all the best time management practices together.

Identify bad habits

Make a list of bad habits that are stealing our time, sabotaging our goals, and blocking our success. After we do, work on them one at a time and systematically eliminate them from our life. Remember that the easiest way to eliminate a bad habit, is to replace it with a better habit.

Don't be a perfectionist

Some tasks don't require our best effort. Sending a short email to a colleague, for example, shouldn't take any more than a few minutes. Learn to distinguish between tasks that deserve to be done excellently and tasks that just need to be done.

Beware of "filler" tasks

When we have a to-do list filled with important tasks, be careful not to get distracted by "filler" tasks. Things such as organizing our bookcase or filing papers can wait until we tackle the items that have the highest priority.

Avoid "efficiency traps"

Being efficient doesn't necessarily mean that we are being productive. Avoid taking on tasks that we can do with efficiency that don't need to be done at all. Just because we are busy and getting things done doesn't mean we are actually accomplishing anything significant.

Delegated tasks should be specific with an end date

It should be ensured that all delegated task is concluded with a deliverable time and the progress should be monitored through diary entry.

### **Tips for successful Time Management**

Effective Time Management is necessary for achieving goals and maintaining balance in life. Here are some tips to help you master this skill:

Set clear goals: Begin with well-defined, measurable objectives to give purpose to your tasks

2) Prioritise wisely: Use tools like the Eisenhower Matrix to focus on what's most important and time-sensitive

3) Create a daily schedule: Plan your day realistically, allocating time blocks for various activities, including breaks

4) Learn to say no: Avoid overloading yourself by declining tasks that can wait or are beyond your capacity

5) Avoid multitasking: Concentrate on one particular task at a time to enhance efficiency and quality

6) Use tools: Explore Time Management apps, calendars, and lists to organise your work and deadlines

7) Delegate tasks: Share responsibilities with team members when appropriate to free up your time

8) Set realistic deadlines: Avoid undue stress by setting achievable timeframes for your tasks

9) Eliminate distractions: Identify and mitigate common interruptions in your workspace for focused work

10) Take breaks: Regular pauses revitalise your mind and maintain productivity throughout the day

11) Review and adjust: Periodically evaluate your Time Management strategies and adapt to changing circumstances

12) Celebrate progress: Acknowledge and reward your accomplishments to stay motivated



- 13) Prioritise self-care: Ensure you get adequate sleep, exercise, and relaxation to sustain your well-being
- 14) Seek help when needed: If you struggle with Time Management, consult mentors or professionals for guidance
- 15) Be patient and persistent: Remember that mastering Time Management is an ongoing process requiring perseverance and adaptability.

**Conclusion**

Time Management is a skill that can significantly improve your productivity, reduce your stress, and enhance your overall quality of life. By defining your goals, prioritising tasks, and implementing effective Time Management techniques and strategies, you can make the most of your limited time and achieve your desired outcomes. With dedication and practice, you can become a master of your time, achieving your goals and enjoying a balanced, fulfilling life. Hope we could answer all your queries about “What is Time Management”!

