

Manage Your Time – Achieve your Goals

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Effective goal setting begins and ends with time management. You must be able to balance your time in the best way possible in order to achieve your goals. Most of us fail to achieve goals because we “lack the time”.

The concept of time management has been in existence for more than 100 year believe it or not. Unfortunately the term "Time management" creates a false impression of what a person is able to do.

Time can't be managed, time is uncontrollable and we can only manage ourselves and our use of time. That is all that can be done. Time management is actually self-management.

For effective time management we need the ability to plan, delegate, organize, direct and control every aspect of our lives just to find 30 minutes a day that is devoted to something productive that is just for us.

There are common time wasters which need to be identified In order for a time management process to work it is important to know what aspects of our personal management need to be improved. Otherwise what is the point in trying?

Below you will find some of the most frequent reasons for reducing effectiveness in and around our lives. You might want to check the ones which are causing to be the major obstacles to your own time management. These are referred to as your time stealers.

Identifying your time stealers

- Distractions, for example the telephone or TV
- Interruptions, for example, guests
- Meetings

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- Tasks you should have had someone else do for you
- Procrastination and indecision
- Acting with out total information
- Dealing with other people's issues or problems
- Some sort of personal crisis, for example, family member is sick or injured.
- Unclear communication
- Inadequate knowledge
- Unclear objectives and priorities
- Lack of planning
- Stress, anxiety and fatigue
- Inability to say "No" to anybody with a request
- Personal disorganization

There are quite a few isn't there? Fortunately there are strategies you can use to manage your time in a better way and be more in control and reduce stress, but you can analyze your time and see how you may be both the cause and the solution to your time challenges.

Below, we will look at time management issues in more detail:

- The telephone. Have you ever had one of those days when you just had to answer the phone with "grand central station, how can I help you?" The telephone can be our greatest communication tool can be our biggest enemy to effectiveness if you don't know how to control its hold over you.

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- Lack of priorities/objectives. This is probably the biggest and most important time waster. It affects all we do both professionally and personally. Those who accomplish the most in a day know exactly what they want to accomplish beforehand, just ask Donald Trump.

Unfortunately too many of us think that goals and objectives are yearly things and not daily considerations. These results in too much time spent on the minor things and not on the things which are important to our lives

- Attempting too much. Many people today feel that they have to accomplish everything yesterday and don't give themselves enough time to do things properly. This leads only to half finished projects and no feeling of achievement as all things are done in a hurry and appear rushed to others.
- Drop in visitors. The five deadliest words that rob your time are "Have you got a minute?" Everyone does it; colleagues, the boss, your peers, and your family and friends.

Knowing how to deal with interruptions is one of the best skills you can learn.

- Ineffective delegation. Good delegation is considered a key skill in both managers and leaders of homes and work.

The best managers have an ability to delegate work to staff and family members to ensure it is done correctly. This is probably the best way of building a team's moral and reducing your own workload at the same time.

The general rule is this; if one of your people around you can do it 80% as well as you can, and then delegate it.

- Procrastination. The biggest thief of time is not decision making but decision avoidance. By reducing the amount of

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procrastinating you do you can substantially increase the amount of active time available to you.

- The inability to say "no!" The general rule is; if people can dump their work or problems on to your shoulders they will do it.

Some of the most stressed people around lack the skill to 'just say no' for fear of upsetting people. Get over it because these people can do it for you.

- Meetings. Studies have shown that the average professional person spends about 17 hours a week in meetings and about 6 hours in the planning time and untold hours in the follow up.

There are many ways we can manage our time. Listed below are some strategies you can use to manage your time in a better and more efficient manner.

1. Always define your goals as clearly as possible.

Do you find you are not doing what you want to do just because your goals have not been set properly yet?

One of the factors which make successful and happy people stand out is their ability to work out what they want to achieve and have written goals which they can review them constantly.

Your long term goals should impact on your daily activities and be included on your "to do" list. Without a goal or objective people tend to just drift off personally and professionally

2. Analyze your use of time.

Are you spending enough time on the projects which although may not be urgent now but are things that you need to do to develop yourself or your career?

If you are constantly asking yourself "What can I do to make things easier for me right now?" it will help you to focus on

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'important tasks' and stop reacting to tasks which seem urgent (or pleasant to do) but carry no importance towards your goals.

Try getting and using a personal calendar, setting reminders on your computer, cell phone or palm pilot.

3. Have a plan.

How can you achieve your goals without a plan? I don't even think that is possible.

Most people know what they want but have no plan to achieve it except by sheer hard work. What's the point in doing hard work when you don't know how to apply it?

Your yearly plan should be reviewed daily and reset as your achievements are met. Successful people make lists constantly.

It enables them to stay on top of priorities and enable them to remain flexible to changing priorities. This should be done for both personal and business goals.

4. Action plan analysis.

Problems will always happen when you set a plan. The value of a good plan is to identify them early and seek out solutions immediately.

Good time management enables you to measure the progress towards your goals because "What you can measure, you can control".

5. Always try to be proactive in the achievement of successfully managing your time.

Time management is not a hard subject to understand, but unless you are committed to building better time management techniques into your daily routine you'll only achieve partial (or no) results and end up right back where you started.

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You have to commit to managing your time better and remember to include time for yourself.

The lesson that you need to learn is that the more time we spend planning our time and activities the more time we will have for those activities.

By setting goals and eliminating time wasters and doing this everyday you may find you will have extra time in the week to spend on those people and activities most important to you.

Goals and Time Management

Goals are necessary to give you the right motivation. Goal-oriented persons manage their time efficiently. They always think of what they can achieve if they will be able to get on the right track and finish the task in lesser time.

Just imagine the oval track in the athletic event. You are there to compete in a running competition. As an athlete, you are to define success in a matter of seconds. For you to win, think of the finish line and the track on which you have to run. You have to see the lines that give you the idea of your track, your direction. You have to be at the end of the path in less time in order to win.

You should be aware of your goals and you should know the right ways to achieve them. Goals are motivational tools or ideas that will give you the zest to start the task or duty with vibrant enthusiasm. This will give you the idea on how to execute a task and overcome challenges in a time frame that you would also be formulating. Goals must be concrete or specific, measurable within a time frame, realistic, attainable, and relevant. These are the markers of success that will give you the idea of your future and of what you want. Goals are based on your present conditions and resources; however, you must increase your resources or change the conditions within a given time to attain your desired result.

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A goal is also a projection, a way of directing your thoughts toward what you foresee as success. It is a mind channel; therefore, you should be aware of the power of the mind and of what you believe you can do with the aid of positive thinking. How to do it will be the next step; but on your way to success, it would be necessary to set things in order, to make some priorities and plans, and to maintain a positive outlook. Here are some goals that you can employ in reaching your desired scenarios in less time:

Motivational Goals –

These goals help in enervating your moves and in encouraging you to be good in whatever you do. Motivational goals are imaginary pictures or moments that you see yourself as, like becoming rich or famous after some years of work and struggle. You may also think of yourself based on social conditions like leading a nation for a better future, becoming a good and patriotic citizen, or anything that you wish to achieve in terms of your status in life. A person is motivated by how he defines the future, or by what he wishes to accomplish in life. Motivational goals are not necessarily the specific conditions that you would want to reach in a particular time. These are scenarios that give you the encouragement to work hard and to waste no time in achieving what you want. Motivational goals are what define you as a person, including your personality and philosophy in life, as well as your vision towards the future. Motivational goals will encourage you to persevere and reach for your dreams.

Projected Goals –

These goals are the ones that you wish to achieve in less time or within a given period. The result of your plan depends on your projected output. You will reach what you want provided that you have created the right conditions to reach the end of that path. Projection is a way of estimating the result of your plan like your projected income after a year from the start of your business, the projected result of your thesis or study, or your plans after five years of marriage. These are similar to motivational goals. However, these

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goals are what you wish to achieve so you can create conditions to reach them. Examples of projected goals are enumerated below:

Perceptual Goal:

Am I optimistic or pessimistic in perceiving ideas or situations? Do I get upset by people or by things that do not meet my expectations? Do I grumble or look forward after a failure or wretched situation?

Professional Goal:

What is my notion of success and how do I get there?

Educational Goal:

What do I want to learn and why should I learn them? What are the things, information, and skills that I have to acquire in order to excel and become a productive citizen?

Familial Goal:

What is my concept of home and how do I define my family? Am I aware of my lineage and my goal for my family? How do I envision myself as part of my family, and my extended family? How do I want them to envision me?

Financial Goal:

What are my financial expectations? Do I want to become rich? Have an affluent Lifestyle?

Physical Fitness Goal:

What do I want to become, physically speaking? What are my hobbies or preferred sports? Do I wish to compete in athletic events and how do I see myself doing it?

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Recreational Goal:

How do I want to enjoy my life?

Public Service Goal:

How can I make this a better world or a more humanly society?

Concrete Goals –

These are parts of your plans and what you wish to achieve realistically. Concrete goals are what's written in your "what to do list" or noted in your planner or calendar. Concrete goals must be the result of your feasibility study or business plan.

It would be better if you always set some goals in planning your activities or in projecting your future. Goals are meant to encourage you in reaching something. But sometimes, goals can be frustrating especially when failures start to enter into the picture. You should not waste time indulging in low-motivational factors such as frustration, low-self esteem, confusion, and anxiety. Instead, you should focus your attention on how you can learn and benefit from such failures. Goals are set to help you encourage yourself. Goals should be based on your capacity and should be reflected by your strengths and weaknesses. These aims should also be realistic and should be based on your immediate concerns.

As what Abraham Maslow had elucidated in Psychology, behaviors are defined by what we consider as "hierarchy of needs" or pyramidal structures in which we are predisposed to strive with. There are basic needs like food, shelter and material things that are necessary for survival. This should be met in order to get into the next level, which includes social interactions and the need for love and belongingness. On top of this pyramid is the need for "self-actualization" or the fulfillment of a person after meeting the more basic needs in life.

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Along with this is the assessment of one's spirituality, the higher definition of success, like personal happiness and higher forms of gratification in line with creativity.

Goals should also be set according to the proper way to adjust in case you do not meet your expectations. If you're not able to reach what you initially desired for the first time, try looking at your aim and modify it. For example, you want to buy a sports car from your savings and additional compensation because you are really working hard for such reward. However, during the middle of the year, you learned that you need to spend your money on some very important expenses, like an increased payment for the amortization of your housing loan or an unexpected expenditure. In order to veer away from frustration, what you can do is either delay the buying of your car until you can save the right amount or buy a car with whatever money you have left.

Never let frustration confuse you or give you the terrible feeling of not achieving what you want. Just in case you decided to buy the car by having another loan from the bank, just imagine the additional money you have to earn to pay all your bills. This would only derail you from your initial agenda. Remember that a wise man is patient with his purse and will never spend a dime for stone.

Other things that you should remember in setting goals include:

- Your priorities in life and their order.
- Your strengths and weaknesses in doing things or in executing actions.
- Your personality and the things that should be improved in meeting the demands of your plans.
- Your plans for other people, especially for your love ones that will give you a sense of fulfillment and personal happiness.
- Your past achievements that will pump-up more encouraging spirit in your next struggles.

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Keep in mind that goals are guideposts but not necessarily the exact result of what you have in mind for your plans. Sticking with your goals and not adjusting to the changes will give you time-wasting frustrations. A right move would be recognizing the changes and moving on to reach your aims amidst any unexpected circumstances. Another part of motivational aspect in efficient time usage would be to avoid procrastination. This kind of negative virtue is a result of the loss of motivation because of many factors that surround your work habits and conditions. These include low-self esteem, discouragement from superiors, the absence of concrete rewards or pleasant results, or plainly because of boredom. Procrastination is one big hindrance in achieving your aims or goals. Therefore, you should avoid such feeling or mindset. Here are some basic tips to get away from such negative thought and activity:

If you are the type of person who gets easily bored, avoid routines or try to change your daily activities once in a while. These would give you a sense of dynamism and would help you avoid the boredom of familiarity and habit formation.

Try to accomplish two boring tasks by alternating each of them. They will give you a directional movement to achieve your desired result.

Reward yourself after doing a very difficult task or a very boring activity, like encoding a private manuscript or filing a card catalog cabinet. You may also think of the reward you will be getting after finishing such activity either in concrete or abstract terms.

In case you are working on a very uninteresting task along with your other activities, make sure to take note of this by writing it down and posting it at your workstation or at your cubicle. By doing this, you would be reminded of the task even when you're not interested to do it initially.

Enjoy your work with what motivates you like listening to classical music or going out once in a while to see the natural scenery.

Never put pressure in your mind. This will just increase your frustration level.

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Talk about your work with your colleague and think about the happiness you feel inside the office. By becoming cheerful and positive, you not only imbibe good mood but also motivate others and yourself to work hard.

Avoid too much caffeine or sweet foods during pressured moments. They will give you too much energy level that can bring your anxiety level and worries up. However, during a relaxed and comfortable situation, you may sip your favorite coffee and dip your spoon on the luscious caramel-chocolate cake in a café where you can enjoy time in a relaxed ambiance, especially if you have just finished a very long and challenging day at work.

Recommended Resource:

[How To Set Your Goals Successfully](#) - Your Guide To Setting Your Goals In Life And Actually Achieving Them, Packed With Tips, Tricks And Techniques To A Better Life!

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