School of Engineering

MANAGING YOUR TIME

Mark Sandford

MANAGING YOUR TIME

Your Time Clock is Ticking

You cannot MANAGE Time

BUT

You CAN manage your activities within TIME

The major Time Management elements are outlined on the clock face – expressed in 4 quarters each with 3 divisions. Some people might feel they should be in a different order. That is not as critical as including them in your Time Management improvement planning.

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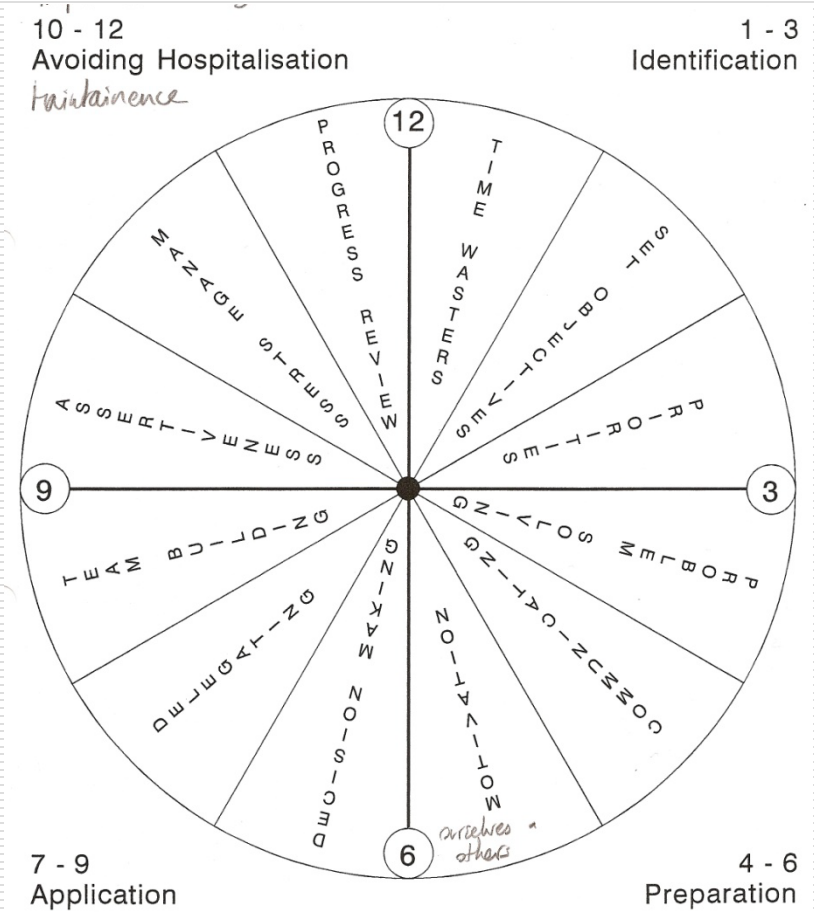

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O'Clock

1-3 IDENTIFICATION

Before you can decide HOW you can make more effective use of your Time, you have to establish where you are now and where you want to get to.

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1.00 TIME WASTERS

There are dozens of these which vary with individuals. What are yours? Why do you Waste Time? Is all you do necessary, appropriate, efficient and effective? Do you know the difference between efficiency and effectiveness? Does your work expand with the Time allotted to it? Can you always find Time for what you WANT to do but not necessarily for what you OUGHT to do?

Do you procrastinate? Do you see Time Wasting at work as stealing from your employer? Why do you Waste Time? Can you find ways of exterminating your Time Wasters? Learn the rules for better Time Management.

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1.00 We waste time because of:

Putting off difficult or unpleasant tasks

Enjoying easy or pleasant tasks

Fear of the unknown or failure

Delaying facing the truth

Enjoying socialising – gossiping

See work as boring – a chore

Being **reactive** and not **proactive**

Liking to move from one task to another

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2.00 SET OBJECTIVES

If you don’t know where you are going, any route will take you there. Having identified your Time Wasters, decide what you must become better at eradicating and what areas you need to improve on before setting Time Management Objectives that are S M A R T etc.

Smart Objectives

S - Specific

M – Measurable

A – Agreed

R – Realistic

T – Time bound

Well set objectives can empower you
Poorly set objectives will overpower you

Smart Objectives – should be:

Acceptable to individual – ownership
Attainable
Agreed - genuinely
Realistic – not a wish
Stretching – challenging, not impossible
Specific – to a subject, not rambling
Results based – what is successful completion
Quality based – how well is it to be done
Measurable – some quantitative measure is required to see success
Reviewable – if circumstances change
Manageable – limit the number of objectives at any one time
Recorded – written down, not memories of conversations

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3.00 PRIORITISE

Some of your Time Management Objectives will be more essential than others. Establish them in a realistic Priority order. What do you HAVE to do, SHOULD do, WANT to do, and what is NICE to do? Begin using a Time Log.

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4-6 PREPARATION

Becoming better at Time Management is not likely to happen overnight. Having identified key areas you must prepare yourself before wading in with both feet.

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4-0 PROBLEM SOLVING

Rather than Wasting Time throwing tantrums or being frustrated by not knowing how to approach a solution to a Problem use the tools of Problem Solving (Mind Mapping, Field Force Analysis, SWOT Analysis, Brainstorming, etc.) to develop a structured approach to your Problem Solving and help your Time Management.

The approach you choose may depend on the prevailing circumstances, your own ability to use a particular method, and the nature of the Problem – e.g. people or production – but a methodical approach is available. Take Time to think and plan. Is the Problem really one you can influence and/or solve? How much Time, effort and money is the Problem worth?

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5.00 COMMUNICATION

Your Time Management Objectives and improvements need to be Communicated to those affected. Just changing things without any explanation will not support the change.

When Communicating, simply being a Transmitter does not necessarily mean you are actually Communicating. There may be no one listening. You need to understand Receivers – are they tuned in to you? Do you know what the Receivers' needs are? Are you a good listener? How good are you at Receiving and Transmitting?

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6.00 MOTIVATION

Understanding your own and other people's Motivation is an important element in Time Management. If you don't know WHY people want something and WHAT their needs are you will not understand why they do/don't do things, what they want to do, what they need to do and how they will respond best. You may Waste Time acting on assumptions and/or generating the wrong stimuli.

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7-9 APPLICATION

In beginning to Manage Time better you will have to start doing some things differently and applying new methods.

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7-00 DECISION MAKING

Are you a good Decision Maker? When have you made bad Decisions? What is your usual Decision Making style? Can your Decision Making be improved to save Time? How good is your Decision Making? Do you know what impact your Decision Making has on others and your business? How are your Decisions transmitted?

Are you aware of how your Decisions will be affected by your value system and impact on the value systems of others? To become more consistent when Decision Making you can use a structured approach and ask yourself key questions to help your objectivity and control.

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8.00 DELGATING

Are you able to maximise your resources and save Time by effectively Delegating appropriate tasks? Are you frightened of Delegating? Are you confident at Delegating? Do you understand the benefits of Delegating? Can you select what to Delegate? Do you know how to choose the best Delegate?

However skilled you are, trying to do everything yourself is unlikely to prove the best use of your resources and becoming better at Delegating can improve overall performance. Become aware of what to do before Delegating, at the time of Delegating, during the Delegating period and after Delegating. Take considered steps when Delegating to avoid dumping.

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9.00 TEAM BUILDING

Effective Teams can usually achieve more than even the best individuals. Diverse individuals all trying to apply their skills independently are likely to Waste Time whereas a fully developed Team will be far more Time efficient and more effective in reaching its goals – like a well trained rowing eight.

Sometimes Teams are essential – e.g. removal men – and the Time Saving emphasis then becomes making the Team more effective.

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10-12 AVOIDING HOSPITALISATION

Are you one of those people who is always ‘busy’? Do you always have too much to do? Do you know what the signs of physical stress are?

Poor Time Management can become part to premature career failure or mental and physical ‘burn out’ and lead to a downward spiral from which it is difficult to escape.

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10.00 ASSERTIVENESS

Having set your Objectives, established your Priorities, prepared and applied your improved Time Management, you must not fail to ensure it is implemented to your specifications.

Learn the essential methods of Assertiveness to help you – improve self-awareness, avoid aggression; maximise personal power; establish win/win situations, learn to say “No”, recognise and use the verbal and non-verbal signs of Assertiveness, etc.

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11.00 MANAGE STRESS

People suffering from Stress are less effective, less predictable and have a higher absentee rate. Do you know how to relax?

Can you identify and control Stress messages – physical, emotional and psychological – in yourself and others? Do you/they care too much? Do you/they fight battles you/they can't win? Do you/they bottle things up? Are you/they change sensitive? Are you/their values easily offended? Are you/they idealists or pragmatists?

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12.00 PROGRESS REVIEW

The path to Hell is paved with good intentions. You will not become a better Time Manager if you don't Review your Progress against your Time Management Objectives and revise them as necessary.

Can you Review performance objectively? If not, can someone else?

WORKING SMARTER

Time Maximising Techniques

-Become a better decision maker
-Learn to say ‘No’ –be assertive
-Plan the work and work the plan
-Know your job
-Prioritise and keep lists
-Be **Effective** and **Efficient**
-Replace **busyness** with **business**
-Avoid unscheduled interruptions
-Learn when your energy level is highest
-Tackle unpleasant tasks first
-Meetings – plan, control attend?
-Slice up problems, use analysis models
-Be self-disciplined and better organised (5 S’s)
-Control your work – life balance

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