

THE TIME COMMANDMENT



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Chapter 1

The Basics On Time Management

Synopsis

“Time is what we want most, but what we use worst.” – William Penn

Time Management is one misleading phrase. While science fiction, for the longest time, has been fixated on the subject of managing time using numerous ways, like the idea of time travel, not one person on this earth can really manage time. As a human, the only thing that you can hope to attain is to successfully manage your life’s events in the most efficient way possible for you to have adequate time left for other things that you need to accomplish. Time is the one that manages itself, in all sense of the word.

Here, you will get to learn more about time management and discover some simple techniques and ideas that you can put to use so that you can make your own time become in the most efficient way possible for you to get all things done while still having enough time left for yourself.

Was there ever a time in your life when you wished for more time? Did you ever want time to pass even more quickly? There are instances when time seems to fly while on other times, it seems to be dragging. You often hear people complaining how their time at school or work is dragging, while the holidays just pass by all too quickly.

The Basics

These illusions are merely the effect of how a person reacts to different emotions and environments because whether you like it or not, nothing will change the fact that one day is always composed of 24 hours, no more, no less.

According to research, once the human brain is engaged in numerous activities, it experiences a reduction in the ability to notice how time passes. Conversely, when your brain has less stimulation, it tends to focus on keeping tab on time passing.

Time management is almost as good as safeguarding your money. You protect your money, aiming to use this in the wisest way possible and avoiding any waste. You budget. You balance the money you earn with the money you spend. And just like money, your time is also a limited but valuable resource. This means that the skills that you will need for managing your time is the same with those required for money management to be successful – planning, management, as well as self-control.

By learning good skills in time management, you will have better chances of controlling your time, with the primary goal of improving your life. Furthermore, this improvement must reduce the levels of stress in your system and heighten your energy levels. Through proper time management, you can maintain or come up with the perfect balance between your family, personal and work life while still possessing the flexibility of responding to new opportunities or surprises.

Chapter 2

Identify Where Your Time Management Is Out Of Control

Synopsis

“Waste your money and you're only out of money, but waste your time and you've lost a part of your life.” – Michael LeBoeuf

Do you usually feel overwhelmed with all the tasks included in your to-do list?

Are you struggling every single day to meet your deadlines despite putting in a lot of hard work? Do you end up double booking or forgetting appointments because you never had the time to go through your schedule first?

Were there important projects that were overlapped by the smaller “fires” that need your attention? These, my dear friend, are symptoms that your time management is going out of control.

Where Do You Need Help

At one glance, it might seem like all tasks listed on your list have equal importance and urgency. But with just several minutes of your time, their differences will quickly become clearer once you learned how to determine your priorities then start organizing and executing around them.

There are many cases when people are all too excited in managing their time in the hopes of allotting enough for everything that they end up neglecting the more vital things and putting more effort and time on those that are not of great importance.

Identifying and deciding what is the most essential is one skill that you can develop with a mindful practice. Every person in this world has his or her own unique set of goals, responsibilities, and duties and no single formula is working for everybody.

To have an effective setting of priorities, you need to understand first your personal dreams and roles. What are the duties of your job? What kind of commitments do you have to the community and your family? What are your long term professional and personal aspirations? How do you plan to move toward them? Once all these things have been clear to you, it will also become easier for you to define your life's priorities and set your time to make the most out of it.

Chapter 3

How Your Time Management Affects Your Life

Synopsis

“Lost time is never found again.” – Benjamin Franklin

All people are taught about the essence of time management, but do you really realize just how crucial it is? As you already know, time management refers to the effective use of your time for completing the necessary tasks.

Managing Time

Usually, the need for managing time occurs in workplaces and schools, although these are not necessarily the only places where time management can come in handy. You might think that managing time is something easy but the truth is, this is far from being that. Whether it is good or bad, time management can greatly affect the life of an individual.

Proper time management has unlimited effects. Both at home and at the work place, proper management of time can pave the way for the accomplishment of more duties and activities.

At the workplace, knowing the benefits of managing time and implementing a good plan for it can result to better quality of work that is produced in a faster rate or speed. This can also involve the creation of a schedule for taking breaks and working. Most employees learned that managing their time at work instead of spending time talking to coworkers give them satisfaction on their productivity and more stability with their job.

When time is not managed properly in the workplace, things will not only become stressful but even dangerous. An employee who does not manage his or her time end up rushing to complete projects that can lead to a low quality of work, and this can result to termination when worse comes to worst. The risky aspect of wrong time management can also increase significantly based on the kind of job. For instance, in the case of construction workers, rushing their job in the hope of beating the deadline can result to serious injury or worse, even death.

Similarly, time management is also important when you are at home. Many people today are unorganized and fail to complete their day to day family activities and tasks. In the case of most families, they find it much easier to manage time by coming up with a family schedule that can include chores, homework, and certain family activities. It has already been proven that when things at home are done quickly, family members also get to spend more quality time together.

But while proper management of time has amazing advantages, doing it in the wrong way can be just as equally devastating. When time is not managed properly, it can negatively affect the workplace, the home and all other people around you. At home, there is a possibility that improper management of time can lead to unnecessary tension among the members and family disagreements. Families that lack the proper sense of managing time are also more likely to miss their scheduled activities, be late for the events at work or school, and not spend some quality bonding time together.

Without a doubt, time management can greatly affect the life of a person. If done properly, it can make life better and happier but a single wrong move can turn things upside down, that is way extra care is always needed when managing your time, be it at home or at the work place.

Chapter 4

Tools For Time Management

Synopsis

“We must use time wisely and forever realize that the time is always ripe to do right.” – Nelson Mandela

Proper time management is important in your life. And in order for you to achieve all the goals that you have set for yourself, there are several techniques and tools for time management that you can use to have better personal organization and attain maximum productivity. Each of these will take some time to learn and master yet you can be assured that practicing them will pay you back in hundred times better for the rest of your existence.

Tools

Time Planner

The very first tool for time management that you need to have is the time planner. This will contain all the things that you need for planning and organizing your life. The finest time planners, whether electronic versions or looseleaf binders, will help you in planning for your days, weeks, months, and year.

Master List

Now that you have the time planner, it is important to make sure that it will contain your master list that will capture each required action, goal or task that comes up. This very list will then become the heart of your time management system. From the master list, allocate your individual tasks to days, weeks, and months.

The master list is regarded as the most powerful tool that was ever discovered to achieve maximum productivity. In creating your list, you start by writing all the tasks that you plan to complete within the day.

The rule here is for you to boost your efficiency for about 25% on the first day of using the list. It means that you are entitled to two bonus hours of productive time within an 8-hour day from the act of creating a list of the things that you need to before starting your work.

Chaos will surely be avoided in your day to day activities when you have this particular time management tool.

When you are done creating your master list, the next thing that you need to do is organize your list based on your priorities. An organized master list is like a map that will guide you from morning till evening in the most effective and efficient manner. The guide will tell you the things that need to be done and which among them are of the highest importance. Soon, enough you will develop the habit of utilizing the master list to serve as your day's blueprint of activities.

Time Management Systems

Today, you can already find numerous computer based time planner systems and PDAs or personal digital assistants that are proven to be wonderful and useful. Whatever your field might be and whatever you do, there are already digital systems for time management that can be loaded or tapped to your personal computer in order to help you in organizing every aspect of your daily life.

Chapter 5

Using Mantras

Synopsis

“We are time's subjects, and time bids be gone.” – William Shakespeare

Time management is almost a mythical ethos which seems to dodge you no matter how good your intentions might be in your life. Did you ever experience being piled up with a mountain of work before you, leaving you with no time at all for your family and friends? Did you ever spent hours and hours at night, contemplating about all the things which are waiting for you at the office tomorrow? If these things sound familiar to you, then, you are definitely not alone.

But this is now the perfect time to make some changes and reclaim the life that you have lost. Here are several mantras that you can use for your time management that can help your personal situation so that you can once again take full control and reclaim your life and rescue your entire day.

Mantras

“Agreeing to everything helps no one.”

When you already have a fully loaded schedule, don't be afraid to decline. Always saying “yes” to your colleagues or boss will help nobody. Not only will your workload increase for at the same time, you might even miss your deadlines, not just for your current tasks but also for those additional tasks that you have accepted.

Needless to say, saying a cursory “no” to such request might become counterproductive, creating the unwanted negative air. Thus, wording your response with extra care is a must.

“A single day only lasts for a day.”

Gaining, stretching or saving time is simply nonexistent. It is something that most people have probably used at one point in time but in truth, this is merely a fallacy. Remember that time is something constant and you can definitely not do anything to alter it.

A few things, such as delegating tasks or using computerized systems, can boost productivity. But all these things take place in the similar time space. When you learned to accept the fact that time passes and it is not something that you can change, you will start to adapt your working styles to better manage the things that you do within the allocated periods in a more effective way.

“Manage yourself to manage your time.”

Extending your working hours is never a good way to manage your time. Time management is something driven by efficiency. When you start to work earlier in your day and finish later, you will end up damaging both your personal and social life. Among the best benefits of proper time management is that it balances your personal and working lives through ensuring that your personal time will be spent in an environment free from any kind of stress.

The adage “Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise” has been heard for so many years and this saying’s key components still ring true even in the modern way of managing time.

Sleeping early at night will make you well rested and ready for the next day, while waking up earlier in the morning gives you extra time of preparing for the day ahead without having to rush. Getting to your office late, tired from rushing and practically in a gloomy mood can negatively affect your whole day.

Chapter 6

Learn To Get Rid Of Bad Time Habits

Synopsis

Bad time habits might be the worst time management thieves but they also happen to be the ones that you have the most power to take control of. Whether you admit it or not, many hours in your week probably end up wasted because of your bad habits. While it can be rewarding to establish efficiency and self-discipline, doing so can also be a bit of a challenge. What are the common bad time habits that many people have today?

Get Rid Of The Bad

- Spending more time on the easier tasks instead of the hard ones, thus not completing the more important projects first.
- Spending time surfing the internet and temporarily losing track of time.
- Spending time on answer the personal emails during the entire day.
- Spending time watching videos in YouTube.
- Spending time browsing the news pages or newsletters.
- Cleaning the desk just to avoid doing the uncomfortable tasks.
- Spending time checking Facebook, Twitter, and other sites for social networking.
- Spending time on Skype and other similar websites.

While some of you might say that these are the things that you do to relax or zone out during an exhausting day, do you think that these will make you productive or are these merely destructive?

Many of you probably say NO to engaging in a new hobby, or visiting your kids at school or hitting the gym simply because you think that the hours of the day are not enough for you to do so. But is it really not enough or did you just end up wasting plenty of your time on these activities, time that should have been allotted for doing more productive things?

This is the reason why it is very important for you to get rid of these bad time habits that are taking away the precious hours that you could have just spent on doing things that you actually need and want.

What are the things that you can do to free yourself from these bad time habits of yours, then?

- ✓ Create a doable to-do list with just 3 to 4 bullet points each time or else, you will be overwhelmed by the things that you have written down.
- ✓ Every morning, make sure that you clean your desk. See to it that you keep only those things needed for the project that you are working on.
- ✓ Once you start working, place your to-do list next to the computer so that your mind will not drift from the work that you need to finish.
- ✓ During projects, disconnect from the internet and give yourself a reward with a limited surfing for just 10 minutes.
- ✓ Answer the personal emails that you've got before getting your lunch as this will help you limit the time that you spend on your account.
- ✓ Exercise during mornings. This will help you have a quicker tempo the entire day, making it easier to complete your tasks and stay focused.

Chapter 7

The Benefits Of Time Management

Synopsis

“Until you value yourself, you won't value your time. Until you value your time, you will not do anything with it.” – M. Scott Peck

Why should you manage your time?

The answer is pretty simple – time management will help you stay on top of your tasks and finish the things that need to be done.

But, do you know that there is actually so much more that you can get from proper time management?

In fact, time management can actually benefit you in practically all aspects of your time? To give you some idea, here are 10 of the benefits that time management can give to your life.

The Benefits

Get More Things Done

Obviously, among the primary goals of managing your time is for you to be more productive. Once you are completely aware of the things that you need to do, it will help you in properly managing your workload. This way, you can complete more of those right tasks in lesser time.

Less Rework

Staying organized means less mistakes and rework. Forgotten details, instructions and items will also cause more extra work on your part. Do you usually end up doing your tasks more than once? Did you need to take that extra trip simply because you forgot something? Time management helps you finish your tasks and finish them properly.

Less Stress

Proper time management can also help in reducing the stress levels of your life. This is because there will be lesser tight deadlines, lesser surprises, and lesser need to rush from one place to another and one task to the next.

Less Problems and Friction in Life

Do you often find yourself creating your own problems? Whether you missed a deadline or you forgot an important appointment, failure to manage your time can only result to an increase in the friction in your life. You can avoid making problems of your own when you plan and prepare ahead for your day.

More Free Time

Creating more time is simply impossible but at least, you can still use it in a better way through properly managing it. Even the simple actions such as finishing your work early or shifting your commute can already create additional time to be spent on your life's leisure.

More Opportunities

More opportunities can come your way when you always on top of your work and time. As the old adage goes, the early bird is the one who always gets to have more option. Apart from that, do not forget that luck also tends to favor those who come prepared.

Less Wasted Time

Knowing the things that you need to do will pave the way for lesser time wasted on idle things. Instead of spending minutes wondering about the things that you have to do next, time management helps you to stay a step ahead of the work that you need to do.

Less Effort

People tend to have a wrong impression on time management, saying that it requires them to exert some extra effort. But on the contrary, managing your time properly can actually make your life so much easier. It makes things require less effort, whether it will be about finishing a certain project or packing the things you need for a trip.

Improves Reputation

The reputation of your time management can also improve your reputation as a person. Both at work and life in general, you are going to be known as someone reliable. Other people will not doubt if you will show up, do the things that you say you will or beat your deadline.

More Time Allotted for Things That Matter the Most

Time management helps you allot your time on areas of your life where it will have the highest impact. Managing your time gives you the chance of spending your time on things or even people that are precious and matter the most in your life.

Time management helps you improve your life in general as it makes you aware not just of your schedule but also of your obligations and priorities. It helps you spend your time on the right things and in the right places. When you can have a proper time management, this will greatly benefit all of your life's areas.

Chapter 8

Staying Motivated For Time Management

Synopsis

“We are time's subjects, and time bids be gone.” – William Shakespeare

If you will take it to your heart and mind to finish a certain task and stay motivated, it will take you a large step towards better time management. But how will you stay motivated for time management?

So far, there several important facts about the human race in general that you have to remember. The first one is that newness can be a good motivating spurt. Go back to that time when you landed on a brand new. Everything around you was fresh and you tend to work with even better enthusiasm.

However, this freshness and enthusiasm also start waning after several weeks or even months. Now that you have settled down to a routine, it has made your work seem uninteresting and dull all over again. This is because you have already lost that sense of newness.

Motivation

The next thing that you have to keep in mind is the fact that even though it is possible for the human mind to finish a mountain of tasks, this very same mind also tends to become distracted, sometimes all too easily. Based on certain studies, the attention span of an average person is not more than 35 minutes or so. There are even some who are claiming that it is less than that. This very tendency of easily getting distracted is the very reason why humans usually find it hard to motivate themselves to do and finish a task.

With these being said, below are the 8 things that you can try in order for you to get and stay motivated in your time management.

1. Recognize your affinity to be distracted. You can take some short breaks after every 30 minutes or so. You can take a short stroll away from your working station. Try to experiment and determine the maximum number of time that you can work prior to needing a break. When you do this, you will notice that your motivation of staying on your tasks also increases.
2. Studies have revealed that soft music, baroque music in particular, is a good help when working. As much as possible, try arranging for some background music in your working place.
3. So that you can satisfy your inclination for change and freshness, you can alternate between a couple of tasks. Staying on a certain task for a lengthy period will make you lose your motivation all too soon. If the situation at work permits it, you can also exchange certain tasks with your colleague.

4. Create a unique and more appealing working environment through the use of humorous posters that can bring a smile to your face. Stock in a few and every once in a while, you can alter the posters.
5. Potted plants are also perfect stress relievers. You can put one or a couple next on your working station. However, see to it that you water them because having wilted plants will never give you the motivation that you need.
6. Each time you sense stress is starting to creep in or you feel a bit distracted, lean back in your chair, close your eyes and relax for one or two minutes. You can softly hum your favorite tune. If you fail to relax in your working chair, you can do this in the restroom.
7. Come up with a list of all the most vital tasks that need to be done the following day. Prioritize your list and work based on the order of priorities. Checking off the most crucial items for every day is already a terrific motivator.
8. Implement a self-reward system. Decide in advance the things that you want for yourself once you have completed a particular task. This can be something as simple as a chocolate bar or a cute trinket from your favorite gift shop. Never overlook this reward routine as this is among the best motivators that you can ever find.

Chapter 9

Staying On Track

Synopsis

“I must govern the clock, not be governed by it.” – Golda Meir

Time management is basically synonymous to self discipline. If you fail to avoid all those distractions that usually pop out during the day, goals on managing your time will flop, with your effectiveness practically going down the hill. Probably one of the greatest distractions that will make you unfocused on your task at hand is your very own stress. Knowing and practicing techniques that are proven to help in reducing stress can be a good way for you to start regaining full control.

Staying On Track

When you feel overwhelmed by all the things that seem to be pulling you towards different directions, staying on track might seem to be out of reach. However, there is only one good solution for it and that is learning how to prioritize. When your tasks are laid out depending on their importance, you will start to gain a much clearer perspective of the things that you need to do.

Aside from knowing your priorities, it is also of equal important for you to set a certain system to for effective management of distractions. With a clear strategy on how to deflect possible interruptions, this can make your overall productivity so much better.

Over-planning is also a big no-no for your time management. There are some people who end up spending lots of time planning for their next action that they usually lose enough time for actually making that particular move that they planned. Practically a kind of glorified procrastination, this will make you feel as if you are being productive since you are thinking about your work but in reality, you are not really doing any work at all.

To stay on track, it is a must that you focus on completing a project in favor of the quantity of project. The best policy here is to take one thing at a time, right from the beginning up to the end. Finishing a certain project prior to starting with another will help a lot in boosting your confidence as you go to another project. It will be so much better if you will move towards your next project of endeavor with a big smile on your face while feeling great about yourself.

Chapter 10

Making Resolutions For Time Management

“Time = Life, Therefore, waste your time and waste your life, or master your time and master your life.” – Alan Lakein

Now that you know more about time management just in time for the upcoming New Year, you might as well include this in the things that you like to change or do for the following year.

In this brand new year ahead of you, you can make some tweaks on how you will approach your day to day schedule in order to have less stress, better concentration, and greater productivity.

Here are several resolutions that you can make for your time management in the coming year:

- ✓ Avoid multitasking. This will only waste more time, create stress, and increase the tendency of making mistakes.
- ✓ List on your personal calendar each event that will consume plenty of time.
- ✓ Allot the day's first 45 minutes for a major priority before you open your email.

- ✓ Conduct a weekly review each Friday for you to know the things that will take place the following week and try to relax and have peace of mind during the weekend.
- ✓ Come up with a remarkable subject line for each email.
- ✓ Try doing the “worst” thing first in order to lessen the chances of procrastination.
- ✓ Practice the 4Ds:
 - Do It – Do things that will require a maximum of 5 minutes right away.
 - Designate It – Create a schedule of all usage of your time on the electronic calendar.
 - Delegate It – Distribute work complete with instructions to the rest if needed.
 - Discard It – Those items that are of less or no value needs to be deleted or placed in the recycle bin.