

GOVT. PG COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, GANDHINAGAR, JAMMU

SEM : 6

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TOPIC : TIME MANAGEMENT AND STRESS MANAGEMENT

→ What Is Time Management?

“Time management” is the process of organizing and planning how to divide your time between specific activities. Good time management enables you to work smarter – not harder – so that you get more done in less time, even when time is tight and pressures are high. Failing to manage your time damages your effectiveness and causes stress.

→Benefits Of Time Management

“Time management” refers to the way that you organize and plan how long you spend on specific activities.

It may seem counter-intuitive to dedicate precious time to learning about time management, instead of using it to get on with your work, but the benefits are enormous:

- Greater productivity and efficiency.
- A better professional reputation.
- Less stress.
- Increased opportunities for advancement.
- Greater opportunities to achieve important life and career goals.

→ Harms Of Lack Of Time Management

Failing to manage your time effectively can have some very undesirable consequences:

- Missed deadlines.
- Inefficient work flow.
- Poor work quality.
- A poor professional reputation and a stalled career.
- Higher stress levels.

→ PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE TIME MANAGEMENT

1. Commitment—if you can't commit to devoting time to a task, don't put it in your schedule. Only schedule tasks you WILL do. Be brutally realistic, not idealistic when making your schedule. Creating a schedule you can't actually keep is setting yourself up for frustration. If you don't actually stick to your schedule it will soon become useless. This may have happened to you in the past.

2. Pursue fun with a vengeance—Make time for enjoyable, rejuvenating and satisfying activities like organizations, sports, and entertainment. Organize your academic and other obligations AROUND these commitments to fun.

3. Time vs. task focus—Think of your day in terms of time, not the tasks you have to do. Devote time to important tasks every day. It's hard to predict how long a task will take, so it's hard to schedule with great precision. But you can reliably schedule regular intervals of time and get into a routine.

4. One thing at a time—Current research shows us that multi--tasking is a myth. In actuality, we are switching back and forth between tasks. With each switch we pay a cognitive cost and a time cost: It takes time to get mentally back into the task, thus making us less efficient. When switching we lose the depth of our engagement, absorption.

5. Block out time—devote, on a regular basis, chunks of time to a specific class. Make it part of your schedule, your routine. Estimate how many hours per week you want to devote to a class. Set aside this many hours for working tasks in the course Slice up your task into pieces and allow specific blocks of time for specific pieces of a big project.

6. First Things First—if you can do so, schedule the things that are most important to you first thing in the day, or at the first available time slot. Anything that gets scheduled later in the day has a greater chance of getting interrupted, put off and never gotten to. You won't be thinking or worrying about your work during your leisure time if you get academic tasks done first.

7. Routine—It takes 30 days to create a habit, but good habits make your life easier. With good habits in place you don't have to make as many hard decisions, thus you are less likely to make unproductive ones such as talking yourself out of doing what you had planned.

8. Flexibility—Don't schedule every hour of the day, leave empty time slots, and schedule in recreation time. Create a two-hour or three-hour block on Friday as a catch all makeup time. When things come up and you are deciding whether to diverge from your established schedule, survey future hours and days to see where you can make up lost time.

9. Respond vs. react—In the moment of decision--making, when faced with a decision or an impulse to diverge from your schedule, don't just react, RESPOND. Pause, take a moment to think. Remember what's most important to you and do what will help you get it.

10. Organize your environment—both physical and social—for success, for support—be creative.

a. Choose carefully where you study and do other tasks: minimize distraction; maximize focus.

b. Use physical reminders. Make it harder to get off track and easier to stick to your plan by changing your environment.

c. Instead of friends being a “distraction”, enlist their support:

i. Study buddy/group—work on problem sets, readings, etc. in your shared course together.

ii. Get a study/writing partner—same place and time, but not the same course.

iii. Ask friends NOT to call you at specific times. Ask them to help you stick to your schedule.

→ STRATEGIES FOR BETTER TIME MANAGEMENT

1. Know How You Spend Your Time

Identifying your most time-consuming tasks and determining whether you are investing your time in the most important activities can help you to determine a course of action. In addition, having a good sense of the amount of time required for

routine tasks can help you be more realistic in planning and estimating how much time is available for other activities.

2. Set Priorities

Managing your time effectively requires a distinction between what is important and what is urgent. Covey, Merrill, and Merrill (1994) categorize our activities into four quadrants in their Time Management Matrix: urgent, not urgent, important and not important.

3. Use a Planning Tool

Some reminders when using a planning tool are:

- Always record your information on the tool itself. Jotting notes elsewhere that have to be transferred later is inefficient.
- Review your planning tool daily.
- Carry your planning tool with you.
 - Remember to keep a list of your priorities in your planning tool and refer to it often.
- Synchronize electronic planners with your computer and recharge the batteries in your planner on a regular basis.
- Keep a back-up system.

4. Get Organized

Most people find that disorganization results in poor time management. Professional organizers recommend that you first get rid of the clutter. With the clutter gone, the next step is to implement a system that allows you to handle information (e.g., tasks, papers, e-mail, etc.) less, only once, when possible.

5. Schedule Your Time Appropriately

Scheduling is not just recording what you have to do (e.g., meetings and appointments), it is also making a time commitment

to the things you want to do. Good scheduling requires that you know yourself. Block out time for your high priority activities first and protect that time from interruptions.

6. Delegate: Get Help from Others

Delegation means assigning responsibility for a task to someone else, freeing up some of your time for tasks that require your expertise. Delegation begins by identifying tasks that others can do and then selecting the appropriate person(s) to do them. You need to select someone with the appropriate skills, experience, interest, and authority needed to accomplish the task.

7. Stop Procrastinating

Try breaking down the task into smaller segments that require less time commitment and result in specific, realistic deadlines.

8. Manage External Time Wasters

Your time may be impacted by external factors imposed by other people and things. You can decrease or eliminate time spent in these activities by implementing some simple tips listed below.

- Use voice mail and set aside time to return calls.
- Avoid small talk.
 - Stay focused on the reason for the call.
 - Keep phone numbers readily available near the telephone.
 - Establish blocks of time when you are available for visits.
 - Take any necessary action immediately following the call.
- Set aside times of the day for receiving calls and let others know when you are available.

9. Avoid Multi-tasking

You lose time when switching from one task to another, resulting in a loss of productivity.

10. Stay Healthy

Scheduling time to relax can help you rejuvenate both physically and mentally. To reduce stress, you should reward yourself for a time management success. Take time to recognize that you have accomplished a major task or challenge before moving on to the next activity.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

→ Defining Stress

Stress is the way human beings react both physically and mentally to changes, events, and situations in their lives. People experience stress in different ways and for different reasons. The reaction is based on your perception of an event or situation. If you view a situation negatively, you will likely feel distressed—overwhelmed, oppressed, or out of control. Distress is the more familiar form of stress. The other form, eustress, results from a “positive” view of an event or situation, which is why it is also called “good stress.”

→ Causes of Stress

The most frequent reasons for “stressing out” fall into three main categories:

1. The unsettling effects of change.
2. The feeling that an outside force is challenging or threatening you
3. The feeling that you have lost personal control.

Increased academic demands

- Being on your own in a new environment

- Changes in family relations
- Financial responsibilities
- Changes in your social life
- Exposure to new people, ideas, and temptations
- Awareness of your sexual identity and orientation
- Preparing for life after graduation.

→ **Symptoms of Distress**

Symptoms of stress fall into three general, but interrelated, categories—physical, mental, and emotional. Review this list carefully. If you find yourself frequently experiencing these symptoms, you are likely feeling distressed:

- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Gastrointestinal problems
- Hypertension (high blood pressure)
- Heart problems, such as palpitations
- Inability to focus/lack of concentration
- Sleep disturbances, whether it's sleeping too much or an inability to sleep
- Sweating palms/shaking hands
- Anxiety
- Sexual problems.

Behavioral changes are also expressions of stress. They can include:

- Irritability
- Disruptive eating patterns (overeating or under eating)
- Harsh treatment of others
- Increased smoking or alcohol consumption
- Isolation

→ **Managing Stress**

- Set priorities. Use the time-management tips you learned in Section 1. Make a To-Do list. Decide what is really important to get done today, and what can wait. This helps you to know that you are working on your most immediate priorities, and you don't have the stress of trying to remember what you should be doing.

- Practice facing stressful moments. Think about the event or situation you expect to face and rehearse your reactions. Find ways to practice dealing with the challenge. If you know that speaking in front of a group frightens you, practice doing it, perhaps with a trusted friend or fellow student. If the pressure of taking tests causes you to freeze up, buy some practice tests at the school bookstore or online and work with them when there are no time pressures.
- Examine your expectations. Try to set realistic goals. It's good to push yourself to achieve, but make sure your expectations are realistic. Watch out for perfectionism. Be satisfied with doing the best you can. Nobody's perfect—not you, not your fellow Cadet, nobody. Allow people the liberty to make mistakes, and remember that mistakes can be a good teacher.
- Live a healthy lifestyle. Get plenty of exercise. Eat healthy foods. Allow time for rest and relaxation. Find a relaxation technique that works for you—prayer, yoga, meditation, or breathing exercises. Look for the humor in life, and enjoy yourself.
- Learn to accept change as a part of life. Nothing stays the same. Develop a support system of friends and relatives you can talk to when needed. Believe in yourself and your potential. Remember that many.

To maximize your ability to cope with stress, try the following:

1. Exercise Regularly. Engage in 3-5 sessions of moderate intensity exercise each week to enhance your

immune system and reduce your risk of developing anxiety and mood disorders.

2. Eat a Healthy Diet. Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fatty fish to maximize your physical health and your body's ability to manage stress.

3. Sleep. Get 7-8 hours of uninterrupted sleep per night to improve your mood and boost your immune functioning.

4. Practice Relaxation. Engage in relaxation exercises on a regular basis or during periods of moderate to high stress. Progressive muscle relaxation (PMR), guided imagery, and meditation are great ways to reduce your overall level of arousal. Or, combine exercise with meditation or mindfulness by engaging in yoga two to three times per week!

5. Express Yourself. Look for the humor in stressful situations, and find ways to express your emotions through writing, art, or talking with friends and family.

6. Reframe. Attend to the ways in which you think about and interpret stressful situations and look for opportunities to reframe the situation in a more rational or positive manner. Remember, the test at the end of this chapter is not something to be feared. Instead, it represents an opportunity for you to demonstrate how much you have learned about stress and stress management!

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