

Free training content for entry level employees

# **TIME MANAGEMENT**

Courtesy

Corporate Consultants

## INTRODUCTION

# MANAGING TIME: MANAGING YOURSELF

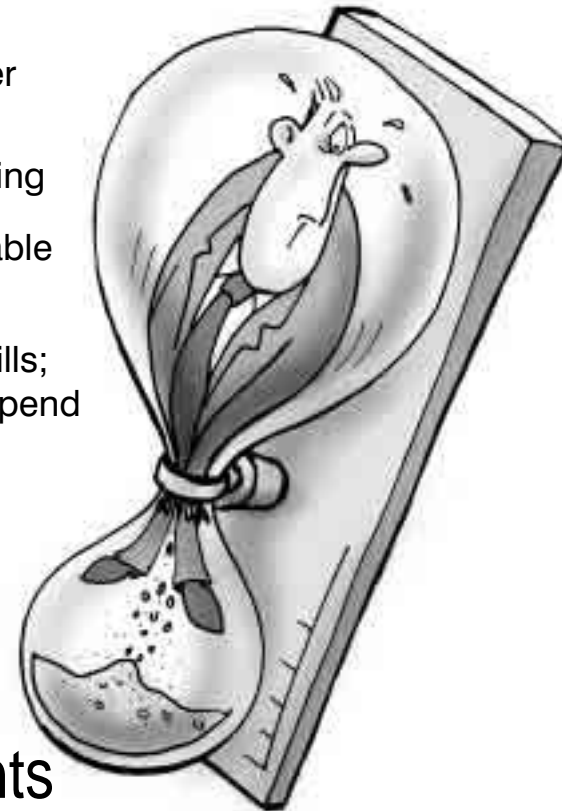
## NO MAGIC ANSWER

- Time is passing us by; once it has gone it can never be replaced
- The older one gets, the quicker it seems to be passing

In truth there is probably no **one** skill or tool that will enable you to manage your time better.

The time management model offers a useful range of skills; improvements in each will have an impact on how you spend your time.

However, getting yourself organised and managing yourself will significantly improve your chances of managing your time ... so please read on.



INTRODUCTION

## MANAGING WORK ACTIVITIES

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF TIME MANAGEMENT



**Taking action:**

- ✓ **For the right reason:** making sure that what you do is linked to your job or an objective
- ✓ **At the right time:** because it is a priority
- ✓ **In the right way:** by getting yourself organised

③

courtesy Corporate Consultants

## MANAGING WORK ACTIVITIES

# FOR THE RIGHT REASON

## JOB CLARIFICATION



Have you a clear understanding about your job and what's expected? If not, how do you know what you should be spending your time doing?

Job clarification can help improve your use of time by:

- Concentrating on objectives and priorities
- Avoiding duplication and overlap of efforts

**Job clarification** is:

- A shared understanding between job holder and manager about
  - what the individual's job is
  - what they are expected to achieve
  - where/how it relates to other jobs
- A continual process reflecting changes both in the individual and their job, from which objectives can be set

**Note**

*Not to be confused with job descriptions which describe what has to be done and not the results to be achieved.*

## MANAGING WORK ACTIVITIES

# FOR THE RIGHT REASON

## JOB PURPOSE



Ask yourself - What's the purpose of my job?  
ie: What are you there to achieve?

Example:

**Overall Purpose** To make money by developing existing and new business within the region at a profit.

Try to keep it to a single sentence in length.



courtesy Corporate Consultants

## MANAGING WORK ACTIVITIES

# FOR THE RIGHT REASON

## IDENTIFYING ACTIVITIES



- Activities**
- Relate to each key area
  - Are areas of activity/responsibility emerging from each key area, eg:

**Key Areas**

**Activities**

Key Areas	Identify New Clients	Develop Existing Clients	Set and Achieve Targets	Recruit and Train
Activities	Research	Client Visits	Sales Targets	Internal Applicants
	Client Contact	Monitor Business Performance	Financial Targets	External Applicants
	Client Visits	Client Records	Monitor Sales Performance	Induction

courtesy Corporate Consultants

## MANAGING WORK ACTIVITIES

# FOR THE RIGHT REASON

## JOB CLARIFICATION - OVERVIEW



### Overall Purpose

To make money by developing existing and new business within the region at a profit

### Key Areas

Identify New Clients

Develop Existing Clients

Set and Achieve Targets

Recruit and Train

### Activities

Research

Client Visits

Sales Targets

Internal Applicants

Client Contact

Monitor Business Performance

Financial Targets

External Applicants

Client Visits

Client Records

Monitor Sales Performance

Induction

7



*Use job clarification at appraisal time to set objectives and agree priorities.*

courtesy Corporate Consultants

## MANAGING WORK ACTIVITIES

### AT THE RIGHT TIME

### SETTING PRIORITIES



#### Decisions to make

- The order in which jobs should be handled
- How much time should be allocated to each

#### Common mistakes

- Not distinguishing between urgent and important tasks
- Doing things you like doing - fire-fighting not fire prevention

#### Urgent jobs

- Don't always have the highest pay-off
- Often get priority over important jobs
- Are often unplanned

#### Important jobs

- Are the ones that help you achieve your overall purpose (see job clarification)

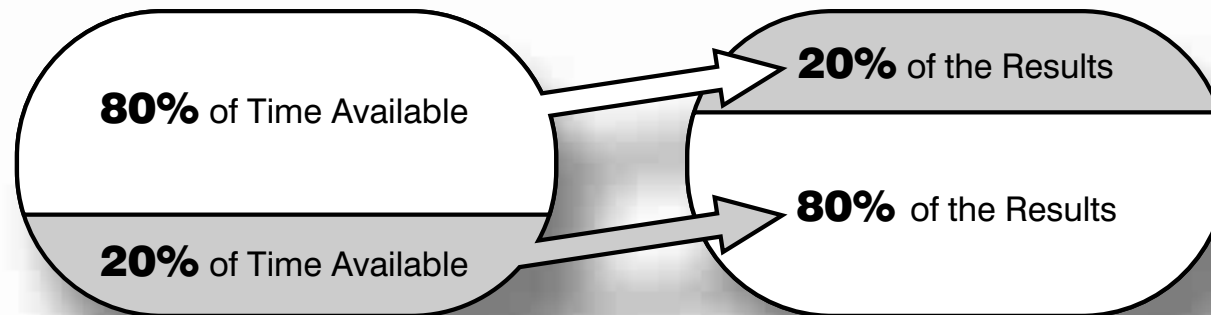


courtesy Corporate Consultants

## MANAGING WORK ACTIVITIES

### AT THE RIGHT TIME

#### PARETO (80/20 RULE)



This means:

- 20% of what you do produces 80% of your results
- 80% of your time is spent in being only 20% effective

Apply Pareto to the activities in job clarification.



*Concentrate on high pay-off activities.*

## MANAGING WORK ACTIVITIES

### AT THE RIGHT TIME

#### DEALING WITH THE UNEXPECTED



- Unexpected events, happening throughout the day, will affect what you plan to do
- Every time you get a job to do ask:
  - Where does it fit into the matrix below?
  - What's the effect on what you planned to do?

		<b>IMPORTANCE</b>	
		Low	High
<b>URGENCY</b>	Low	<b>Don't do it</b>	<b>Do it later</b>
	High	<b>Ask someone else to do it</b>	<b>Do it now - Do it yourself</b>

courtesy Corporate Consultants

## MANAGING WORK ACTIVITIES

### IN THE RIGHT WAY

#### HOW TO SET PRIORITIES



- Use job clarification to agree priorities and objectives
- Work backwards from deadline dates, identifying key stages to be achieved
- Plan to convert these into **action**, each with their own timescale
- Plans identify what needs to be done, by whom and when
- Don't overplan as things will change
- Planning is a mental process that we often do as we go along; however, don't ignore the many planning methods, from simple lists to diary and computer systems
- Do not forget that plans can always be changed; however ...

**IF YOU  
FAIL TO PLAN  
THEN  
PLAN TO FAIL**

## MANAGING WORK ACTIVITIES

### IN THE RIGHT WAY

#### HOW TO ORGANISE YOURSELF



- Create a weekly plan to give yourself:
  - sufficient lead-in time for major tasks
  - an overall picture, in case you need to change what you do (in response to those days when you achieve nothing!)
- Translate this into a daily 'To Do' list - categorise tasks into 'urgent' and 'important' and then prioritise them
- Be realistic - you can only do so much in a day
- Review your list throughout the day
- Ask 'Why me? Could someone else do it?'
- Group related activities together to concentrate your efforts
- Work on key tasks every day - focus on pay-off instead of urgency



*Get into the habit of doing a 'To Do' list for the following day before you leave work (you've prepared yourself mentally).*

courtesy Corporate Consultants

## MANAGING WORK ACTIVITIES

## IN THE RIGHT WAY

### ESTIMATING TIME



This is probably the hardest activity to get right.

#### Why?

- We do not always know how long an activity will take until we get into it
- Because of interruptions (see pp 69-70 on dealing with them)
- People, on whom we are relying, let us down
- Times are dictated by others, eg: customers, bosses

#### So try:

- Being realistic in your estimate (what does experience tell you?)
- Taking account of what's happening elsewhere
- Being pedantic with your planning; and asking what **could** go wrong



*Never underestimate how long things will take.*

## MANAGING WORK ACTIVITIES

### IN THE RIGHT WAY

#### TIME LOGS

How do you find out how long jobs take or where your time has gone? Try keeping a time log, ie: a record of what you have been doing during a given time.

At regular intervals, say 15 minutes, throughout a day, jot down all that you are doing - both work and non-work activities. Use this to analyse who or what interrupted you, how much of the day you were in control, and how much you achieved against your plan.



TIME LOG		
START TIME	ACTIVITY	DURATION

courtesy Corporate Consultants

## MANAGING WORK ACTIVITIES

## IN THE RIGHT WAY

## TAKING CONTROL



Time management involves taking more control over your day (and, indeed, your life).

However, in your working day many things are out of your control, such as:

- Demands of customers
- Meetings called by others
- People going on holiday
- Accidents
- Emergencies
- Breakdowns
- Sickness
- Weather
- Traffic
- Acts of God

What is left is the amount of time to do your job. Is it enough?



courtesy Corporate Consultants

## MANAGING WORK ACTIVITIES

### IN THE RIGHT WAY

#### BEWARE OF MONKEYS!

Despite being a busy person, it is easy to get sucked into doing things for others. Often these tasks have nothing to do with your job (perhaps they interest you or you are flattered to be asked!).

Each time we say 'yes' to these requests we collect another 'monkey', namely, a problem that started with someone else (who is working for whom?).

Furthermore, 'monkeys' eat into our discretionary time; the amount of time left after meeting the demands of boss and job.



courtesy Corporate Consultants

## MANAGING WORK ACTIVITIES

### IN THE RIGHT WAY

#### HANDLING MONKEYS



‘Taking the monkey’ often means that you are taking on a problem. Also, you are preventing others from taking initiative and dealing with it themselves.

So, to handle monkeys:

1. Deal with them as they happen (say ‘yes’, you can help or ‘no’, you cannot).
2. Do not allow them to become too many to handle.
3. Feed them face-to-face only or by phone (avoid memos or e-mail).
4. Feed them by appointment only; ‘Come and see me at ...’
5. Assign a next feeding time; ‘Try, and if you get a problem come back and see me’.

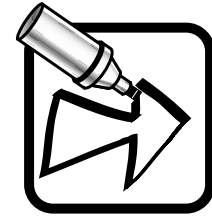


**Tip** *Never say ‘Leave it with me’.*

## MANAGING WORK ACTIVITIES

### IN THE RIGHT WAY

#### LEARN TO DELEGATE



In these days of having to achieve more with fewer resources, it's easy to neglect the skill of delegation.

#### Why delegate?

- To give you more time to do important activities
- To develop and motivate staff
- Because others may be more skilled than you

#### What stops you?

- Unable or unwilling to let go
- Don't want to; like to give the impression of being overworked
- Fear; others will make mistakes and show you up
- Enjoy doing the job; love to get your hands 'dirty'
- It takes time; it's often easier to do it yourself

courtesy Corporate Consultants

## MANAGING WORK ACTIVITIES

### IN THE RIGHT WAY

#### WHAT TO DELEGATE



#### YES:

- ✓ Routine tasks and the associated decision-making
- ✓ Complete jobs to give a sense of achievement
- ✓ Tasks that others could do better and possibly more cheaply

#### NO:

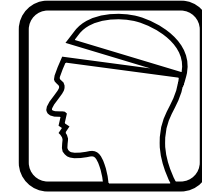
- ✗ Ultimate responsibility for the task
- ✗ Tasks without guidance
- ✗ Unpleasant tasks which are really your responsibility

#### **Remember**

*Delegation means giving people the freedom and authority to handle jobs on their own initiative together with the confidence to succeed.*

courtesy Corporate Consultants

## MANAGING YOUR THINKING & REASONING



### PRIME TIME

#### WHEN ARE YOU AT YOUR BEST?

- We all have a 'prime time' during the day when we're at our best and fully alert
- The secret is to recognise this and do those activities that require energy, application and thought when you're at your sharpest
- When energy is low, we are sluggish and tend to make mistakes
- Watch what you eat - a heavy meal and wine make a lot of people sleepy; a healthy meal can provide energy for hours
- Work in periods of time; a maximum of an hour before you give yourself a break - this way you'll concentrate better



**Tip** *Don't waste high-energy time doing low priority work.*

courtesy Corporate Consultants

## MANAGING RELATIONSHIPS

# INTERRUPTIONS

## WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?



### **Boss**

- Who often has the power when it comes to setting priorities

### **Subordinates**

- The more accessible you are, the more they'll use/abuse you

### **Fellow workers**

- Interrupt for many reasons from social to work-related

### **Clients and customers**

- These you can't ignore

### **Phone**

- Sounds familiar



*Interruptions blow you off course, but they can be managed. Read on ...*

courtesy Corporate Consultants



## MANAGING RELATIONSHIPS



## DEALING WITH INTERRUPTIONS

- When you're interrupted, ask yourself what's more important: the interruption or what you're working on?
- Keep a 'To Do' list to re-focus on what you should be doing
- Try to keep interruptions short - 'What do you want, why, when, etc?'
- Keep a log of who/what interrupts you; a pattern may emerge
- Be assertive; learn to deal with 'Have you got a minute?'
- Invent a deadline
- Continue to look busy
  - stand up to interruptions
  - remove the chair in front of your desk
  - reduce eye contact
  - collect your papers, check your watch
- Go to them - this way you can leave any time
- Learn to say 'no'
- Plan a quiet hour

## MANAGING COMMUNICATIONS

### SUCCESSFUL MEETINGS



- Only hold meetings if they are really necessary
  - Could people be told any other way?
  - Consider the cost; meetings aren't cheap - time away from job, salaries of those attending (see page 99).
- If they are needed then **plan** for them
  - What do you want to achieve?
  - What are you going to discuss?
  - What decisions will need to be made/actions taken?
  - Who needs to be there? How are you going to tell them what it's about and why they are invited?
  - How long can you allocate to the meeting?

Remember, if you fail to prepare, then prepare for your meeting to fail.

## MANAGING COMMUNICATIONS

### SUCCESSFUL MEETINGS

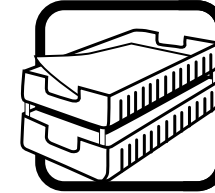


- Prepare an agenda
  - include only relevant items
  - put them in order of importance
  - decide who will lead the input on each
  - allocate time for each item (don't forget to allow for a 5 minute break at least once an hour)
  - what could go wrong and what will you do?
- Collect all information
  - if it's lengthy, summarise it, outlining key points
  - send out agendas and key points in advance
- Prepare the room
  - ensure that there are sufficient tables and chairs
  - if you want equipment (eg: flip charts, overhead projectors) make sure it is available and working
  - arrange refreshments

courtesy Corporate Consultants

## MANAGING YOUR WORK ENVIRONMENT

### DEALING WITH PAPER



#### DO YOU HAVE A CLUTTERED DESK?

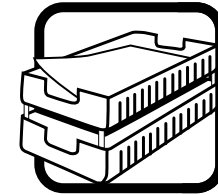
- On average people spend 45 minutes every day looking for lost papers or documents
- 'Cluttered desk = cluttered mind'
- Cluttered desks aren't conducive to clear and creative thinking, so
  - clear your desk of everything not related to what you're currently working on
  - resist the temptation to leave your current work on your desk
  - once you've finished a task, put all the papers relating to it away in a drawer or file
  - always leave a tidy/clean desk when you go home at night
  - adopt a system of dealing with paperwork (read on)
  - group papers together and put them in files



*Start by clearing your desk of all unwanted items.*

## MANAGING YOUR WORK ENVIRONMENT

### DEALING WITH PAPER



- Handle it only once; read it/decide what you want to do with it
- Apply 'GUTS' technique

**G**ive it away

**U**se it

**T**hrow it away

**S**end it

- Have a waste bin within easy range
- Finally, when in doubt - throw it out!

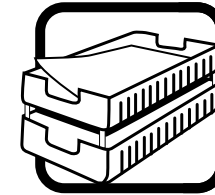


courtesy Corporate Consultants

## MANAGING YOUR WORK ENVIRONMENT

### DEALING WITH PAPER

#### MANAGING YOUR MAIL



##### Incoming

- Look at the way you're organised and how productive you are
- Stop unwanted items reaching you
  - remove your name from circulation lists (either internal or external)
- Action all mail that arrives on your desk
  - deal with it; write comments and pass it on
  - delegate it, or
  - dump it
- Handle your mail in a batch and deal with it accordingly
- Avoid pending/miscellaneous trays
- Develop a system for allocating priorities, eg: A/B files (A: for action, B: to be read)

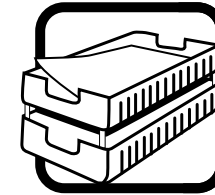
##### Outgoing

- It pays to check all mail bearing your signature

## MANAGING YOUR WORK ENVIRONMENT

### TRAVELLING TIME

#### PRACTICAL TIPS FOR THE REGULAR TRAVELLER

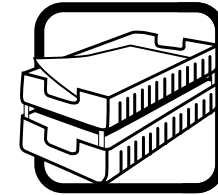


- Is the trip really necessary - or would a letter/phone call do?
- Have a checklist for all you'll need
- Leave a copy of your itinerary in the office/at home
- Work out alternative travel plans
- Carry important phone numbers with you
- Jot down credit card numbers in a safe place
- Take care with any equipment you may have
- Make sure you've got any adaptors that may be necessary for using electrical equipment overseas

## MANAGING YOUR WORK ENVIRONMENT

### TRAVELLING TIME

#### PRACTICAL TIPS FOR THE REGULAR TRAVELLER



- Set up a portable office; take your diary, laptop, phone, stationery, stamps and envelopes with you
- Investigate telephone/fax check-in facilities at airports
- Take advantage of frequent traveller schemes
- Try to avoid the herding instinct on trains and planes
- Use the services of hotels for sorting out any problems
- Take the right clothes for both business and pleasure
- Minimise stress; after travelling eat a light meal, get some exercise and, above all, try to relax
- Finally, never assume - **anything!**

courtesy Corporate Consultants