



## **Workshops and Presentations** **Written Notes and relevant material**

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The following materials are the written notes of a presentation or workshop run by Leigh Nomchong. They are provided here for the benefit of the participants of that workshop or presentation. If you have not attended the workshop/presentation you may find some of the aspects of the material a bit confusing. This is because these notes are a guideline to the event and not a full account of the event. Therefore, if you have not been a participant, you should not view this material on its own, as other relevant and significant material may have been presented verbally or visually.

Please note that we have undergone changes over the years, hence our letter head can vary at times depending on when the workshop/presentation was run.

If you would like a work shop or presentation run for your organisation, or you would like more information, you can contact us below:

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## TIME MANAGEMENT

### **WHAT IS TIME?**

### **WORK AND TIME MANAGEMENT**

- priorities
- goals
- decision making

### **TIME MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS**

- Diary systems
- Filofax systems
- Computer systems such as PIMS
- Project Management Systems.

### **MANAGEMENT STYLES**

- Managing down the line
- Managing upwards

### **STRESS MANAGEMENT**

### **PEOPLE WHO WASTE OUR TIME**

- perfectionist
- problem maker
- the boss
- difficult clients

### **SUMMARY**

## **WHAT IS TIME?**

In biological terms, we have a 24 hour cycle. On average, we spend 8 hours of it sleeping, generally we spend 8 hours earning a living, the remaining 8 hours we usually devote to our social needs. But this includes working in the garden, carrying out assorted house, car and family repairs, landscaping, going out etc.

By comparison, anthropologists did a study on the Kung Bushmen, the last remaining Hunter/gatherer society in the world. They live in the Kalahari Desert in Africa. It was a longitudinal study done over three years. The study looked at how much time the Kung Bushman devoted to maintaining food, shelter, hunting etc, to exist in the harsh desert environment successfully.

It was found that they spent an average of 3.5 hours per day maintaining their existence. How do you spend your time?

## **WORK AND TIME MANAGEMENT**

The management of time is usually associated with one's behaviour at work. So we will discuss the role of time management at work, but remember that the issues I raise also relate to the rest of your life.

What are some of the aspects of time management that we need to take into account.

### **PRIORITIES**

We all know about priorities. It is part of the human system of coping with demands upon us and meeting those demands with a finite amount of resources. Prioritisation is a way of achieving efficient utilisation of resources. This is another word for work.

Priorities are determined on a range of factors:

- Importance of the task, forced level priority (by superior), ease of completion of the task, minimisation of later adverse problems,

The listing of priorities is a personal thing. We make judgements on the basis of our preferences, prejudices, fear (of failure) and skill. Making priorities is learnt behaviour i.e. it is a skill developed over time with practice!

### **GOALS:**

When we have no clear direction, that is no goals, we tend to waste a lot of time and squander resources. However, many people do not assign goals as they are fearful that if they assign goals they will fail them. Never the less, goals clarify direction and help us spend our time wisely.

Again, goal identification is a personal issue, but has the same factors affecting it as does Priorities. Goals can be small and short term, large and long term, AND contradictory! Long term goals often generate a series of short goals, which appear as incremental stages to achieving the long term goal. Goals are important in time management.

Formal vs Informal Goals – Formal is the stated mission statement of the organisation, and Informal is when one of the partners is sparing with one of the other partners to gain some benefit.

**DECISION MAKING:**

There are many decisions that we make, but they all involve the same process. What differs is the subject matter and magnitude of the decision. Some people are phobic of making decisions because they are fearful of the potential adverse consequences. This leads to being overwhelmed and the person vacillates and becomes immobilised.

Decision making can be logically or emotionally driven. E.g. Logic – do this as it makes sense. Emotion – a divorce case. Discuss problem solving vs worry.

**TIME MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS**

- Diary systems
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**MANAGEMENT STYLES**

The office environment is a complex one. There are many variables to cater too and we need strategies to cater to them.

Managing down the line – There is no clear, workable technique. This is a matter of style, which reflects the culture of management. Style covers how one delegates, what one delegates, how one follows up delegated work, who to delegate too. It's also a matter of working with the capability of subordinate staff.

Managing upwards – this is exactly what it means. Sometimes we have to manage our superiors. Sometimes they are not always good managers (but they are the boss), sometimes our superiors are not aware of our needs and need to be educated by us. Sometimes superiors quite literally do not have the knowledge that we have.

**STRESS MANAGEMENT**

Stress management has an effect on how you manage your time, and what decisions you make. Overstress impairs the human decision making system. When you are overstressed you make decisions that you regret later when you are not stressed.

**PEOPLE WHO WASTE OUR TIME:**

There are people in our work who waste our time or use it up for themselves. Be on the lookout for these people. There are various types of personality traits that affect our management of time. The following Personality traits are simplistic so recognise that you cannot catalogue all of your colleagues solely on the following traits.

PERFECTIONIST – this person has to do everything absolutely right. They spend an enormous amount of time and resources completing tasks to the point where they are perfect and beyond criticism. They spend resources far beyond the value of the task. And they get irritated with you if you don't do the same, or you stop them working the way they want too.

- Do not cooperate with this person, they will hate you, but you will not waste time
- Do not cater to their needs, do not give in
- Be polite, firm and unyielding

PANICKER – this person runs around the office in a state of crisis. They create a sense of urgency, they are overwhelmed by the task, They sake papers, they use this as a badge of honour to justify a range of factors (failure, reduced success, recognition of their importance).

- This is NOT your problem
- Deny that it is your problem
- Give the problem back to them

PROBLEM MAKER – this person is good at making their problems, your problems. They are very skilled at convincing you that you should own the problem and therefore, get you to take the problem on for them

THE BOSS – he/she is a problem! They determine workloads, goals, directions, and they can be a panicker and problem maker! But they have the authority to be so.

- You need to manage upwards (nicely).

DIFFICULT CLIENTS – these are great time wasters! They love the sound of their own voices! They need to tell every irrelevant fact regarding the issue. They need your total and undivided attention. They are emotionally driven individuals who are poor time managers. They are consumers of time!

- Avoid these people!
- Tell them you cannot talk to them at the moment because you are about to vomit!
- If you have to listen, do not give polite feedback, just listen. – verbal & non verbal cues.

## **SUMMARY**

Managing your time is achieved by understanding what you are trying to achieve, what you are trying to achieve it with, and not wasting your time.

There are various factors to take into account when trying to manage your time, and these are:

- Prioritisation
- Goals – Formal Vs Informal
- Decision Making
- Time Management Mechanisms
- Management styles
- Stress management
- And dealing with others i.e. the various personality traits of those around us