

TIME MANAGEMENT

**Summary from an online discussion carried out by CMCL-FAIMER
fellows and faculty of the Class of 2007 in April 2007**

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Faculty : Dr BV Adkoli**

The task for this month is divided into 3 sessions (10 days each)

1. Identifying strengths and weaknesses of your time management & importance of to-do list
2. Procrastination and tips to improve time management
3. Whether we can really keep our time management functional and stress free

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List of Fellows and Faculty

Time Management

The session on time management was discussed by almost all fellows. The session was divided into 3 parts of 10 days each.

First Task

1. Do you think that we really need to have a good time management skills?
2. Can you identify 3 strengths and 3 weaknesses of your time management in the last month? (Not necessarily related to intersession activity, you can think about in general).
3. Do you frequently use a to-do list? If yes how you prepare, plan and execute? If not, do you think having one will help in time management?
4. Any other effective time management strategy you are presently using?

Second Task

1. Do you Procrastinate? If yes what are the reasons?
2. If no, how you avoid/manage it?
3. Comment on any of the above mentioned tips for TM which you think will be very helpful to you.
4. Do you think multitasking is bad?
5. How do you manage your emails in listserve?

Final Task

1. Are you able to manage your time effectively in routine (or at the end of day a number of tasks are not done & you feel unhappy)?
2. Do you feel stressed with additional work on listserve?
3. Have you adopted any time management strategy in this month to effectively manage your work?
4. Did time management learning and execution increase or decrease your stress?
5. How do you manage your everyday stress?

First task was to know the ideas of the others about TM and how they practice TM.

Second session was related to why sometimes we are not able to manage time in the world of multitasking.

The Final task was related to stress and time management.

Introduction

Time management skills are essential skills for effective people. People who use these techniques routinely are the highest achievers in all walks of life, from business to sport to public service. If you use these skills well, then you will be able to function effectively, even under intense pressure.

With good time management skills you are in control of your time and your life, of your stress and energy levels. You make progress at work. You are able to maintain balance between your work, personal, and family lives. You have enough flexibility to respond to surprises or new opportunities.

All time management skills are learnable. More than likely you will see much improvement from simply becoming aware of the essence and causes of common personal time management problems. With these time management skills, you can see better which time management techniques are most relevant for your situation. Many of your problems will gradually disappear.

What are the reasons for poor time management?

Usually the reasons for poor time management are:

Lack of clarity about tasks.

This happened in March discussion, most people were reading mails. Some were not responding to actual topic discussion mail, but if there is another mail not related to topic they responded. The reason may be that they did not have time to go through all discussion mails; hence they thought it would be inappropriate to respond, but the other mail was small and they have some idea about the matter being discussed, hence they responded.

Feeling overwhelmed.

Fallacious beliefs (“I’m too smart”).

Thinking, “It’s too hard.” Happened last month, so many mails in inbox, and so many discussions going on. May be it was not too easy.

Whatever the reasons may be, it is said that

Bad time management = stress

By some estimates, people on average waste about 2 hours per day.

Signs of time wasting may include:

- Messy desk and cluttered (or no) files
- Can’t find things

- Miss appointments, need to reschedule them late and/or unprepared for meetings
- Volunteer to do things other people should do
- Tired/unable to concentrate

But don't worry; time management is not something you can not handle.

So, ***“If you can dream it, you can do it”***. Disneyland was built in 366 days, from ground-breaking to first day open to the public. You don't find time for important things, you make it.

Good judgment comes from experience and you might have come across that experiences come from bad judgment. (e.g. for some of us the last month's time management!)

“Work expands so as to fill the time available for its completion”
(Parkinson's Law)

Advantages of good time management:

- You gain time
- Motivates and initiates
- Increases effectiveness and efficiency
- Prevents stress and anxiety
- Reduces avoidance
- Leads to more balance

Remember that time is money (Ben Franklin, 1748), so we must manage it very well.

Keys to Successful Time Management

- **Self knowledge and goals:** In order to manage your time successfully, having an awareness of what your goals are will assist you in prioritizing your activities.
- **Developing and maintaining a personal, flexible schedule:** Time management provides you with the opportunity to create a schedule that works for **you**, not for others. This personal attention gives you the flexibility to include the things that are most important to you.

We can achieve some of these this month, but how?

Try to identify your Strengths & weaknesses, for this:

- Know how you spend your time.
- Know when, where and how you work most effectively and efficiently.

You can further enlarge the spectrum by

- ☐ Identify your ‘macro’ strengths and weaknesses.
- ☐ Analyse when you work best. (Morning, day, night etc.)
- ☐ Analyse where you work best. (Room, home, library etc.)
- ☐ Analyse how you work best. (One hour on, ten minutes off, etc.)

Analyse your present time management skills. One goal is to help yourself become aware of how you use your time as one resource in organizing, prioritizing, and succeeding in your studies in the context of competing activities of friends, work, family, etc. List strategies for areas that need work. Setting goals is important for time management. Goals must be ‘SMART’: Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic, Time-and resource-constrained

Effective aids:

- **"To Do" list**
Write down things you have to do, then decide what to do at the moment, what to schedule for later, what to get someone else to do, and what to put off for a later time period
- **Daily/weekly planner**
Write down appointments, classes, and meetings on a chronological log book or chart.
If you are more visual, sketch out your schedule
First thing in the morning, check what's ahead for the day
always go to sleep knowing you're prepared for tomorrow
- **Long term planner**
Use a monthly chart so that you can plan ahead.
Long term planners will also serve as a reminder to constructively plan time for yourself

To-do’ lists will help you clarify what you need to accomplish each day. They also help you to accomplish it!

In this you

- List your activities for the day.
- Prioritize those activities.
- Check for activities that you can accomplish at the same time.
- Break larger tasks into smaller ones.
- Include your to-do list in your daily schedule.

To-do' lists are very commonly used; you might be using it. It is an **inventory** tool that serves as an alternative to **memory**. When you accomplish one of the items on a task list, you *check* it off or *cross* it off. The traditional method is to write these on a piece of paper with a **pen** or **pencil**, usually on a note pad or clip-board. Remember how we make a list when go to market e.g. Grocery, clothes, cheque drop, petrol refill, window shopping, ice cream etc, and then we usually prioritize it e.g. Cities are crowded these days, so we plan first ATM will come so cheque drop first, then petrol pump and so on-----.

Task lists are often prioritized:

- One method of organizing a general to-do list is the *ABC method*. With this approach, the list is divided into three sections, labelled A, B, and C, containing tasks that need to be done within a day, a week, and a month, respectively.
- To prioritize a daily task list, one either records the tasks in the order of highest priority, or assigns them a number after they are listed ("1" for highest priority, "2" for second highest priority, etc.) which indicates in which order to execute the tasks. The latter method is generally faster, allowing the tasks to be recorded more quickly.

At the heart of time management is an important shift in focus:

Concentrate on results, not on being busy

Many people spend their days in a frenzy of activity, but achieve very little because they are not concentrating on the right things.

The 80:20 Rule

This is neatly summed up in the Pareto Principle, or the '80:20 Rule'. This argues that typically 80% of unfocussed effort generates only 20% of results. *The remaining 80% of results are achieved with only 20% of the effort.* While the ratio is not always 80:20, this broad pattern of a small proportion of activity generating non-scalar returns recurs so frequently as to be the norm in many areas.

First task (last date to respond-10th April, summary will be posted on 11th April along with 2nd task)

Your inputs/comments/views/suggestions are invited for the following issues:

6. Do you think that we really need to have a good time management skills?
7. Can you identify 3 strengths and 3 weaknesses of your time management in the last month? (Not necessarily related to intersession activity, you can think about in general).
8. Do you frequently use a to-do list? If yes how you prepare, plan and execute? If not, do you think having one will help in time management?
9. Any other effective time management strategy you are presently using?

COMPILED RESPONSES FROM FELLOWS AND FACULTY

We started getting responses right from day 1 till the last day. Sanjay was the first responder in 1st and 2nd task, while Dr Supe was the first one in the final session. Monika and Anshu discussed in detail their ways of time management. In this session we were also able to rope in Madan, Aroma, Venu, Jayanthi and even Meena with constant reminders, but satish mahajan was not traceable.

Most of the fellow rated to-do list as one of the main practicing tool for TM. They discussed their to-do lists. There were some useful additional tips for management of to-do lists. Prioritizing the items on the to-do list was discussed. It was advised to keep the to-do list short and updated.

Monika gave example of her teaching days to highlight this:

my earliest memories of my time management plans are when I was preparing for my first board exams in 10th standard. However the first person to inspire me to plan time was my pg teacher. dr BJ Mehta in Ahmedabad...most of my seniors complained that there was too much to read and too little time. our 'boss' BMJ taunted us 'you can easily finish nelson if you read 5pages per day and you don't even do that'

(nelson is the textbook of pediatrics, to date considered to be the papa of pediatrics by most residents, that is probably the one book that supports the degrees of several pediatricians)

we analysed his statement...nelson has nearly 3000 pages. PG is a period of 3 years that is nearly 1,000 days. if you delete the first few months spent in orienting to the work and environment, and still manage to read at least 5 pages per day, it sounds manageable. However, most residents still find it difficult, not because they don't get the time to read, but because they don't plan what and how much to read. Prioritizing is important.

I discussed about my experience:

I remember when I was preparing for PG entrance. I was particularly interested in PGI, so somebody told me to read Harrison, I opened and then closed it thinking that it was not possible. One page will take a long time to read and understand. But then I decided to finish it, and was able to do with better time management. I used to make weekly and daily schedule to see how much I have finished and how much is left. At that time I was not aware of about time management skills. That planning really helped me a lot. I am still carrying that habit of planning schedules daily and weekly.

People were able to recognize their strengths and weaknesses. Weaknesses were very well highlighted with examples. Some fellows were already having strong hold on some aspects of their time management, while others highlighted their problems.

The discussion on strengths and weaknesses led to more detailed discussion on how to say "NO". At this moment faculty jumped in to illustrate more on saying "NO". The importance of saying NO was discussed throughout the month as more and more fellows started practicing it and shared their experience. Most of the fellows found that saying NO does not come naturally and is not easy to practice. Sanjay shared that he was very strict about saying NO, wherever he feels that it is needed. Chandrika & Madan expressed that they will be using it more frequently.

Mrunal gave principles for saying NO:

When you learn to say "NO" you are not closing the door on your responsibilities, but rather you are making sure that you can meet your commitments and accomplish the maximum possible in the time available to you.

To be able to say "NO" you will have to accept these three principles:

1. I realize that I can't do everything
2. I won't agree to undertake a task or project that I know I will not be able to complete in the timeframe required
3. I will not make commitments that are not consistent with the goals and objectives I have set for myself

Dr Supe elaborated more on 80:20 rule. He added that:

Only 20% of the tasks that we do produce 80% of results. Conversely most people spend 80% of the time doing duties that are related to only 20% OF JOB RESULTS. e.g. Examination.

1. 20% of studies answer 80% of your questions.
2. Home front : 80% of the washing is done on 20% of the dresses in the wardrobe that are used most often.
3. In a list of ten tasks, doing 2 of them yield 80% of rewards. Be expert in locating those tasks.
4. If you are chasing a dead line (exam), unless you manage your time you are forced to do 80% of important job in 20% of time that is left over.

This rule will help you locate those 2 items which would fetch you 80% results in 20% work. They are “A” priority items. Once you locate them, the rest of the goals you have are simply “B” or “C” priority items.

The solution is not learning how to do everything more efficiently, but in learning to do less more effectively.

*During discussion on Parkinson’s law, **TS and Vivek** very rightly pointed out that there is no excuse to tell that you did not manage your time well because of this or that-----.*

Delegation of work, which is part of tm was well discussed. Although we wanted to keep it in 2nd task, but once it started and was going well, we thought let it go the natural way even in the final session. The example of dog by Dr TS was very beneficial to all. He added that:

The essence of delegation is to give the authority but have the responsibility yourself. You can never delegate responsibility. Most of the time, people do other way round- make some else responsible, without giving any authority.

Delegation is the art of keeping a dog and let him do all the barking. If you have to tell the dog every time when to bark or when not to bark, then you are making life miserable for both of you. Monika went ahead to explain it in more detail.

Dr Vivek added few beautiful lines

**"GIVE A MAN ORDERS
AND HE WILL DO THE TASK**

**REASONABLY WELL.
BUT LET HIM SET HIS
OWN TARGETS,
GIVE HIM FREEDOM
AND AUTHORITY
AND HIS TASK BECOMES
A PERSONAL MISSION:
'I CAN'.**

TS advised that:

True delegation is difficult to practice because it involves sacrifice-sacrifice of low level power with retention of critical controls. Most of us are more comfortable with low level power- so even when we delegate, we expect the delegate to report to us every five minutes, not take any decision without approval and so on. While we may appear to be delegating but in effect, we are killing not only delegation but also the motivation of the delegate. And then the standard comment is- I try giving authority to them but they do not respond!

So beware- set your eyes on critical controls. From personal experience, I can tell you, life becomes a lot easier for both parties, if you delegate authority appropriately.

Chetna discussed difference between delegation and dumping. Dr TS helped whenever there was confusion and very appropriately and in a milder way corrected the defaulters.

Dr Adkoli came from kitchen (or was told to go) and explained his personal views on delegation and micromanagement. TS, Sanjay & Anshu elaborated more on micromanagement. Sanjay was always there with new supportive presentations and clarifications on multitasking. Dr Jamkar also joined the discussion.

TS warned about micromanagement:

The key reason for micromanagement is lack of faith in your people. If you are doing that, then 'you are barking yourself, inspite of having a dog'. The genesis of this tendency begins from our childhood days. When we wanted to take a serving of soup ourselves, Mummy would say, "stop it- you will spoil your dress. Let me do it for you." This probably continues even after we grow up. Moral of the story- some risk taking is inherent in every activity. You grow, when you make mistakes and learn from them.

**Being successful doesn't make you manage your time well.
Managing your time well makes you successful**

-----End of first session-----

SECOND SESSION

Procrastination and tips to improve time management

If you've found yourself putting off important tasks over and over again, YOU'RE NOT ALONE. In fact, many people procrastinate to some degree - but some are so chronically affected by procrastination that it stops them achieving things they're capable of and disrupts their careers.

"Procrastination is the thief of time" Edward Young, *Night Thoughts*, 1742

If you already know how you should be managing your time, but you still don't do it, don't give up. What you may be overlooking is the psychological side of your time management skills, psychological obstacles hidden behind your personality. Depending on your personal situation, such obstacles may be the primary reason why you procrastinate, have difficulties saying no, delegating, or making time management decisions.

The key to controlling and ultimately combating this destructive habit is to recognize when you start procrastinating, understand why it happens (even to the best of us), and take active steps to better manage your time and outcomes.

Why do we Procrastinate?

In a nutshell, you procrastinate when you put off things that you should be focusing on right now, usually in favor of doing something that is more enjoyable or that you're more comfortable doing.

Procrastinators work as many hours in the day as other people (and often work longer hours) but they invest their time in the wrong tasks. Sometimes this is simply because they don't understand the difference between urgent tasks and important tasks, and jump straight into getting on with urgent tasks that aren't actually important. They have little or no time left for the important tasks, despite the unpleasant outcomes this may bring about.

Another common cause of procrastination is feeling overwhelmed by the task. You may not know where to begin. Or you may doubt that you have the skills or resources you think you need. So you seek comfort in doing tasks you know you're capable of completing. Unfortunately, the big task isn't going to go away - truly important tasks rarely do.

Other causes of procrastination include:

- Waiting for the “right” mood or the “right” time to tackle the important task at hand (remember how we sometimes react to some emails!)
- A fear of failure or success; negative self-beliefs
- Underdeveloped **decision making skills**; difficulty concentrating
- Poor organizational skills; and
- Perfectionism ("I don't have the right skills or resources to do this perfectly now, so I won't do it at all.") quite common-remember I wrote earlier also that most of us are reading all mails on listserv, but usually think that we will respond later after reading it thoroughly and then preparing a perfect answer which must impress others. Come on-just chip in, atleast you will start!.

How to Overcome Procrastination:

Step 1: Recognize that you're Procrastinating

If you're honest with yourself, you probably know why and when you're procrastinating. To have a good chance of conquering procrastination, you need to spot straight away that you're doing it. Then, you need to identify why you're procrastinating and taken appropriate steps to overcome the block.

But to be sure, you first need to make sure you know your priorities. Putting off an unimportant task isn't procrastination, it's probably good prioritization. Identify your priorities, and then work from a **Prioritized To Do List** on a daily basis.

Some useful indicators which will help you pull yourself up as soon as you start procrastinating include:

- Filling your day with low priority tasks from your To Do List;
- Reading an e-mail or request that you've noted in your notebook or on your To Do List more than once, without starting work on it or deciding when you're going to start work on it;
- Sitting down to start a high-priority task, and almost immediately going off to make a cup of coffee or check your e-mails;
- Leaving an item on your To Do list for a long time, even though you know it's important;
- Regularly saying "Yes" to unimportant tasks that others ask you to do, and filling your time with these instead of getting on with the important tasks already on your list.

Step 2: Work out WHY You're Procrastinating

Why you procrastinate can depend on both you and the task. But it's important to understand what the reasons for procrastination are for each situation, so that you can select the best approach for overcoming your reluctance to get going.

Common causes of procrastination were discussed in detail above, but they can often be reduced to two main reasons:

- You find the task unpleasant; or
- You find the task overwhelming

Step 3: Get over it!

If you are putting something off because you just don't want to do it, and you really can't delegate the work to someone else, you need to find ways of motivating yourself to get moving. The following approaches can be helpful here:

- Make up your own rewards. For example, promise yourself a piece of tasty flapjack at lunchtime if you've completed a certain task. (may be in listserve we can start that to get all fellows in)
- Ask someone else to check up on you. Peer pressure works! This is the principle behind slimming and other self-help groups, and it is widely recognized as a highly effective approach. (wake up calls!)
- Identify the unpleasant consequences of NOT doing the task.

Other tips to Beat Procrastination

- Break Inertia-Do small things to get yourself started! (e.g., be the first one to reply to 2nd task-just write that u think it is an important topic)
- Divide task into small manageable pieces
- Set reachable sub-goals that are specific-Saying “read 20 pages of Chapter 5 by 8pm” sounds better than saying “do some studying later.” This helps to gain a sense of accomplishment.
- Don't sabotage yourself-Set up your environment with as few distractions as possible. Arrange your work space the way you like it and work at times when you have peak energy.
- Enjoy Your FREEDOM-When you complete an unpleasant task, take time and feel how nice it is to have it over and done with.

TIPS for time management

Developing time management skills is a journey that may begin with this discussion, but needs practice and other guidance along the way (as we are getting from faculty). **Hence I am including some time management tips:**

1. Find your **creative/thinking time**. Defend it ruthlessly, spend it alone, maybe at home.
2. Find your **dead time**. Schedule meetings, phone calls, and mundane stuff during it.
3. Listing routine tasks wastes time. If you are in the habit of brushing your teeth every day, then there is no reason to put it down on the task list.
4. **Don't leave email sitting in your in box**. "The ability to quickly process and synthesize information and turn it into actions is one of the most emergent skills of the professional world today,". Organize email in file folders. If the message needs more thought, move it to your to-do list. If it's for reference, print it out. If it's a meeting, move it to your calendar. Take action on an email as soon as you read it.
5. **Admit multitasking is bad**. For people who didn't grow up watching TV, typing out instant messages and doing homework all at the same time, **multitasking is deadly**. But it **decreases everyone's productivity**, no matter who they are. So try to limit it.
6. **Do the most important thing first**. "running a morning dash". Spend an hour on the most important thing on her to-do list. This is a great idea because even if you can't get the whole thing done in an hour, you'll be much more likely to go back to it once you've gotten it started.
7. **Know when you work best**. Each person has a best time. You can discover yours by monitoring your productivity over a period of time. Then you need to manage your schedule to keep your best time free for your most important work.
8. **Make it easy to get started**. We don't have problems finishing projects, we have problems starting them,".
9. **Organize your to-do list every day**.
10. **Dare to be slow**. Remember that a good time manager actually responds to some things more slowly than a bad time manager would. For example, someone who is doing the highest priority task is probably not answering incoming email while they're doing it.
11. Learn to say **NO**
12. Learn to Prioritize

Second session (last date to respond-20th April, summary will be posted on 21st April along with Final task)

Your inputs/comments/views/suggestions are invited for the following issues:

1. Do you Procrastinate? If yes what are the reasons?
2. If no, how you avoid/manage it?
3. Comment on any of the above mentioned tips for TM which you think will be very helpful to you.
4. Do you think multitasking is bad?
5. How do you manage your emails in listserve?

It is easier to find something to do with extra time than to find extra time to do something. Most importantly, make it work for you. A time schedule that is not personalized and honest is not a time schedule at all.

“Make Time for Success!”

COMPILED RESPONSES FROM FELLOWS AND FACULTY

Procrastination was discussed in great detail. Almost everyone admitted to doing it. Chetna advised to train your mind NOT to procrastinate

Mrunal added:

When we r on discussion on Mind, i couldn't help myself but to quote these lines from a book,(The monk who sold....)It states, There is nothing noble about being superior to some other person. True nobility lies in being superior to your former self"

So when we procrastinate and r aware about it, why not try to train our mind towards something positive.

On adopting TM methods **Sheena** added that old habits die hard, but we can all try to be better time managers hereafter. Combating negativity was discussed when Anshu brought it up. Chetna advised that Just learn to

IGNORE them and get on with your work. Remember no body can hurt you if you do not allow them to. Sanjay advised various options as:

- Go into the gap negativity will turn into positivity
- Bypass the negative
- Use the negative

TS advised to use stones as stairs.

Chetna advised about negativity:

Its a feeling that sometimes bogs one down so much that you begin being cautious about displaying your joy and enthusiasm. the greater your achievements, the sharper the barbs and criticisms; Just learn to IGNORE them and get on with your work. Remember no body can hurt you if you do not allow them to. Of course it also helps to understand that this reaction of certain homosapiens comes because their feelings of insecurity. if you try to assuage that they will not feel threatened and may not react so bad! Of course its only temporary. Motivation was other aspect of tm which was discussed. There was good correlation suggested between motivation & internal powers, failure & guilt. Body clock was considered as one of strong factors to which we respond. One of the videos on a teacher motivated most of us to teach appropriately.

Hem Lata added that:

Body clock is our best guide. When I feel motivated to do a work then i might finish it in time. if i m not then it will pile up and this thing frustrates you more. BUT one thing which i feel strongly is that we must develop the habit of making lists of daily activities, prioritizing them so as to have better time management.

Sheena added:

You may remember Maslow's hierarchy of motivation.

Motivation is both created from external environmental stimuli and intrinsic. Interest/enjoyment is considered as a measure of intrinsic motivation.

TS added

The strength of motivation for any task depends on 3 factors (I think, you did mention something of this sort in one of your mails). These include attractiveness of the reward, belief that I can do it and the belief that if I do it, the reward will follow (called valence, instrumentality and expectance, if you like technical terms). You thus represent the strength of motivation as $V \times I \times E$. Mathematically, even if one of the factors is zero, the net outcome will be zero.

Use of waiting time was discussed thoroughly. Dr TS, Mrunal, Chetna, Sanjay, Monika, Anshu, Meena & Adkoli shared their experience about how they use their waiting time. Reading novels, quick email checking, refining

schedules & passing DNB were some useful outcomes of this topic. Dr TS discussed correlation between the perfection and completion of work/success.

Mrunal told when we can use it:

- Time you spend commuting on a train or bus
- Time you wait at the doctor or dentist office for your appointment
- Time you spend on a plane, waiting for your plane, or the time you spend waiting for your baggage
- Time you spend "on hold" on the telephone
- Time you spend when you arrive at work or at a meeting earlier than you had anticipated

Multitasking abilities were discussed. Monika, Chandrika and Hem discussed natural instinct for multitasking. It was advised that multitasking should not be done at the cost of quality. Meena and Madan also shared their experiences.

Dr Adkoli added:

From what is being expressed I tend to feel that the tips and tools for time management are many but one has to find one's own strategy depending upon one's own natural style. If you are a multi-tasker, you are lucky; go ahead as long as you can manage.

Chandrika was not very comfortable with multitasking. She added:

Time management discussions always make me feel as if I have to fight the clock and it is against me. Philosophy tells us to flow with the time. I have to feel one with the clock and go along.

While many of us claim to be highly effective as we monitor e-mail, engage in productive sessions with ten different colleagues teach, see patients and answer the mobile all at the same time, it turns out that most of the research does not support this claim. News isn't good for the dedicated multitaskers out there.

Every study finds that the human mind does not perform well on simultaneous tasks — whether it's talking on the cell (even hands-free) and driving, and giving a correct response in a simple experiment.

Chetna advised:

Multitasking can be managed:

- if the tasks are NOT in huge multiples
- if we are aware of our inherent capabilities
- if we are able to do the task well (this should be assessed by others rather than ourselves)

- if we are NOT a perfectionist

Sanjay went to other areas of multitasking:

My biggest challenge is to keep the family happy inspite of multitasking ,heavy schedules ,to be able to help children with homework (esp maths), spend time with wife and do the net also. A huge challenge.

-----End of Second session-----

FINAL SESSION

- ✚ Do you look at other people, and admire their focus, effectiveness and drive?
- ✚ Do you wonder how they seem to be so organized and in control, and how they always seem to do the right thing at the right time in the right way?
- ✚ And do you feel that you work too hard, but even then still struggle to complete your work?
- ✚ Are the things that are important to you drowned in drudgery?
- ✚ Is work eating into the time you want to spend with your family and friends?

Unfortunately, this is very normal. Many people experience these same problems. They feel over-busy, disorganized, stressed and out of control of their lives. Yet they know there's a better way - if only they could find it. Let us see how you can minimize stress and improve your quality of life by managing your time more wisely.

Richard Lazarus and Susan Folkman suggested in 1984 that stress can be thought of as resulting from an “imbalance between demands and resources” or as occurring when “pressure exceeds ones perceived ability to cope”. There are a variety of ways of coping with stress. Some techniques of time management may help a person to control stress.

Time Management helps you to reduce long-term stress by giving you direction when you have too much work to do. Everything good usually starts with gumption. It's picking yourself up, deciding that you could be happier, that you want to be happier - and then doing one small thing to get you started and keep you going. Boredom and blaming are the opposite of gumption. Stress and time management start with gumption. It's the trying that counts. Poor time and stress management often comes from doing the same thing harder, rather than smarter.

Major Causes of Workplace Stress

1. Not knowing what you want or if you're getting it - poor planning.
2. The feeling that there's too much to do. One can have this feeling even if there's hardly anything to do at all.
3. Not enjoying your job. This can be caused by lots of things, for example, not knowing what you want, not eating well, etc. However, most people always blame their jobs

4. Conflicting demands on the job.
5. Insufficient resources to do the job.
6. Not feeling appreciated.
7. Interruptions. There will always be interruptions. It's how they're handled that wastes time.
8. Hopelessness. People "give in", "numb out" and "march through the day"
9. Poor delegation skills. This involves not sharing work with others.

One of the most important factors in becoming overstressed is how much you expect yourself to be able to accomplish. You must have reasonable goals that you can reach within the time that you have to complete certain activities. Set reasonable expectations, and allow yourself enough time to reach them. Much stress can be avoided if you just relax and be careful with commitments and time management. Your parents and teachers can help you set goals and prioritize your activities.

Common Symptoms of Poor Stress and Time Management

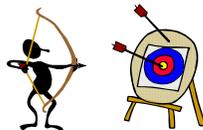
1. Irritability. Fellow workers notice this first.
2. Fatigue. How many adults even notice this?
3. Difficulty concentrating. You often don't need to just to get through the day!
4. Forgetfulness. You can't remember what you did all day, what you ate yesterday.
5. Loss of sleep. This affects everything else!
6. Physical disorders, for example, headaches, rashes, tics, cramps, etc.
7. At worst, withdrawal and depression.



Wise Principles of Good Stress and Time Management

1. Learn your signs for being overstressed or having a time management problem. Ask your friends about you. Perhaps they can tell you what they see from you when you're overstressed.
2. Most people feel that they are stressed and/or have a time management problem. Verify that you really have a problem. What do you see, hear or feel that leads you to conclude that you have a time or stress problem?
3. Don't have the illusion that doing more will make you happier. Is it quantity of time that you want, or quality?

“When You Wash The



Dishes,

Wash the Dishes.”

4. Stress and time management problems have many causes and usually require more than one technique to fix. You don't need a lot of techniques, usually more than one, but not a lot.
5. One of the major benefits of doing time planning is feeling that you're in control.
6. Focus on results, not on busyness.
7. It's the trying that counts - at least as much as doing the perfect technique.

Simple Techniques to Manage Stress

There are lots of things people can do to cut down on stress. Most people probably even know what they could do. It's not the lack of knowing what to do in order to cut down stress; it is doing what you know you have to do. The following techniques are geared to help you do what you know you have to do.

1. Talk to someone. You don't have to fix the problem, just report it.
2. Notice if any of the muscles in your body are tense. Just noticing that will often relax the muscle.
3. Ask your boss if you're doing OK. This simple question can make a lot of difference and verify wrong impressions.
4. Delegate.
5. If you take on a technique to manage stress, tell someone else. They can help you be accountable to them and yourself.
6. Cut down on caffeine and sweets. Take a walk instead. Tell someone that you're going to do that.
7. Use basic techniques of planning, problem solving and decision making.
8. Monitor the number of hours that you work in a week. Tell your boss, family and/or friends how many hours that you are working.
9. "Wash the dishes". Do something you can feel good about.
10. At the end of your day, spend five minutes cleaning up your space. Use this time, too, to organize your space, including your desktop. That'll give you a clean start for the next day.
11. Read your mail at the same time each day.
That way, you'll likely get to your mail on a regular basis and won't become distracted into any certain piece of mail that ends up taking too much of your time.
13. Have a place for everything and put everything in its place.
That way, you'll know where to find it when you need it. Another important

outcome is that your people will see that you are somewhat organized, rather than out of control.

14. Best suggestion for saving time - schedule 10 minutes to do nothing. That time can be used to just sit and clear your mind. You'll end up thinking more clearly, resulting in more time in your day. The best outcome of this practice is that it reminds you that you're not a slave to a clock - and that if you take 10 minutes out of your day, you and your organization won't fall apart.

15. Prioritize your tasks

you can also try following:

- Have a cup of warm tea or hot chocolate
- Take a warm bath or shower
- Read a relaxing book or magazine for a little while as a break from your work
- Try some simple yoga poses
- Call up a friend to talk -- chances are you're not alone
- Feel comfortable saying "no" to additional projects



Myths About Stress and Time Management

Myth #1: All stress is bad. No, there's good and bad stress. Good stress is excitement, thrills, etc. The goal is to recognize personal signs of bad stress and deal with them.

Myth #2: Planning my time just takes more time. Actually, research shows the opposite.

Myth #3: I get more done in more time when I wisely use caffeine, sugar, alcohol or nicotine. Wrong! Research shows that the body always has to "come down" and when it does, you can't always be very effective then after the boost.

Myth #4: A time management problem means that there's not enough time to get done what needs to get done. No, a time management problem is not using your time to your fullest advantage, to get done what you want done.

Myth #5: The busier I am, the better I'm using my time. Look out! You may only be doing what's urgent, and not what's important.

Myth #6: I feel very harried, busy, so I must have a time management problem. Not necessarily. You should verify that you have a time management problem. This requires knowing what you really want to get done and if it is getting done or not.

Myth #7: I feel OK, so I must not be stressed. In reality, many adults don't

even know when they're really stressed out until their bodies tell them so. They miss the early warning signs from their body, for example, headaches, stiff backs, twitches, etc.

Final session (last date to respond-29th April, summary will be posted on 30st April)

Your inputs/comments/views/suggestions are invited for the following issues:

6. Are you able to manage your time effectively in routine (or at the end of day a number of tasks are not done & you feel unhappy)?
7. Do you feel stressed with additional work on listserv?
8. Have you adopted any time management strategy in this month to effectively manage your work?
9. Did time management learning and execution increase or decrease your stress?
10. How do you manage your everyday stress?

Be a goal-getter, not just a goal setter

COMPILED RESPONSES FROM FELLOWS AND FACULTY

Most of the fellows are now addicted to listserv. Although they had to make adjustments in their schedule to keep pace with listserv activities, they find listserv activities as stress reliever. Time management as discussed in this month helped all of the fellows to manage their time well especially in relation to listserv activities. Some fellows, were reading mails but were not responding. Even these fellows were able to manage their time using TM principles and their execution. These fellows ultimately replied in the later half of the month. Most of the fellows are using music, talking with friends/colleagues, walking, exercise, meditation, sleep, playing with kids as stress relievers. Dr Payal contributed that even if something is not completed on the to-do list, do not make it a reason for stress. We got response from all fellows and a number of faculty members for the final session.

Sometimes discussion went to side topics. Infact, what we observed was that all side topics ultimately did benefit one or the other person in tm. Since improving tm is the whole idea of this month, so we did not interfere. What comes naturally is the best.

Ultimate conclusions were that we must:

- have a short and effective to-do list
- learn to say NO and effectively delegate work
- not make time management a source of stress, rather it should relive your stress
- find ways to avoid procrastination
- learn to manage time well in the world of multitasking

Other topics discussed during this month were:

Amitabh's online movie clip

Amitabh's performance in nishabd movie

MiniCEX

Wake up calls

EKS

Other highlights

Anshu met Vice-President

Congratulations to fellows going to Philadelphia

Congratulations to Anshu for promotion

Happy vacation time for some fellows

PSG FAIMER regional institute, Coimbatore activities

Moral of the discussion

Time management advice is not so difficult to comprehend. It typically does not require intense thinking or research to understand. What is much more important is how much those time management principles and techniques become a part of you, how deeply they penetrate into your mind. This is why learning in small bits over an extended period of time (AS WE ARE DOING), with each of those bits repeated a few times, will beat the effect of any intense time management PROGRAMME.

[We are thankful to all the fellows and faculty for participating. It could not have been possible without your active participation.](#)

Appendix-I
List of fellows and faculty

Fellows	Faculty
Madan, Sanjay	Avinash, Vivek
Anshu, Chetna	Payal, Tejinder
Mrunal, Dinesh	Adkoli, Jugesh
Meena, Hemlata	Rashmi, Nima
Chandrika, Jayanti	Stewart Menin, Chandu
Monica, Sheena	William Burdick, Rita
Satish, Aroma	
Venu, Himanshu	
Sheena, Gegandeep	
Harpreet	

