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Course: Study skills

LMD

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Level: First year

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ORGANIZATION AND TIME MANAGEMENT

Objectives of the Lesson: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Determine the meaning of organization and time management
- Highlight the importance of time management skills and their benefit.
- Develop the essential foundational skill of time management

Prerequisites

-Students should have a good command of English

-Students should be at least at a lower-intermediate level in English.

Introduction

At university you will have to organise your work for yourself which means you have to be self-disciplined and use your time effectively. Success is not just about intelligence but about how you use the time available to you. Your ability to use your time well will prove useful not just for study but in your future career.

Planning your work in detail may seem like a waste of precious time, however, taking the time to organise will make your studying more effective and save time in the future. The purpose of organising your time is not to make you a slave to your schedule, but to free you from inefficient study and anxiety. The idea is to take control of the things you have to do; aim to organise your time by making things happen rather than having things happen to you. If the only thing that drives you is deadlines then you will always be chasing them!

1. Time Management Definition

“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.

Managing your time well can help you improve in your career. Organizing plans each day helps you to complete work on time, stay engaged during important meetings and give you space to be creative and proactive in your tasks. Therefore, having strong time-management skills can ultimately lead to accomplishing key goals and advancing in your learning.

2. Time management skills

Time management include a variety of skills that will help you manage your time well. Taking time to develop each of these skills will help you organize your daily work. Some of the most important time management skills include:

✓ **Organization**

Staying organized can help you maintain a clear picture of what you need to complete and when. Being well-organized might mean maintaining an up-to-date calendar, being able to locate certain documents easily, having a tidy environment and taking detailed, diligent notes.

✓ **Prioritization**

Assessing each of your responsibilities for priority is important in being a good time manager. There are many ways to prioritize what you need to accomplish. You might decide to complete fast, simple items followed by longer, more involved ones. Alternatively, you might prioritize your tasks starting with the most time-sensitive, or a combination of both.

✓ **Goal-setting**

Setting goals is the first step to becoming a good time manager. Goal-setting allows you to clearly understand your end goal and what exactly you need to prioritize to accomplish it. Setting both short and long-term goals can lead to success in your career.

✓ **Communication**

Developing strong communication skills can allow you to make your plans and goals clear to people you work with. It also allows you to delegate, which lets you focus on completing the most important, relevant tasks that align with your goals.

✓ **Planning**

A fundamental part of time management is planning. Being efficient in planning out your day, and how you will accomplish things will help you stick to your schedule.

✓ **Stress management**

When practicing good time management, you should also be attentive to your mental health. Handling stress in a positive way can help you stay motivated and perform well when going through your schedule. You might do this by including small breaks throughout your day, or by rewarding yourself in small ways as you accomplish tasks.

3. The importance of time management skills

Time management skills are important because they help you structure your work in a way that allows you to accomplish goals.

Being fully present and focused results from strong time management skills. For example, if you are working on a project you forgot while the teacher is explaining the lesson, you might miss important information that could help you better understand that lesson.

Managing your time well also allows you to have space to be creative and proactive with your goals. When you have a specific time set aside to complete your tasks.

4. How to improve time management skills?

Working on your time management skills can help you be a good learner. These are a few ways you can improve your time management skills:

Set short and long-term goals

Practicing regular goal-setting can help you clearly understand exactly what you need to accomplish to achieve certain results. To hit larger, long-term goals, identify smaller milestone goals along the way. For example, if you have a goal to be promoted within six months, you might need to set smaller goals to improve on certain skills. Your goals should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based.

Set a time limit to complete a task

Setting time constraints for completing tasks helps you be more focused and efficient. Making the small extra effort to decide on how much time you need to allot for each task can also help you recognize potential problems before they arise. That way you can make plans for dealing with them.

Prioritize your assignments

Prioritization is a difficult skill but gets easier with practice. You can practice prioritization by making to-do lists. Writing or typing out everything you need to get done can help you physically prioritize the tasks that are most urgent or easy to get out of the way. Prioritize tasks based on importance and urgency. For example, look at your daily tasks and determine which are:

-Important and urgent: do these tasks right away.

- Important but not urgent: decide when to do these tasks.
- Urgent but not important: delegate these tasks if possible.
- Not urgent and not important: set these aside to do later.

Improving time management skills can help you be a better worker and have the ability to focus fully as you go about your day. You can be a better time manager by being organized, setting goals and prioritizing your to-do list.

Take a break between tasks

When doing a lot of tasks without a break, it is harder to stay focused and motivated. Allow some downtime between tasks to clear your head and refresh yourself. Consider grabbing a brief nap, going for a short walk, or meditating.

Organize yourself

Utilize your calendar for more long-term time management. Write down the deadlines for projects, or for tasks that are part of completing the overall project. Think about which days might be best to dedicate to specific tasks.

Remove non-essential tasks/activities

It is important to remove excess activities or tasks. Determine what is significant and what deserves your time. Removing non-essential tasks/activities frees up more of your time to be spent on genuinely important things.

Plan ahead

Make sure you start every day with a clear idea of what you need to do – what needs to get done that day. Consider making it a habit to, at the end of each workday, go

ahead and write out your “to-do” list for the next workday. That way you can hit the ground running the next morning.

5. The Benefits of Time Management

The ability to manage your time effectively is important. Good time management leads to improved efficiency and productivity, less stress, and more success in life. Here are some benefits of managing time effectively:

- ✓ **Stress relief**

Making and following a task schedule reduces anxiety. As you check off items on your “to-do” list, you can see that you are making tangible progress. This helps you avoid feeling stressed out with worry about whether you’re getting things done.

- ✓ **More time**

Good time management gives you extra time to spend in your daily life. People who can time-manage effectively enjoy having more time to spend on hobbies or other personal pursuits.

- ✓ **More opportunities**

Managing time well leads to more opportunities and less time wasted on trivial activities. Good time management skills are key qualities that employers look for. The ability to prioritize and schedule work is extremely desirable for any organization.

- ✓ **Ability to realize goals**

Individuals who practice good time management are able to better achieve goals and objectives, and do so in a shorter length of time.

➤ **6. The consequences of poor time management**

Poor organization and time management may lead to a number of consequences, among which:

➤ **Poor workflow**

The inability to plan ahead and stick to goals means poor efficiency. For example, if there are several important tasks to complete, an effective plan would be to complete related tasks together or sequentially. However, if you do not plan ahead, you could end up having to jump back and forth, or backtrack, in doing your work. That translates to reduced efficiency and lower productivity.

➤ **Wasted time**

Poor time management results in wasted time. For example, by talking to friends on social media while doing an assignment, you are distracting yourself and wasting time.

➤ **Loss of control**

By not knowing what the next task is, you suffer from loss of control of your life. That can contribute to higher stress levels and anxiety.

➤ **Poor quality of work**

Poor time management typically makes the quality of your work suffer. For example, having to rush to complete tasks at the last minute usually compromises quality.