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# An Exploratory Study To Find Importance Of Time Management in software Project Management

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**ABSTRACT:** Now a days the software industry is a key industry in many developing countries because of the application of information technology in business, manufacturing and many other sectors. Software development produces higher value as compared to other industries.

Software Project Management (SPM) is very important issue for managers. SPM is “the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to meet project requirements”. Time Management (TM) is one of the knowledge areas of SPM. TM is essentially the ability to organize and plan the time spent on activities. Time is the most precious asset available to man which cannot be stored, recovered or transferred. Every human activities uses time, but time is limited in supply i.e. we have only 24 hour in a day, 7 days a week etc. So need for optimal utilization of time is important. The result of good time management is increased effectiveness and productivity. It is a key aspect of project management and involves skills such as planning, setting goals and prioritizing for a better performance.

This paper focuses on Time Management in SPM, importance of Time Management, techniques of time management and some tips for time management. The purpose for this investigation originates from the observation that many of the problems associated with software projects, such as planning, scheduling and late deliveries are related with time.

**KEYWORDS :** SPM, TM, Advantages, Techniques, Tips

### I. INTRODUCTION

Initially, time management referred to just business or work activities. The definition of time management is “the process of planning and exercising conscious control over the amount of time spent on specific activities, especially to increase effectiveness, efficiency, or productivity.” Project time management is one of the Knowledge Area of SPM for project managers. It looks at controlling the amount of time it takes to do the work.

Delivering projects on time is one of the biggest challenges for project managers. Perhaps part of the reason that schedule problems are so common is that time is easily measured and remembered. but once a project schedule is set, people remember the projected completion date, and anyone can quickly estimate schedule performance by subtracting the original time estimate from how long it really took to complete the project. People

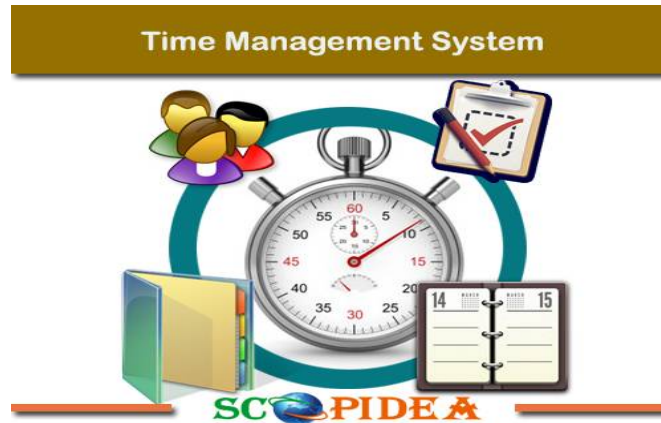
often compare planned and actual project completion times without taking into account the approved changes in the project. Time is the variable that has the least amount of flexibility. Time passes no matter what happens on a project.

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## II LITERATURE SURVEY

To understand time management, first understand the specific things that occur regularly which cause a project manager to run out of time to complete their duties. These 'time robbers' can consist of the following:

- Inundation of emails, telephone calls, etc
- Too many 'casual' office conversations
- Postpone
- Too many unnecessary meetings
- Micro-managing
- Lack of technical knowledge
- General work overload
- Conflicting priorities
- Inability to say 'no'

## III. TIME MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

The key to good time management is not to work more, but to work more efficiently. This means that you should structure your time so that you get more done in less time. A study from Stanford University found out that people who work more hours (more than 55 hours per week) do not actually get more done than those who work less than that. Following are some methods to manage the time more efficiently:

### ▪ Learn to make quick decisions :

Mostly the more time spent on each decision because of confusion means more overall time is used. The best technique is to make a policy to make the decisions quickly. More complex decisions can then be given more time.

### ▪ Run effective meetings :

Ensure that meetings should be well organized and should stay on topic. Additionally, make sure the right people should attend the right meetings. Meetings can sometimes grow organically. As such, meeting attendance can often increase on meaningless points, where too many voices lead to nothing being accomplished. Meetings should be lean and efficient so that proper topics are covered effectively and that off-topic conversations are kept to a minimum.

### ▪ Tackle difficult parts first :

By this, it means first of all find the difficult and complex task from task list and by dealing with them first, you can be more assured that the more easy tasks should not cause you pain if time is beginning to run out. Additionally, more



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complex tasks are usually the ones most valuable, which means getting them completed ahead of time and smaller tasks being late a few days.

## ▪ **Manage your travel :**

There are some individuals who will not feel comfortable till they did not make face-to-face conversation with another individual. In small settings, that is fine. But in a global scenario, where resources may not only span time zones but continents, then it is not feasible. It is important to reduce unnecessary travel as much as possible. Travel in and of itself, is a time waster. Between airports, security, hotel stays and car travel to and from locations, a huge amount of time could be wasted in these situations. If travel is required, try to coordinate travel with multiple meetings and tasks simultaneously so as to maximize that particular trip as much as possible.

## ▪ **Overcome procrastination :**

This is one of the more pervasive, yet completely controllable aspects of time management. Day dreaming, internet surfing, casual chatting and what not can all add up. Now one does not need to become a robot to achieve optimal work efficiency, but it is important to at least reduce those things that may be causing excessive procrastination and cutting into your work time. This is when the time wasters will become effective.

## ▪ **Learn to say no :**

It is important to understand your limits. Recognize the fact that you cannot do everything and that sometimes, you simply have to say you are busy with other things right now. Note that saying 'no' does not only mean telling the boss you are overloaded. If you give them a valid reason, they will understand. Sometimes, you may have no choice and if that is the case, you will simply need to re-prioritize.

## ▪ **Task list and priorities :**

Planning is a key in project management. An effective planning method is to identify all the tasks that you need to do to complete a project. This can be done by making a to-do list or task list. The next step is to prioritize these tasks. Not all tasks are equal. You can identify which tasks take less time and which are important and urgent.

## ▪ **Estimate and track time accurately:**

After you have identified and prioritize the tasks it is the time to estimate how much time it will take to complete them. Make sure that you must include all constraints and other factors in estimation. Most of the time things will not go as planned, so include buffer times for unforeseen events into your project schedule. Also leave enough time for research, testing, meetings and other necessary activities. Also keep your team members in mind. They are only human, which means that they can't work non-stop, but need breaks to recharge. Thankfully, there are a lot of applications that help you track the time nowadays. One more advantage of 'digitalizing' your schedule is that it reduces paper, which is not only good for the environment, but it also helps reduce the stress of having an inevitable paper chaos.

## ▪ **Create a schedule :**

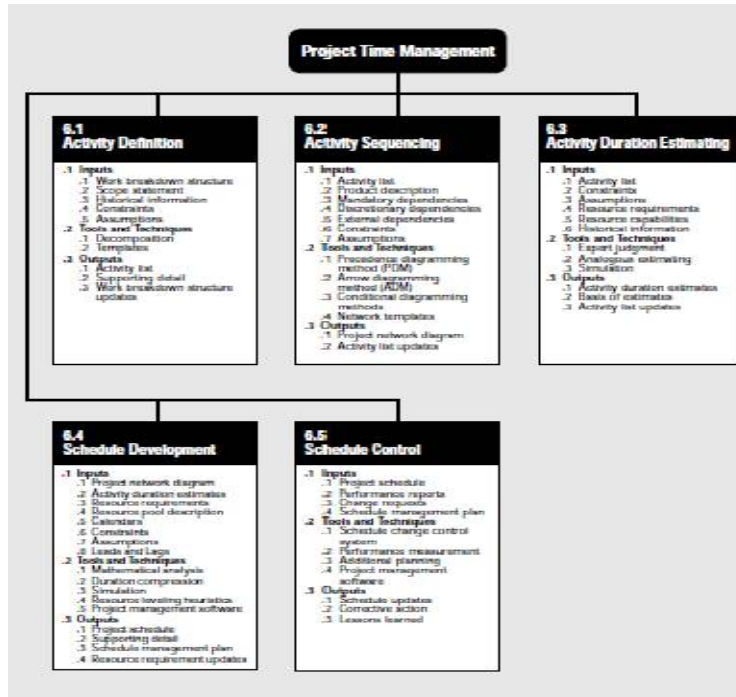
After all the planning and estimating is done, you can create a project schedule, which includes all tasks and their duration. Gantt charts are really help you to schedule activities and assign resources. For more complex projects, add a critical path to visualize which tasks are most important to complete the project.

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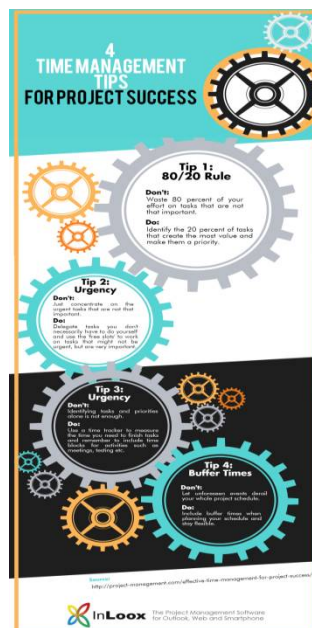
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## IV. TIME MANAGEMENT TIPS FOR PROJECT MANAGERS

To become a successful project manager, you must be able to manage your time well. The best project managers ensure they are productive for most of their time and avoid time-wasters at all costs. Here are some tips that can help to manage time more efficiently.





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## **Create the Plan :-**

If everyone knows what they are doing and have a plan with regular milestones to focus on, project manager will spend a lot of time dealing with issues brought about by a lack of clarity.

## **Remember the 80/20 Rule :-**

The 80/20 rule is the idea that by doing 20% of the work you can produce 80% of the benefit of doing the whole job. The value of this for a project manager is that it reminds you to focus on the 20 percent of activities that matter. From the activities you do during your project, only 20 percent are important. Those 20 percent produce 80 percent of your results. Identify and focus those activities.

## **Not Just Status Updates :-**

It's best to avoid team meetings where you go around the room asking each person to give a status update. These meetings have wastage of time. Instead, spend that time focusing on risks, issues and opportunities. Use the team to come up with solutions and create ideas. If you schedule an hour for the meeting, make sure it lasts for an hour and no longer. Significant issues can be taken off-line if they are likely to cause a meeting overrun. Don't make compulsion to everyone to sit through lengthy technical discussions that don't involve them. Set up a working group to focus on the issues and report to the team at a future meeting.

## **Stop Micro Managing :-**

Avoid going into the detail of the work. With software development projects, it's not necessary for the project manager to get involved at the code level, leave this to the developers. You have selected the right team for the job.

Let them do it, while you concentrate on navigating the project to a successful conclusion as managing projects is a full-time job .

## **Create a To-do List :**

Creating a daily to-do list keeps you focused on achieving your objectives. Scratching tasks from your list can create a real sense of achievement and drives further activity.

## **V. IMPORTANCE**

Time management is important for personal life and career success. As we Know "Time is Money", after this there are a lot of 'time wasters' in our daily life, which is why we need a way to manage our time better. Time Management is often associated with business, but you need this skill in every part of life. It teaches how to manage time effectively and make the most of it. Most people, feel like they have too much to do and not enough time. Wise time management can help to find the time for what you desire, and for what you need to do. Learn to find the time for the things that are important. Even a small amount of time once a day, or even once a week, will take you closer to your goals, and you will be surprised at the progress you make. You become more productive using improved time management skills and tools, and can accomplish more with less effort and time. Time management can help to reduce wasted time and energy, help to become more creative and productive, and enable to do the right thing at the right time. This will of course lead to more balance and fulfillment in life. Time management will help you set up your priorities. Always plan your time well and don't waste it on useless matters. Be careful not to procrastinate, and do everything in the best way you can, with focus and attention.

For project managers, it is particularly important to possess time management skills to be successful. A lack of effective time management can be a negative impact on a project. Time is one of the three triple constraints and any deviation from the schedule can be an effect on the cost and scope of a project. In most cases time really is money. Ineffective time management can also increase stress and frustration in the project manager and the team members. Worst case scenario: a burnout. Time management will not helps to save time or efforts but helps in controlling and monitoring your project according to your time management plan and also help to keep the project within the allocated schedule, budget and goals. Time management is there to help, to control yourself away of errors. It will help to keep



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control on the quality and cost as well. If time management processes are performed perfectly, it will serve in the cost plan and quality plan also. Time management also helps to finish more jobs with less effort.

## VI. ADVANTAGES OF TIME MANAGEMENT

### 1. Reduction in stress level:

The reduction in stress level is main part of time management. If you follow time management properly then off course you will get better result. Even you can relax yourself while doing your work. Stress leads to spoiling of work schedule and disturbed work schedule can never provide best results. The result will come definitely but no one can say it will be best or worst.

### 2. Provides focus on the task:

The time management skills initially provides relief from stress and helps you in focusing your target and performance in the task. A focused person becomes successful in less time as compared to those who do more struggle for getting their target in life. The people always desire to have successful and enjoyable life and that can be obtained by keeping a focused view about everything and every step.

### 3. Decrease procrastination:

There is much duration in life and it also brings fluctuation. The particular point in adopting time management is the ability to predict the results and control the situations. Managing time isn't something that requires extra skills, the only need is to have some knowledge about how to and be dedicated to implement it within your day to day activities.

### 4. Gain self-confidence:

Self-confidence plays a very important role in human life and self-confident people always have better life than dependent persons. The feel usually comes when you plan your work properly and take decisions on time for better result. "Time management never takes your time, rather provides you extra time." A person can do anything with confidence and self trust leads a human being to the next level.

### 5. A way to the goal:

Everybody has a desire to achieve his goal in life and dream to get a relaxing future after achieving target. Managing time allots you time where it has the most impact. Time management system allows every human to spend time on the things that are important to them. In this process, time management has a positive aspect to perform and people consider the scheduling a better option.

### 6. Challenge your productivity:

The capacity of everybody is similar just only habits differentiate in results. The people who score 100 out of 100 are also human not robots, the thing is that they follow their dreams. The condition turns turtle with your determination when you are planning for your next meeting as all the tasks are listed in to-do list. You can use priorities while setting up the task execution sequence. Productivity is a challenge to face, as the process of productivity puts human being on the heels. It's a race which has to be won by all not by any single. In short, it is a great thing to adopt but also demands the capacity to handle the pressure.

### 7. Have an instinct for achievement:

Achievement of a task is different whereas knock a series of success is totally different task. A series of success falls in our kitty only then, when we make our efforts in a predefined way. Discipline and self-improvement are compulsory. The communication tools available in variety- support, synchronous as fixing meeting time in form of web conferencing and asynchronous with no fixed time to contribute as discussion board in form of interaction. The achievement comes with hardworking and dedicated behavior. Everyone has to adopt time management if they desire to have the taste of success.

### 8. Time to relax and do recreational activities:

Recreation in this era of rush is a good thing and everybody wants it but only few can capture it. Never miss any event. No need to worry about missing events as workday is scheduled with reminders and alerts for urgent events. The blessed ones are those who do work on time and adopt a time table in their life to do day-to-day chaos. The relaxed life gives motivation to human being and put them on the way of success. The recreational activities also give family life a boost. People feel more connected to their families. The one and the only thing to keep in mind is relations need time and love to boom.



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## 9. Financial Soundness:

The success brings financial benefits with itself. A human is always financially sound if he have planned his life properly and they maintain a time table of their personal and professional life. The lifelong learning experience promotes the empowerment of individuals with the knowledge. They can research and find information. The interpretation in it with sharing provides students opportunities to get network connectivity. A global community of interesting people.

## 10. Become Healthy:

The health is a blessing for human and it can be achieved by proper maintenance. Time management is also helpful in making human life healthy; as if a person will adopt scheduling in his life then he will definitely save sometime for doing exercise and other health related works. So, he will become healthy. Once you have decided to plan your time, you have to discipline yourself and work on self-improvement with health as a key factor.

## VII. DISADVANTAGES OF TIME MANAGEMENT

### 1. Non-clear Objectives:

The productive behavior is definitely one of the main goals in time management. Sometimes, it leads to non-clear objectives which usually struck people for worse. An unaware person doesn't know what to do? If you are not being able to do better management of workload, you will get more struck in non-done tasks in no time.

### 2. Mismanagement:

Organized results to less rework and mistakes but excess organizing craze leaves a person in problem. The items, details, and instructions are if forgotten then leads to extra work and a blame of mismanagement. A person has to do a task more times if he forgets something. It will lead to tiredness and it happens because of predictive behavior.

### 3. Can't say "no":

You might have forgotten an appointment, or missed deadline and all happened because of working on others task as saying 'no' will be tough for you. Such crazy situations brings life friction. You can avoid creating such problems by planning and preparing exactly. No body can create more time but it can be used in better way by managing time undoubtedly. It's always better to keep back because people simply can't say no to anyone.

### 4. Obstacles:

Simple actions like getting a work done early, produce more issues in life. The time management leads you towards an obstacle. When you know what you need to do, you hate wasting time in idle activities and that leads to disputes and disturbances. Instead of thinking what to do next, concentrate on steps ahead of work, as anything can go wrong. The people face many problems due to it.

### 5. Inactivity:

The common misconception makes time management an extra effort. To the contrary, proper time management makes a human life easier and inactive. If things are asking for less effort than the usual time, then the consumption of time leads to dullness. Manage time for improving life, as time management is all about spending time in right places, and on the right things on right time but sometime the obsession for doing right makes your life dormant.

### 6. Load of different works at one time:

When you work according to time management, then sometimes in over confidence you take too many tasks in hand. That particular condition leaves you in total blunder. The people keep too much expectations from you just because of your flaunting behavior and at last you feel a load of work on your shoulders. And such confusion creates a mismanagement situation.

### 7. Fatigue and stress become part of life:

Weakness and stress is common problem that leads you to a tired phase. The tiredness leads a human being to irritate and fed up of life. They also feel demoralized because they again and again think about their unsuccessful attempt of adopting time management in their life. They consider their unsuccessful attempt as halt in their way and leave interest in all things. Majority of people make themselves prone to diseases. The proper planning is not a cup of tea of all. The first and last thing only adopts those skills which give you relaxation from hardships of hectic life instead of putting you deeper.

### 8. No time for recreation:

Recreation vanishes from those people's life, who get involved in time management more than their personal skills. They waste most of their time in doing planning instead of taking action. Intellectuals usually define, action speaks



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louder than words. And those people can never become successful who spend their money and time in planning. Recreation has become a need of today's life. If someone is not doing it then life of these people becomes a burden on them and they led their life in stagnant way.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

Time management is an essential skill for project managers. If you can't manage your own time, how can you expect to manage your teams? Ask each day what you did to move the project forward. Plan your next day, what will you do to ensure your project continues along the straight and narrow path. Plan your time, manage your resources with a light touch and communicate effectively. The result of good time management is increased effectiveness and productivity. It is a key aspect of project management with a little time management, project success should come easier.

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