

## ***Time management for students***

By: Devajit Bhuyan

“Time and tides wait for none”- An old proverb.

“In the realm of time there is no aristocracy of wealth, and no aristocracy of intellect. Genius is never rewarded even an extra hour a day. And there is no punishment. Waste your infinitely precious commodity as much as you will, and the supply will never be withheld from you from you...” Arnold Bennett.

One of the common problem most of the students have is that, they did not get enough time to prepare for the exam and so they could not do well in the examination. They did not have enough time to play football, play cricket, read novel, go to attend a public meeting in time, go for a movie or drop his/her mother in the beauty parlor and pickup after two hours.

But fact is that time is not really the problem. After all we all get 24 hours a day, 60 minutes in a hour, 60 seconds in a minute. Nobody is getting one second less or one second more. Whether it is me, you, Narendra Modi, Donald Trump, Vladimir Putin, Bill Gates or the teens gossiping in the street corners, everybody is having only 24 hours in a day. Scientist like Einstein, Newton or leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru or modern-day genius Bill Gates were also not lucky to have more than 24 hours in a day. So, the problem was, problem is, problem will not be the availability of time but management and proper utilization of time. Most of the people never thought how to plan and do proper utilization of time. Our school curriculum never taught students about time management and very few parents sit with their children and teach them how to manage time and do better utilization of the most invaluable resource.

In advanced countries like USA, Japan, Canada, UK etc, time management is now a days has become a big business. There are hundreds of books in the market on time management. But one will find very little regarding his own time management by going through all those books spending time and money. Student or any person who is interested to utilize his time best way has to prepare his time management schedule himself. Time management schedule for one student must be by himself, for himself and of himself. No body can prepare a best time management schedule for another person, not even by father, mother or a time management consultant. It is one who himself can make the best schedule of his time management.

The first step to prepare time management schedule by a student is to prepare a balance sheet of how he had spent the yesterday, last 24 hours or last seven days in the week. While preparing the balance sheet of his last 24 hours, one will find that he can easily divide all his activities during last 24 hours as High Priority(HP), Medium Priority(MP), and Low Priority(LP). High priorities are those things like sleeping, eating, attending class which one must do, medium priorities are those things which we should do but could postpone for the time being without any loss or consequence. Medium priorities are those things like repairing the bicycle, repairing of the electric iron, buying a text book from the market or returning a book borrowed from the library. Low priorities are those things which we can postpone indefinitely or we can even forget it. Low priorities things are like going to see a movie in movie hall or enjoying a cricket match or serial in the TV. If one can push aside the same low priority job or item day after day, week after week, at some point of time one can decide whether these jobs can be totally abandoned.

Once a person or student is able to prepare the list of priorities he can go ahead with the preparation of his daily, weekly and monthly time table or time management schedule. It is a well known fact that majority of the students don't prepare their daily routine, weekly priority tasks and Term Planning Calendar/ Monthly calendar. A student who wish to best utilize his time and do good academic result without reducing his fun , play and other activities time must have a daily routine and preferably it should be hanged in front of his study table. While preparing a daily routine a student must be honest and sincere. If a student feels that he is weak in mathematics and strong in English, he should give more time in mathematics, not in English even though he get more pleasure reading English(till he is in the college and abandon mathematics if he opt for arts). The daily routine prepared should not be a rigid one but a flexible one and should be reviewed every month and revise it depending upon the requirement , changed scenario and experience gained.

Once a student have a daily routine, the next step is to prepare the weekly priority tasks. As mentioned earlier a student has to mark the tasks as high priority(HP), medium priority(MP) and low priority(LP) in the weekly tasks schedule. While preparing weekly task schedule you will find that some times attending uncle's marriage or a friend's birth day will be your HP task and for giving time there you have to slightly readjust your daily routine temporarily so that you don't score poorly in your half yearly examination. You may think that you can put uncle's marriage or friend's birthday on LP task and avoid

these if you can't prepare well for the examination. But my opinion is that don't do that. After all life is not the combination of examinations and how much marks one obtain in the examination. Examinations will come every year but your only uncle's marriage will not come every year. Twenty or twenty five years from now nobody including you will remember or care what you score in a particular test or paper, no matter how life threatening or tense you feel for the test while appearing it. So there is and there should be always time to attend a marriage, birth day and at the same time appear in the examination and score A+. The only thing required is that one has to plan his time properly and cut low priority task if necessary and he will find that every thing is fine. At the same time one must be ready to say no when he finds that he cannot afford to go for a picnic before his examination or due to urgency in the home, even though some of his best friend may got disappointed. The simple act of saying no where necessary will help to save lot of valuable time.

Once a student has his daily routine and weekly priority tasks, he can easily go ahead preparing Term Planning Calendar or Monthly Planning Calendar. Prepare the term planning calendar showing the dates for assignments and papers to be submitted, dates of class tests/unit tests and important non-academic activities and events. After you prepare your daily routine, weekly priority tasks and term planning calendar you will find that you don't have dearth of time. You will have enough time to study, play, enjoy movie and cricket match and most important of all you will be able to achieve your goal of securing 95% plus marks in the final examination.

One must be honest and realistic while preparing his plan or schedule. You can't lie yourself. Give more times to those things that require more effort not to the things that come easier to you. Whenever possible, schedule pleasurable activities after study time, not before. Give break for 4-5 minutes after every hour of study to refresh your mind. Be flexible to accommodate the changes and adjust your schedule accordingly.

## ***A STITCH IN TIME SAVES NINE***

Every year with the end of December and entering of January, the examination fever runs high and having a stiff target of 95% plus marks and incomplete revisions, sleeping less seems to be the only option for most of the students. But, does sleeping less and burning more candle gives better result? The answer is certainly not. The loss of sleep results in fatigue and impairs the normal judgement of a man. Over work, anxiety, tension and fear of examination results in loss of concentration and memory also take a nosedive.

As a result many students drop out from the race before it start. With anxiety running high and exam coming closer, it is foolish to think that less sleep will give better harvest. Instead, when you think that you have over worked and are losing concentration, it is the time to switch off the lights and have a sweet dream.

What to do and how to cope up during the hopeless winter months, when most people like to spend their time under the blanket? The answer is don't worry, take it easy. The following tips may be helpful to keep the examination blue out and face it coolly and yet doing well in the examination:

- (1) *Stick to regular hours. It is best to live by one's biological clock. Sleep at the regular hours. Frequent late nights upset your biological clock and it is rather difficult to fix it back.*
- (2) *Sleep your full quota. Never think that loss sleep would suffice—it never does. My mentor taught me that if we lose one night's sleep, it takes four weeks to reset our biological clock. Sleep the regular seven/eight hours. This will recharge your body and mind; also it will increase your productivity/efficiency.*
- (3) *Don't compare your sleeping hours with Tom, Dick and Harry. They are different people, you are different people.*
- (4) *Never try stimulants. Don't even succumb to the temptation of using drugs that promise to keep you awake and alert without the need of a break. Never forget that you are a human being*

Tension and anxiety to perform better and not only to fulfill one's own expectations but also to fulfill the expectations of parents is a major cause that many students perform poorly in the examination or even stumped before the match (exam) actually starts( match fixing?). The cause of frustration in most of the cases is the gap between expectations and achievements. There is also an anxiety to perform better than the last examination and also perform better than rest of the class friends/relatives/family friends. The parents are also to be blamed as they compare the performance of their child with that of other siblings. It increases stress and made exams a 'do or die' situation.

In such a hopeless situation, it is very difficult for a student to concentrate in his studies and perform better in the examination. The need of the hour when students are preparing for their final exam is that they should keep their anxiety, tension low; work systematically with a plan; appear coolly in the examination like any other examination they have faced in the life and then forget it. Too much postmortem after the examination also lead to never ending tension even though the exams are over and a thing of past.

The following tips may be helpful to students during the examination weather to keep their tension low and perform better in the exam:

01. *Keep your expectations at a moderate level. It is always good to aim higher, but don't try to achieve something which is beyond the reach of your physical and mental capabilities. If you keep a realistic*

*target and achieve it, you will enjoy when results are out, but if you dream a target, which is impossible for you to achieve, you will be a frustrated, disappointed man after the exam.*

02. *Don't compare your preparation for exam with your friends. They will mislead you to increase your tension.*
03. *The best way to ward off anxiety and exam blues is to take examination easily. After all exams are not the be all and end all of life. Life will continue irrespective of how you perform in the exam.*
04. *If you are of religious minded, you can pray every morning before starting your studies. If morning is not convenient to you and you are a late riser, you can pray in the evening before starting your studies.*
05. *Always think positive. Think that you can also win. Never think that you are not going to do well in the examination.*

While continuing your studies for longer hours, if you think that you need a break, Have A Break (of course I am not recommending to have a Kit Kat). Restart again when you feel fresh.

As exam is approaching very fast, most of the students are running out of time. Is the clock runs faster during exam days or you are run slow? The fact is that the clock runs at the same speed as usual, in fact you are run faster during exam days. But even than why there is dearth of time?

Most of the students face shortage of time when exam is only a few weeks away. This is because they did not utilised their time properly and that they did not have a time management scheme. It is better for students to prepare their time management scheme at the beginning of the session. However if a student did not prepare his time management scheme and study plan at the beginning of the session, he must have it at least 3/ 4 months before the exam starts. The time management scheme/schedule of a student should include the detail of their study plan, recreational time, normal day to day activities and also cushion for unseen eventualities like attending uncle's marriage 7 days before the exam or for taking a relative to a hospital after he met with an accident.

The most disadvantage thing about time is that though it is free, continuous (not like municipality water taps), yet you can neither store it nor bring back the time you have lost. You can rebuild your damaged house, you can recover your lost money, you can regain your health, but you can't bring back the time which had became past. So unless you plan well in advance and best utilise your time, when exam is very near, certainly you will find that there is acute shortage of time. However, then it will be too late and you can do nothing to bring back the lost time or stop the clock of time. And like an one-day cricket match, to reach a stiff target, you will try to run faster resulting in losing your wicket. The result is declared well in advance, you are stumped before the match (exam) is actually over.

The following tips may be helpful to students during these tense, anxious and terrible days of exam fever:

01. *Segregate your daily activities as low priority, medium priority and high(top) priority. Complete the high priority jobs first and then proceed to medium priority. Discard the low priority jobs/activities till exam is over.*

- 02. Prepare your lesson plan considering your strength/ weakness and time available with you. Finish the difficult lessons/subjects first and left the easier one for the period before the exam, so that you can complete them in a relaxed way without any anxiety and tension.*
- 03. Reduce your TV viewing. If possible limit it only to daily news. Instead you can listen light refreshing music (some times) while doing maths or studying lighter subjects.*
- 04. Please say your friend NO, when he came to your home to request you accompany him for enjoying the movie Mission Kashmir. You can enjoy it in a relaxed mood once the exam is over.*
- 05. Once you prepare your plan for the exam, stick to it with minor adjustment till exam is over. Frequent changing may lead you nowhere.*

*Once you complete your target of study positively to day, you will find no dearth of time tomorrow. And before exam starts, you will find that you have reached the target(completing studies) ahead of time.*