Youth Group for Indian Culture
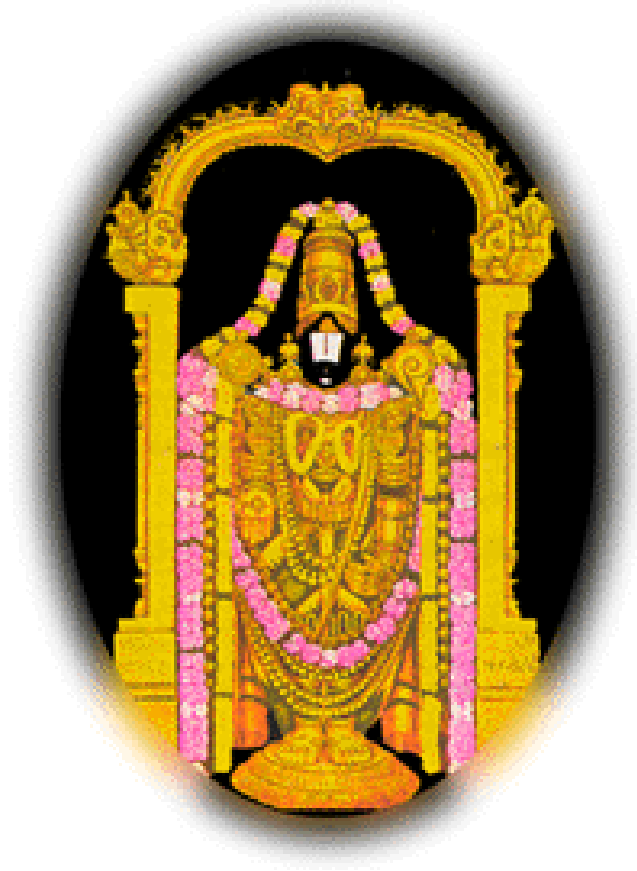
YEAR VII

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CHAPTER ONE

Time Management

1.1 Time - Introduction

What is time? Why is it so important? Why should something be done in time? Why are people always complaining that there is not enough time? Why are people late?

1.2 What is time?

We all know what time is. It's the ticking of a clock, the whine of an alarm, the calendar on the wall. And since we all agree about how those things work, time can seem as solid as a rock.

In fact, it's a lot more fluid. Our calendars are imperfect. We need a leap day to keep them in line with the seasons, and even so, time will eventually get away from us. "If you feel there aren't enough hours in a day, just wait," says Max Tegmark, a cosmologist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. "In a few hundred million years, tidal friction will have slowed Earth's rotation to make the day 25 hours long."

If that doesn't make your head spin, consider that in physics, motion alters time; in psychology, different stimuli alter our perception of time; and in philosophy, there's disagreement on whether time is even real. "In terms of our inner lives, no time exists except for what is happening in the present moment," says Joan Halifax Roshi, a Zen Buddhist teacher.
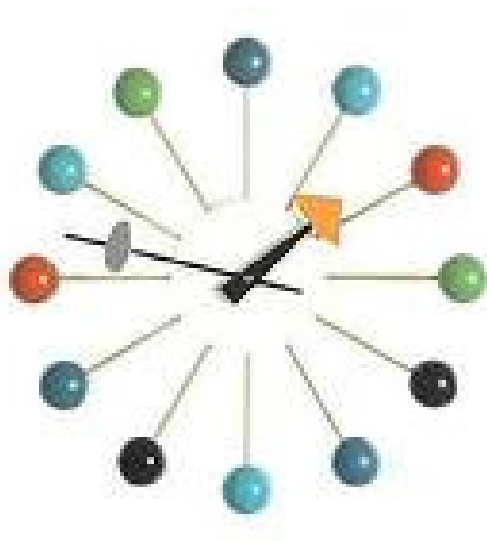
Remarkably, without having even a fundamental definition of time, there is much that physics has revealed about its properties. And what has become thoroughly clear is that whatever time is, it doesn't behave as experience would lead you to believe.

Here's what it means.

In 1905, with his "Special Theory of Relativity," Albert Einstein upended the familiar, thoroughly intuitive notion that time elapses in the same uniform manner regardless of where you are or what you are doing. Instead, Einstein discovered that if you and I synchronize our watches, and then you sit still while I run to and fro, when we rejoin and compare our watches, we'll find that less time has passed on mine than on yours. In short, motion through space slows the passage of time.

At everyday speeds, the effects are too small to be noticed, which is why it took millennia before anyone realized this. But at speeds approaching that of light, the slowing of time becomes evident. If we typically zipped from here to there at speeds nearing 670 million miles per hour, we would experience time's true nature; we'd know in our bones that time's passage depends on how fast we move.

By 1915, with his "General Theory of Relativity," Einstein took these realizations one step further, concluding that something similar happens in a gravitational field. He figured out that the stronger the gravity you experience, the slower the passage of time. After synchronizing our watches, was I to stay in the lobby of the Empire State Building while you went sightseeing on the observation deck, I would experience stronger gravity (being closer to Earth) and according to Einstein, when we rejoin, my watch would be behind yours. The effect would be incredibly small however.

1.3 We can talk all day about time. Here are some facts:

a) *PRESENT IS AN INFINITESIMAL*

Present is the most real perception of time. However, almost all of what we perceive as the present is already past. The present is a brief moment; whatever is
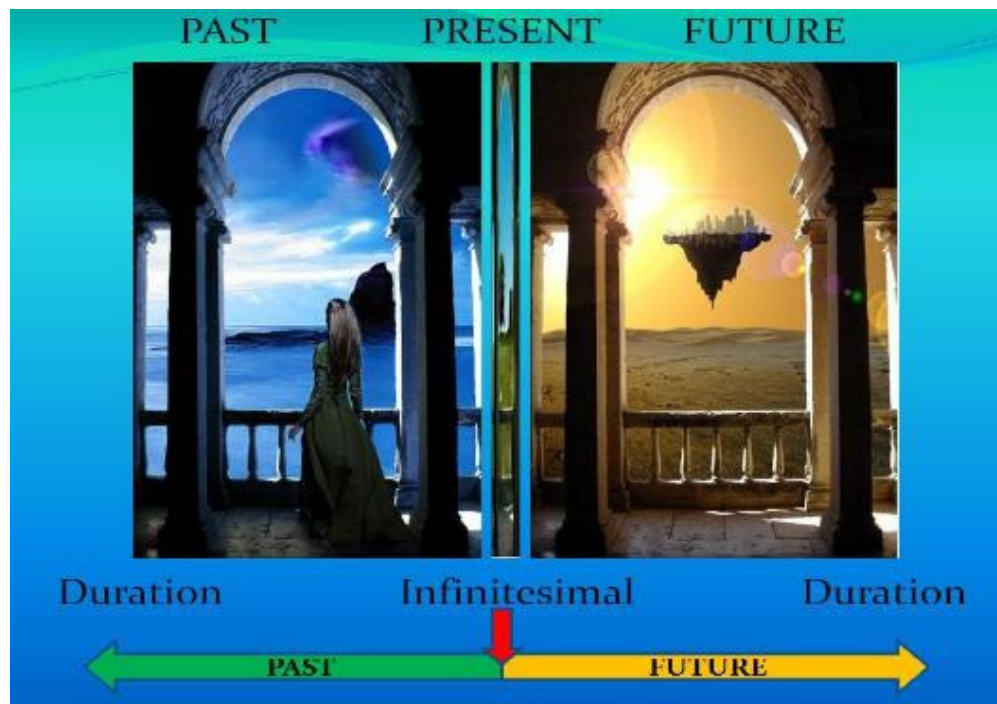
*happening now (present) is confined to an **infinitesimally narrow point on the time line** which is being encroached upon by what we think of as the past and the future.*

***Present resembles the sharp point of a recording laser** or needle while past being a duration or extension resembles the recorded material like tape or CD.*

Present may be mental awareness of the recording of memory into our brain. A person can go to an event but fall asleep and miss the event completely. So that event basically does not exist in his past. Unless we are consciously aware of an event it does not seem to enter our past memory.

b) At the moment **one cannot go back in time**. When you have passed that time or the second you have passed it, it cannot be reclaimed. When you miss your flight, you have missed your flight. It makes it all the more important that the present be utilized to the best at the moment.

c) Total Time is infinite. But our time in the universe is very small. The big bang happened 13.7 billion years ago. Human life expectancy is less than 100 years. Finish everything that one wants to finish in the given amount of time.

d) We cannot create time or add or subtract time. We can only *manage* time to the best of our abilities.

1.4 The next question is how we organize things to be done given time constraints.

1) Plan - Have a master plan and a smaller plan. Everything you do must fit into a plan. Even if you are going to sit around or play Wii for an hour, it should be part of the plan.
2) Prioritize - Time is never enough. Pick what you want to do for the day and for the week to organize.
3) Productive - The best thing to do is to be productive for yourself, for your family, for your neighbors, for the country, and for that matter the entire humanity. After all we all are Jeevaatma, part of Paramaatma.

4) Implement the plan - Have control over the time you are going to spend on various tasks.

A lot of people have a lot of great ideas. These ideas are only good if they can be executed. You need the time to make it happen.

1.5 How Well Do You Plan? Activity 1

DIRECTIONS: FOR EACH QUESTION, CIRCLE THE NUMBER THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOU.

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
How often do you plan in an effort to keep time from running out of control?	1	2	3	4	5
Do you put daily plans on paper?	1	2	3	4	5
Do you allow flexibility in your plans?	1	2	3	4	5
How often do you complete your tasks for a given day?	1	2	3	4	5
How often do you priortize time for what matters to you most?	1	2	3	4	5
How often is your daily plan de-stroyed by urgent in-terruptions?	5	4	3	2	1

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SCORING: Add the numbers next to your answers.

INTERPRETATION:

Score 6-10: Terrible Planner.

You should consider using new tools and processes to help you plan effectively. A great first step would be to take a time management course.

Score 11-15: Below average planner.

You may already have a planning system, but using it more effectively will help to reduce the stress and lack of control you feel in your life.

Score 16-20: Average planner.

Your planning system is working, but you can do better. You may need help in focusing on priorities, dealing with urgent interruptions or writing your daily plan.

Score 21-25: Above-average planner.

Your planning system is working well. Keep up the good work, with periodic reviews to be sure you're planning around what matters most in your life.

Score 26-30: Excellent planner--or candidate for burnout?

You have mastered planning and should experience the serenity that comes from taking charge of your life. But make sure you're in control of your planning rather than letting it control you.

1.6 Time audit - Activity 2

Write down each activity from the morning your alarm goes up.

You get up in the morning on a weekday and go catch the bus. Wake up at _____AM

No.	List the tasks	start	end	Amount
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15	**Catch the bus at**			

Let us discuss everyone's plan. 20 minutes.

1) Do all your planned activities take place?
2) Do you sacrifice activity to make it on time?
3) Do you go late instead of sacrificing a planned activity?
4) Do you add cushion to your plan so that the plan will work?

If you respond YES to any one of these questions you need to address the problem now.

1.7 The Clock and the Compass

To help strengthen our understanding, let us consider the analogy of the clock and the compass — two powerful tools that direct us.

TIME - The clock represents things like our schedule, commitments, appointments, goals, activities — what we do with and how we manage our time.

TASK - The compass on the other hand represents the visions and priorities we have, the principles we follow, and the direction we feel we should go. This tool dictates how efficiently we lead our lives.

The frustration happens when you notice a gap between the two. When what you do, doesn't contribute to what is most important in your life, it is time to stop and ponder. With all the pressure to close this gap, many of us turn to time-management tools /methods.

The idea of this class is not to give you what your goal should be. Whatever your goal is, you have to achieve it effectively. In this course you will learn how to set realistic goals and schedule realistic timeline. When you achieve your goals in a non stressful way you can live happily.

1.8 Ingredients of ideal time management

Time management is all about planning carefully.   Don't bite more than you can chew. At the same time do not bite too little and be a moderate achiever. The balancing is all about getting the maximum out of life.

a) Chart Lifetime goals. Section 2.5
b) Set specific academic and personal goals for the year / semester. (After college -4 years).
    a. Make a master time schedule - Create a term calendar, recording major events. Create a weekly schedule of your classes, labs, drills, meetings, etc - Section 3.4
    b. Make a to-do list for each day the night before.
c) Make the schedule work – time management.
d) Review the results of your schedule and make adjustments.

1.8.1 Interesting Quotes

Time = Life, therefore, waste your time and waste of your life, or master your time and master your life. --**Alan Lakein**

Work is hard. Distractions are plentiful. And time is short. --**Adam Hochschild**

Don't say you don't have the time. You have exactly the same number of hours per day that were given to Helen Keller, Mahatma Gandhi, Michelangelo, Mother Teresa, Leonardo Da Vinci, Thomas Jefferson and Albert Einstein. **– H. Jackson Brown, Jr.**

Time is like Math. Bad master, but a good servant. You better master it. --**Ven Swaminathan**☺

Write your own Time quote or favorite quote. Activity 3

_____

_____

_____

1.9 Life Plan - Timeline

We studied Timeline of India in year 5. Let us see how the human timeline looks like.

Let us sketch the Life Plan.   My DOB is _____I am _____ years old.

Activity 4

Expenditure		Age	Savings	Big
Go to high School	_____ years	_____		
Go to college	_____ Years	_____		
Start Working		_____		
Get Married		_____	_____	_____
Child one		_____	_____	_____
Child Two		_____	_____	_____
Child Three		_____	_____	_____
Child Four		_____	_____	_____
Child 1 to college		_____	_____	_____
Child 2 to college		_____	_____	_____
Child 3 to college		_____	_____	_____
Child 4 to college		_____	_____	_____
Child 1 Marriage		_____	_____	_____
Child 2 Marriage		_____	_____	_____
Child 3 Marriage		_____	_____	_____
Child 4 Marriage		_____	_____	_____

Retirement at the age of   _____

1.10 MASTER SCHEDULE - Any plan to schedule time and tasks must have at its center a MASTER SCHEDULE, that is, a schedule of activities that is fixed. For college students - A master schedule needs to be drawn up only once a semester / quarter. For high school students, it could be yearly or by semester if classes change.

1.11 Why Task Scheduling?

Students who deliberately undertake to schedule their time are not the ones who have decided to spend all their time studying and doing nothing else. They usually have decided to use their time efficiently so as to study and also do other things that are important to them, and to "desensitize" themselves to the many commonly occurring distractions.

What does this "desensitizing" involve? It means removing oneself from constant day-to-day, hour-to-hour decisions as to whether one will or will not spend the next hour studying, whether one will or will not go to the library to study, whether one will or will not go to a show on impulse, and whether or not to use that hour between classes to get next week's lab assignments out of the way.

1.12 How to enter a master schedule with times.

- A workable time schedule can make decisions for you, thus desensitizing you to momentary distractions. For example, an hour of study in one course is not disturbed by wondering about when you will study for another course, or when you'll be able to get out and have some fun.
- First, fill in all the required activities, such as classes, drills, and laboratory periods.
- Second, add other regular activities, such as part-time jobs, commuting time, sports, and regular meetings.
- Third, include sleeping and eating.
- With the fixed activities accounted for, the remaining blank spaces on the uncluttered chart are free for use on a weekly or day-by-day basis. Such a schedule, on a 5x8 card, scotch-taped over your desk, or carried in your notebook, unclutters your mind, and more importantly, enables you to visualize the blank boxes as actual blocks of time into which you may fit additional necessary activities.
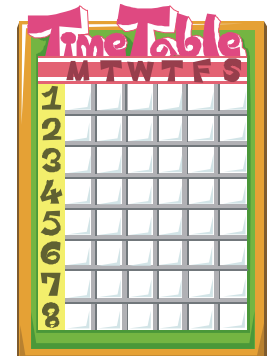
With the MASTER SCHEDULE as your source, you may concoct any type of schedule that fits the uniqueness of your courses, **your part-time or full-time job, or your personality.**

What matters most is that the schedule **works** for you.

1.13 Master schedule Activity 5

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
6-7							
7-7							
8-9							
9-10							
10-11							
11-12							
12-1							
1-2							
2-3							
3-4							
4-5							
5-6							
6-7							
7-8							
8-9							
9-10							
10-11							

1.14 Task Schedule - Activity 6

The idea of this step is to see if it is a balanced plan that is healthy and effective. Usually a **minimum** time schedule is best. In other words, plan what you know is necessary, and add to it later only as necessary. But plan as your first schedule, one you know you can keep, and one that is important for you to keep.

| One: | How many total hours do you have besides sleeping time?   (7 X   )   A) _____ |

Two: Total school hours per week for all courses?   (FSS)   _____

Three: Must-do-Time outside the fixed schedule. No of hours / week
- Club meeting and networking   (FSN)   _____
- Commuting to school   (FSC)   _____
- Breakfast, dressing up - Morning   (FSB)   _____
- Dinner   (FSD)   _____
- Personal grooming – Evening   (FSP)   _____
- Family Time   (FSF)   _____

Total Fixed hours   B) _____

Four: *Discretionary Study Time*   (DS)

Setting up certain hours in which to study Specific subjects   (DSH)   _____
Setting aside certain hours that you will study, but not   (DS1)
deciding in advance which courses will be studied in which hours   _____

Five: *Discretionary Recreation Time   (DT)*
- Physical Recreation – Games and sports   - Music, Dance (DTP)   _____
- Mental recreation – Reading books, Video games, TV   (DTM)   _____
- Hobbies   (DTH)   _____
- "To do List"   (DTT)   _____
  Later we will see how to assign priority to the emerging to do list.

Total Discretionary time Add steps 4 and 5   C) _____

Seventh   TIME LEFT for TO Do List (Step A-B-C)   _____

Remember**:**   Keep your schedule where you can see it. It should be conspicuous, so put it on top of your desk, or pinned on the wall.
Keeping to a schedule is not a matter of "will power," but of the development of a habit of referring to the schedule and following its outline, and this habit development may take weeks of practice.
-Don't let the extra study that you may find necessary, interfere with your recreation hours. Take time from unscheduled hours.
-Exceptions will occur, but afterwards return to the schedule's pattern.

1.15 Daily - To do list

Before going to bed, make a list of things to do for the next day. If the list is big, then put a time when you are going to do it. If the time is tight, you need to figure out how to assign priority.

Activity 7

➢ _____

➢ _____

➢ _____

➢ _____

➢ _____

➢ _____

➢ _____

➢ _____

The reason you do this list before going to bed is to decide whether you are going to have the time to do the things on the list the next day. Sometimes even if you don't have the time, it may enable picking out critical things that must be done. The only way to accommodate them is cutting one of your regular tasks or moving it. It may boil down to cutting the discretionary time like sleeping or entertainment. It helps to decide all this the previous day, so that you have the flexibility.

One's success in being timely is going to boil down to handling the miscellaneous, unplanned tasks effectively. This is what will make you successful. This is the most important part of Time management.

1.16 Interrupting Devices

Once a practical master schedule is made, we have to make the schedule work and tweak it till it becomes easy to follow. One might wonder, once a schedule is put in place, why is it hard to follow. A good balanced plan is not very hard to follow. Having said that, it is a lot harder to follow in today's world than it was 40 years ago. You have constant interruption working against you. TV, video games, phone, cell phone, pager, texting, email, social networking tools and other gadgets are tempting you to break your own commitment to time. We will call these as Interrupting-Devices (ID) from now on. Although some of these are essential, learning to control the "urgency addiction" is very crucial to being successful in life.

Activity 8

a) Do you have a cell phone?   Yes   No

b) Do you get more than 5 messages a Day?   Yes   No

c) Do you see the messages immediately?   Yes   No

d) Do you reply immediately to most of them?   Yes   No

e) Could you have waited replying to the IM?   Yes   No

f) Discuss in the class whether replying to IM all the time is good or
bad. Does the quality of other work you do reduce because of replying to incoming IMs immediately?   Yes   No

g) Discuss in the class - How do you balance the IM with improved quality of Life?

- Keep the interrupting devices (ID) away at specific times, so that it does not distract you.
- Email - Do not look for emails every 5 minutes. Instead set aside some time once a day. Act immediately and clear them from inbox. Keeping them in the inbox will make you read every time and waste time on it.
- IM – Set sometime and sign into IM. Do not be signed in all the time. Almost all things can wait.
- Cell Phone – Set some phone time and pick them up only at those times.
- TV – Do not have the TV on while doing something of importance when you want to be productive. Otherwise, obviously your brain will be distracted between the two activities and it will take much longer to complete the task.
- When you are doing a productive task it is best you keep IDs away. If a new task shows up at your doorstep or through ID, you have to make a decision as to what kind of task it is. You have to decide if it is important and Urgent.

1.17 Follow the matrix of action.

1. If a job falls into first quadrant, go ahead and take care of it.
2. If the job falls into second quadrant, make a decision on when to do it and put it in the calendar or to do list.
3. If the job falls into third quadrant, see if the job can be delegated to someone else.
4. If the task falls into the fourth category, dump it.

Schedule the task in your plan. Do not get into urgency addiction of doing things as they come to you. If you can plan and schedule the tasks then you can effectively handle all the tasks you would like to complete.

The idea is to achieve all your goals. It is not completing the tasks in first-come first-serve basis. Evaluate all the tasks that come your way; decide on when and what to do and set an appropriate time to carry out the task. This will achieve your overall goal effectively.

Urgent | **Not Urgent**

Important

I
- Crisis
- Pressing Issues
- Deadlines
- Meetings

II
- Preparation
- Planning
- Prevention
- Relationship building
- Personal Development

Not Important

III
- Interruptions
- Some mail
- Many popular activities

IV
- Trivia
- Some phone calls
- Excessive TV/Games
- Time wasters
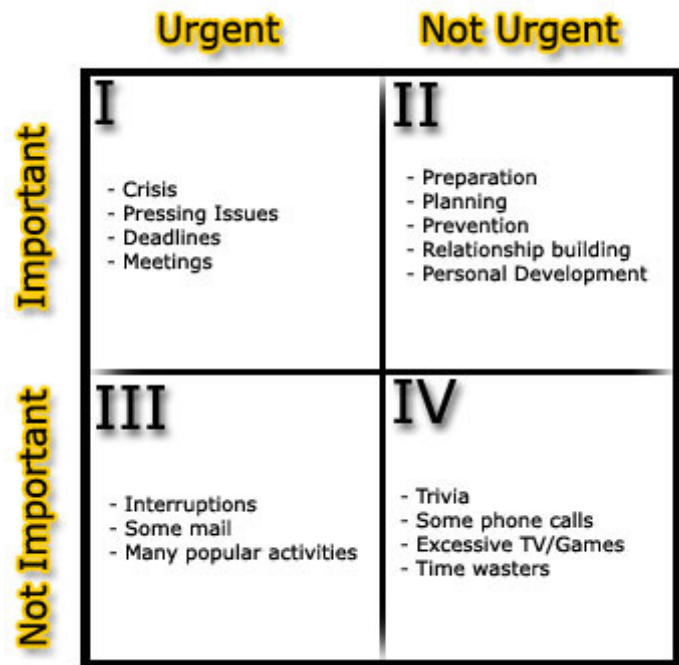
Activity 9

What quadrant would you put this task into

1) Hi you want to catch movie.   _____
2) IM - Hi, r u there   _____
3) Instant message – Mum wants to talk when you are free   _____
4) The boss wants to meet you in his office.   _____
5) Do you want to do some volunteering?   _____
6) The newspaper boy delivers the paper.   _____
7) You hear a email come in.   _____
8) Calendar alarms – Scheduled meeting in 5 minutes   _____

1.18 Assigning time and schedule to the To-do List

- By now we know how to look at a new incoming task and assign priority.
- We know how much time is left according to the Task Schedule.
- Enter the to-do list item into the master schedule. At this point all your tasks are in the schedule. You can just enter to-do list in the schedule. As long as all the tasks are in the schedule and you can   execute them and you should be Ok. However, what happens if there are tasks that need to be done and there is no time in the schedule?
    - Improve the efficiency of execution of the existing tasks and gain time.
    - If possible do multi tasking. But be very careful in sacrificing quality.
    - If you can afford it, get help.
    - At last do not bite more than what you can chew. Do not take extra work if you don't have the time.

1.19 Time reviews

- ✓ Stop regretting your failures and start learning from your mistakes.
- ✓ Continually look at ways of freeing up your time.
- ✓ Examine your old habits and search for ways to change or eliminate them.
- ✓ Examine and revise your lifetime goals on a monthly basis and be sure to include progress towards those goals on a daily basis.
- ✓ When you catch yourself procrastinating-ask yourself, "What can I avoid?"
- ✓ Catch yourself when you are involved in unproductive projects and stop as soon as you can.
- ✓ Find time to concentrate on high priority items and activities.
- ✓ Think and plan on paper first when possible - it makes it easier to review and revise.

1.20 Feedback of how well you are doing

Once you have decided you are going to follow the approach scientifically, you need to evaluate how it is working. One good way to get feedback is to get answers to the following questions:

a) How many times did I miss a planned task? Why did it happen? Was it avoidable?
b) Did I have enough rest?
c) Did I have enough discretionary time to do whatever I wanted to do?
d) How many days or times was I stressed out due to being "out of time".

Make adjustments based on time management techniques, to reduce this number continuously. It may not come to zero occurrences. But if it improves from where you started then you have done well for yourself.

1.21 Revision - Time concepts

A) Discuss life plan – 10 minutes
B) Discuss task list – 10 minutes
C) Discuss task scheduling and amount of time left – 10 minutes
D) Discuss to do list – 5 minutes
E) Discuss scheduling the to do list in amount of time left – 10 minutes
F) Overall goal – ENOUGH Time and QUALITY Time

1.22 Keep focus on bull's eye

- Always keep long term goals in mind.
- Put up reminders in your home or office about your goals.
- Have confidence in yourself and in your judgment about priorities and stick to them no matter what.
- Put your efforts in areas that provide long term benefits.
- Be sure and set deadlines for yourself whenever possible.

1.23 Main goals of quality time

o Count all your time as time to be used and make every attempt to get satisfaction out of every moment. Spend the time with highest possible quality.
o Find something to enjoy in whatever you do.
o Try to be an optimist and seek out the good in your life.
o Find ways to build on your successes.
o Remind yourself: "There is always enough time for the important things." If it is important, you should be able to make time to do it.
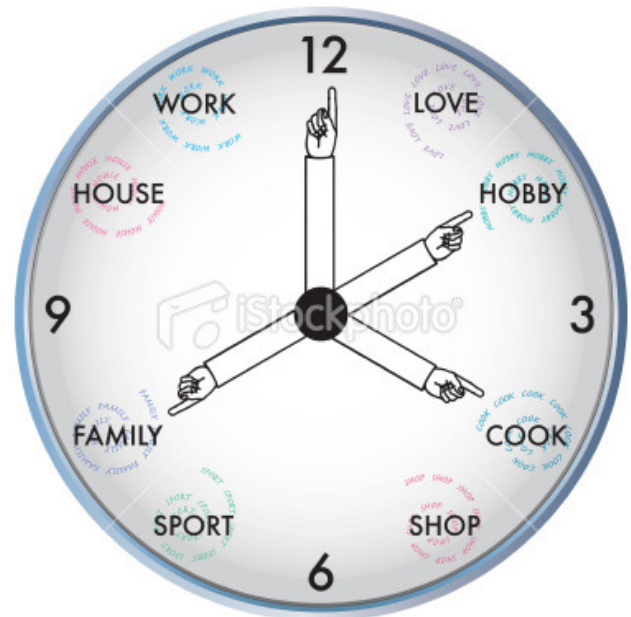
1.24 Time Tips

1) Do first things first.
2) Keep a paper or a calendar with you, to jot down the things you have to do to yourself.
3) Look ahead, say to the next month, try and anticipate what is going to happen so that you can better schedule your time.
4) Concentrate on one thing at a time.
5) Delegate responsibility whenever possible.
6) Start with the most difficult parts of a project, so that either the critical part gets done early or you may find you don't have to do all the other small tasks.
7) Push yourself and be persistent, especially when you know you are doing well.

1.25 Take home for the six sessions - How do I know if I am doing well.

Activity 10

a)	I can finish all tasks on time.	Yes	No
b)	I am not stressed out for time.	Yes	No
c)	I have enough discretionary time to give it to my friends and family.	Yes	No
d)	I have enough time to exercise and be healthy.	Yes	No
e)	I have enough time to sit down and do nothing and feel happy.	Yes	No
f)	Once in a while I can take a minute to help any stranger.	Yes	No
g)	I can walk around with a smile all the time.	Yes	No

If you can say YES to all of the above you have won the time game. Are you a winner? Or do you plan to win it?

- **Set a plan**
- **Execute the plan**
- **Prioritize the tasks**
- **Look back and tweak it all the time**

CHAPTER TWO
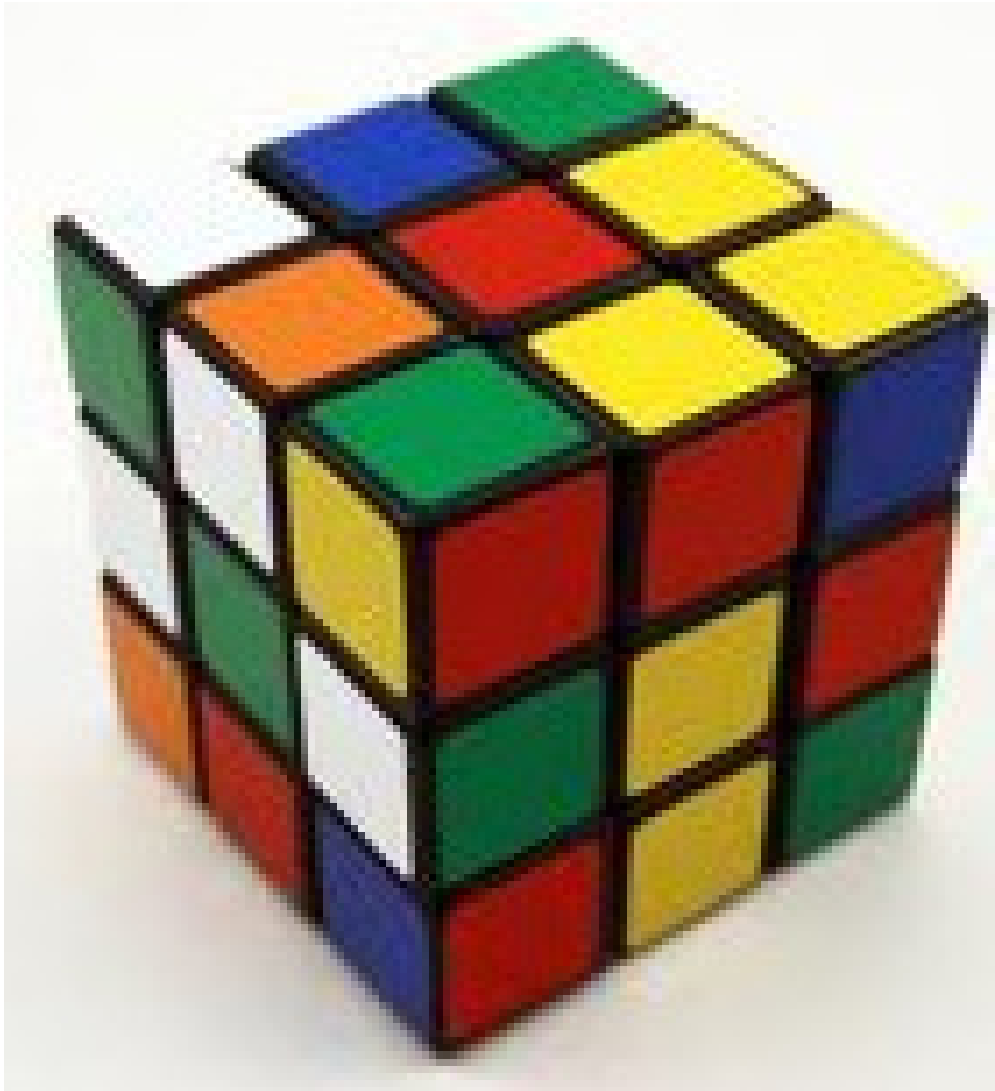
PROBLEM SOLVING

Introduction to Problem Solving

"Problems are only opportunities in work clothes."
        – Henry Kaiser (American industrialist)

Problem solving is a key skill, and it's one that can make a huge difference to your career. At work, problems are at the center of what many people do every day. You're solving a problem for a client (internal or external), supporting those who are solving problems, or discovering new problems to solve.

The problems you face can be large or small, simple or complex, and easy or difficult to solve. Regardless of the nature of the problems, a fundamental part of every manager's role is finding ways to solve them. So, being a confident problem solver is really important to your success.

Much of that confidence comes from having a good process to use when approaching a problem. With one, you can solve problems quickly and effectively. Without one, your solutions may be ineffective, or you'll get stuck and do nothing, with sometimes painful consequences.

There are four basic steps in problem solving:

1. Defining the problem. (Dealt in this chapter)
2. Generating alternatives. (Chapter 3 - Creativity)
3. Evaluating and selecting alternatives. (Chapter 4 – Decision making)
4. Implementing solutions. (Chapter 5 – Project Management)

Steps 2 to 4 of this process are covered in depth in subsequent chapters. For these, see our sections on Creativity for step 2 (generating alternatives); Decision Making for step 3 (evaluating and selecting alternatives); and Project Management for step 4 (implementing solutions).

We will now focus on Step 1 – defining the problem. A significant part of this involves making sense of the complex situation in which the problem occurs, so that you can pinpoint exactly what the problem is. The most important component of problem solving is to understand the problem. A solution may be great, but it may not pertain to the real problem. For example, to be a successful doctor, one has to listen and probe the patient to understand the symptoms.

2.1 Defining the Problem

The key to a good problem definition is ensuring that you deal with the real problem – not its symptoms. For example, if performance in your department is substandard, you might think the problem is with the individuals submitting the work. However, if you look a bit deeper, the real problem might be a lack of training, or an unreasonable workload.

Tools like 5 Whys and Root Cause Analysis help you ask the right questions, and work through the layers of a problem to uncover what's really going on.

The 5 Whys strategy involves looking at any problem and asking: "Why?" and "What caused this problem?"

Very often, the answer to the first "why" will prompt another "why" and the answer to the second "why" will prompt another and so on; hence the name the 5 Whys strategy.

Benefits of the 5 Whys include:

- It helps you to quickly determine the root cause of a problem.
- It's simple, and easy to learn and apply.

At this stage, it's also important to ensure that you look at the issue from a variety of perspectives. If you commit yourself too early, you can end up with a problem statement that's really a solution instead. For example, consider this problem statement: "We have to find a way of disciplining people who do substandard work." This doesn't allow you the opportunity of discovering the real reasons for under-performance.

Example: You live in 4th floor. You need Gas for cooking. The cylinder is 120Lbs. You have no Lift. Define the problem.

_____

_____

2.1.1 Understanding Complexity

When your problem is simple, the solution is usually obvious, and you don't need to follow the four steps we outlined earlier. So it follows that when you're taking this more formal approach, your problem is likely to be complex and difficult to understand, because there's a web of interrelated issues.

The good news is that there are numerous tools you can use to make sense of this tangled mess! Many of these help you create a clear visual representation of the situation, so that you can better understand what's going on. We are going to learn a couple of methods. One is Affinity diagrams and the other is Cause-and-Effect Diagram

2.1.2 Affinity Diagrams are great for organizing many different pieces of information into common themes, and for discovering relationships between these.

A. Describe the problem or issue

Figure 2

Customer Service is sub-standard.

B. Generate ideas by brainstorming. Write each idea on a separate sticky note and put these on a wall or flip chart. Remember to:

- Emphasize volume
- Suspend judgment
- Piggyback on other ideas

Figure 3

Why is customer service sub-standard?

Too much turnover

Untrained staff

No standard systems

There aren't enough phone lines

Staff aren't compensated enough

There's no measurement for what is and what isn't good service

Staff morale is low

Staff feel unappreciated

Not enough management support
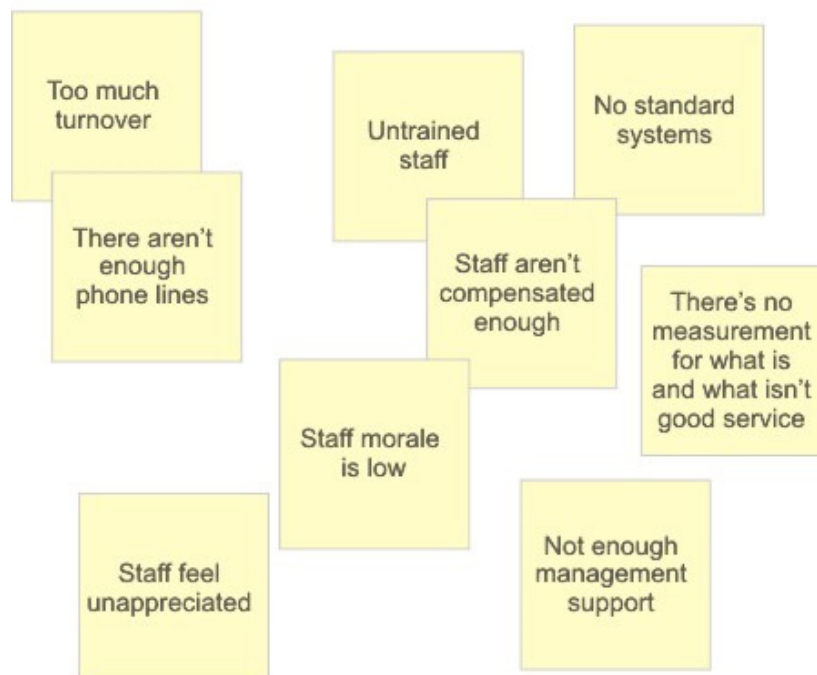
C. Sort ideas into natural themes by asking:

- What ideas are similar?
- Is this idea connected to any of the others?

If you're working in a team:
- Separate into smaller groups of 3 to 4 people
- Sort the ideas IN SILENCE so that no one is influenced by anyone else's comments
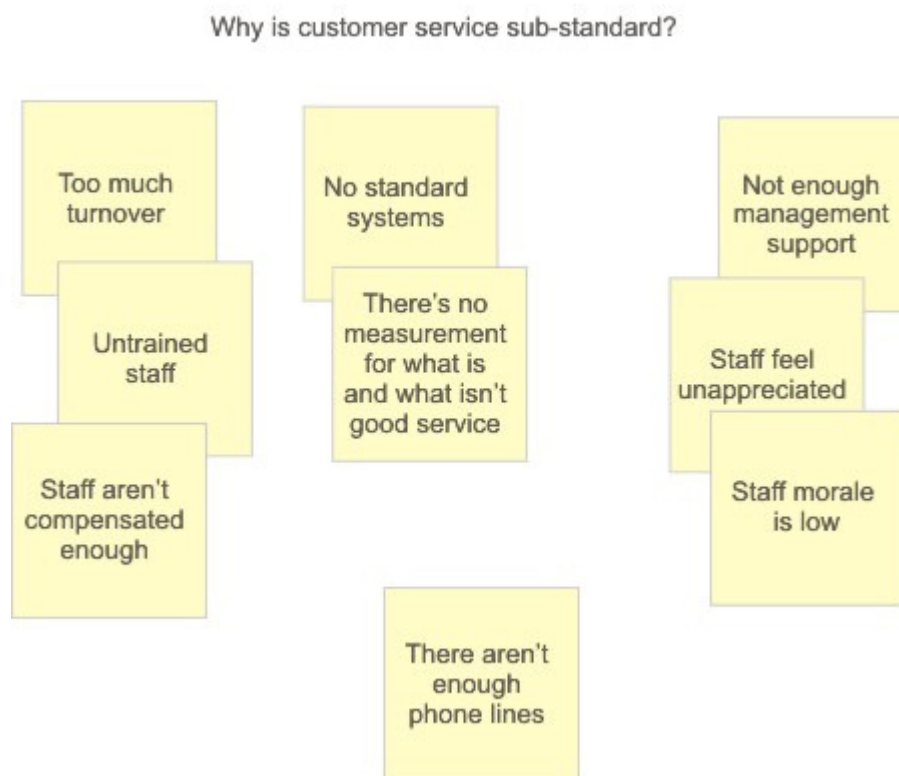- Keep moving the cards around until consensus is reached

Figure 4

Why is customer service sub-standard?

Too much turnover	No standard systems	Not enough management support
Untrained staff	There's no measurement for what is and what isn't good service	Staff feel unappreciated
Staff aren't compensated enough		Staff morale is low
	There aren't enough phone lines	

D. Create total group consensus
- Discuss the shared meaning of each of the sorted groups
- Continue until consensus is reached
- If some ideas do not fit into any theme, separate them as "stand-alone" ideas
- If some ideas fit into more than one theme, create a duplicate card and put it in the proper group
- Try to limit the total number of themes to between five and nine
E. Create theme cards (also called affinity cards or header cards)
- Create a short 3-5 word description for the relationship

- If you're working in a group, do this together, say it out loud
- Write this theme/header on a blank card and place at the top of the group it describes
- Create a "super-headers" where necessary to group themes
- Use a "sub-header" card where necessary as well

Figure 5

Why is customer service sub-standard?

Human Resource Issues	Lack of standard processes and measurement	Workplace culture	Resources and tools
Too much turnover	No standard systems	Not enough management support	There aren't enough phone lines
Untrained staff	There's no measurement for what is and what isn't good service	Staff feel unappreciated	
Staff aren't compensated enough		Staff morale is low	

F. Continue to group the themes/headers until you have reached the broadest, but still meaningful, categories possible

- Draw lines connecting the super-headers, themes/headers, and sub-headers
- You'll end up with a hierarchical structure that shows, at a glance, where the relationships are.

2.1.3 Understanding complexity alternate methods.

Another popular tool is the Cause-and-Effect Diagram. To generate viable solutions, you must have a solid understanding of what's causing the problem. Here are two pictures of solving problem haphazardly and in an orderly manner:
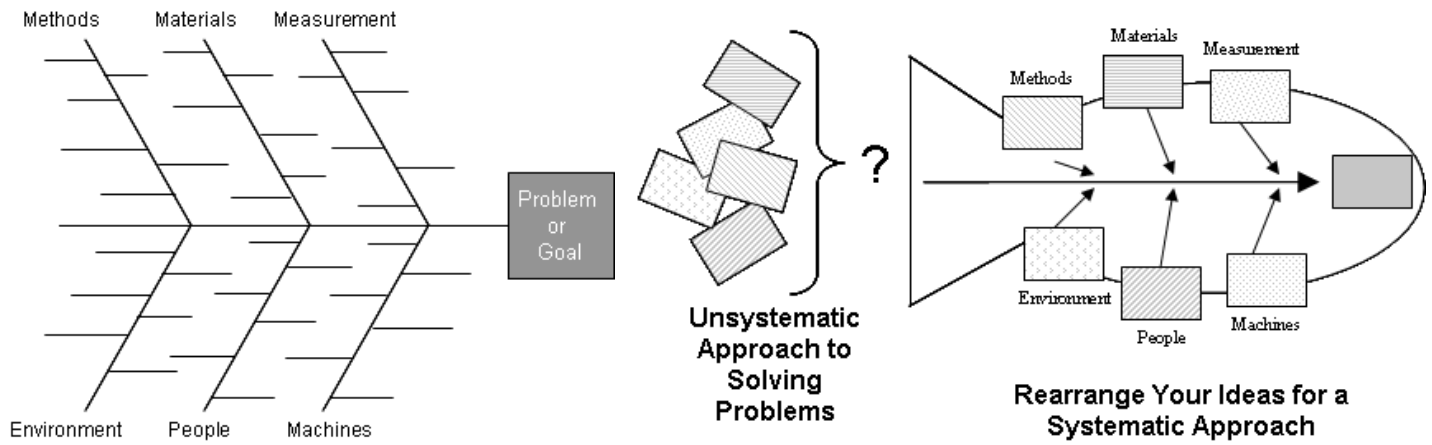
An example of a cause and effect diagram on reasons for downtime is shown in the figure. The steps to create this diagram are given below.

a. Pinpoint the problem you want to fix or the goal you want to reach.

b. Write the problem or goal (effect) on the right hand side of a large sheet of paper taped to the wall and draw a horizontal line to the left.

c. Select the categories for the causes of the problem or for what needs to be done to reach the
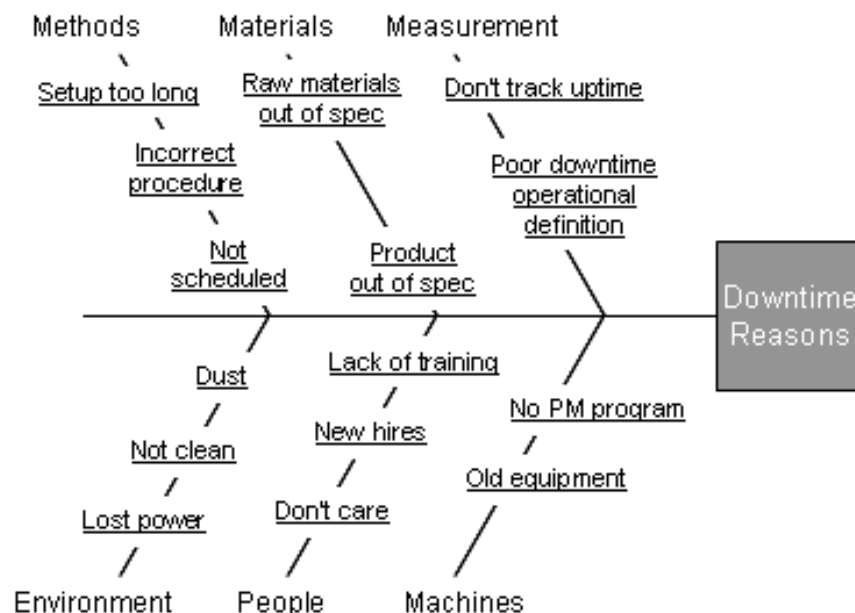

goal. These categories will be the main factors of the cause and effect diagram. Each main factor forms a branch off the horizontal line.

d. Brainstorm detailed causes for each main factor. These detailed causes are written on the branches off those of the main factors. Use the brainstorming rules shown below to maximize the number of causes your group develops.

- Go for quantity of ideas.
- Everyone participates.
- Encourage creativity.
- Don't discuss/criticize/evaluate ideas.
- Build off other ideas.
- Pass if you don't have an idea to contribute.

e. Always try to branch further by continuously asking, "What causes variation in this branch?" In this way, you can add to the cause and effect diagram until it fully shows all the possible causes of variation.
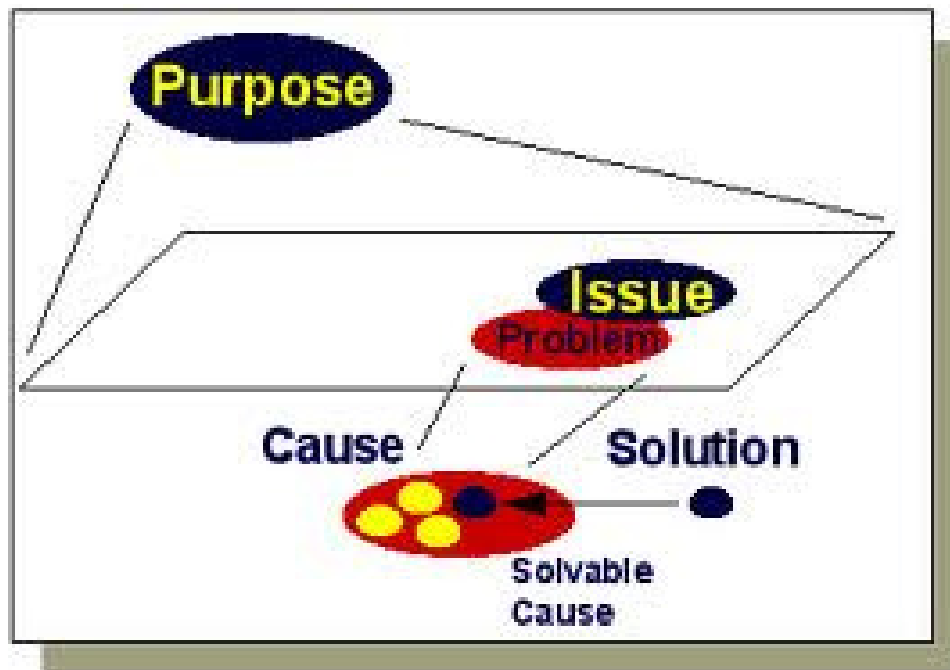
CHAPTER THREE

Creativity

Creativity Tools – Start Here!

There are two completely different types of creativity. The first is technical creativity, where people create new theories, technologies or ideas. We will be addressing this type of creativity here. The second is artistic creativity, which is more born of skill, technique and self-expression.

Many of the techniques discussed in this chapter have been used by great thinkers to drive their creativity. Albert Einstein, for example, used his own informal variant of Provocation to trigger ideas that lead to the Theory of Relativity.

3.1 Approaches to Creativity

There are two main strands to technical creativity: programmed thinking and lateral thinking. Programmed thinking relies on logical or structured ways of creating a new product or service. Examples of this approach are Morphological Analysis and the Reframing Matrix.

The other main strand uses 'Lateral Thinking'. Examples of this are Brainstorming, Random Input and Provocation.

3.2 Programmed Thinking and Lateral Thinking

Lateral thinking recognizes that our brains are pattern recognition systems, and that they do not function like computers. It takes years of training before we learn to do simple arithmetic – something that computers do very easily. On the other hand, we can instantly recognize patterns such as faces, language, and handwriting. The only computers that begin to be able to do these things do it by simulating how human brain cells work. Even then, computers will need to become more powerful before they approach our ability to handle patterns.

The benefit of good pattern recognition is that we can recognize objects and situations very quickly. Imagine how much time would be wasted if you had to do a full analysis every time you came across a cylindrical canister of effervescent fluid. Most people would just open their can of fizzy drink. Without pattern recognition we would starve or be eaten.

Unfortunately, we get stuck in our patterns. We tend to think within them. Solutions we develop are based on previous solutions to similar problems. Normally it does not occur to us to use solutions belonging to other patterns.

We use lateral thinking techniques to break out of this patterned way of thinking. Lateral thinking techniques help us to come up with startling, brilliant and original solutions to problems and opportunities.

It is important to point out that each type of approach has its strengths. Logical, disciplined thinking is enormously effective in making products and services better. It can, however, only go so far before all practical improvements have been carried out. Lateral thinking can generate completely new concepts and ideas, and brilliant improvements to existing systems. In the wrong place, however, it can be sterile or unnecessarily disruptive.

Tool 1 – Programmed thinking - Attribute Listing, Morphological Analysis and Matrix Analysis

To use the techniques of programmed thinking, first list the attributes of the product, service or strategy you are examining. Attributes are parts, properties, qualities or design elements of the thing being looked at.

For example, attributes of a pencil would be shaft material, lead material, hardness of lead, width of lead, quality, color, weight, price, and so on.

Another example: Imagine that you want to create a new lamp. The starting point for this might be to carry out a morphological analysis. Properties of a lamp might be power supply, bulb type, light intensity, size, style, finish, material, shade, and so on.

You can set these out as column headings on a table, and then brainstorm variations. This table is sometimes known as a "Morphologial Box" or "Zwicky Box" after the scientist Fritz Zwicky, who developed the technique in the 1960s.

Power Supply	Bulb Type	Light Intensity	Size	Style	Finish	Material
Battery	Halogen	Low	Very Large	Modern	Black	Metal
Mains	Bulb	Medium	Large	Antique	White	Ceramic
Solar	Daylight	High	Medium	Roman	Metallic	Concrete
Generator	Colored	Variable	Small	Art Nouveau	Terracotta	Bone
Crank			Hand held	Industrial	Enamel	Glass
Gas				Ethnic	Natural	Wood
Oil/Petrol					Fabric	Stone
Flame						Plastic

Interesting combinations might be:

- Solar powered/battery, medium intensity, daylight bulb – possibly used in clothes shops to allow customers to see the true color of clothes.
- Large hand cranked arc lights – used in developing countries, or far from a mains power supply.
- A ceramic oil lamp in Roman style – used in themed restaurants, resurrecting the olive oil lamps of 2000 years ago.
- A normal table lamp designed to be painted, wallpapered or covered in fabric so that it matches the style of a room perfectly.

Some of these might be practical, novel ideas for the lighting manufacturer. Some might not. This is where the manufacturer's experience and market knowledge are important.

Activity: Come out with 3 different products of your own.

Tool 2 – Lateral thinking – Provocation

Lateral thinking techniques help to challenge traditional thinking and allow you to avoid conflicts while constructively criticizing ideas and exploring new opportunities. Provocation is an important lateral thinking technique that helps to generate original starting points for creative thinking.   When using this technique all members of the group/audience should know about how the Provocation is supposed to work and accept it!

For example:
The owner of a video-hire shop is looking at new ideas for business to compete with the Internet. She starts with the provocation 'Customers should not pay to borrow videos'.

She then examines the provocation:
• Consequences: The shop would get no rental revenue and therefore would need alternative sources of cash. It would be cheaper to borrow the video from the shop than to download the film or order it from a catalogue.
• Benefits: Many more people would come to borrow videos. More people would pass through the shop. The shop would spoil the market for other video shops in the area.
• Circumstances: The shop would need other revenue. Perhaps the owner could sell advertising in the shop, or sell popcorn, sweets, and bottles of wine or pizzas to people borrowing films. This would make her shop a one-stop 'Night at home' shop. Perhaps it would only lend videos to people who had absorbed a 30-second commercial, or completed a market research

questionnaire.

After using the Provocation, the owner of the video shop decides to run an experiment for several months. She will allow customers to borrow the top ten videos free (but naturally will fine them for late returns). She puts the videos at the back of the shop. In front of them she places displays of bottles of wine, soft drinks, popcorn and sweets so that customers have to walk past them to get to the videos. Next to the film return counter she sells merchandise from the top ten films being hired.

If the approach is a success, she will open a pizza stand inside the shop.

Taking the Best of Each…

A number of techniques fuse the strengths of the two different strands of creativity. Techniques such as the Concept Fan use a combination of programmed and lateral thinking. DO IT and Min Basadur's Simplex embed the two approaches within problem solving processes. While these may be considered 'overkill' when dealing with minor problems, they provide excellent frameworks for solving difficult and serious ones.

The Creative Frame of Mind

Often the only difference between creative and uncreative people is self-perception. Creative people see themselves as creative and give themselves the freedom to create. Uncreative people do not think about creativity and do not give themselves the opportunity to create anything new.

Being creative may just be a matter of setting aside the time needed to take a step back and allow yourself to ask yourself if there is a better way of doing something. Edward de Bono calls this a 'Creative Pause'. He suggests that this should be a short break of maybe only 30 seconds, but that this should be a habitual part of thinking. This needs self-discipline, as it is easy to forget.

Another important attitude-shift is to view problems as opportunities for improvement. While this is something of a cliché, it is true. Whenever you solve a problem, you have a better product or service to offer afterwards.

Using Creativity

Creativity is sterile if action does not follow from it. Ideas must be evaluated, improved, polished and marketed before they have any value. The next two chapters will give you more ideas on how to put the ideas together, evaluate them and implement them.

Have fun creating!

CHAPTER FOUR

Decision Making

4.1 Decision making skills

Don't leave decisions to chance.

All of us have to make decisions every day. Some decisions are relatively straightforward and simple: Is this report ready to send to my boss now? Others are quite complex: Which of these candidates should I select for the job?

Simple decisions usually need a simple decision-making process. But difficult decisions typically involve issues like these:

- **Uncertainty** - Many facts may not be known.
- **Complexity** - You have to consider many interrelated factors.
- **High-risk consequences** - The impact of the decision may be significant.
- **Alternatives** - Each has its own set of uncertainties and consequences.
- **Interpersonal issues** - It can be difficult to predict how other people will react.

With these difficulties in mind, the best way to make a complex decision is to use an effective process. Clear processes usually lead to consistent, high-quality results, and they can improve the quality of almost everything we do. In this article, we outline a process that will help improve the quality of your decisions.

4.2 A Systematic Approach to Decision Making

A logical and systematic decision-making process helps you address the critical elements that result in a good decision. By taking an organized approach, you're less likely to miss important factors, and you can build on the approach to make your decisions better and better.

There are six steps to making an effective decision:

1. Create a constructive environment.
2. Generate good alternatives.
3. Explore these alternatives.
4. Choose the best alternative.
5. Check your decision.
6. Communicate your decision, and take action.

Here are the steps in detail:

4.2.1 Step 1: Create a constructive environment

To create a constructive environment for successful decision making, make sure you do the following:

- **Establish the objective** - Define what you want to achieve.

- **Agree on the process** - Know how the final decision will be made, including whether it will be an individual or a team-based decision. The Vroom-Yetton-Jago Model is a great tool for determining the most appropriate way of making the decision.
- **Involve the right people** - Stakeholder Analysis is important in making an effective decision, and you'll want to ensure that you've consulted stakeholders appropriately even if you're making an individual decision. Where a group process is appropriate, the decision-making group - typically a team of five to seven people - should have a good representation of stakeholders.
- **Allow opinions to be heard** - Encourage participants to contribute to the discussions, debates, and analysis without any fear of rejection from the group. This is one of the best ways to avoid groupthink. Gradually introducing more and more people to the group discussion, and making sure everyone is heard. Also, recognize that the objective is to make the best decision under the circumstances: it's not a game in which people are competing to have their own preferred alternatives adopted.
- **Make sure you're asking the right question** - Ask yourself whether this is really the true issue. The 5 Whys technique is a classic tool that helps you identify the real underlying problem that you face.
- **Use creativity tools from the start** - The basis of creativity is thinking from a different perspective. Do this when you first set out the problem, and then continue it while generating alternatives. Create new connections in your mind, break old thought patterns, and consider new perspectives.

Figure 1: Starburst diagram for a new product
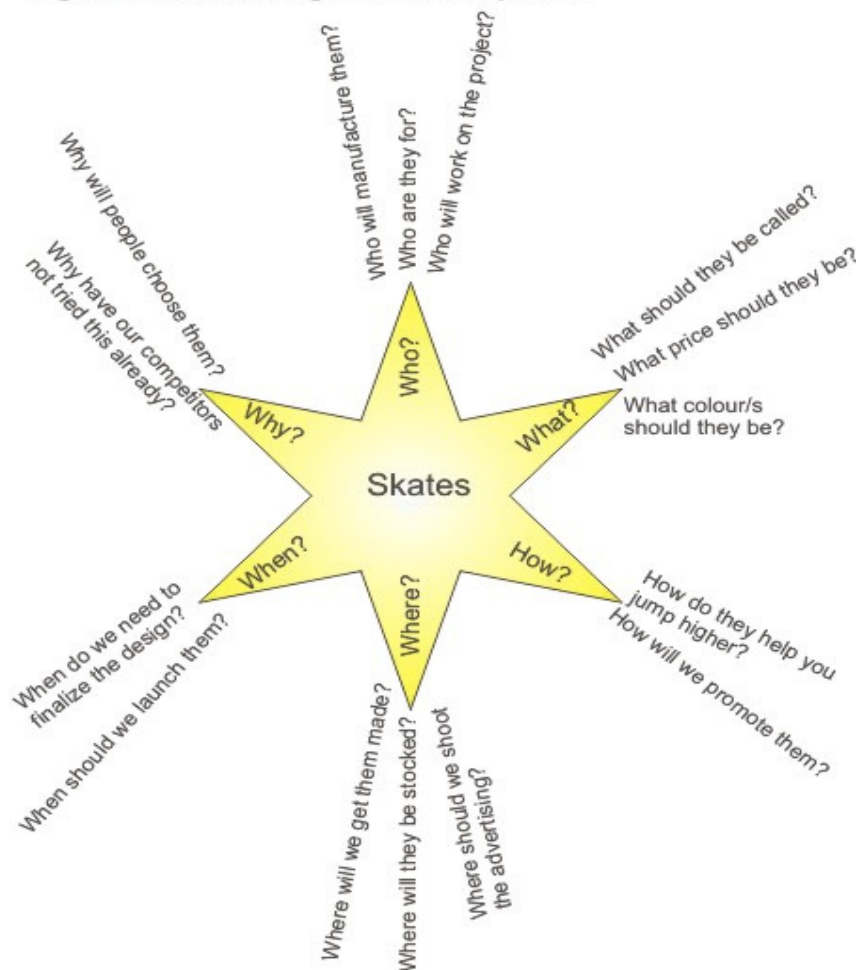
4.2.2 Step 2: Generate Good Alternatives (Chap-Creativity)

This step is still critical to making an effective decision. The more good options you consider the more comprehensive your final decision will be.

When you generate alternatives, you force yourself to dig deeper, and look at the problem from different angles. If you use the mindset 'there must be other solutions

out there'; you're more likely to make the best decisions possible. If you don't have reasonable alternatives, then there's really not much of a decision to make! Here's a summary of some of the key tools and techniques to help you and your team develop good alternatives.

Generating Ideas

• Brainstorming is probably the most popular method of generating ideas. Here is a Picture of a tool called STARBUSTING.

• The Charette Procedure is a systematic process for gathering and developing ideas from very many stakeholders. Make a few groups, brainstorm and collect the ideas together.

• Use the Crawford Slip Writing Technique to generate ideas from a large number of people. Make everyone write ideas on slips of paper. This is an extremely effective way to make sure that everyone's ideas are heard and given equal weight, irrespective of the person's position or power within the organization.

Considering Different Perspectives

• The Reframing Matrix uses 4 Ps (product, planning, potential, and people) as the basis for gathering different perspectives. You can also ask outsiders to join the discussion, or ask existing participants to adopt different functional perspectives (for example, have marketing people spoken from the viewpoint of a financial manager). The same blocks can be assembled 4 different ways (See Picture).

• **Organizing Ideas**
This is especially helpful when you have a large number of ideas. Sometimes separate ideas can be combined into one comprehensive alternative. Use Affinity Diagrams to organize ideas into common themes and groupings. In the coming section there is an example of how it works out. (Touch on Section 2.2)

Figure 1

Random Ideas   Affinity Diagram

Theme 1   Theme 2   Theme 3
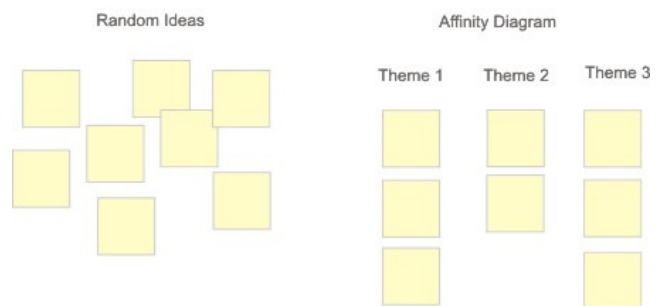
4.2.3   Step 3: Explore the Alternatives

When you're satisfied that you have a good selection of realistic alternatives, then you'll need to evaluate the feasibility, risks, and implications of each choice. Here, we discuss some of the most popular and effective analytical tools.

Risk

In decision making, there's usually some degree of uncertainty, which inevitably leads to risk. By evaluating the risk involved with various options, you can determine whether the risk is manageable. One way of putting figures to risk is to calculate a value for it as**:**

risk = probability of event x cost of event

- Risk Analysis helps you look at risks objectively. It uses a structured approach for assessing threats, and for evaluating the probability of events occurring - and what they might cost to manage.
- **Validation**
  Determine if resources are adequate, if the solution matches your objectives, and if the decision is likely to work in the long term.

Tool 1 - Cost-Benefit Analysis looks at the financial feasibility of an alternative.

Example:

A sales director is deciding whether to implement a new computer-based contact management and sales processing system. His department has only a few computers, and his salespeople are not computer literate. He is aware that computerized sales forces are able to contact more customers and give a higher quality of reliability and service to those customers. They are better able to meet commitments, and can work more efficiently with fulfillment and delivery staff.

His financial cost/benefit analysis is shown below:

Costs:
New computer equipment:

- 10 network-ready PCs with supporting software @ $2,450 each   - $24,500
- 1 server @ $3,500
- 3 printers @ $1,200 each
- Cabling & Installation @ $4,600
- Sales Support Software @ $15,000   Total Cost - $48,800.00

Training costs:
- Computer introduction – 8 people @ $400 each   - $3,200.00
- Keyboard skills – 8 people @ $400 each   -$3,200.00
- Sales Support System – 12 people @ $700 each   -$8,400.00   Total – $11,800.00

Other costs:
- Lost time: 40 man days @ $200 / day   - $8,000.00
- Lost sales through disruption: estimate: $20,000
- Lost sales through inefficiency during first months: estimate: $20,000

Other costs Total - $48,000.00

Total cost: $116,600

Benefits:
- Tripling of mail shot capacity: estimate: $40,000 / year
- Ability to sustain telesales campaigns: estimate: $20,000 / year
- Improved efficiency and reliability of follow-up: estimate: $50,000 / year
- Improved customer service and retention: estimate: $30,000 / year
- Improved accuracy of customer information: estimate: $10,000 / year
- More ability to manage sales effort: $30,000 / year

Total Benefit: $180,000/year

Payback time: $116,600 / $180,000 = 0.63 of a year = approx. 8 months

Tool 2 - Plus-Minus-Interesting looks at the financial feasibility of an alternative

Example: A young professional is deciding where to live. Her question is 'Should she move to the big city?' She draws up the PMI table below:

Plus	Minus	Interesting
More going on (+5)	Have to sell house (-6)	Easier to find new job? (+1)
Easier to see friends (+5)	More pollution (-3)	Meet more people? (+2)
Easier to get places (+3)	Less space (-3)	More difficult to get own work done? (-4)
	No countryside (-2)	
	More difficult to get to work? (-4)	
+13	**-18**	**-1**

She scores the table as 13 (Plus) – 18 (Minus) – 1 (Interesting) = – 6

For her, the comforts of a settled rural existence outweigh the call of the 'bright lights' – it would be much better for her to live outside the city, but close enough to travel in if necessary.

Worksheet For cost benefit analysis

You are traveling to Milwaukee to meet a customer and it takes 8 hours to get there by car. You charge the customer $100/hr. If you drive your own car, you would charge the customer 60 cents a mile. Milwaukee is 500 miles away. It takes 1.5 hours to fly to Milwaukee. It takes 2 hours to get to the airport and board the plane. It takes 30 minutes to get your luggage out and 1 hour to get to the customer. Two way plane ticket is $450/-. Rental car is $65/- a day including taxes. You car to be parked at local airport is $5/ day. Return journey would take you a total of 2 hours to get to the airport and 1 hour to get home from the airport. Calculate a cost benefit analysis and decide which way you would do it to save money for the customer. The meeting is at 12:30 AM. There is a flight at 9:30AM. Return flight at 4:00PM. It is an hour long meeting.

Total travel by Driving Time   =   Hours

Cost of time   = $

Cost of miles   X $.60 = $

Total cost $
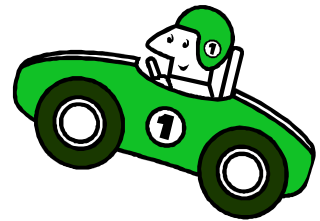
Pros and cons: Total hours, risks

Total travel time by flying   one way to reach the customer   =   Hours

Total time both ways   =   Hour

Cost of time   = $

Cost of the plane plus car rental   = $

Cost of parking   = $

Total cost   = $

Pros and cons: Total hours, risks

Discuss: Is the cost of ticket $950, or $1450?

4.2.4 Step 4: Choose the Best Alternative

After you have evaluated the alternatives, the next step is to choose between them. The choice may be obvious. However, if it isn't, these tools will help:

- Grid Analysis, also known as a decision matrix, is a key tool for this type of evaluation. It's invaluable because it helps you bring disparate factors into your decision-making process in a reliable and rigorous way.
- Decision Trees are also useful in choosing between options. These help you lay out the different options open to you, and bring the likelihood of project success or failure into the decision making process.

Example of Grid Analysis

A windsurfing enthusiast is about to replace his car. He needs one that not only carries a board and sails, but also one that will be good for business travel. He has always loved open-topped sports cars, but no car he can find is good for
all three things.

His options are:

- An SUV/4x4, hard topped vehicle.
- A comfortable "'family car."
- A station wagon/estate car.
- A convertible sports car.

Factors that he wants to consider are:

- Cost.
- Ability to carry a sail board safely.
- Ability to store sails and equipment securely.
- Comfort over long distances.
- Fun!
- Look, and build quality.

Key Points:

Grid Analysis helps you to decide between several options, where you need to take many different factors into account. Firstly he draws up the table shown in Figure 1, and scores each option by how well it satisfies each factor

To use the tool, layout your options as rows on a table. Set up the columns to show the factors you need to consider. Score each choice for each factor using numbers from 0 (poor) to 5 (very good), and then allocate weights to show the importance of each of these factors. Multiply each score by the weight of the factor, to show its contribution to the overall selection. Finally add up the total scores for each option. The highest scoring option will be the best option.

Figure 1: Example Grid Analysis Showing _Unweighted_ Assessment of How Each Type of Car Satisfies Each Factor

Factors:	Cost	Board	Storage	Comfort	Fun	Look	Total
Weights:							
Sports Car	1	0	0	1	3	3	
SUV/4x4	0	3	2	2	1	1	
Family Car	2	2	1	3	0	0	
Station Wagon	2	3	3	3	0	1	

Next he decides the relative weights for each of the factors. He multiplies these by the scores already entered, and totals them. This is shown in Figure 2:

Figure 2: Example Grid Analysis Showing _Weighted_ Assessment of How Each Type of Car Satisfies Each Factor

Factors:	Cost	Board	Storage	Comfort	Fun	Look	Total
Weights:	4	5	1	2	3	4	
Sports Car	4	0	0	2	9	12	**27**
SUV/4x4	0	15	2	4	3	4	**28**
Family Car	8	10	1	6	0	0	**25**
Station Wagon	8	15	3	6	0	4	**36**

This gives an interesting result: Despite its lack of fun, a station wagon is the best choice. Windsurfing really matters to him!

For group decisions, there are some excellent evaluation methods available.

When decision criteria are subjective and it's critical that you gain consensus, you can use techniques like Nominal Group Technique and Multi-Voting. This is better done on a face-to-face process for gaining consensus. A typical application is in organizational planning, when a group needs to agree on priorities in order to assign resources and funds. These methods help a group to agree on priorities.

4.2.5 Step 5: Check Your Decision

With all of the effort and hard work that goes into evaluating alternatives, and deciding the best way forward, it's easy to forget to 'sense check' your decisions. This is where you look at the decision you're about to make dispassionately, to make sure that your process has been thorough, and to ensure that common errors haven't crept into the decision-making process. After all, we can all now see the catastrophic consequences that over-confidence, groupthink, and other decision-making errors have wrought on the world economy.

The first part of this is an intuitive step, which involves quietly and methodically testing the assumptions and the decisions you've made against your own experience, and thoroughly reviewing and exploring any doubts you might have.

The second part involves using a technique like Blind spot Analysis to review whether common decision-making problems like over-confidence, escalating commitment, or groupthink may have undermined the decision-making process. Whatever you thought was straight forward is what normally has a hidden problem. Search for all the hidden problems in the process.

The third part involves using a technique like the Ladder of Inference to check through the logical structure of the decision with a view to ensuring that a well-founded and consistent decision emerges at the end of the decision-making process.

Figure 1: The Ladder of Inference
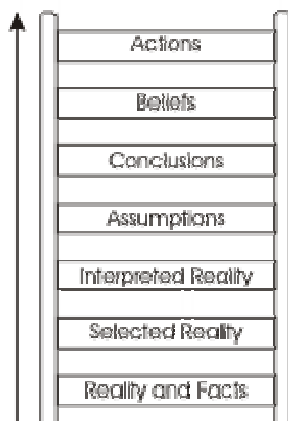
Starting at the bottom of the ladder, we have reality and facts. From there, we:

- Experience these selectively based on our beliefs and prior experience.
- Interpret what they mean.
- Apply our existing assumptions, sometimes without considering them.
- Draw conclusions based on the interpreted facts and our assumptions.
- Develop beliefs based on these conclusions.
- Take actions that seem "right" because they are based on what we believe.

4.2.6 Step 6: Communicate Your Decision, and Move to Action!

Once you've made your decision, it's important to explain it to those affected by it, and involved in implementing it. Talk about why you chose the alternative you did. The more information you provide about risks and projected benefits, the more likely people are to support the decision.

CHAPTER FIVE

Project Management

What is Project Management?

Project management is the science (and art) of organizing the components of a project, whether the project is development of a new product, the launch of a new service, a marketing campaign, or a wedding. A project isn't something that's part of normal business operations. It's typically created once, it's temporary, and it's specific. As one expert notes, "It has a beginning and an end." A project consumes resources (whether people, cash, materials, or time), and it has funding limits.

5.1 Project Management Basics

No matter what the type of project, project management typically follows the same pattern:

1. Definition
2. Planning
3. Execution
4. Control
5. Closure

5.2 Defining the Project

In this stage, the project manager defines what the project is and what the users hope to achieve by undertaking the project. This phase also includes a list of project deliverables, the outcome of a specific set of activities. The project manager works with the business sponsor or manager (who wants to have the project implemented) and other stakeholders (who have a vested interest in the outcome of the project).

Objective – To build a tree house

Resources – 9 people

Cost - $10,000

Time - 30 days

Business Sponsor - Bank

5.3 Planning the Project

Define all project activities. In this stage, the project manager lists all activities or tasks, how the tasks are related, how long each task will take, and how each task is tied to a specific deadline. This phase also allows the project manager to define relationships between tasks, so that, for example, if one task is x number of days late, the project tasks related to it will also reflect a comparable delay. Likewise, the project manager can set milestones, dates by which important aspects of the project need to be met.

Define requirements for completing the project. In this stage, the project manager identifies how many people (often referred to as "resources") and how much expense ("cost") is involved in the project, as well as any other requirements that are necessary for completing the project. The project manager will also need to manage assumptions and risks related to the project. The project manager will also want to identify project constraints. Constraints typically relate to schedule, resources, budget, and scope. A change in one constraint will typically affect the other constraints. For example, a budget constraint may affect the number of people who can work on the project, thereby imposing a resource constraint. Likewise, if additional features are added as part of project scope, that could affect scheduling, resources, and budget.

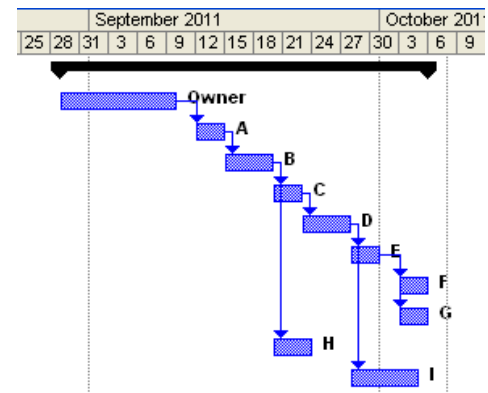*Tools*: Make a **Project file** showing the plan. Update the plan and keep everyone informed.

Step1 – Enter all the tasks

Step 2 – Enter time it takes for each task

Step 3 – Calculate total time

Step 4 – Assign predecessors, and determine critical path.

Step 5 – Assign resources

Jargon to know

Project time line: Shows the amount of time it takes to finish the project.

A **Gantt chart** is a type of bar chart that illustrates a project schedule. Gantt charts illustrate the start and finish dates and other dependencies.

Critical Path : Longest sequence of activities in a project plan which must be completed on time for the project to complete on due date meeting the deadline. An activity on the critical path cannot be started until its predecessor activities are completed; if it is delayed by a day, the entire project will be delayed by a day unless the activity following the delayed activity is completed a day earlier.

5.4 Tasks for building a house

1. Loan approval from the bank
2. Buying Material
3. Framing and structure
4. Plumbing /Electrical work
5. Drywall construction
6. Cabinet installation/ flooring/painting
7. Interior decorations
8. Furnishing
9. Deck building and 10. Landscaping

5.5 Assign time to the task

Total Project timing	40d	Mon 8/29/11	Fri 10/21/11
Loan approval from the bank	10d	Mon 8/29/11	Fri 9/9/11
Buying Material	3d	Mon 9/12/11	Wed 9/14/11
Framing and structure	3d	Thu 9/15/11	Mon 9/19/11
Plumbing /Electrical work	3d	Tue 9/20/11	Thu 9/22/11
Drywall construction	3d	Fri 9/23/11	Tue 9/27/11
Cabinet work/ flooring/painting	3d	Wed 9/28/11	Fri 9/30/11
Interior decorations	3d	Mon 10/3/11	Wed 10/5/11
Furnishing	3d	Thu 10/6/11	Mon 10/10/11
Deck building	4d	Tue 10/11/11	Fri 10/14/11
Landscaping	5d	Mon 10/17/11	Fri 10/21/11

5.6 Constraints in finishing the projects successfully

A) Time to completion = 40 days – Need to bring it down to 30 days.
B) Material cost $5500/-
C) 40 days of labor at $100/; Total labor-$4000
D) Total cost is 9500/-. Project seems within budget but for unexpected delays.
E) Customer says delay will cost $100/ a day extra as fine. Finishing earlier will reap a bonus of $100/-.

Executing the Project

Build the project team. In this phase, the project manager knows how many resources and how much budget is available for the project. The project manager then assigns those resources and allocates budget to various tasks in the project. Now   the project work begins.

Resources- People who would be conducting the following task

1. Manager
2. Framer
3. Mechanicals
4. Drywall
5. Interior finishing
6. Decorator
7. Furnishing
8. Decker
9. Landscaper

5.7 Time, Money, Scope

Frequently, people refer to project management as having three components: **time, money, and scope.** Reducing or increasing any one of the three will probably have an impact on the other two. If a company reduces the amount of time it can spend on a project, that will affect the scope (what can be included in the project) as well as the cost (since additional people or resources may be required to meet the abbreviated schedule).

Discuss

- How to reduce the length of the project to maximize profit
- The effect of finance costs like overtime, interest on borrowed money on budget.
- Careful planning of material coming in JUST IN TIME (JIT). The cost of theft and storage on project budget and schedule.

5.8 Controlling the Project

The project manager is in charge of updating the project plans to reflect actual time elapsed for each task. By keeping up with the details of progress, the project manager is able to understand how well the project is progressing overall. A product such as Microsoft Project facilitates the administrative aspects of project management. A good tool depicting the plan, communicating the plan and other leadership qualities of a project manager are essential for the success of a project.

Communication:

A) Communicate the project initiation – Iron out the dates and prices
B) Regularly (e.g., daily morning) make sure all parts and people are available.
C) Regularly (e.g., daily evening) remind the people of the plan and ensure availability of necessary resources to ensure it is on schedule.
D) Listen to the problems the team is facing. Finally the manager is responsible for the result.

Leadership: Excerpts from the Chapter 6.

The most effective leaders use mainly **referent and expert power. An effective leader has the following attributes.**

- Has integrity.
- Sets clear goals.
- Clearly communicates a vision.
- Sets a good example.
- Expects the best from the team.
- Encourages and supports the team.
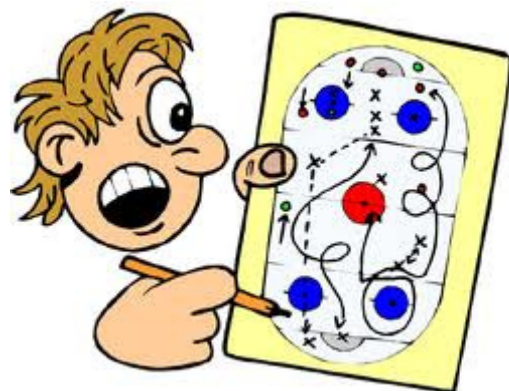
- Recognizes good work and able people.

- Provides stimulating work.

- Helps people see beyond their self-interests and focus on team interests and needs.

- Inspires people to be productive.

**THE BUCK STOP WITH THE LEADER.**

5.9 Closure of the Project

At this stage, the project manager and business owner pull together the project team and those who have an interest in the outcome of the project (stakeholders) to analyze the final outcome of the project. Reevaluate them at the end and enumerate lessons learned.

5.10 Successful Project

A project is a success if

a) Scope – The customer got all that was wished at a competitive price.
b) Time – Effectively finish by the deadline.
c) Money - Made good returns for the team and brought quality work to the team thereby satisfying the team with challenging work.
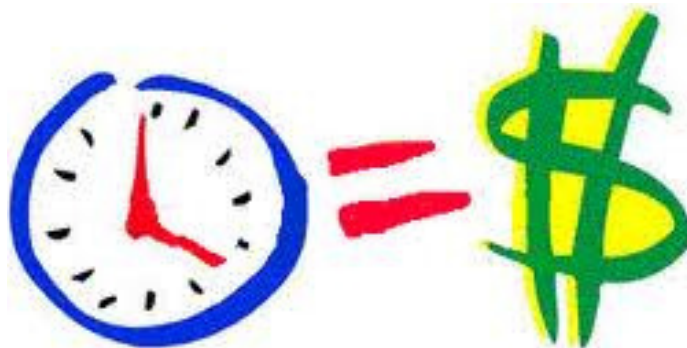
5.11 Project Competition - Whichever team makes the most money wins.

a) You will be building a Tennis court starting today.

Cost: $1600/-

Here are the tasks and the number days:

1) Clearing the land   1
2) Digging the land   1
3) Pouring Concrete   1
4) Leveling the surface   1
5) Putting in Rubber   1
6) Installing Net   1
7) Installing the Fence   3
8) Installing Wind breaker on the fence 2
9) Installing Flood Lights   3
10) Installing Benches   2

Resources: You have 5 people in your team. Each can do only 2 tasks

Constraints

a) Concrete has to cure 2 days after pouring
b) No one can work around when Electrical work is carried out
c) There will be one day of rain – will happen on the second Monday.
d) Project to be done in 13 days,
e) Earlier finish gets 100/ day, later finish – fine $100/day
f) Cost of one person per day per task is $100/-
g) To make your team work on Overtime you will have to pay extra $50/- per day of work
h) Working by the same person 2 days of work has to be compensation for OT. Maximum 2 days of work in a day by the same person.
i) Working weekend in addition O/t Working 16 hours by a person on a weekend is double time.

Here is the time line of the project – Total 75 minutes

1. Step1 – Enter all the tasks - 5 minutes
2. Step 2 – Enter time it takes – 5 minutes
3. Step 3 – Calculate Total days – 5 minutes
4. Step 4 – Assign predecessors – 5 minutes
5. Step 6 - Evaluate the critical path – 5 minutes
6. Step 5 – Assign resources – 5 minutes
7. Work on making the process efficient -20 minutes
8. Announcement on when rain will be
9. Rework the process to see the total time and cost – 20 minutes

CHAPTER SIX

Leadership

Leadership skills

"At the age of seven, a young boy and his family were forced out of their home. The boy had to work to support his family. At the age of nine, his mother passed away. When he grew up, the young man was keen to go to law school, but had no education.

At 22, he lost his job as a store clerk. At 23, he ran for state legislature and lost. The same year, he went into business. It failed, leaving him with a debt that took him 17 years to repay. At 27, he had a nervous breakdown.

Two years later, he tried for the post of speaker in his state legislature. He lost. At 31, he was defeated in his attempt to become an elector. By 35, he had been defeated twice while running for Congress. Finally, he did manage to secure a brief term in Congress, but at 39 he lost his re-election bid.

At 41, his four-year-old son died. At 42, he was rejected as a prospective land officer. At 45, he ran for the Senate and lost. Two years later, he lost the vice presidential nomination. At 49, he ran for Senate and lost again.

At 51, he was elected the President of the United States of America.

The man in question: Abraham Lincoln."
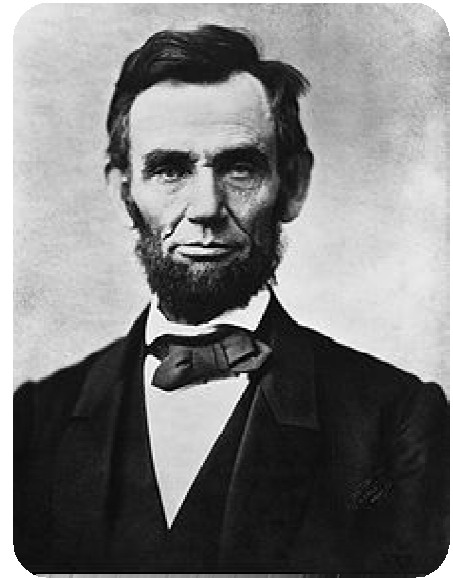
6.1 What is Leadership?

"Leaders are people who do the right thing; managers are people who do things right."

– Professor Warren G. Bennis

"Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it."

– Dwight D. Eisenhower

The word "leadership" can bring to mind a variety of images. For example:

- An army officer, charging forward to meet the enemy.
- An explorer, cutting a path through the jungle for the rest of his party to follow.
- An executive, developing her company's strategy to remain ahead of the competition.

Write down a few more people you consider them leaders

- ○ _____

- ○ _____

6.2 What are the qualities of a leader?

- Has integrity.
- Sets clear goals.
- Clearly communicates a vision.
- Sets a good example.
- Expects the best from the team.
- Encourages.
- Supports.
- Recognizes good work and people.
- Provides stimulating work.
- Helps people see beyond their self-interests and focus more on team interests and needs.
- Inspires.

List the qualities you think are important to be a leader

- ➢ --
- ➢ --
- ➢ --
- ➢ --

6.3 Why do we need a leader?

1. To steer the thoughts into action.
2. To give a fair chance to one and all to put their thoughts through for collective good.

Do you want to be a leader and why?

- ➢ --
- ➢ --
- ➢ --
- ➢ --

6.4 Emotional Intelligence in Leadership

1. **Self-awareness** - Being self-aware when you're in a leadership position also means having a clear picture of your strengths and weaknesses. And it means having humility.
2. **Self-regulation** - Know your values. Hold yourself accountable. Practice being calm.
3. **Motivation** - Re-examine why you're doing this. Know where you stand. Be hopeful and find something good.
4. **Empathy** - Put yourself in someone else's position. Pay attention to body language. Respond to feelings.
5. **Social skills** - Learn conflict resolution. Improve your communication skills. Learn how to praise others.

6.5 Behavioral theories – What does a good leader do?

Behavioral theories focus on how leaders behave. Do they dictate what needs to be done and expect cooperation? Or do they involve the team in decisions to encourage acceptance and support?

In the 1930s, Kurt Lewin developed a leadership framework based on a leader's decision-making behavior. Lewin argued that there are three types of leaders:

1. Autocratic leaders make decisions without consulting their teams. This is considered appropriate when decisions genuinely need to be taken quickly, when there's no need for input, and when team agreement isn't necessary for a successful outcome.
2. Democratic leaders allow the team to provide input before making a decision, although the degree of input can vary from leader to leader. This type of style is important when team agreement matters, but it can be quite difficult to manage when there are lots of different perspectives and ideas.
3. Laissez-faire leaders don't interfere; they allow people within the team to make many of the decisions. This works well when the team is highly capable and motivated, and when it doesn't need close monitoring or supervision. However, this style can arise because the leader is lazy or distracted, and, here, this approach can fail.

6.6 Understanding Power

One of the most notable studies on power was conducted by social psychologists John French and Bertram Raven in 1959. They identified five bases of power:

1. **Legitimate** – This comes from the belief that a person has the right to make demands, and expect compliance and obedience from others.
2. **Reward** – This results from one person's ability to compensate another for compliance.

3. **Expert** – This is based on a person's superior skill and knowledge.
4. **Referent** – This is the result of a person's perceived attractiveness, worthiness, and right to respect from others.
5. **Coercive** – This comes from the belief that a person can punish others for noncompliance.

Give me an example of someone you are influenced by and why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

If you're aware of these sources of power, you can…

- Better understand why you're influenced by someone, and decide whether you want to accept the base of power being used.
- Recognize your own sources of power.
- Build your leadership skills by using and developing your own sources of power, appropriately, and for best effect.

The most effective leaders use mainly **referent and expert power**. To develop your leadership abilities, learn how to build these types of power, so that you can have a positive influence on your colleagues, your team, and your organization.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Communication skills

Communication-Introduction

We can spend almost our entire day communicating. So, how can we provide a huge boost to our productivity? We can make sure that we communicate in the clearest, most effective way possible. This is why the 7 Cs of Communication are helpful. The 7 Cs provide a checklist for making sure that your meetings, emails, conference calls, reports, and presentations are well constructed and clear – so your audience gets your message.

According to the 7 Cs, communication needs to be:

- Clear.
- Concise.
- Concrete.
- Correct.
- Coherent.
- Complete.
- Courteous.

In this article, we look at each of the 7 Cs of Communication, and we'll illustrate each element with both good and bad examples.

7.1 Clear

When writing or speaking to someone, be clear about your goal or message. What is your purpose in communicating with this person? If you're not sure, then your audience won't be sure either.

To be clear, try to minimize the number of ideas in each sentence. Make sure that it is easy for your reader to understand your meaning. People shouldn't have to "read between the lines" and make assumptions on their own to understand what you're trying to say.

Bad Example

Hi John,

I wanted to write you a quick note about Daniel, who's working in your department. He's a great asset, and I'd like to talk to you more about him when you have time.

Best,

Skip

What is this email about? Well, we're not sure. First, if there is multiple Daniels in John's department, John won't know who Skip is talking about.

Next, what is Daniel doing, specifically, that's so great? We don't know that either. It's so vague that John will definitely have to write back for more information.

Last, what is the purpose of this email? Does Skip simply want to have an idle chat about Daniel, or is there some more specific goal here? There's no sense of purpose to this message, so it's a bit confusing.

Good Example

Let's see how we could change this email to make it clear.

Hi John,

I wanted to write you a quick note about Daniel Kedar, who's working in your department. In recent weeks, he's helped the IT department through several pressing deadlines on his own time.

We've got a tough upgrade project due to run over the next three months, and his knowledge and skills would prove invaluable. Could we please have his help with this work?

I'd appreciate speaking with you about this. When is it best to call you to discuss this further?

Best wishes,

Skip

This second message is much clearer, because the reader has the information he needs to take action.

7.2 Concise

When you're concise in your communication, you stick to the point and keep it brief. Your audience doesn't want to read six sentences when you could communicate your message in three.

- Are there any adjectives or "filler words" that you can delete? You can often eliminate words like "for instance," "you see," "definitely," "kind of," "literally," "basically," or "I mean."
- Are there any unnecessary sentences?

- Have you repeated the point several times, in different ways?

Bad Example

Hi Matt,

I wanted to touch base with you about the email marketing campaign we kind of sketched out last Thursday. I really think that our target market is definitely going to want to see the company's philanthropic efforts. I think that could make a big impact, and it would stay in their minds longer than a sales pitch.

For instance, if we talk about the company's efforts to become sustainable, as well as the charity work we're doing in local schools, then the people that we want to attract are going to remember our message longer. The impact will just be greater.

What do you think?

Jessica

This email is too long! There's repetition, and there's plenty of "filler" taking up space.

Good Example

Watch what happens when we're concise and take out the filler words:

Hi Matt,

I wanted to quickly discuss the email marketing campaign that we analyzed last Thursday. Our target market will want to know about the company's philanthropic efforts, especially our goals to become sustainable and help local schools.

This would make a far greater impact, and it would stay in their minds longer than a traditional sales pitch.

What do you think?

Jessica

7.3 Concrete

When your message is concrete, then your audience has a clear picture of what you're telling them. There are details (but not too many!) and vivid facts, and there's laserlike focus. Your message is solid.

Bad Example

Consider this advertising copy:

The Lunchbox Wizard will save you time every day.

A statement like this probably won't sell many of these products. There's no passion, no vivid detail, nothing that creates emotion, and nothing that tells people in the audience why they should care. This message isn't concrete enough to make a difference.

Good Example

How much time do you spend every day packing your kids' lunches? No more! Just take a complete Lunchbox Wizard from your refrigerator each day to give your kids a healthy lunch AND have more time to play or read with them!

This copy is better because there are vivid images. The audience can picture spending quality time with their kids – and what parent could argue with that? And mentioning that the product is stored in the refrigerator explains how the idea is practical. The message has come alive through these details.

7.4 Correct

When your communication is correct, it fits your audience. And correct communication is also error-free communication.

- Do the technical terms you use fit your audience's level of education or knowledge?
- Have you checked your writing for grammatical errors? Remember, spell checkers won't catch everything.
- Are all names and titles spelled correctly?

Bad Example

Hi Daniel,

Thanks so much for meeting me at lunch today! I enjoyed our conservation, and I'm looking forward to moving ahead on our project. I'm sure that the two-weak deadline won't be an issue.

Thanks again, and I'll speak to you soon!

Best,

If you read that example fast, then you might not have caught any errors. But on closer inspection, you'll find two. Can you see them?

The first error is that the writer accidentally typed conservation instead of conversation. This common error can happen when you're typing too fast. The other error is using weak instead of week.

Again, spell checkers won't catch word errors like this, which is why it's so important to proofread everything!

7.5 Coherent

When your communication is coherent, it's logical. All points are connected and relevant to the main topic, and the tone and flow of the text is consistent.

Bad Example

Traci,

I wanted to write you a quick note about the report you finished last week. I gave it to Michelle to proof, and she wanted to make sure you knew about the department meeting we're having this Friday. We'll be creating an outline for the new employee handbook.

Thanks,

Michelle

As you can see, this email doesn't communicate its point very well. Where is Michelle's feedback on Traci's report? She started to mention it, but then she changed the topic to Friday's meeting.

Good Example

Hi Traci,

I wanted to write you a quick note about the report you finished last week. I gave it to Michelle to proof, and she let me know that there are a few changes that you'll need to make. She'll email you her detailed comments later this afternoon.

Thanks,

Michelle

Notice that in the good example, Michelle does not mention Friday's meeting. This is because the meeting reminder should be an entirely separate email. This way, Traci can delete the report feedback email after she makes her changes, but save the email about the meeting as her reminder to attend. Each email has only one main topic.

7.6 Complete

In a complete message, the audience has everything they need to be informed and, if applicable, take action.

- Does your message include a "call to action", so that your audience clearly knows what you want them to do?
- Have you included all relevant information – contact names, dates, times, locations, and so on?

Bad Example

Hi everyone,

I just wanted to send you all a reminder about the meeting we're having tomorrow!

See you then,
Chris

This message is not complete, for obvious reasons. What meeting? When is it? Where? Chris has left his team without the necessary information.

Good Example

Hi everyone,

I just wanted to remind you about tomorrow's meeting on the new telecommuting policies. The meeting will be at 10:00 a.m. in the second-level conference room. Please let me know if you can't attend.

See you then,

Chris

7.7 Courteous

Courteous communication is friendly, open, and honest. There are no hidden insults or passive-aggressive tones. You keep your reader's viewpoint in mind, and you're empathetic to their needs.

Bad Example

Jeff,

I wanted to let you know that I don't appreciate how your team
always monopolizes the discussion at our weekly meetings. I have a lot of projects, and I really need time to get my team's progress discussed as well. So far, thanks to your department, I haven't been able to do that. Can you make sure they make time for me and my team next week?

Thanks,

Phil

Well, that's hardly courteous! Messages like this can potentially start office wide fights. And this email does nothing but create bad feelings, and lower productivity and morale. A little bit of courtesy, even in difficult situations, can go a long way.

Good Example

Hi Jeff,

I wanted to write you a quick note to ask a favor. During our weekly meetings, your team does an excellent job of highlighting their progress. But this uses some of the time available for my team to highlight theirs. I'd really appreciate it if you could give my team a little extra time each week to fully cover their progress reports.

Thanks so much, and please let me know if there's anything I can do for you!

Best,

Phil

What a difference! This email is courteous and friendly, and it has little chance of spreading bad feelings around the office.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Stress Management

What is Stress?

The most commonly accepted definition of stress (mainly attributed to Richard S Lazarus) is that **stress is a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that "demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize."** In short, <u>it's what we feel when we think we've lost control of events.</u>

8.1 Fight-or-Flight

Some of the early research on stress (conducted by Walter Cannon in 1932) established the existence of the well-known "fight-or-flight" response. His work showed that when an organism experiences a shock or perceives a threat, it quickly releases hormones that help it to survive.

In humans, as in other animals, these hormones help us to run faster and fight harder. They increase heart rate and blood pressure, delivering more oxygen and blood sugar to power important muscles. They increase sweating in an effort to cool these muscles, and help them stay efficient. They divert blood away from the skin to the core of our bodies, reducing blood loss if we are damaged. As well as this, these hormones focus our attention on the threat, to the exclusion of everything else. All of this significantly improves our ability to survive life-threatening events.

Not only life-threatening events trigger this reaction: We experience it almost any time we come across something unexpected or something that frustrates our goals. When the threat is small, our response is small and we often do not notice it among the many other distractions of a stressful situation.

Unfortunately, this mobilization of the body for survival also has negative consequences. In this state, we are excitable, anxious, jumpy and irritable. This actually reduces our ability to work effectively with other people. With trembling and a pounding heart, we can find it difficult to execute precise, controlled skills. The intensity of our focus on survival interferes with our ability to make fine judgments by drawing information from many sources. We find ourselves more accident-prone and less able to make good decisions.

There are only very few situations in modern working life where this response is useful. Most situations benefit better from a calm, rational, controlled and socially sensitive approach.

In the short term, we need to keep this fight-or-flight response under control to be effective in our jobs. <u>In the long term we need to keep it under control to avoid problems of poor health and burnout.</u>

8.2 Coping Strategies – Short term

It is not uncommon for someone to be perfectly happy and normal and to suddenly go into a stressed mode. Very often by end of the day people get stressed out due to normal routine work. The following techniques will help coping with them.

Toffler's Stability Zones

Toffler's concept is fairly simple. Stability Zones are places or things that make you feel safe, relaxed, and secure. Think of them as buffers – types of protection or defense – against the outside world. When you're in or with your Stability Zone, you feel safe. It's something safe and familiar, something that doesn't change.

And they're not limited to specific places. They can be things, people, objects, or even ideas:

- **People** – People Stability Zones offer you a relaxing, restful atmosphere when you're with them. They listen to what you say, and you don't have to try to be a different person when they're around. They have values similar to yours, and they've probably been in your life for a long time. A Person Stability Zone could be a spouse, best friend, parent, or co-worker.
- **Ideas** – Idea Stability Zones could be anything from religious faith and political ideology to deeply held beliefs or values (such as environmental protection).
- **Places** – These are very common. Home is one of the most widely used places of refuge, to help someone feel "safe." But a Place Stability Zone can also be larger in scale – like a country – or much smaller in scale – like a specific room.
- **Things** – These could be favorite possessions – like a well-loved book or family heirloom – or favorite clothes that make you feel good.
- **Organizations** – A favorite club, professional group, or even your company could be your Stability Zone – any place or group that you identify with and where you feel welcome.

When: When something bothers one really and cannot continue to function effectively. Going into stability zone can be done anytime.

Deep Breathing

Deep breathing is a simple, but very effective, method of relaxation. It is a core component of everything from the "take ten deep breaths" approach to calming someone down, right through to yoga relaxation. It works well in conjunction with other relaxation techniques such as Progressive Muscular Relaxation, relaxation imagery and meditation to reduce stress.

To use the technique, take a number of deep breaths and relax your body further with each breath. That's all there is to it!

When: This can be performed anywhere anytime. It is good to do this every day during lunch break or later to get through the rest of the day.

Progressive Muscular Relaxation

Progressive Muscular Relaxation is useful for relaxing your body when your muscles are tense.

The idea behind PMR is that you tense up a group of muscles so that they are as tightly contracted as possible. Hold them in a state of extreme tension for a few seconds. Then, relax the muscles normally. Then, consciously relax the muscles even further so that you are as relaxed as possible.

By tensing your muscles first, you will find that you are able to relax your muscles more than would be the case if you tried to relax your muscles directly.

Experiment with PMR by forming a fist, and clenching your hand as tight as you can for a few seconds. Relax your hand to its previous tension, and then consciously relax it again so that it is as loose as possible. You should feel deep relaxation in your hand muscles.

When: This can be performed anywhere anytime. It is good to do this every day during lunch break or later to get through the rest of the day.

8.3 Coping Strategies for Long term Stress - For prolonged stress, some life style changes physically and mentally are necessary. Any one or more of the following would be helpful. These are better done when you have enough time and on a daily routine.

Planning: Most of the people are stressed out for a prolonged period because they have more to do in the time they have available. This can be made easy by using our time audit Section 1.6. There is only so much time one has. After completing a TIME AUDIT take only enough work that can be accomplished. Have enough time for personal relaxation. There is absolutely no other magic way around stress created by lack of time.

Yoga: We have done several classes of Yoga. Doing yoga first thing in the morning as a practice would be good. SURYA NAMASKAR helps with physical activity as well as breathing.

Meditation: There are several ways a meditation can be done. Find a method what suits you. This will definitely rejuvenate the mind.

This is something that you can do for yourself by following these steps:

- Sit quietly and comfortably.
- Close your eyes.
- Start by relaxing the muscles of your feet and work up your body relaxing muscles.
- Focus your attention on your breathing.
- Breathe in deeply and then let your breath out. Count your breaths, and say the number of the breath as you let it out (this gives you something to do with your mind, helping you to avoid distraction).

Do this for ten or twenty minutes.

Physical activity – Any type of exercising would help relax the mind and body.

Social circles- Be a part of social circles of your interest. Talking to friends and family is a good thing for the mind.

Hobbies: Any hobby is better than no hobby. For example cooking and feeding your friends can be a great way to relax.

Travel: Travel opens one's mind on different places, cultures, history among other things. Broader the mind is better it behaves in less important scenarios.

Relaxation: All the above said techniques are to bring about relaxation. Listening to music and media is also relaxation. All the relaxation activities should be done to create relaxation of body and mind and should not become a chore by itself. Sometime the best relaxation is to do nothing and watch the stars or listen to the birds.
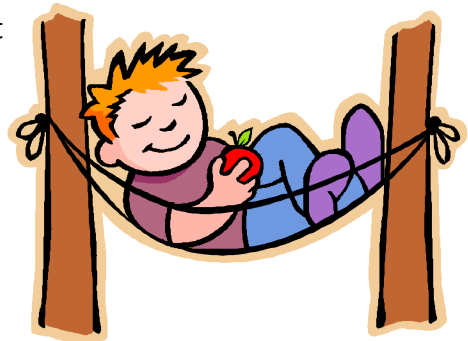
Volunteering: The activity of doing greater good helps the mind relax and understands the bigger picture of life. Seeing unfortunate and under privileged would help the mind take it easy on the smaller things what one thought was the most critical thing.

Stress is a matter of mind. Mind at ease and peace makes one less stressful.

CHAPTER NINE

Social skills

Social skills

All of you are ready to start the first going out of the home environment and into professional environment. First step you will be doing some volunteering and then going to college working and studying and go into the world working every day for the rest of your lives. You will always look back and say, I wish I had known this before. This chapter is an attempt to put together a short and sweet section on professional behavior.

- Dressing – One has to be dressed to occasion. Though one does not have to spend enormous time and money in dressing to be attractive, being dressed to be pleasant and presentable increases the chances of others working with you.
- Shaking hands – Always shake hands firmly with a man, and gently with a woman. Always with a smile and eye contact.
- Introducing yourself – When you say your name say it clearly. Spell it out if you have to. Help them in saying it. Make a joke if you could, about your name. People will always remember you for the strange name of yours. Remember how President Obama introduced himself "A skinny kid with a funny name". Every difficulty is an opportunity. Your difficult name is your best opportunity.
- Distance in standing – When you talk to someone, give a handshaking distance away and talk to them. Lot of people do not like one standing too close.
- Adjust your height – When you are communicating to someone, try to adjust your height by standing or sitting according to their level of height. This helps the other person be comfortable.
- Speak clearly and slowly – DO not be in a hurry and mumble. There is never a prize for finishing your line sooner. Speak slowly. Watch for signs if the person on other side understands what you are communicating. Always feel free to ask if you made sense or show your willingness to repeat.
- Look in the Eye – When you communicate with people the American culture is to look in the eye and speak. Some people get offended if you do not do that.
- Hand Gestures – Use enough hand gestures but not too much. Keep the hands together and let one hand give a gesture at a time. Don't let the hands fly more than a foot. People get distracted. Also too much hand gesture comes out like one is jittery.
- Develop a relationship – Discuss about sports or hobbies of the other person. Taking a few minutes and talking about or listening to their passion goes a long way. People will remember you. Even though you are in a hurry to run, that extra couple of patient minutes will be remembered by others.
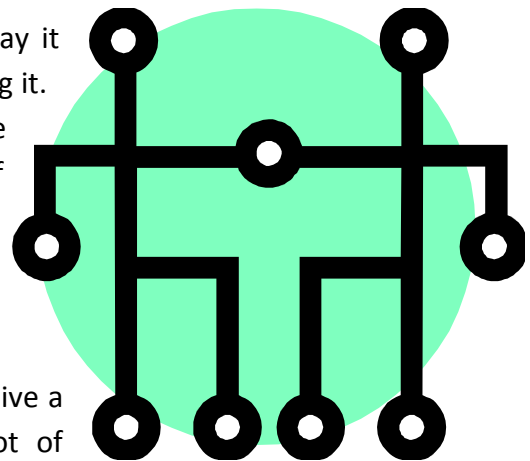
- Use personal Hygiene products – Your school has given enough information on this. To repeat, if you are going to be in close quarters with people or talking a lot use mouthwash before meetings and use antiperspirant products. Smelling good is always an advantage. Your audience will focus on what you have to say.
- Be pleasant – Make it a habit to be smiling and pleasant. It will become a habit and you don't have to work on it.
- Carry a planner – Always carry a planner if your jobs allow you to. When you have a conversation, do take notes and write down the reminders. This professional behavior will be appreciated by your peers and superiors.
- Eating – Do not talk with food in your mouth.
- Eating – Keep the mouth closed while eating. Noisy eating is considered not cultural.
- Fork and knives – In the US it is OK to keep the Fork in the right hand. If you are in Britain or commonwealth country, holding the fork in right hand is considered not cultural. If you are in a new country, it is Ok to ask the host on which silverware goes where. In USA in more exclusive restaurant there are several spoons and forks and each is used for a different purpose. IF you are going to one of those restaurants it is good to take a few minutes to know about these. These are practices. Your idea is not stand out and distract what you are there for. IT is not about right or wrong. It is about showing you are cognizant of these cultural practices.
- Burping – It does happen. Close your mouth and say " Excuse me"
- Eating speed – If you are hosting a dinner, plan to eat at the speed of the guest. You can always take a break if you did eat faster to match the finishing time.
- Eating Pause – Corporate dining is considered the best face time with your customer. Take the time to eat. Pause and put the forks and spoons down and wipe up often. This way you can continue a conversation.
- Ordering food – While eating with a customer order food which is easy to eat. You should not become the side show. Avoid foods like Spaghetti which can send the sauce flying.
- Seating preference – If you are sitting with a customer you go in first and get a seat first where you are in the middle so that you can talk to everyone. Make your important customer sit in a place so that he can only see you. This way you can get the maximum out of the time. As much as possible avoid dining on a bar, this way customer can face you.
- Sneezing – Cover your mouth and nose while sneezing. IF you have excuse yourself to clean up it is acceptable to do so.
- Listen – When someone talks to you listen and maintain full eye contact.
- Do not interrupt – Allow others to finish speaking before you say something.

- Recognize –Do not start the sentence with 'NO' - When someone says something, before you reply pause a few seconds and say "that is a good idea" or " That is interesting" or " Hmm I never thought about that" and then put in your next idea. This way you have given a sincere thought and appreciated the other person's time and opinion. If you really do not agree at least start with "Well, How about this". A few people in meetings would start with No and say their opinion. That is not a pleasant way of putting it.
- Be a good soldier – You have to be a good soldier before you can become a good leader.
- Be a team player – A lot of smart people are not the best team players or perceived to be not the best. When you play a game, it has several aspects to it. Some are defenders and

    some are forwards. Know your role. Play well on that role and the team outcome would be better. Sometimes that is what you want to do. But it is not about you. It is about the team. This important quality is what will help you progress in a team environment. Be ready to put your thoughts away for the team. Play the playbook and not by independent judgment. This is also called BIG PICTURE.

CHAPTER TEN

Personal Improvement

10.1 Being patient

Here's the problem: You're waiting for someone to finish compiling a report that you need for a meeting. Because of an issue that came up, you're already 15 minutes late.

You can feel your body getting tense, and you're getting quite cross. You start sweating, and suddenly you yell at the person for being slow and putting you behind schedule. You can tell she's hurt, but you can't help it. She's making you late!

Does this sound familiar?

Many of us are impatient at times. Losing control of our patience hurts not only us, but those around us. Impatience raises our stress level and can even cause physical harm to our bodies. Being impatient can also damage relationships.

In this article, we'll examine strategies that you can use to be more patient.

Why Practice Patience?

Others often see impatient people as arrogant, insensitive, and impulsive. They can be viewed as poor decision makers, because they make quick judgments or interrupt people. Some people will even avoid impatient people, because of their poor people skills and bad tempers.

People with these personality traits are unlikely to be at the top of the list for promotions to leadership positions. Impatience can even affect relationships at home.

The more patient you are with others, the likelier you are to be viewed positively by your peers and your managers, not to mention your family and friends.

Signs of Impatience

How do you know when you're being impatient? You will probably experience one of more of the following symptoms:

- Shallow breathing (short breaths).
- Muscle tension.
- Hand clenching/tightening.
- Jiggling/restless feet.

- Irritability/anger.
- Anxiety/nervousness.
- Rushing.
- Snap/quick decisions.

Finding Your Causes

If you experience the symptoms of impatience, your next step is to discover the true cause. Many of us have "triggers." These could be people, phrases, or specific situations (like rush-hour traffic) that regularly cause us to enter an impatient frame of mind.

Make a list of things that cause you to become impatient. If you're having trouble identifying your triggers, use these tips:

- Stop and think about the last time you were impatient. What caused it? You can narrow this down to the root cause by using the 5 Whys technique.
- Ask your family, friends, and co-workers about your impatience. Chances are that they know what gets you "wound up".
- Many people become impatient due to physical factors such as hunger, dehydration, or fatigue. Analyze your body the next time you start to feel impatient. A simple remedy might be a snack and a glass of water!
- Keep a journal with you to record when you start to feel impatient. Write down what the situation is, and why you're getting frustrated.

Identifying your triggers helps because it forces you to examine your actions and uncover why you're doing what you're doing. This knowledge also helps you devise strategies to avoid becoming impatient.

Of course, it would be great if you could avoid the triggers that make you impatient. But for most of us, that's just not possible. So you have to learn to manage impatience instead.

When you feel impatient, it's important to get out of this frame of mind as quickly as possible. Try these strategies:

- Take deep, slow breaths, and count to 10. Doing this helps slow your heart rate, relaxes your body, and distances you emotionally from the situation. If you're feeling really impatient, you might need to do a longer count, or do this several times.

- Impatience can cause you to tense your muscles involuntarily. So, consciously focus on relaxing your body. Again, take slow, deep breaths. Relax your muscles, from your toes up to the top of your head.

- Learn to manage your emotions. Remember, you have a choice in how you react in every situation. You can choose to be patient, or choose not to be: it's all up to you.

- Force yourself to slow down. Make yourself speak and move more slowly. It will appear to others as if you're calm – and, by "acting" patient, you can often "feel" more patient.

- Practice active listening and empathic listening. Make sure you give other people your full attention, and patiently plan your response to what they say.

- Remind yourself that your impatience rarely gets others to move faster – in fact, it can interfere with other people's ability to perform complex or highly-skilled work. All you're doing is creating more stress, which is completely unproductive.

- Try to talk yourself out of your impatient frame of mind. Remind yourself how silly it is that you're reacting this way. People often don't mind if a meeting is delayed, just as long as you let them know that you're running late in advance.

- If your impatience causes you to react in anger toward others, use anger management techniques to calm down.

- Some people become impatient because they're perfectionists. However, in addition to causing impatience, perfectionism can actually slow productivity and increase stress. Learn how to stop being a perfectionist.

Remember that, although many people are naturally patient, the rest of us need to practice patience for it to become a habit. Becoming more patient won't happen overnight, but do persist – it's so important!

10.2 Emotional Intelligence

We probably all know people, either at work or in our personal lives, who are really good listeners. No matter what kind of situation we're in, they always seem to know just what to say – and how to say it – so that we're not offended or upset. They're caring

and considerate, and even if we don't find a solution to our problem, we usually leave feeling more hopeful and optimistic.

We probably also know people who are masters at managing their emotions. They don't get angry in stressful situations. Instead, they have the ability to look at a problem and calmly find a solution. They're excellent decision makers, and they know when to trust their intuition. Regardless of their strengths, however, they're usually willing to look at themselves honestly. They take criticism well, and they know when to use it to improve their performance.

People like this have a high degree of emotional intelligence, or EI. They know themselves very well, and they're also able to sense the emotional needs of others.

Would you like to be more like this?

As more and more people accept that emotional intelligence is just as important to professional success as technical ability, organizations are increasingly using EI when they hire and promote.

What is Emotional Intelligence?

We all have different personalities, different wants and needs, and different ways of showing our emotions. Navigating through this all takes tact and cleverness – especially if we hope to succeed in life. This is where emotional intelligence becomes important.

Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize your emotions, understand what they're telling you, and realize how your emotions affect people around you. Emotional intelligence also involves your perception of others: when you understand how they feel, this allows you to manage relationships more effectively.

People with high emotional intelligence are usually successful in most things they do. Why? Because they're the ones that others want on their team. When people with high EI send an email, it gets answered. When they need help, they get it. Because they make others feel good, they go through life much more easily than people who are easily angered or upset.
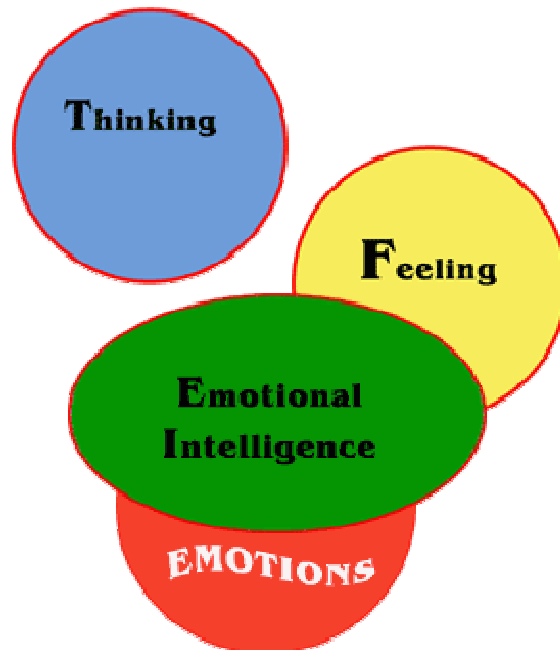
Characteristics of Emotional Intelligence

Daniel Goleman, an American psychologist, developed a framework of five elements that define emotional intelligence:

1. **Self-Awareness** – People with high emotional intelligence are usually very self-aware. They understand their emotions, and because of this, they don't let their feelings rule them. They're confident – because they trust their intuition and don't let their emotions get out of control.
   They're also willing to take an honest look at themselves. They know their strengths and weaknesses, and they work on these areas so they can perform better. Many people believe that this self-awareness is the most important part of emotional intelligence.

2. **Self-Regulation** – This is the ability to control emotions and impulses. People who self-regulate typically don't allow themselves to become too angry or jealous, and they don't make impulsive, careless decisions. They think before they act. Characteristics of self-regulation are thoughtfulness, comfort with change, integrity, and the ability to say no.

3. **Motivation** – People with a high degree of emotional intelligence are usually motivated. They're willing to defer immediate results for long-term success. They're highly productive, love a challenge, and are very effective in whatever they do.

4. **Empathy** – This is perhaps the second-most important element of emotional intelligence. Empathy is the ability to identify with and understand the wants, needs, and viewpoints of those around you. People with empathy are good at recognizing the feelings of others, even when those feelings may not be obvious. As a result, empathetic people are usually excellent at managing relationships, listening, and relating to others. They avoid stereotyping and judging too quickly, and they live their lives in a very open, honest way.

5. **Social Skills** – It's usually easy to talk to and like people with good social skills, another sign of high emotional intelligence. Those with strong social skills are typically team players. Rather than focus on their own success first, they help others develop and shine. They can manage disputes, are excellent communicators, and are masters at building and maintaining relationships.

As you've probably determined, emotional intelligence can be a key to success in your life – especially in your career. The ability to manage people and relationships is very important in all leaders, so developing and using your emotional intelligence can be a good way to show others the leader inside of you.

How to Improve Your Emotional Intelligence

The good news is that emotional intelligence CAN be taught and developed. Many books and tests are available to help you determine your current EI, and identify where you may need to do some work. You can also use these tips:

- Observe how you react to people. Do you rush to judgment before you know all of the facts? Do you stereotype? Look honestly at how you think and interact with other people. Try to put yourself in their place, and be more open and accepting of their perspectives and needs.

- Look at your work environment. Do you seek attention for your accomplishments? Humility can be a wonderful quality, and it doesn't mean that you're shy or lack self-confidence. When you practice humility, you say that you know what you did, and you can be quietly confident about it. Give others a chance to shine – put the focus on them, and don't worry too much about getting praise for yourself.

- Do a self-evaluation. What are your weaknesses? Are you willing to accept that you're not perfect and that you could work on some areas to make yourself a better person? Have the courage to look at yourself honestly – it can change your life.

- Examine how you react to stressful situations. Do you become upset every time there's a delay or something doesn't happen the way you want? Do you blame others or become angry at them, even when it's not their fault? The ability to stay calm and in control in difficult situations is highly valued – in the business world and outside it. Keep your emotions under control when things go wrong.

- Take responsibility for your actions. If you hurt someone's feelings, apologize directly – don't ignore what you did or avoid the person. People are usually more willing to forgive and forget if you make an honest attempt to make things right.

- Examine how your actions will affect others – before you take those actions. If your decision will impact others, put yourself in their place. How will they feel if you do this? Would you want that experience? If you must take the action, how can you help others deal with the effects?

10.3 Building Self-Confidence

So how do you build this sense of balanced self-confidence, founded on a firm appreciation of reality?

The bad news is that there's no quick fix, or 5-minute solution.

The good news is that building self-confidence is readily achievable, just as long as you have the focus and determination to carry things through. And what's even better is that the things you'll do to build self-confidence will also build success – after all, your confidence will come from real, solid achievement. No-one can take this away from you!

So here are our three steps to self-confidence, for which we'll use the metaphor of a journey: preparing for your journey; setting out; and accelerating towards success.

Step 1: Preparing for Your Journey-Five steps

Look at what you've already achieved: Put these into a smartly formatted document, which you can look at often. And then spend a few minutes each week enjoying the success you've already had!

Think about your strengths: Looking at your Achievement Log, and reflecting on your recent life, think about what your friends would consider to be your strengths and weaknesses. From these, think about the opportunities and threats you face. Make sure that you enjoy a few minutes reflecting on your strengths!

Think about what's important to you, and where you want to go: Setting and achieving goals is a key part of this, and real self-confidence comes from this. Goal setting is the process you use to set yourself targets, and measure your successful hitting of those targets.

Start managing your mind: At this stage, you need to start managing your mind. Learn to pick up and defeat the negative self-talks which can destroy your confidence. Create strong mental images of what you'll feel and experience as you achieve your major goals – there's something about doing this that makes even major goals seem achievable!

And then commit yourself to success! The final part of preparing for the journey is to make a clear and unequivocal promise to yourself that you are absolutely committed to your journey, and that you will do all in your power to achieve it. If as you're doing it, you find doubts starting to surface write them down and challenge them calmly and rationally. If they dissolve under scrutiny, that's great. However if they are based on genuine risks, make sure you set additional goals to manage these appropriately.

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"I agree Hepworth you do have drive, ambition and self-confidence, but what we're looking for is ability."

Step 2: Setting Out

This is where you start, ever so slowly, moving towards your goal. By doing the right things, and starting with small, easy wins, you'll put yourself on the path to success – and start building the self-confidence that comes with this.

Build the knowledge you need to succeed: Looking at your goals, identify the skills you'll need to achieve them. And then look at how you can acquire these skills confidently and well. Don't just accept a sketchy, just-good-enough solution – look for a solution, a program or a course that fully equips you to achieve what you want to achieve and, ideally, gives you a certificate or qualification you can be proud of.

Focus on the basics: When you're starting, don't try to do anything clever or elaborate. And don't reach for perfection – just enjoy doing simple things successfully and well.

Set small goals, and achieve them: Starting with the very small goals you identified in step 1, get in the habit of setting them, achieving them, and celebrating that achievement. Don't make goals particularly challenging at this stage, just get into the habit of achieving them and celebrating them. And, little by little, start piling up the successes!

Keep managing your mind: Stay on top of that positive thinking, keep celebrating and enjoying success, and keep those mental images strong. And on the other side, learn to handle failure. Accept that mistakes happen when you're trying something new. In fact, if you get into the habit of treating mistakes as learning experiences, you can (almost) start to see them in a positive light. After all, there's a lot to be said for the saying "if it doesn't kill you, it makes you stronger!"

Step 3: Accelerating Towards Success

By this stage, you'll feel your self-confidence building. You'll have completed some of the courses you started in step 2, and you'll have plenty of success to celebrate!

This is the time to start stretching yourself. Make the goals a bit bigger and the challenges a bit tougher. Increase the size of your commitment. And extend the skills you've proven into new, but closely related arenas.

10.4 Anger Management

Learning to control aggression

Anger can be normal and healthy emotion that helps us instinctively detect and respond to a threatening situation. More than this, when it is properly channeled, it can be a powerful motivating force – we all know how hard we can work to remedy an obvious injustice.

However it can also be an emotion that gets out of control, leading to stress, distress, unhealthiness and unhappiness. Uncontrolled anger can seriously harm your personal and professional life, because it can become incredibly destructive – to yourself and the people around you.

And in a modern workplace that often demands trust and collaboration, it can cause great damage to working relationships.

This article teaches an effective 12-step approach that helps you direct your anger constructively rather than destructively. The 12-step approach is based on the ideas of Duke University's Redford Williams, MD, who with his wife authored the best-selling book Anger Kills. (In this book, Williams discusses 17 steps for controlling anger – these are often abridged to the 12 steps described here.)

Understanding the Theory

Anger is a well-developed coping mechanism that we turn to when our goals are frustrated, or when we feel threat to ourselves or to people, things and ideas we care about. It helps us react quickly and decisively in situations where there is no time for a careful, reasoned analysis of the situation. And it can motivate us to solve problems, achieve our goals, and remove threats.

Acting in anger can serve, therefore, to protect yourself or others. A positive response and constructive outcome can improve your self-esteem and self-confidence.

The Danger of Anger – Foolishness...

On the other hand, a negative response can damage relationships and lead to a loss of respect and self-respect. This is particularly the case when we react instantly and angrily to what we perceive to be a threat, but where that perception is wrong. This can leave us looking very foolish.

So we need to learn to use anger positively, and manage it so that it is constructive and not destructive. Where situations are not immediately life-threatening, we need to calm down and evaluate the accuracy of our perceptions before, if necessary, channeling anger in a powerful but controlled way.

Anger management, then, is the process of learning how to "calm down" and diffuse the negative emotion of anger before it gets to a destructive level.

A Subjective Experience

People experience anger in many different ways and for many different reasons. What makes you angry may only mildly irritate one of your colleagues, and have little to no effect on another. This subjectivity can make anger difficult to understand and deal with; it also highlights that the response is down to you. So anger management focuses on managing your response (rather than specific external factors). By learning to manage your anger, you can develop techniques to deal with and expel the negative response and emotions before it causes you serious stress, anxiety and discomfort.

Despite our differences in the level of anger we feel toward something, there are some universal causes of anger that include:

- Frustration of our goals.
- Hurt.
- Harassment.
- Personal attack (mental or physical) on ourselves.
- Threat to people, things or ideas that we hold dear.

We commonly experience these potential anger triggers in our daily lives. An appropriate level of anger that is expressed correctly helps us take the right action, solve the problem that is presenting itself, or deal with the situation in a positive manner. If we can learn to manage our anger, we will learn to express it appropriately and act constructively.

Using the Tool: Redford Williams' 12 steps to calm down:

Step 1: Maintain a "Hostility Log"
Download our free Hostility Log worksheet and use it to monitor what triggers your anger and the frequency of your anger responses. When you know what makes you angry, you will be in a much better position to develop strategies to contain it or channel it effectively.

Step 2: If you do, acknowledge that you have a problem managing anger
It is an observed truth that you cannot change what you don't acknowledge. So it is important to identify and accept that anger is a roadblock to your success.

Step 3: Use your support network
If anger is a problem, let the important people in your life know about the changes you are trying to make. They can be a source of motivation and their support will help you when you lapse into old behavior patterns.

Step 4: Use Anger Management techniques to interrupt the anger cycle

- Pause.
- Take deep breaths.
- Tell yourself you can handle the situation.
- Stop the negative thoughts.

"Listen to me going on, I meant to ask - How's the anger management classes going?"

Step 5: Use empathy
If another person is the source of your anger, try to see the situation from his or her perspective. Remind yourself to be objective and realize that everyone makes mistakes and it is through mistakes that people learn how to improve.

Step 6: Laugh at yourself
Humor is often the best medicine. Learn to laugh at yourself and not take everything so seriously. The next time you feel tempted to kick the photocopier, think about how silly you would look and see the humor in your inappropriate expressions of anger.

Step 7: Relax

Angry people are often the ones who let the little things bother them. If you learn to calm down you will realize that there is no need to get uptight and you will have fewer angry episodes.

Step 8: Build trust

Angry people can be cynical people. They believe that others are going to do something on purpose to annoy or frustrate them even before it happens. If you can build trust in people you will be less likely to become angry with them when something does go wrong and more likely to attribute the problem to something other than a malicious intent.

Step 9: Listen

Miscommunication contributes to frustrating and mistrusting situations. The better you listen to what a person is saying, the better able you will be to find a resolution that does not involve an anger response.

Step 10: Be assertive

Remember, the word is assertive NOT aggressive. When you are angry it is often difficult to express yourself properly. You are too caught up in the negative emotion and your physiological symptoms (beating heart, red face) to put together solid arguments or appropriate responses. If you learn to assert yourself and let other people know your expectations, boundaries, issues, and so on, you will have much more interpersonal success.

Step 11: Live each day as if it is your last

This saying may be overused, but it holds a fundamental truth. Life is short and it is much better spent positively than negatively. Realize that if you spend all your time getting angry, you will miss out on the many joys and surprises that life has to offer.

Resource sheet 1
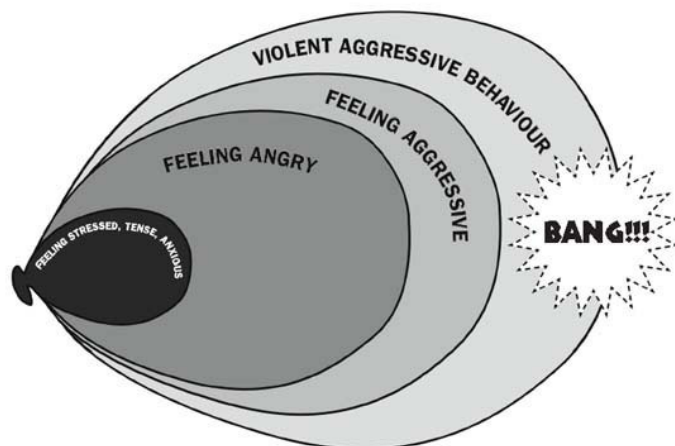
Step 12: Forgive

To ensure that the changes you are making go much deeper than the surface, you need to forgive the people in your life that have angered you. It is not easy letting go of past hurts and resentments but the only way to move past your anger is to let go of these feelings and start fresh. (Depending on what, or who, is at the root of your anger, you may have to solicit the help of a professional to achieve this fully.)

These 12 steps form a comprehensive plan to get control of inappropriate and unproductive anger. And the quicker you begin the better. Anger and stress are highly correlated and the effects of stress on the body are well documented. Even if you are not at the point where you feel your anger is a problem, it is a wise idea to familiarize yourself with the processes listed. If you do not have the tools to deal with anger correctly, it has a way of building-up over time. Before you know it, you can be in a position where anger is controlling you and becoming a negative influence in your life. Being proactive with anger management will help to ensure it remains a healthy emotion that protects you from unnecessary hurt or threat.

Resources

a) Academic Skills Center, Dartmouth College 2001

b) http://www.timephysics.com/

c) http://www.forbes.com/2008/02/28/what-is-time-oped-time08-cx_ee_0229thought.html

d) Read more: http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/topics/topic_time3.html#ixzz1L0mPcPXE

e) http://www.diegm.uniud.it/create/Handbook/techniques/List/ProvAndMov.php

f) http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newCT_00.htm