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How is your time management?

Fewer topics are as complicated to deal with as this one. The reason for that is the way you manage time. Time management results from a mixture of personal habits, cultural traits of your environment, circumstantial pressure and satisfying personal and third party expectations.

There is a good chance we'd win if we were willing to bet you're not satisfied with how you've been managing your time. If we're wrong . . . congratulations! You are one of the few. For the rest of us, we suffer the nagging sensation we owe something, that there isn't enough time to conduct an activity the way we wanted to, or simply complain about the lack of time in a typical day.

As mentioned in the beginning, our personal habits are a strong component in the way we manage and interact with time: Postponing until the last minute, searching for a nonrealistic level of excellence due to the established deadline, or allowing that our agenda be destroyed by someone else's priority. On top of that, we should add other people's habits, which work as real time wasters: meetings which never start at the scheduled time (and of course, never finish on time), the belief that a 15 minute delay is not really a delay but a reasonable tolerance time, agreements that are not honored and so on.

What can we do to take advantage of the only resource which is non renewable, inelastic, we cannot store, and to make it worse, is in a stage of permanent countdown?

1) Remember that although time is a limited resource, you are not

According to Stephen Covey, a renowned time management author, "every breakthrough is a break-with, a letting to. As we work to put first things first in our lives, it may be time for us to let go of things that are holding us back, keeping us from making the contribution we could make."

2) Don't be afraid to say no

To say no means to focus on what is important. When we want to reconcile other people's priorities to our agenda, most probably, the result will be frustration. Negotiate, make an agreement, but do not lose sight of your own priorities.

3) Identify your time wasters

Many things can be preventing you from optimizing your time management, such as too many meetings, unproductive meetings, abandoning a job before its conclusion and the dependence on third parties to carry out your own work. Identify your main time wasters and look for alternatives to eliminate them, or at least, minimize their impact.

4) Develop your sense of urgency

Sense of urgency is not stress. Sense of urgency is focus on what is critically important and on initiatives that make the difference, which are translated into observable daily progress.

5) Value and practice punctuality

In the same way you are bothered with other people's tardiness,



concentrate on valuing and respecting time - yours and theirs. As King Louis XVIII said: "Punctuality is the Courtesy of Kings." We would add: and mandatory for everybody else.

See you next time. We welcome your feedback.

To know more of our training programs, please send us an e-mail to:

sergio.pereira@mapa-way.com or

sonia.dondice@mapa-way.com

Visit our website:

www.mapa-way.com