



I USED TO HAVE A HANDLE ON LIFE, BUT IT BROKE!

Strategies for Saving Time, Reducing Stress, Boosting
Efficacy and Enjoying your Job More!

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IUP Center for Teaching Excellence

Strategies we will explore today!

1. Identifying Your Time Stealers and Stress Producers
2. Setting and Prioritizing Personal Goals
3. Managing Your Time Effectively
4. Organizing and Enhancing Your Work Spaces
5. Communicating Clearly to Save Time and Reduce Stress
6. Dealing with Difficult People
7. Strategies for Actively Managing Stress
8. Developing a Personal Action Plan



S. Robertson,
October, 2012

PRELIMINARY SELF-CHECK

While you are waiting for the workshop to begin, complete the following checklist. Your answers will remain confidential, so be as honest as possible.

- | | YES | NO |
|--|-------|-------|
| 1. I am aware of all of the things that cause stress in my own life. | _____ | _____ |
| 2. For the most part, my work space is organized so that I am able to work efficiently and quickly find whatever I am looking for. | _____ | _____ |
| 3. I understand how to manage goals sensibly in order to prevent unhealthy stress. | _____ | _____ |
| 4. I have enough personal time. | _____ | _____ |
| 5. I communicate in ways that are both efficient and effective. | _____ | _____ |
| 6. I know how to detect the signs of stress in myself and others. | _____ | _____ |
| 7. I know how to calm myself when I am feeling extremely stressed. | _____ | _____ |
| 8. I rarely procrastinate on a project or task. | _____ | _____ |
| 9. I make a concentrated effort to promote a relaxing and fun workplace for myself and my colleagues. | _____ | _____ |
| 10. I can honestly say that most of the time I enjoy life, both at work and at home. | _____ | _____ |

How Does Stress Impact You?



How do you know when you are stressed?

What do you do about that?

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

One of the problems facing all of us is that we are juggling too many roles and too many tasks. Different people want different things from us and each feel their demands are important. To clarify the demands on your time complete the statements below.

- Administrator/Employer expects me to:
- Students want me to.....
- Colleagues expect me to...
- My family needs me to.....
- My professional community wants me to.....
- My local community expects me to.....

GOALS WORKSHEET

Work-Related Goals	Priority	Personal Goals	Priority

Regularly check back with this list. Are your actions consistent with the priority ratings you have given your goals? If not, you need to re-think your action plan. If these are your true priorities, then postponing or overlooking them - no matter what the excuse - will eventually translate into frustration at work and elsewhere.

DEVELOPING YOUR GOALS

Once you have identified and prioritized your goals, you need to develop a plan to accomplish them.

Pick one goal from your highest priority list and break it into smaller tasks and assign a timeline for accomplishing the task.


Transfer the tasks to your calendar and Master List.

To accomplish your goals - develop a plan and **WORK THE PLAN!**

GOAL _____

Task		Timeline

MY GOALS

A large, empty rectangular box with a thick black border and rounded corners, intended for writing a goal.A large, empty rectangular box with a thick black border and rounded corners, intended for writing a goal.A large, empty rectangular box with a thick black border and rounded corners, intended for writing a goal.

Date Created _____




MASTER LIST

Task	Priority	Complete By

10 Commandments of Clutter



1. Stop procrastinating
 2. Quit making excuses
 3. Use it or lose it
 4. Learn to let go
 5. Be a giver
 6. Set limits
 7. Use the in-and-out inventory rule
 8. Less is more
 9. Keep everything in its place
 10. Compromise
- 

Organize your Work Spaces

The Top of Your Desk

- ◇ Schedule an appointment with yourself. (2 hours)
- ◇ Start with what you can see (the top of your desk)
- ◇ Go through EVERY piece of paper in every pile, nook and cranny.
- ◇ Ask yourself why you are keeping each one.
- ◇ Make a conscience decision to keep or toss (toss a LOT!)
- ◇ Resist the urge to reminisce.
- ◇ Each paper you keep needs to be filed where you can find it efficiently.
- ◇ Make a list of any work you need to do related to various items. (Put in a file marked "TO DO")
- ◇ Start a reading file.
- ◇ Cut out articles you want to read rather than keeping the entire document.
- ◇ Throw out everything you don't absolutely need to keep (bring extra garbage bags)

Now, do the same with your...

- ◇ File Drawers
- ◇ Book Cases
- ◇ Desk Drawers
- ◇ Floor
- ◇ Briefcase
- ◇ Car
- ◇ Computer

Work at STAYING Organized

- ◇ You've done the hardest part already!
 - ◇ Stay organized by making decisions about new pieces of information as they arrive.
 - ◇ File what you need, toss what you don't, add new work related to the information on your master list.
 - ◇ Work on your system diligently.
- P.S. Piles are okay if you keep them under control!



Communication Styles

Each time we interact with someone else, we have a choice in terms of how we choose to communicate. Three of them are poor choices, the other is outstanding....

Assertive Communication (the outstanding one)

- "Saying what you mean and meaning what you say"
- Relies on honesty, openness, and a sense of responsibility for a positive outcome,
- Builds mutual trust between the people involved.
- Uses an "I" message to take responsibility for issues (e.g., "This is how I feel...")
- States opinions respectfully, acknowledging that the other person may see the situation differently.
- Listens attentively, uses good eye contact, and positive body language.
- Does not allow others to take advantage.
- Is often difficult to employ because we are not conditioned to use this style of communication during childhood years (and beyond)

Aggressive Communication

- Uses hurt and anger to manipulate others.
- Discounts or disregards feelings of others
- Will say or do anything to get their own way.
- Hurt/Guilt
 - Whining and Complaining without initiating or accepting solutions
 - Dwells on the past
 - Blames others for mistakes
 - Gets feelings hurt easily
 - Has numerous physical ailments
 - Requires/demands constant attention
- Anger/Fear
 - Likes to argue - must always be right
 - Is rude, abrasive, or sarcastic
 - Often is rude, obnoxious, domineering, and loud
 - Tries to intimidate rather than build mutual respect
 - Is frequently out of control in tone and action
 - Creates tension, mistrust, and resistant

Passive Communication

- Avoids confrontation at all costs.
- Put personal needs and concerns last; feels guilty about getting own needs met.
- Strong desire to be liked.
- Agrees to all requests and demands, even unreasonable ones, rather than saying "no."
- May produce poor results (paperwork, therapy outcomes) because of over commitment.
- May become overwhelmed and tired; eventually cannot fulfill even basic commitments.
- May ultimately "blow up" or "burn out" after a period of time.

Passive-Aggressive Communicaiton

- Combination of the desire to avoid direct confrontation (passive) and the desire to "win" - get one's own way (aggressive) at all costs.
- Is exceedingly deceitful and dishonest
- Is done with the intent to manipulate people or "teach them a lesson."
- Is damaging and dangerous to building trust and mutual respect.
- Demonstrated in behaviors such as:
 - Using the "silent treatment"
 - Often spends time gossiping/tattling on others
 - May seem supportive on the surface but actually criticizing people behind their backs.
 - Enjoys seeing others people fail
 - Likes to get people to take sides against another person, policy, or idea
 - Is the exact opposite of open, honest, assertive communication that promotes positive interactions and reduces stress

Dealing with Difficult People

Difficult People:

- have a *choice* of how they behave and treat others.
- *do not* become difficult overnight.
- are *reinforced* for being difficult.

Your most powerful tool is understanding that their goal is to manipulate you into doing what they want! (Don't let them!)

REMEMBER: You cannot control the behaviors of others – you can only control your OWN behavior in response to them.

“Fix it for me” People (whiners/complainers)

- Often just provide a litany of woes, problems, and complaints and then wait for you to provide the answer.
- Keep in mind that if you fix their problems for them – they will definitely be back soon!
- Most effective way to break this cycle is to ask questions such as:
 - What exactly is it you would like me to do for you?
- This forces them to think about a solution rather than waiting for YOU to do it!

Angry People

Don't be Intimidated

- Listen without interrupting (try to look pleasant!)
- Maintain appropriate volume level, eye contact, and facial expression
- Use volume to regulate the tone of the conversation
- Resist the urge to escalate the conversation into a shouting match.

Clarify Problem/Solution

- Ask individual to provide an idea for a solution to the problem.
- If appropriate, ask for a specific task they need you to do to help change the situation
- Don't take responsibility for something that is not your fault!

Remember!

- Don't allow yourself (or others) to make excuses for the person who is being difficult.
- Don't take their behavior personally – they most likely treat everyone badly.
- Don't reward difficult people for their negative behavior.

Proactively Manage Stress

- ❖ Don't take responsibility for things that are not under your control
- ❖ Focus your efforts on what works
- ❖ Don't waste time on Needless Opposition (Pick your Battles)
- ❖ Don't live in an imagined future (the "if only" trap)
- ❖ Learn to say "no" with a smile
- ❖ Support one Another
"I hear you are doing great things!"
- ❖ Tune into your responses to stress
- ❖ Remove Yourself from Stressful Situation
- ❖ Vent your feelings
- ❖ Counteract Stressful Thoughts with Positive Ones
- ❖ Spend More Time with Significant Others
- ❖ Count Your Blessings
- ❖ Take Time To Do Things you Enjoy
- ❖ Regularly Engage in Physical Activity
- ❖ Associate with other positive people
- ❖ Laugh!

Creating Change to Meet Personal and Professional Goals

What Do I Want to Change? (Be Specific)	Potential positive Impact of this change on my personal or professional life (1-10)	Amount of effort I am willing to put forth to create this change (1-10)	Amount of influence I have in creating this change (1-10)	Potential negative risk if I delay making this change for 6 mos. (1-10)	TOTAL

ACTION PLAN

From the strategies we explored today, choose 2 or 3 to work on in the immediate future. Then, list the steps you will take to make this happen.

STRATEGY _____

Steps _____

STRATEGY _____

Steps _____

STRATEGY _____

Steps _____

Take the Stress Quiz

How Stressed Are You?

Rate yourself as to how you typically react in each of the situations listed below.

4 = Always

3 = Frequently

2 Sometimes

1 Never

- ___ 1. Do you try to do as much as possible in the least amount of time?
- ___ 2. Do you become impatient with delays or interruptions?
- ___ 3. Do you always have to win at games to enjoy yourself?
- ___ 4. Do you find yourself speeding up the car to beat the red light?
- ___ 5. Are you unlikely to ask for or indicate you need help with a problem?

- ___ 6. Do you constantly seek the respect and admiration of others?
- ___ 7. Are you overly critical of the way others do their work?
- ___ 8. Do you have the habit of looking at your watch or clock often?
- ___ 9. Do you constantly strive to better your position and achievements?
- ___ 10. Do you spread yourself "too thin" in terms of time?

- ___ 11. Do you have the habit of doing more than one thing at a time?
- ___ 12. Do you frequently get angry or irritable?
- ___ 13. Do you have little time for hobbies or time by yourself?
- ___ 14. Do you have a tendency to talk quickly or hasten conversations?
- ___ 15. Do you consider yourself hard-driving?

- ___ 16. Do your friends or relatives consider you hard-driving?
- ___ 17. Do you have a tendency to get involved in multiple projects?
- ___ 18. Do you have a lot of deadlines in your work?
- ___ 19. Do you feel vaguely guilty if you relax and do nothing during leisure?
- ___ 20. Do you take on too many responsibilities?

___ TOTAL SCORE

Time Management and Organization

A= Usually B=Sometime C=Never

- ___ Do you set your own deadlines if others do not set them for you?
- ___ Once you have established your own deadlines, do you stick to them?
- ___ Are your deadlines clearly visible on your calendar and/or in your planner?
- ___ Are you realistic in establishing a beginning date that will allow you to finish as expected?
- ___ Do you actually start on time?
- ___ Do you create a step-by-step plan of action to reach your deadline?
- ___ Are you realistic in predicting how much you can accomplish at each level of your plan?
- ___ Do you establish checkpoints in your projected plan to monitor your progress?
- ___ Do you identify existing obstacles that may deter you from reaching your deadline?
- ___ Do you actually start on time?
- ___ Do you create a step-by-step plan of action to reach your deadline?
- ___ Are you realistic in predicting how much you can accomplish at each level of your plan?
- ___ Do you establish checkpoints in your projected plan to monitor your progress?
- ___ Do you identify existing obstacles that may deter you from reaching your deadline?
- ___ Do you clarify expectations of those who assign your deadlines to avoid future confusion?
- ___ If you are uncomfortable with the time allotted for the task, do you request more time?
- ___ When given a deadline, do you break it into goals with objectives and time lines for each?
- ___ If, at some point, you realize that you simply won't reach your deadline, do you request an extension or continue on in frustration as you attempt the impossible?
- ___ Do you ask the person giving you a deadline to check in with you regularly?

ANSWER KEYS

Quiz A: Stress Quiz

Score 20 to 30 = life lacks stimulation.

Score 31 to 50 = good balance in ability to control stress.

Score 51 to 60 = stress level bordering excessively tense.

Score 61+ = tend to be highly stressed.

Reference for Online Stress Quiz:
<http://www.arc.sbc.edu/stressquiz.html>

Quiz B: Time Management and Organization Quiz

- Mostly "A" Answers: You are better than most people in meeting deadlines effectively and most likely enjoying a high percentage of success.
- Mostly "B" Answers: In attempting to meet deadlines, you are probably easily sidetracked. On the positive side, there is a great deal of room for improvement.
- Mostly "C" Answers: It is clearly time to re-evaluate your current procedure for reaching deadlines before you suffer negative consequences.

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