

## Time Flies; Be its Pilot ...V Pradeep Kumar

This academic year has been variously challenged due to the pandemic; reduced offline classes, introduction of online classes, curtailed syllabus and continued anxiety and uncertainties. Although the classes have just begun for the year, in just a few months students will face examinations. Time management has never been as crucial as it's in this academic year.

Time management is analyzing the utility of current activities and finding a way to do the desired activities in lesser time. The process eliminates unwanted activities and provides more time, for important activities, while assisting the smooth progress in academic pursuits.

### How to manage time efficiently?

1. List all activities including the routine such as attending classes, studying, homework, sports and recreation, commuting, household chores, family time etc.
2. List all activities that you're not able to pursue due to paucity of time such as a new hobby or sport, an additional course etc.
3. Classify all your activities/tasks into four quadrants on paper or your computer, as described below:
  - a. **Quadrant 1: Important and Urgent:** This will include all activities which are important and can't be postponed. Examples include attending classes, tuitions, homework, etc.  
In this quadrant, the need is to be more efficient at carrying out the activities. Hence, do focus on improving listening skills, attention and speed.
  - b. **Quadrant 2: Important and not urgent:** In this quadrant classify activities such as plans for examinations, career planning, preparing for competitive exams, sports etc. This is the most important quadrant and activities listed here are crucial for your academic and professional success. Activities such as career planning are not something you do everyday but they need a lot of thinking, creativity and time, whenever you work on these activities. Obviously, such activities also demand a relaxed mind and maximum time must be spent on activities in this quadrant.
  - c. **Quadrant 3: Urgent and not important:** During a given day, there's lot of routine activities you may be doing which can't be postponed to another day. Examples include sharing household chores, commuting, helping parents, personal time etc. Whether we like it or not, we end up spending a good amount of time in this quadrant and they simply can't be postponed to another day. Hence, doing the activities faster and efficiently should be your focus.
  - d. **Quadrant 4: Neither urgent nor important:** There's maximum scope of time management in this quarter, which you will realize the moment you start identifying and classifying activities which are neither urgent nor important. But these activities do take away a substantial amount of time. Examples include, unusually long study breaks, TV time, Social media, long phone calls, internet browsing, shopping sites, etc. These activities while needed in limited measure, end up being time wasters. Therefore, critically evaluate and you will be pleasantly surprised to see the amount of time that can be saved by limiting these activities. The time saved can now be utilized for those pursuits for which you didn't have the time earlier and for increasing the time for the most important Quadrant 2.

### Time Management Tips

1. Set attainable goals related to your career and courses.
2. Classify all activities needed to pursue those goals and classify them into quadrants.

3. Be an active listener in classes and tuitions.
4. Pursue effective studying techniques like SQ3R which enhances learning and increases memory.
5. Focus on difficult subjects, when you are at your best.
6. Take effective, short breaks periodically.

Michael Altshuler, the well-known motivational speaker expressed essence of time management beautifully, by saying "The bad news is time flies. The good news is you're the pilot". Every one of us is blessed with the same amount of time every day. By understanding and implementing the concept of time management, you will find adequate time for studying, planning and implementing your career plans and for sports and recreation, giving you a balance of academic and personal life, which is so essential for your well-being.

*(The author is a management and career consultant based in Bengaluru)*

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#### TIME MANAGEMNT QUADRANTS

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	<p><b>Quadrant 1 Get Efficient</b></p> <p>[Focus, listening skills, attention, speed]</p> <p>Attending classes and tuitions, studying, home assignments etc</p>	<p><b>Quadrant 2 Act Creatively</b></p> <p>[Thinking, creativity, planning]</p> <p>Planning career, preparing for competitive exams, sports, hobbies, health etc</p>
NOT IMPORTANT	<p><b>Quadrant 3 Routine</b></p> <p>(Try doing things fast and save time)</p> <p>Helping parents, sharing household chores, personal time, commuting etc</p>	<p><b>Quadrant 4 Miscellaneous</b></p> <p>(Time wasters - maximum scope for saving time)</p> <p>Study breaks, social networking, emails, mobile, internet, TV etc</p>