**Time Management**

**Student’s Name:**

**Institution:**

**What are your top five picks and why? How do they apply to your life today? In the future?**

Professor Randy Pausch found himself at an odd time to talk about time management at a time when he was battling pancreatic cancer. After watching his lecture, I learnt that the five most important elements for time management include goals, priorities, planning, treating time as a commodity and how to deal with interruptions. Every time I go to school, I did not consider time management as being important. In fact, the goal for my day at work is to accomplish most or all the tasks assigned. Sometimes I am lucky to accomplish my tasks but sometimes I fall short. Professor Pausch insists on having a goal with time which helps to plan the “todo list” to be completed for the day. With the right goals in mind, it is possible to outline the reasons for doing something and to concentrate on the most important things first.

Planning according to Professor Pausch is a very important time management aspect. He insists that “failing to plan is planing to fail”. Most of the time, I like getting started with something without planning ahead of time. My excuse is that I don’t have time to plan for things or won’t follow the plan anyway. Without a proper planning, it is difficult to prioritize the important tasks. According to Professor Pausch, undertaking many things (100 things to do in life) does not mean you achieve something. Instead, Professor Pausch recommends giving time to the most important and urgent tasks first and attending to the not-urgent and not-important tasks last. Personally, planning and prioritizing has always being problem in the attempts I have made in managing my time.

The most interesting part of Professor Pausch speech is when he said time should be treated as a commodity. This is the first time I have a heard such an idea. I always thought that time helps us accomplish other things but I have never thought of it as a commodity. In his explanation, he refers time as being valuable. His whole idea of time management is to help people learn how to manage the valuable commodity (time) and eliminate wastage. His reasoning is especially clear on how interruptions affects what we accomplish each day. According to him, a small interruption may take a few minutes but the recovery from such an interruption can take hours. I think interruptions are the reasons I don’t accomplish much but I still did not understand his idea of avoiding interruptions.

**What time management skills have you implemented since you have enrolled in college?  Have you been successful?**

One of the skills I have implemented unsuccessfully is planning. Whenever I planned for a schedule to guide me through the day, I found out that I either didn’t accomplish things according to the plan or I didn’t have time to plan at all. Life has taught me a lesson that I am not always motivated. There are times when I feel motivated and times when I don’t feel like doing anything no matter how I try. Professor Pausch touched on this issue too. According to Professor Pausch, the best way to manage time is to spend productive time in the most creative way and alone. He also recommends to spend the “dead time” to plan, schedule meetings, exercise and making phone calls. This was valuable advise for me because I have struggled with this problem for a long time.

I agree with professor Pausch that filing systems are good because I have tried them and they save me a lot of time. My colleagues at school who have ignored this time management skill and they spend hours looking for documents. Procrastination is a big problem for me especially because I like overloading myself with many tasks in the course of the day. I have never used the covey’s four quadrant model to plan my day. My way of planning tasks dwells on picking the easiest tasks first and ending with the most difficult. This model leads to lateness in some tasks and stress is usually the end result when things are messed up.

**What time management skills do you think are most critical to you as a manager?**

Professor Pausch opens his lecture with a very powerful statement that “being successful doesn’t make you manage time well but managing time well makes you successful”. The most important time management skill I learnt from his lecture is “learning to say NO”. I have a habit of handling too many tasks because I can’t say no. Another skill I found critical is flexible planning. Managing my plans flexibly means they guide me to handle my tasks successfully but also flexible enough to adapt to changes that I may not have anticipated. Doing my tasks early to avoid the last minute rush is a critical skill. Procrastination is stressful especially when the stakes are too high. Other skills include appreciating other people and avoiding too many calls. I hope to take these skills to a test to evaluate how I can do better in time management.

References

Pausch R., (November 2007). “Time Management" by , Retrieved from

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=blaK_tB_KQA>