SDV 100-083A: Week 2 – Assignment:Time & Stress Management

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Personal Time Assessment: 28

Based on the assessment on page 82 I am doing a reasonably well managing my time but I certainly could do better. Based on my previous experience time management is a skill that is easily learned but hard to master. To inch up from good to better is much harder than to go from mediocre to good.

The book speaks very generally and tries to cover all bases. I have tried to imagine the way other professionals deal with this and narrow it down to people that can serve as a role model for me. I have chosen the journalism professionals as a potential role model. Unlike doctors and firefighters my time management criteria does not carry the added stress of a life or death situation. Also unlike crafts people and technicians I do not have to factor in physical labor. But like journalist (both for work and for school) I have to read and understand ideas and concepts and deliver my understanding in the form of papers (for school) or scripts (for work).

Following the previous thought and recognizing that procrastination and distractions are probably my most important foes I plan to improve this skill by:

1. Creating a more organized atmosphere:

I am rather organized at work but my desk at home is the catch all place for all of my projects, hobbies, bills and my school work. I aim to make my study environment at home more organized and put away my other projects and hobbies when I am not working on them. This should help me from getting distracted.

1. Do task as quickly as possible so there is time to refine it latter:

I can’t help the fact that I am my worst critic. The more I work on a project, a paper, or a script of code the more I learn about other improvements that can be added. So that I can use this as an asset I am to get all of my school assignments started as soon as possible. Do the best I can at first try and improve on it as soon as I get a chance.

1. Set a handful of short-term goals and work toward them:

In the past I have tried to make detail lists and allocate set amount of time to tasks but I was unsuccessful. This time I will limit myself to a general and very high level agenda (in google calendar) which would contain fluid and flexible short term goals. A sample task may be: do one hour of khanacadamy.org; affording me the flexibility to do this task as soon as possible in the day.

Stress Management

Like time management this is an area that I have some practical experience in, though there is always room for improvement. Reading the book did not present magical new solutions but it reaffirmed and reiterated what I knew:

1. Continue to improve my relationship with people that can help limit my stress:

There are very few people such as my wife that truly know my goals and understand me. Their thoughts and actions are always in my benefit and are free to me. As my academic life becomes more complex and demanding my dependency will increase. I aim to appreciate these relationships at home, solidify them at work and cultivate new ones in school among faculty and students.

1. Limit my involvement at work with people that ask for help:

The personality assessment confirmed that I have a tendency to do a given task personally as way of guarantying that it gets done properly. I should work harder to communicate a solution to people that come to me for help rather than doing it for them.

1. Eat and sleep properly:

The temptation to stay up at the end of the day is great. Mindlessly watching TV may even look relaxing but it is not a substitute for a proper sleep pattern. It also opens the door to late night snaking which in turn causes additional sleep issues. Compensations like coffee leave much to be desired especially when it comes to mental alertness.

1. Do the simple things first, remove clutter:

Clutter in my study area at home can be as distracting as emails at work. It took me a long time to automatically sort most of my emails in folders so that I don’t have to be constantly distracted by them. I should implement a similar solution at home.

1. Allow a physical output for emotional stress:

I can’t help but to be upset or annoyed sometimes. The source of annoyance can be other people or even I. Not everyone is obliged to do things the way that makes sense to me. To change my focus from the person or the situation that is causing the anodynes a physical activity almost always works. An activity like climbing the stairs or going around the building does provide an actual stress release but even more importantly it physical –all be it temporarily- detaches me from the annoying situation or person. I have been successful with this technique except for when I am the source of my annoyance. I need to remember that though I can’t walk away from myself I can walk away from the bad code I have written or a lousy job I have done; returning to it at a later time with a clear head and a better idea.