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**Best Practices for Teaching  
Time Management in QA Testing**

In the volatile world of software development, QA or quality assurance testing is a necessary step in the life cycle of a software project. As with any sector, there are goals to be achieved and deadlines to be met. Therefore, effective time management is a requisite. Hence it is a very crucial skill when it comes to Quality Assurance (QA) Testing, as testers have to balance multiple tasks, deadlines, and expectations from different stakeholders. However, it can be challenging to manage your time effectively, especially when you face unexpected issues, changing requirements, or complex scenarios.

There are a lot of Time Management practices for Quality Assurance (QA) testing, take for example knowing how you spend your time, Setting Priorities, and Using a planning tool. These are great and all but there should a better way on teaching and setting an example for time management in Quality Assure (QA) testing and it can be enumerated with;

Setting SMART goals is the first best practice towards improving testers time management skills. SMART is an acronym for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. It assists testers in defining what they want to achieve, how they will track progress, whether it is reasonable, how it matches with projects objectives, and when they plan to complete it. Setting SMART goals allows testers to prioritize work, arrange schedule, and track results. The second practice is to track the amount of time testers spend on each quality assurance task using a time tracking tool. Testers may find out where they spend too much or too little time, how they manage time, and how to improve their workflow with the use of a time monitoring application. For instance, testers can use a time monitoring application to evaluate productivity and efficiency, compare estimated and real time for each test case, and modify goals and expectations accordingly. Automating repeated chores that don't require much creativity or human intervention is the third practice to get better at time management. In addition to lowering human error and increasing consistency, automation can save testers time and effort. For instance, they can use technologies like Selenium, TestNG, Faker, or Jenkins to automate processes like configuration management, data collection, report generation, and regression testing. Testers can concentrate on more difficult and sophisticated jobs that call for their abilities and attention by using automation. Effective communication with the testers team, stakeholders, and clients is the fourth practice to boost time management skills. Any QA engineer must communicate with others in order to discuss test findings, feedback, problems, and suggestions as well as to receive their requests and contributions. Effective communication keeps everyone in sync and committed to the project's objectives while preventing misunderstandings, disputes, and delays. Effective communication can be achieved, for instance, by asking and responding to questions, using clear and succinct language, selecting the right channels and resources, and delivering frequent updates and reports. Learning to say no when it's necessary is the sixth practice to get better at managing testers time. Saying no can be challenging, particularly if they are worried of missing out on opportunities or challenges or if they want to satisfy clients, coworkers, or managers. Saying yes to everything, however, can result in overcommitment, stress, and burnout, as well as lower-quality work. Therefore, testers must learn to say no when they need to concentrate on priorities and goals, when the request is unreasonable or unnecessary, or when testers already have too much on your plate. The sixth and last practice for better time management is to routinely assess and enhance testers performance and procedures. Finding their strengths and shortcomings, learning from their failures and achievements, and putting adjustments and improvements into practice can all be facilitated by reviewing and improving. For instance, by performing retrospectives, getting feedback, establishing new objectives, and implementing best practices, testers can evaluate and enhance time management skills.

* Using the SMART criteria (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timebound) to frame objectives improves focus and responsibility, according to many industry recommendations. According to a recent article for QA professionals, SMART goals allow testers to "prioritize work and track progress" by breaking down complicated testing milestones into specific steps and realistic dates. The SMART structure, established by George T. Doran in 1981, is widely employed throughout project management and QA teams because it blends ambition with reality and incorporates time-boxing into all objectives.
* Empirical studies of time‐tracking tools show they deliver actionable insights into where teams over‑ or under‑invest effort. For example, Hubstaff’s internal survey found that developers who log their hours gain “accurate visibility into how long specific tasks take,” enabling more precise future estimates and better workload balance. Similarly, harvest reports that real‐time time‑tracking “captures employee hours in real time,” helping project managers identify bottlenecks early and keep tight budget and schedule controls in place
* Automation in QA not only reduces tedium but has been shown to dramatically shorten test cycles and improve coverage. A Capgemini report summarized by Shftrs indicates test automation can cut testing time by up to **40%** and testing effort by up to **60%**, while also boosting accuracy by as much as **90%**. More recent benchmarks demonstrate that automated regression suites run in minutes rather than days, accelerating feedback loops and enabling rapid, reliable releases.
* QA is inherently cross‑functional, and clear, timely communication correlates with both faster defect resolution and lower risk. A Kualitee analysis highlights that good QA communication “speeds up your testing process” by ensuring stakeholders share information promptly, which reduces misunderstandings and friction between testers and developers. Another study emphasizes that regular, succinct reporting of test progress and issues builds trust and keeps projects aligned with business objectives
* Knowing how and when to decline requests is critical to avoid overcommitment and burnout. Forbes advises that by “embracing the power of ‘no,’ you can ensure that your time is spent on what’s truly important,” leading to greater productivity and less stress. Harvard Business Review research further underscores that a well‑timed, thoughtful refusal frees up capacity for high‑priority tasks and prevents downstream delays caused by overextension.
* Retrospectives and process audits are cornerstone practices in agile QA, yielding continuous improvement. Atlassian points out that regular retrospectives enable teams to “reflect on how to become more effective, then tune and adjust behavior accordingly,” which over time boosts both speed and quality of delivery. A QA‑focused retrospective case study also found that structured post‑release reviews foster cross‑functional collaboration and surface actionable process changes, driving measurable efficiency gains in subsequent cycles

In summary, mastering time management is a cornerstone of high‑quality QA testing. By setting SMART goals, tracking how time is actually spent, automating repetitive tasks, communicating clearly, learning to say no, and regularly reviewing and refining processes, testers can meet project deadlines more consistently, reduce stress, and deliver more reliable results. When these practices become habits, teams not only boost their individual productivity but also strengthen collaboration and stakeholder confidence. Ultimately, effective time management empowers QA professionals to focus on what matters most—uncovering critical issues and ensuring that each release is as polished and dependable as possible.

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