Unit 219-Managing Yourself

Information Pack

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this unit is for you to develop an understanding of best ways to manage yourself as a practising or potential team or cell leader.

Time management is important for busy companies so they can prioritize all their work tasks and achieve their goals faster. When you better manage your time, you will be able to take on new opportunities and grow your business in a sustainable manner.

This unit will require you to produce a questionnaire to ask colleagues and team members as to the importance of time management and its relationship to causes and symptoms of stress. From this survey, using both time and stress management techniques, you should determine those activities that create most stress and how they affect the team's production / productivity objectives and working relationships. In conclusion your report will show in an action plan how to obtain support for helping to minimise your own stress through improvements in time management or through other appropriate actions.

GUIDANCE

This document is prepared to break the unit material down into bite size chunks. You will see the learning outcomes above treated in their own sections. Therein you will encounter the following structures;

Purpose	Explains *why* you need to study the current section of material. Quite often learners are put off by material which does not initially seem to be relevant to a topic or profession. Once you understand the importance of new learning or theory you will embrace the concepts more readily.
Theory	Conveys new material to you in a straightforward fashion. To support the treatments in this section you are strongly advised to follow the given hyperlinks, which may be useful documents or applications on the web.
Example	The examples/worked examples are presented in a knowledge-building order. Make sure you follow them all through. If you are feeling confident then you might like to treat an example as a question, in which case cover it up and have a go yourself. Many of the examples given resemble assignment questions which will come your way, so follow them through diligently.
Question	Questions should not be avoided if you are determined to learn. Please do take the time to tackle each of the given questions, in the order in which they are presented. The order is important, as further knowledge and confidence is built upon previous knowledge and confidence. As an Online Learner it is important that the answers to questions are immediately available to you. Contact your Unit Tutor if you need help.
Challenge	You can really cement your new knowledge by undertaking the challenges. A challenge could be to download software and perform an exercise. An alternative challenge might involve a practical activity or other form of research.
Video	Videos on the web can be very useful supplements to your distance learning efforts. Wherever an online video(s) will help you then it will be hyperlinked at the appropriate point.

Contents

Organisations

An organisation can be defined as:

'A social unit of people, systematically structured and managed to meet a need or to pursue collective goals on a continuing basis. 'Business Dictionary'

Shake up your meeting's

Love them or loathe them, meetings take up an enormous amount of time (and money) for organisations. According to Jeff Haden, contributing editor at Inc, "Whoever invented the one hour default in calendar software wasted millions of people hours." So make your default 30 minutes (or less) or think of more creative ways to reduce the number of meetings you have. For example, why not try 'No Meeting Wednesdays' (exactly what it says on the tin)? And always avoid attending meetings where you are not really required - you can always get a briefing from another attendee if necessary.

Use the blocking technique...... to schedule meetings, appointments, phone calls and other communications back-to-back. This way, you can free up your time to create set periods of uninterrupted work, without disrupting your flow.

Disconnect

Take a tip from Bryan Guido Hassin, CEO of Smart Office Energy Solutions, and use the concept of 'airplane days'. Hassin noticed that he could get a lot done during long intercontinental flights, where he couldn't be reached by anyone. So, back on the ground, he started scheduling what he called 'airplane days' - days where he turned off his phone, social media and network connections in order to capture that productivity at work. If you would like to follow his lead and go offline, there are a few things you will need to do in order to prepare, including deciding how long you'll be offline for, what you can realistically achieve during this time, and what information (e.g. hard copies of documents and reports) you'll need.

Embrace agile or iterative working

A widely used technique in software and product development, the concept is now making its way into the mainstream. An agile approach involves working incrementally in 'sprints' of around one week or so. This helps break large tasks into smaller, more manageable ones that are completed within these 'sprints'. This can also help you recognise that you don't have to be a perfectionist from the off - good enough is fine; polishing to perfection can come later.

Say no (nicely)

It's good to help others but you don't always have to do everything people ask of you, particularly when it can cause you to lose focus on your own tasks. Be assertive and try not to take on additional work if you can help it. It can sometimes be hard to say an outright 'no' though, so if you have trouble with this, try

saying 'not just now' instead, and offer an alternative time when you will be available to take on these tasks.

Delegate better

As a counter to the above tip, do not be scared of handing over work to others. As the saying goes, you should only do what only you can do. When you are feeling overwhelmed, clarify your priorities and work out what you can realistically consign to others - without passing the buck, of course!

Make use of technology!

There's a whole raft of productivity tools and apps at your fingertips; for example, Evernote is good for taking notes in meetings, and you can also attach relevant documents or other files, keeping everything consolidated in one place. Use Trello for efficient project management, while Toodledo is a useful online to-do list. Inc. contributor and creator of the 'Four Hour Work Week' Tim Ferriss has produced a handy list of the best productivity tools and apps for 2016 at: http://www.inc.com/tim-ferriss/the-best-tools-and-apps-to-boost-your-productivity-in-2016.html.

Find it difficult to organise and manage your workload? The ABC Method is a quick and simple technique that separates out tasks and prioritises them in order of necessity. So, you can tackle the most important jobs first and use your time more productively.

Challenge

Complete the template below to categorise your tasks or create a to-do list of all the tasks and activities you need to complete. The list does not need to be in any particular order.

Label each task on your list with an A, B or C depending on its importance.
A tasks are the most important. They must be done straight away. An example of an A task could be writing a presentation for a meeting happening later today. These tasks are your most urgent, and you don't have the option of putting them to one side.
B tasks need to be completed soon, but are not as urgent as the A tasks. An example of a B task could be making weekly travel arrangements or completing a budget report for the month. Most B tasks have deadlines, so be careful that you don't neglect them for so long that they suddenly get upgraded to the A list.