

Alicia Sample
Time Management Effectiveness
self feedback report

Monday, January 20, 2003

Introduction

The following information is provided to help you to navigate the extensive information that is included in this Time Management Effectiveness output report.

1. Overall summary chart

The summary results chart provides a quick visual representation of your scores in seven categories that make up the Time Management Effectiveness profile. Scores upon which to most concentrate are above 3.5, which are considered to be strong and scores below 2.75, which may be in need of further development. Please note that these category scores are averages. Individual question scores can be viewed by clicking on the category label hyperlink.

2. Category description pages

This report contains three output pages for each of the seven categories. The first of these three pages explains the category, list average scores and then provides high and low score interpretation notes. The second page provides a graphical representation of individual question scores. The third page in the set provides broadly based improvement actions for those individuals wanting to develop their competencies in the overall category.

3. 10/10 Report

The 10/10 Report page provides the raw scores for the top 10 highest scoring questions and the bottom 10 lowest scoring questions out of the 84. It also identifies the categories to which these questions belong.

4. Course and Reading suggestions

This output report includes development suggestions for the two lowest scoring categories out of the seven. These suggestions include training courses that may prove helpful, as well as specific books that may provide some useful additional information.

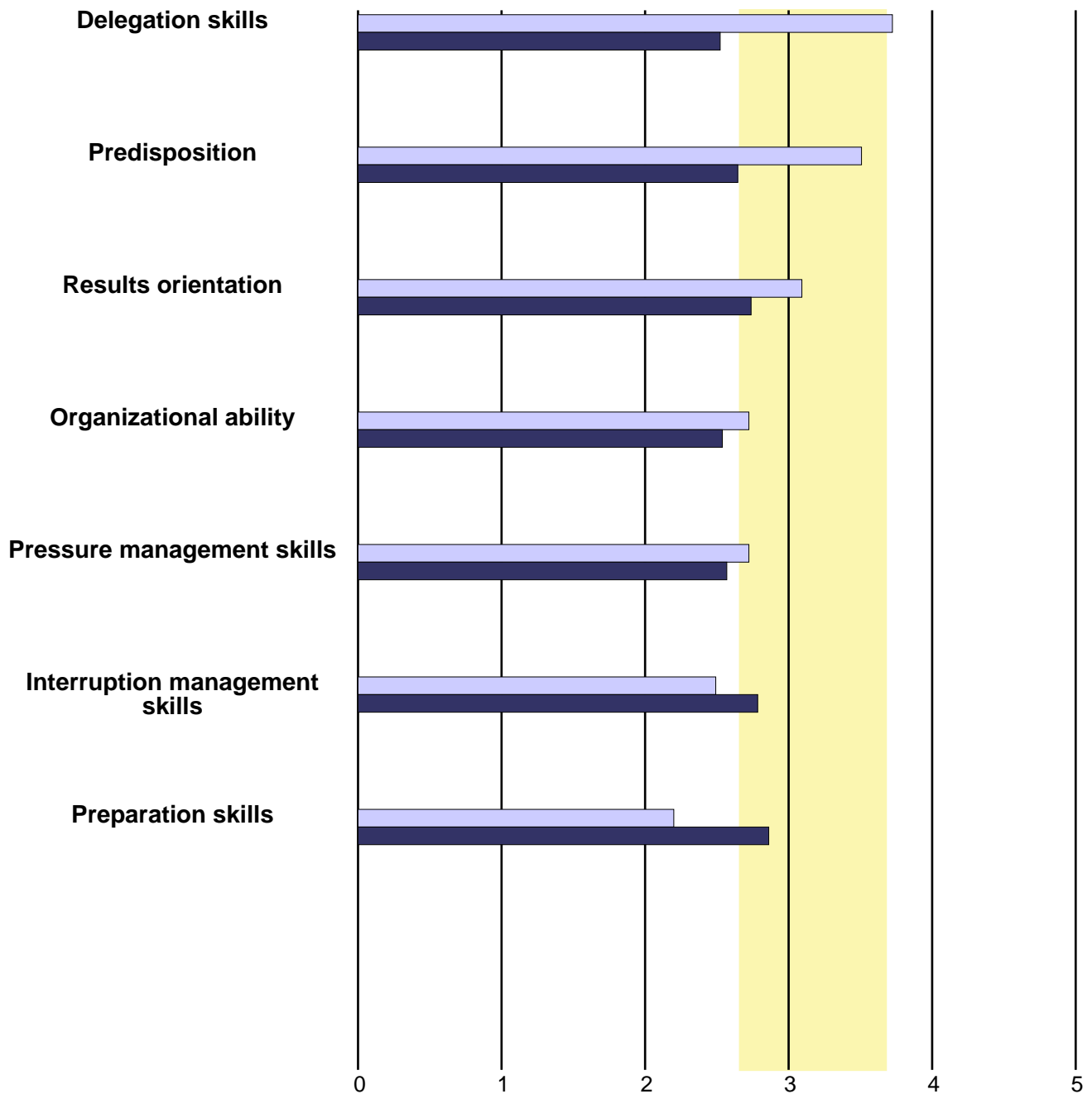
5. Development Plan

The development plan takes the five lowest scoring questions on aggregate and puts them into a single page template for individuals to record the specific actions that they plan to take as a result of their feedback during the forthcoming twelve month period. Individuals may draw upon any of the general guidance offered in their feedback report, or perhaps more usefully, draw upon the coaching tips ideas that are also included (see next section)

6. Coaching tips

The overall output report includes detailed coaching tips for the five lowest scoring questions on aggregate (consistent with the one page development plan). These coaching tips provide not only elaborative information about the particular questions but provide some specific advice on what individuals might do to improve their skills or learn new behaviors in the future.

OVERALL SUMMARY



Self
 Norm

The above chart is sorted in descending order of summary scores.

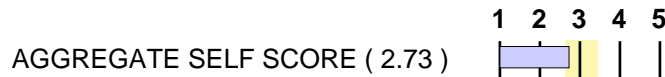
Norm bars shown on this chart are the progressive average aggregate scores of all individuals rating themselves on this questionnaire.

Time Management Profile

PRESSURE MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Pressure management skills looks at your ability to keep calm and stay focussed when the pressure is on or a crisis occurs. This category asks the question "When all around you are losing their heads, can you keep yours?"

1 = almost never, 5 = almost always.



Interpretation

LOW (less than 2.75)

"Scales predominantly in the ones and twos ('occasionally' and 'almost never') are likely to mean that you see pressure as something that can be at the very least distracting and at most able to take you entirely off-course, causing potential strain and worry.

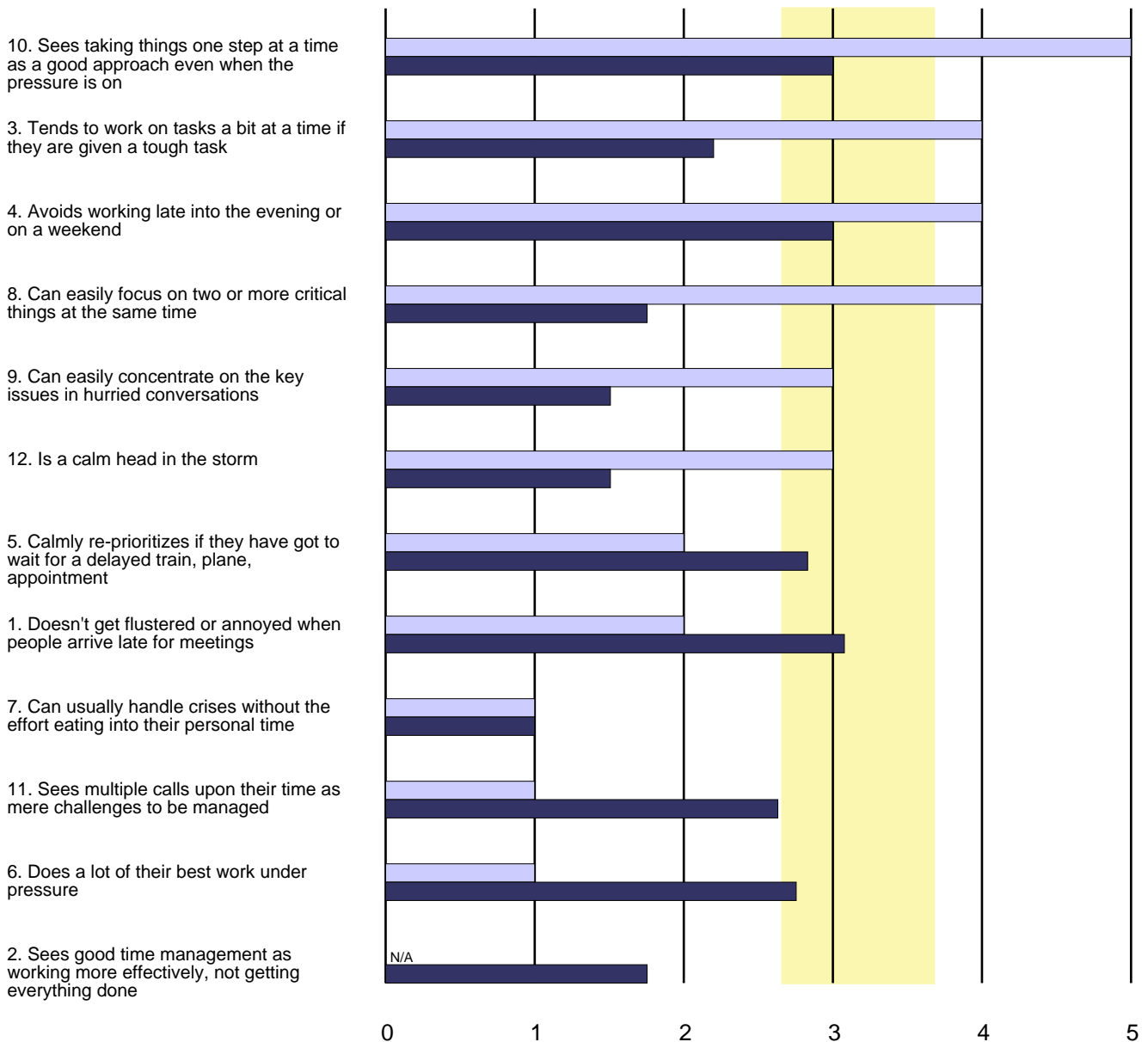
A low score person is likely to become more flustered or disorganized or destabilized by high levels of pressure by 'so-called' workload crises. This can lead to cutting corners, dropping priority tasks, working at home or late at night or even pressurizing others (in some cases unnecessary)."

HIGH (greater than 3.5)

"Scales predominantly in the fours and fives ('almost always' and 'very frequently') are likely to mean that you manage pressure of all sorts in a relatively relaxed and flexible way and not necessarily see it as a threat to your key priorities.

A high score person will be likely to see pressure as an inevitable part of day to day life (when it occurs) and therefore, look to accommodate it in the best way that they can. However, they are also likely to find creative ways to make extra time available and carefully avoid letting the pressure prevail or to start encroaching on personal or reflective time."

Time Management Profile PRESSURE MANAGEMENT SKILLS



Self
 Norm

The above chart is sorted in descending order of summary scores.

Norm bars shown on this chart are the progressive average aggregate scores of all individuals rating themselves on this questionnaire.

Time Management Profile

PRESSURE MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Pressure management skills looks at your ability to keep calm and stay focussed when the pressure is on or a crisis occurs. This category asks the question "When all around you are losing their heads, can you keep yours?"

Improvement actions

Low scorers need to become more accepting of pressure as something to be managed as flexibly as possible. Strong efforts need to be made to 'ring-fence' planning time, thinking time, break time and relaxation time when pressure is at its greatest. Ultimately, pressure should be viewed as something to be creatively managed to be reduced and not endured as a long-term 'norm'.

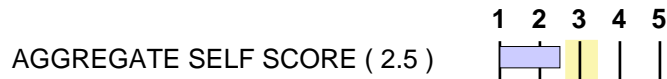
Pressure management skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Do some quiet reflective thinking or contemplation on the sort of pressure or crises that arise on a regular basis (or which is of a similar type when it occurs).-Develop a range of flexible coping strategies that can be deployed when this occurs.-Include more planning, stronger prioritization, delegation, more short breaks or a number of other coping tactics into your schedule.-Take your time and calmly re-think your most important priorities when the pressure is on or crises occur.
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Time Management Profile

INTERRUPTION MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Interruption management skills looks at how well you stay on track when unexpected events or people interfere with your plans. This category asks the question "How flexible are you or your plans to the occurrence of unexpected events or interruptions?"

1 = almost never, 5 = almost always.



Interpretation

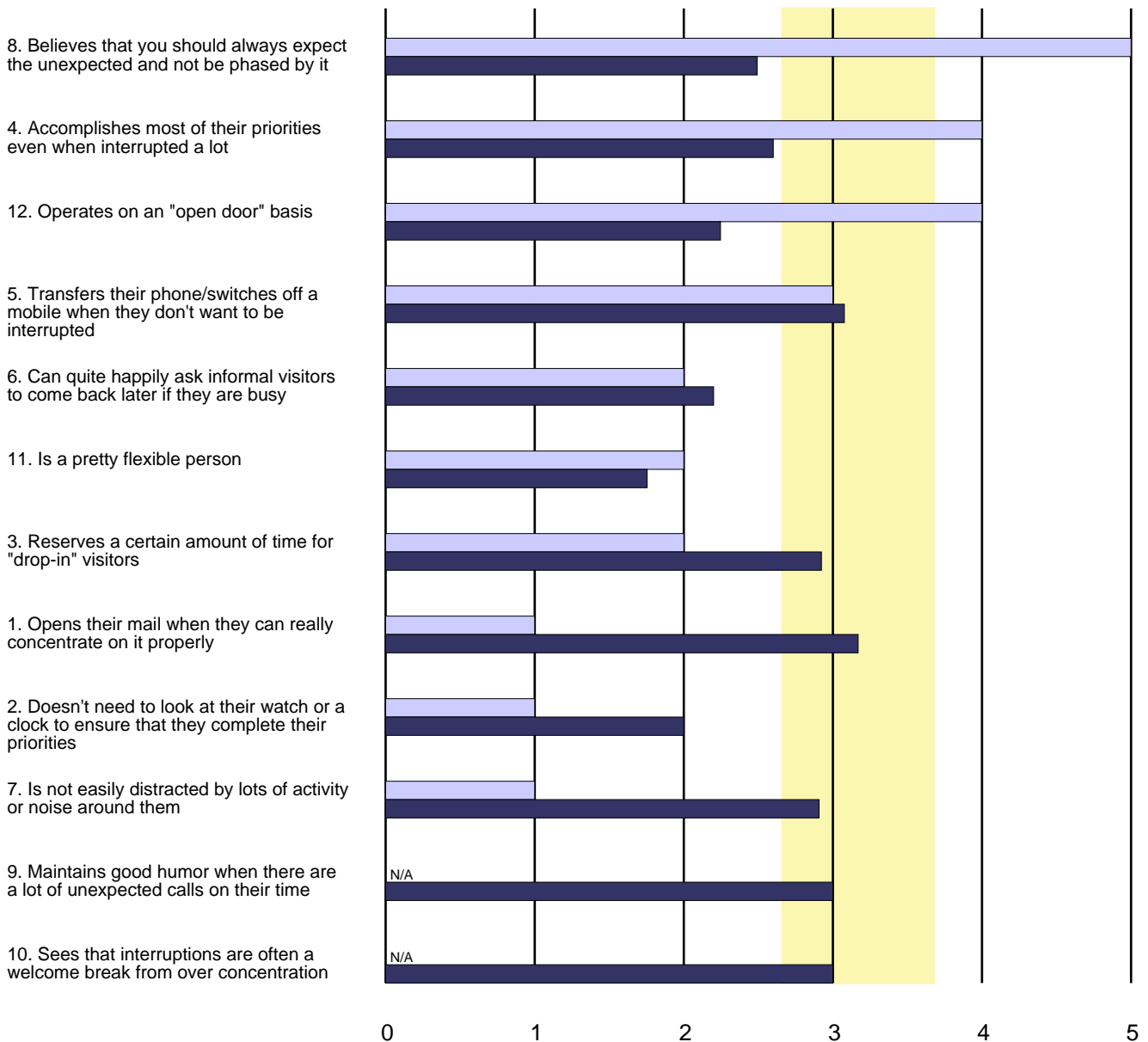
LOW (less than 2.75)

"Scales predominantly in the ones and twos ('occasionally' and 'almost never') are likely to mean that this individual may let any interruptions steer them off-course, when they occur and get in the way of greater priorities. In addition, low scorers can unwittingly give indications that it is O.K for others to interrupt them when they like. A low score person will be likely to both dislike interruptions and worry about when they might arise (yet again!) as well as invite them in the future by allowing current interruptions to take control. This usually leads to other work (and some of it much more important) being pushed back or being dropped altogether. "

HIGH (greater than 3.5)

"Scales predominantly in the fours and fives ('almost always' and 'very frequently') are likely to mean that this individual takes interruptions in their stride when they occur, but also plans their day to accept a certain amount of unexpected variation. A high score person will be likely to not only signal that interruptions should be saved (as much as possible) for the more important matters, but also ensure that they only command enough time to be quickly evaluated for their importance in the wider workload picture."

Time Management Profile INTERRUPTION MANAGEMENT SKILLS



Self
 Norm

The above chart is sorted in descending order of summary scores.

Norm bars shown on this chart are the progressive average aggregate scores of all individuals rating themselves on this questionnaire.

Time Management Profile

INTERRUPTION MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Interruption management skills looks at how well you stay on track when unexpected events or people interfere with your plans. This category asks the question "How flexible are you or your plans to the occurrence of unexpected events or interruptions?"

Improvement actions

Low scorers need to design in at least some time when interruptions are generally not acceptable (closing the door of a room, switching off or transferring a phone or holding mail for example). In addition, low scorers need to recognize that not every interruption requires their full attention and immediate action. Instead such interruptions should be speedily assessed and allocated appropriate time on the prioritized 'to-do' list.

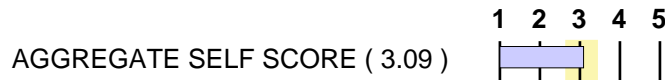
Interruption management skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-List the main interruptions that you are likely to encounter (like phone calls, mail, drop-in visitors etc).-Design 'spare' time into your day or your week to allow for some interruptions (but be clear about how you will manage them when they occur).-Assess how much time you will allow before you need to prioritize your workload and get back on track, when interruptions occur.-Be firm in managing casual interruptions from people by clearly telling them that your have important priorities that you must do first.
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Time Management Profile

RESULTS ORIENTATION

Results orientation looks at how well you maintain focus on the results or goals that matter or are important. This category asks the question "How well do you distinguish between what is important from what is merely urgent"

1 = almost never, 5 = almost always.



Interpretation

LOW (less than 2.75)

"Scales predominantly in the ones and twos ('occasionally' and 'almost never') are likely to mean that this individual may spend insufficient time in thinking about which tasks or activities can move them closer to their goals. Low results orientation can also mean incorrectly seeing all activity as being synonymous with productive work or output.

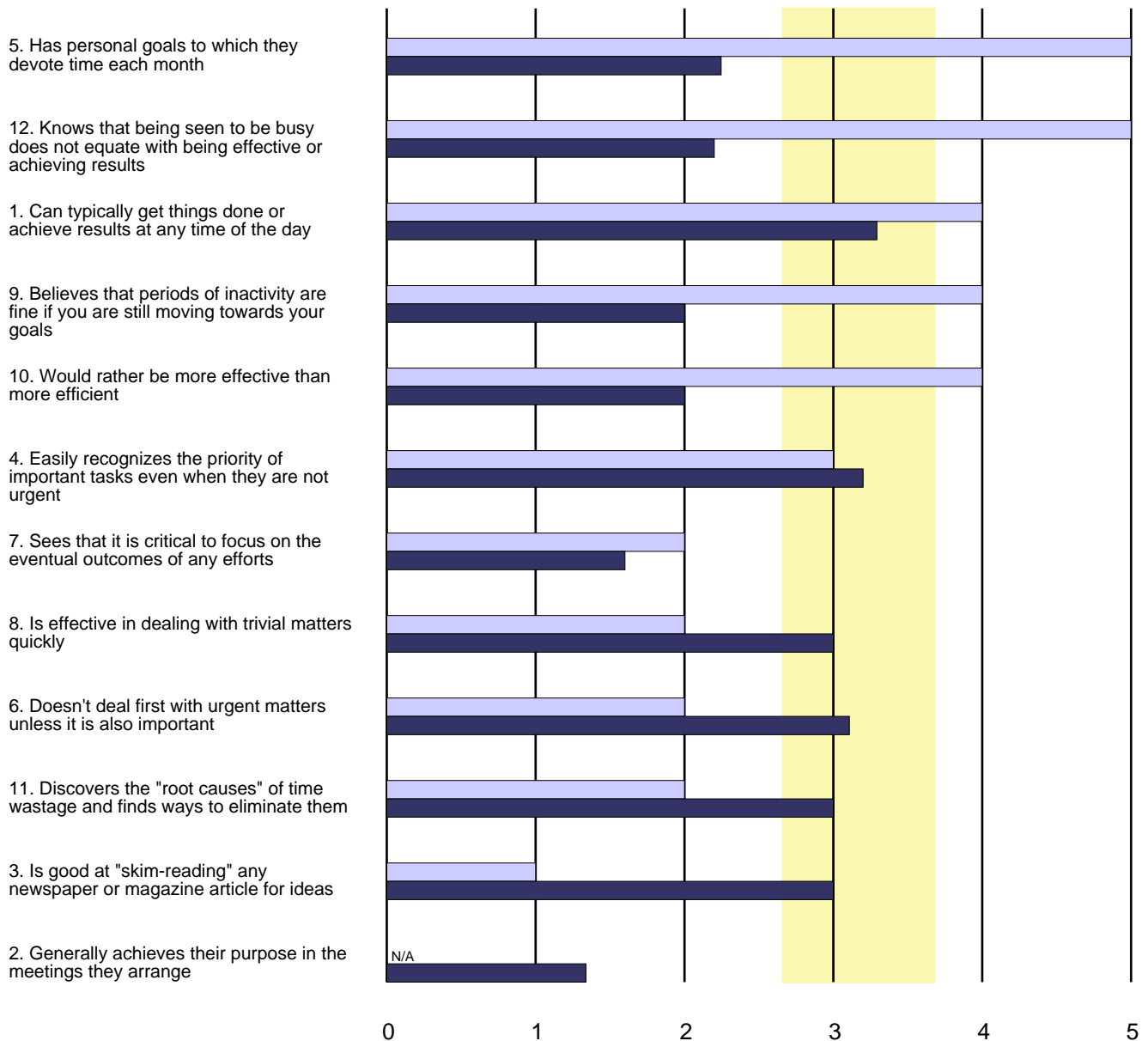
A low score person will often think they are "juggling with a lot of balls in the air" but in reality may be "running to stand still". Completing tasks or expending effort without direction ultimately means that important work or personal goals do not get done quickly enough."

HIGH (greater than 3.5)

"Scales predominantly in the fours and fives ('almost always' and 'very frequently') are likely to mean that this individual retains a strong awareness of what is both important and of a high priority most of the time. This will often mean asking others to be very clear about what they want to achieve and value most and does this have precedence over their own goals.

A high score person will usually understand that the tasks or projects that they spend the majority of their time in doing should achieve results that are important to themselves personally or their organization."

Time Management Profile RESULTS ORIENTATION



Self
 Norm

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Time Management Profile

RESULTS ORIENTATION

Results orientation looks at how well you maintain focus on the results or goals that matter or are important. This category asks the question "How well do you distinguish between what is important from what is merely urgent"

Improvement actions

"Low scorers need to keep an up to date list of what is important or what results they would like to achieve and by when. Having done this, they should plan their work and organize their time to ensure that anything that is trivial or of low value is minimal in their day, or that a major part of the day is given over to moving closer to their goals."

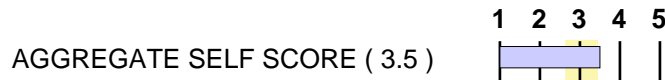
Results orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Write down your major work related goals and your personal goals for the week or month ahead and how much time appears to be needed to work on each.-Write down the steps and tasks that will help you to move towards these goals or targets-Make sure that your expected results are built into your planning, scheduling and organizational process.-Seek out all the regular wasted time and effort in your weekly schedule and develop a comprehensive plan to eliminate it.
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Time Management Profile

PREDISPOSITION

Predisposition looks at your base character predisposition, temperament or your internal drive levels. This category asks the question "how much do you feel the pressure of time or how hard do you drive yourself?"

1 = almost never, 5 = almost always.



Interpretation

LOW (less than 2.75)

"Scales predominantly in the ones and twos ('occasionally' and 'almost never') are likely to indicate the so-called "Type A" behavior. This means that this individual is likely to be under constant pressure of time, see life in general as competitive and are hard driving (on themselves and others).

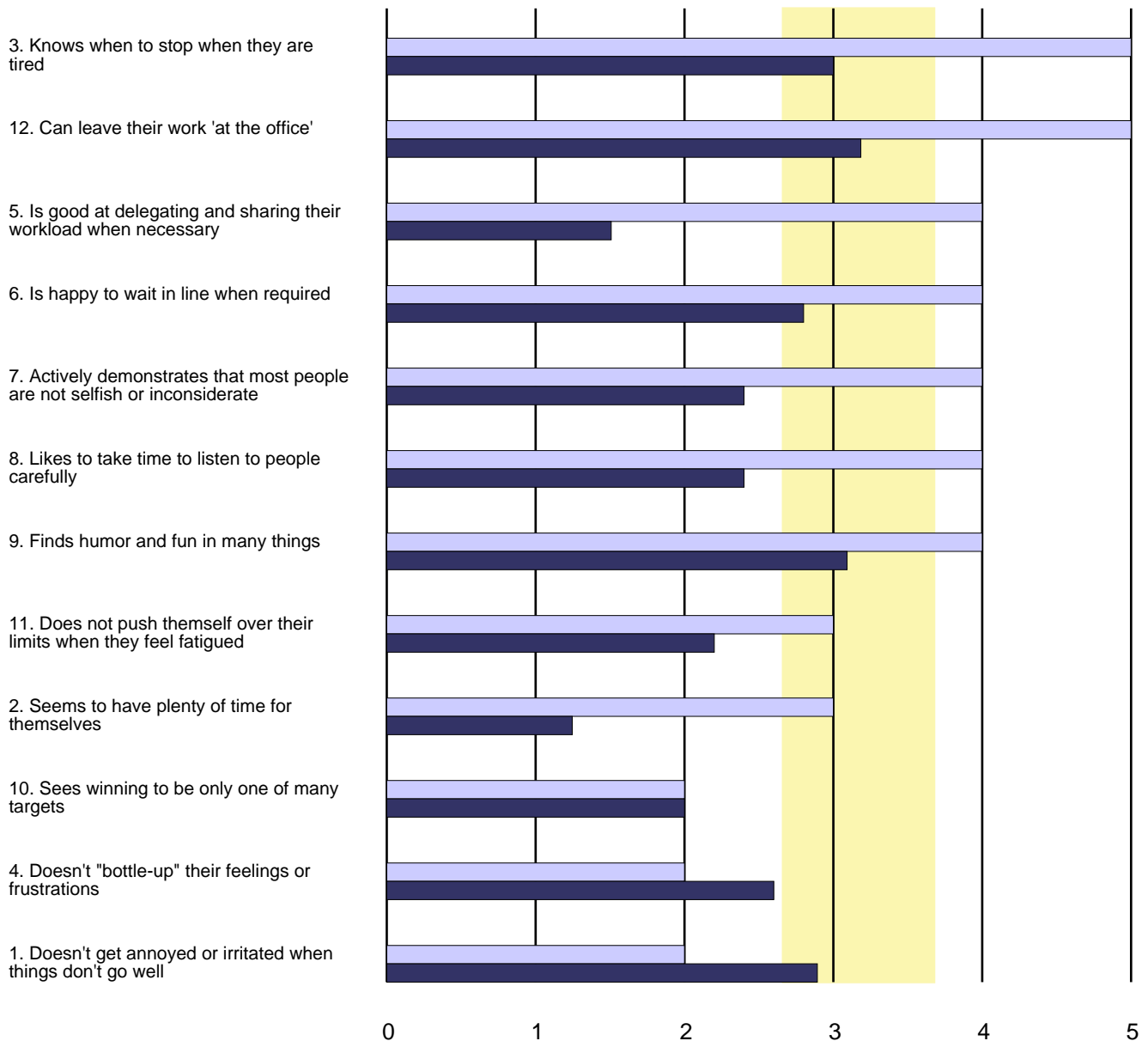
The Type "A" gets things done and can be fast and action orientated. However, this behavior type is more naturally disposed to "bite off a lot to chew" (pushing themselves and others hard). Some type 'A's will cram a lot into their day and can therefore impress those around them with their capacity to manage time with great pace and energy. However, the type 'A' may become overly obsessive about cramming in as much as possible and sometimes fail to design in enough contemplative time, or even time for themselves to relax or quietly reflect on where they might be going."

HIGH (greater than 3.5)

"Scales predominantly in the fours and fives ('almost always' and 'very frequently') are likely to indicate the so-called "Type B" behavior. This means that this individual is likely to be calm, relatively "laid-back", able to relax and wind-down, and able to easily avoid competitive pressures and unnecessary deadlines.

The Type "B" will probably do things at a steadier pace with perhaps fewer "balls in the air" at once. This type is an excellent controller of their pace and energy. As such, they are likely to be better able to avoid becoming a "slave to the clock". However, the type 'B' may choose to deliberately miss some deadlines and instead seek what they see to be a healthy personal balance of overall workload (even if it means being seen as slower than some others). "

Time Management Profile PREDISPOSITION



Self
 Norm

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Norm bars shown on this chart are the progressive average aggregate scores of all individuals rating themselves on this questionnaire.

Time Management Profile PREDISPOSITION

Predisposition looks at your base character predisposition, temperament or your internal drive levels. This category asks the question "how much do you feel the pressure of time or how hard do you drive yourself?"

Improvement actions

The Type "A" can engage themselves generally in designing more personal time into their life, their relationships and their enjoyment. They can also try to avoid setting themselves deadlines and targets quite so often. The Type "A" should work on their '1' scores first, then the '2' scores and so on. This approach of concentrating on low scores first, should be used in every category.

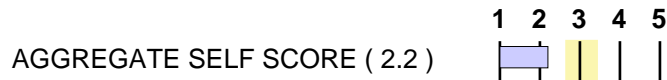
<p>Predisposition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Design in much more personal time to relax, reflect, think, and pursue gentle recreation, as often as you can -Stop working when you know that you are tired and clearly achieving less than your best. -Try not to fill up your day with as much activity, targets and priorities. -Plan this different and slower approach into your day at first, until it becomes more natural for you. -Clearly separate your work from your leisure time and keep the two apart as much as possible
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Time Management Profile

PREPARATION SKILLS

"Preparation skills looks at how well you prepare yourself for important tasks or personal priorities that you face each day or each week. This category asks the question "To what extent is planning ahead an integral part of your time?"

1 = almost never, 5 = almost always.



Interpretation

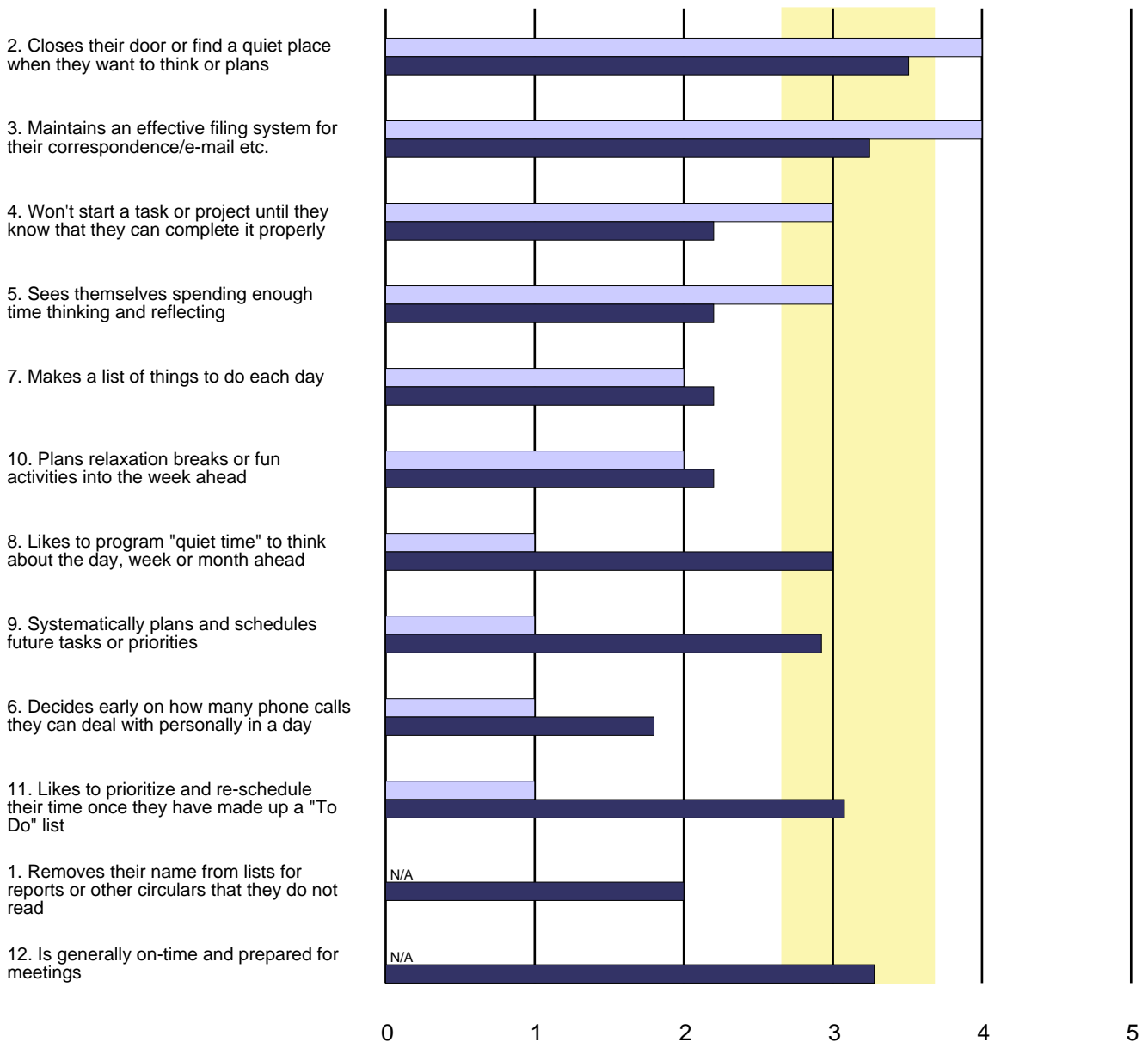
LOW (less than 2.75)

"Scales predominantly in the ones and twos ('occasionally' and 'almost never') are likely to mean that this individual may be neglectful of planning or priority setting or let events dictate what happens in their day more than it needs to do. The low score person is likely to find their time "squeezed" so much that they can do little or no planning ahead and may therefore constantly feel that their time is not their own."

HIGH (greater than 3.5)

"Scales predominantly in the fours and fives ('almost always' and 'very frequently') are likely to mean that this individual is a well prepared person or one that plans ahead quite frequently to ensure that their known workload is tackled in a way that is sensible for them. A high score person will be likely to find time in every week to quietly plan or schedule ahead. This may be done over an extended period, just once or twice in a week, or in many short "bursts" when needed. "

Time Management Profile PREPARATION SKILLS



Self Norm

The above chart is sorted in descending order of summary scores.

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Time Management Profile PREPARATION SKILLS

"Preparation skills looks at how well you prepare yourself for important tasks or personal priorities that you face each day or each week. This category asks the question "To what extent is planning ahead an integral part of your time?"

Improvement actions

The low scorer needs to actively build in time to plan and prepare. This will not be easy at first and may not occur naturally, or on a regular basis, even if it is started with good intentions. Planning or priority setting should ideally be diaried at the beginning or end of each day for even a few minutes. If this proves difficult, ask a friend or partner to remind you. If possible, use a planning system, pre-designed priority setting list or organizer to help give you some structure and to prevent losing scrappy pieces of paper or trying to keep priorities only in your mind.

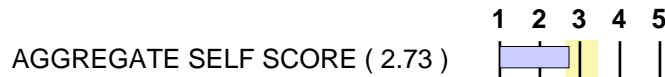
Preparation skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Force yourself to spend at least at few minutes each day with a minimum of a pen and paper, and reflect upon what is important to achieve in the day or the week ahead.-Make a list and prioritize it into MUST DO, SHOULD DO and NICE TO DO IF THERE IS TIME categories.-Stick to your daily plan as much as you can, once it has been thought through.-Ensure that breaks, quiet time and catch-up gaps are planned into each day.
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Time Management Profile

ORGANIZATIONAL ABILITY

Organizational ability looks at how well you generally maintain a healthy equilibrium in your life. This category asks the question "How effectively do you control your time to achieve a 'good' balance?"

1 = almost never, 5 = almost always.



Interpretation

LOW (less than 2.75)

"Scales predominantly in the ones and twos ('occasionally' and 'almost never') are likely to mean that that this individual spends "little or no time" in organizing their workload systematically or merely tackles the next tasks that face them with limited pre-thought.

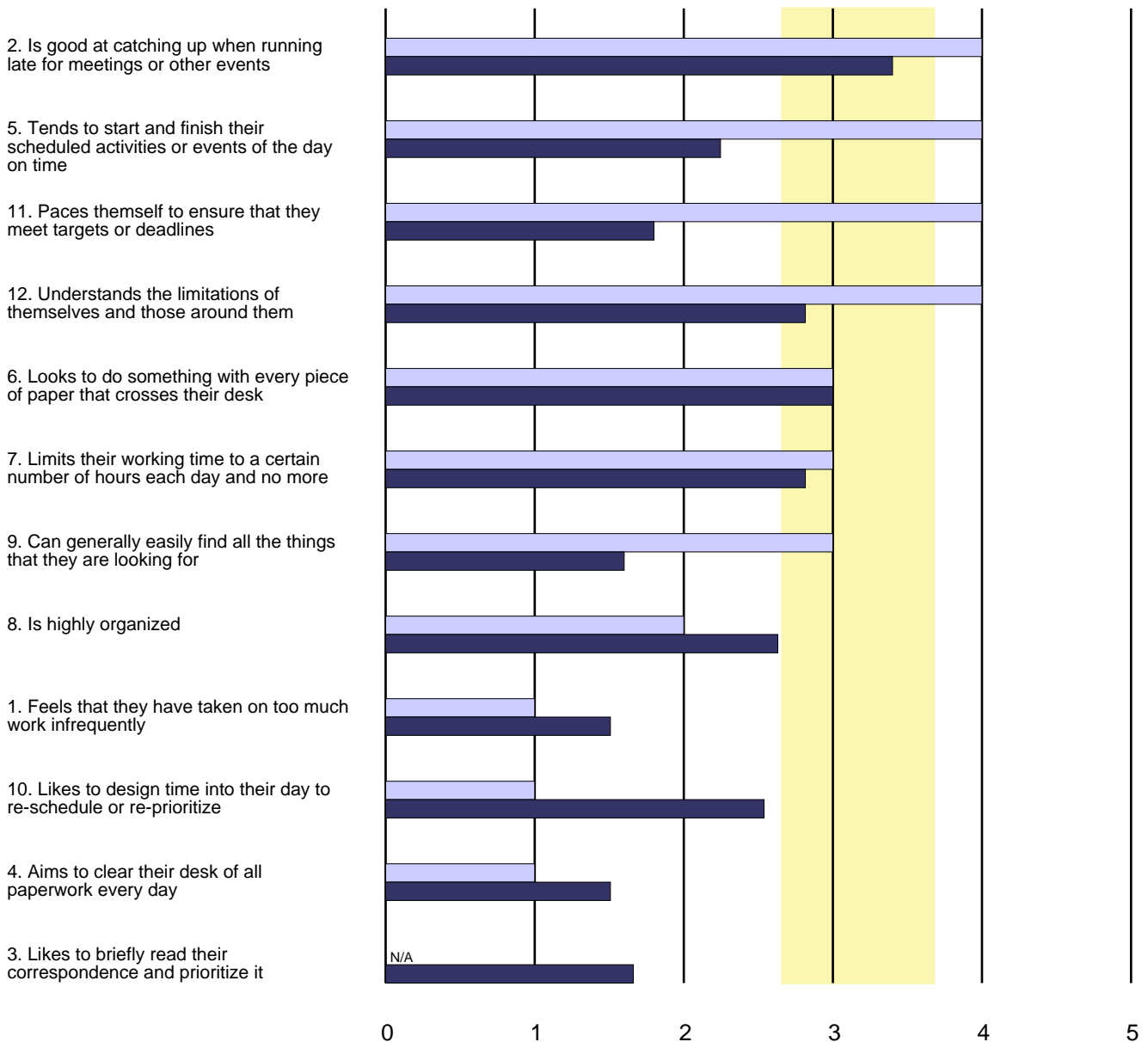
A low score person will be likely to feel that there are more tasks than there is time in the day to do them. As a result they will typically take on whatever comes next or whatever seems to be most urgent without organizing themselves or others as well as they might."

HIGH (greater than 3.5)

"Scales predominantly in the fours and fives ('almost always' and 'very frequently') are likely mean that this individual is able to organize themselves and others to ensure that significant changes in their workload are quickly accommodated and re-prioritized.

A high score person will be likely to see personal organization to be a critical tool in the time management kit-bag. They will therefore appreciate the need to think about the on-going fluctuations in workload and changes in deadlines and re-organize themselves and others to achieve the best result."

Time Management Profile ORGANIZATIONAL ABILITY



Self
 Norm

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Time Management Profile

ORGANIZATIONAL ABILITY

Organizational ability looks at how well you generally maintain a healthy equilibrium in your life. This category asks the question "How effectively do you control your time to achieve a 'good' balance?"

Improvement actions

Low scorers need to recognize that people, resources, targets, deadlines and the availability of time will have to be organized in order to achieve the right results – in other words you cannot float through each day as a piece of flotsam or jetsam, drifting on the sea of changing priorities. As a result, low scorers need to take charge of their personal priorities and learn that there is always an optimal sequence for tackling a series of future tasks or projects.

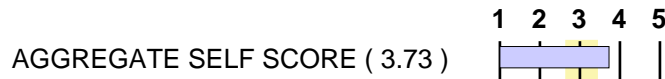
<p>Organizational ability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Make sure that all your planned and unplanned activities of the day and week are always scheduled and re-scheduled as necessary. -Set up a system to make sure that you can find things you need regularly and think carefully about targets and deadlines for tasks or projects. -Try not to make commitments until you have looked at your overall workload and worked out what is possible and how much re-organization will be necessary. -Realistically recognize that your own limitations and those of others around you, upon which you may depend to meet your targets and deadlines.
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Time Management Profile

DELEGATION SKILLS

Delegation skills looks at how well you assess what you are capable of achieving and seek ways to obtain assistance from others when necessary. This category asks the question "How effectively do you spread your tasks or workload to stay personally in control or on top of things?"

1 = almost never, 5 = almost always.



Interpretation

LOW (less than 2.75)

"Scales predominantly in the ones and twos ('occasionally' and 'almost never') are likely to mean that this individual takes on too much work by themselves. They see asking others for help as a sign of weakness or failure (or that people around them are far less capable or skilled than they are).

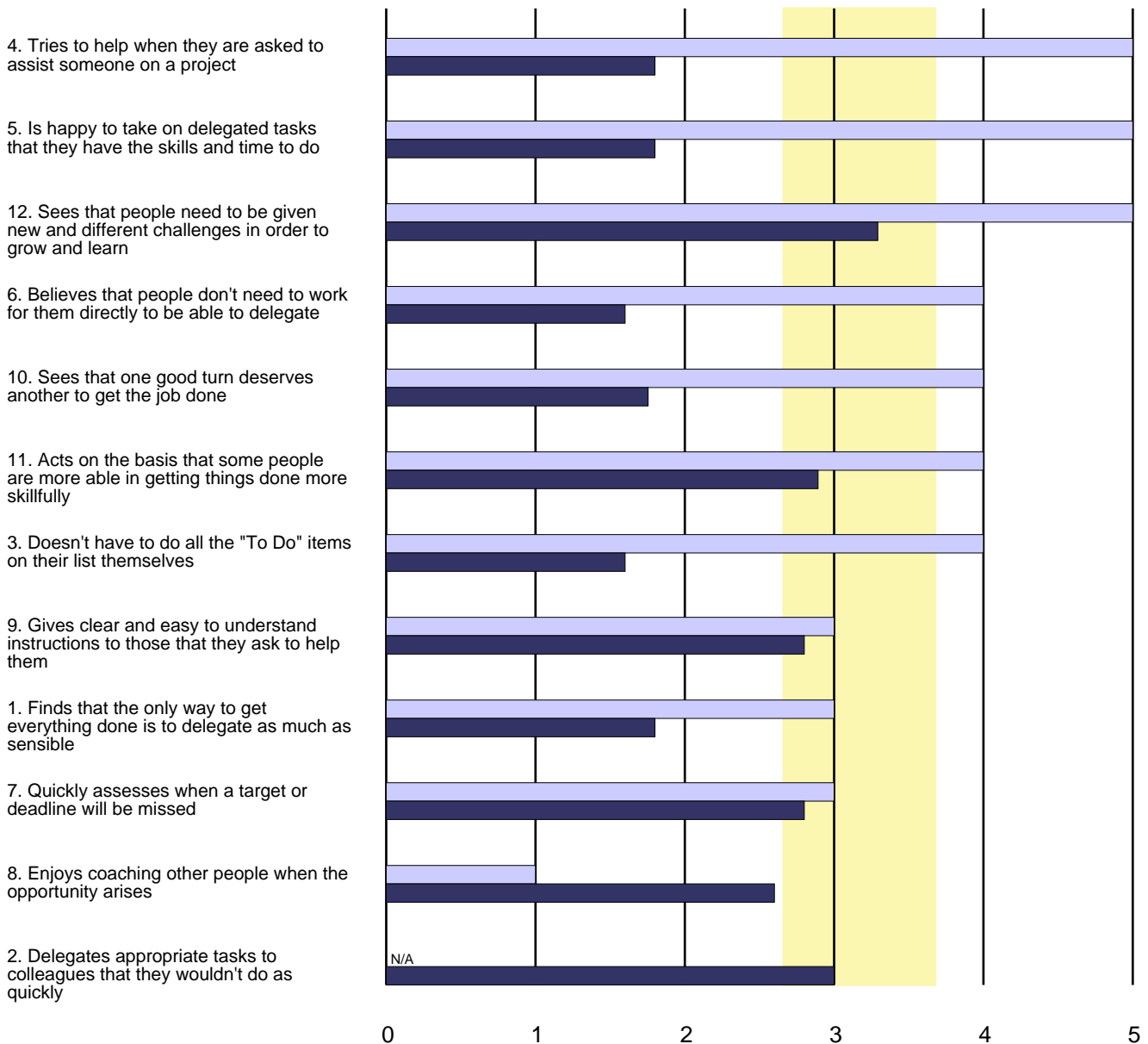
A low score person will be likely to take on most tasks themselves and have an "if a job is worth doing well, its better to do it yourself" attitude most of the time. This can lead to having to frequently work harder to catch up or to work longer hours than necessary, rather than thinking about spreading your workload more creatively."

HIGH (greater than 3.5)

"Scales predominantly in the fours and fives ('almost always' and 'very frequently') are likely to mean that this individual recognizes their own skill limitations and constraints in the time available to them, and looks to find ways to get others to help as much as possible.

A high score person will be likely to carefully evaluate their own limitations against their workload and look to find ways to match people, resources and tasks as much as they can (even when they do not have people working for them directly)."

Time Management Profile DELEGATION SKILLS



Self
 Norm

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Time Management Profile DELEGATION SKILLS

Delegation skills looks at how well you assess what you are capable of achieving and seek ways to obtain assistance from others when necessary. This category asks the question "How effectively do you spread your tasks or workload to stay personally in control or on top of things?"

Improvement actions

Low scorers need to invest more time and energy in sharing their skills with others and in accepting that some people around them can tackle a number of tasks as well, if not better, than they can. Small tasks can be delegated experimentally to start with, or alternatively high scorers might look to 'trade' work that they enjoy (or are good at) with work that they do not do as well as colleagues. The more this "co-operative way of working" is practiced, the more naturally delegation is likely to occur.

Delegation skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Think about your colleagues around you and their skills and abilities relative to your own-Reflect upon the balance of workload that prevails in a given day or week (including the peaks and troughs).-Look at your own skills and abilities and develop a list of tasks and activities that could become the basis of discussion for delegating to them and for you to potentially take on some of their tasks.-Consider what tasks or projects could help individuals to grow or learn new skills.
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THE '10/10' REPORT

Top 10 development needs

		scores
Pressure management skills	6. Does a lot of their best work under pressure	1.0
Pressure management skills	7. Can usually handle crises without the effort eating into their personal time	1.0
Pressure management skills	11. Sees multiple calls upon their time as mere challenges to be managed	1.0
Interruption management skills	1. Opens their mail when they can really concentrate on it properly	1.0
Interruption management skills	2. Doesn't need to look at their watch or a clock to ensure that they complete their priorities	1.0
Interruption management skills	7. Is not easily distracted by lots of activity or noise around them	1.0
Results orientation	3. Is good at "skim-reading" any newspaper or magazine article for ideas	1.0
Preparation skills	6. Decides early on how many phone calls they can deal with personally in a day	1.0
Preparation skills	8. Likes to program "quiet time" to think about the day, week or month ahead	1.0
Preparation skills	9. Systematically plans and schedules future tasks or priorities	1.0

Top 10 strengths

Pressure management skills	10. Sees taking things one step at a time as a good approach even when the pressure is on	5.0
Interruption management skills	8. Believes that you should always expect the unexpected and not be phased by it	5.0
Results orientation	5. Has personal goals to which they devote time each month	5.0
Results orientation	12. Knows that being seen to be busy does not equate with being effective or achieving results	5.0
Predisposition	3. Knows when to stop when they are tired	5.0
Predisposition	12. Can leave their work 'at the office'	5.0
Delegation skills	4. Tries to help when they are asked to assist someone on a project	5.0
Delegation skills	5. Is happy to take on delegated tasks that they have the skills and time to do	5.0
Delegation skills	12. Sees that people need to be given new and different challenges in order to grow and learn	5.0
Pressure management skills	3. Tends to work on tasks a bit at a time if they are given a tough task	4.0

COURSE AND READING SUGGESTIONS

The following are general reading and course suggestions that may help you to better understand the two categories in which your scores were the lowest and to assist you in writing your development plan.

Preparation skills

"Preparation skills looks at how well you prepare yourself for important tasks or personal priorities that you face each day or each week. This category asks the question "To what extent is planning ahead an integral part of your time?"

Course Suggestions

- Thinking/planning ahead
- Planning methods/approaches
- Scheduling skills
- Prioritization skills

Reading Suggestions

- First things first, Stephen Covey and Rebbecca Merrill, Simon and Schuster, 1994
- The Art of doing nothing, Veronique Cienne and Erica Lennard, Clarkson Potter, 1998
- 201 ways to manage your time better, Alan Axelrod and Jim Holtje, 1997
- Managing your time, John Rogers, Handbook of Management Skills, Gower, 1994 edition

COURSE AND READING SUGGESTIONS

Interruption management skills

Interruption management skills looks at how well you stay on track when unexpected events or people interfere with your plans. This category asks the question "How flexible are you or your plans to the occurrence of unexpected events or interruptions?"

Course Suggestions

- Assertiveness skills
- Strategic/tactical planning
- Workload prioritization
- Negotiating skills

Reading Suggestions

- The 80/20 principle, Richard Koch, Nicholas Brearley Publications, 1998
- 100 quick tips for time management, Doug McFarlane and Nicki Harding, The short attention span library, 1997
- 101 ways to make every second count, Robert bly, Career Press, 1999
- Managing your priorities from strat to success, William Bond, Irwin, 1996

Other Suggestions

- Analyze all of your interruptions in a given day or week and plot them on a graph or a pie chart so as to see which are the most significant that need a new handling approach.
- If you feel comfortable to do so, talk to your direct supervisor/manager or a training and development specialist about personal training, coaching, and specific projects to improve your skills and other possible support they may be able to offer.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Use the space below to write out your personal development plan for the next 12 months based on your results. Draw upon the general improvement actions in relevant areas of the report and ideas that are suggested in the attached coaching tips.

Development Area: Does a lot of their best work under pressure		1.0	N/A	N/A
Action to Take:	Target Date:			
Development Area: Can usually handle crises without the effort eating into their personal time		1.0	N/A	N/A
Action to Take:	Target Date:			
Development Area: Sees multiple calls upon their time as mere challenges to be managed		1.0	N/A	N/A
Action to Take:	Target Date:			
Development Area: Opens their mail when they can really concentrate on it properly		1.0	N/A	N/A
Action to Take:	Target Date:			
Development Area: Doesn't need to look at their watch or a clock to ensure that they complete their priorities		1.0	N/A	N/A
Action to Take:	Target Date:			

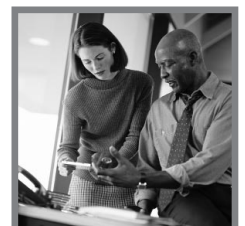
5 Pressure Management Skills

Does a lot of their best work under pressure

“Pressure” has a negative feel to it, and with reason: pressure can bring harmful stress, needless worry and damaging disruption. But not all pressure is bad. Sometimes pressure can make us lift our game, and perform better than we otherwise would have. The trick, of course, is knowing which is the good pressure, and which is the bad.

Here are some tips that may help you thrive on the good type of pressure:

1. Re-think the pressure, and move from seeing it as something that threatens to something that challenges. When the going gets tough, the tough get going.
2. Remember that athletes sometimes get an adrenaline boost in pressure situations, and they perform all the better. Some actors prefer the stimulus of live theatre work to the more routine, but less stimulating, atmosphere of the film or television studio. You may get an elevated sense of concentration and energy from pressure in a way that is similar to what athletes and actors get. If so, use it.
3. Re-think the pressure in terms of what it can give you in your situation. Sometimes pressure or a crisis is precisely what is needed to break a log-jam of limited resources and people saying no. Pressure or a crisis puts pressure on them to re-think a situation, and re-think and replace conventional and counter-productive ways of behaving. You may now have increased leverage, and you may find that words like “the only way we’re going to beat this is...” actually get you what you have wanted for some time.
4. You may find that increased pressure is exactly what you need to energize your peers. Teamwork which may have been thin on the ground may become more apparent now, particularly if team members see that you all sink or swim together.
5. Be careful, however, of becoming an adrenaline junkie, a crisis addict: don’t seek out pressure continually. There’s more than enough pressure around without you-consciously or unconsciously – trying to create more.

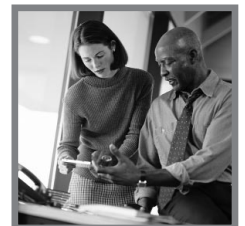


5 Pressure Management Skills

Can usually handle crises without the effort eating into their personal time

The simplest way to try and get time to handle things which are out of the ordinary is to take time from the time allocated to the ordinary – and sometimes that means taking personal time. The simplest way is not always the best way, however. The real trick is to solve a crisis, not merely fix one crisis by creating another crisis elsewhere which is perhaps less visible, but none the less real. Would any of the following tips work for you?

1. The easiest way to solve crises is not to have any. When crises occur, it is a good idea to complete post-mortems on them. Why did the crisis occur? Was it a one-off, or is it part of an ongoing pattern? If it is part of an ongoing pattern, then this is – in a strange way – a good thing: any pattern that can be detected can be worked upon, and perhaps the root causes can be eliminated.
2. When a crisis occurs, don't presume that the only part of the day with any flexibility in it to solve the crisis is your own personal time. Look at your schedule: what can be shifted, deferred? Always try to build flexibility into your schedule, so that you have freedom to move when the call to battle stations come.
3. Can anyone else help you? Can anyone give you a hand? Can anyone give you a gift of time? A good way to solve a crisis is to get help, and a good way to get help is to have in place a culture of cooperation and sharing: if they help you this time, then you can help them the next time they are in a jam. If you have a good track record here – if you really mean what you say, and are completely reliable – then you should have no trouble in getting help. If you've been less than helpful in the past – if you are all talk, and no action – you will find allies thin on the ground – and it will be nobody's fault but yours. Cooperation and helping are therefore not simply feel-good ideals, they are practical realities. If a culture of cooperation and sharing does not exist currently, then start working on creating one now.
4. If it seems impossible to avoid encroaching upon your personal time for one particular crisis, is it possible to trade off or negotiate some make-up personal time at another time? For example, if I work back two nights on this particular nightmare, can I take a day off next week or next month?
5. When a crisis comes, don't panic. When we panic, we do things badly, and things done badly usually have to be done again, and again. In other words, panic is literally a waste of time. Stay cool, and do it right the first time.

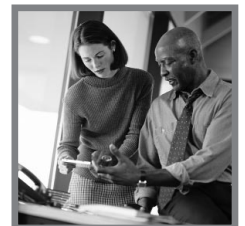


5 Pressure Management Skills

Sees multiple calls upon their time as just challenges to be managed

How much do they want? Too much. How often does this happen? All the time. So what can you do about it? What you need to do is to see that such multiple calls upon your time are just challenges to be managed. Here's how:

1. Within limits, welcome different tasks as providing you with some variety. They may be a blessing in disguise, and you may be able to see connections between them.
2. Rethink the situation: maybe it's better to be so in demand that you have problems in coping with the demand rather than not being in demand at all.
3. A good way of filtering multiple demands is to ask for them to be put in writing. Try to educate peers, subordinates and superiors into acquiring this habit. Putting it in writing has a number of advantages. It gives you a much clearer brief than can come out of a simple conversation: the requester is forced to clarify just what is being asked for. It allows you to put the problem in perspective, and think about it coolly and clearly. It gives you a clearer basis for working out a priority order for handling multiple tasks. It also sometimes leads to the requester having second thoughts about making the request: maybe the solution to their problem will become clear as they write, and maybe the hassle of writing it down is less than the hassle of doing it themselves (an indication, perhaps, that they were just dumping their problems onto you).
4. You can cope with quite a lot of work if you are aware of your own energy curve. This simply means that you work better at certain times of the day, and not so well at others. For example, some people are larks, or morning people, while others are owls, or afternoon or evening people. Your energy and concentration levels may also fluctuate throughout the day according to when you eat and drink, and what you eat and drink. Become more aware of these patterns, and what may appear to be an overload of demands may be more manageable. If your workload is dependent upon the output of others – and that applies to just about everyone in the world – then you should try and factor in the energy curves of others as well. Theirs may be quite different from yours.
5. It's OK to say yes to multiple demands within reason, but you must be ready to say no beyond a certain point. Taking on too much will mean that quantity will drive out quality, and the work – and your reputation – will suffer as a consequence.



4 Interruption Management Skills

Deals with their mail in detail when they can concentrate on it properly

Being able to manage interruptions means learning to compartmentalize different tasks and experiences. It means learning to manage discontinuity, switching between activities, and being able to pick up the threads at a later point. It also means being able to defer certain activities until such time as you can get a block of dedicated time to do a job properly. Opening mail is one of those activities. Here's how you can manage it better:

1. Be aware of the rhythms of mail delivery. Mail often brings solutions, but it often brings problems as well – and you've already got quite a pile of those already. Don't dilute your concentration by opening up a Pandora's box of new problems with the mail. Try to polish off a number of existing problems before the mail arrives.
2. When the mail does arrive, don't see them as pretty presents to be opened right away. If other activities really have higher priority, put the mail aside – be disciplined.
3. Make sure that when you put the mail aside that it is not being thrown into a black hole. Make sure that the pile of mail stays together, in the one spot.
4. Delaying looking at mail can help you solve problems, but don't procrastinate on it. There may be something urgent lurking in there. In a typical work day, therefore, it might be best to look at the mail mid-morning, or about an hour after it arrives on your desk.
5. When you finally get a block of time to look at the mail, defend that time as well as you can from further interruptions.
6. Make sure that your filing system is up to scratch. If it is, you can pull the appropriate files to match the matters arising from the mail as you open it. Wherever possible, try to handle each piece of paper only once.
7. Don't punish yourself by thinking that it all has to be looked at in one day. Assign priorities to mail, and look at the lower priority stuff later on in the week, if necessary.
8. With electronic documents, use the technology, hardware and software to pre-prepare mail so that you can process it with maximum efficiency later on: print out complete documents or summaries, in either full scale or reduced scale. Print out email lists.



4 Interruption Management Skills

Doesn't need to look at their watch or a clock to ensure that they complete their priorities

Completing priorities is all about pacing yourself, and staying on target with completing all of the little bits that make up your workload. Time is your enemy, and time is your friend, but clock-watching isn't always the best way to pace yourself, especially if this means that you have to work twice as hard at the very last minute just to meet a deadline (and even compromise quality in the process).

Try these approaches instead:

1. To a certain extent, priorities solve your time problem for you: top priority tasks take as long as they take, and – within reason – time passing is irrelevant to completing these tasks. In other words, priorities are important to complete properly and do well, not just finish quickly.
2. Build as much contingency time as you can so that you avoid scrambling to get something done at the last minute. The more room you give yourself to finish your priority work the better.
3. Sometimes clock-watching can break up your concentration, and paradoxically will ensure that you exceed whatever time you have arbitrarily allocated for a task. You may win a few battles, but lose the time war when you interrupt yourself.
4. Be aware of larger time-frames, such as weeks or months, or the time allocated to complete sections of projects, and have these represented in wall-planners and project charts. This “macro-time” is not separate from the “micro-time” of clocks and watches, but concentrating more upon the macro picture may mean that the micro takes care of itself.
5. Develop an “internal clock” within you, so that you learn to pace yourself according to the needs of the situation.
6. Don't leave things to pile up for too long. Start tasks or projects a few hours, days or even weeks earlier than you need to. This helps to create breathing space when something else you have to tackle is running late or needs your attention.

