# 4. Project & Time Management

#### OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

**Introduction Operational Management Models** 

#### PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Introduction

What is a Project?

**Project Aims** 

**Project Analysis** 

**Project Planning Activities** 

**To Identify Clear Project Goals** 

**Defining Project Scope** 

**Recruit and Build Team** 

Allocation of Responsibilities and Accountability

**Assessing Risk** 

**Estimating Time Accurately** 

**Developing a Project Schedule** 

**Resource Planning** 

**Developing the Project Budget** 

**Pilot Projects** 

**Simple Projects** 

Writing the Project Plan

**Logical Framework Matrix** 

**Gantt Charts** 

**Critical Path Analysis and PERT** 

**The Planning Cycle** 

**Evaluation** 

Range of Management Systems

Why Projects Fail

#### TIME MANAGEMENT

Introduction

Success

**Analysing Time Management** 

**Improving Time Management** 

**Time Management Matrix** 

**Delegation** 

Effective Use of Secretary/PA/Assistant

#### **Operational Management**

# Introduction

In any NGO, the overall *management* aim should be to prepare a realistic and coherent operational plan, based on agreed strategy, which makes best use of available resources

world net towards the fulfilment of the organisation's mission (i.e. to maximise animal welfare gains from resources) and to ensure that this is effectively realised (making any appropriate changes necessary along the way).

The main elements needed for this include: -

- Planning (long range and short range)
- ➤ Management control systems
- > Project management
- > Review and evaluation

The timescale of operational planning in NGOs varies widely. More effective planning includes the following: -

#### > Long Range Plans

Typically 5-year operating and financial projections, reviewed annually.

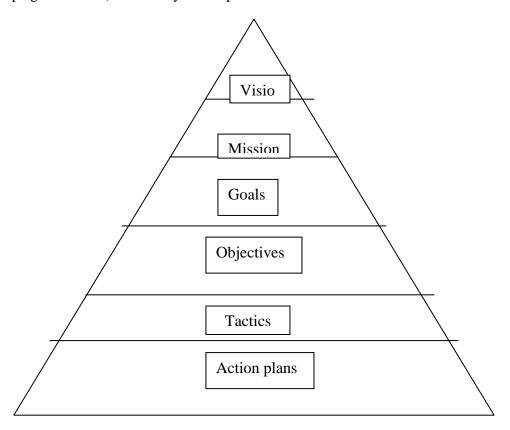
# > Short Range Plans

Practical plans to implement strategy. Usually covering a two to three year timescale (reviewed annually), but one year for many smaller organisations. Two or three year operational plans tend to include less detail for second and third years..

#### **Operational Management Models**

## Strategy Pyramid

The below diagram depicts the 'top down' approach to planning – based on the formulation of a vision and mission, the development of goals to achieve these, which are formed into strategy. From the agreed strategy, appropriate tactics ate chosen (e.g. the 'Campaigns Toolkit') and finally action plans.





This approach is based on the old business model – which is effective in known and stable environments, but not in volatile environments or rapidly changing times. The difference is explained below.

# Modern Versus Traditional Management Models

The following chart indicates the differences between a traditional management model and a modern model suitable for NGOs in volatile or creative environments. However, a stable service provision role may favour a management model with more traditional characteristics.

Traditional Business Model	Modern NGO-Friendly Model
Managing assets	Managing resources and capabilities
Accounting-driven	Effectiveness-driven
Product based	Campaign based
Hierarchical	Networked
Rationality and analysis	Intuition and analysis
Command and control	Empowered employees
Instructing and checking	Motivating and coaching
Reactive	Responsive
Risk averse	Encouraging risk and innovation
Blame culture	Supportive culture

### Modern Management

The key to many modern management techniques lies purely in establishing teams and aligning team and individual goals with campaigns (or educational/project) goals, and providing the resources needed for accomplishment. Key aspects of the modern management role are set out above.

To lead in volatile times you must: -

- > Learn to anticipate and prepare for volatility
- ➤ Learn to stay a step ahead of volatility and its inherent dangers
- > Distinguish patterns and order amidst chaos
- ➤ Learn to manage opportunities as well as risks

# Traditional Management

Even if a modern management model is adopted, some of the more useful aspects of traditional management can be applied. Below is a brief outline of the main aspects of traditional management that could be useful.

Setting Objectives and Planning

- > To determine the objectives aligned with the organisation's vision and mission.
- > To determine the goals for each issue.
- > To decide the best way(s) to reach the objectives.
- > To decide on most appropriate tactics to be used.

#### Organising the Group

To analyse the activities, decisions, and relations needed.



- > To classify the work.
- ➤ To divide the work into manageable activities and further divide the activities into manageable jobs.
- ➤ To group units and jobs into an organisational structure.
- > To select people for the management of the units and for the job to be done.

# Motivating and Communicating

- To make a team out of the people who are responsible for various jobs.
- > To empower employees and motivate them to follow through on your strategic focus.
- > To take relationship responsibility.
- > To make human resource decisions on pay, placement, and promotion.
- > To communicate the objectives to the people whose performance is needed to attain these.
- ➤ To communicate constantly to and from his subordinates, superior, and colleagues.

#### Measuring Performance

- To establish critical success factors (CSFs) major factors that are of key importance to the performance of the organisation and members of staff.
- > To establish yardsticks for measuring targets.
- ➤ To make the measurements focused on the performance of the whole organisation, and every individual, available to each staff member.

#### **Project Management**

#### Introduction

Animal protection societies manage some enormous projects, involving large amounts of resources. Yet they rarely use professional project management methods. They are also poor at feedback and monitoring and evaluation, so their mistakes and shortcomings can be repeated. This means they are wasting valuable resources – most importantly their hard-won donations and their most valuable asset – their people. They are also delaying progress towards the achievement towards their mission, and adding to stress and 'burn-out'.

However, it is also important that appropriate project management methods are used, and not too-onerous methods, when the projects are too simple to make this worthwhile. The ideal is to choose a method that is suitable for the task, and the least onerous that will achieve its purpose.

#### What is a Project?

A project is any activity that has: -

- ➤ A unique task
- ➤ A specified target
- ➤ A set timescale
- ➤ A fixed budget



#### **Project Aims**

Every project should aim to be: -

- ➢ On time
- > To specification
- ➤ On budget

# **Project Analysis**

There should be considerable analysis before the start of the project (in addition to previous research). This should include the following areas: -

- ➤ The Project Manager's role and responsibilities
- > Stakeholder analysis
- > Problem analysis
- > Analysis of objectives
- > Analysis of alternatives
- The Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) for large, complex projects (including those with more than one executing department or organisation) (see below)
- ➤ Planning large projects using planning and management methodologies, such as Gantt charts and critical path analysis (see below)
- Risk analysis (see below)

# **Project Planning Activities**

The planning activities a manager needs to do, with the help of team members, are listed below: -

- > To define the project boundaries ('scoping') what it included and not included in the project
- > To recruit and build the team
- > To agree how team members will work together
- > To assess the work (in broad terms)
- To assess risks and develop contingencies see below)
- > To assess potential implications for other departments and stakeholders, and consult and involve
- > To assess project resources
- > To develop a fundraising strategy (with fundraising professionals, if available)
- > To develop a project schedule
- > To break the project down into manageable parts (sub projects)
- > To decide who will do what
- > To assign accountability
- > To agree the project budget
- > To identify clearly the key goals for the project outcomes
- > To develop and write up a final project plan

#### **To Identify Clear Project Goals**

It is vital to identify clear project goals, ensuring that these provide maximum possible progress towards priority issue goals, as agreed in the organisational strategy.

Do not make the mistake of including project stepping-stones (e.g. number of stalls held to recruit new campaigners, as opposed to number of new campaigners recruited). Goals should be achievement orientated, as opposed to activity orientated.



#### **Defining Project Scope**

A scoping statement defines the project's place in a larger scenario, describes the major activities of the project, and puts some boundaries on the project to define what the project will and won't do. It contains the definition and detailed description of what will be produced by the project and desired outcomes. It contains the name and purpose of the project, the project manager's name, and a statement of support/approval from the sponsor or line manager/Chief Executive. The following steps are necessary in this process: -

- ➤ Define what is expected from the project and project success and failure criteria that criteria that will used to evaluate results
- Explain how the project will contribute to the overall issue goals (as set out in the organisational strategy)
- Clearly define the methods, tasks, basic conditions, project objectives and final outcome(s)
- > Define the project boundaries what's included and not included in the project
- ➤ Identify all stakeholders persons or groups of persons who are participating in the project, are interested in the project performance, or are constrained by the project
- Establish the overall direction, expectations and constraints that the team will use when they plan the project

#### **Recruit and Build Team**

- Make sure you have the right people on the team
- Make sure the team have all the training/development/support they need for the task
- Make sure all key stakeholders have some type of representation (to advise the team)

# Allocation of Responsibilities and Accountability

- ➤ Write out allocation of responsibilities e.g. responsibility matrix
- Agree areas of budget responsibility and budgetary approval limits

#### **Assessing Risk**

- > Explore what might go wrong and identify countermeasures to prevent problems from occurring
- > Identify a team member responsible for each countermeasure
- > Draft risk plan for management and team

# **Estimating Time Accurately**

- > Time planning for small and medium sized projects Gantt Charts (see below)
- ➤ Effective planning for middle-sized projects The Planning Cycle (see below)
- > Time planning for large, complex projects Critical Path Analysis & PERT (see below)

#### **Developing a Project Schedule**

➤ Identify project phases, milestones and outcomes schedules and schedule all the works that must be accomplished to meet the project key dates and objectives



From the above, compile the high-level schedule used to communicate the dates by which major accomplishments in the project will be completed to the project sponsor/manager, trustees, supporters and donors and other stakeholders

#### **Resource Planning**

- > Identify resources required project personnel, equipment, materials and facilities
- ➤ Optimise scheduling with respect to all available and procurable resources

# Resources include: -

- > Energy
- > Equipment
- Materials
- **➤** Money
- > People
- > Time

#### **Developing the Project Budget**

- ➤ Identify and quantify the prospective costs of project outcomes
- ➤ Develop a spending budget to include the projected cost of the project, including internal and external costs.

# **Pilot Projects**

If a large-scale project is considered, it can be useful to carry out a smaller scale version — a 'pilot project'- in order to test the project and methodology. This enables an assessment of value to be carried out, before launching into a major project that will involve a significant time and resource commitment. It will also: -

- ➤ Allow operational problems to be anticipated and solved at an early stage
- > Provide a positive practical example to bring funders and other stakeholders on board

#### **Simple Projects**

Simple projects are often best managed using simple timetables and action plans. These should be prepared and negotiated with project staff to improve plans and get buy-in.

During the project these will contain sufficient control points and deliveries to monitor project progress and take any appropriate remedial action.

Planning should aim to make the task easier, not to build unnecessary workloads. The simplest, effective method for the task is the best option.

#### Writing the Project Plan

- Compile the information developed during the above planning into a formal project plan and obtain formal approval from the project sponsor/management
- Agree and document the procedures that will be used to make changes to the plan



The project plan should include: -

- > Project goals
- ➤ Activities and who assigned to (budget and timeline)
- ➤ Other departments involved (agreed)
- ➤ Risk analysis and contingency planning
- > Project targets (both measurable i.e. quantifiable and qualitative) and who is responsible
- > Progress reporting arrangements

Targets should be **SMART** i.e.

**S**pecific

Measurable

**A**chievable

Realistic and

Timed

# **Logical Framework Matrix**

A Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) includes the following aspects: -

	Intervention Logic	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Sources of Verification	Risks and Assumptions
Principal Objective				
Specific Objective				
Results				
Activities		Means	Costs	
				Pre-conditions



#### **Gantt Charts**

A Gantt chart is a 'Time-Line', which plots project activities against a calendar. Durations for each task are shown graphically on a timescale ranging from hours to a year. Views can be provided of tasks, resources, or resource usage by task, for example:

TIME

TASKS | Month 1 | Month 2 | Month 3 | Month 4 |

Task A | Task B | Task C | Task D |

Time

Gantt Charts are useful tools for analysing and planning more complex projects. They:

- ➤ Help you to plan out the tasks that need to be completed
- > Give you a basis for scheduling when these tasks will be carries out
- Allow you to plan the allocation of resources needed to complete the project
- ➤ Help you to manage the dependencies between tasks.

When a project is underway, Gantt charts are useful for monitoring progress. You can immediately see what should have been achieved at a point in time, and can therefore take remedial action to bring the project back on course. This can be essential for the successful and profitable implementation of the project.

#### **Critical Path Analysis and PERT**

Critical Path Analysis (CPA) and Programme Evaluation and Review Technique (PERT) are powerful tools that help you to schedule and manage complex projects. They were developed in the 1950s to control large defence projects, and have been used routinely since then.

The benefit of using critical path analysis techniques over Gantt Charts is that critical path analysis formally identifies tasks which must be completed on time for the whole project to be completed on time, and also identifies which tasks can be delayed for a while if resources need to be reallocated to catch up on missed tasks. The disadvantage of critical path analysis is that the relation of tasks to time is not as immediately obvious in complex projects as it is in Gantt Charts. This can make them more difficult to understand for someone who is not familiar with the technique.

A further benefit of critical path analysis is that it helps you to identify the minimum length of time needed to complete a project. Where you need to run an accelerated project, it helps you to identify which project steps you should accelerate to complete the project within the available time. This helps you to minimise cost while still achieving your objective.

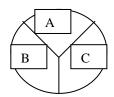
As with Gantt Charts, critical path analysis helps you to plan all tasks that must be completed as part of a project. They act as the basis both for preparation of a schedule, and of resource planning. During management of a project, they allow you to monitor



achievement of project goals. They help you to see where remedial action needs to be taken to get a project back on course.

The critical path represents the sequence of tasks or events that directly effect the completion of a project. Knowing the critical path allows the project manager to shorten or at least control a project's schedule by focusing on those tasks that directly affect the project's completion.

The following is a simple example of critical path analysis: -



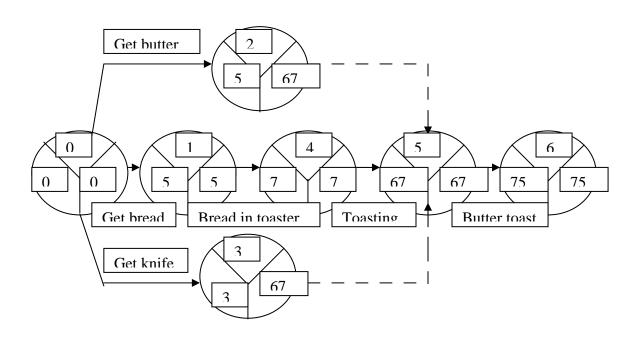
A = Completion of activities

B = Earliest completion time

C = Latest completion time

# Example of Buttered Toast

Activities: -	
Get bread	5
Get butter	5
Get knife	3
Bread in toaster	2
Toasting	60
Butter toast	8





The minimum task period is 75 seconds.

The critical line is the middle one – this has to be well managed to ensure the task is completed in minimum time.

Critical Path Analysis is an effective and powerful method of assessing: -

- ➤ What tasks must be carried out
- ➤ Where parallel activity can be performed
- > The shortest time in which you can complete a project
- Resources needed to execute a project
- The sequence of activities, scheduling and timings involved
- > Task priorities
- > The most efficient way of shortening time on urgent projects

As with Gantt Charts, in practice project managers tend to use software tools like Microsoft Project to create critical path analysis charts. Not only do these make them easier to draw, they also make modification of plans easier and provide facilities for monitoring progress against plans.

#### PERT (Program Evaluation and Review Technique)

PERT is a variation on critical path analysis that takes a slightly more sceptical view of time estimates made for each project stage. To use it, estimate the shortest possible time each activity will take, the most likely length of time, and the longest time that might be taken if the activity takes longer than expected.

#### The Planning Cycle

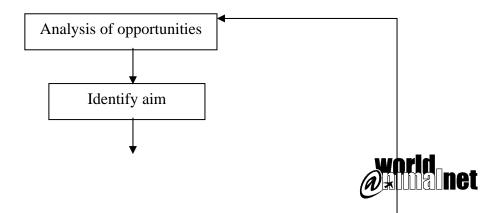
It is best to think of planning as a cycle, not a straight-line process.

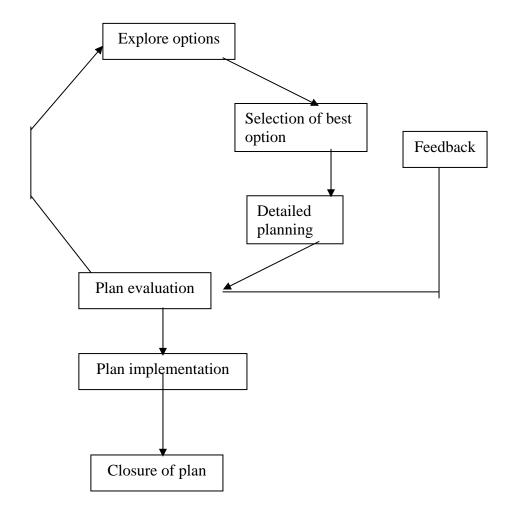
Once you have devised a plan you should evaluate whether it is likely to succeed. This evaluation may be based on a number of factors, including cost and/or likelihood of success/impact. This analysis may show that your plan may cause unwanted consequences, may cost too much, or may simply not work.

In this case you should cycle back to an earlier stage. Alternatively you may have to abandon the plan altogether - the outcome of the planning process may be that it is best to do nothing!

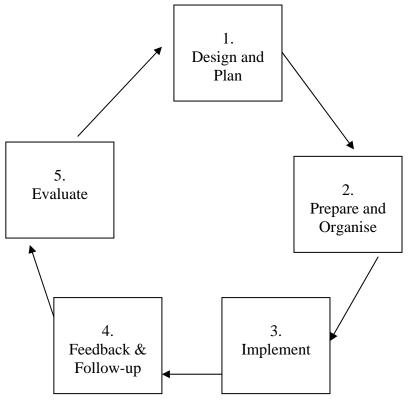
Finally, you should feed back what you have learned with one plan into the next.

# The Planning Cycle - diagram





Five Step Planning Model



world Oximal net

12

#### **Evaluation**

An important stage of project management is evaluation. This cannot be done unless SMART targets (particularly measurable and timed targets) are agreed in advance. Evaluation is vital if the organisation is to continuously improve its performance, and avoid repeating past mistakes. On no accounts should evaluation be viewed as a 'witch hunt', to apportion blame for project problems. It should be viewed as an important organisational tool to help learning and organisational development, maximising effectiveness (and therefore mission fulfilment).

# **Range of Management Systems**

The 'best laid plans of mice and men' go astray, so management control systems are necessary to ensure effective project monitoring that is not intrusive, does not hamper creativity, but motivates. This would include: -

- Annual operating budget and periodical accounting reports and checks
- ➤ Project management procedures (including: regular reviews, monitoring progress markers, identifying and monitoring critical factors)
- ➤ HR management procedures (including performance appraisals)
- Policies
- > Project evaluation
- ➤ Internal audits/internal monitoring procedures
- External evaluations e.g. periodic use of consultants
- > Pilot projects and spreading

In general, animal protection organisations are not very good at carrying out project evaluations. All too often, as soon as one project is finished, the team leaps into the next – without looking back to evaluate the project and to learn from its mistakes. Yet evaluation is essential if performance is to be honed and excellence achieved. Similarly, internal and external audits and evaluations are rare, and yet they could yield enormous results in terms of mission fulfilment. This is particularly true in the case of learning and improvement across the organisation as a whole. For example, in an international organisation, good practice benchmarks can be applied across country boundaries (and the same is true for cross team learning in smaller organisations).

An excellent project management tool is to carry out a well-measured and monitored pilot project. This can then be evaluated and, if successful, perfected and spread (e.g. nationwide or internationally), using the improved model as guidance.

#### Why Projects Fail

There are many reasons why projects fail, including: -

- Project manager not empowered
- > Team responsibilities not clear
- Unclear specification
- ➤ Lack of clear planning
- > Time-scales too ambitious
- ➤ Insufficient risk/contingency analysis
- ➤ Poor budgetary control
- ➤ No change/delay notices
- > Lack of procedures
- ➤ Lack of effective monitoring/control



#### **Time Management**

#### Introduction

Effective use of time is of vital importance in modern animal protection societies, where the potential amount of work is vast. Effective use of time can help staff to achieve animal protection objectives and to make their work more rewarding and less stressful.

The main principles behind time management can be summarised as: -

- ➤ It is essential to analyse your work, and to be clear about priorities
- ➤ Value your time
- > You must spend time in order to save it

You can only make good use of your time if you are clear about what you are trying to achieve. Fire fighters confuse *urgent* activities with *important* activities.

Work smarter, not harder, sums up the overall approach.

The key to effective time management is to know your priorities, establish goals and to ensure that your work is organised towards the achievement of these goals.

Work is often the enemy of achievements and should never be confused with results. How to use time is all about how to control the job, not the job controlling you. In fact, the most effective way of dealing with certain tasks may be to leave them undone (or at least to do them as quickly and simply as possible)! Key points in effective time management are: -

- ➤ Identify the kind of success you want to achieve
- ➤ Work out priorities, and specific goals
- > Develop a system to work towards these goals
- ➤ Be aware of your own work style, and strengths and weaknesses
- > Be aware of your staff's work styles, and their individual strengths and weaknesses
- > Develop planning strategies, focussing on priorities
- ➤ Identify 'time wasters' and consider ways of coping with them

There are tried and tested time management techniques, and some key principles are given below.

#### **Success**

Success is very personal, subjective and relative. A key to success for animal protection societies is consciously deciding what you want to achieve – the mission - and pursuing a pathway to this. Managing mission-driven staff means aligning their goals to the organisation's goal (or choosing staff who share your goal), and giving them the resources and support/development they need to achieve.

The vision of success is the start, beyond this important factors are: -

- ➤ Believing you will achieve success
- > Focussing on achieving your goals towards success
- > Cutting out things that are not central to your goal
- ➤ Being undeterred by setbacks



- ➤ Always concentrating on solutions, not problems
- ➤ Using your strengths and compensating for your weaknesses
- Maintaining balance in your life, and personal happiness

# **Analysing Time Management**

Before you develop time management strategies, you need to assess your own skills (and problems). A good way of doing this is to keep a time analysis diary for a period (and to do this again periodically as a check that your systems are working). Where does your time go? How much of it is spent on your priorities? How much on jobs planned by you, as opposed to work 'outside your control'? How much of the work you do could be delegated? How much of your time is spent: in meetings, on the telephone, answering e-mails, finding and filing information? How often are you interrupted? How many times do you start jobs and move on to another without finishing? How often do you do things that turn out to be useless and/or overtaken by events?

This exercise will provide a useful starting point for you to consider your work style. Some people are verbal communicators, and may spend a lot of time in meetings or on the telephone, whereas others may prefer written communication, but may spend too much time answering e-mails or written correspondence. Do you always use the most effective means of communication? Do you sort and organise your work in a logical way? E.g. collect and reply to piles of letters or e-mails periodically (using short/stock replies where possible)?

#### Key Results Mapping

Another useful exercise is to agree your 'key results' (critical success factors) in order of importance, and then assess the amount of time spent on each e.g.

Key Results	Time Spent
(Order of importance)	(1-5, with 1 most)
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Now map your most time-consuming tasks, and assess how much these contribute towards the achievement of your key results e.g.

# Time Spent (Order of time spent) 1. 2. 3. 4.

Consider how you can reduce time spent on time-consuming tasks that do not work towards key results (including major threats/opportunities). How can you ensure that time is spent in proportion to the key results priorities identified? The above analyses will help in this assessment.



#### **Improving Time Management**

Never let the 'urgent' take precedence over the 'important'. Recognise what is important to your success, and ensure that this is worked on proactively, and prioritised. Allocate your time to achieving key results.

Consider how you can reduce time spent on time-consuming tasks that do not work towards key results. Consider how to ensure that time is spent in proportion to key results priorities, using the above assessment as a guide.

Remember 'Pareto's Law' – the 80/20 rule – concentrate on the 20 per cent of your work that produces 80 per cent of the results. Minimise the amount of work that you do on the remaining 80 per cent.

# Key Tips are: -

- ➤ Plan (see separate chapter) and make action lists
- Agree strict priorities and deadlines with your manager/staff
- Negotiate resources around priorities (staff, money, contracting etc.)
- Learn to say 'no'!
- > Train and delegate effectively
- ➤ Use your Secretary/PA/Assistant to help
- Find systems to deal quickly and minimally with routine/less important tasks
- ➤ Remember 'good enough is good' don't waste time on non-priority tasks
- > Ensure there are efficient communication channels
- ➤ Do not waste time in meetings develop an effective meeting strategy (see separate chapter)
- ➤ Manage telephone, e-mail and correspondence flows
- ➤ Deal with quick tasks in one go ('single-touching')
- ➤ Periodically monitor your time usage again, and make any necessary changes

Preparing 'action lists' is the immediate part of the planning process. It is good practice to keep a list of outstanding action points in priority order. This list should be regularly reviewed and re-prioritised.

#### **Time Management Matrix**

The time management matrix is a good way of explaining the difference between the urgent and the important – which effective time management needs to distinguish between.



	Urgent	Not urgent
I	1	2
M	Activities:	Activities:
$\boldsymbol{P}$	Crises	Prevention
0	Pressing problems	Strategy
$\boldsymbol{R}$	Deadline-driven problems	Planning
$\boldsymbol{T}$	•	Recognising new opportunities
$\boldsymbol{A}$		Relationship building
N		Recreation
$\boldsymbol{T}$		
N	3	4
0	Activities:	Activities:
$\boldsymbol{T}$	Interruptions	Trivia
	Some calls	Busy work
I	Some correspondence	Some calls
M	Some e-mails	Some correspondence
$\boldsymbol{P}$	Some meetings	Some e-mails
0	Pressing matters	Some meetings
$\boldsymbol{R}$	Popular activities	Time wasters
T		Pleasant activities
$\boldsymbol{A}$		
N		
$\boldsymbol{T}$		

Urgent activities appear to require immediate action - whereas importance has to do with results.

In the matrix, if you keep concentrating on quadrant 1, it gets bigger and bigger and dominates you.

People who spend their time in quadrant 3, often think they are in quadrant 1, but their achievements are not important.

Effective people stay out of quadrants 3 and 4 urgent or not, because they are not important. They also shrink quadrant 1 down to size by spending more time in quadrant 2. Quadrant 2 is at the heart of effective time management.

#### **Delegation**

Consider your use of delegation: -

- ➤ Do you delegate areas of responsibility, or just tasks? (There are two main types of delegation: responsibilities and targets)
- > Do you delegate authority (to make decisions and spend/use resources) to go with the responsibility?
- > Do you avoid over-supervision and under-supervision?
- > Do you avoid loss of control (by moving gradually to delegate more authority, and using appropriate monitoring systems)?
- > Do you train staff to accept increasing delegation (or do you feel it's 'quicker to do it yourself')?
- > Do you approach it systematically:
  - o Define the job?



- o Decide whether it can be delegated?
- o Communicate it clearly?
- o Train?
- o Monitor and follow-up?
- ➤ Do you avoid stifling creativity, by allowing staff to choose their methods (defining end results, not methods)?
- Can you 'back-off' the job, and leave it to targets and monitoring?

The starting point for effective delegation is to appoint appropriate and competent staff who have the capacity to do the job well, and to learn and develop.

Staff should be progressively trained and developed, so they gain the necessary skills and competence. Investment in staff is an investment in the future. Although it may be more time-consuming in the short-term, it is the only way to real achievement (and staff satisfaction) over the longer-term.

There is a real difference in managing 'mission-driven' staff in animal protection organisations to managing staff who work for other motivations, such as money, social aspects/company etc. Managing the 'mission-driven' is essentially a case of ensuring that staff goals are aligned with those of the organisation, they are given the skills and resources necessary to do the job, and the advice and support to help them to perform. It is vital, therefore, to communicate and share goals, and to establish tasks that work towards these.

#### **Effective Use of Secretary/PA/Assistant**

You can manage time more effectively by using your secretary or assistant as a personal assistant, if you do not already (and many managers fail to do this).

Firstly, your assistant needs to know your job clearly, and your priorities and preferred working style, to be effective. Also, you need to know his/her strengths/weaknesses, career goal and training/development needs.

The sort of jobs a personal assistant should be capable of handling are: -

- ➤ Arranging meetings/travel etc.
- > Preparing minutes/action points etc.
- ➤ All filing (and ordering filing systems)
- > Writing, not just typing, routine letters and replies
- > Drafting much of your correspondence
- ➤ Deciding which mail you want to see and then give to someone else to action, distributing mail which you do not even need to see, and sorting the remainder into categories e.g.
  - o Mail requiring your attention urgently
  - O You should decide who should deal with it
- ➤ Making telephone calls for you that are simply giving information or confirming arrangements
- Asking callers for the purpose of their call, in an attempt to action it for you, whether you are available or not
- > Operating a follow-up file to remind you when follow-up action is needed
- > Doing the following for you, whenever possible
  - o Obtaining and collating information for you
  - o Compiling routine weekly and monthly reports



Jobs a personal assistant should not be doing are: -

- > Retyping whole pages because you have not organised your amendments on computer
- Making coffee and tea for the whole department
- > Typing replies to internal memos, when a hand-written comment by you on the original is adequate
- ➤ Unnecessarily retyping urgent internal notes or financial reports, when hand-written information is legible
- > Personal chores, such as shopping

Jobs that waste your personal assistant's time are: -

- > Finding telephone numbers repeatedly for you, instead of keeping your own index for you
- > Writing lengthy minutes of meetings, when action points would suffice
- > Struggling to read your hand-written manuscript drafts, when you could use a computer or dictating machine
- ➤ Continually interrupting your work, because she does not plan hers

#### **Further Resources**

## **Project Management**

# Web Sites

#### Mind Tools - Project Planning

http://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN\_PPM.htm

#### Create a Gantt Chart in Excel

http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/assistance/HA010346051033.aspx

#### Gantt Chart and Timeline Centre

http://www.smartdraw.com/resources/centers/gantt/

#### Books

# Project Management, 3rd Ed.

Harvey Maylor

Publisher: FT Prentice Hall

ISBN: 0273655418

# Project Management for Dummies (For Dummies S.)

Stanley Portney

Publisher: John Wiley & Sons Inc

ISBN: 076455283X

# The Definitive Guide to Project Management: The Fast Track to Getting the Job Done on Time and on Budget

Sebastian Nokes

Publisher: Financial Times Prentice Hall

ISBN: 0273663976



#### **Project Management**

Mike Field, Laurie Keller Publisher: Thomson Learning

ISBN: 1861522746

# **Time Management**

# Web Sites

# Mind Tools - Time Management Skills

http://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN\_HTE.htm

# Time Management – Business

http://www.businesstown.com/time/time.asp

#### Time Management (student handbook)

http://www.d.umn.edu/student/loon/acad/strat/time\_manage.html

#### **Books**

#### Common-Sense Time Management

By: Barrie Pearson

Publisher: Management Books 2000

ISBN: 1-85252-094-9

#### The One Minute Manager

By: Kenneth Blanchard, Spencer Johnson

Publisher: HarperCollins Business

ISBN: 0007107927

# The Personal Efficiency Program: How to Get Organized to Do More Work in Less

Time

By: Kerry Gleeson

Publisher: John Wiley & Sons Inc

ISBN: 0471463213

#### Time Management for Unmanageable People

By: Ann McGee-Cooper

Publisher: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group

ISBN: 0553370715

# Managing Time

By: Tim Hindle

Paperback 72 pages (1998) Publisher: Dorling Kindersley

