**Top Twenty Time Wasters Handout**

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|  | **Attempting too much**: Taking on too much work and then being unable to concentrate on or finish a job properly. Having to do the work of others, either because subordinates are incapable, there are not enough support staff or you are doing two jobs at once. |
|  | **Management by crisis**: Jumping from one urgent task to the next. The last job in becomes the new priority. Doing your work too fast and, consequently, ineffectively. |
|  | **Routine**: Getting swamped by unimportant, routine work. |
|  | **Inadequate planning and prioritisation**: Being unable or unwilling to set priorities. Not taking time out to think and plan. |
|  | **Perfectionism**: Spending too much time trying to do the perfect job at the expense of more important or urgent work. |
|  | **Procrastination**: Finding it hard to get started on a difficult or undesirable job. |
|  | **Lack of self-discipline and concentration**: Letting the mind wander and not concentrating on one task at a time. Finding excuses to stop working. Leaving tasks unfinished. |
|  | **Inability to say no:** Taking on tasks that are not your business or not taking the courage to give reasons why a task is not possible from the time perspective. |
|  | **Drop-in visitors:** Having too many unscheduled interruptions such as visitors or phone calls, making it difficult to focus on priorities. |
|  | **Telephone interruptions:** Lack of method for handling them and inability to keep conversations short. |
|  | **Ineffective delegation:** Subordinates could take on more responsibility but you cannot or will not delegate. |
|  | **Confused responsibility or authority:** Lack of clarity over job role, responsibility without authority, unwillingness to accept responsibility. |
|  | **Bureaucracy**: Inefficient and time-consuming administrative systems. |
|  | **Excess volume of paper and electronic mail**: Being swamped by correspondence and documentation. |
|  | **Meetings**: Having to attend too many irrelevant and badly run meetings |
|  | **Poor communication**: Instructions not clear or lack of attentive listening on your part. Lack of feedback. |
|  | **Lack of, or incomplete, information**: Preventing you from taking decisions, following correct procedures, etc. |
|  | **Travel**: Substantial time away from the office so that the work accumulates for your return. |
|  | **Lack of punctuality**: Late arrivals of others for appointments or meetings. |
|  | **Excess socialising**: Desire to stay connected or inability to terminate personal conversations. Having to attend social events (receptions, lunches, etc.) |