

SPECIAL PAPER

Time Management in Nursing Work

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Abstract

Objective: To view the importance of time management in nursing work and to find the best steps and strategies that help in time management.

Methodology: integrative review with the following guiding questions: What's time management? How to manage time in the nursing work? What are the strategies used in managing time? Searches were performed in Medline, EBSCO, WILEY, Elsevier databases, and RCN publishing company. Reviewing articles from different journals that published from 2005-2012, and books that concerning about the topic with the following categories: management, leadership, free time, nursing work, and administration of the time.

Results: The results highlight that the nurses have to use the strategies in their works in order to deliver better quality care, get more done and feel less stressed in the process, as well as to develop their self's.

Conclusion: Proper planning and good organization of time with the proper implementation of the plans and positive disposition towards wasting time gives us a successful and effective management of time.

Keywords: Time Management; Time Strategies; Time in Workplace; Free Time, Nursing.

Introduction

Managers have four kinds of resources: people, equipment, money, and time. Of these the time is irreplaceable, which means the time management skills are essential for success (Pearce, 2007). Nursing is a very demanding career. In nursing work nurses work not only have tons of things to get done, but also forced to make some decisions. For that the importance of time management started.

Time Management is the method which used to organize our time, so each decision we make regarding that is useful, constructive and the most beneficial to our life's structures. "It's one of the necessary conditions for managers' efficacy and one of the strategies for improving the conditions of organization survival, can be establish in an organization successfully if the appropriate cultural backgrounds have already been established for this system" (Hashemzadeh et al., 2011, p. 2536).

Understanding of time management and leisure planning principles can affect physical and mental health (Trenberth, 2005). Allowing ourselves to consciously choose how to spend our time, in the context of a holistic approach to

life, rather than being dictated and constrained by a specific role, may lead to increased happiness and to a more balanced sense of self (Bresciani, Duncan & Cao, 2010).

Methodology

A integrative review was undertaken using the electronic medical databases include; Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System Online (MEDLINE), EBSCO, WILEY, Elsevier databases, and RCN publishing company. Keywords used in the search included: Time Management; Time Strategies; Time In Workplace; Free Time, Nursing. The inclusion criteria used were: articles published in English in the period from January 2005 to November 2012.

Also some books included in this review but not limited to publishing year. The exclusion of the primary articles took place due to the following reasons: repeated articles in the databases, articles not in English language, not available in full for free access.

Discussion

Management is the science that includes the planning, organization and coordination,

guidance and oversight. Henri Fayol defined management as "planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating, and controlling the work of a given set of employees" (Wren, 1972, p. 9). Due to the importance of management not only in practice, but even in our daily lives, the time plays an important role and a key role in our life.

Time Management is a way to develop and use processes and tools for maximum efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity. It involves mastery of a set of skills like setting goals, planning. And also its effective use of time to achieve desired results (Downs, 2008). In time management we are managing our time better, we are simply making better decisions about what we do and how we will do it, at the end we have better performance.

The management and organizing the time help us to complete our works faster, with less effort and allows us to seize opportunities. It's associated with administrative works through a continuous process of planning and analysis and evaluation of all activities carried out by administrative during working hours daily, in order to achieve high investment of time available to reach the desired goals, the time in the administrative process must be seen as a resource, and should be built on flexible ideas. Proper planning and good organization of time with the proper implementation of the plan and positive disposition towards wasting time gives us a successful and effective management of time.

Pareto's Principle

The 80/20 Rule, also known as Pareto's Principle, says that 20 percent of something always are responsible for 80 percent of the results. For example, twenty percent of the products will have eighty percent of the flaws. This Rule tells how we can use it to more effectively to manage our time and many different aspects of our life. Also another theory which is Pickles Jar Theory which deals with the aspect of creating proper balance, it helps us to visualize priorities, as well as the amount and size of tasks that can be done realistically on a given day (Brogan, 2010).

How to manage our time?

"The essence of time management is to put some things first, others second, and still others third. Set goals and order them from most to least important. Then develop a time plan for meeting

them. Control your actions in order to make the most of your time. Learning to manage time means learning to manage yourself" (Katey & Torres, 2006, p. 1).

Many researchers and writers wrote and discuss the strategies for time management. Walker, Wysocki & Kepner (2012) proposed five tips for Managing Time in the Workplace:

- "(1) Prioritize your tasks;
- (2) Get the job done right the first time;
- (3) Do not waste time;
- (4) Delegate tasks;
- (5) Avoid procrastination" (p. 1).

Also they concluded that " Focusing on these common areas of managing time should reduce the amount of time spent on each task. Prioritizing is simple once a to-do-list is utilized that fits your style; this requires the ability to distinguish what is important and/or urgent during the day. Adjusting the way tasks are executed will save time and minimize procrastination. Delegating tasks to the most appropriate person will reduce wasted time for you and others. Finally, dealing with the sources of procrastination will go a long way to making you an effective manager of time" (p. 3).

Pickles Jar Theory

This theory teach us the right way to manage time, it's very simple to understand and execute, it also makes us aware of the fact that distractions that lead to mismanagement that should be avoided completely in order to follow the right track (Sengupta, 2011). The basic idea is that you should schedule only your high priority tasks for the day and leave the gaps in between for less important activities (email, browsing and so forth). This is supported by the analogy of a pickle jar, where you can fit more in the jar if you add large pebbles first before pouring in smaller pebbles and sand (rather than adding the largest pebbles last when they will be unlikely to fit).

Managing time in nursing work

Being a nurse naturally comes with some stress and difficulties on the job, with a little planning and prioritizing, nurses can better manage the time they have at work, allowing them to provide better care for themselves and their patients. Time management that can help nurses balance

their professional and personal lives more efficiently and effectively, it's important to learn how to manage nursing time at work effectively to reduce stress and ensure you provide quality care.

Time management is recognized as an important component of work performance and professional nursing practice, nurses using different strategies of time management. Learning time management skills in nursing lets nurses work smarter instead of harder. This skill is crucial to survive the day to day busy shift (Rosario, 2012). The amount of time required for a nursing member to spend on any activity in nursing practice is important for nursing manager in order to schedule and task allocation (Munyisia, Yu & Hailey, 2011).

Jones (2012) mentioned some tips for time management which include:

- (1) Arrive early to plan your work (that way you will never be late),
- (2) list activities that need to be done (this allows you to transfer tasks from your mind into a paper, then your brain space becomes available for something else),
- (3) prioritize these activities (prioritize patient care using categories, write everything down, cross items off as you complete them, and re-prioritize as events unfold throughout the day),
- (4) estimate the time needed for each,
- (5) be conscious of the amount of time spent on different tasks,
- (6) allow time for unscheduled activities or errors (if not the time will be wasted),
- (7) learn to say no, finally;
- (8) organize your home life; prioritize and delegate tasks at home to reduce stress, make relaxation a must do in your life.

Benefits of time management in nursing work

Nursing can be an especially demanding career. Most nurses have a lot of things they are responsible for and to make quick decisions about patient care and well-being. Improving time management plans can make the nurse much more efficient nurse, one that will be able to attend to the needs of more patients in less time. In some cases, it may give the nurse more time to speak with and to know those that he is caring for, in others, knowing how to do things

quickly could mean saving a life. Of course, better time management doesn't just help patients, it can also be a big stress relief for those working in advanced environment. Knowing how to prioritize the tasks each shift can make a big difference in lowering stress and helping to manage the nurse work, less stress can also help you arrive to spend time relaxing or socializing with the family without feeling completely exhaustion and nervous.

Free time management

Wei, Chin, Tzung, and Chung (2011) referring free time to those periods when individuals are unobligated and can decide his works. And it usually involves "killing time" if not objective this free time, also having no plans for free time can cause problems, "While time management can improve the quality of work, the management of free time can contribute to the quality of life" (p. 561-562).

Trenberth (2005) concluded in her study that leisure can contribute to physical, social, emotional and cognitive health through prevention, coping and transcendence. And also she suggested that educating and counseling people on how to manage their time and plan for leisure can help people apply those skills and improve physical and mental health. In Wei, Chin, Tzung, and Chung (2011) study they recommended to have the opportunities not only for recreation, but also for leisure education to teach students how to manage their free time.

Finally, it is easy to blame others or circumstances, but the human remains responsible for his time. If people do not make use of time management and its benefits, they will not be benefited from the services of science and technology (Hashemzadeh et al., 2011).

Conclusion

Time management is the ability of person to use the time function to accomplish the tasks in the exact timing. When we are successful at time management, we are able to maximize use of every hour of the day. This means using each hour of our day to do the right things to accomplish all of the tasks that we need to in the most efficient manner. More time management more achievement, less stress. Nursing is a demanding and stressful occupation, thus the nurses should be organized. Managing time effectively, knowing when to delegate and thinking critically are essential.

The organization of time usually linked to the person self, who determines times and work, and entertainment time, and the organization aims only to make the best achievements and reduce the pressure and stress on the person as well as allow that time to develop him/herself. So there is no one style fits all people, every individual must be responsible for him/herself and to organize his/her time according to his/her needs.

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