

Organization of time of the operational activities in the tourism management – an important issue for all managers

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Abstract

As the tourism industry is complex and turbulent, the need of ongoing upgrades of the system and the skills of the managers is more than needed. The manager first of all should organize his work if he wants to manage organizing the work of his subordinates. The basic issue that he has is the time, especially because of some determinants that time possesses. It is well known that time has one very unique and negative characteristic, which is the one that it cannot be turned back. Under that we understand that what has passed has passed and it cannot be turned back again and only can be used at the moment and not after that. Time as one untouchable category has an inelastic characteristic. And, the manager has to have that on mind and the fact that the all those years that he has spent on that position are just certain amount of time, nothing more and nothing less. He does not have the possibility to turn it back, to stop it or to lower it etc. How he spends his time is his and only his choice and problem. Because of this reasons, he has to make a rationalization of the time spent on his duties. With one word, he has to learn to manage his own time if he wants to manage the time of his employees and with that to make profit for the company that he works for.

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Introduction

Time management is of great importance in business. Especially in tourism, mostly because of the fact that tourism is a very complex and time related industry and business⁷⁹. Organizations must

⁷⁹ WTO (2002). *Second Meeting of the Tourism Recovery Committee – Berlin, Germany*.

have more interest in time as it is a scarce resources and it involves the various resources. If time wasn't managed, nothing else will be managed. And a good management of time is useful in providing the resources and the costs of the organization; the time element is the only productive component fairly distributed among organizations, unlike other production elements, therefore if this element is used efficiently and effectively it will reach the efficiency in reaching the objectives of the top management⁸⁰.

What is required is to invest time to achieve the objectives of the organization, and if the capital (i.e. time) is invested it will continue to grow and be successful in the future.

Time management varies in difficulty from one facility to another depending on the type and nature of the sector. In the tourist sector it seems difficult as products are intangible, heterogeneous, uneven and difficult to predict. Therefore the management companies operating in this sector must do more than care for achieving greater effectiveness of available time to all corners of the organization⁸¹.

Previous studies

In order to get better understanding about this complex issue, several studies shall be presented below which were done in the past years. They will be of great usage for the future research and analysis of the time management in the tourism sector and industry⁸².

Study of Abu Samra (2007). The study aimed to identify leadership styles of academic department's heads in community colleges in Palestine and its relation with time management, the study concluded that the estimates sample time of management reality was moderate, and there is a positive relationship between leadership style and the reality of time management.

Study of Guoqing & Yongxin (2000). The study aimed to identify gender differences between Chinese managers in time management, it was found that female managers are less effective in managing time than male managers, but there was no difference between males and females in regard to their views about what waste time.

Study of Al -Washah (2004). The study aimed to identify trends in Central Administration directors working in the institutions which work in qualified industrial areas toward time management and effectiveness of time management. The study found that there are positive trends among these managers about time management and exploitation leading to efficiency and positiveness. The study recommended the adoption of clear action plans within the institution which leads to providing time to employees.

Study of Al Joofee (2004). The study aimed to evaluate operations of official time management in the university of Ab, the study found that the formal time for the requirements of the daily administrative job in the University of Ab is enough to accomplish the tasks. Administrative officers lacked functional awareness of time management and investment importance, towards the requirements of his or her official position. The most important thing the study recommended is to establish administrative unit dealing with the process of planning and follow-up in the University.

Organization of time of the operational activities

Having on mind the facts said above, it can be stated that there have been several tries to make graphic and theoretical adjustments in the usage of the working time of the managers and employees. One kind of matrix for time managing is the following one⁸³:

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Nayef A. M., Abdul R.A.R.M., Al-Nsour O.H.M. (2012). *Time Management in Travel and Tourism Companies in Jordan*. Journal of Management Research, Vol. 4, No. 1: E8.

Table 1: Matrix of time management

	Urgent	Non-urgent
Important	<p>I</p> <p><u>ACTIVITIES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis • Urgent problems • Projects with deadlines 	<p>II</p> <p><u>ACTIVITIES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention, self upgrading • Building new relations • Acquiring new possibilities • Planning, recreation
Unimportant	<p>III</p> <p><u>ACTIVITIES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interruptions, phone calls • Mail, meetings, reports • Urgent problems created by fast thinking • Building popularity 	<p>IV</p> <p><u>ACTIVITIES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trivial things • Part of mail • Part of phone calls • Wasting time • Making up false meetings

Source: Gjorgjioski B. (1996). *Organizacija na rabotnoto vreme na menadzerite*, Centar za internacionalen menadzment. Skopje.

On the basis of the matrix given above, all the things that the manager meets with in his work can be divided into 4 different groups like following⁸⁴:

1. Urgent-important things,
2. Un-urgent-important things,
3. Unimportant-urgent things,
4. Unimportant-non urgent things.

It is a fact that according to the importance of executing, priority is given to those activities which are situated in the first group, and last ones in priority are those one situated in group four.

One way of time management according to Sikavica and Novak⁸⁵ is the following:

- preparing for the daily results that have to be accomplished,
- making a list of tasks which will be divided into three categories "A", "B", "C",
- creating priority tasks in each group,
- dividing the tasks onto the employees,
- working on one and only one task at a time,
- rising u the abilities for communication between the members of a group etc.

It is my thought that the right usage of the time should be respected in the following phases:

1. What should be done during the working day (which duties should be accomplished),
2. Which would be the order of executing that same tasks,
3. What would be the schedule of the activities that should be done.

⁸³ Gjorgjioski B. (1996). *Organizacija na rabotnoto vreme na menadzerite*, Centar za internacionalen menadzment. Skopje.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Sikavica P., Novak M. (1999). *Poslovna organizacija*. Informator, Zagreb, str. 433.

Phases in the process of organization of time

It is my personal opinion that each and every manager in the field of organizing his own work has to be in order with the schedule of the activities that should be done which is given prior completing the tasks. That should be done if he wants his work to be fluent and without troubles and if the organization would like to make their goals possible and on time.

In the margins of phase one, the duties are being divided, a list with the things that should be done for that day is being made, the things with deadlines, and of course a list with the things that should be done in the nearest future.

Thing involved in this group are like checking up the mail, checking if there are some meetings or briefings arranged earlier for the day and the days that follow etc.

In phase two a schedule is being made for the activities that should be executed. The core of this phase is in making a list with the priorities which have to be done.

Of course, priority should be given to the following activities⁸⁶:

- executing deadlines,
- importance of the person that should be kept in touch,
- the importance of the activity given before.

Phase three is connected to the schedule and making of the same one for the activities. Under that comes the necessity of the activities given before to be time scheduled. The time schedule of the activities understands the amount of time needed for completing the tasks given. This phase is important because it shows the efficiency and the effectiveness of the manager and the employees for the thing that are delegated earlier. The necessity of controlling in this phase comes from the fact that as soon the things are said and done, as better and more profitable the company would be. Also, some activities can be done inside the company (for then is needed less time), and for some is needed more time because they cannot be done in the company and the staff is needed more time to accomplish them.

Thru organizing the working day, the manager succeeds in his will of creating an efficient and effective organization, or not (all depends on his commitment on his job, and responsibility doing it). That's the reason why time management is crucial in each organization which would like to be successful and profitable.

Rationalization of time and activities

The manager is in position to make all this possible if he is willing to make a rationalization for all the things that should be done by the employees and him as well.

Of great importance is the fact that he should make all those so called "empty walks" disappear, with other words said the time that is being lost from different reasons that have not got a connection with the working process and the completing of the tasks. As sources from which time is being lost can be mentioned⁸⁷:

- unexpected briefings,
- unnecessary phone calls,
- visits by accident,
- unnecessary talks during the working process.

The unexpected briefings and accident visits as a source of time loss are the major issue that concerns both managers and owners of companies. Most of the time the reasons that appear are

⁸⁶ WTO/ECOWAS (1999). *Seminar on Safety and Security of Persons and Goods in the Tourism Sector – Cotonou, Benin.*

⁸⁷ Tourism and the Media (1998). *Shaping the Image of Destinations in the Middle East and North Africa – Conference in sustainable tourism.* Amman, Jordan.

those that the managers would want to run, get away from the daily tasks, the requests from the owners, the will to "chat"⁸⁸ etc.

On several occasions the manager has to be victim of people who really take their precious time away, but at the same time are a great partner of the company which he works in.

On the other hand, the managers themselves are initiators of some kinds of briefings because they want to have more time for themselves⁸⁹.

A question that is being asked is that which are the ways to avoid such time loss?

One way is the behavior of the manager in the way to avoid "unwanted" visitors who will create an empty period of time in which he would not be productive. The following situations are used⁹⁰:

- if the managers doesn't want to be disturbed in his work, he should avoid sitting with people that come to him. By doing that, he gives the visitor a sign that he is in a hurry and doesn't want to be disturbed,
- if a client who is not written in the list with clients, he should tell him that he is busy and doesn't have time to chat with him,
- if he can't get free of the unwanted visitor, he should stand of the chair and start making his desk off etc.

Conclusion

There are managers who know that the unwanted conversations are taking too much time and yet they secretly want to start a conversation like that. To fulfill that "need" of his, they are recommended the following:

- every day, some period of the day to have conversations like that,
- to let their colleagues decide whether there is a need of an "unwanted" conversation or not. If they initiate one, the manager should organize it and be part of the same.

Since the objectives of the managers and staff are specific and clear, there is no duplication of work objectives and policies, there has to be an accurate job description of work duties, and precise description for the authorities. The deficiencies in some areas (i.e. There is not continuous, sufficient and updated staff meetings to make staff acquainted with the new development at work, there isn't renewed and up-to-date information for decision-maker when adopting any decision, and sources of information is not totally available) in the travel and tourism companies should be overcome fast and easily. Only in this way the companies will have the opportunity to grow and develop. Travel and tourism companies have to work to meet rapid customer orders. In places and time where customer orders are received for tourism products and met quickly, tourist offers for touristic products are continuously presented; tourism services and tourist programs are presented quickly and according to the need and demand of market tourism offers are published for customers continuously through the use of newer and faster roads such as the Internet.

After all, it has to be concluded that the managers who managed companies in the past are very different from those who do the same thing at this time. It is true, the amount of information that they receive is different, as in quality, as in quantity. But basically, they are being received on one and only way, thru mouth, verbal way.

⁸⁸ That are so called visits from "courtesy" from business cooperates which have to be done, but at the same time they mean loss of time.

⁸⁹ WTO (2000). *Turismo y los medios de comunicacion – Ceiba, Nicaragua*.

⁹⁰ WTO (2000). *Turismo y los medios de comunicacion – Quito, Ecuador*.

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