Higher Administration & IT

Time and Task Management

Time and Task Management

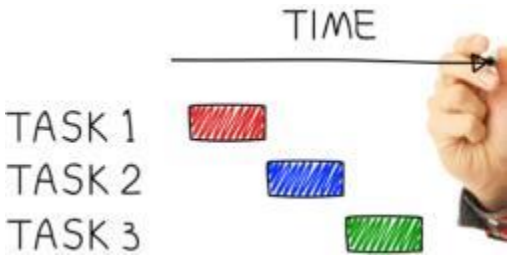
Describing strategies for effective time and task management and their importance.

Strategies for effective time and task management, and their importance	♦ skills required: planning, delegating, organising, directing, and controlling ♦ setting targets for the individual and the organisation ♦ dealing with changes in priorities ♦ monitoring and evaluating progress ♦ time stealers and strategies to minimise their effect in independent working, group working and meetings ♦ benefits of good time and task management, to the individual and organisation ♦ consequences of bad time and task management, to the individual and organisation

Topic	Further advice and guidance about skills, knowledge and understanding
Strategies for effective time and task management, and their importance	♦ skills required: planning, delegating, organising, directing, and controlling ♦ setting targets for the individual and the organisation, for example: — personal development planning — action plans — to-do lists — priorities lists — Gantt charts — e-diary ♦ dealing with changes in priorities ♦ monitoring and evaluating progress through: — meetings — accessing files — buddy system — Gantt charts ♦ time stealers and strategies to minimise their effect in independent working, group working and meetings ♦ benefits of good time and task management, to the individual and organisation ♦ consequences of bad time and task management, to the individual and organisation



Definitions



- **Time Management** – the ability to use one's time effectively or productively, especially at work.
  - not about ***how much*** time you spend, but ***how*** it is spent.

- **Task Management** – finishing an assigned piece of work in a certain amount of time.



Skills for Effective Time and Task Management

- **Prioritisation:** deciding on what tasks are important, which tasks should be carried out first and which tasks are less important.
- **Resource management:** making effective use of time, staff and equipment.
- **Organisation:** being able to look ahead and plan tasks that need to be carried out.
- **Delegation:** deciding when it is appropriate to ask someone else to so some of your tasks.
- **Assertiveness:** being able to say 'no' when necessary when you have taken on too much work.
- **Negotiation:** being able to negotiate deadlines and resources.
- **Control:** tackling tasks calmly and in order of priority.
- **Evaluation**: being able to look at tasks, seek improvement and identify the causes of any problems.



Role of the Senior Administrative Assistant

- Required to **work to deadlines**.
- Ensure **others achieve targets** and **deadlines set**



1 - Planning

To-Do List – list of all tasks needing carried out over a period of time eg a day.

Helps you feel organised and focused.
Works as a reminder of tasks.

- **Crossing off items:**
  - Sense of progress and accomplishment
  - Motivational
  - Move forwards without being overwhelmed



1 - Planning

Priorities List – to make lists or plans more effective it is important that they are prioritised – some are important some are urgent – some are both!

- Work out **what still needs** to be done
- Identify what is **urgent** and what is **important**
- Think about **value to the organisation**
- **Which will take the most effort to complete?**
- Be flexible and adaptable
- Be realistic and know you can't do everything today



- **Action Plan –** lists the steps that must be taken in order to achieve a specific target which is usually with a longer term project
  - Identifies the tasks to be done
  - Identifies timescale and resources for each task
  - Identifies who is responsible for each task
  - Shows any notes to explain actions or changes in priorities.
  - Allows complex projects to be broken down into SMART targets.

Action Plan Example

Name: Miranda Dyer

Project: Compile a brochure of all secondary schools in Scotland

Action required	Estimated time for completion	Actual time taken to complete	Notes
Research schools in Scotland	8 hours	9.5 hours	Book a quiet office with phone and internet access
Enter information onto database	2 hours	1 hour	Enquire whether building a database of primary schools would be worthwhile
Source images for brochure	2 hours		
Create brochure using desk-top publishing software	6 hours		Ensure most up-to-date software is available

SMART Targets

- **Specific** – be well defined and state exactly what has to be done
- **Measurable** – quantifiable - state how much/what size, so you know how to achieve them
- **Agreed** – with Line Manager as part of PDP
- **Realistic** – achievable but still a challenge – you should have the necessary skills
- **Timed** – key dates identified when the work will be completed – a deadline has been set



Examples of SMART Targets

- By the **end of next month** a database of **100** suitable UK hotels for company travel is to be compiled
- **Within the next two months** the manual filing **system** detailing employee records is to be transferred to a database.
- **By 30 September**, the administrative assistant is to attend a training **course** on our new CRM system







Urgent vs Important

- **Answering the phone** – urgent if you ignore the caller may ring off and you would not know why they called. However it may not be important

- **Regular file management** – this is important, but not immediately pressing, however if left too long finding files may be difficult





Urgent vs Important

- **Urgent tasks demand immediate attention** – but whether they are done may or may not matter.
- **Important tasks matter** – not doing them will have consequences.
- If the task is important but time is short, delegation should be considered.



2 - Time Management: Delegation

- Develops **staff abilities** and **motivation**
- **Allows managers to have time**, to carry out more important tasks

- **But…**
  - Fear of **losing control** – impact if something goes wrong
  - **Job insecurity** and **loss of status**
  - **Unable to trust** subordinates
  - Don't want to **overburden** staff/**upset** staff/start **conflict**
  - Don't know **how to tell others** to work
  - **Lack of knowledge** and **strength of the team**



Consequences of Poor Delegation

- **Work not completed** on time or a **poor standard**
- Increased **stress** and possible **absenteeism**
- **Decreased motivation** and **unhappiness**
- **Low productivity** and **efficiency** levels





3 – Time Management: Organising

- **Schedule** time first thing (or last thing) to think about what needs to be done – this will lead to less stress.

- **Keeping your workstation tidy** *otherwise* it is impossible to prioritise what needs action.

THINK! Try to handle papers only once…

Keep ¦ Save or Giveaway ¦ Archive or Delete

4 – Time Management: Directing and Controlling



Methods for monitoring and the progress of work which has been delegated:

- **Random or Sample Checks** – overseeing quality and progress of work
- **Regular Updates** – ask for regular updates on progress from employee
- **Regular Review meetings** – extra support offered as required
- **Mentoring** – senior member oversees, addressing problems immediately and avoiding junior employee stress
- **Buddying** – similar to mentoring, more experienced member of staff at the same level to offer help and advice.
- **Appraisal** – discussing current performance and evaluating training and development required, this helps career development
- **Review PDP Targets** – employee sets own targets, matches with organisation.
- **Gantt Charts** – *see next slide*

Sampling Checks

<u>Definition</u>: The line manager reviews an employee's work to check progress, quality and consistency.

- **Random check on a piece of work**, this check is unannounced.
- Sample check on **a piece of work from each employee,** this check is preplanned and the same task is sampled for each employee.
- **Double check where the line manager completes the work themselves too**, ensures the outcome is the same and highlights problem areas.

The Mentor

Definition: A **senior employee** (**not** their **line manager**) is **assigned to a junior employee** to **assist** and **support** them in **reaching their targets**.

- is someone who **knows the details of the job** and the organisation.
- can **offer on the job training**.
- is responsible for **setting short-term targets** – set out during weekly meetings.
- can **evaluate progress of targets**.
- can provide **support and give specific guidance** of next steps.

The Buddy

<u>Definition</u>: An employee is paired with a more experienced member of the team who has the same job role.

- The buddy is someone who knows the details of the job and the organisation.
- Help and advice are available from the buddy.

Gantt Chart



David McBride		NOVEMBER																			
Task	Time	5th - 9th					12th - 16th					19th – 23rd					26th – 30th				
		M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
Prepare financial accounts	3 days																				
Organise Scottish sales seminar	5 days																				
Monthly team meeting	1 day																				
Interviews for new admin post	6 days																				
Staff appraisals	4 days																				

This allows you to see at a glance:

- **What the various tasks are**
- Each task or item of work is **represented by a coloured bar**
- How long each task is scheduled to last - **start date and end date**
- Where **tasks overlap** with other tasks and by how much
- **Key dates (milestones)** – including the start and end date of the whole project
- Adjustments made where additional time is required.
- **Comparisons** – between work planned and work accomplished
- Allows **identification of overlapping activities**, **unmanageable workload** or space for employees to take on more.

Gantt Chart – Sample Answer

- This is a **graphical representation** of planned work against completed work with the aid of a timeline. All the key events are called **MILESTONES**.
- Each task is represented by a **colour bar showing start date and end date.**
- To be fully effective it will be displayed in **a PROMINENT POSITION**.
- Identifies **quieter/busier times** and tasks which are falling behind schedule.



Compare a Gantt Chart and an Action Plan

- A Gantt Chart would show deadlines and progress graphically **WHEREAS** the Action plan would give written details as to which tasks have to be completed.
- **BOTH** are used in ensuring staff work towards agreed deadlines.
- **BOTH** allow large tasks to be broken down into smaller chunks and time frames allocated.

See SQA Past Paper 2023 Q11

Mentoring System – Sample Answer

- The mentor is someone **familiar with all the details** of the job/organisation.
- **On-the-job training is offered** – *both can learn from each other*
- Mentor sets **short term targets** – discussed at weekly meetings
- The Mentor can **appraise/evaluate progress towards targets** and provide appropriate levels of **support in different situations.**



Some possible answers…

- **Buddy system.** This is where an employee is paired with a more experienced person, usually at the same level, who can be called upon for help and advice. This will usually be someone who is familiar with all the details of the job and the organisation.
- **Mentoring system.** Here a more senior member of staff is assigned to an employee. This senior member of staff can be relied upon to supply help and advice as well as knowledge of the organisation and how it works.
- **Line manager.** This might involve the line manager doing periodic checks of work or discussions about progress of tasks to ensure that organisational policy is being adhered to and the required quality standards are being met.
- **Internal audits.** Many organisations use some type of quality system to check that organisational standards and quality standards are being met. These internal audits are usually carried out by someone external to the department but internal to the organisation.
- **Appraisal …**

Importance of Target Setting

- Employees and departments **know what is expected of them**
- Is the organisation achieving **success**?
- Any **deviations from target** can be corrected, if monitored regularly
- Increased **productivity**
- Increase in **motivation** – trying to reach the target set



Why Monitor Targets?

There should be an agreed procedure to monitor and evaluate progress of targets.

Benefits of doing so:

- Targets can be adjusted where necessary.
- Improved productivity.
- Improved quality of work as appropriate support and time has been dedicated.

Summarising Recording Targets…

- **Gantt Chart** – shows comparisons between work planned and work accomplished. Key target dates (milestones) will be marked on the chart.
- **To-Do List** – shows a list of tasks to be completed.
- **Priorities List** – tasks put in order of importance.
- **Action Plan** – identifies what should be done by whom, with expected completion dates
- **Electronic Diary (e-Diary)** – different views are available to show daily/weekly/months
- **Personal Development Plan (PDP)**



Summarising Recording Targets…

Personal Development Plan (PDP):

- A structured document used to record formally areas of **strength** and areas for **development** with **SMART targets** set taking account of the **aspirations** of the employee.
- Reviewed once or twice a year with manager to monitor performance and progress towards targets.
- Allow an employee to:
  - Focus on specific aspects of their job
  - Identify strengths/skills to be shared with others
  - Identify development and training needs
  - Expand job role in the organisation



Changing Priorities



- **Unexpected circumstances:**
  - Member of staff absent
  - Computer network 'crashes'
  - Changed deadline for a piece of work
- Priorities lists should list **high, medium and low priority items** to assist with rescheduling when required
- Employee should remain clam and maybe call on the help of others to complete tasks if necessary

Changing Priorities

Senior Administrative Assistants need to be able to re-evaluate the importance of tasks in real time to ensure all deadlines are met.

- Priorities lists should support in this.

Strategies used to support changing priorities:

- Changing the teams work schedules.
- Extending deadlines of appropriate tasks.
- Offering overtime to staff.

Time Stealers – Reducing Effectiveness



- **Lack of forward planning**
- **Interruptions** eg telephone or visitors – do not disturb time
- **Meetings** – set time limits and ensure they are entered in an ediary
- **Email** – only access at certain times of the day
- **Taking on too much** – delegate
- **Unable to find information** – poor file management
- Acting **without complete information**
- **Crisis management** – not having plans
- Unclear or poor **communication**
- **Inability to say "NO"** – taking on too much work
- **Desk stress** – clutter, unable to find information
- **Procrastination**
- **Not grouping jobs together – duplicate journeys**





Solving Time Stealers – Some Solutions

- Learn **politely to control the conversation** and suggest meeting at an appropriate time
- Have some **"Do Not Disturb" Time** – use voicemail at certain times of the day
- Only **check emails at certain times**
- **Discuss workload** with manager – learn to **say NO**
- Implement a **clear desk policy**
- Have **plans/strategies** in place for **unexpected situations** eg staff absence
- Always remember… you should never struggle and **ask for help** when required.
- Ensure that **meetings have time limits** and ensure **agendas are realistic**
- **Group jobs together** so that visits to the photocopier or other departments are carried out only once or twice a day
- Use a **to-do list or priorities list** and ensure that one task is fully completed before another one is started



Effects of Poor Time Management

- Staff become **stressed** and **absence levels increase** with work overload.
- **Poor productivity** – work is not produced as efficiently or to the right quality **(activity panic).**
- **Morale will decrease** – low job satisfaction.
- **Relationships with others** – who may not be able to progress their own work.
- Increase in **accidents** or unnecessary incidents.
- Increased **costs to management.**
- **Reacting to situations** vs good planning.
- Poor **appraisal** – lack of **promotion/bonus** – **verbal/written warnings.**
- **Feeling of being unsupported**, take grievance out against organisation.



Sample Answer

When answering the phone, be polite and listen but avoid unnecessary small talk keeping the conversation brief. Use voicemail wisely and set time aside to return missed calls. With the use of a personal mobile phone family can still contact you in an emergency.

Check your emails at only certain times of the day and close your email program when not in use. New emails appearing on screen can be a distraction. Set up mail rules to filter messages and delete all irrelevant emails that do not apply to you. Often people in an organisation will use the reply-all feature inappropriately.

Try to avoid interruptions, be firm with colleagues who just want to chat. Let others know times when you are available and make an appointment (or more informally reschedule a more appropriate time) to discuss the matter.

Group jobs together so that similar tasks are carried out at the same time. Learn to 'say no' and be honest if you cannot manage additional workload and raise these concerns with your line manager. Keep your desk free of clutter, tidying at the end of the day and make a to-do list (or update) for the following day.

Benefits of Good Time Management

- Improved **morale** and **job satisfaction**
- Increased **productivity** and better **quality** of work
- Lower **stress levels** and less **staff absence**
- **Better relations** with both internal and external clients
- Elimination of **procrastination** and **indecision**
- Improved **promotion prospects**
- **Positive customer relations** with less complaints potentially due to efficiencies

Consequences of Poor Time Management

- *Some flip points from benefits.*

- Increased **organisational costs**
- **Targets not being achieved**
- **New projects and ideas** are **not started** as never any extra time available.



Internet Activity



- Access www.mindtools.com
- Choose Time Management
- Work through the activities and take some short notes on Time Management

- There are some example documents which you can download.

Internet Activity



Some useful information can be accessed here on the businessballs.com website

Sample Exam Questions

- Outline 4 methods which a Senior Administrative Assistant could use to monitor an employee's work. (4)

- Describe 3 time management strategies a Senior Administrative Assistant could use to be more effective in the workplace. (6)

- Justify the need for a Senior Administrative Assistant to monitor and evaluate a Junior Administrative Assistant's work. (3)

Question 1

- ✓ Check at regular intervals that work is progressing as expected.
- ✓ Set regular meetings with an employee.
- ✓ Request regular updates from an employee.
- ✓ Check progress against Action Plans.
- ✓ Use a Buddy system where an employee is paired with someone with more experience for help and advice.
- ✓ Review targets set in an employee's Personal Development Plan.
- ✓ Use a Gantt chart to compare planned and actual progress/identify if tasks are on track.
- ✓ Use an appraisal system to discuss progress towards targets.

Question 2

- ✓ **Use To-do Lists of tasks to be done** – updated at the beginning of the day or the end of the day for the next day – arranged in order of importance – to ensure that urgent tasks are completed on time – to allow tasks to be ticked off as/when completed.

- ✓ **Prepare an Action Plan** which breaks down a task into smaller more attainable parts – to arrange tasks in order of completion – estimate/decide time for completion/deadline, for example, organising an event.
- ✓ **Delegate routine tasks to other members of staff** – allows an employee more time to focus on key/urgent tasks.
- ✓ **Use a Gantt chart to keep tasks on track** – monitor timing of a project using a dateline – implement corrective action if needed by changed priorities.
- ✓ **Use a proper file management system (both electronic and manual)** – give documents/files appropriate names to assist in easy retrieval – keep an organised desk/desktop.

Question 3

- ✓ Ensuring that tasks are completed on time.
- ✓ Ensuring the quality of work being completed.
- ✓ To review the progress of a task/find out if assistance or resources are needed for a task.
- ✓ To review and adjust targets for future tasks.
- ✓ To keep staff on track/ensure staff stay on task and are not distracted.
- ✓ To help award performance-related pay.
- ✓ To assist with the staff appraisal process.
- ✓ To identify future training needs of staff/employees.

Sample Exam Questions

- Outline the reasons why a Senior Administrative Assistant may be reluctant to delegate a task. (2)
- Describe the long-term implications for a Senior Administrative Assistant who fails to delegate tasks to a Junior Administrative Assistant. (6)
- Describe strategies which could be used to overcome the problem caused by 2 common time stealers. (4)

Question 4

- ✓ Inability to trust colleagues to complete the work on time.
- ✓ Fear of loss of status/job security.
- ✓ Worry that work will be of poor quality.
- ✓ Fear of upsetting staff/overburdening staff.
- ✓ Fear of losing control over the task.

Question 5

- ✓ **(Senior Admin Assistant) may suffer from stress as a result of a heavy workload** – could result in employee taking time off through illness – leading to an inability to focus on effective completion of the task.
- ✓ **(Senior Admin Assistant) may find it difficult to meet deadlines –** resulting in lower productivity.
- ✓ **Deadlines are not met** – leading to problems with dissatisfied customers/clients.
- ✓ **Junior staff do not have the opportunity to develop new skills** – may not be able to deputise if senior staff are unavailable/absent.

Question 6

- ✓ **Frequent interruptions whether telephone/visitors** – learn to control time or protect time.
- ✓ **Unexpected visits by colleagues** – be polite but firm especially if the person is just looking for a chat.
- ✓ **Meetings that take longer than necessary** (face-to-face or on telephone) – set time limits.
- ✓ **Taking on too much work** – delegate more tasks, learn to say NO – be assertive.
- ✓ **Unable to find the information you require** – ensure you have an appropriate filing system.



Actual Examination Questions

2015 (SPEC) Q3 (Section 2)

Describe task and time management strategies employees could use.

(4 marks)

2015 (SPEC) Q3 (Section 2)

3		**Action plans** An action plan can be used to break down a large project into smaller parts for individuals/groups (1 mark) – this is where task responsibilities, deadlines and resources are given (1 development mark).	4	Award 1 mark for each valid description. Award 1 mark for a development of a description. To gain full marks at least two strategies must be described.
		Gantt chart Used by managers to show comparisons between work planned and work accomplished (1 mark). Key target dates will be marked on the chart and adjustments can be made where additional time is needed (1 development mark). Other responses could include: • to-do lists • priorities lists • diaries • task-management software • strategies to reduce time-stealers.		Up to 3 marks can be awarded for describing any one strategy. Award a maximum of 2 marks for responses related to time-stealers. Accept any other appropriate response.

2015 Q3

Outline 4 methods which could be used to monitor and evaluate an employee's work.

(4 marks)

2015 Q3

3.			• **Buddy system -** An employee is paired with a more experienced person for help and advice. • **Mentoring system -** A more senior member of staff is assigned to a junior employee. • **Line manager reviews/meetings** The line manager can carry out periodic checks on progress by meeting with a member of staff. • **Action plans -** This is where task responsibilities, deadlines and resources are allocated. • **Appraisal -** Reviews current performance and helps identify and evaluate the training and development needs of staff. This appraises current strengths and weaknesses and assesses employee's career development. • **Personal Development Plans** Where employees set their own targets for future skills development. • Random/sample/double checks can each be awarded a mark if different • Gantt charts… • Internal audits… • Mystery shopper/comment cards/online reviews/surveys/feedback forms – can all be awarded marks if relate back to monitoring and evaluating the employee.	4	Award **1 mark** for each valid brief statement. Accept any other suitable response. Do not accept to-do lists and priorities lists

2016 Q7

Describe the time and task management strategies that employees could use.

(4 marks)

2016 Q7

7.			To Do lists - Listing each task to be undertaken and trying to stick to the list Priorities List - Employees could prioritise tasks into urgent and non-urgent, high, medium and low priority Gantt Charts - Which can show overall progress towards targets - Compares actual with estimated time spent on tasks - Use of milestones to track progress/used by teams to manage large projects Employees should try to handle papers or tasks only once in order of priority Ensuring telephone calls are dealt with in minimum time - using caller ID/Screen Calls/Voice Mail Frequent visitors are discouraged or kept to a minimum. Being aware of own ability to cope with workload and not taking on too much work Delegation... Action plans... Organising/Filing... Diaries	6	Candidates are required to consider at least two methods to gain full marks. Award **1 mark** for each valid description point. Award **1 mark** for each valid development point. **Up to 5 marks** may be awarded for describing any one method. Be aware that if the strategy is not named would you know what is being described. Accept any other suitable response.

2017 Q1

Describe, using the information given in the case study, strategies Karen could use to improve the effectiveness of her time and task management.

(6 marks)

2017 Q1

1.			• Karen could give each job a priority - trying to note how long she will spend on a job and trying to stick to her list/Karen could try to prioritise her tasks into urgent and non-urgent, high, medium and low priority • Karen should complete one task before moving on to another. Karen could try to handle papers or tasks only once in order of priority • Karen should try to avoid interruptions by ensuring telephone calls are dealt with in minimum time and that chatty colleagues are discouraged. Have a set time for catching up on calls/e-mails/visitors • Karen could use a quiet/separate space to ensure that she can focus on the tasks she has to complete without interruptions or the distraction of the main open-plan office • Action Plans could be used to break the task down into smaller components with **timings** • Karen could make use of Gantt Charts which would indicate the overall timescale of the project and milestones/deadlines which need to be met • Karen could discuss with other members of staff if work can be shared depending on their workload • E-diary could be used to set reminders of tasks/for meetings.	6	To gain full marks **at least 2 strategies** must be described. **5 marks** can be awarded for one strategy. Award **1 mark** for each valid description point. Award **1 mark** for each valid development point. Accept any other appropriate response. DNA a to-do-list as Moira has left one - going on to say that Karen should prioritise these tasks would be acceptable. The use of the word delegation infers that Karen has a subordinate - this is not the case and should not be awarded. No limit on number of time-stealers, eg saying no to further tasks.

2018 Q4 (SPEC)

Describe the possible implications for an Administrative Assistant who has poor time and task management skills.

(6 marks)

2018 Q4 (SPEC)

4.	• The quality of their work could be poor, in an attempt to meet deadlines. • They may not be trusted with important or high level tasks – this could affect their chances of promotion. • Relationships with other team members may suffer, as other members of the team may not be able to proceed with their own work. • They may suffer from stress – this could result in illness/absenteeism. • They may receive a poor appraisal, affecting pay and/or future career. • They may be sent on training courses. • They could be given a mentor or buddy to check on their work flow. • They may become quiet and withdrawn – stop communicating with other team members. • They may be given a verbal or written warning. • If they feel unsupported, they could take out a grievance against the organisation.	6	Award **1 mark** for each valid description point. Award **1 mark** for each valid development point. Award up to **5 marks** for describing any one implication. Or any other suitable response.

2019 Q4

Outline 2 possible time stealers.

(2 marks)

Outline strategies that could be used to minimise each of these.

(2 marks)

2019 Q4

Question			Expected response	Max mark	Additional guidance
4.	(a)		• Interruptions (telephone/visitors/e-mails) • Taking on too much work/Inability to say 'No' • Desk stress/unable to find information • Meetings taking too long • Crisis management • Procrastination • Making unnecessary/duplicate journeys • Disorganised	2	Award **1 mark** for each time stealer.

	(b)		• Interruptions (telephone/visitors/e-mails)
			  ○ do not disturb time/voicemail used at certain times of the day/close email down and check at certain times of day
			  ○ staff's own phone alerting them to incoming messages
			• Taking on too much work/Inability to say 'No'
			  ○ delegate/discuss workload with line manager
			• Desk stress/unable to find information
			  ○ introduce a good file management system/clear desk policy
			• Meetings taking too long
			  ○ set time limits/realistic agendas
			• Crisis management
			  ○ don't react hastily to situations take time to find a reasonable solution
			  ○ have plans/strategies in place for unexpected circumstances for example staff absence
			• Procrastination
			  ○ to-do list/priorities list
			• Making unnecessary/duplicate journeys
			  ○ group jobs together so visits to other departments are only made once a day
			• Disorganised
			  ○ make a to-do-list, ask for help
				2	Award **1 mark** for each valid strategy.
					
					No development marks available.
					
					Watch for repetition of strategies.
					
					Accept any other suitable response.

2019 Q5

Describe the following methods of monitoring and evaluating progress.

- Gantt chart
- Mentoring system

(4 marks)

2019 Q5

5.			**Gantt chart** • Graphical representation of planned work against work completed using a timeline - key events on the chart are called milestones • Each task or item of work is represented by a coloured bar on the chart which indicates start date and end date • The chart is displayed in a prominent position within the work place • Allows managers and individuals to quickly identify tasks/ projects which are behind scheduled deadlines • Allows identification of busy times/quieter times **Mentoring system** • The mentor is someone who is familiar with all the details of the job/organisation • Mentor can offer on the job training - both can learn from each other • Mentor can have responsibility of setting short term targets - this can be set out during weekly meetings • Mentor can appraise/evaluate progress towards targets • Mentor can provide appropriate levels of support in different situations • Mentor can give specific guidance regarding next steps	4	Award **1 mark** for each valid description. Award **1 mark** for each valid development point. Up to **3 marks** may be awarded for describing any one method. Accept any other appropriate response.

2021 Q5

Discuss the benefits to an employee and the organisation of effective time and task management.

(6 marks)

2021 Q5

5.			**Employee** • increase morale/motivation among employees leading to greater job satisfaction • lower stress levels for employee – more time is available for important/urgent jobs – quality of work/creativity improves – better chance of promotion • improve relationship with management • limits potential conflict with colleagues **Organisation** • increased productivity therefore targets and deadlines are met – company develops a good reputation/more competitive/improved customer relations • higher/better quality of work • increased job satisfaction leads to lower staff turnover and less absenteeism – money is saved in the recruitment process and training new staff • prevents customer dissatisfaction and complaints which can be expensive – recompense/reputation	6	Candidates are required to consider at least one benefit for the organisation and one benefit for the employee to gain full marks. Award **1 mark** for each valid discussion point. Award **1 mark** for each valid development point. Accept any other suitable response.

2022 Q5

Justify the need for an Administrative Assistant to have good time and task management skills.

(4 marks)

2022 Q5

5.			• enables deadlines to be met • work is not rushed/quality of work is high • may be given more challenging tasks if they are viewed as reliable workers • could improve their chances of promotion • reduces the chance of them suffering from stress and consequently, being ill/absent from work • improved relationships with management/other team members as projects are not delayed • possible pay rise or bonus if targets are met	4	Award **1 mark** for each valid justification. Award **1 mark** for each development point. Cap at **1 mark** for emotions and **1 mark** for customer satisfaction. DNA time and task management techniques. Accept any other suitable response.

2022 Q9

Discuss ways in which an organisation could monitor the progress of its targets..

(6 marks)

2022 Q9

9.			**Action Plan** • a document that could be prepared to help plan a long-term project – tasks are arranged in the order of priority – shows tasks that need to be completed, an estimate of how long they should take, target date and completion date – includes a breakdown of who is responsible for completing each task, and the resources required for the task – shows any notes to explain actions or changes in priorities **Random** or **sample checks** • a selection of the employee's work is checked by the line manager **Double checks** • completed tasks are also undertaken by the line manager – enables manager to identify any problem areas – ensures results obtained are the same **Buddy systems** • often a new employee, who is paired with a **more experienced** member of staff at the same level – buddy can be called upon for help and advice – usually someone who knows the details of the job and the organisation

6			Award **1 mark** for each valid discussion point. Award **1 mark** for each development point. Up to **5 marks** may be awarded for discussing one method only. Do not accept: • Personal Development Plan • Priorities List • To-do List Accept any other suitable response.
			Mentoring systems • a **more senior member of staff** is assigned to an employee – normally not their line manager – can be called upon for help and advice and knowledge of how the organisation works – senior member of staff has good knowledge of the job and the organisation **Line manager review** • the line manager will carry out periodic checks on progress of an employees' work – may have discussions about progress of tasks to ensure that organisational standards are being met – can be a good line of support and advice for employees **Appraisal** • a meeting which takes place between an employee and their line manager to review current performance – enables both to identify and evaluate the training and development needs of the employee in order to improve their performance – opportunity to assess employee's career development **Gantt Chart** • chart that contains key dates/milestones in a project and shows if they have been achieved – can be used to show comparisons between work planned and work completed • gives an "at a glance" overview of a project

2023 Q5

Outline 2 possible time stealers that could prevent a Senior Administrative Assistant from completing their work.

(2 marks)

Describe strategies that could be used to minimise each of these.

(4 marks)

2023 Q5

5.	(a)		• interruptions from colleagues who stop to talk about non-work matters • phone calls from colleagues or clients which can interrupt thought processes • taking on too much work than can be completed in time scale • inability to say 'no' as worried about how that would be viewed by team leader • disorganised with regards to filing systems/storage of documents/desk • meetings taking too long without reaching conclusions • making unnecessary/duplicate journeys • crisis management • procrastination	2	Award **1 mark** for each valid outline. Accept any other suitable response. Some candidates have grouped distractions which if developed can each be given a mark.
5.	(b)		**Interruptions (telephone/visitors/e-mails)** • voicemail used at certain times of the day/e-mails only checked at certain times of the day - you are not being interrupted while completing a task • do not disturb time **Taking on too much work/Inability to say 'no'** • delegate • discuss workload with line manager **Desk stress/unable to find information/disorganised** • introduce a good file management system - so items can be found quickly, means time is not lost looking for information **Meetings taking too long** • set realistic agendas and time limits - this means time is not wasted in meetings discussing points that are not relevant **Making unnecessary/duplicate journeys** • group jobs together so only one visit to other departments is needed each day **Crisis management** • have a plan or strategy in place for unexpected situations such as staff absence **Procrastination** • create a priorities list or to-do list so you are less likely to stray off tasks	4	Award **1 mark** for each valid point. Award **1 mark** for each valid development point. No mark awarded for listing strategy. Mark awarded for justification of strategy only. Need to check the strategy matches the time-stealers given in (a). Award up to **3 marks** for strategies to deal with one timestealer. If more than 2 time-stealers given, then mark the strategies to give the highest mark. Accept any other suitable response.

2023 Q11

Compare a Gantt Chart and an Action Plan.

(2 marks)

2023 Q11

11.			• a Gantt Chart would show deadlines and progress graphically WHEREAS the Action Plan would give written details as to which tasks have to be completed and what has been achieved • a Gantt Chart allows all team members/leaders to quickly see when tasks should start WHEREAS with an Action Plan individuals would need to refer to a document which can take time • both are used to plan large scale projects • both show who is responsible for a task • both show proposed time taken against actual time taken • both allow large tasks to be broken down into smaller chunks and time frames allocated • both are used in ensuring staff work towards agreed deadlines	**2**	Award **1 mark** for each valid comparison. Similarities and differences can be given. Accept any other suitable response.

2024 Q2

Justify the importance of Greg delegating tasks to employees in the organisation.

(2 marks)

2024 Q2

2.			• it can motivate employees
			  ○ increased productivity
			• it can enhance employee skills/experience
			  ○ could help prepare staff for taking charge if Greg was absent
			• it could help lead to future promotion opportunities for team members
			• reduced staff turnover
			  ○ could lead to less time/money spent on recruitment
			• it would help to ensure that deadlines are met
			• it could increase the standard or quality of Greg's work
			• it can alleviate Greg's stress
			• allows Greg to focus on more important tasks
				2	Award **1 mark** for each valid justification.
					
					Award **1 mark** for each development point.
					
					Accept any other suitable response.

2024 Q5

Outline characteristics of targets that help to make them effective.

(3 marks)

Describe ways an organisation can monitor and evaluate the progress of an employee's work.

(5 marks)

2024 Q5

5.	(a)		• **Specific** - the targets are well defined and state exactly what needs to be achieved • **Measurable** - targets must be quantifiable to assess if they have been met eg an increase in sales by 10% • **Agreed** - target must be discussed and agreed by the team leader • **Realistic** - targets must be challenging but achievable • **Timed** - target completion dates should be identified/deadlines given	3	Award **1 mark** for each valid brief statement. No development marks available. Accept any other suitable response. Acceptable alternatives: • Attainable/achievable - target must be realistic and within skill set • Relevant - target must be in line with the project or business goals Candidates do not need to state the characteristic if it is inferred in their answer.
	(b)		• buddy system - an employee is paired with a more experienced person for help and advice • mentoring system - a senior employee is assigned to a junior employee to assist and support them in reaching their targets • line manager reviews/meetings - the line manager can carry out regular checks on progress by meeting with a member of staff • action plans - shows which tasks have to be completed by each employee and reasons for deviation • random/sample or double checks to ensure the quality of employee work • appraisal - reviews current performance and helps identify and evaluate progress an employee has made in reaching their targets ○ this appraises current strengths and weaknesses and assesses employee's development needs and career development • Gantt charts - useful to show the comparison between the planned and actual progress of targets/projects • mystery shopper/comment cards/online reviews/surveys/feedback forms - *if linked to monitoring and evaluating the employee*	5	Award **1 mark** for each valid description. Award **1 mark** for each valid development point. Must describe at least 2 ways correctly to achieve all **5 marks**. DNA PDP, To-do list, priorities list. Accept any other suitable response.

2025 Q4

Describe the consequences of poor time and task management skills to both an employee and the organisation.

(4 marks)

2025 Q4

Question			Expected response(s)	Max mark	Additional guidance

4.			• staff become stressed
			  ○ this could lead to illness and absence from work
			• staff might be unable to complete deadlines on time
			  ○ this could impact relations with customers and lead to an increase in complaints/compensation payments
			• it could impact working relationships between colleagues and management
			  ○ employee may harm future promotion prospects, loss of pay rise/bonuses
			• decrease in staff morale and job satisfaction of employees
			  ○ increase in staff turnover
			  ○ causing increased staff recruitment and training costs for the organisation
			• organisation may have lower productivity
			• poor customer experience
			• quality of work may decrease
				4	Award **1 mark** for each valid description.
					
					Award **1 mark** for each valid development point.
					
					Accept any other suitable response.

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Time and Task Management