TIME MANAGEMENT AT EXECUTIVE MANAGER'S LEVEL
- RESEARCH IN ROMANIAN ORGANIZATIONS/ENTITIES -

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ABSTRACT

As anyone can observe, time became a very precious resource. Managers have to use their time with efficiency. In this sense they have to know in which direction to focus their attention and how to manage the time in their organizations/entities. This paper is focused in a research about time management at the manager's level. Among other topics, special importance is given to understand how the time is used when speaking to fix/mobile phones and how much time manager is connected to the Internet. The research uses mainly statistical tools and is done in order to enhance the course part which deals with time management.

INTRODUCTION

In many specialized resources it is written that people who use time management techniques – organizing, planning and scheduling time – are the highest achievers in all aspects of life. Shortly, time management means to concentrate on achievable and realizable results, not on being busy.

When browsing Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, one can find: "Time management strategies are usually associated with the recommendation to set goals. These goals are written down and broken down into a project, an action plan or a simple to-do-list. Deadlines are set and priorities are assigned to the individual items on the to-do-list. This process results in a daily plan with a to-do-list. Some authors recommend a weekly instead of a daily perspective."

If someone is interested in more resources, he/she may find (Blair, 1992): "Personal Time Management has many facets. Most managers recognize a few, but few recognize them all. There is the simple concept of keeping a well ordered diary and the related idea of planned activity. But beyond these, it is a tool for the systematic ordering of your influence on events, it underpins many other managerial skills such as Effective Delegation and Project Planning."

When we speak about a categorization scheme for the time management approaches that are on the market, one can refer to the first generation – reminders (lists/notes), the second generation – plans, preparations, schedules, set goals, the third generation – planning, prioritizing, controlling on a daily bases and the need of the fourth generation where we have to make the difference between urgency and importance in planning (Covey, 1994)

"Time (also) seems to accelerate. If you take a two-weeks holiday, the second week goes faster than the first. The same is true of a management course and, I am afraid, of a lifetime; the second half goes faster than the first. ... All you can do is *make the best use of the time you have*" (Scott, 1992)

Romania passed with many difficulties a period of more than 17 years towards market economy. Some people consider this period as being a very long one. However, specialists consider that today's Romanian economy is a real surprise. It is not possible to have good results/achievements without good managers who use their time with efficiency.

Managers work in a global environment where IT&C plays a great role and therefore they have to be connected to the world. In this sense, the easiest way is to use the (fix/mobile) telephone and the Internet services. In this context I will herein mention just two aspects:

1. "The Internet has become a global communication environment able to share knowledge online" (Kovács et all, 2006).

2. "Manage your emails and phone calls – don't let them manage you. Ideally check at planned times, and avoid continuous notification of incoming emails.

The more senior you are the more selective you need to be about when to be available to receive phone calls.

Try to minimize the time that you are available to take unplanned phone calls, unless you are in a customer-facing, reactive role (customers can be internal too), and even if you are customer-facing, you must plan some time-slots when you are not available, or you'll never get anything important and pro-active done." (Chapman, 2006)

Starting from the above points of view, we made a research at executive manager's level to find how are they organizing their time. This research have a social relevance because it will provide education material in the

courses for our students, some of them future managers. The results will be also used in the short courses provided for the local managers community. The research has a scientific relevance because is the first of this kind in our faculty and between the few existing in our country.

Objective: to conduct an exploratory research in order to find how managers from Romanian companies use their 24 hours daily time and how many days/month they travel.

Methods: We found 107 organizations/entities that were chosen randomly from those who accepted students to have face-to-face contact with the managers. Each one was visited by a student who explained the structure of the questionnaire developed in Microsoft Excel In this way, the participating students involved themselves in this research by knowing that they will benefit of it. After data introduction, it was shown the remaining time and an error message if the time exceeded the value of 24 hours (the total daily spent time). In this sense the questionnaire was completed successfully if the remaining time was zero. After obtaining all the answers, the 107 sets of data were placed and analyzed (mean values, diagrams, etc.) in Microsoft Excel; the statistic analysis was conducted in Statgraphics software package.

The set of questions is:
1. How many employees have your company?
2. Monthly, about how many days do you travel?

About how many hours do you spend daily with the following activities?
3. Supervision in your office/company.
4. Administrative matters.
5. Meetings with your employees.
6. Meetings with your clients/guests within business hours.
7. Meetings with your clients after work.
8. Business meetings.
9. Reading (in general).
10. Personal/private matters.
11. Sleep.
12. Access Internet (Web and e-mail).
13. Telephone calls (on fix and mobile phones).

Figure 1 shows the questionnaire completed with data to one of the organizations and figure 2 shows the chart associated with the percentage of time used by its manager for the above mentioned activities.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Among the total of 107 organizations/entities which participated to this research we found 18 companies with a number of more than 500 employees. Therefore, we divided the statistical analysis into two sections:
- first one is taking into consideration all 107 organizations/entities (A);
- the second one is for the 18 big companies (B).

A. Statistical analysis for all organizations/entities

1. Supervision in the office/company
   - the average time spent for supervision in the office/company is 3 hours. On the whole, this average time is situated within a minimum of 2h 38' and a maximum of 3h 17';
   - 60.75% of the managers spend between 0 and 3 hours, 35.51% spend between 3 and 6 hours and 3.74% more than 6 hours.
2. Administrative matters
   - the average time spent for administrative matters is 1 hour and 45 minutes. On the whole, this average time is situated within 1h 35' and 1h 55';
   - for administrative matters 36.45% of the managers spend 2 hours and 28.04% 1 hour.
3. Meetings with the employees
   - the average time spent for meetings with the employees is 1 hour and 30 minutes. On the whole, this average time is situated within a minimum of 1h 23' and a maximum of 1h 37';
   - 45.18% of the managers spend with the employees less than 1 hour, 40.36% between 1 and 2 hours and 13.35% more than 2 hours.
4. Meetings with the clients/guests within business hours
   - the average time for this activity is 2 hours and 2 minutes. On the whole, this average time is situated within 1h 50' and 2h 13';
   - for meetings with the clients/guests within business hours, 26.17% of the managers spend between 0 and 3 hours, 40.19% between 2 and 3 hours and 7.48% more than 3 hours.
5. Meetings with the clients after work
   - the average time spent for meetings with the clients after work is 1 hour and 8 minutes. On the whole, this average time is situated within a minimum of 1 hour and a maximum of 1h 16';
   - 11.21% of the managers don't have meetings after work with their clients, 52.34% spend for this less than 1 hour, 31.78% spend between 1 and 2 hours and 4.67% more than 2 hours.
6. Business meetings
   - the average time for business meetings is 1 hour and 52 minutes. On the whole, this average time is situated within 1h 42' and 2h 3';
   - 2.8% of the managers don't have business meetings, 44.86% spend between 1 hour and 2½ hours and 4.67% spend more than 3 hours.
7. Reading
   - the average time spent for reading (in general) is 1 hour and 5 minutes. On the whole, the average time for reading is situated within a minimum of 58' and a maximum of 1h 12';
   - 3.74% of the managers don't read, 69.16% read less than 1 hour, 24.3% read between 1 and 2 hours and 2.8% read more than 2 hours.

8. Personal/private matters
- the average time for personal/private matters is 1 hour and 5 minutes. On the whole, this average time is situated within 58 minutes and 1 hour and 13 minutes;
- for personal/private matters 29.25% of the managers spend less than 1 hour, 33.96% spend between 1 and 2 hours, 17.92% between 2 and 3 hours, 11.32% between 3 and 4 hours and 18.87% more than 4 hours.

9. Sleep
- the average time for sleep is 6 hour and 42 minutes. On the whole, this average time is situated within a minimum of 6h 31' and a maximum of 6h 53';
- 58.88% of the managers sleep between 6 and 8 hours and 39.25% between 4 and 6 hours.

10. Access Internet (Web and e-mail)
- the average time is 1 hour and 24 minutes. On the whole, this average time is situated within 1h 13' and 1h 34';
- for access the Internet, 49.53% of the managers spend less than 1 hour, 28.04% spend between 1 and 2 hours, 13.08% spend between 2 and 3 hours and 2.8% more than 3 hours.

11. Telephone calls (on fix and mobile phones)
- the average time spent for phone calls is 1 hour and 22 minutes. On the whole, this daily average time is situated within a minimum of 1h 14' and a maximum of 1h 30';
- 54.21% of the managers spend with phone calls less than 1 hour, 37.38% spend between 1 and 2 hours, 6.54% between 2 and 3 hours and 0.93% more than 3 hours.

13. Travel
- the average time for travels is 5.5 days/month. On the whole, this average time is situated within 4.8 and 6.3 days/month;
- 36.45% of the managers travel less than 3 days/month, 32.71 between 3 and 6 days/month, 12.15 travel between 6 and 9 days/months and 7.48 travel more than 12 days/month.

Figure 3 shows the chart for the average time for the specified activities for all the 107 organizations/entities.

Correlations (for all 107 organizations/entities)

The time for the supervision in the office/company is not correlated with the time for administrative matters. Statistically speaking, these two variables are independent at 99% level of confidence.

The time for the supervision in the office/company is correlated with the time for meetings with the employees. Statistically speaking, we can reject the hypothesis that these two variables are independent at 99% level of confidence.

The time for the supervision in the office/company is correlated with the time spent for the meetings with the clients/guests within business hours.

The time for the supervision in the office/company is correlated with the time for business meetings.

The time for administrative matters is correlated with the time for meetings with the employees.

The time used for the meetings with the clients/guests within business hours is correlated with the time spent for the business meetings.

The time for business meetings is correlated with the time for telephone calls.

There are significant differences (95%) between the average time used for supervision in the office/company, the average time for the meetings with the employees and the average time used for administrative matters.

B. Statistical analysis for the companies with a number of more than 500 employees

1. Supervision in the office/company
- the average time spent for supervision in the office/company is 3 hours and 8 minutes. On the whole, this average time is situated within a minimum of 2h 19' and a maximum of 3h 58';
- 60.67% of the managers spend for supervision between 1 and 3 hours, 27.78% spend between 3 and 5 hours and 5.56% between 5 and 7 hours.

2. Administrative matters
- the average time spent for administrative matters is 1 hour and 43 minutes. On the whole, this average time is situated within 1h 19' and 2h 7';
- for administrative matters, 33.33% of the managers spend between less than 1 hour, 38.89% spend between 1 and 2 hours and 27.78% spend between 2 and 3 hours.

3. Meetings with the employees
- the average time spent for meetings with the employees is 2 hours and 8 minutes. On the whole, this average time is situated within a minimum of 1h 38' and a maximum of 2h 38';
- 16.67% of the managers spend with the employees less than 1 hour, 44.44% between 1 and 2 hours, 22.22% between 2 and 3 hours and 16.67% between 3 and 4 hours.

4. Meetings with the clients/guests within business hours
- the average time for this activity is 1 hour and 43 minutes. On the whole, this average time is situated within 1h 19' and 2h 7';
- for meetings with the clients/guests within business hours, 38.89% of the managers spend between less than 1 hour, 38.89% between 1 and 2 hours and 22.22% between 2 and 3 hours.

5. Meetings with the clients after work
- the average time spent for meetings with the clients after work is 1 hour and 5 minutes. On the whole, this average time is situated within a

minimum of 38 minutes and a maximum of 1 hour and 31 minutes;

- 55.57% of the managers have meetings after work with their clients for less than 1 hour, 38.89% spend between 1 and 2 hours and 5.14% spend between 2 and 3 hours.

6. Business meetings

- the average time for business meetings is 1 hour and 40 minutes. On the whole, this average time is situated within 1 hour and 19 minutes and 2 hours and 1minute;
- 33.33% of the managers have business meetings for less than 1 hour, 55.56% spend between 1 and 2 hours and 11.11% spend between 2 and 3 hours.

7. Reading

- the average time spent for reading (in general) is 1 hour and 9 minutes. On the whole, this average time for reading is situated within a minimum of 48' and a maximum of 1h 24';
- 72.22% of the managers read for less than 1 hour a day, 22.22% read between 1 and 2 hours and 5.56% read between 2 and 3 hours.

8. Personal/private matters

- the average time for daily personal/private matters is 1 hour and 55 minutes. On the whole, this average time is situated within 57 minutes and 1 hour and 15minutes;
- for personal/private matters 38.89% of the managers spend less than 1 hour, 38.89% spend between 1 and 2 hours, 5.56% between 2 and 3 hours, 5.56% between 3 and 4 hours and 11.11% between 4 and 5 hours.

9. Sleep

- the average time spent for sleep is 6 hour and 40 minutes. On the whole, this average time is situated within a minimum of 6h 12' and a maximum of 7h 7';
- 38.89% of the managers sleep between 5 and 6 hours, and 61.11% between 6 and 7 hours.

10. Access Internet (Web and e-mail)

- the average time for access the Internet services is 1 hour and 26 minutes. On the whole, this average time is situated within 1 hour and 1 hour and 40 minutes;
- for this activity 55.56% of the managers spend less than 1 hour, 38.89% spend between 1 and 2 hours and 5.56% between 2 and 3 hours.

11. Telephone calls (on fix and mobile phones)

- the average time for phone calls is 1 hour and 26 minutes. On the whole, this average time is situated within a minimum of 1h 19' and a maximum of 1h 34';
- 44.44% of the managers spend with phone calls less than 1 hour, 50% spend between 1 and 2 hours and 5.56% between 2 and 3 hours.

13. Travel

- the average time for travels is 5.36 days/month. On the whole, this average time is situated within 4.81 and 5.91 days/month;
- 38.89% of the managers of big companies travel less than 3 days/month and 61.12 travel more than 3 days/month.

Figure 4 shows the chart for the average time spent for the specified activities for the 18 companies with a number of more than 500 employees.

Correlations (only for the 18 big companies)

The time for the supervision in the office/company is not correlated with the time for administrative matters. Statistically speaking, these two variables are independent at 99% level of confidence.

The time for the supervision in the office/company is not correlated with the time spent for meetings with the employees.

The time for the supervision in the office/company is correlated with the time spent for the meetings with the clients/guests within business hours. Statistically speaking, we can reject the hypothesis that these two variables are independent at 99% level of confidence.

The time with the supervision in the office/company is correlated with the time for business meetings.

The time for administrative matters is not correlated with the time for meetings with the employees.

The time with the meetings with the clients/guests within business hours is not correlated with the time for the business meetings.

The time for business meetings is correlated with the time for telephone calls.

There are significant differences (95%) between the average time for supervision in the office/company, the average time spent for the meetings with the employees and the average time spent for administrative matters.

CONCLUSIONS

The research shows that, on the whole, there is not significant difference between the time spent by managers of all organizations/entities and the time spent by the managers of companies with a number of more than 500 employees. The collectivity of investigated managers is very heterogeneous but have relatively homogeneous behavior regarding time management. This caused to us serious question marks about it.

However, based on the evaluation of average values, the managers of 18 big companies with a number of more than 500 employees, compared with the managers of all organizations/entities – fig.5:

- spend much more time with the meetings with their employees;
- spend slightly more time with supervision, reading and telephone calls;

- spend much less time with meetings with the clients/guests within business hours, business meetings and with personal/private matters;
- spend slightly less time with administrative matters, meeting with the clients after work, access the Internet and travel.

Based on the results and the above conclusions we can say that in our region, managerial competencies at managers of big companies are not used correctly and, therefore there is a strong need of specialized time management courses at this level.

REFERENCES

Blair, G.M., "Personal time management for busy managers", 1992, *Engineering Management Journal*, Volume 2, Issue 1, pp 33-38.

Covey, S.R., Merrill, A.R., Merrill, R.R., 2000, "Managementul Timpului *sau* Cum Ne Stabilim Priorităţile", Editura ALLFA, Bucureşti, România. (First time published in English in 1994 by Franklin Covey Company under the title of " First Things First")

Kovács, L.A., Plăcintar, S.E., Pop G.M., 2006, "A platform-independent web-based tutorial suite with adaptable structure", *Integrated Design and Process Technology Conference Proceedings*, pp 437-444, San Diego, Ca.

Scott, M., 1992, "Time Management", Century Business, London, Sydney, Auckland.

Internet resources:

- *http://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_HTE.htm* (Time Management)
- *http://www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/infokits/time-management* (Time Management)
- *http://www.businessballs.com* (Alan Chapman – time management tips)
- *http://management.monster.com/featuredreports/new-managers/time-management/* (Time Management for Managers by Matt Krumrie)
- *http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Time_management* (Time management, from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)
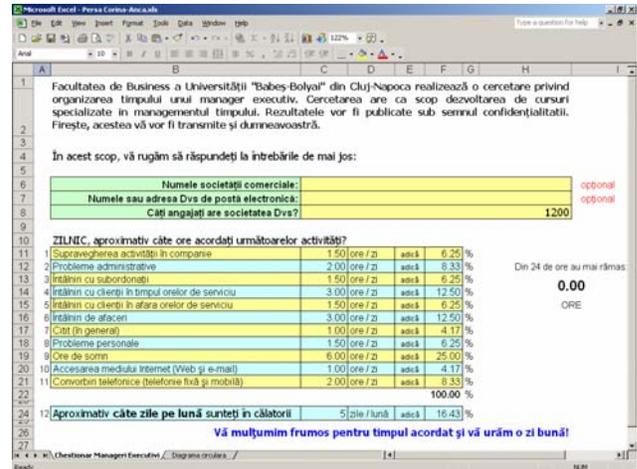
F5IGURES

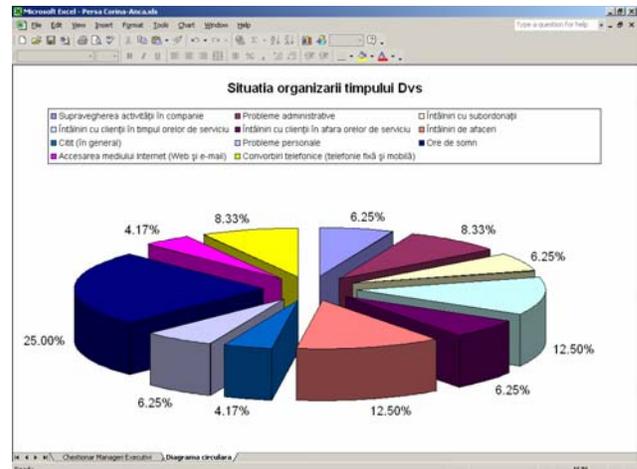**Fig. 1 One questionnaire completed with data**

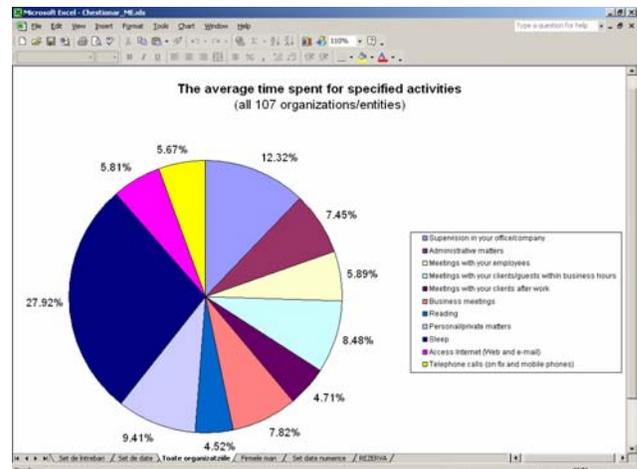**Fig. 2 The time used by the manager for daily activities**

Fig. 3 The average time used by all managers for daily activities
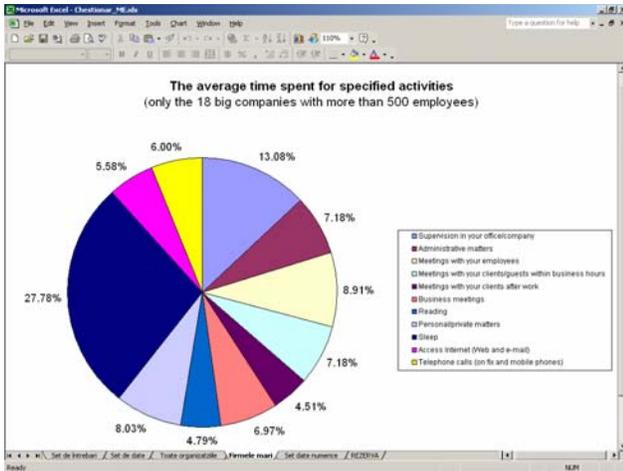
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Fig. 4 The average time for daily activities used by the managers of big companies (more than 500 employees)
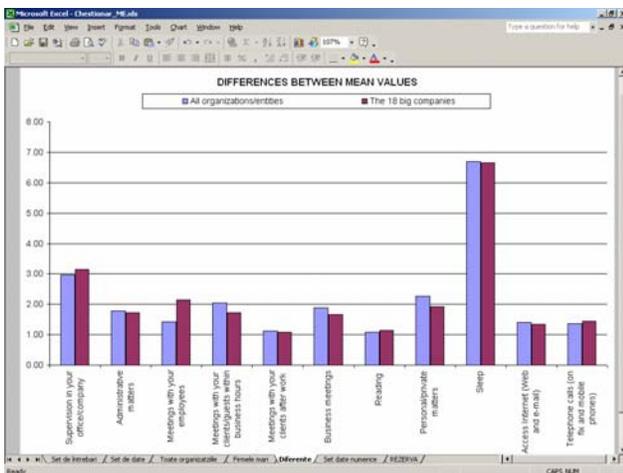

Fig. 5 Comparison between the time used by all managers and the time used by managers of big companies