

## Time Management Strategies Needed by University Business Education Graduates for Successful Business Enterprises as Perceived by Small Scale Business Operators in Delta State

Dr. James Okoro

*Institute of Education delta State University Abraka*

*\*Corresponding Author: Dr. James Okoro, Institute of Education delta State University, Abraka*

### ABSTRACT

*The study assessed time management strategies needed by university business education graduates for successful business enterprises as perceived by small scale business operators in Delta state. One research question was raised for the study. A descriptive survey design was used for the study. The population comprises 884 small scale operators in Delta State. A sample size of 265 (30%) was selected from the entire population. A questionnaire was used for data collection. The questionnaire was validated by experts and tested for reliability. A result of 0.79 coefficient was obtained. Data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The findings, are the time management strategies needed by university Business Education graduates for successful business enterprise as perceived by small scale business operators and they include planning the job to be done and assign responsibilities to subordinates among others. It was recommended that Time management skills should be taught to students in Business Education programme to have vast knowledge on time management. Lecturers should be encouraged to undergo training on time management skills needed in Business Education.*

**Keywords:** *Time management, strategies, needed, business education graduates, small scale business and operators.*

### INTRODUCTION

Business Education is a branch of vocational education that deals with the impartation of relevance skills, knowledge, attitudes that will enable those students that engage in the programme to be self-reliant and capable of running their own small scale businesses successfully without expecting failure. Business Education as a field of study is offered in universities and colleges of education in Nigeria. Though at secondary school level there is a business study which exposes the students to pre-vocational skills, Business Education programme is a total education programme which provides the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitude needed by an individual to perform in the business world as a producer or consumer of the goods. Osuala (2007) in Ezemoyih (2013) describes Business Education as a programme of instruction which consists of two parts: office education, a vocational education programme for office career and general Business Education, a programme which provides students with information and competencies needed by all

managing personnel, business affairs, and for the services of the general business world.

Business Education helps to create awareness in business occupation, preparing students to become better citizens, consumers of goods and services making business teachers to be better equipped for service delivery and preparing graduate of Business Education for self-employment. Business Education curriculum is so vast in Nigerian Universities that it includes related course in accounting, management and office technology that prepare graduates for future works. It develops in the students certain skills, attitudes and abilities that are relevant in securing jobs in the business world; it also gives them insight into general business and acquaints them with general business information that will make them efficient and national purchasers and consumers of business products.

Business Education programme at the university level exposes students to courses in taxation, production management, auditing, book-keeping leadership entrepreneurship studies, ICT, marketing, consumer behaviour, business settings, word processing, business law, law and

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meeting procedures, shorthand and keyboarding among others. After graduation, the students are exposed to various skills needed to operate small scale businesses since they are expected to establish their own enterprises instead of seeking government jobs Davies (1982) in Igbongidi (2015) defines small scale business as a firm having at least two of the following four key factors.

- Management of the firm must be independent and usually the managers are the proprietors.
- The relative size of the firm with its industry must be small when compared with the biggest unit in the field.
- The area of operation must be mainly local, with workers
- The capital is supplied by the owner.

In some cases, a small scale business can belong to one man who runs it successfully with the family members with little capital outlay. The owners of such businesses are referred to as small scale business operators. Time is a relevant skill which is needed for the day to day operation of small scale business.

Time is one of the relevant skills needed by a Business Education graduate. Time is the second, minute, hour, period, expected to complete a particular task in every organization. Employees in an organization are expected to utilize the time optimally to avoid wastage. This is known as concept of time management. Sassans (2008) states that time management is a set of principles, practice, skills, tools and systems that help one to use his time to accomplish what he wants. In the same direction, Oliverio, Pasework and White in Grimm (2011) define time management as planning and using the hours and minutes of a workday in the most effective and efficient manner possible to accomplish all tasks assigned. Mind tools, (2002) in Peretomode and Peretomode (2008) see time management as a set of related common-sense practical skills that help you to use your time in the most effective and productive way possible. Peretomode and Peretomode (2008) identify some ways of effective time management:

Determine which of the things you do that are important, and which can be dropped, use your time, in the most effective way possible, increase the time in which you can work, control

the distractions that waste your time and break your flow, maintain a balance between your work, personal and family lives. Increase your effectiveness and reduce stress, gain greater control of your time, life and of your stress and energy levels. You can reduce stress by being more in control of what you do, being productive, and consequently secure in your job, enjoying what you do, giving yourself more quality time to relax and enjoying life outside work.

Mindtools, (1999), Ellington and Earl (1997), Viner, (1995) in Peretomode and Peretomode (2008) identify further tips for effective time management:

- Keep track of how you use your time
- Plan your time
- Self-organization
- Get the most out of meetings
- Use waiting time effectively
- Good use of travelling time
- Improve your reading techniques
- Set deadlines for using time

Avoid negative procrastination creating more time for yourself through delegating work and getting up early.

- Avoid distractions
- Possible assistants should be encouraged
- Visitors can waste a lot of time; let people know not to distract you.
- Rearrange your office furniture where necessary
- Avoid unnecessary phone calls
- Improve your phone skills
- Tackle tough jobs first
- Divide all tasks into categories
- Avoid the clustered-desk syndrome
- Develop the habit of finishing what you start
- Resist your impulses to do unscheduled tasks
- Don't waste time regretting failures or things you didn't accomplish

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- Keep a close eye on your pending file
- Ugwanyi and Ogbonnain, in their studies, came up with a reviewed version of time management strategies required to enhance on the job performance of secretaries in business education.
- Develop proper attitude towards time wasters
- Avoid engaging much in low pay off activities
- Avoid engaging in conversation with socializing colleagues when important tasks are waiting
- Be organized to concentrate on the work at hand
- Communicate tactfully to time wasters that you are busy
- Prepare 'to do' list for each work day
- Avoid anything that wastes office item and results to not meeting deadline
- Reduce subordinates interruption by explaining directions
- Thoroughly adhere and complete first task first
- Schedule routine meetings and open door times to clarify issues
- Handle uncontrollable interruption promptly or set a time for getting back to them
- Learn to say no to requests when busy and assign some else to handle such situations.
- Book appointment with important clients to reduce interruptions
- Design visitors form to reduce callers interruption to the executive
- Pause and breathe to respond promptly and appropriately to some controllable interruptions.

Business Education graduates at the completion of their degree programme should be able to have a vast knowledge of time management strategies and techniques necessary for running their own businesses.

### Statement of the Problem

Employees in many establishments seem to have little or no knowledge of time management techniques. In most cases, they are time wasters

which could lead to failure of many businesses. Employees spend more time in discussing irrelevant things which becomes a distraction to the goals of the organization. Time is a vital asset in any business operation if it is not well handled, it can crumble the entire business venture. Time wasted cannot be regained by employees. The statement of the problem therefore, is time management strategies needed by university Business Education graduates for successful business enterprises as perceived by small scale business operators in Delta state.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to access time management strategies needed by university Business Education graduates for successful business enterprises as perceived by small scale business operators in Delta State.

### Research Questions

The following research question was raised for this study.

What are the time management strategies needed by university Business Education graduates for successful business enterprises as perceived by small scale business operators in Delta State?

### Method

The study adopted the descriptive survey design. The population comprises 884 small scale operators in Delta State. A sample size of 265 (30%) was selected from the entire population. A 45-item questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The questionnaire has two parts: Parts A and B. Part A contains 3 items of personal data of the respondent (sex, location, job experience) while part B contains 42 items based on the research question. The questionnaire was validated by 10 business operators in Edo State. Cronbach alpha was used to establish the reliability of the instrument. A result of 0.79 coefficient was obtained. The questionnaire was structured on a 4 points scale of very highly needed 4 points, highly needed 3 points, needed 2 points, not needed. The mean score of 2.50 and above is needed and less than 2.50 is not needed in discussing the research question items.

### RESULT

The result of the study is represented in the table.

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### Research Question

What is the mean rating of time management strategies needed by university Business

Education graduates for successful business enterprises as perceived by small scale business operators in Delta State?

**Table1.** Mean rating of respondents on time management strategies needed for successful operations of small scale businesses in Delta State (N = 265)

S/N	Items on time management strategies	Mean (x)	SD	Decision
1	Plan the job to be done	3.31	0.96	Needed
2	Assign responsibility to subordinates	3.05	0.75	Needed
3	Monitoring process against planned job	3.20	0.77	Needed
4	Integrating the strategic consideration in the plans made	2.55	0.67	Needed
5	Revisit the plans to include new information	2.72	0.97	Needed
6	Set priorities	3.50	0.92	Needed
7	Allocate time efficiently	2.90	0.88	Needed
8	Oversee several tasks to be done	2.53	0.82	Needed
9	Meet deadlines for the completion of task	2.75	0.65	Needed
10	Keep track of how you use your time	2.65	0.66	Needed
11	Plan your time	2.80	0.99	Needed
12	Self organization	2.61	0.75	Needed
13	Use waiting time effectively	2.75	0.85	Needed
14	Good use of travelling time	2.86	0.88	Needed
15	Improving your reading techniques	2.87	0.79	Needed
16	Set deadlines for using time	2.90	0.87	Needed
17	Avoid negative procrastination.	2.88	0.66	Needed
18	Avoiding distractions	2.98	0.86	Needed
19	Possible assistants should be encouraged	2.86	0.65	Needed
20	Avoid Visitors who will waste your time.	2.67	0.89	Needed
21	Create thorough fair in your office	2.86	0.97	Needed
22	Avoid unnecessary phone calls	3.00	0.68	Needed
23	Improving your phone skills	2.50	0.66	Needed
24	Tackle tough jobs first	2.87	0.76	Needed
25	Avoid the clustered-desk disorder	2.65	0.69	Needed
26	Develop the habit of finishing what you start	2.76	0.98	Needed
27	Resist your impulses to do unscheduled task	3.10	0.94	Needed
28	Don't waste time regretting failures.	2.58	0.91	Needed
29	Develop proper attitude towards time wasters	2.65	0.69	Needed
30	Avoid engaging much in low pay off activities	2.75	0.87	Needed
31	Avoid unnecessary conversation with others	2.85	0.88	Needed
32	Prepare 'to do' list for each work day assigned to you	2.80	0.82	Needed
33	Avoid anything that wastes office items	2.90	0.66	Needed
34	Reduce subordinates interruption by explaining directions	2.81	0.76	Needed
35	Schedule routine meetings	2.87	0.96	Needed
36	open door to others to clarify issues	2.96	0.83	Needed
37	Learn to say no to request when busy	2.80	0.67	Needed
38	Book appointment with important clients to reduce interruptions	2.85	0.85	Needed
39	Design visitors form to reduce callers interruption to the executive	2.81	0.93	Needed
40	Respond promptly to mails	2.86	0.95	Needed
41	Avoid unnecessary gossip in the office	2.98	0.93	Needed
42	Avoid unnecessary explanation	3.13	0.89	Needed
	Grand mean (x)	<b>2.85</b>	<b>0.82</b>	

In the table, all the items are time management strategies needed since the means ranges 2.50 to 3.50.

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study revealed the following time management strategies needed by university Business Education graduates for successful business enterprises as perceived by small scale

business operators: plan the job to be done, Assign responsibility to subordinates, Monitor process against the planned job, Integrate the strategic consideration in the plans made, Revisit the plans to include new information,

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Set priorities, Allocate time efficiently, Oversee several tasks to be done, Meet deadlines for the completion of task, Keep track of how you use your time, Plan your time, ensure self-organization, Use waiting time effectively, ensure good use of travelling time, Improving your reading techniques, Set deadlines for using time, Avoid negative procrastination, Avoid distractions, Possible assistants should be encouraged, Avoid Visitors who will waste your time, Create thorough fair in your office, Avoid unnecessary phone calls, Improve your phone skills, Tackle tough jobs first, Avoid the clustered-desk disorder, Develop the habit of finishing what you start, Resist your impulses to do unscheduled task, Don't waste time regretting failures, Develop proper attitude towards time wasters, Avoid engaging much in low pay off activities, Avoid unnecessary conversation with others, Prepare 'to do' list for each work day assigned to you, Avoid anything that wastes office items, Reduce subordinates interruption by explaining directions, Schedule routine meetings, open door to others to clarify issues, Learn to say no to requests when busy, Book appointment with important clients to reduce interruptions, Design visitors form to reduce callers interruption to the executive, Respond promptly to mails, Avoid unnecessary gossip in the office and avoid unnecessary explanation. This study is in consonance with the earlier studies of Peretomode and Peretomode (2008) and Ugwanyi and Ugwu (2013) who identified similar strategies required to enhance quality in job performance.

### CONCLUSION

Time is an asset in every organization (school) either profit or non-profit. It is important that employees in organizations should manage time effectively so that it cannot be wasted in order to achieve the stated goal of

the organization, such as the school. Time wasters should take note that time wasted cannot be regained.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made for the study:

- Time management skills should be taught to students in Business Education programme to have vast knowledge of time management.
- Lecturers should be encouraged to undergo training on time management skills needed in Business Education programme.
- School authorities should reward lecturers who manage their time effectively in teaching students.

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