

## **TIME MANAGEMENT FOR THE SECRETARY/OFFICER TEAM:**

The MANAGEMENT SKILLS outlined earlier can be applied to the management of time, as well.

There is increasing pressure to do more and more with our limited time, therefore, we need to be even more thoughtful about the use of this precious resource. When discussing time one needs to consider overtime. Overtime is viewed by some as an indication of strong commitment to the job. However, if this is a regular work style, it is a sign of too much work or poor organization of the workload. It is not a good, long term answer since quality of work and personal relations can deteriorate. "Work smarter not harder (nor longer)" is an appropriate slogan.

### **TIPS FOR TIME MANAGEMENT:**

1) Interruptions usually head everyone's list of what gets in the way of good time management. Not only do they take time to deal with, but they are usually unexpected and break concentration so time is needed to get back on track.

- \* Upgrade secretary's tasks and inform others of the secretary's role;
- \* Have specific times for making/receiving phone calls and meeting with others when possible. Have your secretary schedule appointments. Plan carefully to keep them short. "Be ruthless with time, but gracious with people;"
- \* Minimize interruptions. Regular team meetings can reduce them as can the use of notes. Have "quiet times" with the secretary screening calls, and ensure other are aware of these. Remember secretaries need concentration time, too.

2) Identify where your time goes each day, each week or each month. This is the starting point for improvement. Record your use of time over a period of a few weeks, since patterns often emerge and improvements can suggest themselves. Be specific in your recording - secretaries can make useful forms with headings to be check off - and make your own comments as to whether a particular activity was "a time waster" or worthwhile. You can also note where you may not be spending enough time.

- \* Look at the actual tasks you do. Ask yourself, Why? Perhaps it was once important but is not a priority or necessary anymore.
- \* "Who is doing this?" Is it the right person/section?