

LEISURE TIME MANAGEMENT

PAULINA GAJEWSKA, KATARZYNA PISKRZYŃSKA

ABSTRACT

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Leisure has always been, is and will be an essential asset to every human being to function properly. Ability wise time management is a virtue that can be learned. Such techniques as: S.M.A.R.T method, Eisenhower Matrix, the Pareto Principle or ABC analysis make it possible to influence the amount of our time. It is important to decide on any of the techniques consistently pursue its stated purpose. Therefore, it is important to "take care" of our free time. The goal of the paper is to present the most important time management methods and to show the most common mistakes so that presented knowledge could help living in an optimal way also by increasing the space for our leisure time. The article presents also test results on the demand of free time services among the residents of Bielsko-Biala and to offer quality leisure time for the citizens. The research method was a survey carried out among the inhabitants of Bielsko-Biala and the surrounding area. The study, which is a pilot one, was conducted among 120 respondents and may become the basis for formulating clear conclusions and may allow to make decisions based on them.

KEY WORDS

time management, leisure time, methods of time management.

PAULINA GAJEWSKA

e-mail: pgajewska@ath.bielsko.pl

KATARZYNA PISKRZYŃSKA¹

e-mail: kpiskrzynska@ath.bielsko.pl

University of Bielsko-Biala, Poland

¹ Corresponding author

Introduction

Time management is the process of wisely organizing and planning how to divide our time between our activities and tasks. Good time management means optimal work and enables us to work smarter. Today the use of time or managing time is a critical issue both for individuals and organizations. The value of time management is not control of time per se, but the ways people can use time to improve their life (Mackenzie 1990).

Time is one of life's valuable possessions and it's really life management. Mastering time management means more

than just increase productivity. When time is managed wisely, it minimizes stress and improves the overall quality of our life. By using the time-management techniques, we can improve our ability to function more effectively – even when time is tight and pressures are high.

Lack of time is a common complaint in western society. In response, there has been a proliferation of "...books, articles and seminars on time management, along with their assertions, prescriptions and anecdotes" (Macan 1994).

In order to utilize time effectively, individuals must first be able to predict how much time is needed for the activity (Kelly 2003).

Good time management requires an important shift in focus from activities to results because being busy isn't the same as being effective. Applying proper study time management strategies can help us to save time and stress. Additionally, it will enable us to spend more time for our hobbies and spare-time activities.

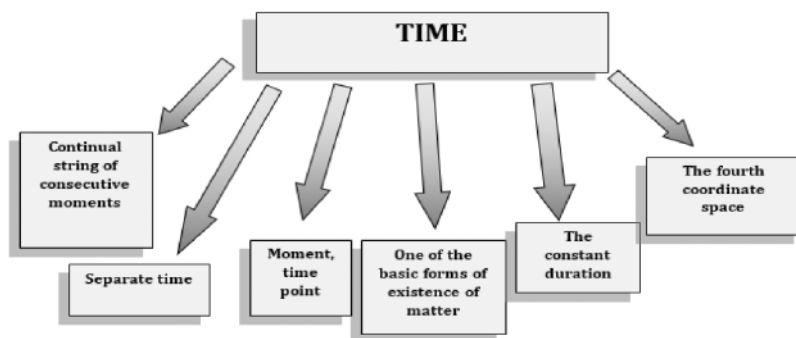
Studies demonstrate that time management skills can be trained (MacCann et al. 2012). Time management makes success by reducing stress, maintaining balance, increasing productivity and also setting and trying to reach goals. From this broadened perspective people can see the real value of time management is that enhances their lives in all dimensions (Alay, Ko-

cak 2002). People that apply study time management will be able to beat procrastination and focus their full attention on their studies, which will finally allow them to spend more time with leisure activities.

1. Time in theoretical terms

Time is a priceless, scarce gift. It cannot be stored or sold. You cannot speed up or slow down time. Every hour, minute, second passes from the future through the present to the past. "Time is a natural aspect of human life, existential experience, so unmistakable that we are not able to separate it from our existence" (Buczyńska-Garewicz 2003). Contrary to appearances, it is very difficult to explain what time it is, after all, it is such an obvious and pervasive aspect of everyone's life. Here are some definitions of time:

Figure 1. Time definitions



Source: own study based on Bieniok 2010: 17.

Currently, the public is very sensitive to time. During the day we peek at a watch several times. We wake up and fall asleep knowing what time it is. We often arrange mealtimes according to specific time (Adamski 2007). Time is ticking. From generation to generation we had wondered what to do to use it best. Thus the concept of time management emerged. This is regarded as a consistent and goal-oriented

practical application of proven techniques work in such a way that the managing oneself and one's own surroundings is easily done and the resulting available time is used sensibly and optimally (Seiwert 1998).

The leading idea of time management is: how to proceed in order to have an impact on what is happening around us all. It is important to be able to decide oneself about one's own life, both private and pro-

fessional. In the book entitled "Time management", Tracy (2013) entered into a gold mind with this process: time management is a skill just like typing or riding a bike. Like any other skills, it can be understood with the often repeated exercises.

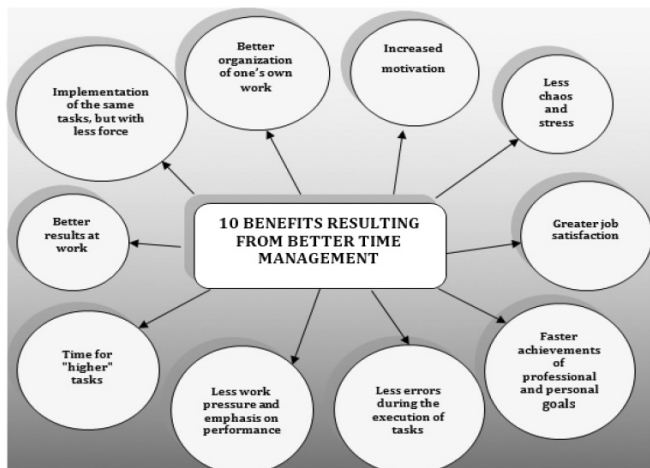
Time management is important in performing trivial chores or advanced professional activities and meetings with friends, phone calls or planning leisure time. For each of the steps we need a certain amount of time, it depends on us whether

we will use it more efficiently and at a certain time will do more or less steps. Tracy (2013) presents four basic reasons why one should explore the literature on time management:

- gain two extra hours a day,
- improve its efficiency and creativity,
- develop a sense of control over events, and sometimes,
- save on more time for your family.

Figure 2 presents some benefits of better time management.

Figure 2. Benefits resulting from a better time management



Source: own study based on Seiwert 1998: 17.

There are many benefits of a wise time management. One should believe in yourself and the fact that it is possible to achieve them. Clearly put, specific, achievable goals definitely contribute to this. We cannot forget that the adoption of new customs and habits requires three weeks of exercises. This is the time you spend learning time management.

2. Methods and techniques of time management

One of the basic skills that are required to complete the tasks is the ability to man-

age time effectively. In order to have an impact on your time and to manage it well, you need to use commercially available methods and techniques of time management. Therefore, you should know some of them, to cope with this issue better. One can distinguish here:

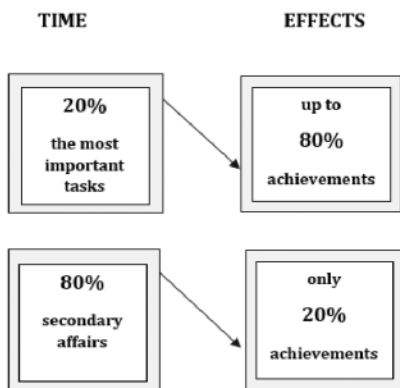
- Pareto principle,
- ABC analysis,
- Eisenhower matrix,
- ALPEN method.

Pareto Principle – the 80/20 rule. It was defined by an Italian economist – Vilfredo Pareto in 1897, who shows that

80% of the results is obtained from 20% of expenditures. Thus, according to this principle: 20% of the activity brings 80%

of performance and 20% of time and energy used up effectively gives 80% of the results.

Figure 3. The Pareto principle in time management



Source: own study based on Bieniok 2010: 84.

Pareto principle is very useful and uncomplicated. It allows to achieve maximum results in minimum time. It gives the opportunity to increase personal effectiveness in the pursuit of the objective pursued and greatly facilitates the achievement of concrete results at work.

ABC analysis is very similar to the Pareto principle, also based on a percentage of the effects of the acquired effort, but takes into account the significance and importance of the tasks to be accomplished. The method of ABC analysis (Krzyżaniak 2005):

- developing a list of tasks,
- ordering according to the degree of urgency,
- numbering the tasks,
- classification of tasks using the ABC scheme:
 - very important task, which are not to be delegated, represent 15% of all the tasks,
 - important tasks, although these in some way, you can delegate, represent 20% of all the tasks,

- tasks less important, free to delegate, they represent 65% of all the tasks.
- checking the time schedule,
- amendments plan, removing the resulting errors,
- verifying if the task B and C can be delegated to someone else.

Another issue discussed in the paper is the time planning method – the Eisenhower Matrix, also called Eisenhower Box. The “Eisenhower Method” stems from a quote attributed to Dwight D. Eisenhower: “I have two kinds of problems, the urgent and the important. The urgent are not important, and the important are never urgent”. Using the Eisenhower Decision Principle, tasks are evaluated using the criteria important/unimportant and urgent/not urgent and then placed in according quadrants in an Eisenhower Matrix (also known as an “Eisenhower Box” or “Eisenhower Decision Matrix” (Fowler 2012). The matrix is based on a division of the matrix into four types of tasks A, B, C and D.

Table 1. Eisenhower Matrix

	NOT URGENT	URGENT
IMPORTANT	B TASKS Issues important, but not urgent, that can wait, but require constant attention. You should plan, implement and regularly check the degree of implementation.	A TASKS Issues important and urgent to be taken up immediately personally because the consequences can be serious.
DOES NOT MATTER	D TASKS Cases not urgent and not important. Such tasks can be avoided	C TASKS Urgent but not important, to be carried out by someone else, or to be carried out immediately to be done and over with. Such tasks should be delegated.

Source: own study based on Bieniok 2010: 86.

Eisenhower method lets you focus on the most important tasks, the implementation of which will allow the achievement of objectives without wasting precious time.

ALPEN method is one of the ways of time management which is based on the arrangement of the plan of the day. It is very effective method in short term purposes completion. The abbreviation comes from the words: A – Activity, L – Long, P – Priority, E – Extra time, N – Note (Rühle 2004). Its introduction does not take much time, just 15 minutes each day to plan your day effectively. ALPEN method, spreads over various stages, as follows (Jak zarządzać... 2013):

- step 1 – the process of making a list of tasks scheduled for the day. In order to make it easier, they can be divided into different categories of related tasks, e.g. the execution of telephone or personal contact,
- step 2 – determining the amount of time needed to perform specific tasks in all categories throughout the day,
- step 3 – programming only the 60% of the day. The remaining 40% should be used as a reserve for unforeseen situations. In practice, you must assume that, at the eight-hour working time, only 5 hours should be scheduled,
- step 4 – involves assigning priorities and delegating tasks using ABC methods and, discussed further in the thesis, Eisenhower matrix,

- step 5 – involves controlling and ticking completed tasks. Cases which cannot be realized in a given day, must be moved into the next day. The following day, the first task to be realized are the tasks formerly postponed.

Using the ALPEN method makes it possible plan each day quickly and efficiently. Its main advantage is that it is not time-consuming or complicated, it allows self-control and to use the hierarchy of scheduled tasks from the most relevant ones to the less important ones.

3. Time traps and time thieves

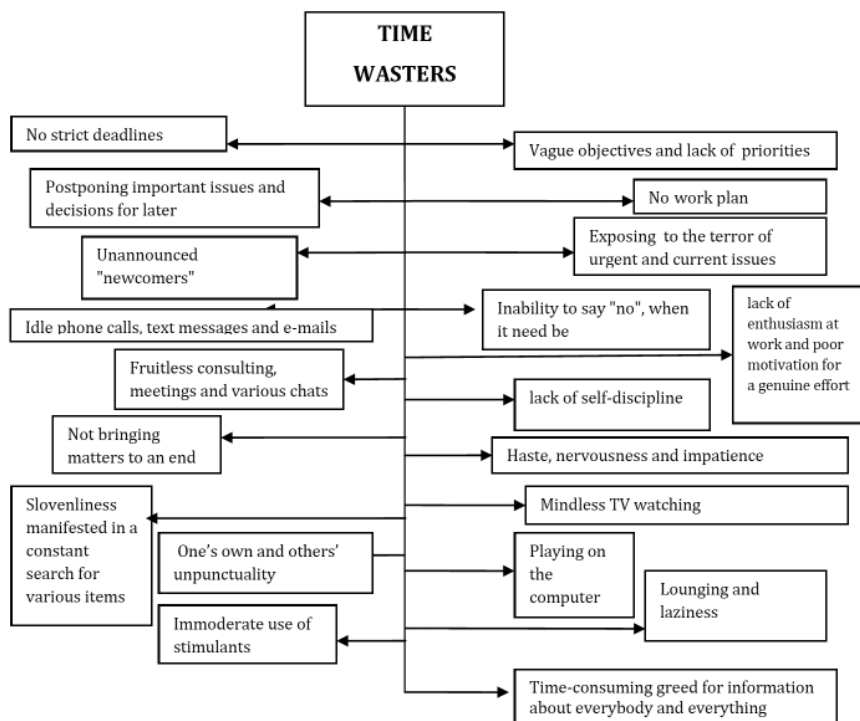
Though the wise time management brings many benefits, there are also many varieties of so-called time wasters (Figure 4).

It's worth to quote the words of Adair (2000), who says: "look in the mirror and you will see the person who most wasted your time". According to the author, the realization of this fact is the first step, without which it is impossible to start the process of optimum time management. In his book he shows the common problems with time. The first one is the creation of a person putting matters off until later. A closely associated with such behavior is procrastination, which is defined as "the disease of the twenty-first century, which majority of the population is either already suffering from, or sooner or later will fall

ill. Procrastination should not be confused with laziness. It suddenly appears in people who were previously considered to be very organized and compulsory; it is a disease of perfectionists. The main reason for procrastination is too many responsibili-

ties and things taken on your own shoulders. The more responsibility taken and the more one has to do, the more likely it is that in the end Procrastination will settle in the minds of the public” (Combs 2013).

Figure 4. Time wasters



Source: own study based on Bieniok 2010: 48.

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disease of the twenty-first century, which majority of the population is either already suffering from, or sooner or later will fall ill. Procrastination should not be confused with laziness. It suddenly appears in people who were previously considered to be very organized and compulsory; it is a disease of perfectionists. The main reason for procrastination is too many responsibilities and things taken on your own shoulders. The more responsibility taken and the more one has to do, the more likely it

is that in the end Procrastination will settle in the minds of the public" (Combs 2013).

Procrastination is often defined as delaying certain activities and using current time for other purposes. Procrastinators are typically not well organized or structured in time use (McCown et al. 1987). There is no doubt that the habit has an extremely negative impact on time management. This is quite a common phenomenon, partly due to laziness, lack of motivation, excessive duties and being overwhelmed by them. Life in the fast lane definitely contributes to the spread of procrastination. The sense of such relaxation is obviously illusory and short-lived. There is no saving method to get rid of this nasty habit, but one way is to measure the time wasted on self-pity. It is worth to write it down on a piece of paper, along with pleasant activities, which were being carried out at the time, but no attention was paid, since the head was occupied with the thought of the unpleasant duty, constantly waiting to be executed. Then, you need to perform this chore and write down on the same piece of paper how much time it took to carry it out. It is time for comparison: how much time is swallowed up in self-pity and how much time it has taken to perform the task. Then, ask oneself whether it was worth complaining.

4. Managing leisure time

Nowadays people do not have much free time. It has become a very valuable asset. Leisure time exists as a social phenomenon and is a composed part of every person's life. The problem that exists is how to prevent unconstructive use of leisure time, which is a component part of everyday life (Havziu, Rasimi 2015).

Intensive development of humanity meant that the role of free time is becoming more and more important. It plays a

particularly important role in the lives of children and adolescents. The way children and young people spend their free time really affects their behaviour, growth and life. Each of the educators, sociologists and urban planners uses a different definition of free time. Leisure by Joffre Dumazedier are classes, which the individual can give oneself willingly to; either for recreation, entertainment, development of one's knowledge, or for one's (selfless) education, one's voluntary participation in the social life, after the release of professional, family and social responsibilities.

Leisure (or free) time represents time spent away from work, domestic cores and/or business and especially dedicated to freely eligible practical activities. It is a recreational period of discretionary use for satisfying personal needs and pursues rest, amusement, creative labors or subject development (Rodríguez Suárez, Agulló Tomás 1999).

However, the distinction between compulsory and noncompulsory ones are not strict and depends on each person since studying, cooking or doing music may be unpleasant activities to be done for some people but render pleasant ones for others (Goodin et al. 2005).

Child's leisure time – a period remained after completing school duties, household operations and organization and order activities, connected to health and hygiene, the time in which it can do things according to one's will, related to recreation, entertainment and responding to consumer needs arising from interests. Adolescents' leisure time also includes the period in which they fulfill voluntarily adopted social duties (Przeclawski 1978).

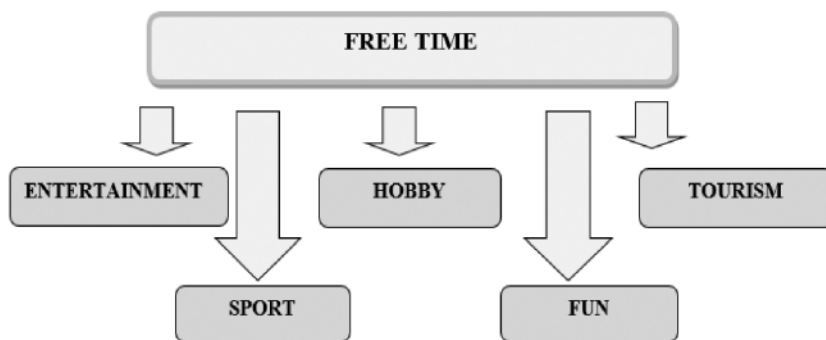
It should be emphasized that there is a fundamental difference between adolescents' leisure time and adults' free time. Children and young people fill it with

activities that develop their interests, fun, entertainment, usually this is done under the supervision of careers, while adults prefer to spend it resting, spending time with family or reading books.

Each individual follows his own preferences choosing a form of leisure time. Often a family, economic factors and the amount of time available has a very large

impact on such decisions. And so the family with young children, who have time only at the weekends, will choose to spend time on a rather quiet trip in the area nearby their residence. While those that do not have small children may choose to do, for example, adventure sports. Distribution of free time due to the ways of spending it is shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Distribution of free time due to the ways of spending it



Source: own elaboration.

Most common contemporary forms of spending free time include: tourism, sports and recreation, the mass media, e.g. newspapers, magazines, cultural education, ie. theatre, museums, etc., the self-study, artistic amateurism, DIY, hobby farming, fun and social contacts, collecting things, social activities (Pięta 2004).

Leisure has always been, is and will be an essential asset to every human being to function properly. Ability wise time management is a virtue that can be learned. Such techniques as: S.M.A.R.T method, Eisenhower Matrix, the Pareto Principle or ABC analysis make it possible to influence the amount of our time. It is important to deciding on any of the techniques consistently pursue its stated purpose. Therefore, it is important to "take care" of our free time. Companies offering services related

to leisure are competing with each other to make an offer as most accurately tailored to the needs of potential customers. Hence, for the last several years, appeared a concept of culture animator as a person who cares about providing entertainment services to customers of free time.

5. Methodology of research

Bielsko-Biala is a rapidly growing city. Over the years it produced several new facilities and many existing ones have been modernized. More and more people show interest in those facilities. Table 2 presents the methodology of the research.

Table 2. Research methodology

Marketing research	Description
Aim of the research	The aim of the research was to find out the ways of spending free time by the residents of Bielsko-Biala and the surrounding areas
Subject research	Analysis of leisure preferences by residents of Bielsko-Biala and the surrounding area
Research problem	The research problem focused around the assessment and analysis of behaviour of the inhabitants of the city and countryside of Bielsko
Companies covered by the research	The research covered all age groups of Bielsko citizens and residents of Bielsko.
The timing of the research	October 2015
A communication method used in the research	As a method of communication the questionnaire was used
Collectivity, research sample	The collectivity were inhabitants of Bielsko-Biala and the surrounding area. The sample was 120 respondents
Providing questionnaire (distribution channel)	The questionnaire was delivered by hand www.interaktrywnie.pl and personally by the interviewer in the case of students of the University of the Third Age.
Brief characteristics of the survey	It contained six questions relating to the residents and their leisure preferences and nine questions about sports and recreation facilities of Bielsko-Biala

Source: own elaboration.

Basic data collected during the test are as follows:

- sample size is 120 respondents,
- 72 women and 46 men (two persons did not indicate their gender),
- age of the respondents:
 - 19 people under the age of 18,
 - with the largest group of respondents between 19 and 25: 48 people,
 - 20 respondents were between 26 and 40 years of age,
 - only 8 of the respondents were aged between 41 and 60,
 - 25 was a group of people above 60,

– two people did not specified their education:

- 48 respondents have secondary or higher education,
- 8 persons, vocational education,
- 14 people elementary education,
- only 25 respondents have dependent children.

The first two questions of the questionnaire aimed to obtain information on the number of hours per week spent on entertainment and if they are happy with that time.

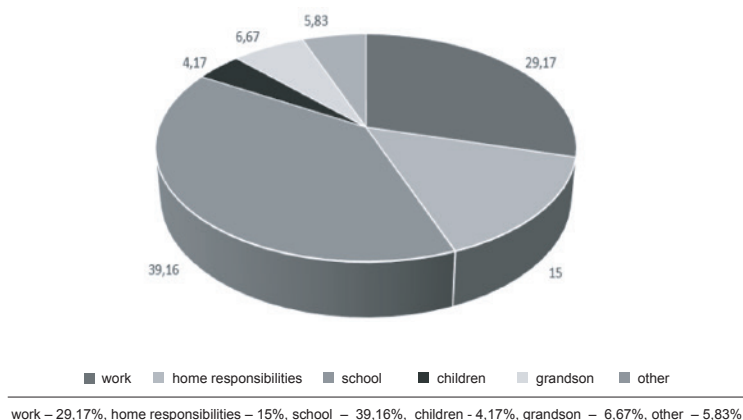
Table 3. Number of hours devoted to entertain every age group

Number of hours spent on entertainment	Age respondents				
	under 18	19-25	26-40	41-60	over 60
more than 15 hours	36,84% (of respondents under 18)	10,42%	10,00%	0,00%	8,00%
9-15 hours	21,05%	27,08%	25,00%	12,50%	16,00%
4-8 hours	36,84%	37,50%	40,00%	50,00%	32,00%
1-3 hours	5,26%	22,92%	15,00%	37,50%	32,00%
I do not have time for it	0,00%	2,08%	10,00%	0,00%	12,00%

Source: own elaboration.

The following are the percentage con- founders of free time for residents of Biel-

Figure 6. Factors distorting free time of residents of the city and the surrounding area



Source: own elaboration.

And here are the responses given to the question: “what do you like doing in your spare time?”. Common answers include:

- Internet, computer games, television (movies, series, entertainment programmes),
- reading books / newspapers,
- meetings with friends / relatives/ boyfriend / girlfriend / friends,
- sport: cycling, football, swimming, fitness, jogging, winter sports,
- listening to music, dancing,
- walking / hiking / Nordic walking / hiking in the mountains,
- cinema, theatre, concerts, travel / tourism,
- gardening,
- playing the guitar,
- shopping events, sleeping

There were also such answers as:

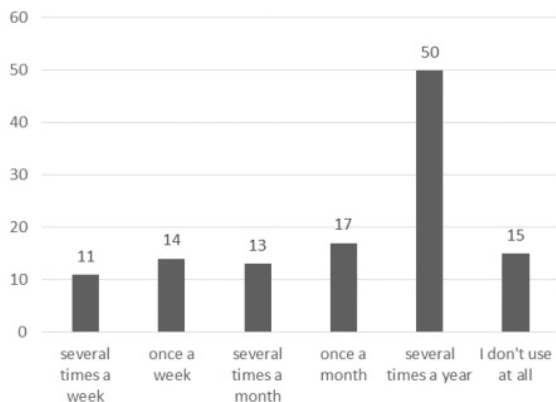
- gymnastics, skating, tennis, hiking/ climbing/cliff jumping,
- taking care of animals,
- developing technical knowledge / DIY,

prayer,

- personal development, language learning,
- crocheting, knitting,
- handmade art,
- the gym,
- computer graphics, running a blog,
- motorcycle mechanics, interactive entertainment,
- painting pictures / drawing,
- social activities, the Society of Friends of the Earth BB,
- watching matches, spending time with sons,
- crosswords solving,
- chess.

Factors such as the price of using the facility, access to the facility, the availability of catering but also peace and quiet – decide how often the residents of Biel-sko-Biala and the surrounding area benefit from the offered base of recreation and sports. The results are shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7. Frequency of sports and recreational infrastructure of Bielsko-Biala



Source: own elaboration.

As many as 90 respondents say that sports and recreation facilities in the city is sufficient. Those who responded negatively to this question, named the following places which should be situated in the city:

- “Orliki” – sport fields,
- walking trails,
- more tennis courts (preferably free of charge),
- better equipped gyms (especially in schools, where several groups of pupils must share facilities at the same time), skate park,
- water park,
- more pools (pool with ozone water for adults),
- new recreational facilities for children,
- more routes and bike stations,
- places for beach volleyball,
- a new skating rink (the best year-round),
- school driving lessons in emergency situations,
- places to skateboard and parkour,
- a place for dance meetings for seniors,
- parks,
- recreational gymnastics program activities (tables),
- ski slopes.

Residents of Bielsko-Biala and the surrounding area “fight” for time for them-

selves. Favorite forms of leisure are: Internet, computer games, television (movies, series, entertainment), reading books / newspapers, meeting friends, sport: cycling, soccer, swimming, fitness, jogging, winter sports, listening to music, walking. As a rule, the residents of Bielsko-Biala have from four to eight hours of leisure during the week and are not fully satisfied because of this. Especially those who have very young children lack time for themselves. And as you may have guessed, main distorting of free time are: school – for young people, work – for adults, grandchildren – for the elderly, household chores for all above. Therefore, they do not use the entertainment venues that the city offers them as often as they wish to.

Conclusions

Tasks, not exceeding the time limits, the balance between different areas of life require discipline and perseverance. Various tools and techniques help understand and manage time. Each of us is different, each of us has a different personality, different life goals and other expectations with respect to time. Therefore, for every person other tools will be helpful.

Time can't be spared or accumulate – so we should use management time tools, to use our time optimally. Both on our work and free time. The more free time we have for us, the greater opportunity to pursue our own dreams and passions. Hence it is important to “take care” of our free time. Free moments offer the possibility of entertainment, leisure, contribute to the development interests and find our places in society. There are many ways to use this time, but the three basic is: sport, tourism and the media. Everyone should be able to choose the one with which has the best chance to rest.

Bielsko-Biala is a city that offers a lot of leisure time entertainments. Everyone should find something interesting there, but there are places: that people would to have in their city: water parks, places to play beach volleyball, walking trails and skateparks. On the other hand, this municipal facilities are maintained in good conditions. These include swimming pools, climbing walls, ice rinks, sports fields, sports halls, recreation areas for children. Communal swimming pools (Start, Troclik, Aqua, Panorama) are of similar popularity among the inhabitants of the city. Certainly new Bielsko objects are noteworthy: modernized swimming pool, multifunctional hall or ski slope Dębowiec. The creation required much financial investment and work, but thus it can become the pride of the city. Football pitches in Bielsko. Seem to be the huge success. Looking at them/ observing them in the summer evenings, you may found them being constantly occupied by young amateur players. Physical activities are also widely available in the city. It is a little different with – cycling paths. There should be more of them. Many of Bielsko citizens and residents of the surrounding villages have a problem finding them, because they are not suffi-

ciently marked. Also, sports and recreation events offered by the city could be more varied. Many of them do not stir emotions as they are mediocre. Surely, there should be more chess tournaments and dance shows. Extreme sports events would be welcome as well. However, Bielsko-Biala is developing, invests in recreation and does care about its inhabitants.

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Paulina Gajewska, PhD, Assistant Professor, Management and Transport Faculty, Management Department, University of Bielsko-Biała. Scientific interests: management problems, techniques, methods and tools of quality management services, time management, self – management.

Katarzyna Piskrzyńska, PhD, Coordinator for management control system, University of Bielsko-Biała. Scientific interests: management problems, techniques, methods and tools of quality management services, time management, self – management.