

<p><b>Institution:</b> University of Worcester</p>
<p><b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 19 - Business and Management Studies</p>
<p><b>Title of case study:</b> Understanding and Enhancing Time Management Behaviour in Organisations</p>
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>The Centre for People at Work is a research and consultancy centre with expertise in human resources and occupational psychology. Primary research in one particular area of expertise, time management, has generated two new psychometric constructs of ‘Time Personality’ and ‘Temporal Intelligence’. These constructs have been applied in workshops to help employees understand their time personalities and make changes to improve their time management. More significantly, however, these constructs have been disseminated in major practitioner publications, which have led to the incorporation of the constructs into a leading provider of training and development services Time Management training courses. This course seeks to train delegates in skills which can be used to improve their time management and efficiency in the workplace.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>Whilst there has been much speculation about the benefits of effective time management both for individuals and organisations since the late 1970s, empirical research examining the benefits, such as enhanced well-being and increased performance, has been limited. As well as a lack of evidence into the effects of practising time management, there has also been little research exploring the efficacy of different approaches to time management and time management training <i>per se</i>.</p> <p>Dr Jan Francis-Smythe has undertaken research on aspects of time management from the early 1990s to the present (during which time she has been employed by the University of Worcester in a range of research focused roles, most recently as Director of the Centre for People at Work (CPW)). Through a series of studies, she developed and validated the new construct of ‘Time Personality’ (<b>References 1 and 2</b>). This posits that an individual’s time personality is based on five preferences about how they deal with five different aspects of time: <i>Planning</i>; the extent to which they like to plan their days in advance; <i>Punctuality</i>; the extent to which they are on time for scheduled events; <i>Polychronicity</i>; the extent to which they like to ‘multi-task’, <i>Time awareness</i>; the extent to which they allow themselves to become immersed in activities with little regard for the time; <i>Impatience</i>; the tolerance they have if they have to wait for something. Assessment of an individual’s ‘Time Personality’ helps to identify which time management techniques would best suit them and, as a consequence, makes them more effective in the workplace, which has significant benefits for employers and, also, for employees. Simultaneously, Dr Francis-Smythe developed a way of measuring the time characteristics of a task and was able to demonstrate how the fit between someone’s Time Personality and the time characteristics of their job could contribute to predicting an individual’s well-being and job satisfaction (<b>Reference 3</b>).</p> <p>More recently, the work on Time Personality has been extended through a University of Worcester funded doctoral research project examining ‘Temporal Intelligence’ (completed in 2013). ‘Temporal Intelligence’ posits that effective leaders can adapt their behaviours (e.g. task delegation, decision making, developing a vision and deadline setting) based upon their awareness of their followers’ time personalities and other job characteristics. So, although ‘Time Personality’ refers to self-directed thoughts, behaviours and attitudes towards time, ‘Temporal Intelligence’ refers to those directed towards followers. This research has shown that both a leader’s own Time Personality and their awareness of their followers’ time personalities are important aspects of leadership behaviour. This led to the development of a tool for measuring a leader’s Temporal Intelligence, the first time-related leadership measure to be created.</p>

## Impact case study (REF3b)

**3. References to the research**

1. Francis-Smythe, J. A. & Robertson, I. T. (1999) Time-related Individual Differences. *Time & Society*, 8(2): 273-292. DOI: 10.1177/0961463X99008002004.
2. Francis-Smythe, J. A. & Robertson, I. T. (1999) On The Relationship Between Time Management and Time Estimation. *The British Journal of Psychology*, 90, 333-347. DOI: 10.1348/000712699161459.
3. Francis-Smythe, J. A. & Robertson, I.T. (2003) The Importance of Time Congruity in the Organisation, *Applied Psychology*, 52, 298-321. DOI: 10.1111/1464-0597.00136.

The university is confident that the research meets the 2\* quality threshold. The research has been subject to review to ascertain this. Further: reference 1 has been highly cited (74 times) and is the 11th most cited article in the journal; reference 2 has been highly cited (66 times) and was discussed in New Scientist; 'Time flies', issue 2201, August 28th 1999; reference 3 has been cited 22 times.

**4. Details of the impact**

The research has been disseminated by two principle means: workshops and practitioner articles.

A series of practical workshops were run by Francis-Smythe and her team over the period 2006-2008 for a number of public and private sector organisations:

- April 2006 for Midlands Excellence as part of a 'Time to Lead' event (22 delegates).
- July 2007 for Worcester City Council as part of a Work Life Balance Conference (approximately 150 delegates).
- October 2007 for Worcestershire's Jobcentre Plus Annual Conference (approximately 100 delegates).
- August 2008 for Southco (a Worcester-based global manufacturing organisation) as part of their 'Learning at Work' day (approximately 100 delegates).

These workshops broadly followed the same format; they all included the delivery of a presentation on the concepts of Time Personality and Temporal Intelligence, as well as interactive components whereby delegates were invited to:

1. share the issues and challenges they have faced relating to time;
2. assess their 'time personalities';
3. reflect on how their time personalities may have predicted their issues and challenges; and
4. identify individual solutions and alternative ways of working to prevent such issues and challenges arising in the future.

Not only did these workshops disseminate the findings of the research, they also demonstrated to delegates how their time personalities can influence their time management and, subsequently, their workplace effectiveness. Testimonials from the workshops demonstrate the on-going impact of the research both for individuals and organisations. For example, the Manager of Network and Event Services for Midlands Excellence has noted: "*Leaders and managers from West Midlands based organisations have gained much value from sharing in some of Jan's expertise and research, which has allowed them to develop individually, but also to take valuable knowledge back into the business/workplace*" (**Source A**).

In addition to the workshops, a practical article raising leaders' awareness of the emerging construct Temporal Intelligence was published in LT Focus; the practitioner magazine produced by

the highly regarded Leadership Trust organisation (**Source B**).

However, whilst the workshops and the Leadership Trust article enabled wide and varied dissemination of the research to non-academic audiences, the dissemination that led to the greatest impact in terms of both reach and significance, was an article published in *Professional Manager*; a practical publication in a major management practitioner journal advising people on specific ways to enhance their management of time. This article reached approximately 50,000 readers (**Source C**).

Dr Francis-Smythe received considerable direct feedback on the article from practitioners. Readers' commented on how the article had encouraged them to reflect on their own workplace effectiveness and on the relationship between time management and workplace stress. One reader noted: *"We provide specialist management consultancy to large government departments and blue chip corporates. While we are all extremely successful in managing time, I have been aware for some time that people do have different 'time personalities' as you call it. This can lead to stress, both between us and within project teams."* Some readers asked for more information regarding how the research could be further applied in specific workplace environments. One reader, working in the area of talent management, requested advice regarding *"how I could apply your research further into my customer group in a large multi-national"*. Some readers asked if they could directly participate in the time personality research in order to diagnose, and receive feedback on, their own time personalities. As one reader noted: *"As a manager for an engineering consultancy I feel I have quite good time management skills but it would be interesting to get some feedback!"* (**Source D**).

In addition, this article reached the Personal Development and Management Development Trainer at Reed Learning (formerly Reed Training). Reed Learning is one of the UK's leading providers of training and development services. Reed Learning has been delivering learning services since 1995, during which time they have trained over 250,000 people. With reference to the article published in January 2010, another article; 'Time Personalities' was posted on Reed's 'Love Learning' blog in February 2010. Following this blog post, Reed Learning began to incorporate the Time Personality research into their Time Management course. During the course, delegates are asked to reflect on their Time Personalities and, in collaboration with other psychometric tools, to choose the techniques that most fit their personality and which they could adopt to improve their time management and effectiveness in the workplace. This has helped Reed Learning to offer an individualised approach to their time management training, as stated by The Learning Content Designer at Reed Learning: *"It has sparked some interesting discussions and has been of great help/comfort to delegates, particularly the idea of choosing the techniques to match your personality, rather than having a "one-size-fits-all" approach to time management."* (**Source E**).

These courses are run throughout the year across different locations; approximately three times per month in London (36 per year), and once every two months in Birmingham (6 per year). The courses, charged at £570 per delegate, are delivered to group sizes ranging between 3 and 14 delegates. So, with 42 courses being delivered, between 126 and 588 delegates complete Reed Learning's Time Management course each year which features Francis-Smythe's Time Personality research.

##### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- A. Workshop testimonials
- B. Doyle, A. & Francis-Smythe, J.A. (2008) How does time impact on our ability to lead? *LT Focus Summer*, 5.
- C. Francis-Smythe .J.A. (2010) Bending Time to Suit You. *Professional Manager*, Vol.19, Issue 1, January, 34-36.

**Impact case study (REF3b)**

- D. Email feedback on practitioner article
- E. Statement from Isabel Kennedy, Learning Content Designer, Reed Learning.