

Summary of Randy Pausch's Lecture on Time Management

Randy Pausch was a professor at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He was a professor of Computer Science. He passed away in 2008 at only 47 years of age because of pancreatic cancer.

The last lecture he gave, 'Really achieving your childhood dreams', was posted on Youtube and gained viral fame and he later published a book entitled 'The Last Lecture' about the same topic which became a best-seller.

In his lecture about time management which he gave at the University of Virginia, he brings up many interesting points, here are five of them:

This is something more general but I like the fact that he tries to relate every piece of advice he is giving to the audience to a personal experience in order to show how it worked for him and why.

To build on that, he emphasizes the fact that what he is telling his audience to do isn't the 'right' way of doing it but a suggestion and that if they have already adopted a technique of time management that works for them and that is efficient, they don't need to change that. He acknowledges the fact that other methods work and takes the example of his assistant which has a completely different way of organizing her workplace.

He also mentions the usefulness of keeping track of how we spend our time. Just like with money, we often don't realize where we're spending a big chunk of it, so by keeping time logs for example, we can see what is it that we're doing that isn't a priority but is very time consuming and work that into figuring out our priorities.

Another point is to limit interruptions as much as possible. Even if the interruption only lasts 2 to 3 minutes, it will take more than that to get back into whatever you were doing before the interruption happened. The example he gives is that his answering machine asks the caller to send him an email which would allow him to get back to them on his own time.

However, limiting interruptions isn't always possible. When you can't prevent an interruption, try to make it as short as possible. He uses the example of standing up when someone comes into his office which would create a sense of urgency and make the meeting quicker. He also has folding chairs in his office for guests so in order to stay for prolonged periods of time, extra effort has to be made.

Websites I used:

<https://www.cs.cmu.edu/~pausch/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Randy_Pausch

<https://www.cs.cmu.edu/~pausch/news/index.html>