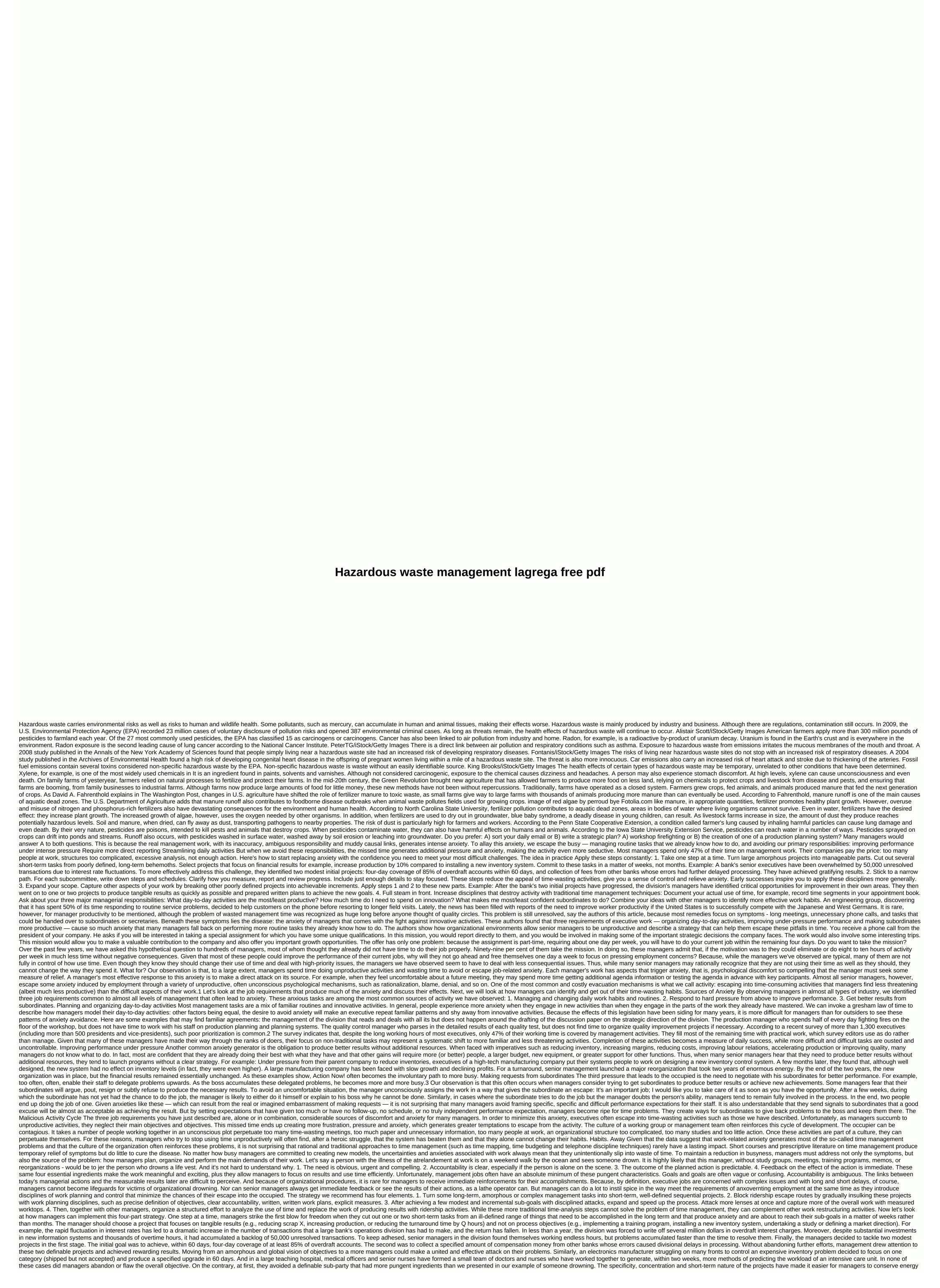
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directly for results rather than scattering them into the training. Sticking to a narrow path The narrow nature of the pilot projects allows the senior managers who lead them to introduce more disciplines of work planning and control. Managers must clearly define and assign each pilot objective, requiring project managers to produce written (even summary) work plans, concise measures, and planned progress reports and reviews. Unfortunately, many older adults believe that these disciplines make sense for the work of people at lower levels, but cannot be applied to difficult management tasks. And as long as leaders define their goals in broad and long-term terms, there is a truth in what they say. More often than not, however, by using this rationalization, they avoid confronting the very essence of their work, namely breaking down complex and abstract issues into discrete pieces. Ironically, when senior managers creatively and rigorously apply these disciplines to the challenges of their jobs, they not only block unproductive escape routes, but also reduce the anxiety that drives this rationalization. Each of the pilot projects we described was launched with a written work plan that outlined the steps and timelines. Methods for measuring, reporting and reviewing progress have also been created. In the banking division, the senior manager even organized a one-day working session where the heads of his department could reach consensus on the objective-setting, work planning and review techniques they would use. These disciplines do not need to be elaborated, just detailed enough to help managers not wander off the track. Without them, it's too easy for managers to unknowingly slip into the old time-wasting patterns whenever anxiety makes them uncomfortable with the task at hand. But as they commit in writing to specific steps towards a goal the possibility of drift decreases. When managers gain a sense of control over their jobs and their anxiety decreases, they become able to apply these disciplines to broader spheres of activity. Their initial successes become springboards for further gains. Expanding the scope Once senior managers have completed a few targeted projects, they can capture other aspects of management work by further breaking down large, complex and poorly defined projects. Defined, and projects in achievable and short-term increments and organizing them with disciplined approaches. Thus, when one inventory category is mastered, managers can attack other categories in the same way. When one production line has made progress in reducing waste, others may use the same processes; when one branch has increased the number of visits per day from sellers, other branches may apply the same approaches. In the banking division, as soon as the two initial projects were clearly moving forward on time, the division director then asked his people to identify the crucial opportunities for improvement in their own areas. Each manager submitted a long list. Senior management then asked them to focus on one or two areas that would produce tangible results as soon as possible and to submit written work plans to achieve their objectives. Full steam to come The final element of our strategy is to analyze and directly experiment with the use of time. Managers who complement the work disciplines that have just been described with the more traditional types of analysis particularly useful. The first is an objective analysis of how managers actually use their time. For this analysis, managers can effectively use most traditional time management tools (such as those listed in Exhibit I). Each manager can ask a secretary to keep track of his or her time for a week or two under a limited number of categories. Managers can make more careful entries in their appointment books, using them not only as reminders, but also as newspapers. Senior manager may spend five or ten minutes (possibly with a secretary or assistant) rebuilding the day and noting key activities, time spent and other important quantifiable factors. The analysis of deliberately planned time versus spontaneous or interrupted time is useful. Managers can complete brief questionnaires about the amount of time spent in an average week or month. The second area to be analysed is more personal. Here, executives ask questions such as Exhibit II to initiate self-analysis and to get an insight into the effects of certain employment requirements. The extent to which a manager can discuss these issues with his or her and his superiors will influence the kind of help he can receive. Managers are likely to be uncomfortable sharing this data, and it may take some time to accept the fact that everyone has some symptoms of anxiety and therefore feel free to discuss these issues more openly. What activities of my time are most productive? Which one least? How much of each day is simply lost, by hours of doughnuts, interruptions, and so on? Suite? I have daily routines that have not been tested lately for efficiency? Responding to Challenges How much time is spent on improvement or innovation? How much on maintenance and firefighting? What should be the proportions? Do I have clearly defined and measurable improvement goals, or are they vague? When the pressure goes down to get better results, do I ever have to press the action button or the program button before analyzing what's really needed? Asking my subordinates to meet my expectations What do I feel most or least confident about asking my subordinates to meet my expectations what do I feel most or least confident about asking my subordinates to meet my expectations what do I feel most or least confident about asking my subordinates to meet my expectations what do I feel most or least confident about asking my subordinates to meet my expectations what do I feel most or least confident about asking my subordinates to meet my expectations what do I feel most or least confident about asking my subordinates to meet my expectations what do I feel most or least confident about asking my subordinates to meet my expectations what do I feel most or least confident about asking my subordinates to meet my expectations what do I feel most or least confident about asking my subordinates to meet my expectations what do I feel most or least confident about asking my subordinates to meet my expectations what do I feel most or least confident about asking my subordinates to meet my expectations what do I feel most or least confident about asking my subordinates to meet my expectations whether my expectations where my expectations were my expectations as a subordinate my expectation where my expectation are my expectations as a subordinate my expectation where my expectation are my expectation as a subordinate expectations down? Do I need to get progress reports at short intervals to make sure things are moving in the right direction? With such analyses in hand, executives can focus on action. They can answer questions like these: What activities take more than 30 minutes a week can you safely eliminate? Select one to eliminate next week. What tasks that take an hour or more a week could you do in half the time or less? Choose one to reduce next week. What activities that take 30 minutes or more per week could you delegate completely to a subordinate? Choose one to delegate next week. After doing this kind of time analysis, engineers in a group working on a custom energy product discovered that they spent 50% of their time dealing with routine service problems, much more time than they should have. This has led them to change their work habits in a number of ways, such as trying standard ways to help clients on the phone before making long (but psychologically comfortable) field visits. Individual and group efforts to analyze and reduce time-wasting activities lead to a kind of awareness that facilitates the cutting of incremental project units and the capture of time with administrative procedures such as simplifying forms, focusing and shortening meetings, streamlining communication and reducing organizations, jobs will have demands that create anxiety and thus lead to wasted activities of time. Therefore, the strategy we have outlined here must be applied continuously. Second, the old familiar cycle of aling can be reversed: success can generate confidence, which in turn can have a significant impact on management productivity. 1. For a more comprehensive treatment of managers' escape mechanisms, see Robert H. Schaffer's The Psychological Barriers to Management Effectiveness, Business Busine York: AMACOM, 1980). 3. For a revealing and amusing discussion of this phenomenon, see William Oncken, Jr. and Donald L. Wass, Management Time: Who's Got the Monkey? HBR November-December 1974, 75. A version of this article appeared in the May 1982 issue of the Harvard Business Review. Review.

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