Where Does the Time Go?
Time Management in Medicine

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Disclosures

• I have no disclosures or conflicts of interest
• The views expressed in this presentation are my own and do not necessarily represent the views of Temple University.
Goals

- Dispel myths about time management
- Understand the psychology & cultural/social factors that play into poor time management
- Help you develop an approach to better manage your time
Who am I?

• Work Full-time
• Primary care
• Hold a 2 leadership positions
• Married to a full time physician
• Mom to two children

“It’s a fine line between getting it all done and madness……”
Disclaimer

- I don’t have all the answers
- Medical literature has not addressed this topic
- Data presented is derived from psychology/social science and business literature
  - Large Gender bias in literature
- Global Focus on managing your time in medicine.
Time Management

• Definition
  – Time management refers to the way that you organize and plan how long you spend on specific activities.
We associate “Time Management” with a large emotional component
- Stress
- Anxiety
- Depression
The *Real* Definition of Time Management
Work-Life Balance

- Work-life balance is a concept including proper prioritizing between “work” (career/ambition) and “lifestyle” (health, pleasure, leisure, family & spiritual development).

-Wikipedia
Better Time Management = Better Work-Life Balance
Time Management
LET'S TALK ABOUT MYTHS, IN TIME MANAGEMENT
MYTH #1

It's about *managing* your time
• It's not about managing your "time", but rather managing your overall workload & productivity
It’s about the workload

• Shift your focus on the work load or responsibilities
• Evaluate your current situation
• Be judicious about what you activities you will participate in and how you will manage it.
MYTH #2

Being busy is the same as being effective
It’s the results, not the hours……

• Good time management requires an important shift in focus from activities to results.
• Spending your work day in a frenzy of activity often achieves less, because you’re dividing your attention between so many different tasks.
Multitasking: Switching Costs

• Example:

Four experiments in which young adults switched between different task such as solving math problems or classifying geometric objects. For all tasks the participants lost time when they had to switch from one task to another.

Cost of Multitasking

- Estimated productivity loss in some studies of 40% of your daily activity
- Leads to Cognitive Fatigue
- Leads to Increase in errors
Understand the Neuroscience of How People Work Best

• Higher productivity associated with short burst of attention
Minimize Multitasking

THE MYTH OF MULTITASKING

YOUR BRAIN ON ONE TASK

100%

(HAPPY BRAIN)

YOUR BRAIN MULTITASKING

10% 10%

ONE TASK

ONE TASK

UNUSED BRAIN JUICE
Practical tips

• Check email/EHR in-basket once or twice a day
  – And address those issues in real time
  – David Allen’s 2 minute Rule

• Minimize interruptions
  – Close the door of office
  – Turn off text messaging/twitter updates

• Schedule activity for intense 90 minutes then break
MYTH #3

The idea we can get it all done
Face the facts…..

You’re a limited Resource

SOMEDAY I’LL BE A UNICORN
Key Point

Align Your Time Management with Your Goals

- Accept you are not going to be able to get it all done
- Make explicit choices about what you are going to do
- Identify “the right things” and “do” them
How do I align my time with my goals?

- There is a 3 step process

*Getting Work Done, Harvard Business Review 20-minute manager Series*
October 28, 2014 by Harvard Business Review
Step 1: List your goals

- Personal goals
- Career goals
- Write them down & regularly reflect
- Use this list to:
  - Prioritize your daily work
  - Gauge your progress
Step 2: Identifying your activities

- Write down your job activities
- Organize/group these activities to better analyze what you do

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core Responsibilities</td>
<td>Crises and fires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Growth</td>
<td>Free time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing People</td>
<td>Administrative tasks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity Categories

- **Core responsibilities**: day to day task that make the crux of your job. (eg. Phone calls to pts, rounding)

- **Personal growth**: activities and projects that you find meaningful & valuable, but may not be part of your everyday responsibilities. (eg. Mentorship)

- **Managing people**: your works with others, including direct reports, colleagues, and even your superiors. (eg. Attending on inpatient/consult service with residents, students, fellows).
Activity Categories

- **Crisis & Fires**: interruptions and urgent matters that arise occasionally and unexpectedly. (eg. Pt decompensated needs transfer to ICU or RR).

- **Free time**: lunch breaks? Time spent writing personal emails, browsing web, facebook, etc.

- **Administrative tasks**: necessary task that you perform each day (eg. Signing off nursing orders/forms).
### SAMPLE CHART FOR TRACKING TIME SPENT ON TASKS PER WEEK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK ENDING 4/14</th>
<th>Core responsibilities</th>
<th>Personal growth</th>
<th>Managing people</th>
<th>Crises and fires</th>
<th>Free time</th>
<th>Administrative tasks</th>
<th>TOTAL TIME/DAY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
<td>1 hr</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
<td>0 hrs</td>
<td>0 hrs</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
<td>8 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL TIME/ACTIVITY</strong></td>
<td><strong>13 hrs</strong></td>
<td><strong>7 hrs</strong></td>
<td><strong>10 hrs</strong></td>
<td><strong>2 hrs</strong></td>
<td><strong>3 hrs</strong></td>
<td><strong>10 hrs</strong></td>
<td><strong>45 hrs</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PERCENTAGE OF TIME</strong></td>
<td><strong>29%</strong></td>
<td><strong>16%</strong></td>
<td><strong>22%</strong></td>
<td><strong>4%</strong></td>
<td><strong>7%</strong></td>
<td><strong>22%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE** *20-MINUTE MANAGER: GETTING WORK DONE* (HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW PRESS, 2014)
Practical tips

• Seeing your work broken into categories will help you visualize how you are really spending your time.

• Tracking your time is a useful exercise to determine where you are spending your time
It takes time to truly evaluate your goals.

**Cost** = Hours of reflection, mentoring sessions, and up-front investment of effort to identify your goals

**Investing in yourself.** Getting career satisfaction of accomplishing your goals, being a productive member of your workplace, and enjoying the process without burning out = **PRICELESS**
MYTH #4

If I had more time, I would be more productive
168 Hours is a lot of time!
Professionals overestimate their work week

• An analysis of time logs of professionals in medicine, law, consulting, tech and finance found that people who thought they worked 50-59 hours a week were off by 9-10 hours.

John Robinson & Geoffrey Godbey “Time for Life”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Work</th>
<th>40 hours</th>
<th>50 hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sleep</td>
<td>(8 hours a night)</td>
<td>56 hours</td>
<td>56 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Remaining (family, friends, other)</td>
<td>72 hours</td>
<td>62 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MYTH #5

I’m always working so I never see my kids/partner....
• Americans are spending more time with their children than ever before
• Women on average spend 13.5 hours with their children compared to 1960’s where the average was 10.0 hours

Pew Research report 2011
Q: So if the data says I do have the time….why do I feel like I don’t?
Answer: because you really do feel you have no time.

It’s the Psychology of Scarcity.
The Psychology of Scarcity

- Scarcity tends to focus the mind on immediate challenges.
- People in the grip of scarcity are tightly focused on meeting their urgent needs.
- The trap of scarcity.
Important things on the periphery get ignored.
Practical tips

• Embrace that fact you *do* have time & empower yourself to prioritize your goals
• Schedule time in your calendar to have dedicated to long term goals
  – *Fiercely protect this time*
OVERWHELM

• Overwhelm is the product of lack of control, lack of predictability and the anxiety it has produced

• Ambiguity is the enemy in the workplace that fuels the overwhelm.
Combat Overwhelm

CHANGE THE WAY YOU MANAGE YOUR WORK
Define your Mission

• Sit down with your boss…..
  – Set clear parameters & performance measures
  – Communicate and adjust
Make Your To Do List

- Schedule **FIRST** your activities that work towards your goals and priorities
- Remember most of your to do list will never get done
- Hire out your chores
Want to Be Happy? Buy More Takeout and Hire a Maid, Study Suggests

By NIRAJ CHOKSI July 27, 2017

Researchers found that paying others to do tasks one dreads could lead to more happiness. New York City cleaning business found that the happiness of others could be profitable.

Chung W. Lee/The New York Times

It’s a question central to daily life: Do you spend money to spend time to save money? Well, if happiness is the goal, you might consider opening that wallet.

Buyin time promotes happiness
Ashley V. Whillans, Elizabeth W. Dunn, Paul Smeets, Rene Bekkers and Michael I. Norton
PNAS July 24, 2017. 201706541;

• Get rid of unconscious culture bias & gender stereotypes
• Do what is best for you to work & have your life or family
Combat the Overwhelm

• USE YOUR Health care team!
• Delegate the many micro decisions you make everyday that exhaust you & save your energy for the decisions that matter.
Embrace the Restorative Power of Vacation
“Time is the Coin of your life. You spend it. Do not allow others to spend it for you”.
-Carl Sandberg

“Doing Good work, having quality time for family & meaningful relationships & the space to refresh the soul is the Good Life.”
-Brigid Schulte