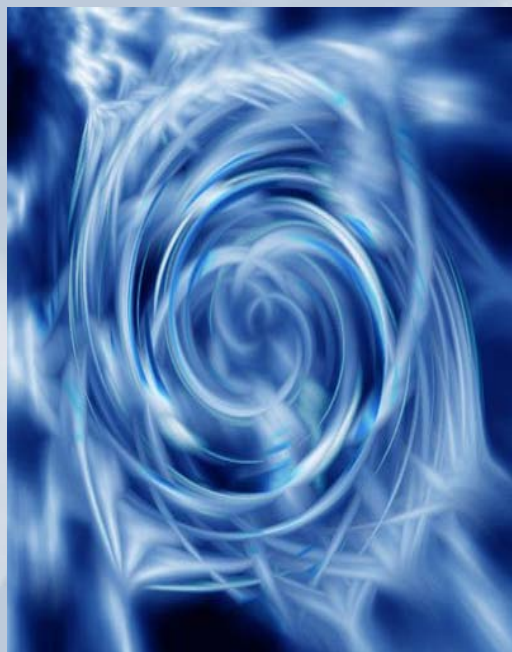


# Order in Chaos: Learning to Manage Your Time More Effectively

- A little quiz to start...
- Please take a few minutes to fill out the short quiz on **pink paper**
- Check all questions to which you would answer YES
- Add up your score & then read reverse side

2011



# Order in Chaos: Learning to Manage Your Time More Effectively



**ROYAL COLLEGE**  
OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS OF CANADA  
**COLLÈGE ROYAL**  
DES MÉDECINS ET CHIRURGIENS DU CANADA

Author: Hema Patel MD MSc FRCPC  
Derek Puddester MD MEd FRCPC

Date: September 2011



Who we are  
and  
Why are we doing this workshop?

# Who are you?





# Pink Sheet Survey

## If you scored...

**-13 to 0**

Time management should be a priority for you!  
STAY for the workshop!!

**0 to 4**

You have some ideas about time management but would benefit from this workshop. STAY!

**5 to 9**

You are already using lots of the time management tips that we are going to talk about; reflect on specific areas where you might need help. STAY and add your own suggestions.

**10**

You are already a time management expert. You may wish to view these materials as a “Trainer” or “Trainer of the trainers”



# Objectives



1. To provide a framework for effective time management for physicians
2. To describe and apply specific time management strategies
3. To encourage ongoing self-reflection on time management behaviour



# Official Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

- None

# Disclosures and Truths

- We are ordinary people living in a vortex likely similar to your own
- Aiming to share well established ideas
- We will be covering some highly personal territory
- Don't panic and share what you want





# Plan of the workshop

- **Taking the time to think about your time**
  - Value your time
  - Consider your time wasters
- **Time management frameworks to consider**
  - Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced
- **Priority setting around personal goals**
  - What do you want more time for?
  - Where are you headed?
- **Specific time management strategies**
  - Calendar/Agenda basics
  - Office work
  - Email
  - Meetings
- **Procrastination and Perfectionism**
- **Tour de Table, Summary and Evaluations**



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# Time management is an ongoing behavioural issue, not a time problem



# Thinking about your time

- How are you spending your time?
- What are you wasting your time on?
- What do you want more time for?
- What is it that you want to accomplish with your time?



Really important – especially in medicine where there are few boundaries to how busy you can be...

“It’s not enough to be busy. The question is: **what are you busy about?”**

- Henry Thoreau



bul0209 www.fotosearch.com

# Time Wasters - Small Group Work



**Green Worksheet – LEFT hand column**

**What is wasting your time?**

**From YOUR perspective, list up to 5 activities/tasks in your personal or professional life that are “wasting” your time.**

**5 minutes**

**Report back – 5 minutes**

# Top Time Wasters

- Common themes?
- Any unusual wastage?
- Some time wasters “in the eye of the beholder”
- Highly contextual



# How are you wasting/spending/using your time?

- The obvious
- The not- so-obvious
- More on the not-so-obvious ahead





# Your Attitudes Towards Time

**Do you respect your own time? Time of others?**

- **Do you frequently interrupt others?**
- **Do you often keep others waiting?**
- **Do you frequently miss agreed deadlines?**
- **Are you always running a few minutes late?**
- **Are you often making excuses as to why you are late?**

**Do your actions reflect your attitudes toward time?**

# Value your time

- Time is your most precious natural resource
- Time is (better than) money
- Time is everything – just ask someone who doesn't have much left



# Plan of the workshop

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# Choose a Time Management / Personal Development Framework...

- Large literature on time management and personal effectiveness especially from business sector
- Many, many frameworks
- **Messages similar**



# 3 Sample Time Management Frameworks

## **Eat that Frog**

By Brian Tracy

Easy to read

Introductory

## **Time Management and Personal Development**

By John Adair and Melanie Allen

Practical guide

Intermediate

## **7 Habits of Highly Effective People**

By Stephen Covey

Advanced philosophical perspective

# Time Management and Personal Development

By John Adair and Melanie Allen

## 10 Principles of Time Management

1. Develop a personal sense of time
2. Identify long-term goals
3. Make medium-term plans
4. Plan the day
5. Make the best use of your best time
6. Organize office work
7. Manage meetings
8. Delegate effectively
9. Make use of your committed time
10. Manage your health

Adair J, Allen M. Time Management and personal development. Thorogood Press. London UK 2003.

# Essential Element in Every Framework

- Explicitly identifying and balancing priorities
- Making “commitments match convictions\*”
- Goal setting (long, medium and short term) is a prerequisite

\* Sull DN, Houlder D. Do your commitments match your convictions?  
HBR. Jan 2005;82-91.

# Setting Priorities



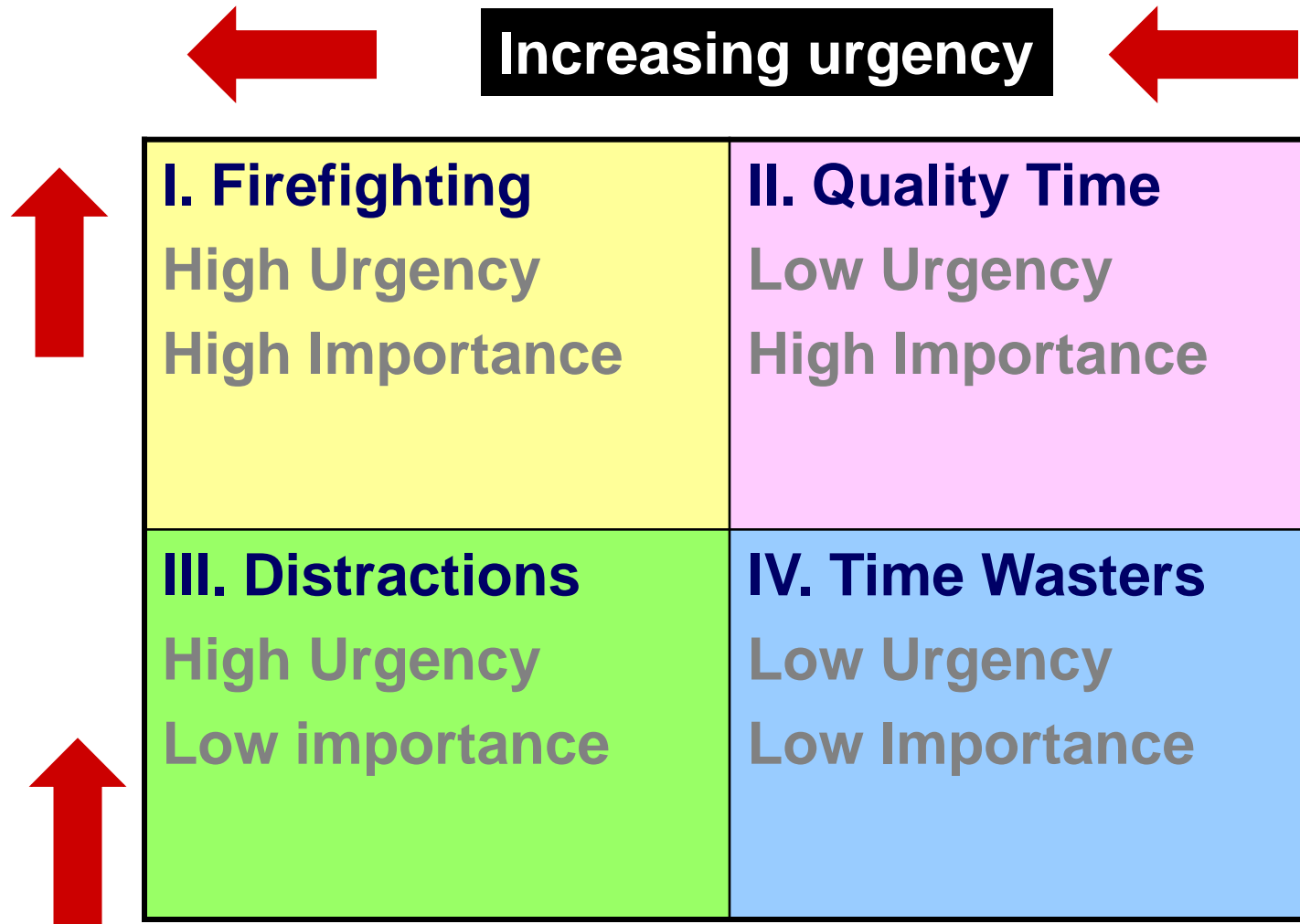
- Many methods
- Common outcome: strategic alignment of daily (weekly, monthly, yearly) priorities with long term goals
- **Covey's Time Management Matrix** is one of the best tools



# Pull out the yellow sheet in your handouts

- The Time Management Matrix

# The Time Management Matrix



**Increasing importance**

# Using the Matrix – Small Group Work



## YELLOW Handout

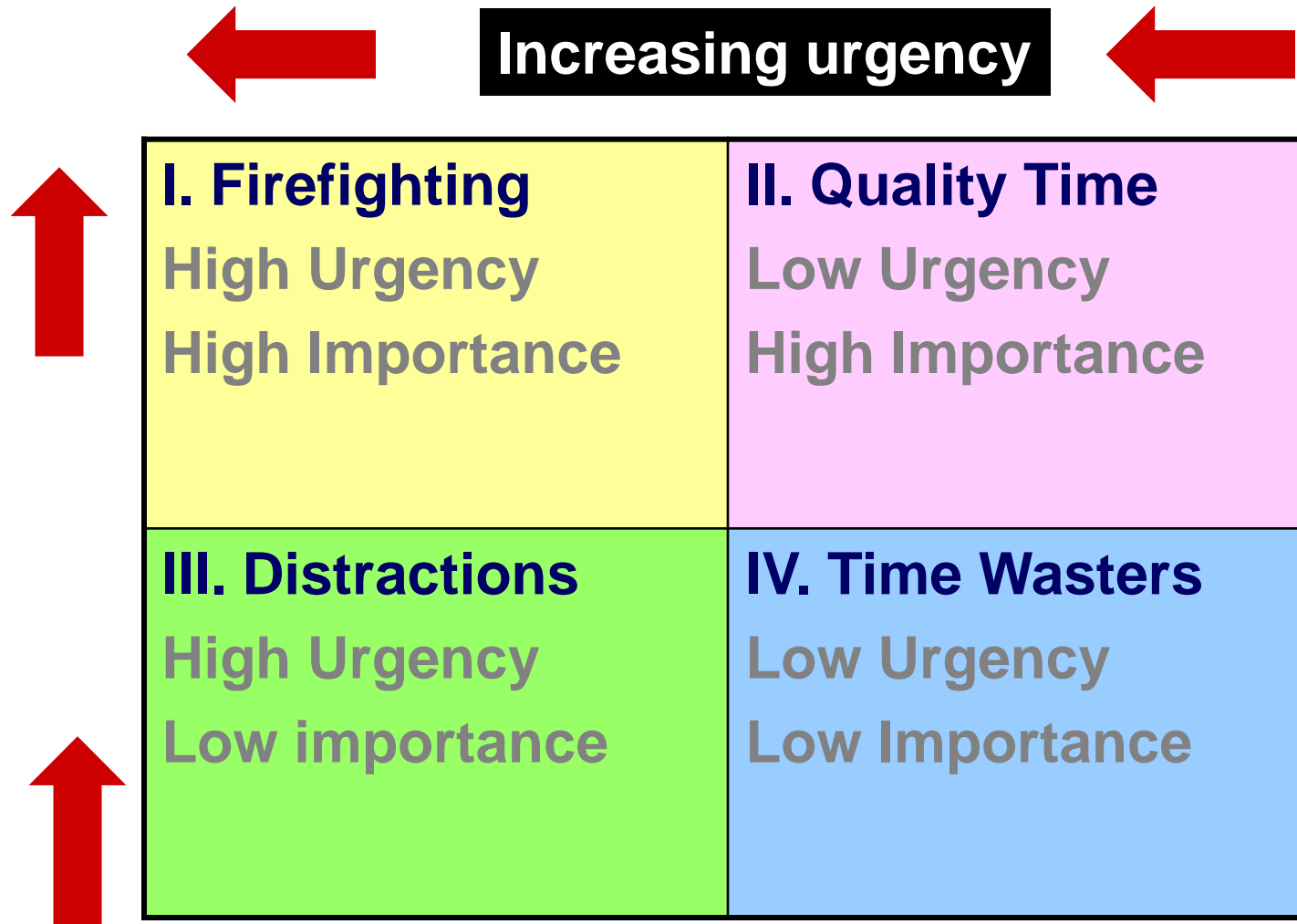
Work in pairs – 15 mins

Find 1 or 2 examples from your own lives/agenda for each quadrant of the matrix

Categorize “Urgency” and “Importance” from YOUR OWN perspective

Plenary Debrief – 5 mins

# Your Examples for the Matrix



**Increasing importance**

# Typical Examples

## I. Firefighting

Crises  
Deadline driven projects  
Pressing problems  
Scheduled clinical service

## II. Quality Time

Planning new projects  
Preparing proposals  
Recognizing new opportunities  
Prevention  
Relationship building  
Mentoring a key individual

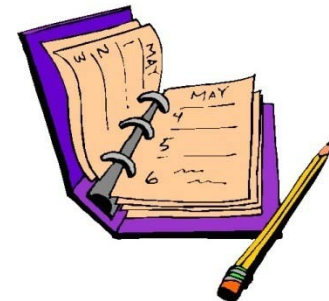
## III. Distractions

Interruptions  
Some calls  
Some mail, reports  
Some meetings

## IV. Time Wasters

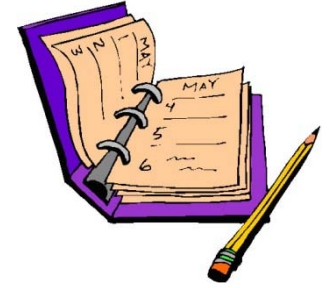
Trivia, busy work  
Some mail  
Some meetings  
Some phone calls  
Procrastination  
Commute travel time

# The Time Diary – Helps you develop a personal sense of time



- Before you can CATEGORIZE/PRIORITIZE your activities, you need to know WHAT they are....
- Best method: **the time diary**
- Basically, note how you spend your day in 15 - 20 minute blocks

# The Time Diary



- **Collect information for 1-3 days**
  - Paper time grid
  - Post it notes
  - Chronicle electronically
  - Dictate
  
- **The recording alone is therapeutic**

# Interpretation of a Time Diary

## Step 1 – Listing & Categorization

- Look for patterns of time use
- Categorize the type of activities, based upon importance and urgency
- Tool: Covey's Time Management Matrix



# So ... which quadrants are you spending your time in?



the 4 quadrants  
of time

# Interpretation of a Time Diary

## Step 2 - Reflection

- Actual vs. perceived time use
- Quadrant analysis
- The more time you spend in "2" the less you spend in "1"
- **2 minutes planning saves 10 in task execution**
- All day in "1" is exhausting →
- ...recipe for burnout



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**What do You Want More Time For?  
Personally, Professionally:  
List 5 items: your choice – or a mix**



## **Individual Work**

**Pull out the GREEN worksheet again**

**Fill in the RIGHT hand column**

**(Top 5 things I Want More Time For)**

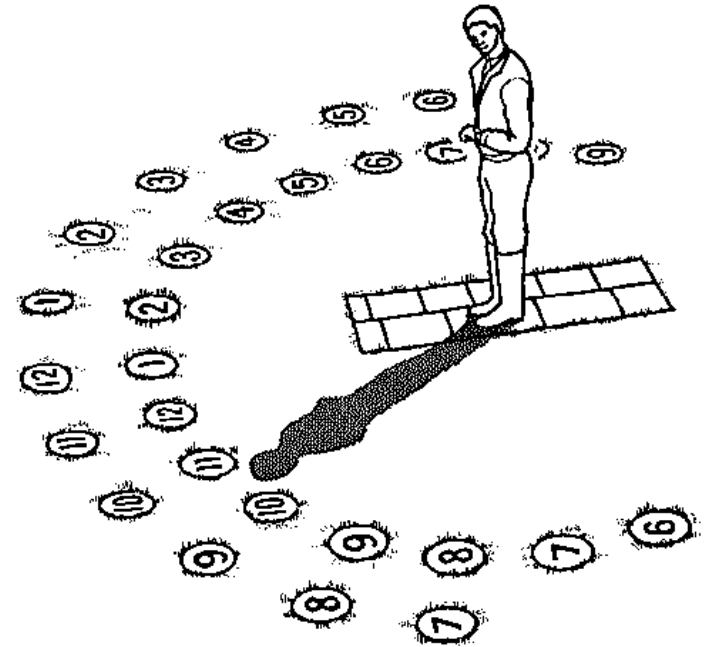
**5 min**



# Debrief:

## Top 5 things I want more time for

- Your personal choices
- Reflection of your values
- Critical in priority setting
- Less wasted time means you have more for the items on this list
- This is a good starting point for developing your goals....



Once you know what you want more time for, consider why – this is a first step in developing longer term goals....

Begin with the end in mind

-Stephen Covey

# Long-range Goals



- This takes thinking time
- What is your purpose? What do you want out of your professional life? Out of your personal life?
- **Writing down your own goals predictive for actually reaching them**
- Reflect on what you hope to accomplish in 5 years, 10 years, upon retirement

## 3 goals in 60 seconds...



- On reverse side of green sheet
- List 3 (or more) things you VERY MUCH wish to accomplish/complete/be known for in any dimension of your life
- (more fun than writing your obituary)



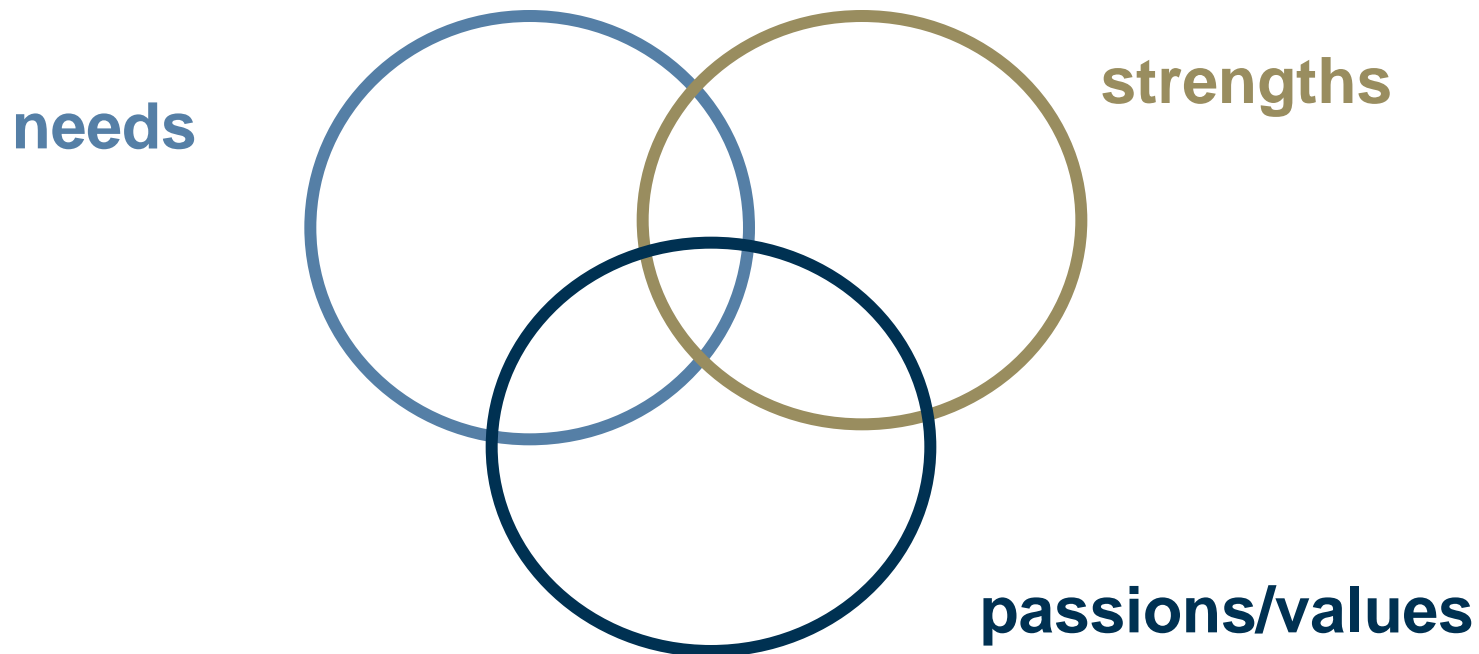
# Developing, Describing Your Goals



- Was this a hard task?
- If it was easy – great
- Re- assess regularly
- If it was hard – give it more thought, talk with a mentor
- Consider the difference between outside expectations and your own desires

# Long-range Goals

- What are you particularly good at?
- Where are your talents? Passions? Values?
- Find your intersection



Adapted from Stephen Covey

# A Brief Word on Strengths and Weaknesses

- Separating “capability” from “talent”
- Talents: what do you excel at?
- Sometimes hard to see for yourself
- Ask people you trust
- Go back in time to your elementary school self

# The “Catch” in Time Management

- **Goals setting is a prerequisite for effective time management and personal development**
- **Not necessarily an easy task**
  
- **But if you don't identify your own goals....someone is often ready to give you theirs...**



# Strategic Alignment

- Align smaller tasks/activities to longer term goals



# From long term goals, make medium term plans



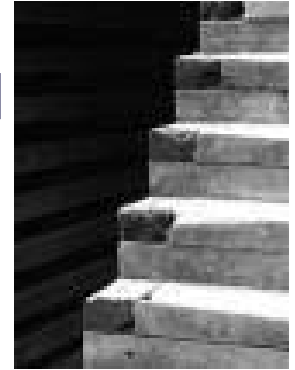
**Define the steps that will lead you to your goal**

**(decide what you want to build, make a plan – then get the bricks)**

**If you get the bricks first,  
you end up with a pile of bricks**



# Make Medium Range Goals With Long Range Goals in Mind



- Duration depends on you
- 6 month, 1 year, 3 year, 5 year frames
- Specific deadlines
- **Strategic steps in a focused direction**
- Re-evaluate at each step
- Reward yourself



# Weekly and Daily Goals



- **Align your weekly and daily priorities with your long range goals**
- **Be reasonable with your daily/weekly objectives – prioritize 3-5 things to accomplish per day**
- **Watch out for Quadrant 3 activities that appear URGENT but are NOT IMPORTANT**

# SMART Goals

- Set goals that motivate you (instantly cite their value)
- Set SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time Bound)
- Set goals in writing
- Match goals with a clear action plan
- Monitor, review, evaluate (daily, weekly, annually)



## A Challenge for You

### Consider one of your goals (from green sheet)

- Can you see anything in your agenda which is a step towards this goal?
- On a monthly basis, what are you doing that will help you accomplish your goal?
- On a weekly basis?
- On a daily basis? (some days)

# Linking Daily Work to Long Term Goals

- Easier said than done
- Likely won't happen just by chance
- Takes planning (Quadrant II investment)
- If you don't see any connection between daily work and long term goals....unlikely in your intersection



# Resource Materials

- Summary of Time Management Frameworks on white paper in your folders
- Find a framework that suits you best

# Practical Time Management

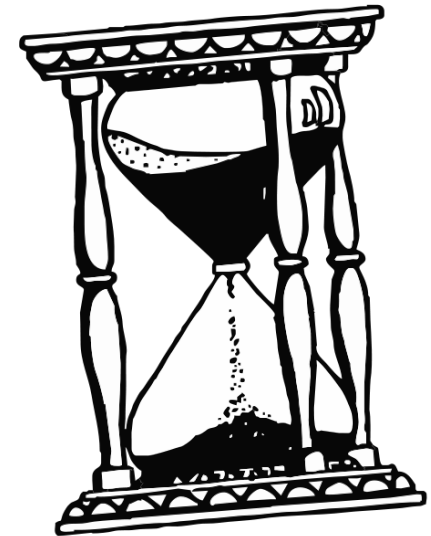
Copyright 2001 by Randy Glasbergen.  
www.glasbergen.com



**“No matter how busy I am, I’m never too busy to stop and complain about how busy I am.”**

# Plan of the workshop

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# Your Calendar

- One person will manage your calendar - hand this task, in toto, to your assistant
- Give them principles to operate under and permission to approach you when need be
- Put everything in your calendar (Subject, key players, location, time, required materials, deadlines, etc.)



# Make the best use of your best time (Adair)

- When, in the day, do you work best?
- More creatively, more efficiently?
- More easily solve problems?
- Concentrate better?
  
- Your prime time?
- The sweet spot in your day?



Round  
robin

# Make your agenda work for you

- Should be EASY to use
- Take 2 minutes to review your agenda at the beginning and end of each day, build in weekly and quarterly reviews
- Schedule activities according to their priority and time them appropriately

# Scheduling Strategies

- Know what time you actually have and the tasks you need to complete
- Identify what is urgent and high priority (quadrant 1/2...)
- Block time to meet these tasks
- Block in contingency time
- Block in discretionary time (personal projects, self development)

# Workspace Considerations



# Workspace

- Your desktop is workspace not storage space
- Organize and clear items at the end of each day and at the end of each week
- Have the Quadrant 1 & 2 files that you need close by (Hot Files)
- All else should be **filed for retrieval not storage**



# Organize your workspace The Kindergarten Way

- Create activity areas within your workspace, based upon the activities that you do most often
  - completing charts
  - seeing patients
  - computer use
  - telephone calls
  - meeting space
- Makes it easier to focus on one activity at a time
- Store items at their point of use

## Paperflow – The Four D's

- **Do it!** Perform the necessary items; then file, re-route, or discard
- **Delay it!** Further action needed but not now. Note in your agenda and file for easy retrieval
- **Delegate it!** Give immediately to someone else
- **Dump it!** Discard immediately

# Filing 101

- File for retrieval; if you have an assistant then agree on filing plan and keep track of categories
- Book one day a year to purge your office of outdated paper. Be ruthless.
- NEVER develop piles.
- If it is online/in an email then recycle.



## Organize your workspace

# Colour Coded Files

- Colour code to simplify (e.g. Hospital, University, Professional)
- Date stamp, initial & sort items upon receipt
- Keep colour coded files for recurrent tasks (calls, labs, urgent forms)
- Colours can align with calendar and phone



## Other Critical Files

- Academic CV folder; keep it on your desktop
- Subfiles: evaluations, presentations, awards and recognition, etc.
- Teaching dossier
- Brief Bio with photo
- “Good ideas” folder

# To-Do List Tips

- Develop the skill of maintaining to-do lists
- List items by priority
- Colour code and link to hot files
- Review/edit daily list each morning (5 min)
- Purge/re-prioritize once a week (10 mins)
- Be proactive, look and plan ahead (Fridays)

## When items get stuck on the list...

- STOP and honestly ask yourself WHY
- This is procrastination....more on this in a moment
- Reflect on why the task is not being completed (alignment, resources, priorities, skill)

# Your Email Tips – share your best ones



# Email Management

- Assess your needs
- For each role/position have a unique email address (e.g. [puddester@me.com](mailto:puddester@me.com), [drpuddester@me.com](mailto:drpuddester@me.com), [puddester@cheo.on.ca](mailto:puddester@cheo.on.ca)); this allows for instant streaming of time in each role, email filing, delegating, and deleting
- Schedule time for email (0830, 1230, 1630)
- Commit to this start/stop time on a regular basis: you will influence the behaviour of others
- 4D's apply!

## More Tips (Because we need them...)

- Subject line should be triage tool
- Be blunt: **email is NOT a letter**. Have a disclaimer if need be (“Sent from my iPhone...please excuse typos, grammatical errors, or uncharacteristic lack of warmth!”)
- If it is more than a few lines...ask whether this is the best communication method

# Toxic eMail Behaviour



- Diatribes, speeches, editorials
- Cute little stories about kittens, jokes, chain mail
- Large documents (fill the mailbox)
- Forwarding sensitive email (read the footer!)
- Fights (aggressive, passive aggressive, passive)
- Cover Your Butt email (i.e. ccing)
- Spy email (i.e. bccing)
- Not responding to email (unprofessional...)



# Healthy eMail Behaviour



- Be polite but not literary
- Understand that email is NEVER anonymous or confidential
- Spell check if easy/automatic; ? danger
- Have a detailed footer (contact info, disclaimer, privacy)
- Check all accounts regularly
- Quick check: attachment attached? senders correct?
- One question/point per email (or very well structured)
- Helpful filing system

# Phone Management

- Do not answer your phone if possible
- Schedule phone time (0830, 1230, 1630) and return calls that day (the hot potato rule)
- **Use the phone** instead of email where appropriate (conflict, confusion, urgent issues, favours, relationship building, bad news)

# More on Smart Phones - the world is 24/7/365

- Choose what you like, find sexy/exciting, and has the capacity to grow
- Apps - new form of toolkit
- Be strategic with calendar and to do functions (multiple calendars, colour coded)
- Keep contacts up to date (scanner)

# Get out there!

- Consider the value of social networking (LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook)
- Incredibly valuable networking (and contact updating) with a tap

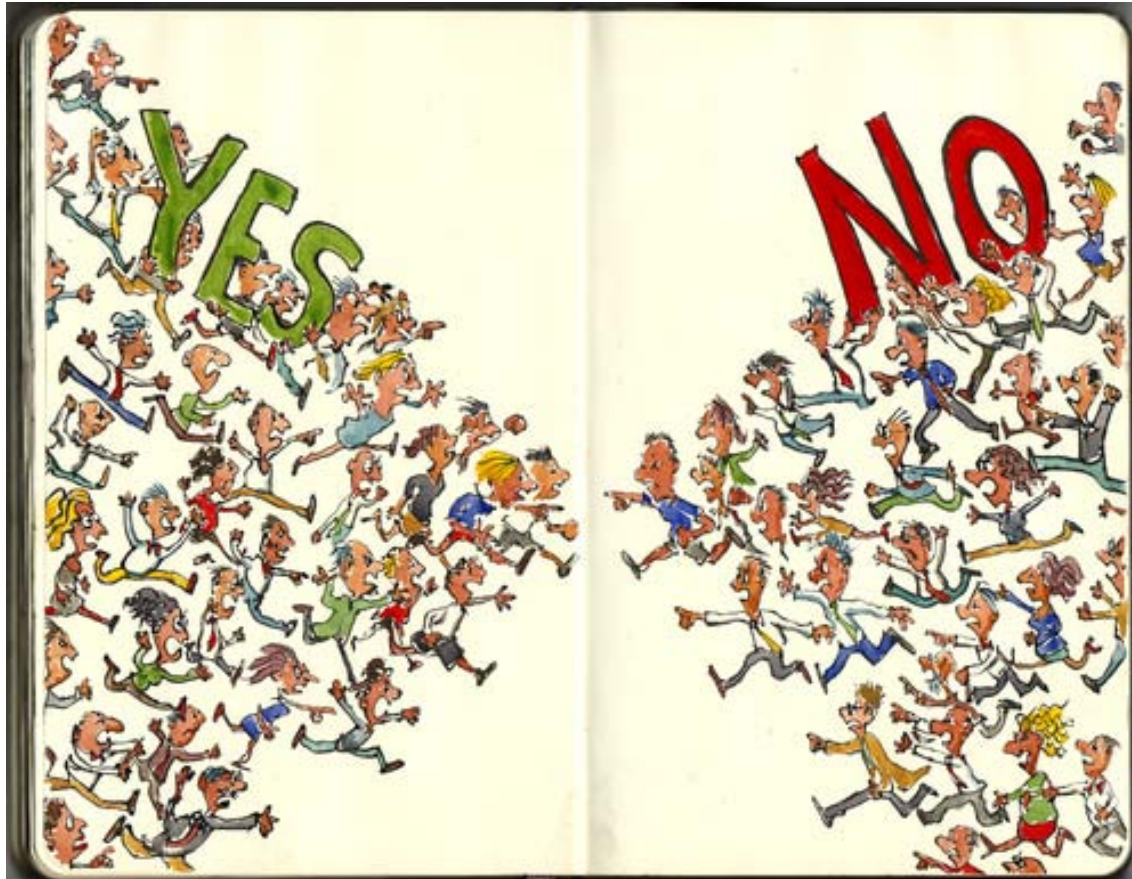
# Smart Phone Etiquette - Don'ts

- Don't be the borg. Its not cool.
- Don't use while driving. Its dangerous.
- Don't use during dinner, dates , or sensitive meetings . Its rude.
- Don't let your teenager set your ring tone.
- Don't assume the vibration setting is subtle.
- Don't show it off, lay it on the table, or play with it distractedly.
- Don't ever play games while in your professional role!
- Don't take pictures or videos (or audio recordings) without consent.

# Smart Phone Etiquette - The Do's

- Do check it frequently during brief gifts of time. This can help with 4 D's
- Do use it to manage your calendar
- Do use helpful apps for time management (To Do Lists, Bento)
- Do enter new contacts immediately along with a photograph (with consent)
- Do have a contact card you can beam/email
- Do take important (brief) calls but step out of the room after hitting the receive button (people get it and will wait a few seconds)

# Meetings



# Making Meetings Work

- Meetings are very expensive.
- Managed well, meetings make participants feel valued, encouraged, and respected.
- Managed poorly, meetings make participants demoralized, deskilled, and dehumanized.
- Leaders report meetings are effective 56% of the time, 25% did not require a meeting, and 19% actually meet objectives/goals.
- The vast majority of meetings are a waste of time.



# The Culture of Meetings: The Calling Together

- Define roles: Who is the leader, facilitator, timer, recorder, gofer, enforcer, room-reader?
- Define rules: How are decisions made (e.g. consensus, voting)? Is there an appeal process?
- Define outlook: Positive or negative world view? Complaints without potential solutions?

- Define participants: Are the key people at the table? Are their delegates well prepared/trained?
- Define scripts: Have an agenda, timeline, location/time, introductions, as well as a beginning, middle, and end. Circulate documents two weeks in advance - NEVER at the meeting or the day before.

# The Culture of Meetings: The Engagement

- Start on time: do not penalize those who were on time
- Set a tone: short story, joke, observation; vision of how the meeting ought to end; commitment to participation, respect, and time; acknowledgment of key processes
- Get to work: 80% of a meeting is planned in advance (expect participants to have read their materials - do not summarize/review), state the issue/conflict/decision tree, invite input (pro/con/other), move to action

- Facilitate discussion (invite the shy, manage the bold, bluntly ask if everyone has had an opportunity to participate)
- Document reasonably and carefully

# The Culture of Meetings: The Follow Up

- Minutes ought to be circulated within 3 days and corrections invited
- Minutes need definition (process or action); suggest action with clear lines of accountability, time frames, resources, follow up points, and anticipated outcomes
- Push teams to reflect on the meeting and their roles

# The Culture of Meetings: Managing Controversy

- Speak to disruptive people in advance and aim to identify/manage their concerns
- Set a strong and positive tone
- Remind people of the rules of engagement, the values of the organization, and the importance of solution
- Set guidelines for participation
- Manage disruptive people decisively
- **Be a role model**

# The Culture of Meetings: Managing Time Wasters

- Assign discussion times on the agenda
- Seek permission at the beginning of the meeting to cut people off and terminate discussion if reasonable and required
- Turn taking need not be sequential - give everyone a chance before allowing a participant to re-engage

- Emphasize repetition of other's comments is a waste of time
- Ask verbose/unclear speakers to clarify how they are pushing the discussion forward
- Label gossip and chit-chat and ask speakers to stay on topic for the benefit of all



# The Culture of Meetings: Teleconferences

- Are typically painful, unproductive, and dreaded
- Should never be longer than 1 hour
- Should be limited to no more than 7-10 ppl
- Require energetic and skilled facilitation
- Need participants to be actors (“This is Derek from Ottawa...I have a question”)
- Should occur only for topics that inspire - monotonous topics ought to be dealt with electronically

# Procrastination



# Another Little Quiz – Individual work

- BLUE sheet
- In your folders
- Do you procrastinate?
- 2 mins





# Why do we procrastinate?

- A lack of clear goals and/or indecision
- Fear
- Anger and resentment
- Feeling overwhelmed or exhausted
- Perfectionism

# Addressing your Procrastination

- Develop insight into your own procrastination style (avoidance, distraction, rigidity)
- Know why you procrastinate (bored, overwhelmed, disinterested, stressed, burned out)
- Move forward (values, motivators, transparency, accountability) via self-education, coaching/mentoring, formal training, or therapy

# Eat that Frog! (as Tracy says)



- Do the most unpleasant but necessary part first
- Get it out of the way so that you can move forward
- Otherwise you just keep dreading it
- Reward yourself right after

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# Review and Wrap-Up

- Take the time to think about your time!
- Know where you want to go and then break the journey into smaller steps
- Use the strategies that suit you best
- Time management is about behaviour



# Thank You!

- Your feedback is important
- Please take a moment to fill in the evaluation form