Achieving Balance: A Time Management Workshop

The Balanced Postdoc – Towards a Fulfilling Career and Life

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Overarching Goals

• Understanding and Reflection
  – Your challenges/barriers
  – Time management across time periods
  – Strategies/tools

• Application: 20 min break out activity
Private Reflection

WHAT ARE MY TIME MANAGEMENT BARRIERS OR CHALLENGES?
(Unofficial) Time Management Typology

- The perfectionists
- The procrastinators
- The volunteers
- The non-prioritizers
- The anti-time managers
Managing Across Time Periods

- Hourly / Daily / Weekly
- Monthly / Semesterly
- Yearly
- Life / Career Course
Managing Across Time Periods

- Hourly / Daily / Weekly
- Monthly / Semesterly
- Yearly
- Life / Career Course
Section Break

LIFE / CAREER COURSE
Life Course Key Questions

• Where are you headed in your life and career?

• What needs to do be done at this stage of my life or career, and what can wait until later?

• Who and/or what supports me?
Individual Development Plan (IDP)

Florida State University has adopted the use of the Individual Development Plan or IDP for all its postdoctoral trainees. Postdoctoral scholars and their advisors can generate an IDP at the new Postdoctoral Orientation every August and a helpful slide presentation can be found below to use as a resource for incoming postdocs that may arrive throughout the year. The IDP can be incorporated into the annual review process as a helpful goal setting tool.

In addition, advisors who are supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) should be advised that use of the IDP is mandatory for all non-competitive renewal reports.

- 'Click here' for NIH Policy Regarding IDP and Investigator Annual Progress Reports (RPPR)
- Slide presentation file - What is an IDP?
- Individual Development Plan for Postdoctoral Scholars as Adopted by Florida State University
- myIDP, an interactive web-based tool that helps postdocs in the sciences examine their skills, interests, and values
Life Course Tool #2: Mentors

- **What:** Field-specific and/or identity-specific mentors who are NOT supervisors
- **Where:** Personal contacts, associations, field-specific news sources, social media
- **Why:** Different perspectives, no immediate
- **When/How:** Mentor or friendtor? Formal or informal conversations?
Yearly Planning Key Questions

• What overall things do I need to accomplish this year?

• What deadlines do I need to be aware of this year?

• What “curve balls” are in my court this year?
Yearly Planning Tool #1: Printable Life Plans (1-5 years)
Yearly Planning Tool #2: The Not To Do List

• What can someone else do?
• What is out of your control?
• What drains your energy?
• What doesn’t really have to get done?
Semesterly Key Questions

• What will the flow of the academic calendar be like for me?

• What will be the impact of the academic calendar on my team?

• Do you need to anticipate seasonal issues? (hurricanes, flu season, etc.)
Semesterly Planning Tool #1: Quarterly Planning

• Ask key players for dates:
  – Departmental/lab meetings
  – Academic calendar dates
  – Partner/family-related dates

• Your major goals / deadlines
  – Select goals
  – Set deadlines
  – Notate it somewhere
Semesterly Planning Tool #2: Monthly Calendars

• Digital or paper
• Public vs private or shared with family
• Only the highlights – deadlines and events
• Lie to yourself (move deadlines up a few days to a week)
Semesterly Planning Tool #3: Habit Tracking

- What habits do you want to start/stop
- Goal != Perfection
- Examples:
  - Water intake
  - Exercise
  - Coffee intake
  - Vitamins
  - Cooking vs. eating out
  - Staying off social media
Weekly Key Questions

• When does this week end and begin?

• What must be done this week?

• What can I do this week to help me next week?
Weekly Planning Tool #1: The “Brain Dump”

• Write a list of everything that has to get done this week
  – Do this right before at the beginning of the week
  – Separate by project?
  – Separate list for non-pressing tasks

• Then ask yourself this...
Weekly Planning Tool #2: Importance vs. Urgency Grid

- **URGENT**
  - **DO IT NOW**
  - **PLAN IT**

- **NOT URGENT**
  - **DELEGATE**
  - **DROP IT**
Weekly Planning Tool #3: Make Tasks Into Appointments

- Schedule the tasks in your calendar as if they are meetings
- Plan for things to take longer than expected
- Consider your energy levels
Weekly Planning Tool #4: Create Efficient Meetings

- Use scheduling software
  - Outlook
  - Calendly
- Ask participants to develop a plan for the meeting
- Shorten meetings
- Move socializing time to coffee breaks or group-bonding activities

PURPOSE: Why are we meeting? (Simple, 1-line explanation):

DESIRED OUTCOMES: What exactly do we want to come out of this meeting? (Tangible outcomes we can check off as "done" when meeting is over):

OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS: Any questions that need answering before we can have productive meeting? (Questions you need answered by me? Info I need to prepare ahead of time?):

CONTEXT, NOTES, & RESOURCES: Relevant info, links, documents? (Share any additional info that might help us have a successful meeting. Documents can be emailed to me or inserted here via links to Google Drive, Dropbox, OneDrive, etc.)
Daily/Hourly Key Questions

• What has to be done right now?

• When / how am I going to care for myself today?
Daily Planning Tool #1: Pomodoro & Time Tracking

• Focus periods
• Know how you spend your time
• Associated apps/websites:
  – Toggl
  – Forest
  – Pomotodo
The Pomodoro Technique

1. Decide on the task to be done.
2. Set the timer to 25 minutes.
3. Work on the task until the timer rings.
4. Take a short 5 minute break.
5. Take a 15-30 minute break.

repeat 4 times

#bitesizePD
Application

20 MIN BREAKOUT SESSION
QUESTIONS? THANK YOU!