

Time Management

AGU Heads & Chairs Workshop – December 2013

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DISCLAIMER: ideas within this presentation come from an assortment of sources gathered over many years of giving this talk. They are provided with the understanding that what works for one person may not work for another. And most importantly, my presentation of these ideas in no way implies that I successfully employ any of them.



TIME IS LIMITED

We CANNOT do everything.

Pull out a sheet of paper.

Goal: *By the end of the next hour, you will have created a list of concrete ways better manage your time.*



THE CHALLENGE

We ARE department chairs because of one or more of the following:

- a. We care about our department and want to ensure that things are done well (by our standards).
- b. No one else can step up or accomplish what “needs” accomplishing.
- c. We can’t say no.

We ARE overcommitted because of one or more of the following:

- a. We care about projects and want to ensure that things are done well (by our standards).
- b. No one else can step up or accomplish what “needs” accomplishing.
- c. We can’t say no.



THE SOLUTION

1. Set your priorities
2. Reduce the number of things you are trying to do.
 - a. Delegate: where possible, learn to accept things happening differently than the way we want them to.
 - b. Reconsider whether things really do “need” to happen. And if so, find or develop additional resources to step up. (Delegate.)
 - c. Learn how to say no.
3. Be at peace with stopping your efforts before they are perfect.
4. Find ways to be more efficient and “waste” less time.

SET YOUR PRIORITIES

Identify your own values and how you want to live your life, and make choices that align with those values and priorities.

Don't let others choose your priorities for you.



CONSIDER:

Make an ordered list
of your priorities.

For example:

*#1: My mental, spiritual, physical
health*

#2: My family

#3: My job

a) The students

b) My future career desires

c) My own academic education

d) My department

e) The college as a whole

• *#4: My friends, home, etc.*



SUGGESTIONS...

Items that aren't being done, but really need to be done (high priority, not necessarily most enjoyable), can be scheduled, like classes or appointments.

Ignore due dates and do the highest priority tasks as soon as time becomes available – something else ALWAYS comes up.

Do the easy stuff when you have small chunks of time between larger projects (when you feel unable/unwilling to start larger projects...)

Schedule time when you won't work (like evenings, weekends, or mornings). This down time forces you to be more efficient at work (refraining from distractions and idle conversations during the day).

Make your scheduled personal time unchangeable except for emergencies. (Treat like a class.)

Make clear delineation between personal and work time.

REDUCE YOUR WORKLOAD

Delegate.

- Learn to accept things happening differently than the way we want.
- Reconsider whether things really do “need” to happen. And if so, find or develop additional resources .

Learn how to say no.



DELEGATE

You don't have to enact ALL good ideas.

You don't have to carry all the burden.

Delegating is valuable to
more than just yourself:
when everyone contributes,
the atmosphere and
environment improve for
everyone.





Developing resources for DELEGATION

Spread out among faculty –
here's what I can do; here's what
I can't – anyone want to take any
of these on or do we let them go?

Be willing to let things go...
Be willing to let them be done
differently.

THINK YOU CAN'T DELEGATE TO YOUR COLLEAGUES?

Change your attitude.

Everyone has something of value to contribute. It might be challenging to find it, but it's there. Nurture it.

(If you think it's not there, you won't find it.

If you believe it is there AND that you can find it, you will.)

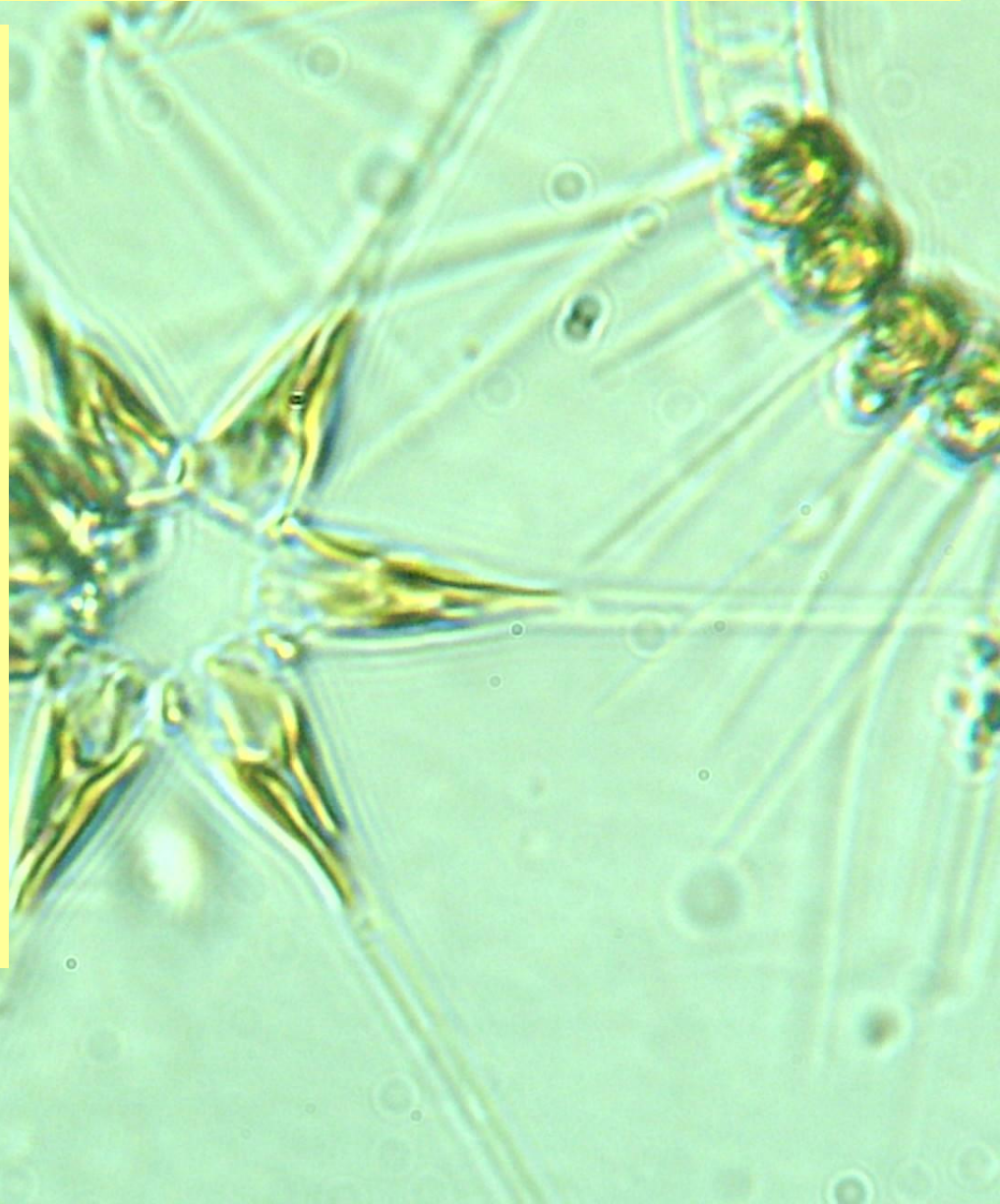


Developing resources for DELEGATION

Give up things you might really want to do to folks whose energy is best diverted there (best hope of their cooperation)

Be okay with it happening poorly

Be okay with it not happening



CONSIDER:

What is one thing
you've successfully
delegated in the
past?

What are some
things you're
currently doing that
you could delegate
or give up? (*even if they
are things you REALLY
wan to do yourself*)





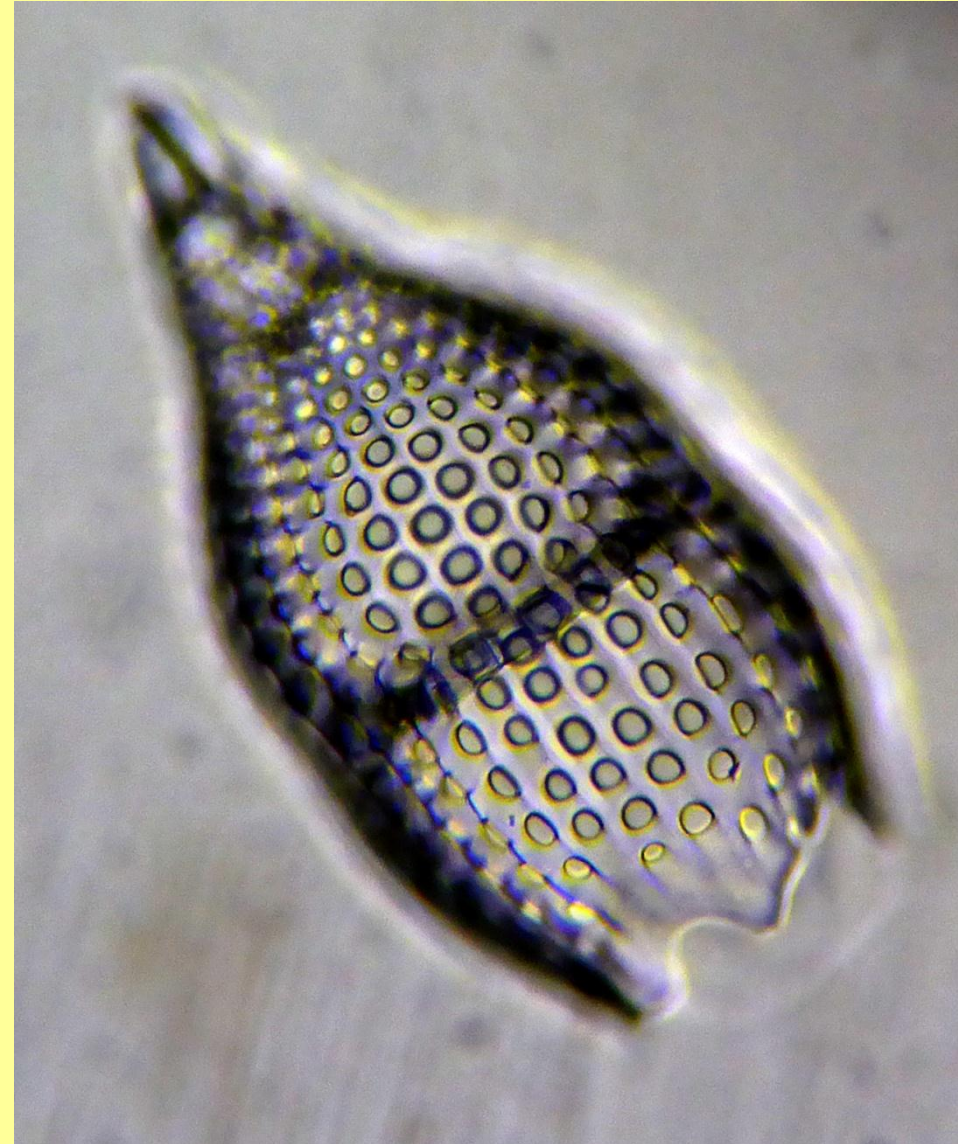
Group Activity

Share SUCCESSFUL examples.

LEARN HOW TO SAY NO

EXAMPLE:

“You know, I really want to help out, but I know that right now I just won’t be able to give you and this project the time and commitment it deserves. So I have to say no. Thank you for asking.”



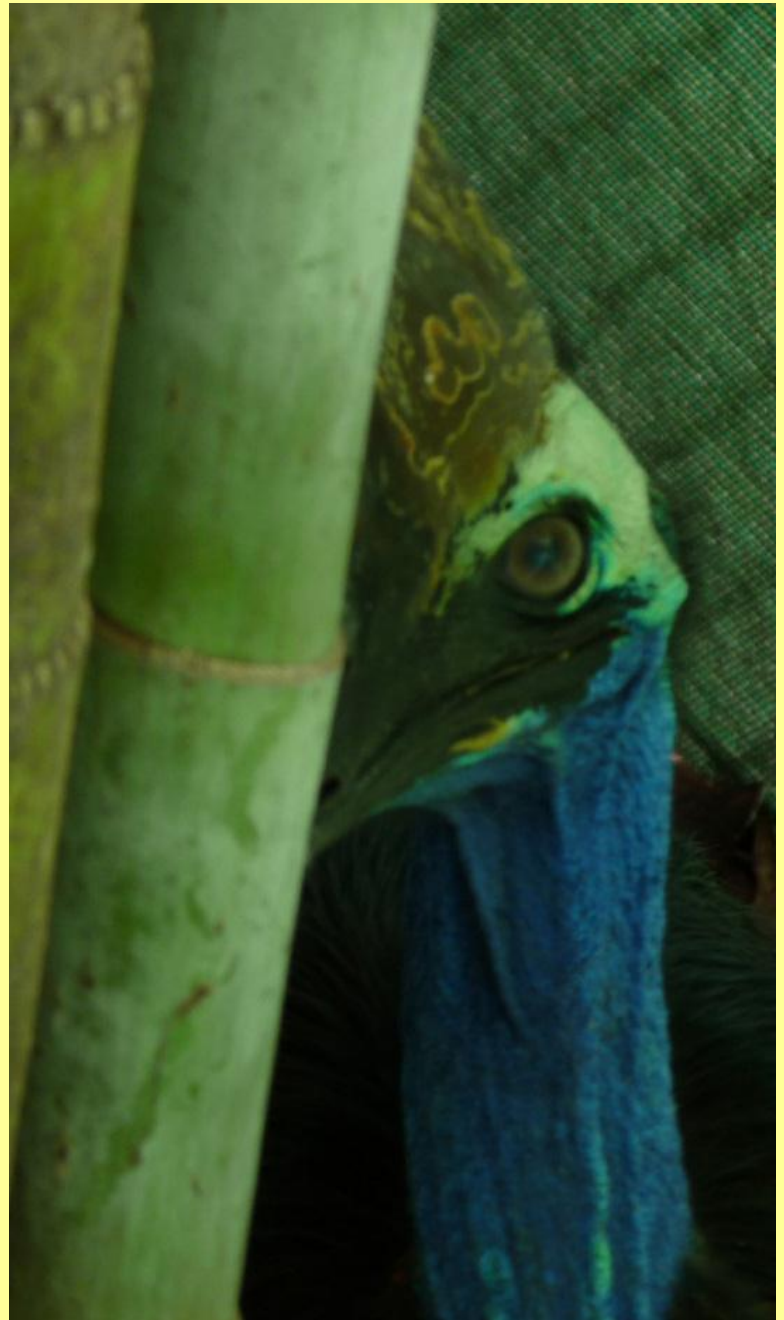


YES

**REALLY MEANS NO TO
SOMETHING ELSE YOU'RE
ALREADY DOING**

Just because an opportunity arises that you really want to do or that you feel a deep sense of obligation to do doesn't mean you should do it.

If you sign up for too much, you will go crazy trying to get it all done. And it will be hard to ensure everything is done really well...

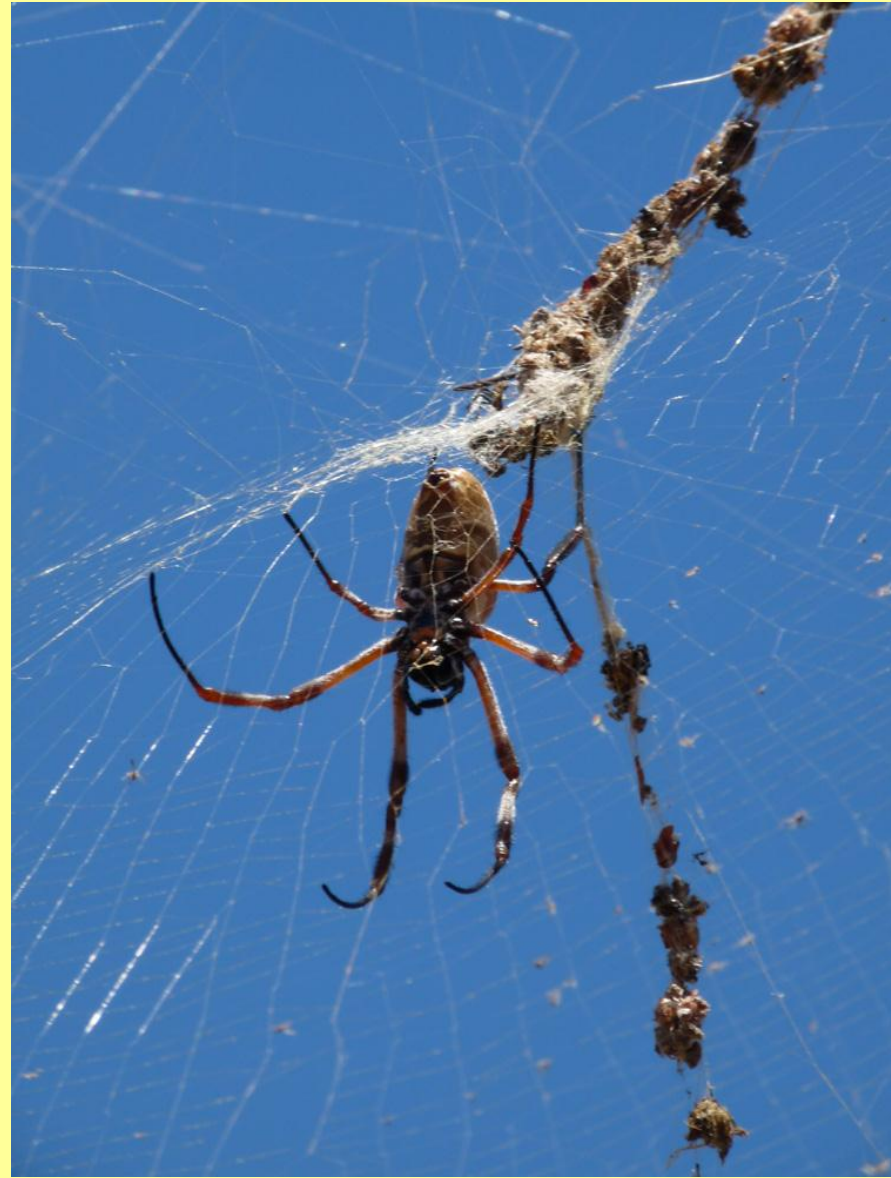


CONSIDER:

What is a good example
of when you successfully
said no in the past?
(Results)

What is one thing in your
life that you **really want
to do**, but you know you
should defer until you
have more time?

What is one thing that
you **would like** to
say no to?



A low-angle, upward-looking photograph of several jellyfish swimming in deep blue water. The jellyfish have large, translucent, golden-brown bells and long, thin, white tentacles that are illuminated from below, creating a dramatic, ethereal effect. The background is a deep, vibrant blue.

Group Activity

Share SUCCESSFUL examples of when you were able to say NO. How did you do it? How did it feel?

SOME STRATEGIES FOR NO

- Have a policy that says you won't (even if you have time) say yes to any requests that must be completed in the next 24 hours (set a standard that folks need to give you time if they want your commitment – good for students and coworkers).
- Don't hesitate to say you're busy, even if the "busy" is personal time that you've scheduled. That should be equally important to other commitments.
- Be firm and polite. You can be sympathetic, but don't appear wishy washy, or they'll push.
- You don't need to provide lengthy explanations about why you can't do something. Keep it simple – it just doesn't fit in your schedule. Otherwise you sound defensive and encourage further pushing.
- No sending of email on weekend or at nights. You can respond, but queue it up. Don't send it. Otherwise folks start expecting you to be working at those times.
- No working on "other" work when it's time set aside for a specific project.



BE AT PEACE WITH THINGS NOT HAPPENING AS PERFECTLY AS YOU *COULD DO IT*

Calculate the % of your time you are willing to give to a particular job and then stick to it. Schedule that time.

Examples:

- 8 hours a week
- 2 hours a day
- 1 day a week



CONSIDER:

*What is one thing in your life that you've already successfully put limits on?
(Results?)*

What is one endless time-eating activity in your life that you should set boundaries on and be okay with less than perfection?





Group Activity

Share SUCCESSFUL examples.

INCREASE EFFICIENCY AND REDUCE WASTE



AVOID TIME PITs

Set time limits on activities in which you lose track of time like *unscheduled office hours, e-mail, web design, graphics, etc.*

Avoid checking e-mail, internet, or answering phone as soon as they present themselves – instead set aside time specifically for those tasks

Avoid doing e-mail first thing in the morning – get something on your To-Do list done first

Meet students in common areas so it's easier to exit at the end of the allotted time

MORE SUGGESTIONS...

Keep a To-Do or Tasks List and Calendar (many software programs can help, like Google calendar)

Use a calendar with moveable sections/tasks, so you can keep track of tasks, even if you need to move them. You can use this process to schedule projects and set goals.

Break large projects into small steps and goals. Schedule each.

*Stay organized on desk and desktop (computer)
– purge excess paper*

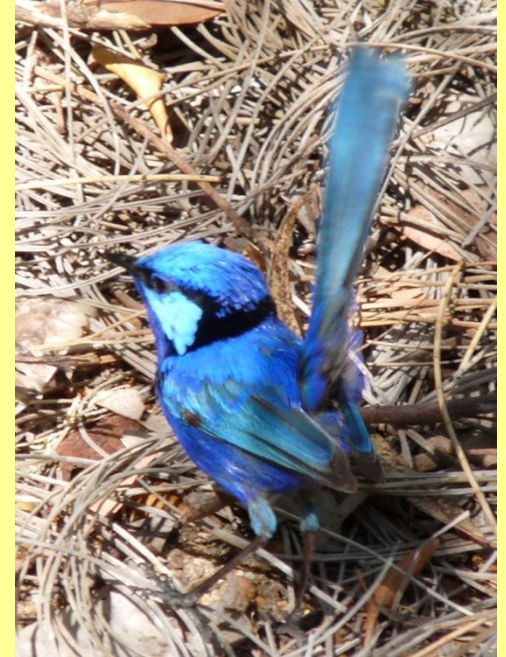
Focus on getting at least one BIG thing done daily.



MORE SUGGESTIONS...

Write notes at the end of the day to record where you are and where you want to start again the next day. This process can help you get on track the next day faster.

Reduce distractions by hiding, or closing door up to a crack, and/or having sign on door explaining you are “writing” or “grading” or ...



CONSIDER:

What is one of your
best time-saving
techniques?



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Group Activity

Share SUCCESSFUL time-
saving techniques.

CONSIDER:

*What new strategies did you hear today that you plan to use (or old ones that you're now ready for)?
How and when will you enact them?*

