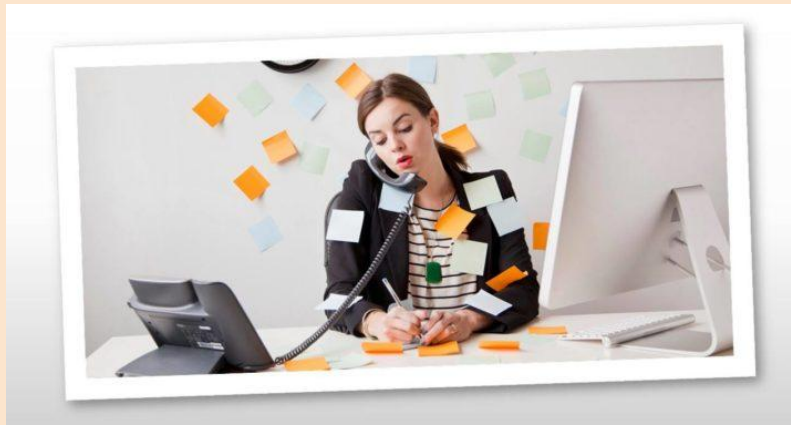


Time management And productivity

Marika, Qiancheng, David



Overcommitting

Procrastination

Busyness

Common Problems

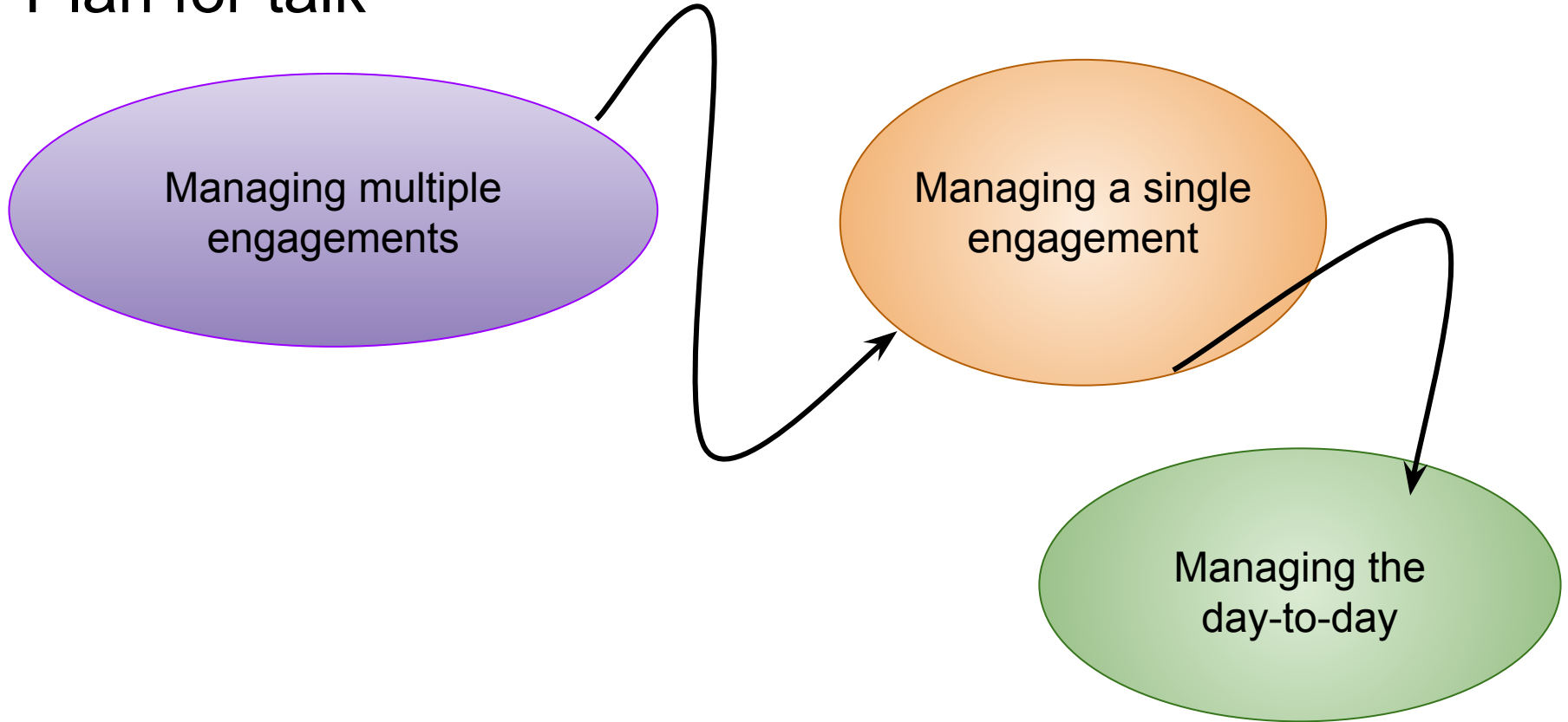
Perfectionism

Distracting workspace

Disorganization

Hugh Kearns , Maria Gardiner & Kelly Marshall (2008) Innovation in PhD completion: the hardy shall succeed (and be happy!)

Plan for talk



managing multiple
engagements



Overcommitting

Taking on so many things that your high priority goals suffer.

Overcommitting

Taking on so many things that your high priority goals suffer.

Technique: setting your priorities.



Exercise 1: list your priorities

Take a few moments to make an ordered list of your priorities.

Some examples:

- Research
- Mental and physical well-being
- Time with friends and family
- Religious or community engagement
- Coursework
- Hobbies

Busyness/Procrastination

Looking like you are very busy, but in reality only less important things are getting done.

Busyness/Procrastination

Looking like you are very busy, but in reality only less important things are getting done.

Technique: Set goals for your priorities.
Schedule time to achieve the goals.

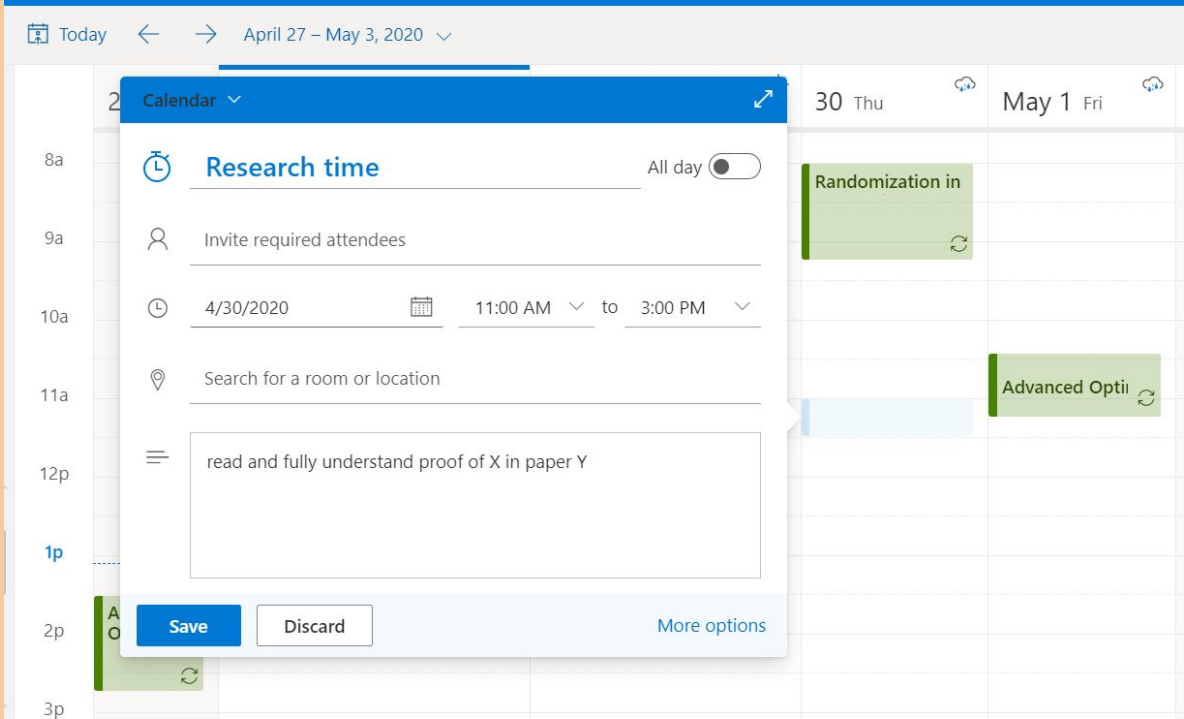


Exercise 2a: Setting goals

Pick one of the priorities you listed and set a 1 week goal for that priority, along with the number of hours it will take (approximately)

Exercise 2b: Scheduling time for your goals

Now make time in your schedule to achieve your goal.



April 2020

Add calendar

Calendar

United States holid...

Course Schedule

Seminars

Fun!

Deadlines

Personal

Course Audit

Research Meetings

Office Hours

Daily work

27 Mon

Apr 28 Tue



29 Wed



30 Thu



May 1 Fri



7a

Fairness reading

8a

MPC Re

9a

10a

Algorithms and

11a

12p

1p

2p

Randomization in Computing

Invitat
<https://t...>

Deletic Resear

Sof

Northe Theory Semin

Daily BUsec coffee chat

Adam Office Hours

Advanced Optimizati

Grad Initiation Course

Randomization in Compu

BUsec Seminar

Gavin's Office Hours

Call mc

Daily BUsec

Randomization in

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(no lunch) BUsec res


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Cyber Alliance


 Adam Office Hou


Advanced



Research Meetings 

 **FB ads meeting**

 Wed 2/26/2020 10:10 AM - 11:10 AM

 You're the organizer.
Palak Jain didn't respond.

 things we will have done before this meeting: 1. Palak will learn about how to link a business account to an ad account and run ads 2. Marika will learn about A/B testing and make a document with the important stuff.

 Edit  Cancel

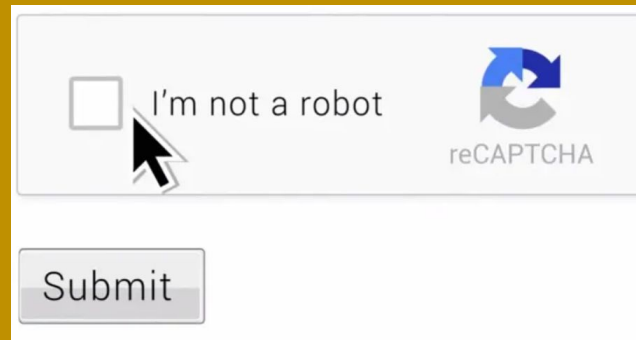
Overworking

Working to an unhealthy amount.

Overworking

Working to an unhealthy amount.

Technique: Give your brain a rest.

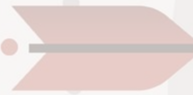


Part 2: managing a single engagement

Focus on the Task at Hand

When managing a single engagement, it's best to put all the focus on the task at hand.

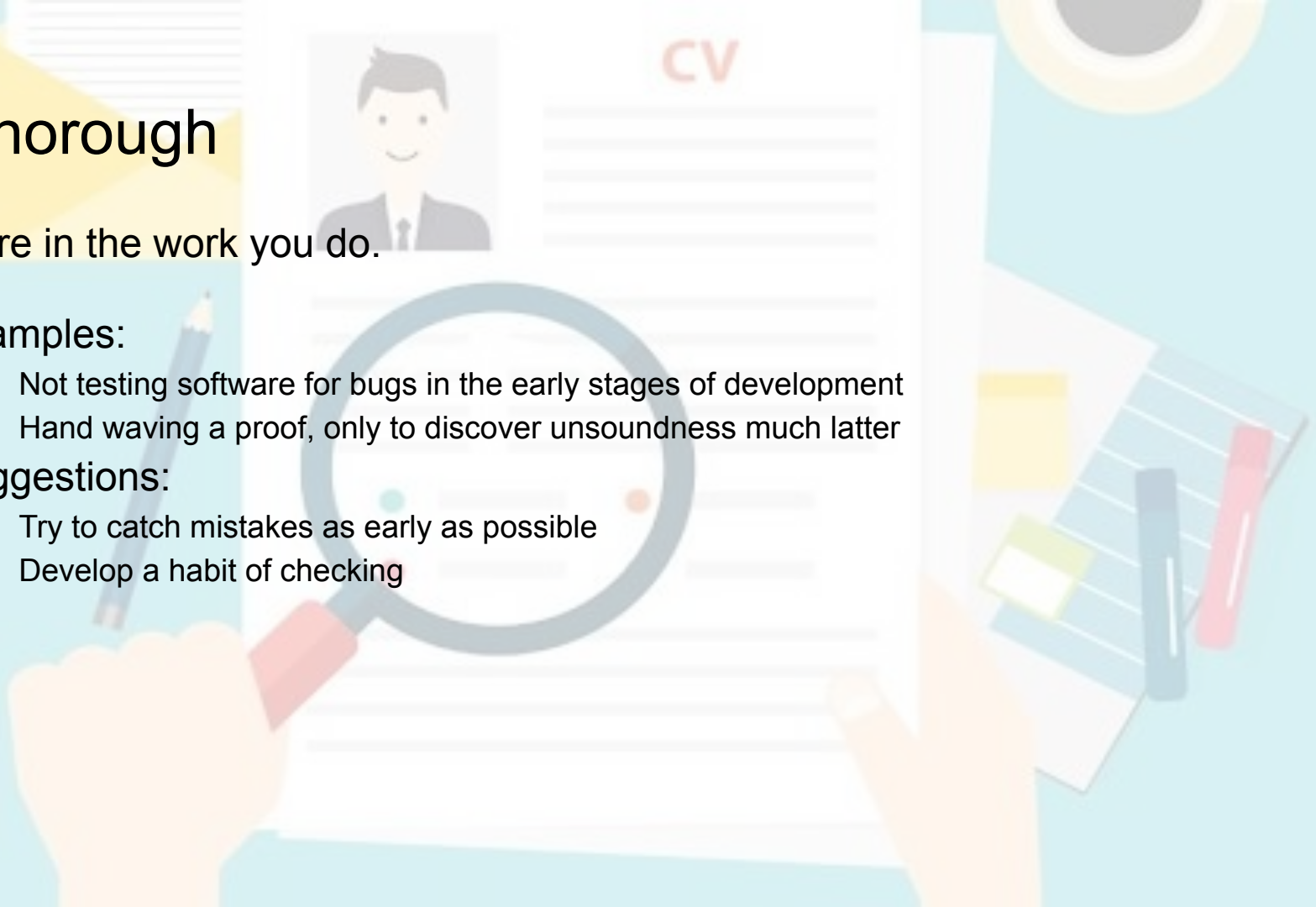
- **Examples:**
 - Distracting music
 - Anxious about something else
- **Suggestions:**
 - Turn off music and other forms of entertainment
 - Relax and don't stress
 - Don't worry about the next thing



Be Thorough

Take care in the work you do.

- **Examples:**
 - Not testing software for bugs in the early stages of development
 - Hand waving a proof, only to discover unsoundness much latter
- **Suggestions:**
 - Try to catch mistakes as early as possible
 - Develop a habit of checking



Perfectionism

Setting unrealistic and impossible expectations.

- **Examples:**
 - Overextending on a project
 - Overly fussy about every detail
- **Suggestions:**
 - This is very normal
 - Get a high level overview, then decide if details are worth pursuing
 - Know when to say “It’s good enough”

Splitting a Large Task



Splitting a large task into smaller pieces may be helpful

- **Examples:**
 - Implementing a large piece of software in self contained modules
 - Postulate certain lemmas as true, work on them later
 - Writing a paper in sections
- **Suggestions:**
 - Working on smaller tasks is less daunting.
 - Working on a large monolithic task can be dull.
 - Think about how a task can fit into your current schedule.

Be Flexible



Planning out tasks and engagements is a good habit for time management, but adhering to a plan strictly and mechanically might not be optimal.

- **Examples:**
 - Setting aside 2 hours for some problem, getting stuck during the first 10 minutes and not doing anything else.
 - Getting very close to solving a problem, giving up because the allotted time has run out.
- **Suggestions:**
 - Allow some degree of leeway in a day's plan
 - Staring at a problem is not always helpful, putting it down temporarily can be more beneficial
 - Plan in advance in case of emergency situations

Be reasonable



Some tasks are simply too much to accomplish in a certain amount of time.

- **Examples:**
 - Only setting aside a single day for a large project
 - Taking on problems well beyond your abilities
- **Suggestions:**
 - Select tasks with reasonable difficulty
 - Don't let ego cloud your judgement
 - Compromises sometimes have to be made

Managing the day to day



- Have a runner's mindset.
 - Be goal oriented.
- Be temperate in all (other) things.



Your mindset is important

- Always look forward.
 - Stop looking at previous mistakes and mishaps.
- Get used to that “good feeling” after “running”.

Be goal oriented.

Don't punch in the air.



Organize your day (don't punch in the air)

- Not developing a routine or system that makes managing your time and life easier will make you waste a lot of effort.

- Example:
 - Forgetting something important that needs to be done on time.
 - Over-exerting short term, underperforming long term.



Set

S

M

A

R

T



Specific



Measurable



Attainable



Relevant



Time Based

goals.

- The first thing you do for work in the morning should be to plan your day.
 - Rank tasks by urgency and importance.
- Keep this plan always in mind throughout your day.
 - Humans like to work towards goals.
- Be sure to keep this plan in mind throughout your day.

Keep a routine!

- A regular sleep and meal schedule will go a long way.
- A routine reduces stress because it's one less thing you have to worry about.
- There are many other benefits of routines.



The myth of multitasking

“The research is almost unanimous, [...] and it says that

people who chronically multitask show an enormous range of deficits.

They're basically terrible at all sorts of cognitive tasks, including multitasking.”



Be temperate in other things.

(also known as)

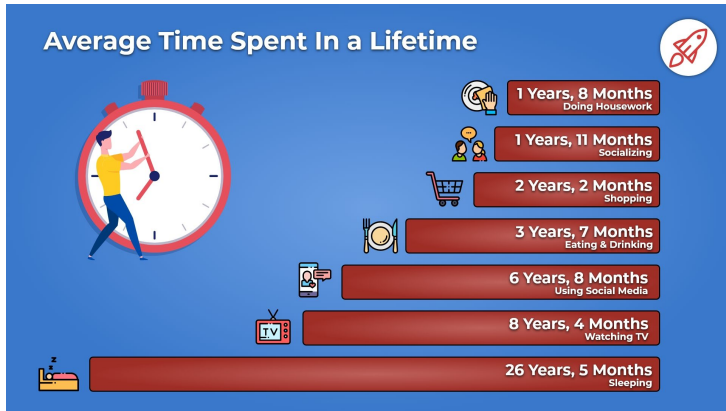
self control.

Pay attention to where you work

- trying to work in a busy or unsuitable location or situation
- Example:
 - Disorganized desk, hard to find documents or devices
 - “Too cozy” of a working space
 - Working space that’s physically uncomfortable
- Suggestions:
 - An organized desk is always a good feeling.
 - From the audience?



The internet profits off of your attention.



The average American professional spends

2.6 hours
a day checking email.



Suggestions to use your attention wisely

- When you work on a certain task, avoid “useful” distractions like:
 - Checking email.
 - Checking Twitter for internship positions.
 - Replying to texts that you have to reply to at some point, but not immediately.
- Plan dedicated times during the day to check and respond to email.



Suggestions to use your attention wisely

- Do you really need that many “productivity” apps?
- Turn on “Do Not Disturb” mode.
- Avoid using social media from working machine.

Time management tools

- A physical notebook
 - Super customizable
 - Very helpful in forming good habits since it's an “organization-only” tool, as opposed to a phone

- Google/Outlook Calendar
 - Can set reminders for events through email and push notifications for events
 - Different calendars for class time, research meetings, seminars, office hours, etc (one can toggle things on and off easily)
 - Integrated with every app (Zoom, Slack, Gmail .. etc)
 - Hard to beat UI/UX

Pomodoro technique

- Setting a timer for 25-30 minutes to focus and then taking a 5 minute break and repeating.
- Longer 20-30 min breaks after 4 rounds of focus time (about 2 hours).