

# **Time Management: Balancing Work, Life, and Health**

**Ben Partridge**

(he/him/his)

**Assistant Professor and Levinson-Shapiro Faculty Scholar  
Department of Chemistry**

**DEI-O Forum, September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

# Today's Questions

- Why is time management important?
- How do we like to procrastinate?
- How do we spend our time and how do we know how we spend our time?
- What techniques help us to organize our time?
- How can we use our time more effectively?

# Who are you?

## Reflect

- On a blank sheet of paper, list the aspects of your life (private and professional) that are important to you.
- Rank them from most important to least important.
  
- What does private and professional wellbeing mean to you?
- What are the tell-tale signs when you are stressed/overburdened?

# The importance of self-care

## Reflect

What does self-care mean to you?

Practicing good self-care might mean:

- Basic needs - **physical health**
  - *sleep, food, water, exercise, hygiene*
- Recreational, social, and down-time - **mental health**
- Recognizing stress and symptoms of burnout
  - *anxiety, fatigue, lack of purpose, detachment, cynicism*
- Be forgiving

# Know how you spend your time

How did you spend your time last week?

Assessing your time expenditure:

- List all the **tasks** that you do in a particular week
- Identify **tasks** that are specific to a particular day
- Organize your list into ~6-8 **activities**:
  - Basic needs
  - Teaching
  - Studying
  - Research
  - Communication
  - Personal time
  - Recreation

# Schedule everything

- Sketch out a schedule of **activities**, rather than a to-do list
- Don't lose sight of what's important!
  
- Schedule in some down time and some flex time
- There will be days when it all goes awry - that's okay
- Find the system that works for you
- Ask others how they work and manage their calendars
- You cannot do it all, and that's okay too
  
- "I didn't have the time" vs. "I didn't make the time"
- i.e., take ownership of your schedule and plan deliberately

# Procrastination

What is procrastination?

## **Reflect**

How and why do you procrastinate?

# Procrastination

Sapadin and Maquire (1996) identify **six types of procrastination**:

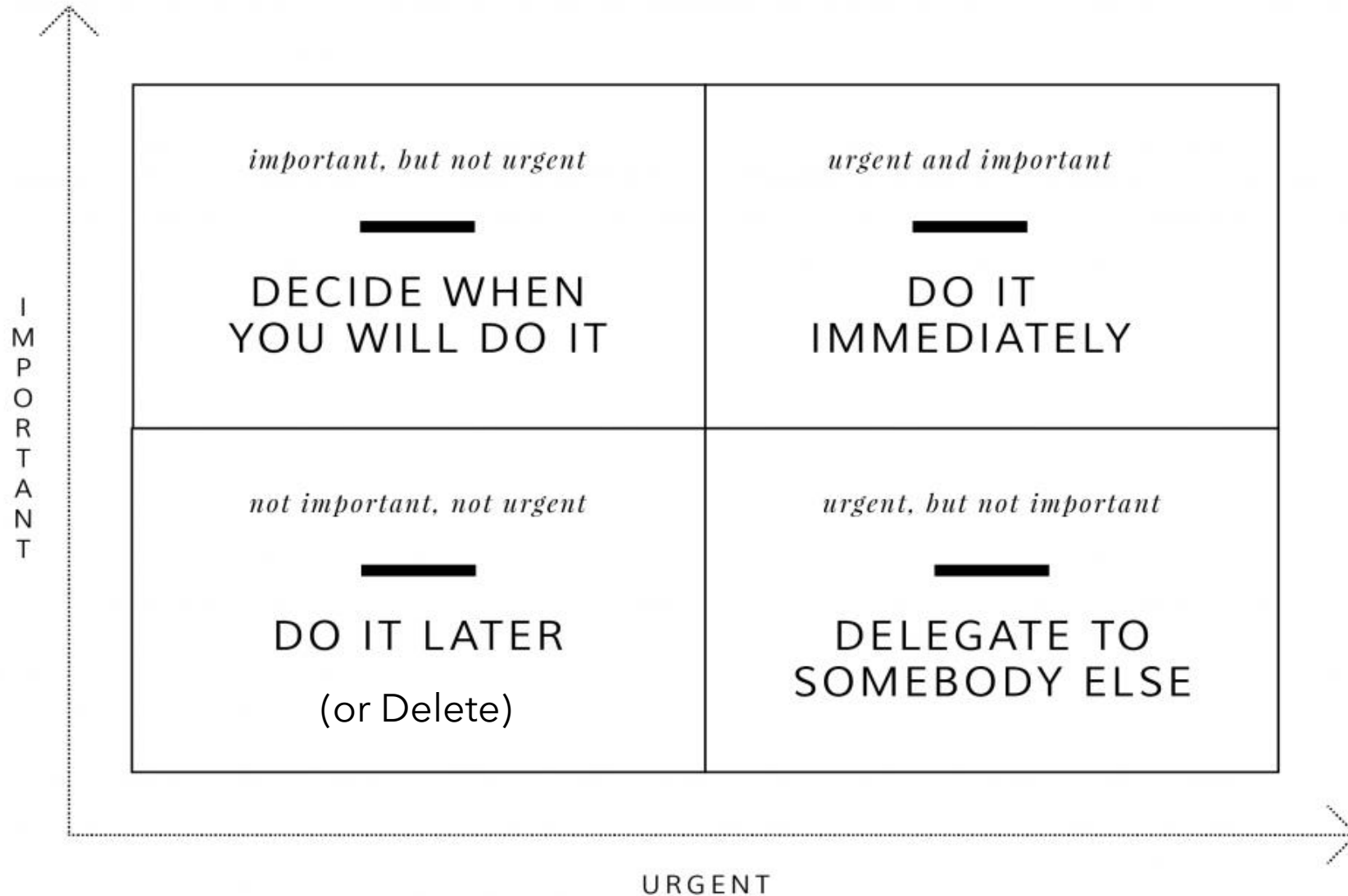
- The Perfectionist: "BUT I want it to be perfect!"
- The Dreamer: "BUT I hate all those bothersome details!"
- The Worrier: "BUT I'm afraid to change!"
- The Defier: "BUT why should I have to do it?"
- The Crisis Maker: "BUT I only get motivated at the last moment!"
- The Overdoer: "BUT I have so much to do!"

How do we overcome procrastination?

- Divide a large task into smaller pieces
- Make an arbitrary start
- Set deadlines (and make them count!)
- Reward yourself by goal or by time
- Work by ritual



# One way to prioritize: The Eisenhower matrix



# Finding your own rhythm

## Reflect

How do you work best?

Some facets to different working styles:

- Start hard, end easy ("Eat that frog") vs. Start easy, end hard
- Deadline fulfilment
- External accountability
- Time of day
- Working in silence vs. working with music
- Working alone vs. working collaboratively
- Working in bursts of time vs. working in big blocks of time
- The two-minute rule vs. "The Tyranny of Tiny Tasks"

# Some additional resources

Setting work priorities:

<https://www.wework.com/ideas/professional-development/creativity-culture/how-to-prioritize-work>

Time management techniques:

<https://www.brightpod.com/boost/10-popular-time-management-techniques>

<https://todoist.com/productivity-methods/pomodoro-technique>

<https://www.usa.edu/blog/time-management-techniques/>

and many, many others...