

# Manage your time and power your career





## Your Hosts for Today...



**Imrah Mughal**  
Career Development and  
Employee Experience Analyst  
**UNDP**



**Clare Endicott**  
Career management expert  
**Fuel50**



# Poll Question:

Most common signs you are not managing your time well

1. Need to rush
2. Missing appointments
3. Getting forgetful
4. Missing deadline
5. All the above



# Learning Outcomes

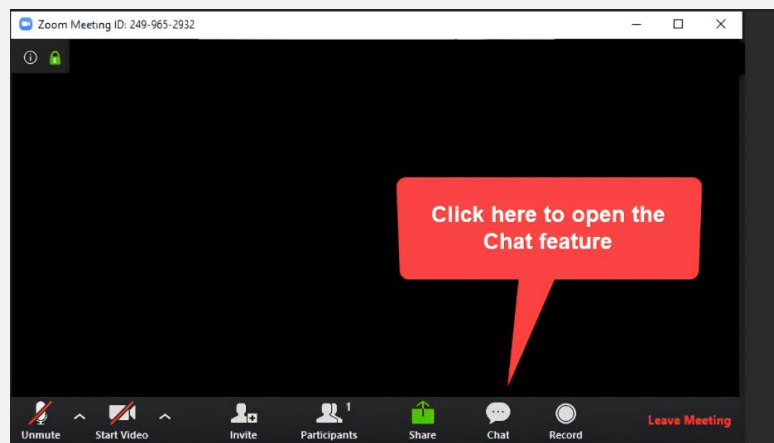
- To identify what you can do differently to enable greater productivity
- To provide some facts and tips to enable you to make informed choices about how you use your time and your energy





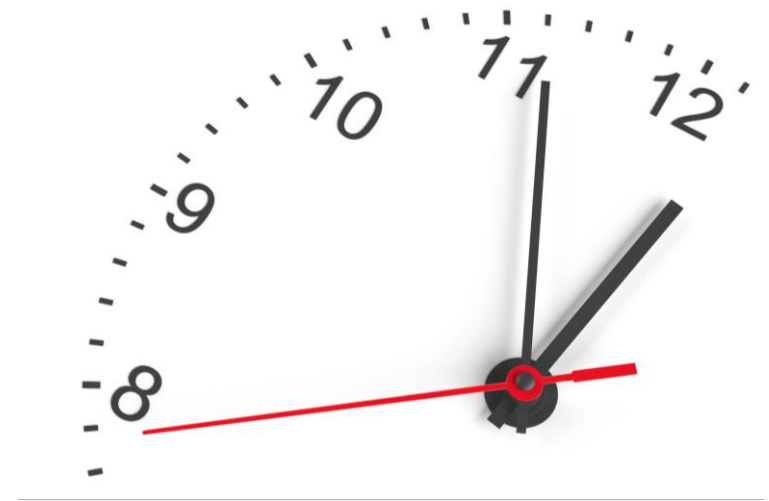
# What are the challenges you face?

Let us know in chat...



# Why don't we 'have the time'?

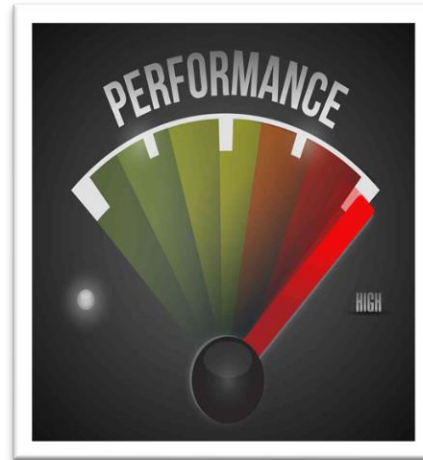
- Frequently we get hijacked by the immediate reactive things
- Short term goals win over longer-term goals as our brains are fixed on immediacy
- To get things done we need to plan in all aspects of life and work over weeks, months and even years
- There is a need



# Energy rather than time is the currency of high performance

## Old paradigm

- Manage time
- Avoid stress
- Life is a marathon
- Downtime is wasted time
- Rewards fuel performance
- Self discipline rules
- The power of positive thinking



## New paradigm

- Manage energy
- Seek challenge
- Life is a series of sprints
- Downtime is productive time
- Purpose fuels performance
- Rituals rule
- The power of full engagement



# Human beings are complex energy systems

(Loehr and Schwartz 2003)

- **Physical energy:** fueling the fire
- **Emotional energy:** transforming threat to challenge
- **Mental energy:** appropriate focus and realistic options
- **Spiritual energy:** meaning and purpose



Pause for a minute and consider how you look after each part of your energy system  
How often do you stop and consider how you keep yourself on form?  
Please comment in chat





- Priorities
- Productivity

How can we use our energy more effectively?





## Priorities

Also known as: Setting intentional direction

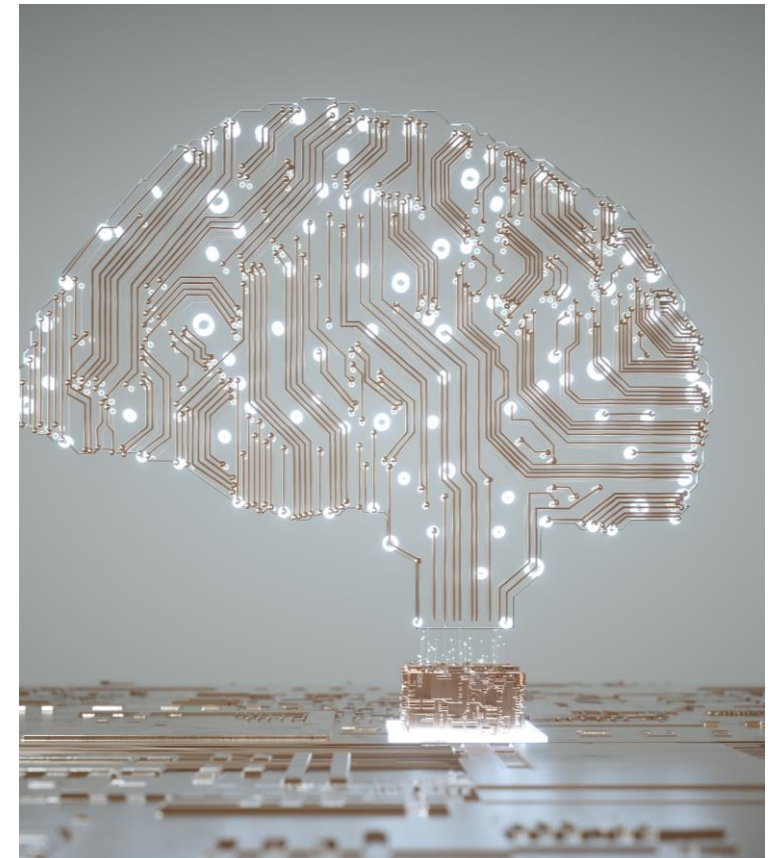
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‘Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life and you will call it fate.’ (Carl Jung)



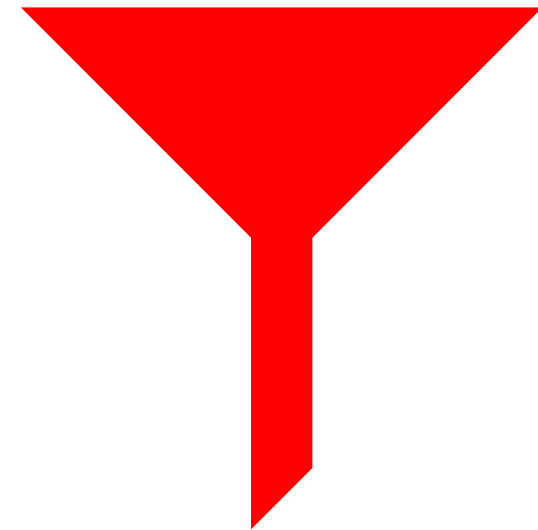
# Choosing your filters: our subjective reality (Caroline Webb 2017)

- To deal with the world's complexities the brain uses its automatic system to prioritize what seems the most deserving of our brain's deliberate system (Pre frontal cortex) which is responsible for planning, self control and reasoning
- It filters out anything it does not see as important. This filtering happens without us being aware of it.
- Hence, we experience an incomplete and subjective version of reality. Whilst it helps us to filter it can also miss some of the important things.
- Need to identify our intentions – make it conscious



# Set your intentions, set Your filters make your day more deliberate

- **Aim:** For each of the day's most important activities, what matters most in making them a success? What does that mean your real priority should be?
- **Attitude:** What concerns are dominating your mood/thoughts? Are they helping or hindering? Can you set them aside if you need to?
- **Assumptions:** What negative assumptions have you got about the task/meeting? Can you challenge these?
- **Attention:** Considering your true aim and your assumptions where do you most want to direct your attention? What do you want/need to notice?



Consider your next working day or a  
challenging meeting and work  
through this checklist



# Setting goals that help

- Set some behavioral goals
- Articulate your goals positively and specifically
  - Create 'approach goals'
  - Find a personal why
  - Break off bite sized chunks
  - Make a 'when-then' plan
- Create a brain friendly to do list:
  - Write it down as soon as you think of it
  - Satisfying to tick off
  - Be realistic
  - Include mind-body maintenance





# Staying on track with your intentions

**What might get in the way?** How can you reduce the chances of being derailed? Make a 'when-then' plan

**Priming:** What can you do to ensure you stay on track? Have you got any words, phrases or sayings to help keep you on track? How can you create an environment that supports your work?

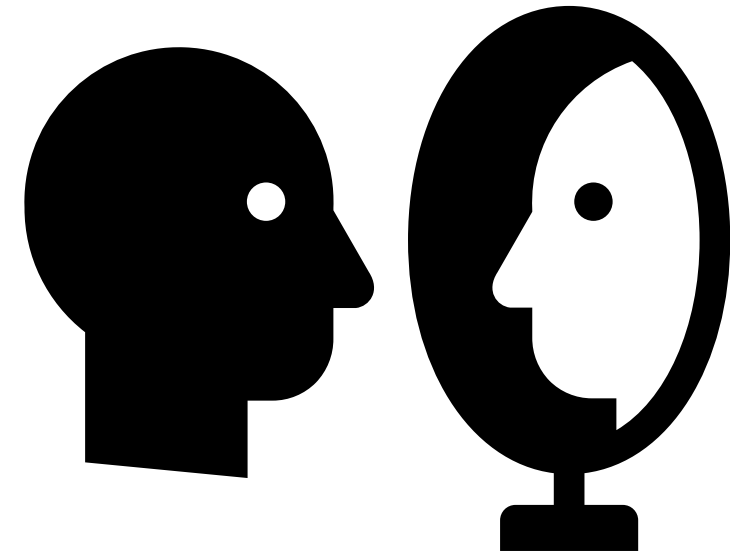
**Mind's eye rehearsal:** Take a couple of minutes to visualize the most important part of your day going well. How will it look, sound and feel? What will you do to overcome any challenges in your way?

**Small rewards:** Plan these in



# Time for reflection

- Consider what we have discussed about priorities and setting intentional direction
- What are you going to take away and use to?
- Please put your thoughts in chat





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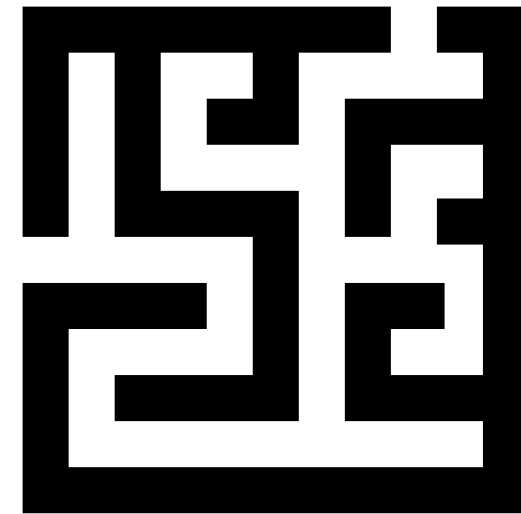
Increasing productivity  
Also known as: Making the  
hours in the day go further!





# The challenges

- Many of us have too much to do
- Handling more informal demands on our time- always on alerts and messages
- Focus on what is the brightest noisiest thing rather than on what is truly important
- Many people try to multitask
- Many skip breaks and miss out on fresh air and exercise



Let's reflect: Which of these do you ?

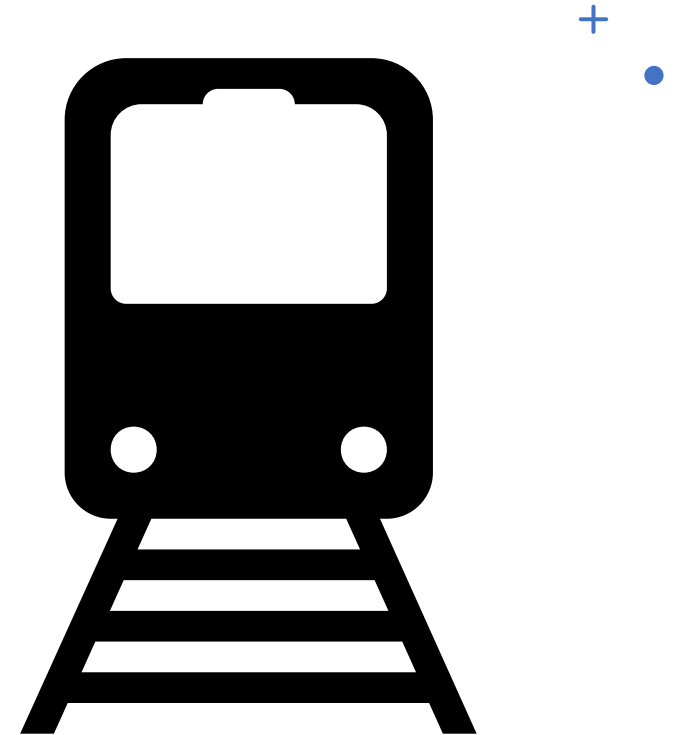
# Single tasking

## Why is this important?

- Research done at various universities demonstrates that multi tasking damages productivity
- i.e makes the working day longer
- Research by University College London showed it can also have the effect of seemingly lowering intelligence
- Research at Vanderbilt University showed that people doing two tasks simultaneously took 30% longer
- Other research has shown that multi tasking damages the quality of decision making
- Each time we switch task we are using our deliberate mental system is rapidly switching between activities and each switch uses mental time and energy

# How can you stay on track with single tasking?

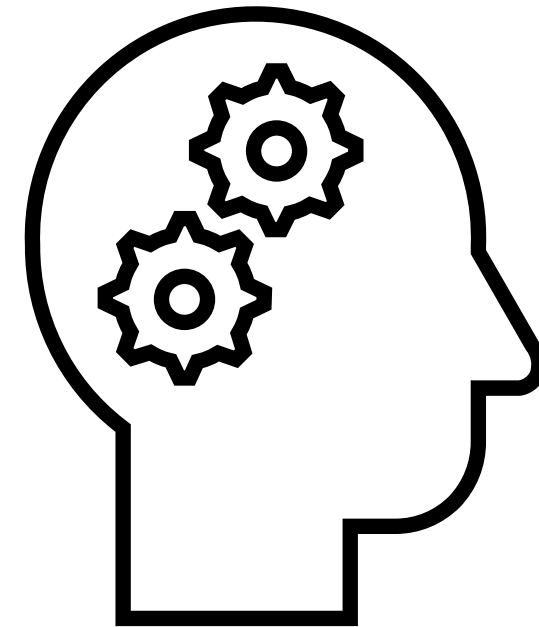
- Batch your tasks: Group similar tasks together so you are not constantly switching
- Zone your day: What is the best time of day for you to tackle each batch of tasks? Use your best time of day to do the jobs requiring the most brainpower. Create longer blocks of clear time for important work.
- Remove distractions: minimize interruptions; switch off alerts; find a 'car park' technique to capture stray thoughts before they disappear
- Plan mini rewards for your success at staying on track: what works for you?



Time to reflect: Which will work best for you?

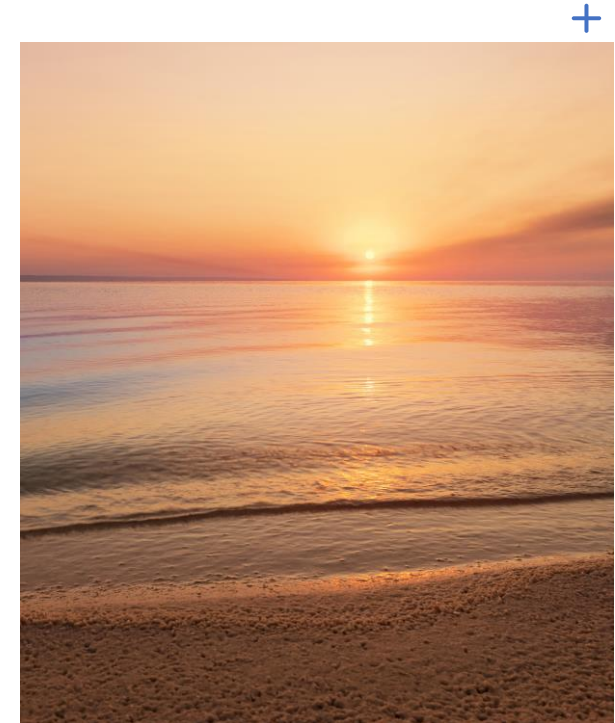
# Why we need downtime to power productivity

- Our brain's deliberate system (pre frontal cortex) needs regular breaks and fuel to keep it functioning effectively.
- When the pre frontal cortex is overworked it is not doing its job well so we have less insight, less self control, less concentration and less effective forward thinking
- When our brain's are not busy with a task and in a 'resting state' they are busy encoding and consolidating the information just absorbed.
- This reflection time results in enhanced learning and insight
- This means we make more effective use of our mental energy if we allow time to recharge and reflect during the day



# Ensuring deliberate downtime

- Take breaks: aim to take breaks every 90 minutes (about 1 and a half hours) between each zone of activity
- Make decisions at peaks and not troughs: Which task requires you to make a lot of choices, and how can you make them when your brain is freshest?
- Schedule breathing room: can you offer blocks of time as blocks of 25 minutes or 45 minutes (rather than 30 or 60 minutes) to create mini breaks between appointments.
- Allow reflection time: After each task or meeting use a minute to record your biggest insights. An end of day reflection practice is also helpful e.g., DATE – discovered, achieved, thankful for, experienced.



# Dealing with overload: what helps?



- **Mindful pausing:** pause to focus on your breathing for 3-5 minutes
- **Get it out of your head:** write down your thoughts running around in your head
- **Identify the most important thing:** what really needs to happen now
- **Smallest first step:** identify the first step for that much larger task you can start today
- **The constructive 'no':** start the conversation helpfully and identify what you are saying 'yes' to and what you are declining. End constructively.
- **Setting clear boundaries** for how you organize your time and decide how to communicate that constructively to others
- **Automate daily decisions:** can you do the same thing at the same time every day so you can spend more of your mental energy on things that matter
- **Remember the tips** about single tasking and avoiding multi tasking and ensure you give yourself down time.

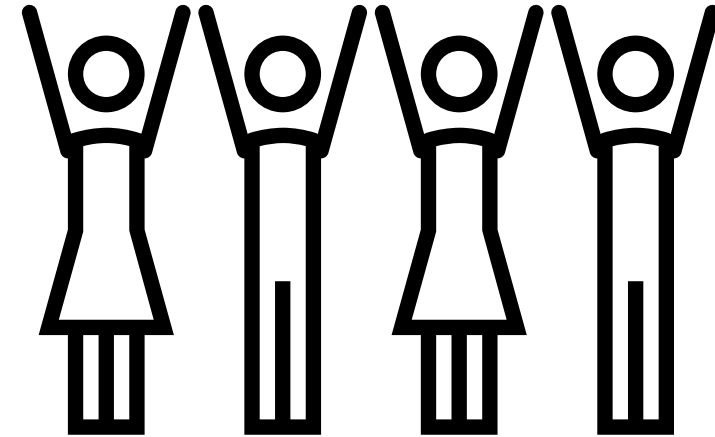
Time to reflect: Which action resonates best with you?





## Beating procrastination: Some tips for that task that has been hanging around

- Picture the benefits: How will it feel for you and for others if you complete the task? What will be better?
- Plan a short-term reward: How can you reward yourself for progress and then completion?
- Link the first step to something you enjoy doing
- Identify the results and consequences of inaction
- If you are really stuck into procrastinating ask yourself why you are avoiding it, then keep asking yourself 'why' you feel that way and then 'why' is that the case until you get to the root cause. This can help you to remove the blocker.



Time to reflect: What have you been procrastinating about and which action will help?



# What am I going to do differently?

- 1 Learning Point
- 1 Action
- What is the first step and when will you make it?







## Suggested further reading:

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- This webinar is based on the work of Caroline Webb “How to have a Good Day” and
- Jim Loehr and Tony Schwarz “On Form”





# Thank You!

For any further questions, reach out to us on:

**E-mail:** [career.development@undp.org](mailto:career.development@undp.org)



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