

Time Management (and Really Important Things)

Marek J. Drużdżel

Politechnika Białostocka

Wydział Informatyki

m.druzdzel@pb.edu.pl

<http://www.wi.pb.edu.pl/~druzdzel/>

Eighteen fundamental skills of a scientist

1. How does science work?
2. What is research?
3. Identifying good research problems
4. Writing papers
5. Presentation in front of an audience
6. Obtaining funding
7. Reviewing/refereeing the work of others
8. Teaching
9. Guiding students, running a lab, managing projects
10. Scientific creativity
11. Information finding
12. Career planning
13. Interacting with people and networking
14. Marketing your skills: job hunt
15. **Balancing your life between work and family**
16. **Coping with stress**
17. **Ethics in science**
18. **Appreciation for quality rather than quantity**



Overview

- How to use your time best?
- How to manage stress?
- What is really important?
- Concluding remarks



Time management

- How to use your time best?
- How to manage stress?
- What is really important?
- Concluding remarks

How to use your time most efficiently?

Buy yourself a calendar
... and look at it regularly ☺

The screenshot displays a software application titled "Client Appointment Manager". It features a menu bar (File, Edit, View, Tools, Reports, Charts, Help) and a toolbar with icons for Today, Day, Week, and Month views. The main interface is divided into three vertical sections:

- Calendar:** A monthly calendar for November 2009. The 9th is highlighted in yellow.
- Appointment Details:** A section for "Duncan Fisher - DC" showing appointment details for 11/9/2009 from 08:00am to 09:00am. The details include:
 - Abercrombie, Kristy, 415-555-6579
 - Lower Back Pain
 - 415-555-1234
 - 5647 Cypress Hill Rd
 - Fargo, ND 58104
 - kristy@samplename.com
 - Confirmed
- Waiting List:** A section showing appointment status:
 - Due today - 4
 - Due tomorrow - 5
 - Expired - 0
 - All - 11

The central part of the interface shows a detailed hourly appointment schedule for Monday, November 09, 2009, organized by three staff members:

- Duncan Fisher - DC:**
 - 8:00 - 8:15: Abercrombie, Kristy, 415-555-6579 ✓ Lower Back Pain
 - 9:00 - 9:15: Barley, Renee, 415-555-7262 ✓ Whiplash/Auto Injury
 - 10:00 - 10:15: Empty
 - 10:45 - 11:00: Teschner, Anton, 415-555-4567 Sports Injury
 - 11:00 - 11:15: Empty
 - 11:30 - 11:45: Lunch (Green block)
 - 12:00 - 12:15: Empty
 - 12:30 - 12:45: Walker, Rich, 415-555-8046 ✓ Experiencing Back Pain
 - 1:00 - 1:15: Empty
 - 1:30 - 1:45: Duncan, Dave, 415-555-3823 Whiplash
 - 2:00 - 2:15: Jacobsen, Doug, 415-555-4411 ✓ Sciatica
 - 3:00 - 3:15: Empty
 - 3:30 - 3:45: Leaving for the day. (Pink block)
 - 4:00 - 4:15: Empty
- Jenny Miller - Stylist:**
 - 8:00 - 8:15: Empty
 - 8:15 - 8:30: Hermann, Jennifer, 415-555-4695 Color, Haircut, Style, ✓
 - 9:00 - 9:15: Empty
 - 9:15 - 9:30: Fisher, Jennifer, 415-555-5366 Style, Practice style for wedding. ✓
 - 10:00 - 10:15: Empty
 - 10:15 - 10:30: Low, Glen, 415-555-5483 Haircut, Highlights
 - 11:00 - 11:15: Engberg, Sandra, 701-555-5555 Facial, Manicure, Pedicure, ✓
 - 12:00 - 12:15: Lunch (Green block)
 - 12:15 - 12:30: Empty
 - 12:30 - 12:45: Lunch (Green block)
 - 1:00 - 1:15: Smallson, Fran, 415-555-8883 Haircut
 - 1:15 - 1:30: Overfield, David, 415-555-6837 Haircut, Style
 - 2:00 - 2:15: Wood, Deborah, 415-555-9444 Massage
 - 3:00 - 3:15: Empty
 - 3:15 - 3:30: Empty
 - 3:30 - 3:45: Empty
 - 4:00 - 4:15: Empty
- Kevin Bensen - CPA:**
 - 8:00 - 8:15: Reyes, Celso, 415-555-7900 Review quarterly tax payments. ✓
 - 9:00 - 9:15: Empty
 - 9:15 - 9:30: Perry, Dave, 415-555-8439 Tax Planning, Review estimated taxes.
 - 10:00 - 10:15: Empty
 - 10:15 - 10:30: Partner meeting. (Yellow block)
 - 11:00 - 11:15: Empty
 - 11:15 - 11:30: Violette, Mike, 415-555-4417 Strategic Planning, Review business plan, discuss payroll services.
 - 12:00 - 12:15: Lunch (Green block)
 - 12:15 - 12:30: Empty
 - 12:30 - 12:45: Lunch (Green block)
 - 1:00 - 1:15: Golliday, Michael, 415-555-9837 Estate Planning, Discuss probate, gifts, estate tax, and will. ✓
 - 2:00 - 2:15: Empty
 - 2:15 - 2:30: Empty
 - 2:30 - 2:45: Empty
 - 3:00 - 3:15: Empty
 - 3:15 - 3:30: Empty
 - 3:30 - 3:45: Empty
 - 4:00 - 4:15: Andres, Cristina, 415-555-2174 Tax Planning, Received a bonus at work and needs to understand implications.

What if a calendar is not enough: Know your priorities



**It's not enough to be busy, so
are the ants.**

**The question is, "What are we
busy about?"**

attributed to Henry David Thoreau

**Things which matter the most must never
Be at the mercy of things which matter least.**

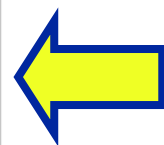
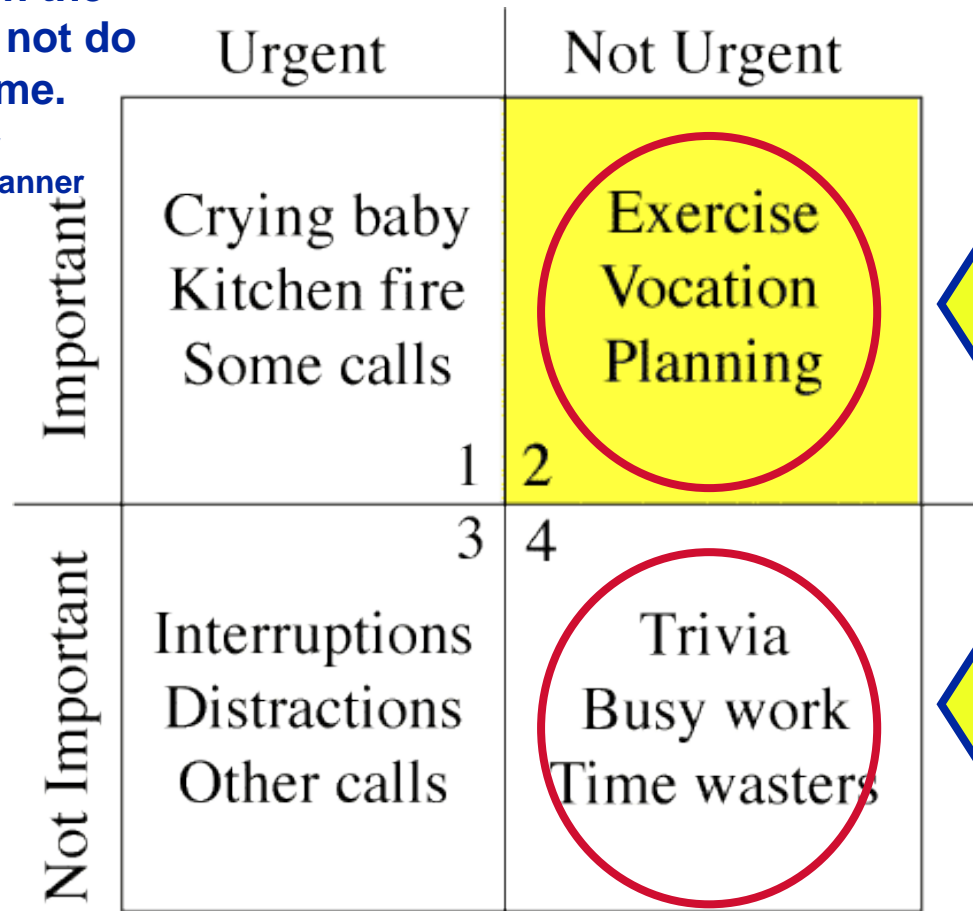
Johan Wolfgang von Goethe

- How to use your time best?
- How to manage stress?
- What is really important?
- Concluding remarks

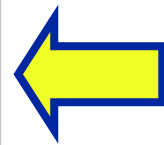
What if a calendar is not enough: The four quadrants approach

Hard work is often the easy work you did not do at the proper time.

Bernard Meltzer
radio host and city planner



Here is where you want to be all the time!

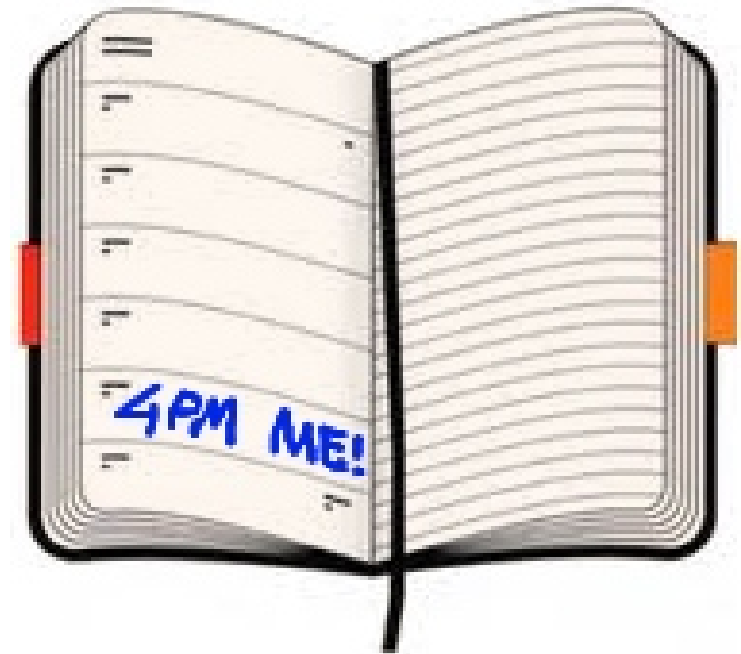


You don't want to be here ever

Attributed to Stephen Covey, author of
"The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People"

How to use your time most efficiently?

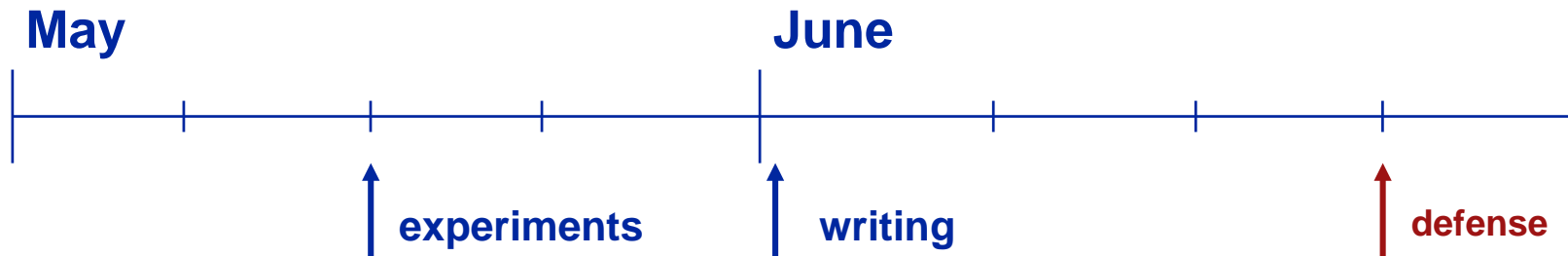
- Plan your time!
- Try to plan for chunks of quality time
- Make appointments with yourself



Planning

A million dollars advice: **PLAN!**

If each of you sends me in 10 years a check for as much as you judge (retrospectively) this advice is worth, I will be a wealthy man 😊.



Know when to refuse

- Do not take too many things at the same time
- Learn to decline kind and honorable offers to join a “Committee on ...”.
- Choose the duties that you want to do because they are important.
- Distribute routine tasks among people around you.



Share everything, including work

All people are **eager**, although they can be classified into two types:

1. Those, who are **eager** to work
2. Those, who are eager to approve the eagerness of the first type

Make it clear who has to do what and who is responsible for what

Divide routine work among your workers, family, and friends



Know when to ask advice



<http://adviceisforwinners.com/>



Ask advice from
everyone,
but act with
your own mind.

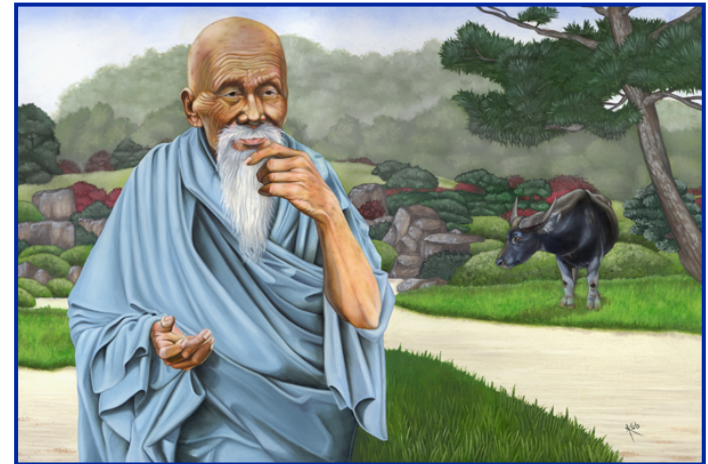
- Author Unknown

CuriositiesByDickens.com

First step is important

"Even a trip of a thousand miles starts with the first step."

Lao-tzu, Chinese philosopher (604 – 531 BC)



**The longer you wait with it,
the harder it is to make**

“Parkinson's Law”

“Work expands so as to fill the time available for its completion.”

(Attributed to Cyril Parkinson)

When facing a task, it sometimes works to set yourself a time limit for it

How to use your time most efficiently?

- When teaching, set a time limit for preparation (e.g., one day preparation for each lecture)

What do we know about stress?

Two types of stress

- Positive (motivating, stimulating)
- Negative (paralizing)

Stress is like spice - in the right proportion it enhances the flavor of a dish. Too little produces a bland, dull meal; too much may choke you.

Donald Tubesing,
pastor, author and speaker



Simple techniques for stress reduction

How to manage stress?

A simple recipe (but not for you 😊)



How to manage stress?

- There is no doubt that you will need some stress management technique!
- Working 8am-6pm (well, six days a week then 😊) is not as bad as it seems, as long as you use your time efficiently



"What fits your busy schedule better, exercising one hour a day or being dead 24 hours a day?"

Work hard but also play hard



Find something that allows you to relax mentally (sports, yoga, fishing, dance?)

Nature is phenomenal ...



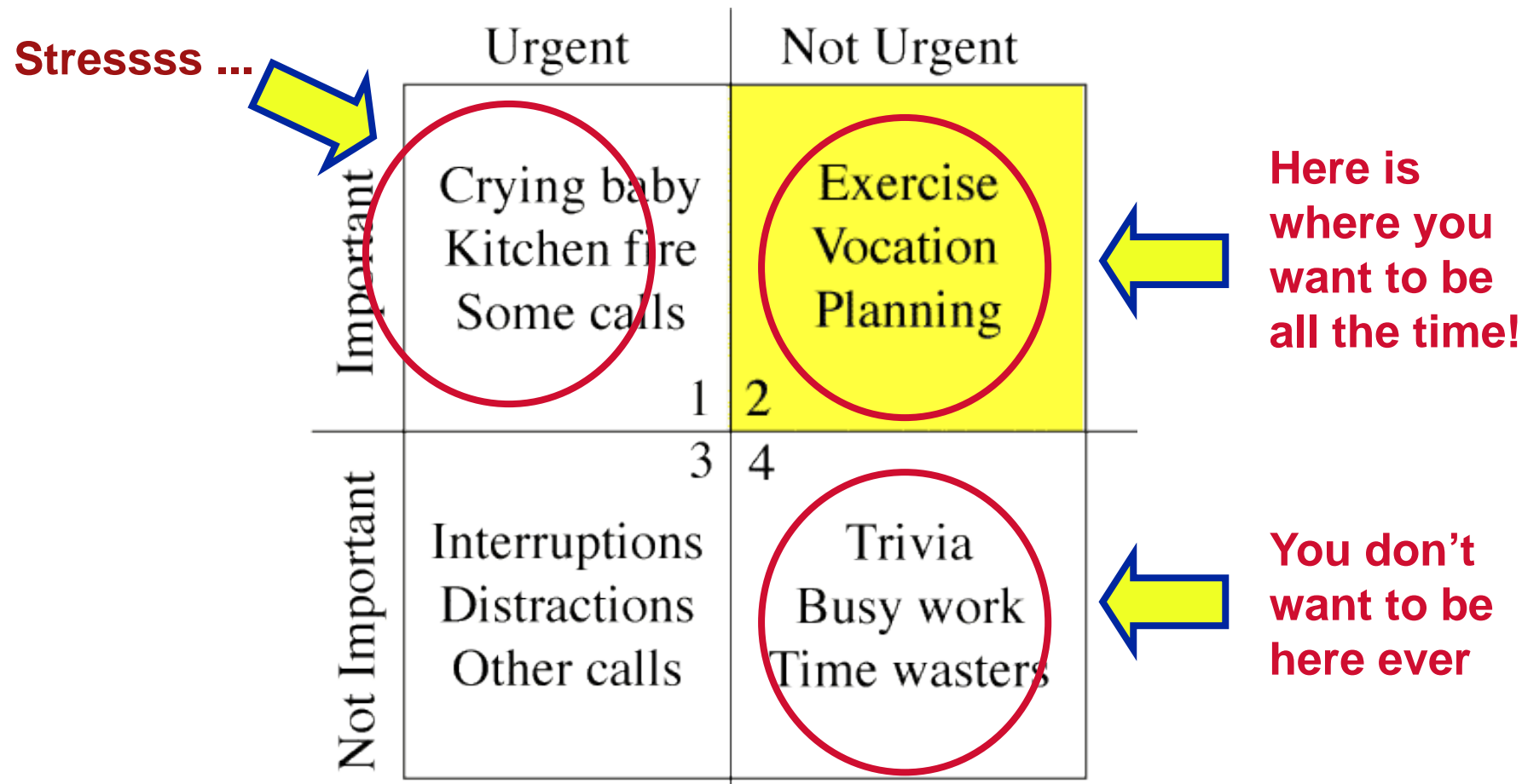
Hours of work, hours of rest

Work during “office hours” (i.e., from 8:00am to 5:00pm, well perhaps six days a week ☺), is not as bad as they paint it, as long as we learn to use that time effectively



Avoiding stressful situations

What if a calendar is not enough: The four quadrants approach



Attributed to Stephen Covey, author of
"The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People"

Solve problems early

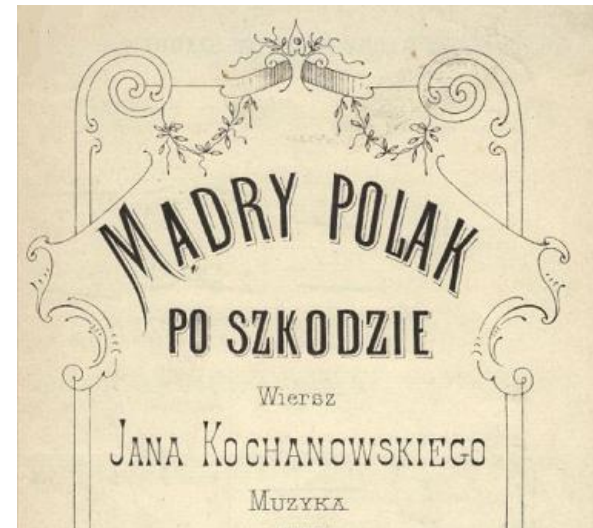
- Personal conflicts can be a source of stress
- Do not be afraid of conflicts
- Small conflicts (if they are worth it) may prevent larger conflicts/explosions



phillipmartin.info

Solve problems early

- „Mądry Polak po szkodzie” 
- „Als de kalf verdronken is, dempt men de put” 
- „Lepiej zapobiegać niż leczyć” 
- „An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure” 
- „Voorkomen is beter dan genezen” 



Solve problems early

- Recognize potential problems early (e.g., dishonest colleagues or a dishonest boss)
- If you feel that you don't fit, leave while it is still easy.

Love what you do (or do what you love?)

“Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life.”

Confucius



“No one, I think, does successful research of any significance unless there is fun in doing it, and unless he or she believes in the significance, personal and social, of what is being done.”

Herbert A. Simon



Foundations are usually the most important

“Striking with a finger starts with the heaps”



Start from „largest stones”



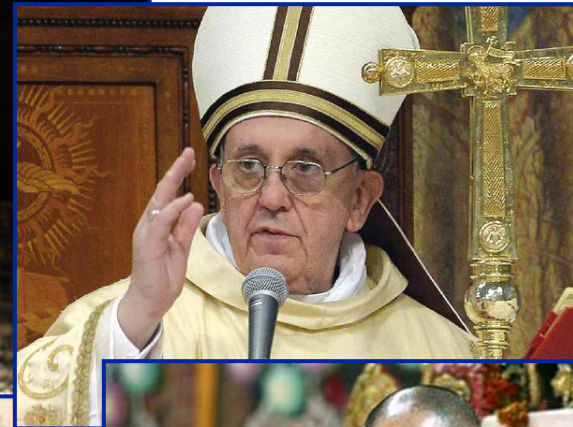
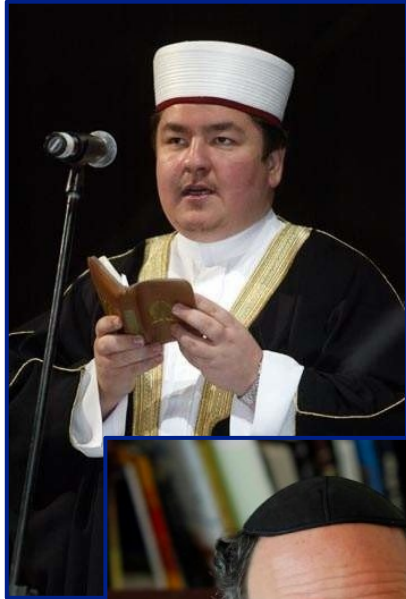
You will know what to do when you encounter difficulties in life ...

... which are guaranteed to appear in both your career and personal life!

What is really important in life?

- Need a guiding light
- That guiding light will give you solid foundations for everything else
- People are much more important than things and than professional success

Religion is a good investment in your health



What is really important in life?

- A really important among all is your family!
- Beware the “never a good time to have children/family” trap (e.g., Trevor & Carol in Idiocracy)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icmRCixQrx8>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U8rhIZJAdd0>



A mission statement is helpful

Write your personal (or your family's) mission statement and have everybody know it and understand it.

© Original Artist
Reproduction rights obtainable from
www.CartoonStock.com



How to help others?

We are social beings: Friendship

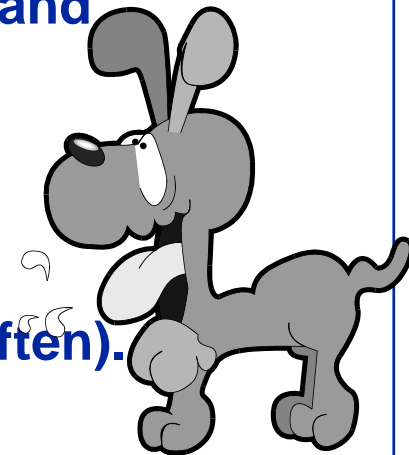
- Be a good colleague at work – you are a team member and you should feel responsible for its success
- It is wiser to help your friends than it is to compete with them.
- On the other hand, you are not a “buddy”! Do not enter any suspect “business” relationships.
- Avoid “brownnosing”.



Healthy environment

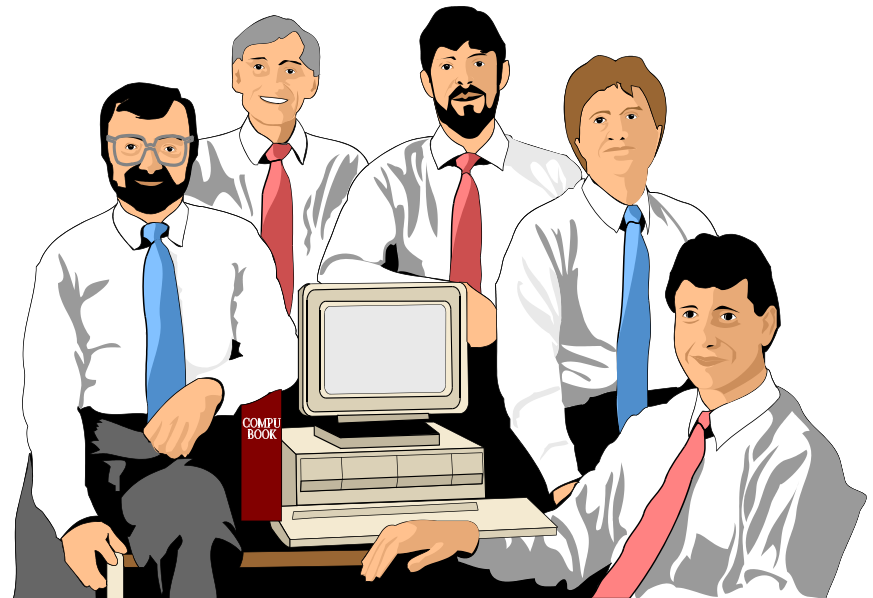
There is an inequality built into the system: you are the professor, he/she is a student. You need to create a healthy environment for your trainees. Some ideas (Katz, 1976):

- **Attend to the needs of the students (office space, equipment, adequate stipend).**
- **Show interest in their personal development, recognize their progress.**
- **Facilitate exchange of ideas between the students and other members of the research group (a weekly seminar?).**
- **Encourage cooperation rather than competition.**
- **Foster imagination and creative pursuits.**
- **Help students satisfy their curiosity (talk to them often).**
- **Encourage students to take a variety of courses to promote a broad knowledge base.**



Team building

- A team works much better than a group of disconnected individuals.
- Replace competition by collaboration.
- Share responsibilities but also privileges.
- Teach people to give and accept constructive criticism.
- Give a feeling of permanence (it's not a project, it's a lab!).
- You can make better decisions together (and your people will learn to make better decision at the same time!).



Team building: Show that you value everyone

What is the common theme in the following pictures?



Always make both arrival and departure of your employee/student an event!

Team building: Show that you value everyone

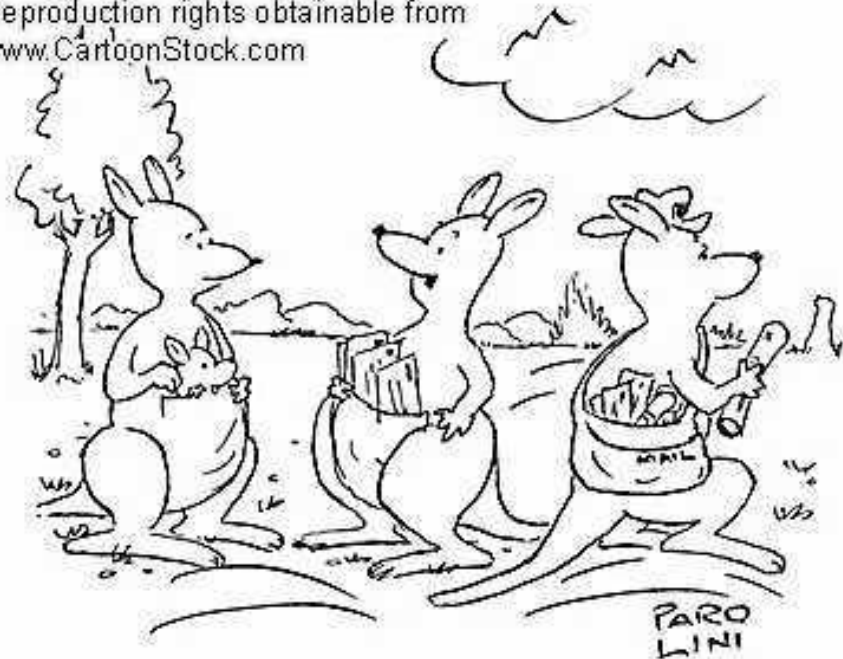


"I've been fired, but they were really nice about it."

Keep your relationships

- Only then will your former student or your former programmer correct his/her programs 😊.
- Help them with their careers and keep in touch with them

© Original Artist
Reproduction rights obtainable from
www.CartoonStock.com



search ID: epa1060

"THE KIDS ARE GROWN AND GONE NOW, BUT
THEY ALWAYS KEEP IN TOUCH."

Concluding remarks

- Have a calendar ...
... but always remember what is important
- Make appointments with yourself
- Know when to refuse, ask for advice
- “If you do what you love and love what you do, you'll never work another day in your life”
- Simple “motivators” like “I won’t have ice cream until I have finished this section of the paper” work surprisingly well

Concluding remarks

- **Stress is a part of life, it motivates us and allows us to feel that we are alive.**
- **However, certain types of stress are unpleasant, unhealthy and harmful to us.**
- **It is best to organize your life in such a way as to avoid such sources of stress.**
- **With what we can not avoid, we should learn to live.**

Eighteen fundamental skills of a scientist

1. How does science work?
2. What is research?
3. Identifying good research problems
4. Writing papers
5. Presentation in front of an audience
6. Obtaining funding
7. Reviewing/refereeing the work of others
8. Teaching
9. Guiding students, running a lab, managing projects
10. Scientific creativity
11. Information finding
12. Career planning
13. Interacting with people and networking
14. Marketing your skills: job hunt
15. Balancing your life between work and family
16. Coping with stress
17. **Ethics in science**
18. Appreciation for quality rather than quantity

Next
week

