Getting It Done!

Time management for scientists
The Lucky Ones

• Mainly set our own agendas and control our own time

• Science is incremental, allowing for small but significant successes

• Most of us really love what we do, despite our insecurities

How to make the most of these advantages?
Exercise:

1. When (what time of the day or week):
   - are you most creative and imaginative?
   - do you write the best?
   - are you most receptive to new ideas?
   - are you good for nothing but formatting references?

2. Besides your science, what other things are most important to you and in your life?
The career of a scientist
The Goal: Do science to the high quality necessary to feel good about our work while leaving room for other things we want to do

Today: Provide some ideas to try when you need them

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The key elements of time management for scientists

1. Know yourself
   - when do you do your best work?
   - when are you stupid?
   - compartmentalized vs. open time
   - protect your most productive periods
   - know when to say ‘no’
2. Have a plan

- break things into subsets: 'Write thesis' is not a useful list item
- when you stop for the night, think about what you want to get done the next day
- try not to stop when things aren't going well
3. **Get started**

- even just a title, potential authors list, and the start of an outline means you've started the paper
- just start writing, even if you end up throwing most of it out later – editing is easier than composing
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4. Collaborate

- trust your collaborators (workaholics are control freaks)
- control what's most important
- beware of vampires
- have meetings in someone else's office
- know when to say ‘no’
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5. Give yourself a break

• the work is never done, only good enough
• take time to be lazy and stupid, when you need it
• don't waste time wishing you were taking time off, just go
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6. Celebrate successes
   • both big and small
   • schedule your holidays after big deadlines
   • at least have an ice cream cone before plunging back into the breach
"Yeah, but would you want to have a beer with him?"