

Management of an
Independent Research Program:
**Balancing Research,
Teaching, and Service
Oh yes, and Life Too!**

Holly L. Storkel

Jordan Green

Karen Helfer



Whose got the time?

You'll never have more time than you do today.



teach

plan new study

attend conferences

faculty meetings

student research

conference presentations

prepare lectures

committees

collect data

grade exams

analyze data

peer review manuscripts

submit manuscripts

submit manuscripts

recruit doctoral students

revise manuscripts

mentor students

advise students

write grants review grants





How Does It All Fit?

There is no more time in the day to be found but you can learn to use that time more wisely.

Agenda

- ✦ What are the early markers of success?
 - ✦ Holly Storkel – The view from the chair's seat
- ✦ Experience from the trenches
 - ✦ Karen Helfer
 - ✦ Jordan Green

What are the early
markers of success?

A view from the chair's
seat

Holly Storckel
University of Kansas

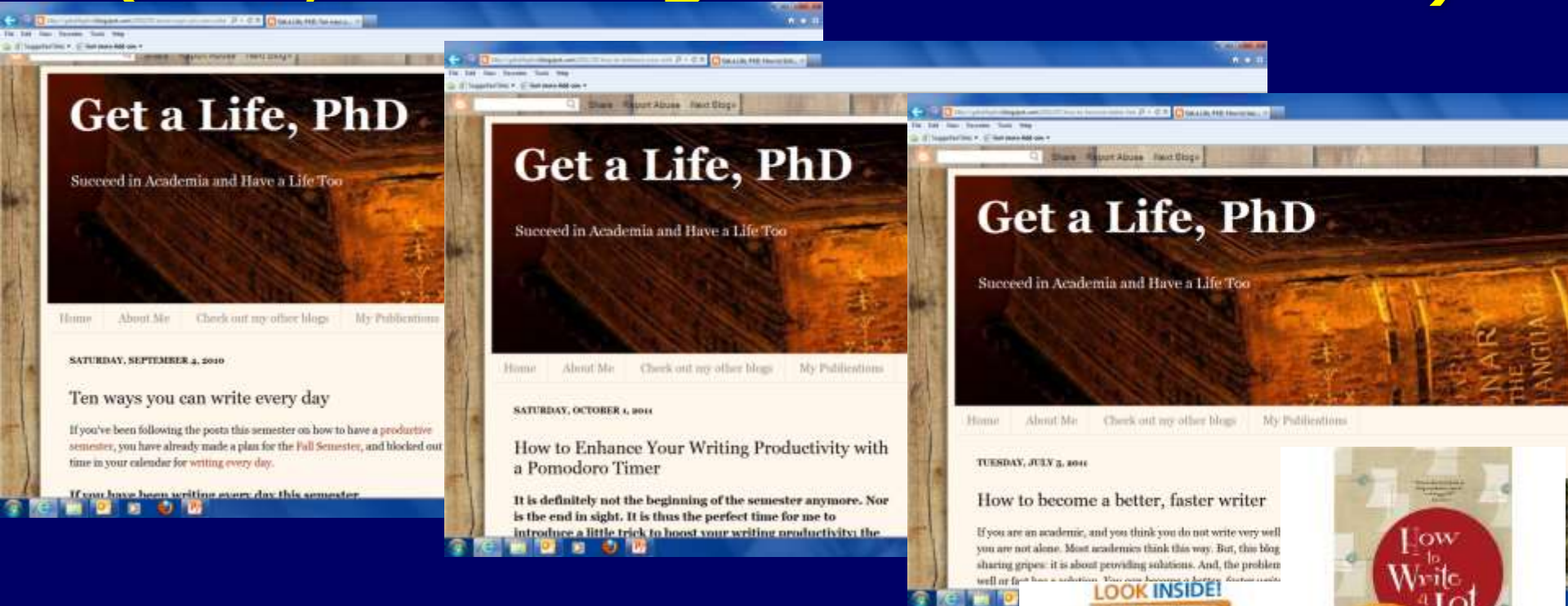
Research

- ✦ How soon do you purchase major equipment/supplies central to your research program
- ✦ How soon do you start *new* data collection
- ✦ How soon do you publish your dissertation/post-doctoral work
- ✦ How soon do presentations turn into publications

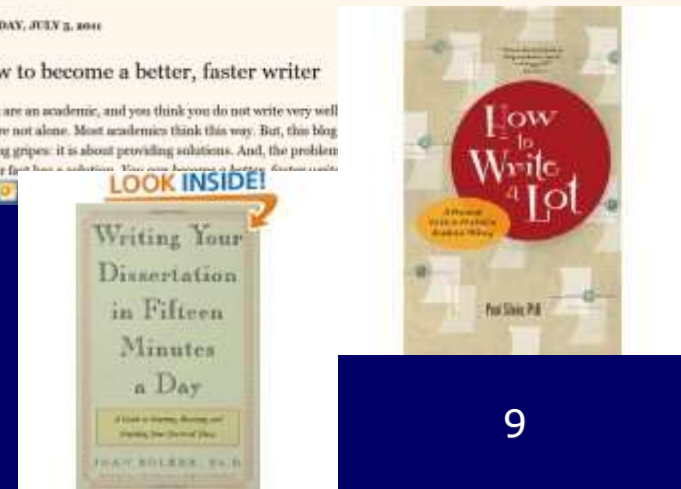
Successful people create a research pipeline

- ✦ Projects at each stage of development
 - ✦ Thinking about a study (Study 7) -- Activity
 - ✦ Designing a study protocol (Study 6) -- Activity
 - ✦ Initiating data collection (Study 5) -- Activity
 - ✦ Finishing data collection (Study 4) -- Activity
 - ✦ Analyzing data & presenting (Study 3) – Activity + Product!
 - ✦ Writing manuscript (Study 2) -- ~Product
 - ✦ Manuscript in review (Study 1) -- ~Product
 - ✦ Manuscript in press – Actual Product!!!
 - ✦ Etc.

An Aside: Creating Products (i.e., Writing Without Tears)



✦ Essentially: Set goals & write every day



Research

- ✦ How soon do you apply for internal funding
- ✦ How soon do you apply for small scale foundation funding
- ✦ How soon do you apply for larger scale national funding
- ✦ Are you taking advantage of training and mentoring opportunities related to funding

Successful people have a strategic plan

- ✦ Currently have a XXX grant (e.g., R03), which will fund Studies 1-3
- ✦ Plan to apply for a YYY grant (e.g., internal grant) to fund Studies 4-5
- ✦ Plan to apply for a ZZZ grant (e.g., ASHFoundation grant) to fund Studies 6-7
- ✦ Studies 1-7 will set foundation for R01 application

An Aside: Semester Planning Resources

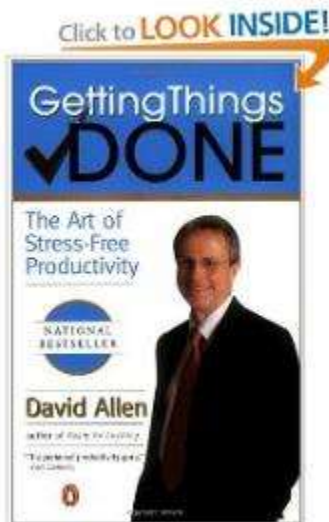


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SUNDAY, JANUARY 1, 2012

Five Steps to Making a Semester Plan for Academics

Now that we have brought in the New Year, there is no doubt it: the Spring Semester is here. This means it is time to make a Spring semester plan.



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Research

- ✦ How quickly do you resubmit manuscripts after receiving reviews
- ✦ How quickly do you start work on a revised grant application after receiving reviews
- ✦ How quickly do you move to a new journal/funding agency when you are rejected

Successful people are resilient

- ✦ Everyone gets discouraged but successful people move past disappointment relatively quickly
- ✦ Successful people generate and embrace Plan B (or C, or D....Z)

Research

- ✦ How quickly do you attract students at different levels to your project
- ✦ Do those student projects lead to presentations or publications
- ✦ How coherent are the projects across students
- ✦ Are you making use of student funding outlets
- ✦ Are you retaining the students

Successful people use student projects wisely

- ✦ Student projects should meet your needs
 - ✦ Should lead to a coherent set of presentations/publications
- ✦ Student funding diversifies your funding portfolio
- ✦ Retaining students minimizes your training time
 - ✦ Think about a student pipeline (e.g., 1st = free labor via student project, 2nd = hourly paid position, 3rd = GRA)

Teaching

- ★ Are you copying your own exams?
Running them to testing services?
Grading every paper? Finding
video clips? Inserting clip art on
PPT slides?etc.,

Successful people focus their teaching efforts and delegate effectively

- ✦ Use GTAs wisely
- ✦ If you don't have a GTA or don't have enough GTA time, find others to help (office workers, pay someone hourly from teaching grants, independent studies)
- ✦ Good enough is just fine for the first offering of a course
- ✦ You have ~5 years to teach this course well!

Service

- ★ Do you say yes/no or (1) what activities are required, (2) what is the timeline for those activities, (3) can I get back to you on that?

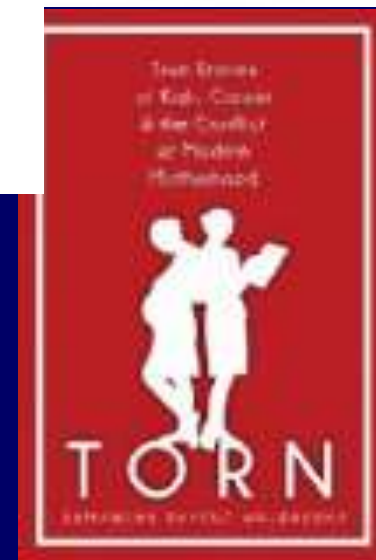
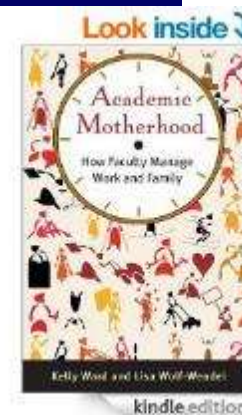
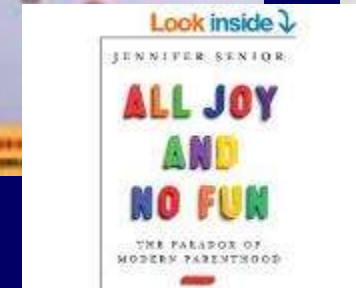
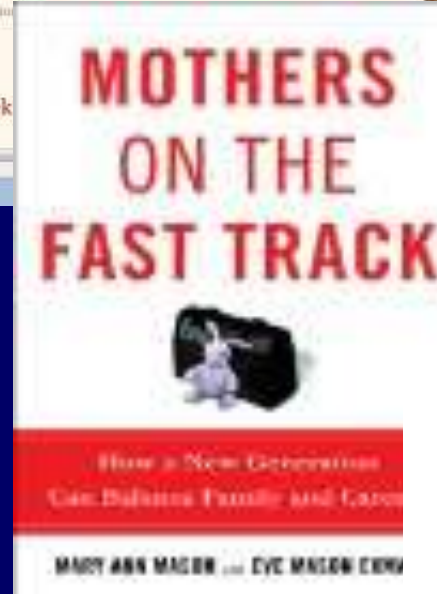
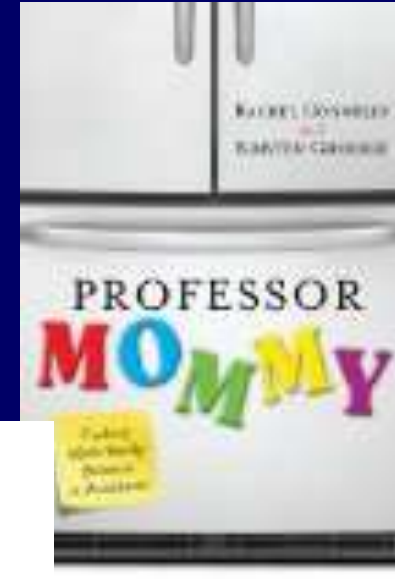
Successful people are thoughtful about their time

- ✦ Ask questions to be sure you know what you are signing up for
- ✦ Consider whether you will enjoy the activity and/or will it advance your career
- ✦ Consider whether now is the right time & ask for advice
- ✦ Say no graciously (e.g., promptly & offer other suggestions)

Life: Successful people have one!

- ✦ Successful people
 - ✦ Take vacations
 - ✦ Leave work early on sunny days to _____ (play golf, play tennis, take a walk)
 - ✦ Go out to lunch with colleagues
 - ✦ Leave work to attend important life events
 - ✦ Etc.

Resources on Work Life Balance (With Apologies to the Men in the Audience)



Experience from the Trenches

Karen S. Helfer

University of Massachusetts

BALANCING EXPERIENCES

Job Responsibilities:

- ✦ Research -- NIDCD R01 (PI) and NIDCD R01 (Co-I)
 - ✦ Multiple projects in our departmental lab
 - ✦ Projects in co-investigators' labs
 - ✦ AuD capstone and Honors Theses projects
- ✦ Teaching & Advising
 - ✦ 3 course per year + Honors Colloq., 12-130 students/course
 - ✦ Currently buy out of 1 additional course/year
 - ✦ Academic Advising: 5-6 Au.D. students
 - ✦ Capstone project advising: 2-4 students/year
- ✦ Service
 - ✦ Graduate Program Director
 - ✦ Departmental and school-level committees
 - ✦ Journal and grant reviews
 - ✦ RSAC member
 - ✦
- ✦ Somehow...everything gets done

Research

- ✦ The end result is what's important
 - ✦ Number of publications, first authorship, and strength of journal are all important
- ✦ Presentations are necessary because they let others in the field know about your work, which you'll need for outside letters during the tenure process
 - ✦ but be sure you're turning those presentations into publications

Research

- ✦ Be programmatic in your research, but also consider branching out
 - ✦ Find collaborators
 - ✦ within your department
 - ✦ within your university
 - ✦ outside of your university
 - ✦ Ask for input from people with expertise in other areas (e.g., statistics, linguistics, psychology)

Research

- ✦ Writing—just do it!
 - ✦ If you're stuck, try stream-of consciousness writing (a.k.a. “brain dump”)
 - ✦ Commit to setting aside time in your day or week to devote only to productive writing (manuscripts or grant proposals)
 - ✦ Join (or start) a writing group/club

Research

- ✦ Take advantage of grant-writing resources at your home institution
- ✦ Ask funded colleagues to share their successful proposals
 - ✦ and ask them to critique yours
- ✦ Accumulate a record of grant submissions
 - ✦ but be strategic
- ✦ Use the grant writing process as an opportunity to really think about what you want to do in the next few years

Research

- ✦ Take advantage of eager undergraduates to help with your research
- ✦ Network within your community to find potential research subjects
 - ✦ Talks at local agencies
 - ✦ Press releases

Teaching

- ✦ Even if you're already a good teacher, take advantage of teaching improvement programs offered by your institution
- ✦ If allowed, use undergraduate T.A.s
- ✦ Don't be so available to your students that it encroaches on your research activities
 - ✦ It's OK to close your office door

Service

- ✦ Learn how time-consuming a service activity will be before you agree to do it
- ✦ Choose activities that will help you...
 - ✦ learn how to improve your record (e.g., Personnel Committee, grant reviews)
 - ✦ Enhance your research (e.g., manuscript reviews, talks at area agencies)
 - ✦ Let others in the field get to know you (e.g., national organization committees)

What works for me

- ✦ Make lists
 - ✦ new/updated list every Monday morning
- ✦ Do the hard stuff (or things you're not looking forward to doing) first thing in the morning
 - ✦ save things that need less brain power (grading, writing letters of recommendation, etc.) for when you're less productive
- ✦ Use your summer wisely
 - ✦ time to read, think
 - ✦ if possible, don't agree to teach during the summer

Other advice

- ✦ Figure out what's important to your Chair, Dean, higher administration; what do they value?
- ✦ Time goes fast...if you weren't productive last semester, figure out how to be more productive next semester
- ✦ "Be Switzerland"

Life

- I don't answer work email during nights/weekends and I don't expect others to do so
- Plan ahead
- Do things now so that you can take care of the crises that come up in the future
- Realize when you're in "crunch mode" and get help during those times
- Realize that there's always something you could be doing for work—but you don't have to do it right now
- Your kids really will grow up fast!

Managing Work-Life Balance

Jordan Green

Professor of Communication Sciences and Disorders

Director of Speech and Feeding Disorders Lab

MGH Institute of Health Professions

Boston, MA

Balancing experiences

Professor (70% research, 20% teaching, 10% service)

- ✦ Research
 - ✦ Direct Lab
 - ✦ Grants
 - ✦ 2 NIDCD R01s (PI, Co-PI) and 1 Industry grant
 - ✦ 1 doctoral student grant, 1 postdoctoral fellow grant
- ✦ Teaching & Mentorship
 - ✦ 1 course per year after buy out
 - ✦ Theses Advising: 2 MA. Students
 - ✦ Doctoral mentor: 2
 - ✦ Postdoctoral mentor: 2
 - ✦ Grant mentor/consultant: 2
 - ✦ Spaulding scholar mentor
- ✦ Service
 - ✦ Departmental and school-level committees
 - ✦ Journal and grant reviews (MFSR 4-year term)
 - ✦ RSAC member
 - ✦ Conference Co-chair on Motor Speech Conference
- ✦ Personal: Spouse + 16 y/o son + 13 y/o daughter

Success = busyness

- ✦ As an academic researcher you will effectively become a CEO of small corporation
 - ✦ A very demanding, but extremely rewarding career
 - ✦ Overall goal is to maintain a high level of productivity...
 - ✦ while not becoming overwhelmed and drained by your work
 - ✦ while ensuring that you are not neglecting essential aspects of your other-than-work-life
- ✦ With so many competing demands work-life balance needs to be proactively managed

4 Ps of work-life balance

- ✦ Prioritize
- ✦ Perspective
- ✦ Preservation
- ✦ Perseverance

Prioritize

- ✦ Writing peer-reviewed manuscripts and grants is the highest priority
- ✦ Develop a work plan with your administrators to build-in research and writing time
- ✦ Strict schedule
 - ✦ Work when it is best for you - early or late
 - ✦ Minimize interruptions by attuning students and staff to your schedule
 - ✦ Impose deadlines for yourself
- ✦ Drop or delegate unproductive activities
 - ✦ Minimize unnecessary meetings - use email
 - ✦ Schedule meetings in blocks to preserve writing time

Prioritize

- ✦ Be strategic in your research
 - ✦ Only take on new projects or collaborations that feed your programmatic line of research

Prioritize

- ★ Beware of service creep
 - ★ Over-commitment is the default mode
 - ★ Many service commitments can be long-term and then overlap
 - ❖ NIH panel: 4-6 years
 - ❖ Departmental committee: 3 years
 - ❖ RSAC: 3 years
 - ❖ Journal editor: 3 years
 - ❖ Grant consultant: 5 years
- ★ Get comfortable saying “no”

Perspective

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"That isn't dark matter, sir—you just forgot to take off the lens cap."

Perspective

- ✦ Be proactive about mental house keeping
 - ✦ Don't waste energy on negative thoughts
 - ✦ Practice decreasing mind chatter (monkey mind)
 - ✦ Practice staying out of unproductive interdepartmental politics

Perspective

- ✦ Remind yourself of why you are doing the science
 - ✦ Because you..
 - ✦ are intrinsically curious
 - ✦ want to advance knowledge in the field
 - ✦ improve the lives of persons with communication disorders

Perspective

- ✦ Develop a non-competitive attitude
 - ✦ Do not compare yourself to others...
 - ✦ you are on your own unique path
 - ✦ We are learning together as a relatively small community
 - ✦ Be generous with your science and support of other scientists
 - ✦ You will create a community and it will maximize the impact of your work

Perspective

- ✦ Practice gratitude
 - ✦ Recognize how privileged you are to be able to pursue your interests
 - ✦ We are fortunate to have a job where we're engaged and can implement our ideas
- ✦ Practice humility (choose your metaphor)
 - ✦ "Just laying bricks"
 - ✦ "Standing on the shoulders of giants"
- ✦ Keep expectations realistic
 - ✦ Progress can be slow in research and advancement is often incremental

Persistence

- ✦ Setup your supports
 - ✦ Make your family part of the team...
 - ✦ Or better yet your research participants
 - ✦ Bring your child and/or spouse into work so that they understand what you do
 - ✦ Communicate with spouse & partners about deadlines & work stressors

Persistence and Resilience

- ✦ But try to compartmentalize work as much as reasonably possible
 - ✦ Try not to bring the stress home
 - ✦ Instead, allow home to save you from yourself

Persistence and Resilience

- ✦ Schedule the fun and downtime

Help your colleagues and mentors maintain their life-work balance

- ✦ Minimize email communications in the evenings or weekends
- ✦ Reserve texts for special purposes
- ✦ Give them time to review your work or write letters
 - ✦ 2 week minimum

✦ Bottom line

- ✦ Take the time and effort to find out what works for you

Disclaimer

It's a ongoing practice