Living a Sustainable Life:

**Managing Time,
Setting Priorities, and
Reducing Stress**

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Agenda

- Setting the Context
- Exploring Stress and Work-Life Sustainability
- Tips to
  - Facilitate Sustainability
  - Manage Time
  - Prioritize Tasks

Setting the Context

- Shortage of skilled workers
  - Increased demand on employees
  - Alarming stress statistics
  - Limited resources to "get the work done"
- Trying to find solutions in silos
  - Business
    - Recruitment / Retention / Employee Engagement
  - Government
    - Policies / Sustainable Environments / Economy
  - Individuals
    - Career Management / Work-Life Balance

Stress in the Workplace

Absenteeism

- Absenteeism due to stress up 300% since 1995
  ~ Statistics Canada
- Stress is related to
  - Up to 80% of on-the-job accidents
  - 40% of job turnover
  ~ American Institute Of Stress

Presenteeism

- 42% of Canadian workers went to work sick or exhausted
- Also related to *disengagement*
  - Employees show up, but not productive
  ~ Kinjerski, 2010

Sustainability

- A state that can be maintained at a certain level indefinitely (source: Wikipedia.org)
- Different areas of focus
  - Environment
  - Economic
 - Community
  - Organization
  - Individual

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10 TIPS TO FACILITATE SUSTAINABILITY

1. LEAVE "WHITE SPACE"

Living Outside the Margins

- No "white space" around life activities
  - No room for things to go wrong
  - Work longer and rest less
  - Sacrifice personal health and relationships
- Domino Effect
  - A small change causes a similar change nearby, which causes another similar change
  - People and organizations begin to implode, collapsing from within with no indication that destruction was imminent

2. EAT WELL

3. GET ENOUGH SLEEP
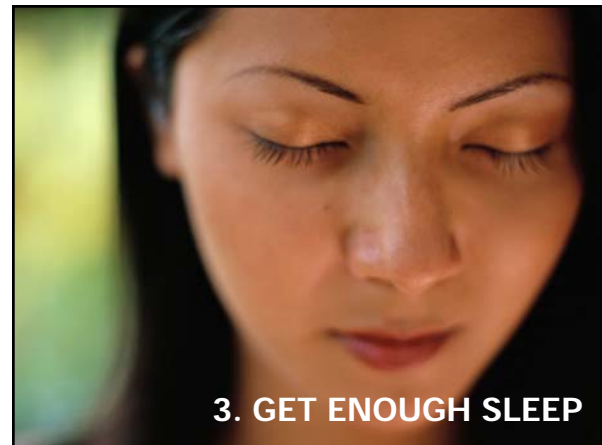
Nap-Time at Work?

- Average adult sleeps 6 hours, 58 minutes
  - 8 hours is recommended by sleep experts
- Sleep deprivation can lead to
  - Increased errors/accidents and drug use
  - Increased absenteeism and turnover
  - Decreased productivity
  - Higher group insurance premiums
- Changing attitudes towards napping
  - Recognition of impact on health / productivity / safety
  - Understanding consequences of lack of sleep

Source:
http://management.about.com/cs/people/a/NappingatWork.htm

4. MAKE CONTINUOUS ADJUSTMENTS

Work-Life Balance Strategies

- Reclaim control
  - Make conscious choices about activities and relationships to maintain or set aside
  - Prioritize / Juggle responsibilities
  - Give work and other roles the time they are worth
  - Delegate / Say "no" when necessary
- Relinquish control
  - Expect the unexpected
  - Remain flexible, adaptable, and resilient
 - Let go of things outside of sphere of influence

Sustainability Strategies

- Stress management
  - Maintain clear boundaries / Preserve "alone time"
  - Take breaks, days off, holidays
  - Exercise / Walk / Sleep / Eat well
  - Laugh / Focus on positive thoughts
- Maintain supportive relationships
  - Family / Friends / Colleagues / Pets
- Faith / Spirituality / Meditation / Prayer
- Plan Effectively
  - Set goals and rewards
  - Chunk projects / Limit time spent on each
  - Go for "quick wins" / Delegate

5. DEFINE A UNIQUE FORMULA FOR YOU, FOR NOW
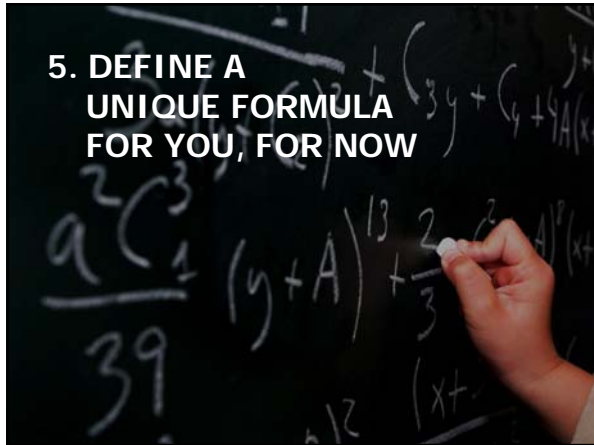
Juggling Major Life Roles

- What roles are you juggling?
- How is time allocated to each role?
- What roles have you dropped?
- What roles need more of your time?
- How are your roles interconnected?
- Can any roles be clustered or combined?

Making Space for What's Important

6. ACCEPT THAT BALANCE IS A MYTH

What Does "Balance" Mean For You?

- The key to maintaining a healthy lifestyle
- Each aspect must work together to bring optimal balance

Wheel segments: Physical, Work, Emotional, Leisure, Social, Spiritual, Intellectual

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What's Working? What's Not?

What's Working?	What's Not?
Skills...	Skills...
Level of Challenge/Interest...	Level of Challenge/Interest...
Workload...	Workload...
Resources...	Resources...
Personal Capacity...	Personal Capacity...
Workplace Wellness...	Workplace Wellness...
Supportive Relationships...	Supportive Relationships...
Other...	Other...

The "Tyranny of the Urgent"

- Don't be distracted by urgency
  - Plan and prioritize
  - Organize activities and events
  - Stay focused on what's important
  - Learn to delegate non-essential projects
- Identify/control/eliminate time wasters
  - Self-generated
  - Environmental or "other-generated"
- Don't wear "busy" as a badge of honour

URGENT!

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10 Tips for Managing Time and Prioritizing Tasks

1. Know yourself
2. Avoid multitasking
3. Set goals and reward yourself
4. Use a prioritizing formula
5. Invest time in scheduling
6. Be clear and concise when communicating
7. Make effective use of technology
8. Avoid management by crisis
9. Delegate effectively
10. Learn to say no

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7. TAKE A SYSTEMS APPROACH

Sustainable Systems

- Perpetual motion
- Terrariums
- Reduce . . . Reuse . . . Recycle
- Forest renewal
- Flood control

- Initial inputs
- Energy conservation
- Resilience
- Capacity to replenish
- Maintenance
  - Prune/purge/release

Career Engagement

~Neault & Pickerell
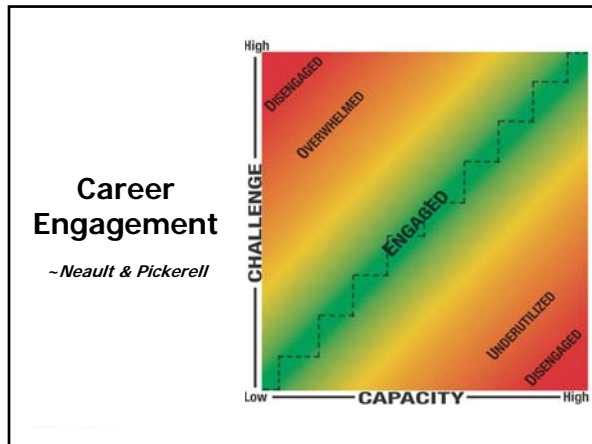
Two Routes to Disengagement

- Overwhelmed
  - High challenge; insufficient capacity
  - Results in anxiety/worry
  - At risk for stress-related burnout
  - Become unproductive and unable to juggle multiple tasks / complete work
- Underutilized
  - High capacity; low challenge
  - Results in boredom and apathy

~ Neault & Pickerell, 2011

8. ACCESS YOUR ALLIES

9. RECOGNIZE WARNING SIGNS

How Do You Know When You *Don't* Have Work-Life Balance?

- You're constantly tired
- You feel like you have no choices or control
- Life seems to be happening to you
  - You don't feel like you're managing your life
- More things aren't getting done than are
- Your life seems more negative than positive

Fires can't be made with dead embers,
nor can enthusiasm be stirred
by spiritless men.
Enthusiasm in our daily work
lightens effort and turns even labor
into pleasant tasks

~ Stanley Baldwin

Burnout

Symptoms	Causes
Emotional exhaustion	Overload/Long hours
• Unenthusiastic	Fuzzy boundaries
• Dissatisfied	Unclear/unrealistic goals
• Helplessness/Apathy	No time off/Too little sleep
Physical/mental fatigue	Unclear priorities
• Can't concentrate	Lack of control
Negative toward others	Feeling underpaid
• No sense of fun/humour	Feeling disrespected
• Quick-tempered, angry	Feeling like an outsider
Feeling of working hard but accomplishing little	Values conflicts

10. ACKNOWLEDGE THAT PERFECT ISN'T POSSIBLE

10 Tips to Facilitate Sustainability

1. Leave "white space"
2. Eat well
3. Get enough sleep
4. Make continuous adjustments
5. Define a unique formula for you, for now
6. Accept that balance is a myth
7. Take a systems approach
8. Access your allies
9. Recognize warning signs
10. Acknowledge that perfect isn't possible