

# Time Management for Accountants, Auditors, and Other People who Have to Work for a Living

Nashville Area Chapter AGA  
Winter Seminar  
January 2017



## Disclaimer

The views presented are my own and do not necessarily represent the views of the Comptroller of the Treasury, his representatives, or the Department of Audit.



## *Identify Problem Indicators*

- ◆ Stressed out
- ◆ Harried
- ◆ Missed deadlines
- ◆ Missed obligations (meetings, etc.)
- ◆ Can't find what you need
- ◆ Not sleeping
- ◆ Illness



## *Time Thieves*

---

- ◆ *Multi-tasking*
- ◆ *Failure to delegate*
- ◆ *Conflicting Priorities*
- ◆ *Crisis Projects*
- ◆ *Interruptions*
  - *Email/Social Media*
  - *Meetings*
  - *Noise*
  - *Distractions-weather, etc.*



## Objectives

- ◆ Today we're going to talk about three areas of time management that cause people problems:
  - Multi-tasking
  - Delegation
  - Distractions
    - ◆ Email/Instant messaging
    - ◆ Meetings
    - ◆ Noise



## Multitasking



## To Multitask, or Not to Multitask

We often pride ourselves on our ability to multitask...we even list it as something we look for in our new employees, but is it a good thing?

It depends on how you go about it....



## What is Multitasking?

The simultaneous execution of more than one program or task by a single computer processor.

Are we computers?

Have you ever noticed your computer slowing down when you have too many things going on?



## Effective Multitasking

- ◆ Break large projects into manageable tasks.  
(what is an effective adult attention span?)
- ◆ Work on projects one task at a time.
- ◆ Switch projects as necessary, completing a task of one project before moving on.
- ◆ Document, document, document.



## Delegation



## What is Delegation?

the assignment of any responsibility or authority to another person (normally from a manager to a subordinate) to carry out specific activities. It is one of the core concepts of **management** leadership.



## Benefits of Delegation

- ◆ Develops co-workers skills
- ◆ Spreads the work out so that it doesn't "bottleneck"
- ◆ Empowers team members, and grows self-esteem
- ◆ Creates empathy, and ultimately loyalty
- ◆ Protects the organization



## Why We Don't Delegate

- ◆ “It would take me longer to explain what I want someone to do, than it would to do it myself.”
- ◆ If my team knew how to do everything I do, why would I be needed?
- ◆ If I delegate to someone else, my superiors will think I can't do my job.
- ◆ I like to be in control.



## Effective Delegation

- ◆ Explain what needs to be done
- ◆ Put it in perspective
- ◆ Define parameters—set deadlines
- ◆ Be considerate
- ◆ Motivate
- ◆ Be realistic
- ◆ Follow up



## *But I'm Not In Charge!*

- ◆ Take ownership of delegated tasks
- ◆ Ask necessary questions
- ◆ Use delegated tasks as an opportunity to grow
- ◆ Try these ideas out in civic or church settings
- ◆ You might be in charge someday, practice for the future!



## *Managing Distractions*

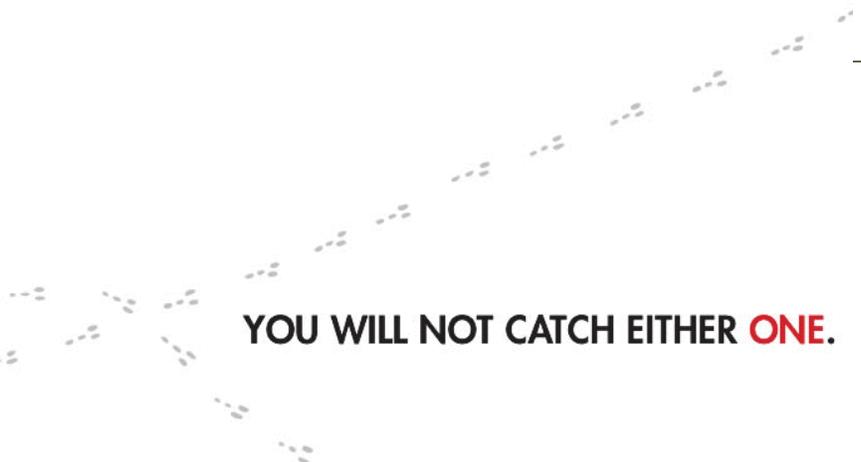




IF YOU CHASE TWO RABBITS...



YOU WILL NOT CATCH EITHER **ONE**.



## Email/Instant Messaging

- ◆ Know your job
- ◆ Know your office policies
- ◆ Know your supervisor's preferences
- ◆ If it isn't work-related, leave it alone.
- ◆ Set rules to deal with non-immediate emails or chats until later.



## Meetings, Meetings, Meetings...

- ◆ Are we meeting just because "we need to meet?"
- ◆ Are we meeting to tell everyone to come to work on time when only one person isn't?
- ◆ Are we meeting to discuss something that could be handled in an email?



## Effective Meetings

- ◆ Scheduled, with an agenda provided in advance.
- ◆ The right people are present.
- ◆ Begin and end on time. If you need additional time, schedule another meeting.
- ◆ Confirm “to dos” and decisions resulting from the meeting.



## Noise

- ◆ Unavoidable
- ◆ A bigger issue for some than for others
- ◆ Be considerate
- ◆ If you're going to use headphones, make it known—I've used the location feature of Lync/Skype to indicate that I'm using headphones.
- ◆ Don't use them unless they help you focus.



## Wrap up

- ◆ Discussed time management issues of multitasking, delegation, and dealing with distractions
- ◆ If you decide to change something about how you use time, remember that it takes at least 30 days to establish a habit.
- ◆ We tend to be perfectionists by nature. Remember to be kind to yourself if you try to set a new habit...if you goof, don't beat yourself up, just try again.



**[beth.pendergrass@cot.tn.gov](mailto:beth.pendergrass@cot.tn.gov)**

**615-747-5294**

