



Work Flows:
Goal Setting, Scheduling
& Managing Your Day

April 1 2020

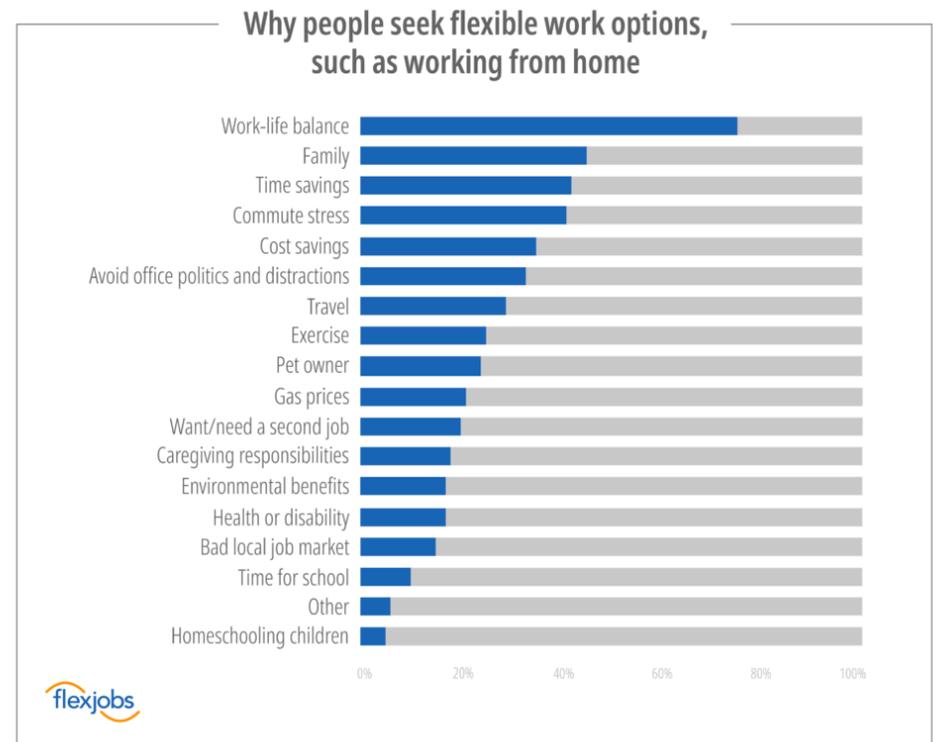
With lots of help from:

WORKFLOW TOOLS AND STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS By Dr. Nicole Cabrera Salazar

Movement Consulting LLC <https://www.movebold.ly/#about>

Why remote work is the future of employment

- According to a [2017 Deloitte survey](#) of more than 10,000 business and HR leaders from 140 countries, the organization of the future is a “network of teams.” Teams are becoming much more dynamic, and work is more distributed.
- According to Gallup, 43% of U.S. employees work remotely all or some of the time.
 - 1) Reduced Costs
 - 2) Hire Top Talent
 - 3) Employee Retention
 - 4) More Diverse Teams
 - 5) Ecological Sustainability



<https://miro.com/guides/remote-work/>

Survival Guide to Working from Home



Create a remote work routine

1. **Make your home routine the same as your in-office routine** as much as possible.
2. **Set start and end times for your work**, including expectations with your coworkers *and* family at home.
3. **Create work start and sign off routines:**
 1. Find time in a standup or on Slack at the beginning and end of the day.
 2. Signing in and signing out for the day helps create a boundary between work and home life.
4. **Reserve time for meals and snacks:**
 1. Do not eat at your desk, avoid grazing all day, plan meals, plan lunches with coworkers over Zoom.

Use a Timer !!

Use Google Calendar !!

<https://askalmanac.com/articles/12642/survival-guide-to-working-from-home-for-remote-employees>

Survival Guide to Working from Home

Set up your home workspace

- **Don't work at the kitchen table; set aside a distinct workspace in your home.** It doesn't have to be an office, it can be any corner of the house that designates "workspace" and delineates the boundary between work and home.
- **Remove distractions and clutter as much as possible,** especially spaces people will see during video calls.
- **Create rituals for starting and ending your day in your workspace** to help delineate work-home life, like Nancy Mays, who makes a point to say goodbye to coworkers on Slack before she physically leaves her workspace.
- **Set boundaries with people at home** around your workspace and hours to mitigate distractions.
- **Get the proper equipment:**

<https://askalmanac.com/articles/12642/survival-guide-to-working-from-home-for-remote-employees>

Goal Setting

Why it works:

Setting daily, weekly, and monthly goals is a necessary aspect of life, but it's especially important for science. Remember, becoming a scientist takes time; *it's a marathon, not a sprint*. It's important to pace ourselves so that we don't burn out too quickly.

It's also imperative to set goals for self-care, exercise, time with friends and family, and whatever else is most important to you.

Scheduling Your Day

Why it works:

When you write down the things you plan to do the next day, it puts the information “in the world”¹ versus keeping it in your head . You’ll be able to sleep better because your mind won’t be ruminating and reminding you of things you shouldn’t forget.

It also helps for goal assessment: if you’re not getting everything on your schedule done during the day, you’re probably underestimating how much you can do or how fast you can do it. Readjust often!

¹ *The Design of Everyday Things*, Don Norman

Goal Setting techniques: Task Boarding

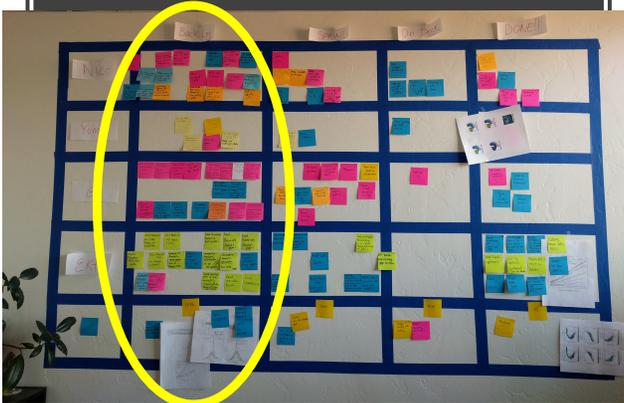
My office wall



Task Boarding

Column 1

Back Log (Semester/ Summer)



High level goals – designed to be a bit overwhelming

Create a list of major tasks that need to be completed over the semester/summer.

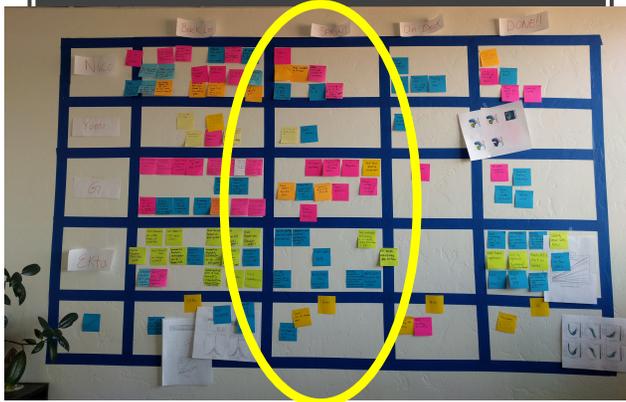
Classes: Go through syllabi and make a post it for each major evaluation (e.g. Midterm, Homeworks). (one class per row).

Research: Work with your advisor to come up with the high level tasks that need to get done over the duration of the summer (e.g. data reduction, report)

Task Boarding

Column 2

Two/One Weeks (sprint)



Start with ONE of your high level goals.

Create a list of tasks that you can do over the next TWO weeks to address how you will accomplish all (or PART) of the high level goal.

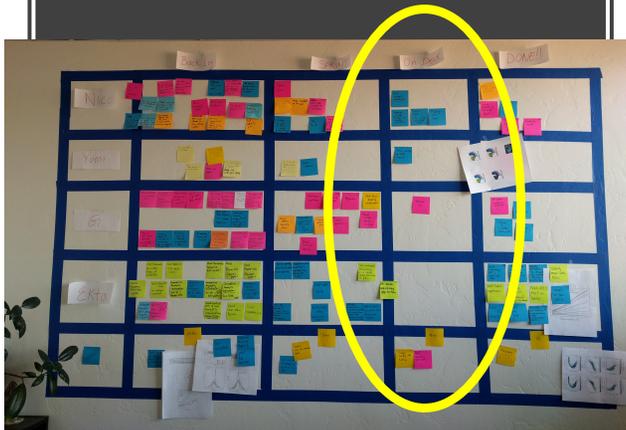
S.M.A.R.T.: Goals should be **specific** (*what exactly is my task?*), **measurable** (*how do I know the task has been completed?*), **attainable** (*is this task realistic?*), **relevant** (*does this task advance my larger goals?*), and **timely** (*when do I need to complete this task?*).

Swallow the Frog: Divide up your tasks throughout the week, taking care of the important tasks first and *not moving on to other tasks until the important ones are finished!* You'll accomplish more and feel more accomplished this way.

Task Boarding

Column 3

TODAY!
(On deck)



Take a sprint goal and create related tasks that you will work on TODAY.

This need to be set **every** morning (see daily stand up model)

Prioritize: Number your tasks in order of importance, with 1 being the highest priority.

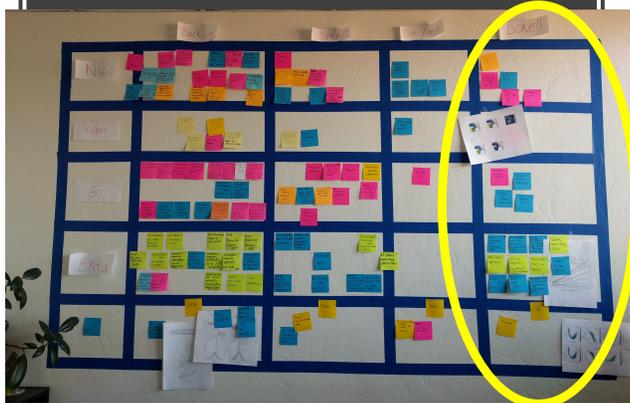
Assign **NO MORE THAN 3-4** tasks per day

Reevaluate: Didn't accomplish all the goals you set for the day? It's most likely because you set too many! Remember, you should only be aiming to complete 3-4 tasks each day, no more. Think about how you can better set goals and tasks for the next day and plan accordingly.

Task Boarding

Column 4

DONE!



Move post-its you have completed from “On Deck” into this category.

This is pretty satisfying

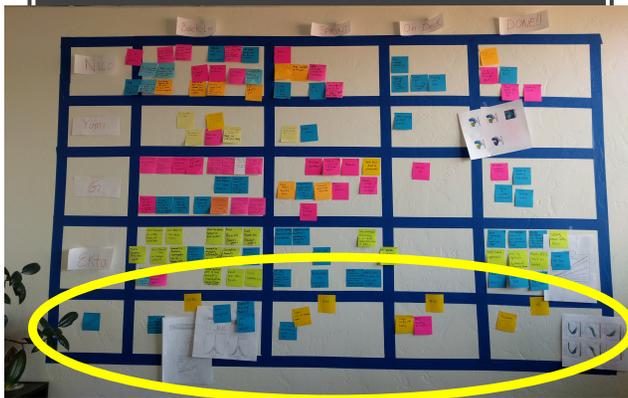
You can include plots.

Be self-compassionate: Give yourself a break, even if you avoided work all day; it’s likely that unresolved feelings that are the cause, NOT incompetence/incapability. Be kind to yourself and remember that you can start fresh tomorrow.

Task Boarding

Special Row or Column

CHEERS!

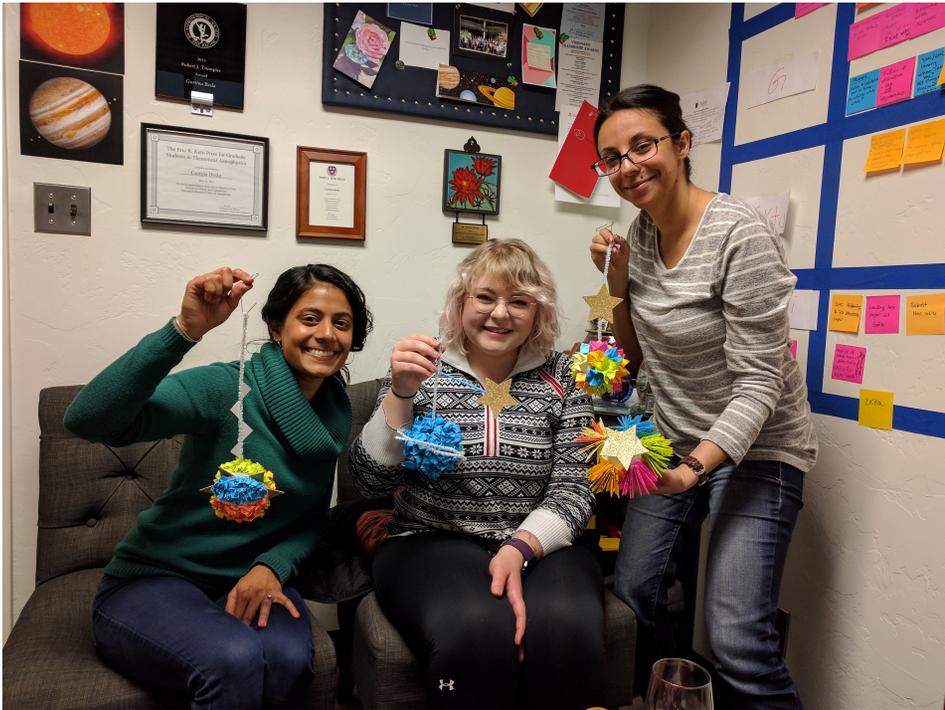


At the end of the sprint (one week or two weeks), reset the Sprint Goals, and crumple up the DONE post-its

Keep track of the “DONE” post-its that you are proud of and don’t crumple them up. Put them in a separate row or column.

At the end of the month – do some art with all your crumpled “DONE” post-its!

And Celebrate at the end of each month with the saved “DONE” post-its that you are proud of !



Remember to Reward Yourself

Task Boarding: Online Versions

- <https://trello.com/> (but there are many others)
- <https://trello.com/templates/education>

Trello lets you work more collaboratively and get more done.

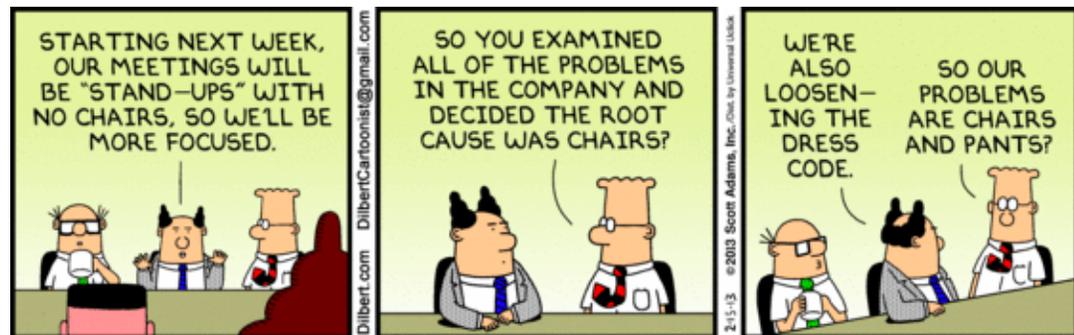
Trello's boards, lists, and cards enable you to organize and prioritize your projects in a fun, flexible, and rewarding way.



Managing your day: Daily Stand Ups

An accountability
measure to update your
“On Deck” task board or
set tasks for the day

- Get Up, Eat Breakfast, Get Dressed,
 - then meet with friends: (3 min/person while *standing*)
1. What did you work on yesterday ?
 2. What do you plan to work on today?
 3. What is in your way?



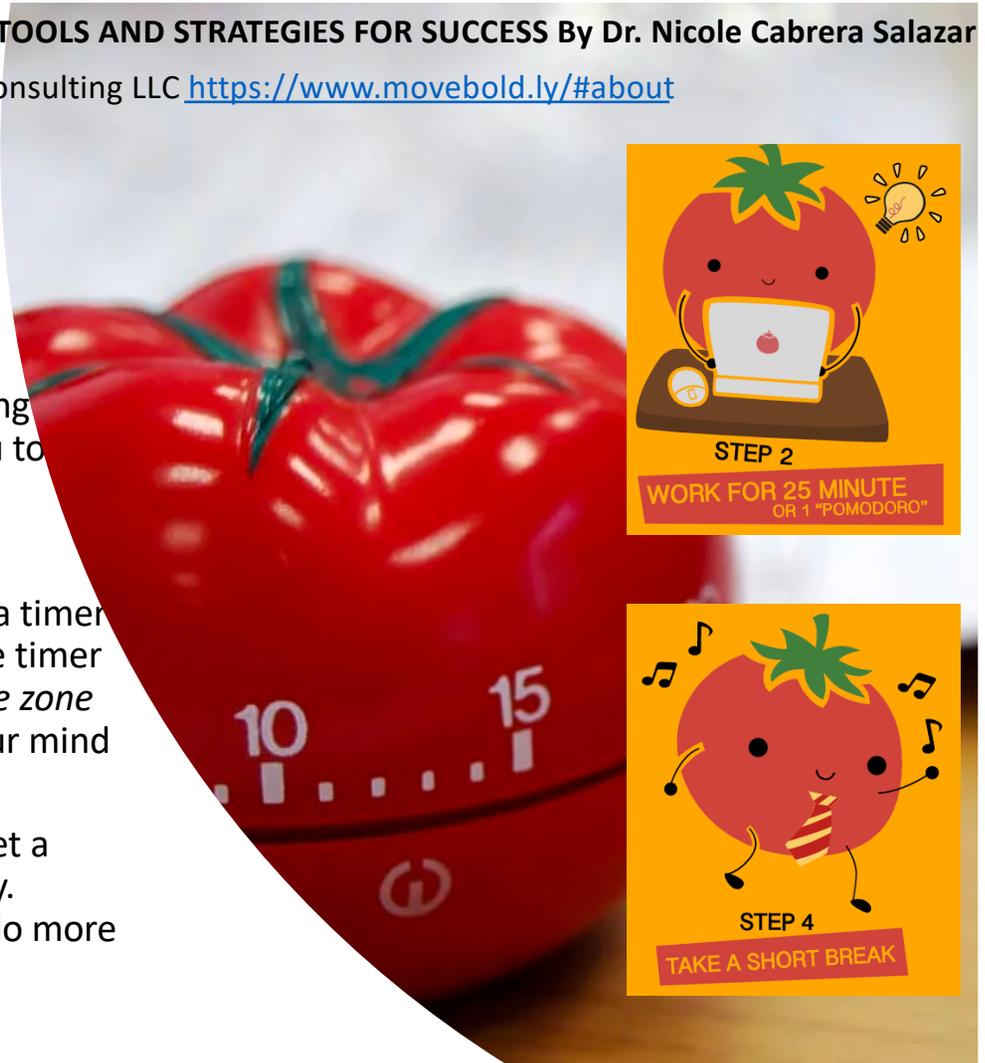
<https://martinfowler.com/articles/itsNotJustStandingUp.html>

Managing your day: Pomodoro Technique

Why it works: Your brain has not evolved to focus for long periods of time. Using the pomodoro method forces you to break often in order to avoid burnout.

How to do it:

- Use an app like **Be Focused** or **TomatoTimers** to start a timer every time you sit down to work. When the 25-minute timer goes off, it's time to take a break -- *even if you're in the zone and getting a lot done*. The forced break will allow your mind to rest, making your work time more efficient.
- Each 25-minute block is called a *pomodoro*; you can set a goal for how many pomodoros you'd like to do per day. Because you're more focused, you may not need to do more than 10-12 pomodoros (5-6 hours of work per day).



Managing Your Day: Blocking Distractions

- *Why it works:* Did you know that notifications from email or social media create a dopamine loop in your brain? It makes sense then how easy it is to get distracted, and how hard it is to break the cycle.
- *How to do it:* If you're likely to go down a browser black hole, apps like **Self Control** (Mac), **LeechBlock** (Chrome) and **Cold Turkey** (Windows) block distracting websites for a set amount of time -- and you can't turn the timer off once it's going.
- If your phone is a bigger problem, you can turn off notifications during work hours. You might have to resort to harsher tactics like deleting all your social media apps, hiding your phone inside your desk, or even putting it in another room.



Managing your day: Forest App

Stay focused in a pleasant way



Whenever you want to focus on your work, plant a tree.



In the following time, it will grow when you are working.



The tree will be killed if you open websites on Blacklist.

- <https://www.forestapp.cc/>
- 2 in one: Timer & helps you stop going to websites that will distract you
- At least 3 students at the meeting are already using it !



Managing Your Day: Virtual Work Meetings/Study Grups (Zoom & Discord)



- Schedule a couple hours where anyone on your “team” can log in, with or without the camera on.
- This could be right after the “stand up” for example.
- No one needs to talk to each other. Just a way to not be working alone.
- **Discord:** <https://discordapp.com/> Works well for study groups
- Zoom Tutorial: <https://www.craigfreshley.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Zoom-Meeting-Basics-from-Good-Group-Decisions-2020-03-16-6.pdf>

Building Community : Slack

- Slack.com
- Share updates
- Plots (Cheers updates !)
- No emails !!!



A screenshot of a Slack workspace. On the left is a dark purple sidebar with a navigation menu. The top of the sidebar shows the workspace name "Besla-Team" and a user profile for "Gurtina Besla". Below this are icons for Threads, Mentions & reactions, Drafts, Saved, Channel browser, People, Apps, and Files. A "Channels" section is expanded, showing a list of channels: # coding (highlighted), # conferences, # gaia, # general, # mcsatellites, # mwmass, # mwvpos, # papers, # pictures, # random, # satellite-halo, and # strategies. Below channels are "Direct messages" including Slackbot and gurtina (you). The main content area on the right shows the "#coding" channel. At the top right of this area is a date separator for "May 17th, 2019". The first message is from "gurtina" at 10:08 AM, containing a link to a Divio blog post titled "What nobody tells you about documentation - Blog - Divio". The second message is from "Nico" at 11:57 AM, featuring a 3D visualization plot with concentric rings in shades of purple, blue, green, and yellow, and a red line. The third message is from "ekta" at 1:06 PM, consisting of five fire emojis and the text "SO COOL". At the bottom is a text input field for sending messages to the channel, with a rich text editor toolbar above it.

Research Teams:
Remote Meetings
are normal !

Astronomy & Physics are
International Fields



GitHub: Code Repositories and Version Control

- Github.com
- Used for:
 - keeping track of code so you don't accidentally delete things
 - Allowing your advisor to see your progress without having to deal with email
 - flagging bugs
 - Team Coding
- Tutorials: <https://lab.github.com/>
- More on April 15th !!



PRACTICING SELF-COMPASSION

- *Why it works:* No matter how well we plan our workflow, there will always be good days and bad days. Failure is a feature, not a bug, of our humanity. When we accept it, we can stop the endless spiral of guilt and avoidance that prevents us from doing our best work.
- *How to do it:* Avoided work all day? Close your laptop and call it a day, and take time to practice self-care. Write down your feelings of avoidance and where they come from, and hold space for the part of you that is scared. Acknowledge that tomorrow can be different. Love yourself.