

Tensions in Time Management: Implications for Leaders

14:30 – 16:00 (90 minutes)

Organizers:

Prof. Dr. Laura M. Giurge (London School of Economics)

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Workshop Goals

Time management can be challenging, especially for leaders.

We invite you to...

- ... analyze your own time management habits: **The Time Audit Exercise**
- ... explore the tensions in time management: **The Polarity Map Exercise**

Together, we will draw conclusions for self-leadership and people-leadership practices regarding time management and exchange best practices.



What is time? |

Why is it so hard to manage our time?



**Cultural
barriers**



**Organizational
barriers**



**Individual
barriers**

Think about **3 key**
goals that you want
to achieve in the next
12 months at work

The Time Audit Exercise

Work activity	% time in the last week	Serves which goal	Important/ Un-important	Urgent/ Non-urgent
Writing	40%	Individual goal	Important	Non-urgent

The Time Audit Exercise: Debrief

- Are you **satisfied** with how you spent your time last week?
- What % of **your time** did you spend on your **key goals**?
- What % of **your time** did you spend on **important / urgent activities**?
- How close is last week to how your **ideal week** would look like?
- What are the **barriers** that prevent you from optimally using your time?

Why is it so hard to manage our time?

Long-term &
Short-term goals

Individual &
Collective goals

Performing &
Learning

Planning &
Flexibility

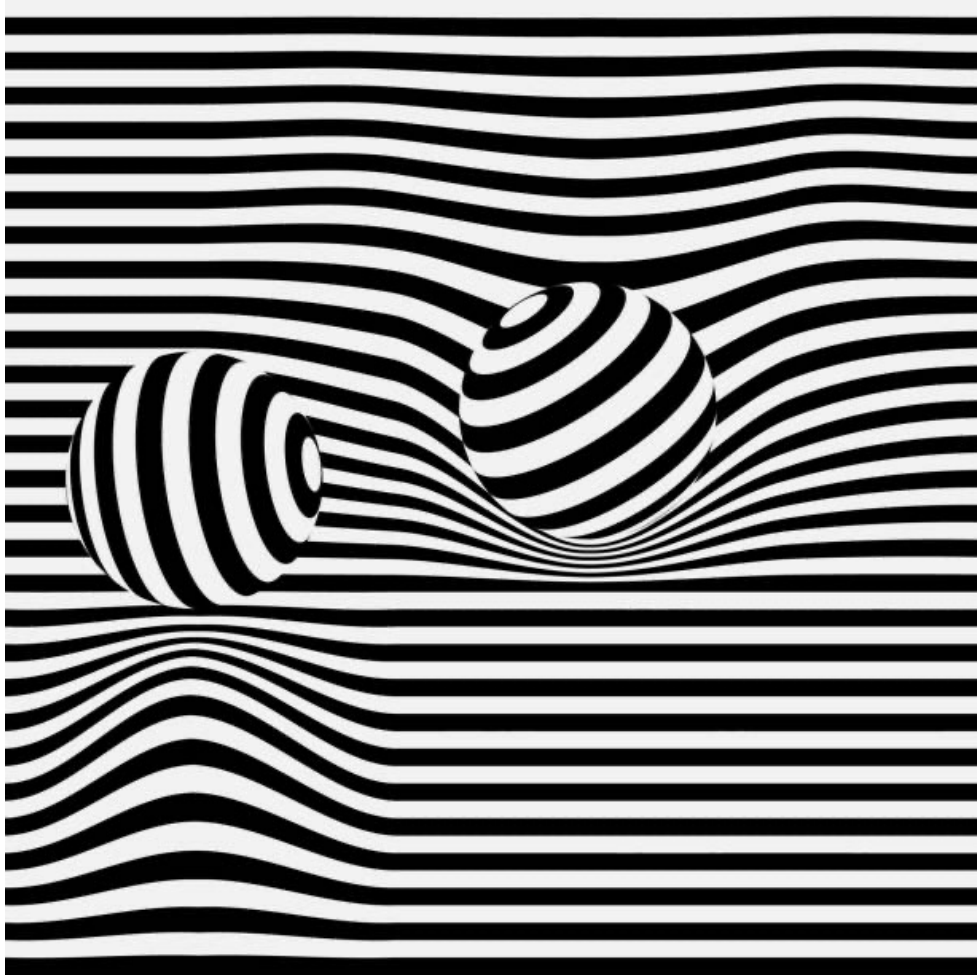


Availability &
Boundaries

Work & Life
goals

Productivity &
Recovery

Paradoxical elements are characterized by....



Interdependence

Contradiction

Persistence

Time is an important leadership tension



THE 11 PARADOXES OF LEADERSHIP THAT HANG ON THE WALL OF EVERY LEGO MANAGER

- To be able to build a close relationship with one's staff, and to keep a suitable distance.
- To be able to lead, and to hold oneself in the background.
- To trust one's staff, and to keep an eye on what is happening.
- To be tolerant, and to know how you want things to function.
- To keep the goals of one's department in mind, and at the same time to be loyal to the whole firm.
- To do a good job of planning your own time, and to be flexible with your schedule.
- To freely express your view, and to be diplomatic.
- To be a visionary, and to keep one's feet on the ground.
- To try to win consensus, and to be able to cut through.
- To be dynamic, and to be reflective.
- To be sure of yourself, and to be humble.

A key leadership tension related to time is...



**Plan your own
time well**

**Be flexible with
your schedule**

Overwhelmed? Adopt a paradox mindset

- 1. Change your question.**
How can I do both?
- 2. Embrace the tension and start to feel comfortable with it.**
Tensions are inherent in work and leadership.
- 3. Take your distance from the problem and start looking for new approaches.**
The following exercise can help.



The Polarity Map Exercise: Analyze the Tension

Why would you want to leverage this tension
(state the greater purpose)?

Step 5: Enter
action steps

Step 1: Enter
positive results

Step 2: Enter
positive results

Step 6: Enter
action steps

Planning
your time

Being
flexible

Step 7: Enter
early warnings

Step 8: Enter
early warnings

Step 3: Enter
negative results

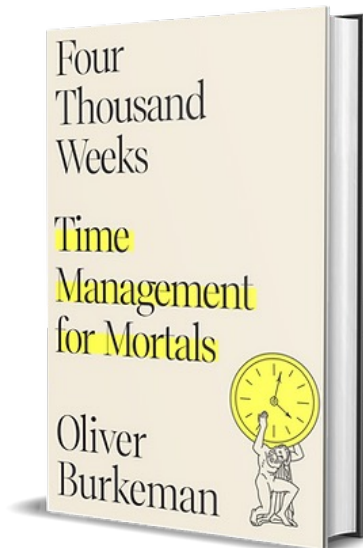
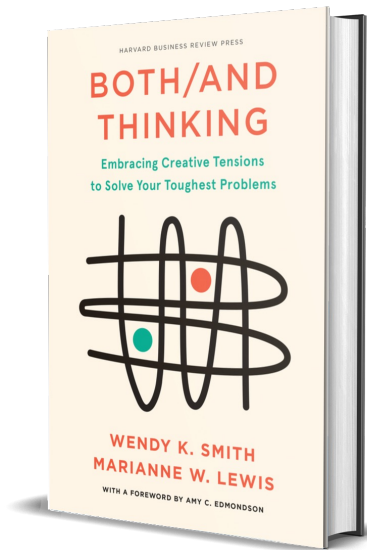
Step 4: Enter
negative results

What is the danger of **NOT** leveraging this tension?

The Polarity Map Exercise: Debrief

- Any **key insights** from applying the polarity map to the planning-flexibility tension?
- Anything **new / surprising / creative** you will implement?
- Which **conditions** make the planning-flexibility tension easier / harder to manage?
- How is the planning-flexibility tension related to **other tensions** you experience as a leader (e.g., closeness-distance, control-autonomy, goal conflicts)?

Want to learn more?



Research: Flexible Work Can Dampen Motivation
Harvard Business Review, April 2022



The Course of Off-Hours Email
Wall Street Journal, October 2021



Why Time is the Currency of Knowledge Work
Forbes, May 2021

Thank you!

Best of luck with managing your time!



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