

Calendars for Humans: How to undo the all-day cram

Dominica DeGrandis



TEAM PAIN

- Too many interruptions - can't focus
- Conflicting priorities - everything is a Priority one !
- Too many meetings
- No time for internal process improvements
- Too many different tools!
- Every reorg brings another process method.

- Burnout

AND YOU WANT ME TO ATTEND



**HOW MANY MEETINGS ON
WEDNESDAY?!**

CSRA Team
Sparrow Hawks
Kevin Kirkpatrick



Paula Thrasher

@paula_thrasher

Following



I love having 5 meetings scheduled at the same time - over my lunch break - said no one ever ...

8:50 AM - 14 Sep 2017

3 Likes



2



3



Tweet your reply



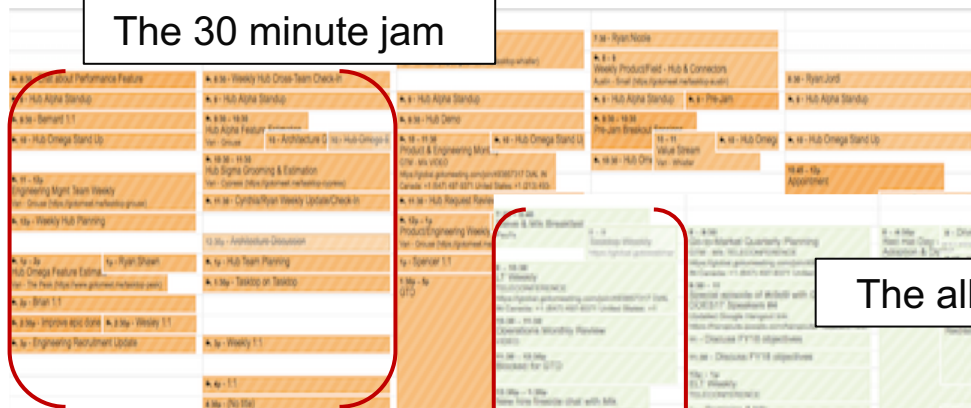
LiliTree ★ @Lilitree · Nov 2



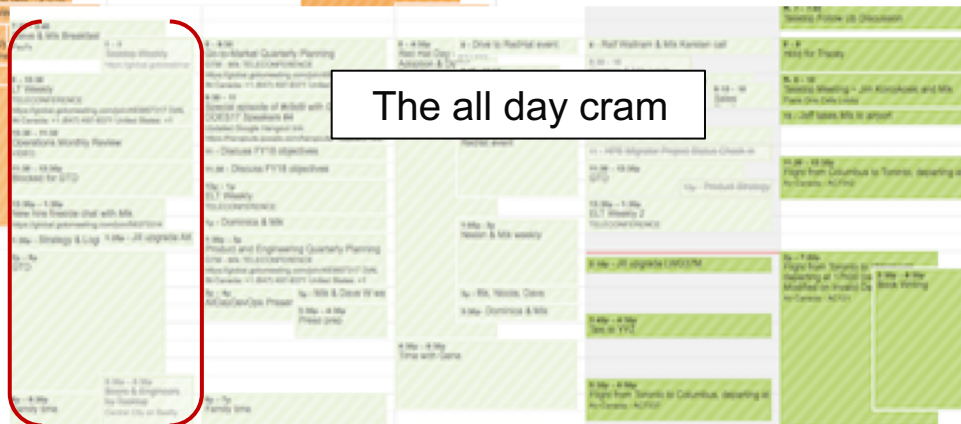
Replying to @paula_thrasher

This is my life, starting at 7 am.

The 30 minute jam



The all day cram



The triple booked wham



The 30 minute jam

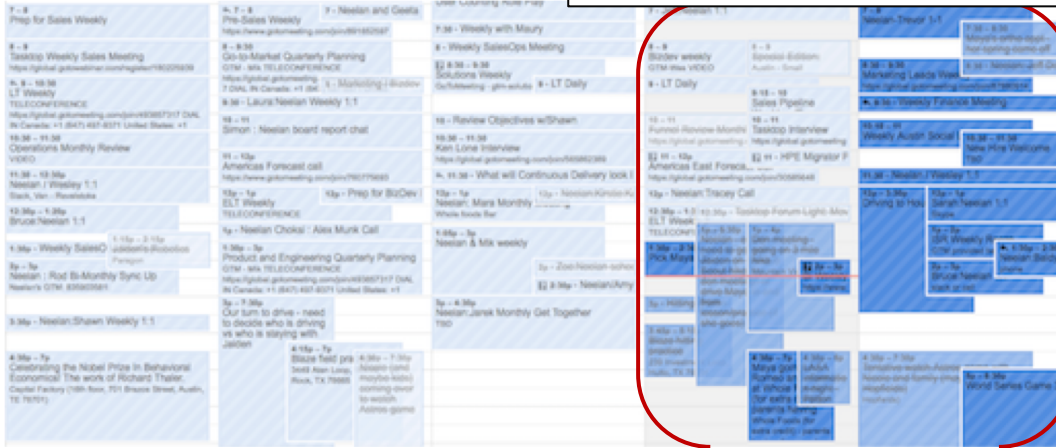
The all day cram



Back-to-back 7am to 7pm meetings leave zero flexible time

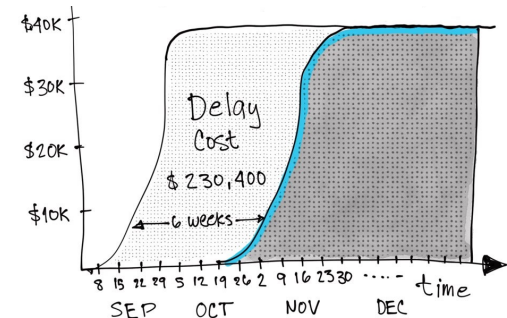
- no room for unexpected important urgent work
- disappointed people
- cancelled meetings (how often cancelled?)
- How much time is wasted rescheduling meetings?

The triple booked wham



A canceled meeting creates rework – which has a cost

If the no-show person disagrees w/ decision made by the others, then rework occurs to rehash out that decision.



How to undo the all-day cram

1. **Maker calendar:** Creative people (developers, designers, writers)
2. **Manager calendar:** Decision makers
3. **Combo calendar:** People who do both

Maker calendar

| | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thurs | Fri |
|------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| 8am | | | | | |
| 9 | Arch planning | Stand | 1:1 Sarah | Stand | OPS Review |
| 10 | | | Design sync | | |
| 11 | D1 | D1 | D1 | D1 | D1 |
| noon | | | | | |
| 1pm | lunch | lunch | learning | lunch | team lunch |
| 2 | All Hands | Demo | | Review | |
| 3 | | | | | |
| 4 | D2 | D2 | D2 | D2 | D2 |
| 5 | | | | | |
| 6 | Pick up kids | DevOps Meetup | Pick up kids | Pick up kids | |
| 7 | family | | family | family | Beer |

Ultradian cycles: brain naturally gets lull in concentration every 90 – 120 min when awake b/c brain wave frequencies rise, then sink. <https://www.polyphasicsociety.com/polyphasic-sleep/science/rhythms/>

Manager calendar

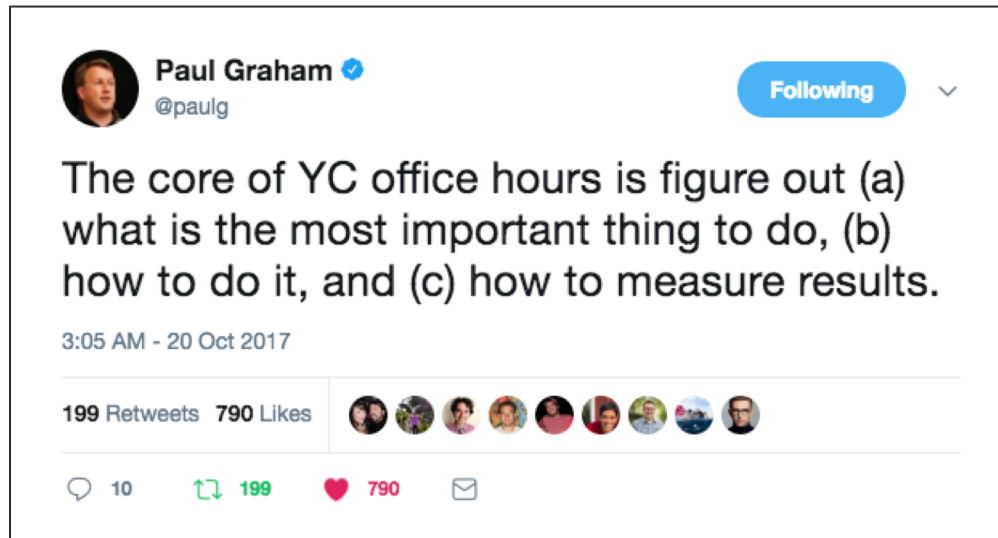
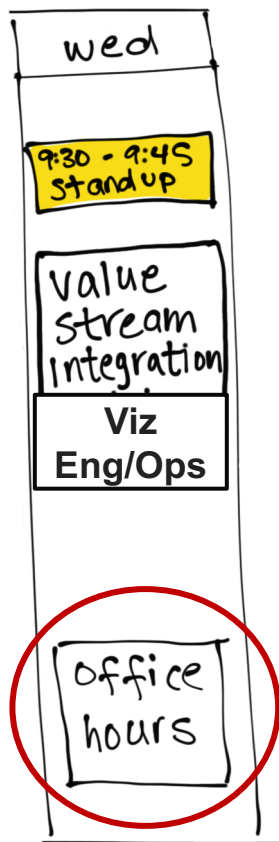
mgrs meet w/
other mgrs
during prime
maker time

Unstructured
time after
dept meetings

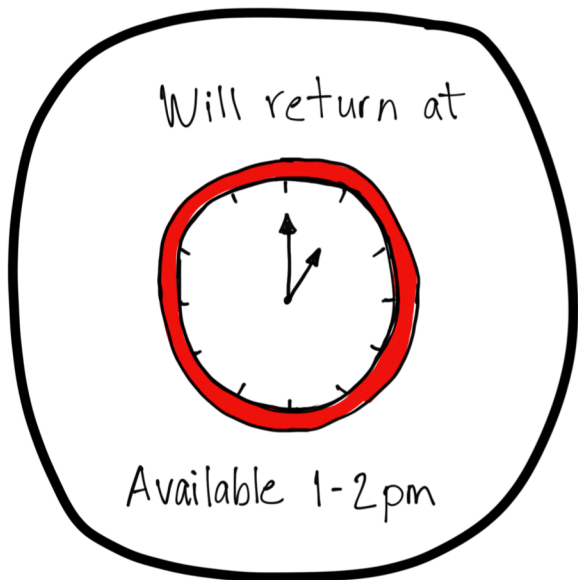
| | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thur | Fri |
|-----|----------------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------|------------|
| 7am | | | Phone briefting | Shanghai call | |
| 8am | LT daily | LT daily | LT daily | LT daily | LT daily |
| 9am | LT Weekly | | LT Daily | | |
| 10 | | Go to Market | Prod & Eng Monthly | ELT | DPs Review |
| 11 | ops monthly planning | | Internal call | CEO/VP MKTG | |
| 12 | | ELT Weekly | | CEO/CFO weekly | |
| 1pm | | | conf review | CEO/VP Product | |
| 2pm | All Hands | CEO & COO Weekly | Office hours | Office hours | D↓ |
| 3pm | DND | DND | | | Happy Hour |
| 4pm | | | | | |
| 5pm | | | | | |
| 6pm | Trans mte | | | | |
| 7pm | family | family | family | family | |
| 8pm | | | | | |
| 9pm | | | | | |

Leadership is in a position to make everyone meet at their frequency.

Office hours



Do-not-disturb hours



Set a regular cadence to let people know when you are available and when you are not available.

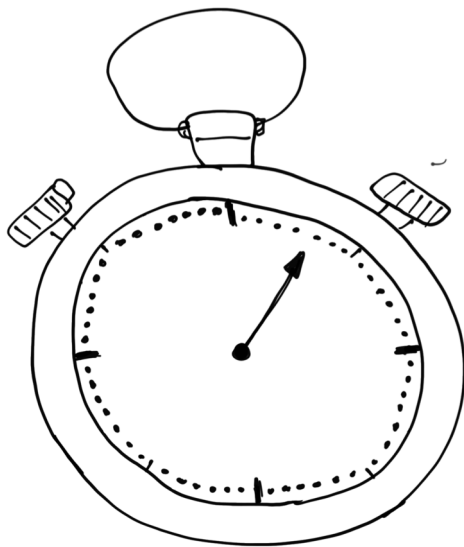
Combo calendar - before

| | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri |
|---------|------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 8:00 am | | | | | |
| 9:00 | | Value Stream map | | Webinar | |
| 10:00 | Travel | Tasktop training | LT DAILY | | Breakout |
| 11:00 | Eng | ~ 1:1 | TAS Demo special episode #c9d9 | ~ | |
| Noon | | DOES Enter Data Strm Gateway Int | Sol | | Quarterly reportings |
| 1:00 | Intro call | | Prep talk | Devops West | All Hands |
| 2:00 | | | ~ 1:1 | Marketing lunch | Busy |
| 3:00 | ~ 1:1 | ~ 1:1 | Field Qs | | |
| 4:00 | Stand | stand | Data stream | Int - 1 Release Demo | Travel |
| 5:00 pm | | | Expenses | | Happy hour |

Combo calendar - after

| | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri |
|---------|--------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 8:00 am | | | | | |
| 9:00 | Intro call | Value Stream map | !!! !!! | Webinar | !!! !!! |
| 10:00 | Travel | Tasktop training | LT DAILY | | Breakout |
| 11:00 | Eng | ~ 1:1 Data Stream | Tas | Stand | Quarterly reportings |
| Noon | | | special episode #c9d9 | Field Q's | |
| 1:00 | DOES 17 call | Gateway Int | Prep talk | Devops West | All Hands |
| 2:00 | | | DND | Marketing lunch | Busy |
| 3:00 | D1 | D1 | | | Travel |
| 4:00 | | | Data Stream | Int - 1 Release Demo | |
| 5:00 pm | | | Expenses | Pomodoro time | Happy hour |

Pomodoro's



- Break down work into time-boxed intervals separated by short breaks.
- Set timer for 25 or 30 min and work intensely to finish task before timer rings.
- Pomodoro's provide intense focus time.

“But that won’t work here.”



Tasktop @Tasktop · Feb 22

Which time thief is preventing you from getting work done?

[#MakingWorkVisible](#)

[@dominica](#)

40% Too much work in progress

7% Unknown dependencies

31% Unplanned work

22% Conflicting priorities ✓

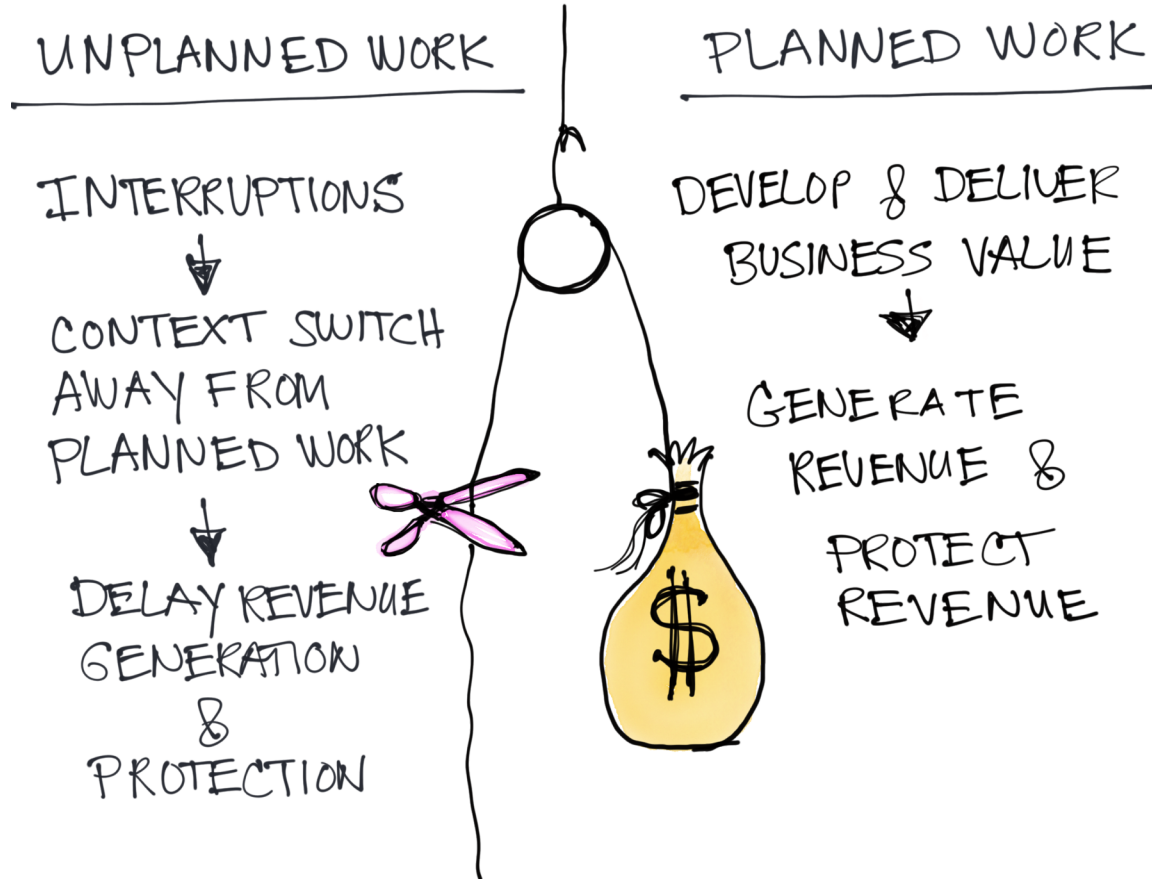
TOO MUCH Work-in-Progress (WIP)



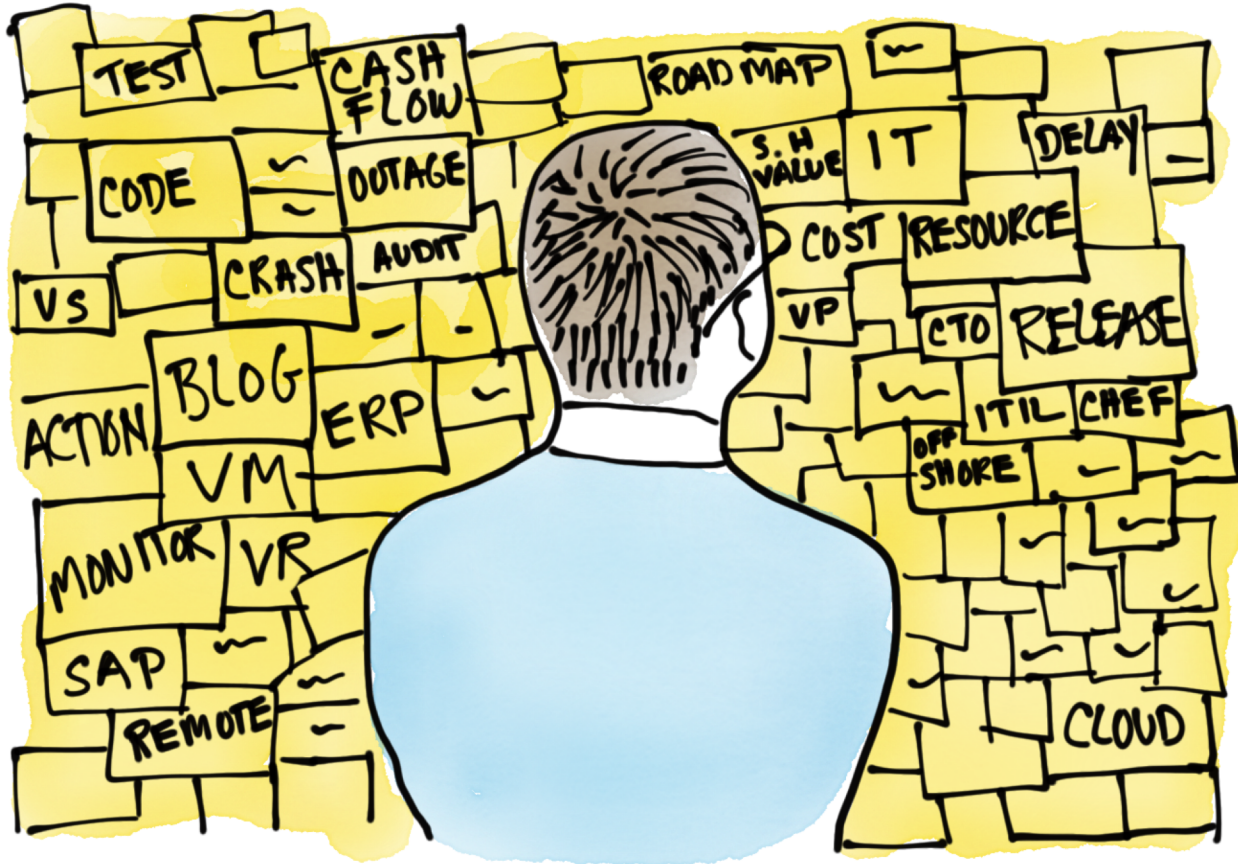
Too much WIP: When demand exceeds capacity. Lots of partially completed work.

WIP is leading indicator of CT.
Multitasking is an opportunity to screw up more than 1 thing at a time.

UNPLANNED WORK



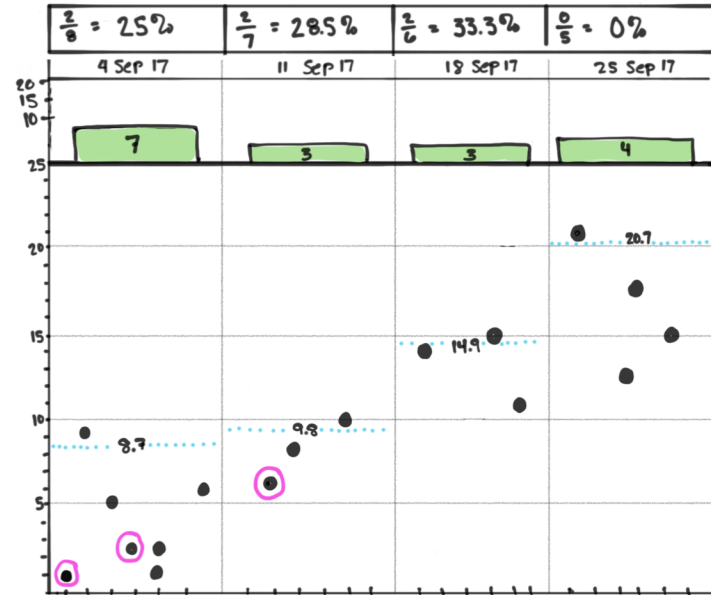
CONFLICTING PRIORITIES



How to get buy in to undo the all-day cram

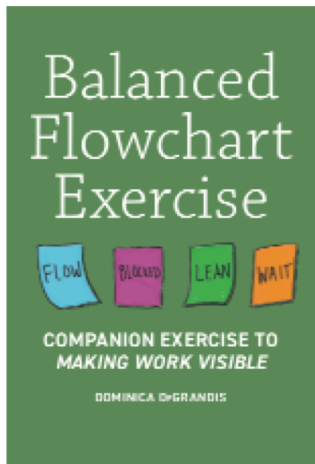
Measure at least one metric trend in 4 different areas.

- How fast
- How productive
- How good
- How predictable



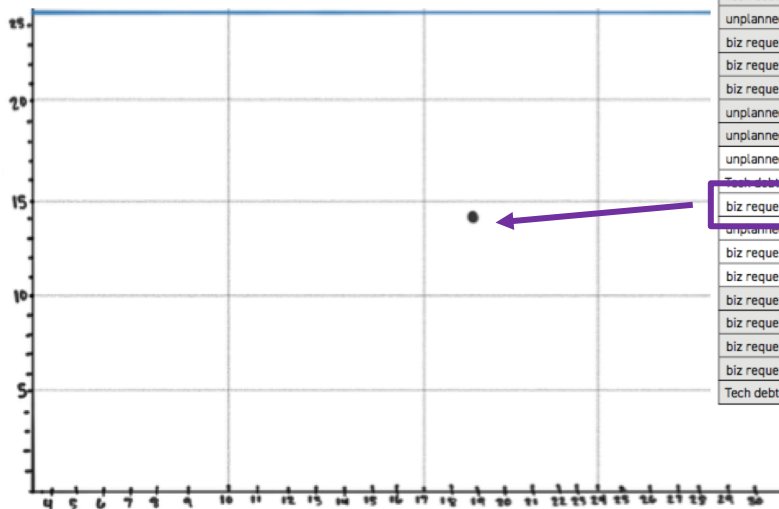
Inspired by Troy Magennis & Larry Maccherone,
"Doing Team Metrics Right,"
<http://focusedobjective.com/team-metrics-right/>

Balanced Flowchart Exercise



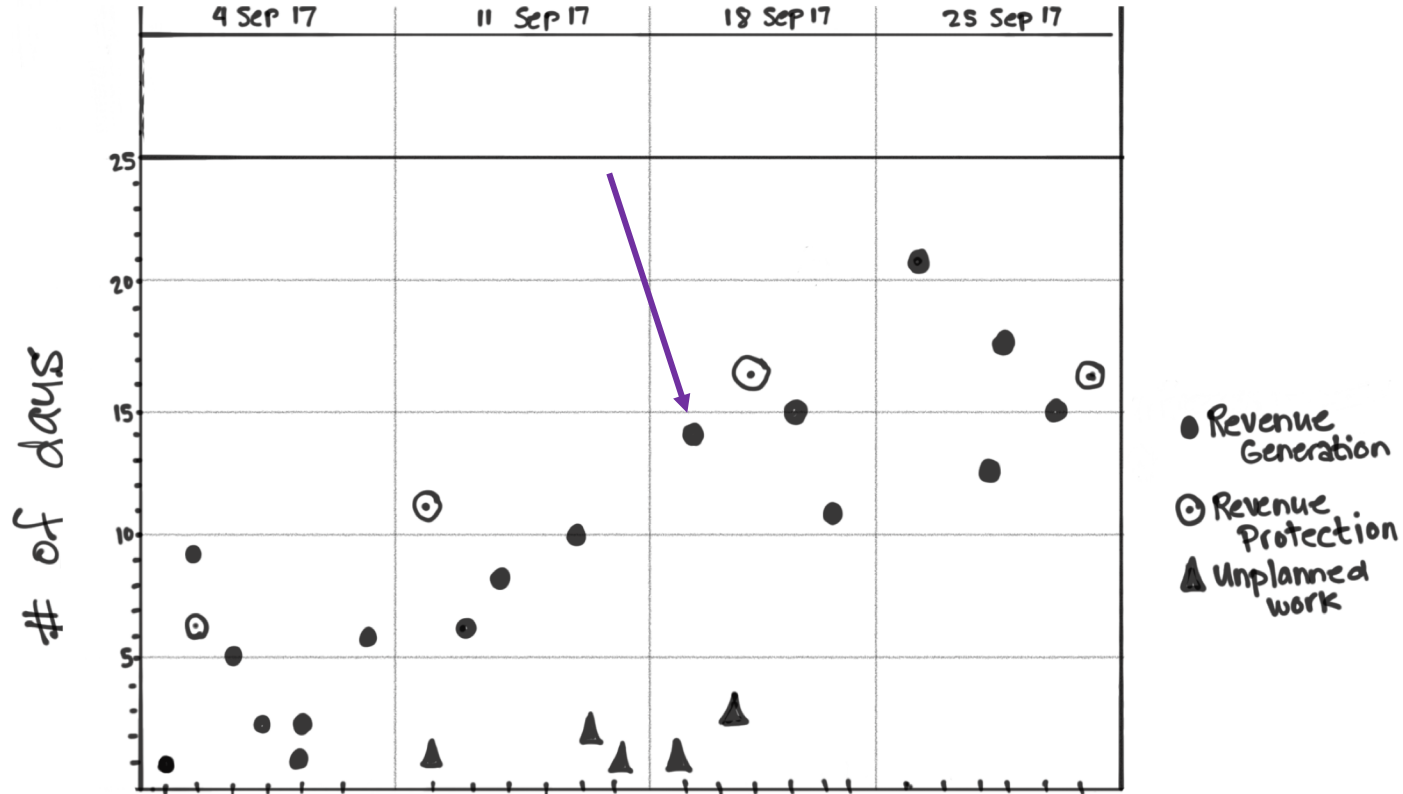
MATERIALS:

- Blank balanced flowchart
- Data spreadsheet

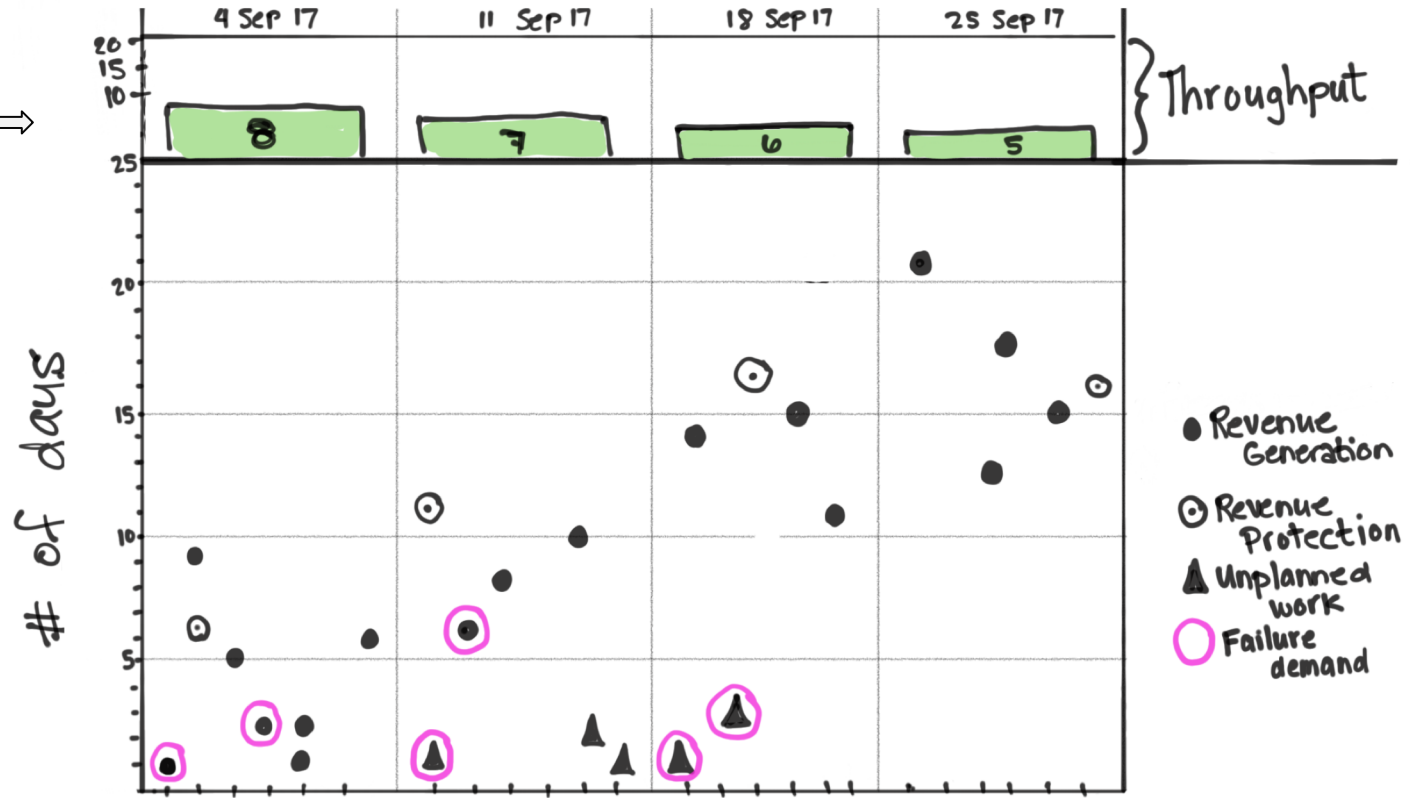


| Work Item Types | Day Done | Day Ready | Flow Time (#days) | Failure Demand? |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|-----------------|
| biz request | 4-Sep-17 | 3-Sep-17 | 1 | yes |
| Tech debt or process improve | 5-Sep-17 | 29-Aug-17 | 7 | |
| biz request | 5-Sep-17 | 27-Aug-17 | 9 | |
| biz request | 6-Sep-17 | 1-Sep-17 | 5 | |
| biz request | 7-Sep-17 | 4-Sep-17 | 3 | yes |
| biz request | 8-Sep-17 | 6-Sep-17 | 2 | |
| biz request | 8-Sep-17 | 5-Sep-17 | 3 | |
| biz request | 9-Sep-17 | 3-Sep-17 | 6 | |
| Tech debt or process improve | 11-Sep-17 | 30-Aug-17 | 12 | |
| unplanned work | 11-Sep-17 | 10-Sep-17 | 1 | yes |
| biz request | 12-Sep-17 | 6-Sep-17 | 6 | yes |
| biz request | 13-Sep-17 | 5-Sep-17 | 8 | |
| biz request | 15-Sep-17 | 5-Sep-17 | 10 | |
| unplanned work | 15-Sep-17 | 13-Sep-17 | 2 | |
| unplanned work | 16-Sep-17 | 15-Sep-17 | 1 | |
| unplanned work | 18-Sep-17 | 17-Sep-17 | 1 | yes |
| Tech debt or process improve | 20-Sep-17 | 2-Sep-17 | 17 | |
| biz request | 19-Sep-17 | 5-Sep-17 | 14 | |
| unplanned work | 20-Sep-17 | 10-Sep-17 | 2 | yes |
| biz request | 22-Sep-17 | 11-Sep-17 | 11 | |
| biz request | 21-Sep-17 | 6-Sep-17 | 15 | |
| biz request | 26-Sep-17 | 5-Sep-17 | 21 | |
| biz request | 27-Sep-17 | 9-Sep-17 | 18 | |
| biz request | 27-Sep-17 | 14-Sep-17 | 13 | |
| biz request | 29-Sep-17 | 14-Sep-17 | 15 | |
| Tech debt or process improve | 30-Sep-17 | 13-Sep-17 | 17 | |

Balanced Flow chart exercise – How Fast?



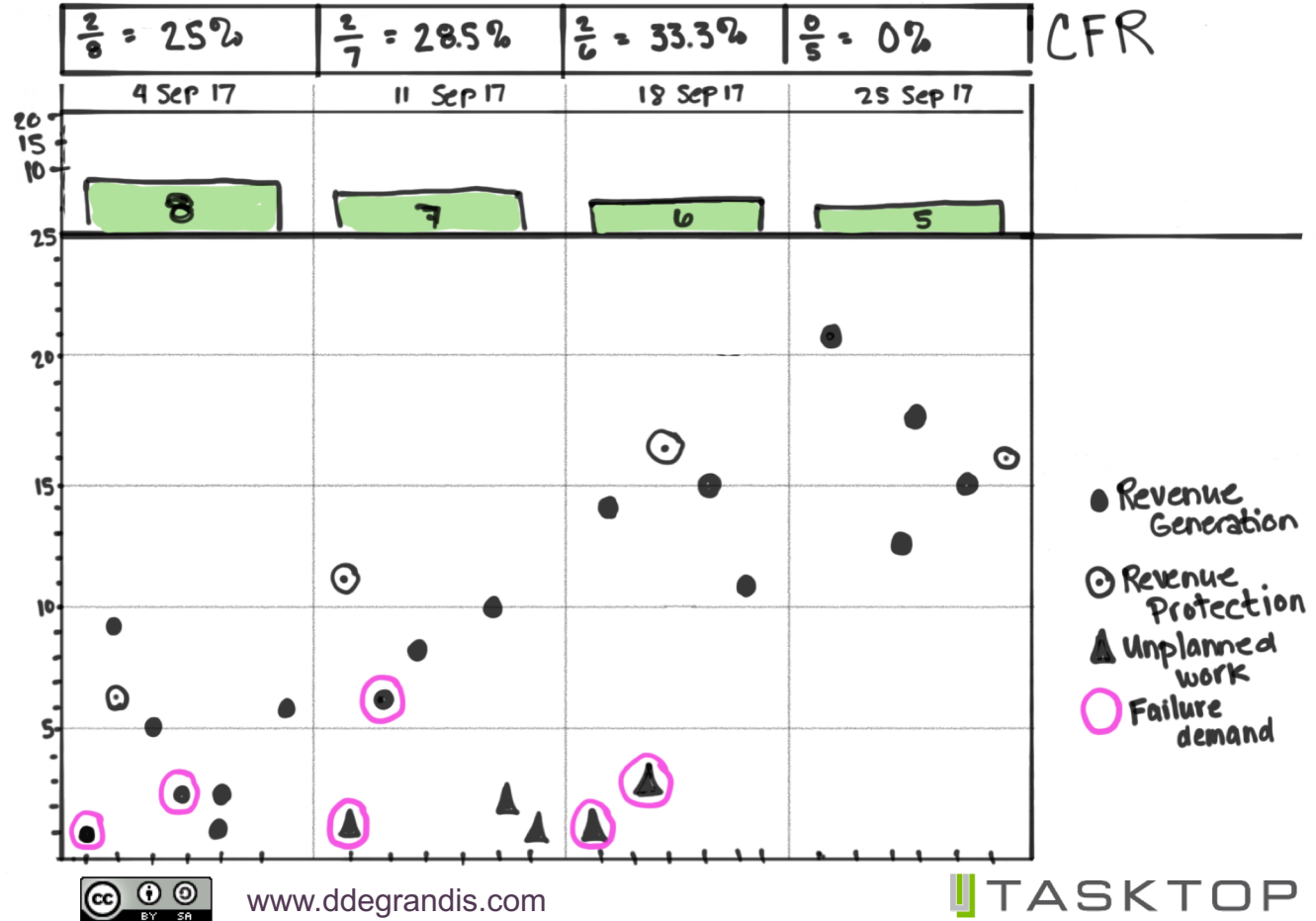
Balanced Flow chart exercise – How productive?



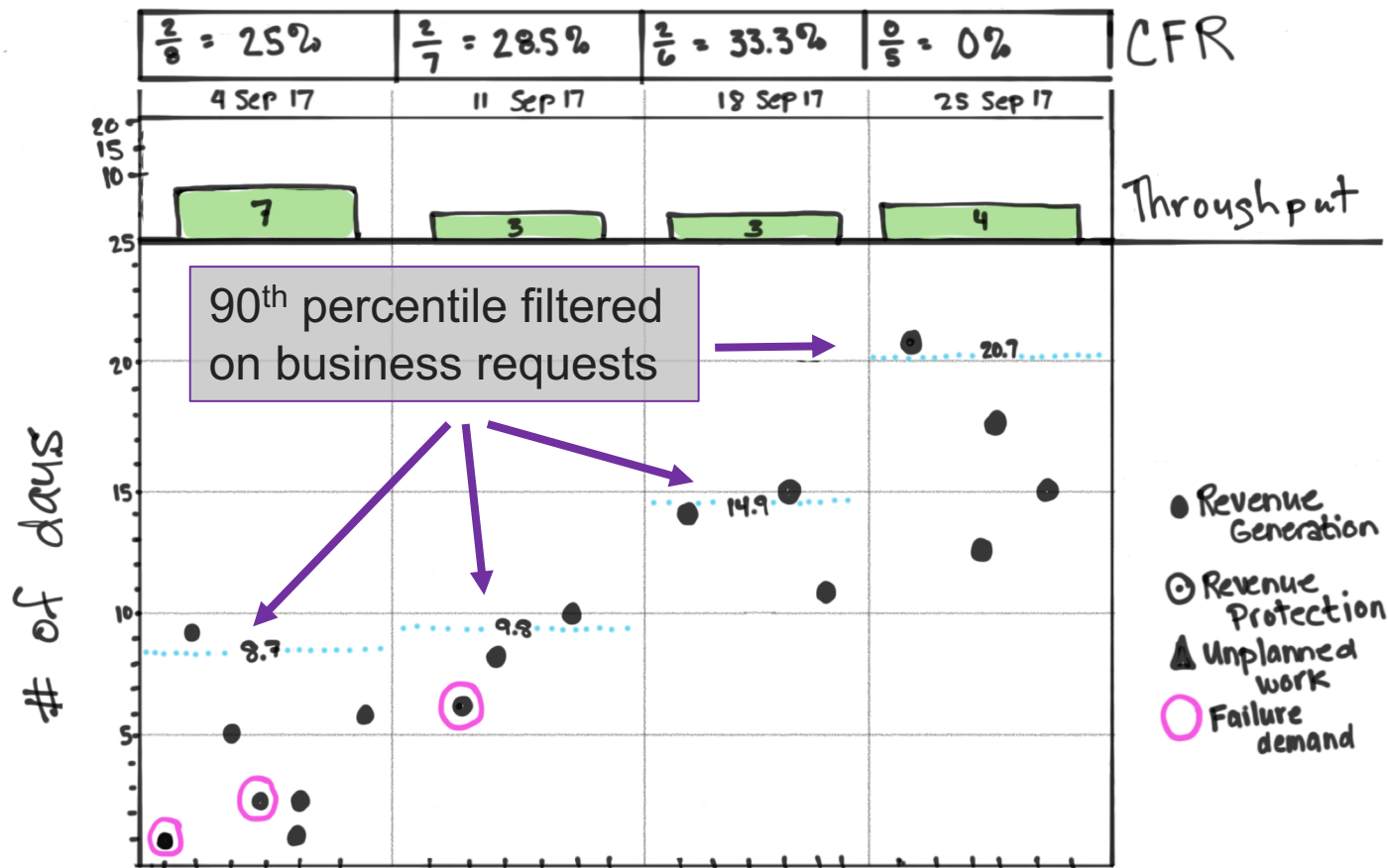
Balanced Flow chart exercise – How good?

Look at Quality
change failure rate (CFR)

$$\frac{\text{\# of FD done items}}{\text{\# of total done items}}$$



Balanced Flow chart exercise – How predictable?



“The difference between successful people and very successful people is that very successful people say “no” to almost everything.”

~Warren Buffett



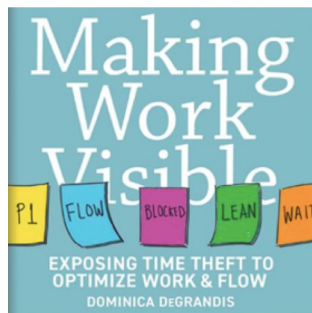
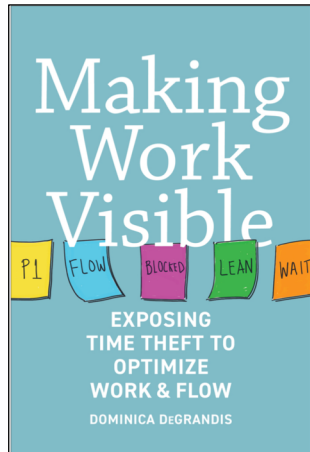
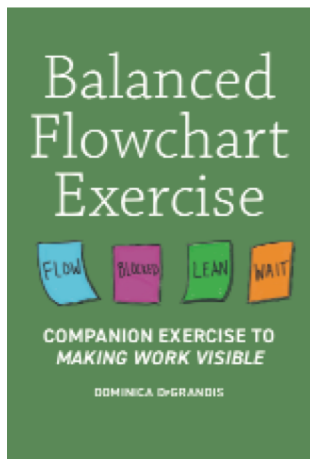
more no, less wip

Making Work Visible by Dominica DeGrandis



Want to talk more about time thieves?





Email: dominica@SendYourSlides.com

Subject: flow

To receive:

- copy of this presentation deck
- Videos of my talks
- 73 pg excerpt of Making Work Visible
- 45 min excerpt of Making Work Visible audiobook
- Balanced Flow Chart exercise
- Tasktop article on tool integration



Please

**Remember to
rate this session**

Thank you!