

ACHIEVING MORE BY DOING LESS

**I'm lazy and productive,
and you can be too!**

Achieving More by Doing Less Workshop

- EckmanGuides.com
- [Download the workshop materials:](#)
- Play along: SLIDO.COM
- Event code: 224 733
- Scan the QR code.



Ground Rules

- This session is for you, so please participate.
- These are tricks and tips that worked for me but might not be right for everyone or every situation. Please consult a coach or physician to find a program that is best for you.
- No animals were harmed during the creation of this presentation, and please support pet rescue groups.



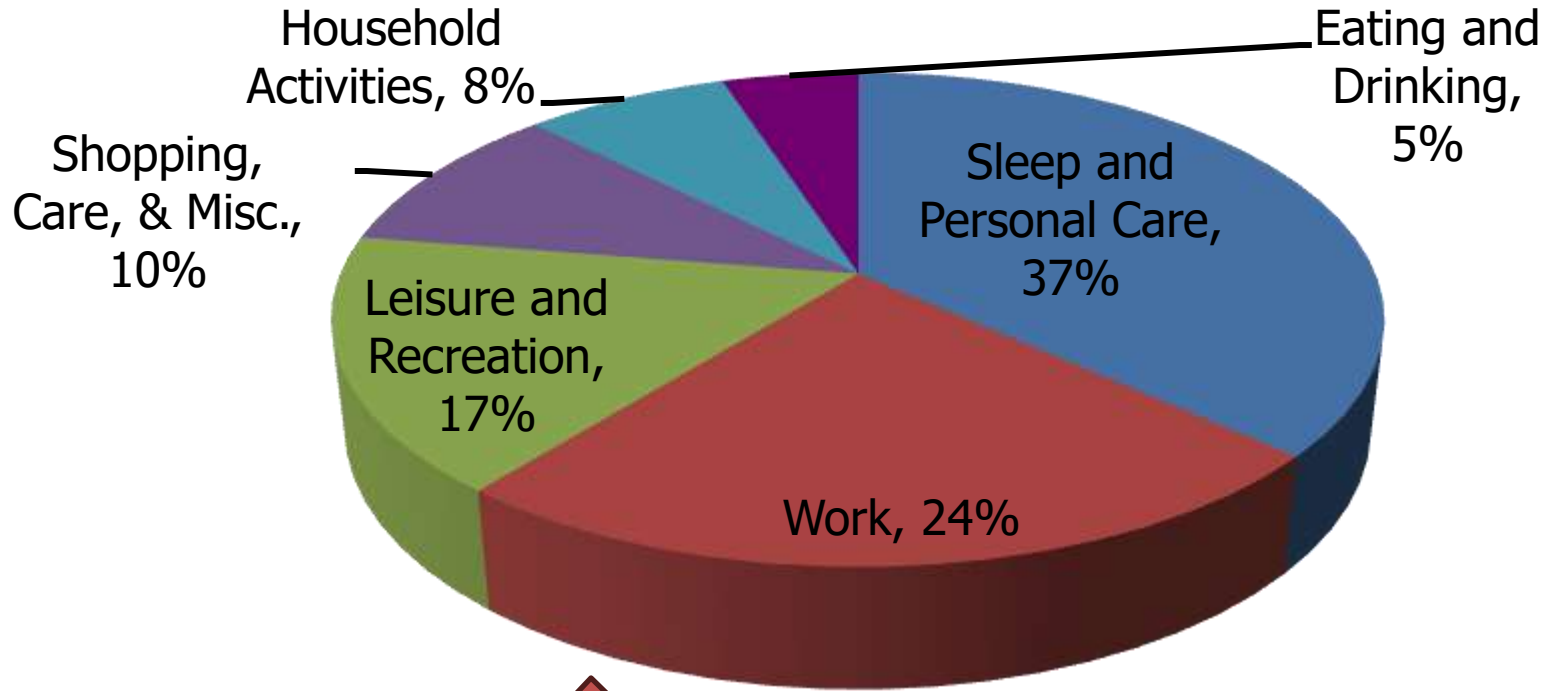
This presentation is sponsored by Noodle and Dumpling.





How many hours per week are you working?

So Where Did All Our Time Go? (Full-time 2024-2025)



Only 40.32
hours?

[American Time Use Survey 2025 Results \(BLS\)](#)
[American Time Use Survey 2024 Results \(BLS\)](#)
[Time use and teleworkers \(Statistics Canada 2024\)](#)
[Time Use Survey Brochure \(Statistics Canada 2025\)](#)



How do we ever get work done?!

117 Emails per day	~2 minutes between disruptions
153 Teams messages per day	50% of meetings are between 9:00 – 3:00
50+ messages after work hours,	57% of meetings are ad hoc calls
29% checking email until 10 pm	10% of meetings are booked last minute
20% checking email on weekends	33% of meetings span time zones



Things We Shouldn't Cut

Bathing, sleeping, learning, relaxing, dreaming, bathing, and bathing



We Can't Add Time, but We Can Use It More Effectively

What do we want?
TIME TRAVEL

When do we want it?
IT'S IRRELEVANT!!!



Use Moderation to Maintain Sanity

You aren't helping anyone if you burn out and start making careless mistakes.

Photo by [Nandhu Kumar](#) from [Pexels](#)



Phone a Friend

Your friends and network are here to help whenever you need it.

- Tips and templates
- Sounding board for ideas
- Coaching
- Someone to vent to
(Watch: [Critical importance of a work spouse](#))



Take Back Control of Your Social Media

- Time box social media activities
- Pick a theme for each time box
- Don't feed the trolls



[Photo by Ellie Burgin from Pexels](#)
[Photo by Alex Green from Pexels](#)



Brain Teaser

Goal:

- Fill your Sprint Cup from the Backlog Pitcher

Rules:

- You start with a full 1 L pitcher (demand).
- Your cup holds 400 ML and can be emptied once per week (capacity).
- Every week, 420 ML is added to the pitcher.
- You cannot add glasses, pitchers, or drink the water.
- How do you empty the pitcher using only the glass?



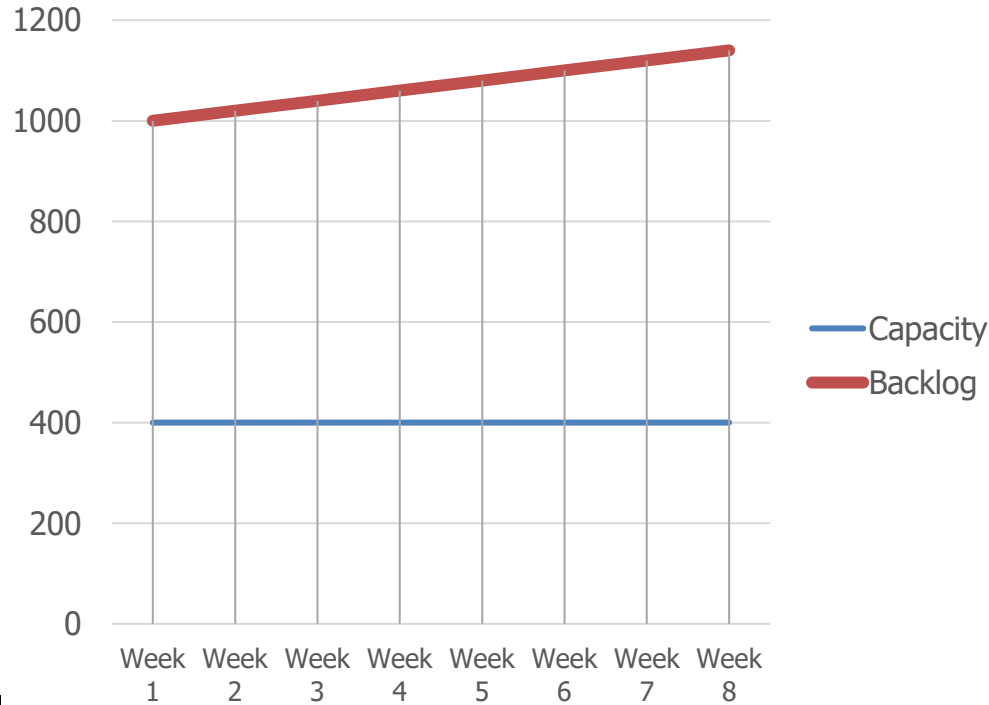
Note: Lemons are purely for decoration and not a factor in the solution.

Photo by [Julia Zolotova](#) from [Pexels](#)



Brain Teaser

Demand Always Exceeds Capacity!



You
Can't
Complete
Everything!

Photo by [Julia Zolotova](#) from [Pexels](#)

17 October 2026

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90-Day's Effort in 60-Days



Image: [Office Space](#); Quote: [Grosse Pointe Blank](#);
Photo by [Mikael Blomkvist](#) from [Pexels](#)

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17 October 2026

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Administrative Work vs Primary Work Activities

ADMINISTRATIVE WORK

- Shared upkeep everyone handles, regardless of their delivery role.
 - Checking email and responding to messages
 - Attending company meetings
 - Timesheets

PRIMARY WORK

- Recurring services you provide that help the team deliver solutions.
 - Discussing an issue or decision related to the project
 - Facilitating a requirements meeting
 - Backlog refinement
 - Triaging defects



Define Your Services and Primary Work Activities

Services/Primary Work Activities	Importance / Urgency	Influence / Authority	Superpowers (strengths)
<i>Requirements Elicitation & Backlog Refinement</i>			
<i>Process Mapping & Workflow Optimization</i>			
<i>Project Schedule, Milestones & Sprint Delivery</i>			
<i>Risk, Assumptions, Issues & Dependencies (RAID) Management</i>			
<i>Stakeholder Engagement & Communication Cadence</i>			
<i>User Acceptance Testing (UAT) & Solution Validation</i>			
<i>Triage, Production Support</i>			
<i>Change Management, Training & Handover Documentation</i>			



Reduce Waste



Photo by Miguel Á. Padriñán from Pexels
[The 8 Wastes of Lean](#), Nawras Skhmot, 5 AUG 2017

The 8 Wastes of Lean (adapted)

- T - Transportation:
Unnecessary movement
- I - Inventory:
Excess work-in-progress (WIP)
- M - Motion:
Unnecessary movement
- W - Waiting: Idle time
- O - Overproduction:
Doing more than is needed
- O - Overprocessing:
More effort or quality than required
- D - Defects:
Errors or rework.
- S - Skills (Unused Talent):
Underutilized skills and creativity

Simplify and Automate Repetitive Tasks



- Daily: 4 min x 30 days = 120 min/month
- Monthly: 15 min sorting + (10 sec x 30 days) = **100 min/month saved!**



Sort first



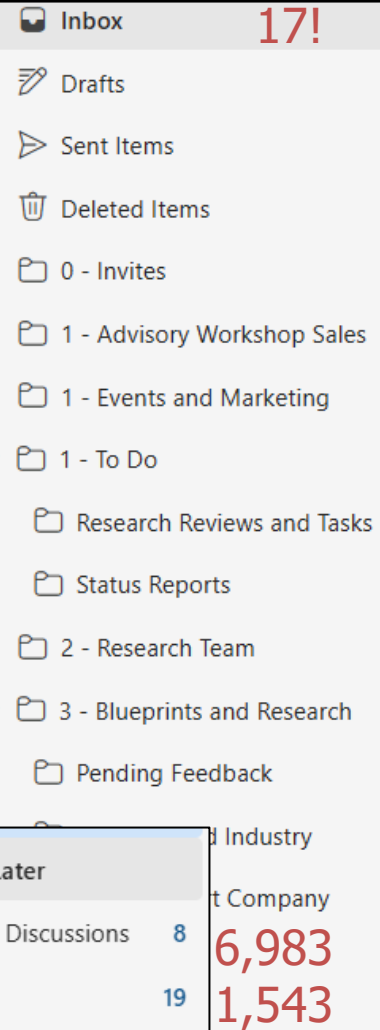
Stop Answering Emails!

- Decide what's most important.
- **Only Handle It Once.**
- Filter everything else and ignore.
- If it's important, they will contact you directly.

Keep manageable
(O.H.I.O.)

The lie we tell
ourselves

This is
never going
to happen



Inbox	17!
Drafts	
Sent Items	
Deleted Items	
0 - Invites	
1 - Advisory Workshop Sales	
1 - Events and Marketing	
1 - To Do	
Research Reviews and Tasks	
Status Reports	
2 - Research Team	
3 - Blueprints and Research	
Pending Feedback	
6 - Read Me Later	
3 - Research Discussions	8
8 - Articles	19

Industry
t Company
6,983
1,543



Boost Productivity with AI



Email replies

Have AI suggest a response based on long or complicated threads

"Draft a response thanking them and suggesting their concerns should go to the steering committee."



Meeting follow-up

Turn meeting notes into a draft action list.

"List the decisions, owners, and due dates in these notes. Add tasks to Outlook."



First drafts

Turn rough notes into a clear stakeholder update.

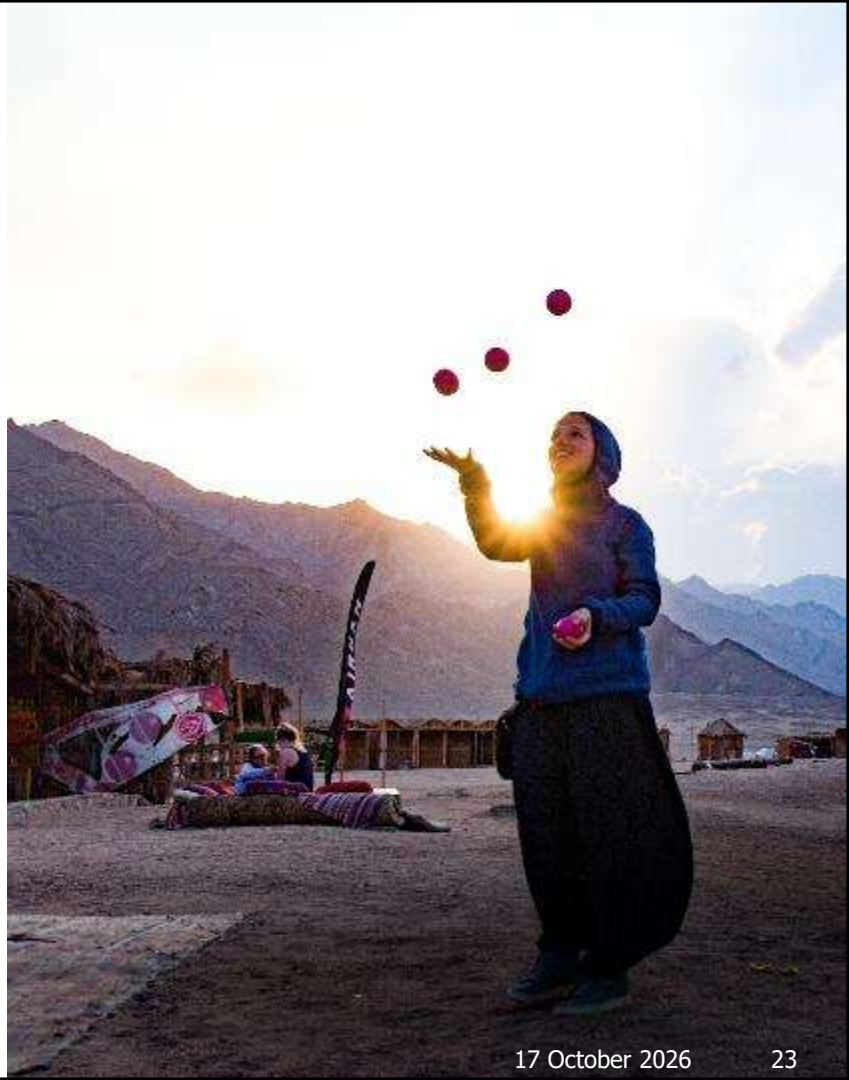
"Draft a short status update from these notes. Flag gaps and stakeholder actions needed."



Review every output. Use approved work data. Features vary by license and settings.

Switching Costs

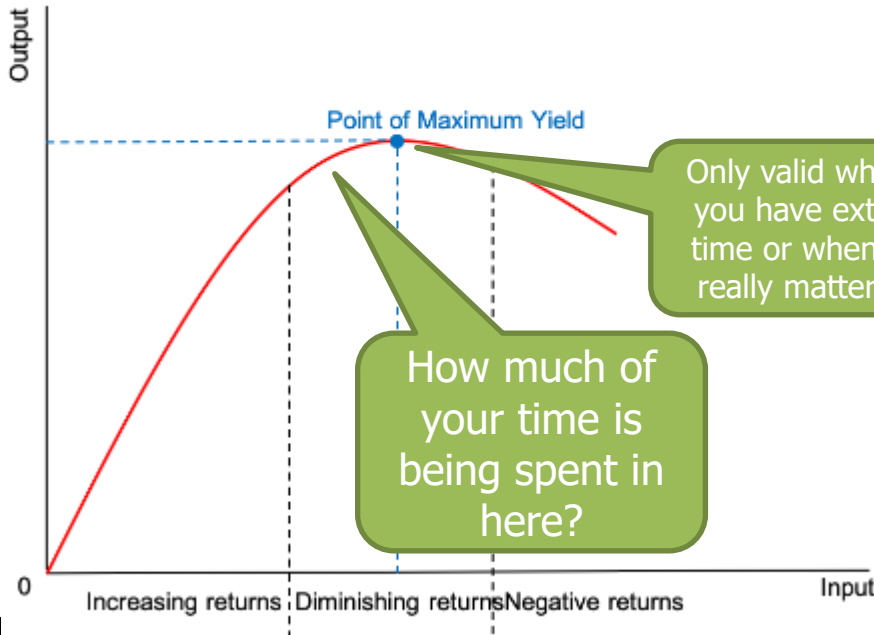
- It takes 25+ minutes to recover productivity from an interruption.
 - [The Cost of Interrupted Work: More Speed and Stress](#)
- Significant multitasking reduces your effective IQ 3x more than marijuana.
 - ['Info-mania' dents IQ more than marijuana](#)
- 2% of the population can effectively multitask. - [2012, David Strayer](#)
- Learn more: [The High Cost of Multitasking](#)



Don't Let PERFECT Ruin GOOD ENOUGH

Law of Diminishing Returns:

Adding another factor of production yields smaller increases in output.



Focus on High ROI Activities

Every gambler knows
That the secret to survivin'
Is knowin' what to throw away
And knowin' what to keep
'Cause every hand's a winner
And every hand's a loser

[Kenny Rogers - The Gambler](#)
[Photo by Anastasiya Badun from Pexels](#)



Home Rule: NO CLUTTER ALLOWED!

In what order should these areas be cleared?

Play along: [SLIDO.COM](https://www.slido.com)
Event code: 224 733



Table in the family room



End table next to couch

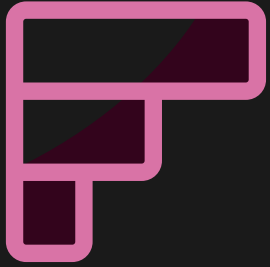


Sunroom table



Sunroom high-top table





In what order should these areas be cleared?

Home Rule: NO CLUTTER ALLOWED!

The correct order for putting things away:



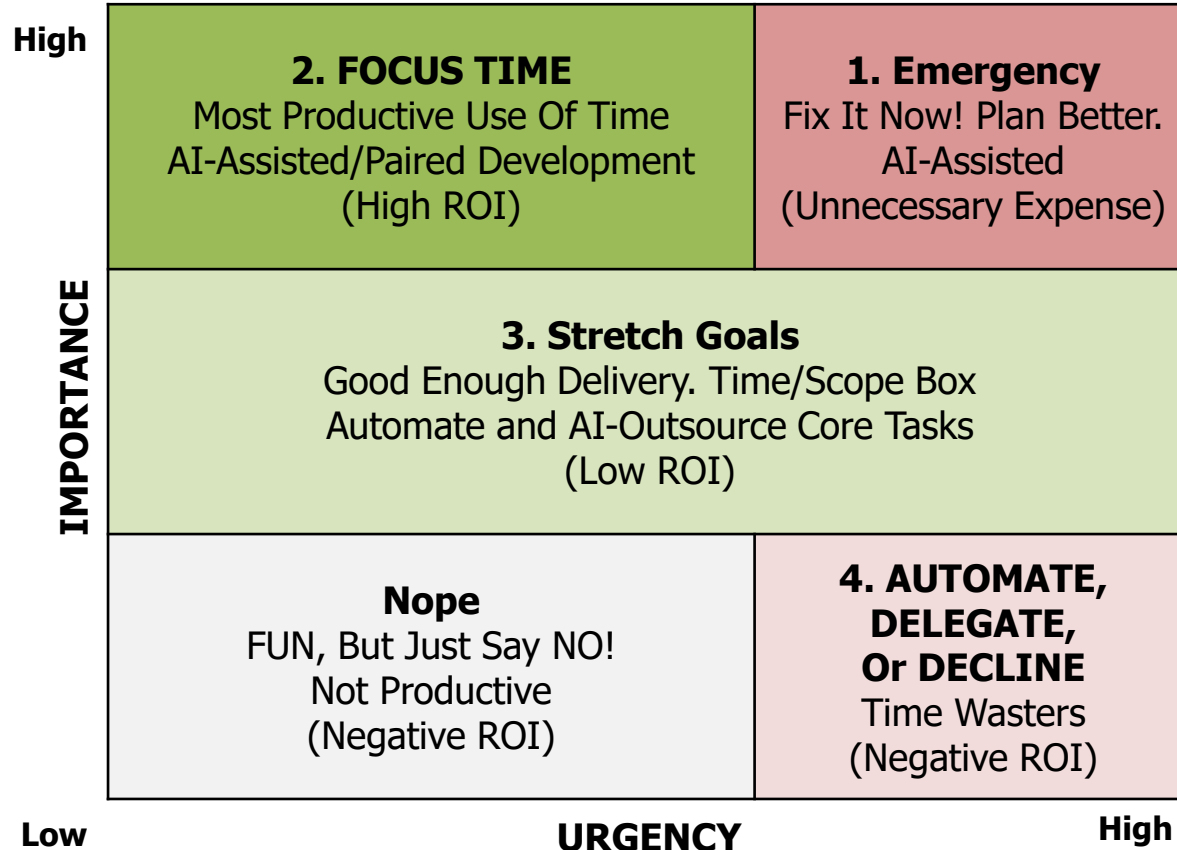
Understand what clutter is:

1. Anything out of place...
2. That isn't my wife's!

This is not clutter:



Setting Priorities: Modified Eisenhower Matrix



Define Your Services and Primary Work Activities

Services/Primary Work Activities	Importance / Urgency	Influence / Authority	Superpowers (strengths)
<i>Requirements Elicitation & Backlog Refinement</i>	2. Focus Time (High/Low)		
<i>Process Mapping & Workflow Optimization</i>	3. Stretch Goals (Medium/All)		
<i>Project Schedule, Milestones & Sprint Delivery</i>	2. Focus Time (High/Low)		
<i>Risk, Assumptions, Issues & Dependencies (RAID) Management</i>	2. Focus Time (High/Low)	High	
<i>Stakeholder Engagement & Communication Cadence</i>	2. Focus Time (High/Low)		
<i>User Acceptance Testing (UAT) & Solution Validation</i>	4. Automate, Delegate, Decline (Low/High)	IMPORTANCE	
<i>Triage, Production Support</i>	1. Emergency (High/High)		
<i>Change Management, Training & Handover Documentation</i>	3. Stretch Goals (Medium/All)		

2. FOCUS TIME Most Productive Use Of Time AI-Assisted/Paired Development (High ROI)	1. Emergency Fix It Now! Plan Better. AI-Assisted (Unnecessary Expense)
3. Stretch Goals Good Enough Delivery. Time/Scope Box Automate and AI-Outsource Core Tasks (Low ROI)	
Nope FUN, But Just Say NO! Not Productive (Negative ROI)	4. AUTOMATE, DELEGATE, Or DECLINE Time Wasters (Negative ROI)

Low

URGENCY

High



Only Work on Things You Can Influence

Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change (yet),

Courage to change the things I can,

and Wisdom to know the difference.

**Think Globally,
Act Locally**

Adapted from Serenity Prayer by Reinhold Niebuhr

Influence vs Authority

INFLUENCE

Ability to shape decisions through trust and persuasion.

You build support, even when someone else owns the decision.

Win stakeholder support for a change to project priorities.

AUTHORITY

Formal right to make decisions within your assigned role.

You set direction and remain accountable for the decision.

Prioritizing items in your product roadmap and backlog.

You can influence beyond your authority. Strong leaders use both.



Define Your Services and Primary Work Activities

Services/Primary Work Activities	Importance / Urgency	Influence / Authority	Superpowers (strengths)
<i>Requirements Elicitation & Backlog Refinement</i>	2. Focus Time (High/Low)	Authority	
<i>Process Mapping & Workflow Optimization</i>	3. Stretch Goals (Medium/All)	Authority	
<i>Project Schedule, Milestones & Sprint Delivery</i>	2. Focus Time (High/Low)	Influence	
<i>Risk, Assumptions, Issues & Dependencies (RAID) Management</i>	2. Focus Time (High/Low)	Influence	
<i>Stakeholder Engagement & Communication Cadence</i>	2. Focus Time (High/Low)	Influence	
<i>User Acceptance Testing (UAT) & Solution Validation</i>	4. Automate, Delegate, Decline (Low/High)	Authority	
<i>Triage, Production Support</i>	1. Emergency (High/High)	Influence	
<i>Change Management, Training & Handover Documentation</i>	3. Stretch Goals (Medium/All)	Influence	



You Do You, Boo!

How much of your day are you harnessing your superpowers?



“Your purpose is as unique as your fingerprint.”

- Dr Daphne Clarke-Hudson
on the Purpose Addicts podcast

Photo by [cottonbro](#) from [Pexels](#)

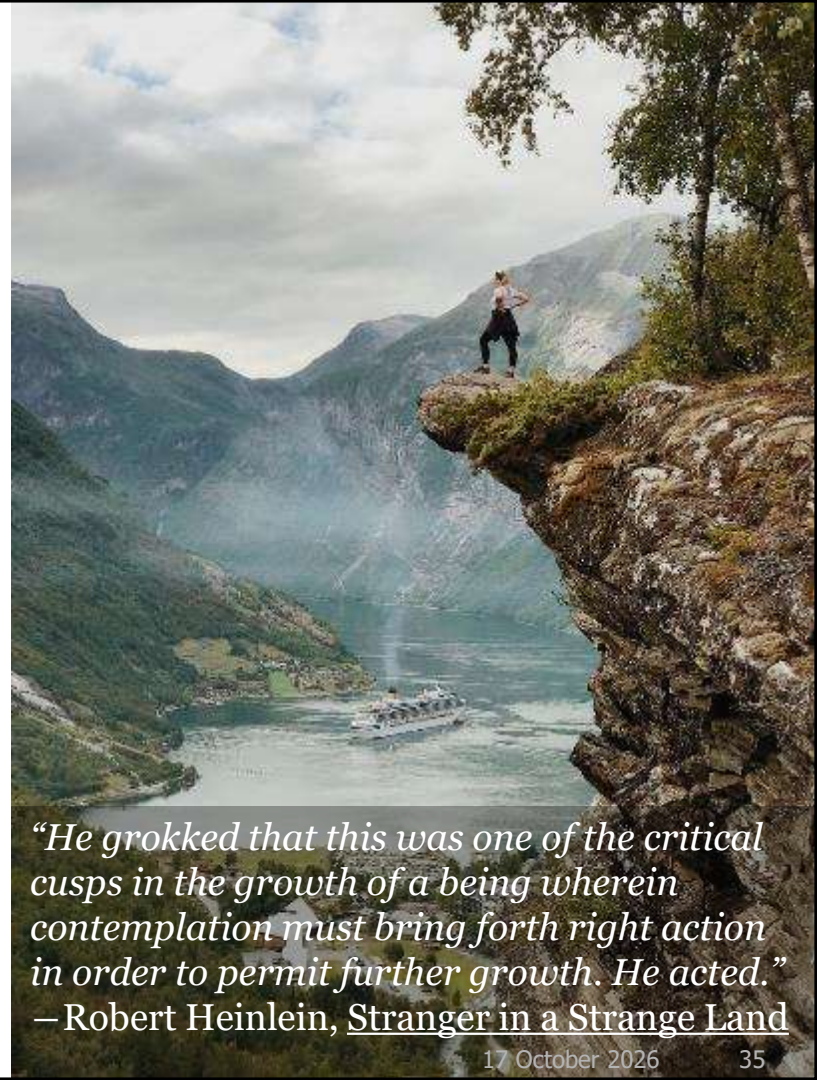
Own Your Journey

- Play to YOUR Strengths!
- Outsource Everything Else.

Activity: Identify Your Superpowers

- If a manager asked what your three best attributes or skills were, what would you answer?

[Photo by Julie Aagaard from Pexels](#)



“He grokked that this was one of the critical cusps in the growth of a being wherein contemplation must bring forth right action in order to permit further growth. He acted.”
— Robert Heinlein, Stranger in a Strange Land



Map Superpowers to Services

Services/Primary Work Activities	Importance / Urgency	Influence / Authority	Superpowers (strengths)
<i>Requirements Elicitation & Backlog Refinement</i>	2. Focus Time (High/Low)	Authority	Attention to detail
<i>Process Mapping & Workflow Optimization</i>	3. Stretch Goals (Medium/All)	Authority	Attention to detail
<i>Project Schedule, Milestones & Sprint Delivery</i>	2. Focus Time (High/Low)	Influence	Planning & sequencing
<i>Risk, Assumptions, Issues & Dependencies (RAID) Management</i>	2. Focus Time (High/Low)	Influence	Attention to detail, Clear messaging
<i>Stakeholder Engagement & Communication Cadence</i>	2. Focus Time (High/Low)	Influence	Clear messaging
<i>User Acceptance Testing (UAT) & Solution Validation</i>	4. Automate, Delegate, Decline (Low/High)	Authority	Attention to detail
<i>Triage, Production Support</i>	1. Emergency (High/High)	Influence	Grace under pressure
<i>Change Management, Training & Handover Documentation</i>	3. Stretch Goals (Medium/All)	Influence	Clear messaging



Reduce Work In Progress

Work in progress has NO value!
Only delivered work has value.



Photo by Ali Pazani from Pexels

Origin of Kanban [kahn-bahn]



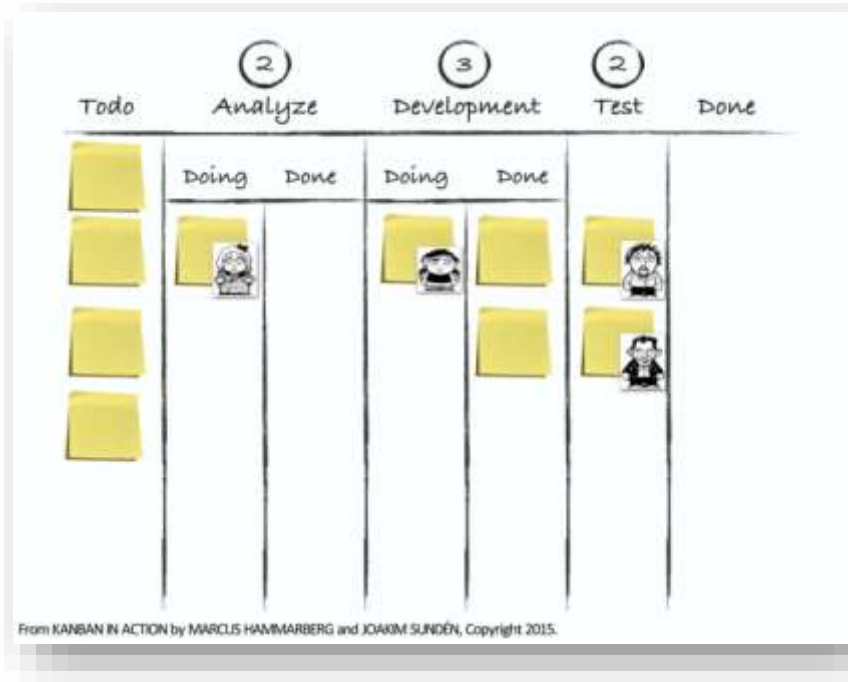
- Kanban originated in the Lean Manufacturing process at Toyota Production Systems.
- It is based on a signal board to quickly see and manage work items.
- Kanban promotes several key principles, including:
 - Pulling your next work item, not having it pushed to you.
 - Finish tasks first, move work forward second, add new work last.

Photo by cottonbro studio from Pexels

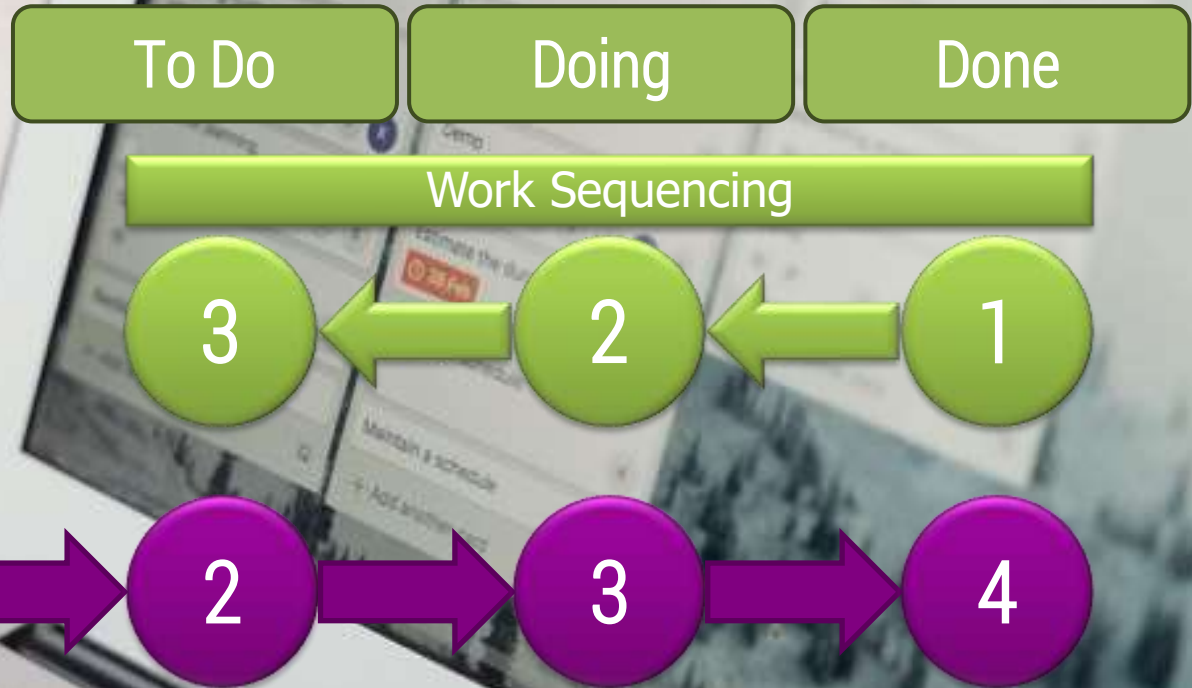
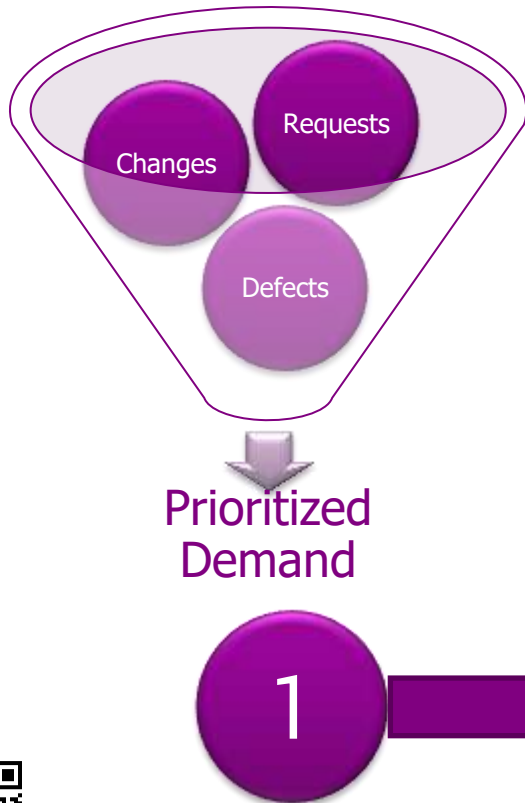
Learn more at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanban_\(development\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kanban_(development))

Kanban and Limiting Work In Progress (WIP)

- Read/Work right to left.
- Finish everything you can first.
Stop Starting. Start Finishing.
- Only start new tasks when all other tasks are blocked.
- Limit WIP per column to avoid switching costs.

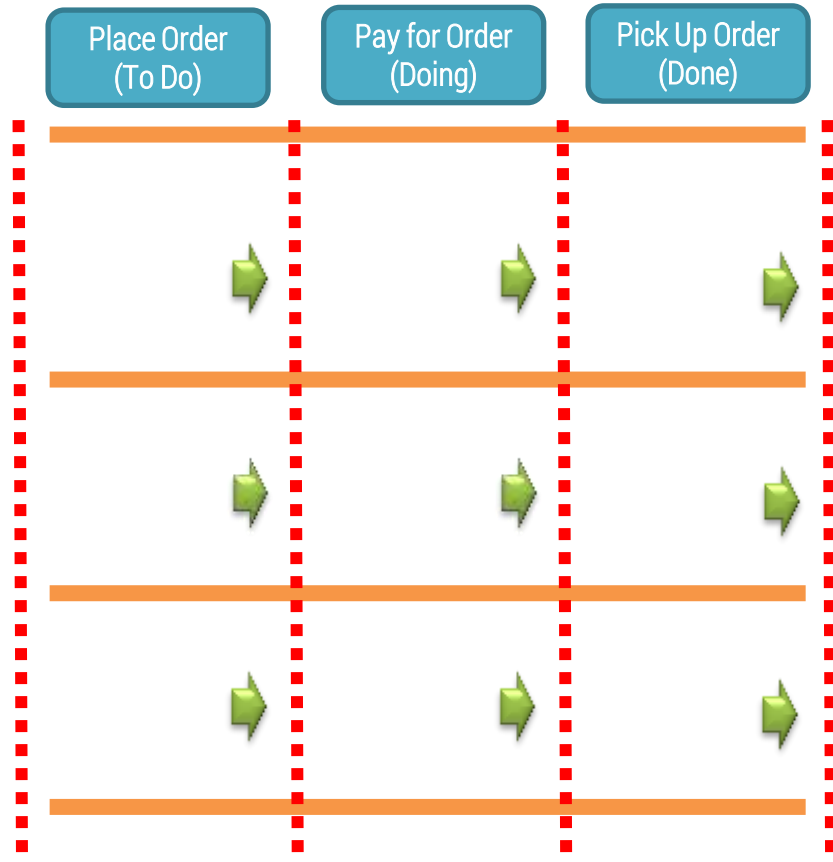
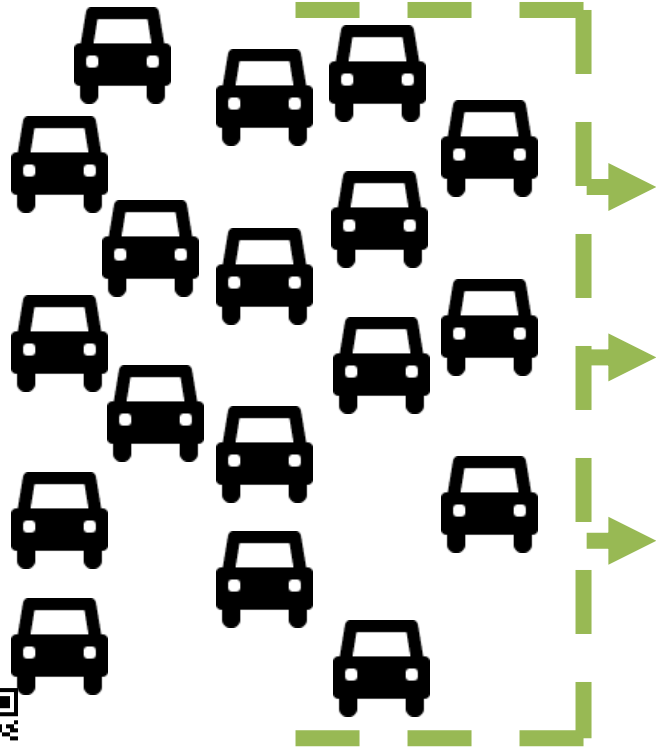


Kanban Basics

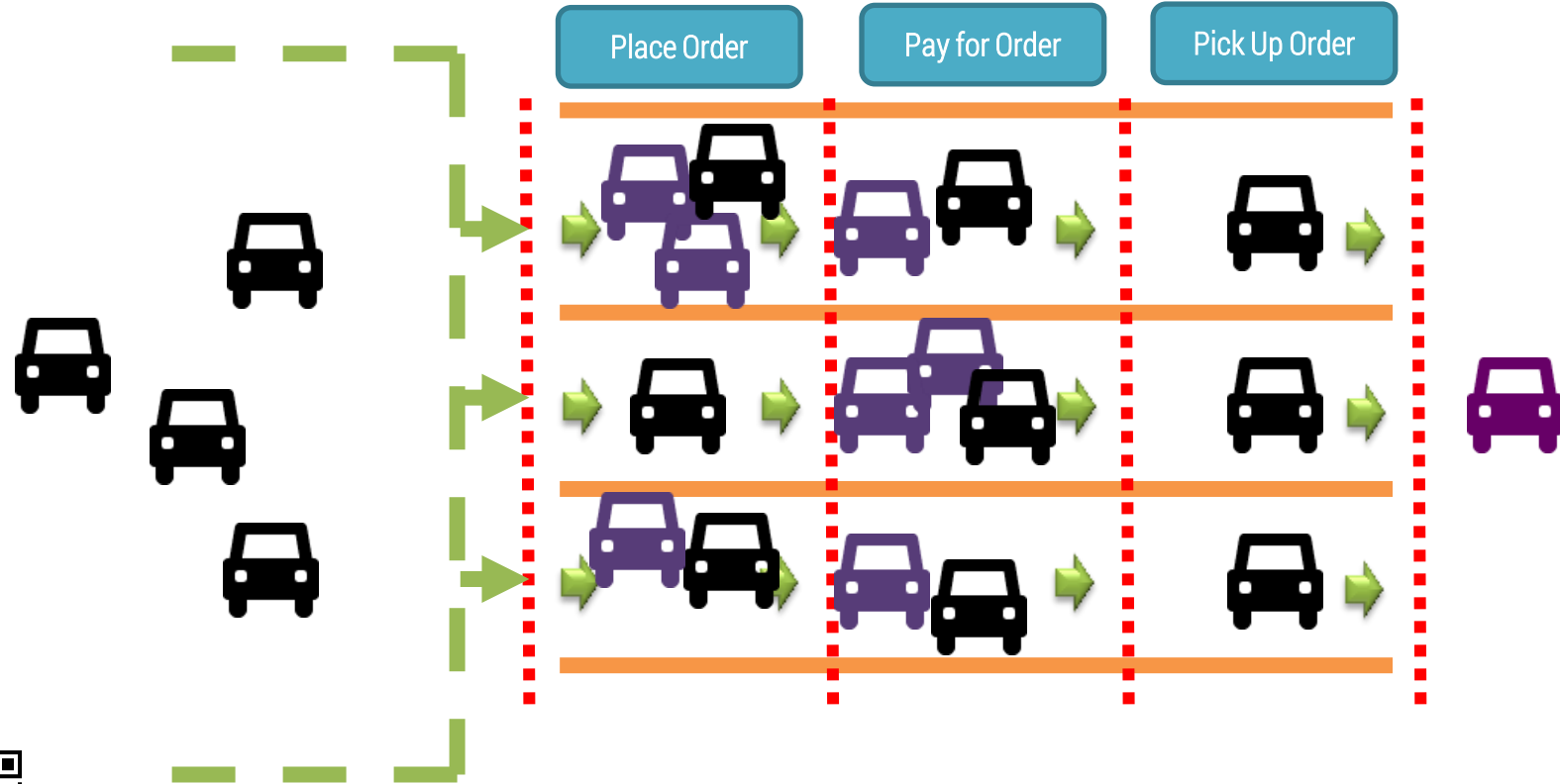




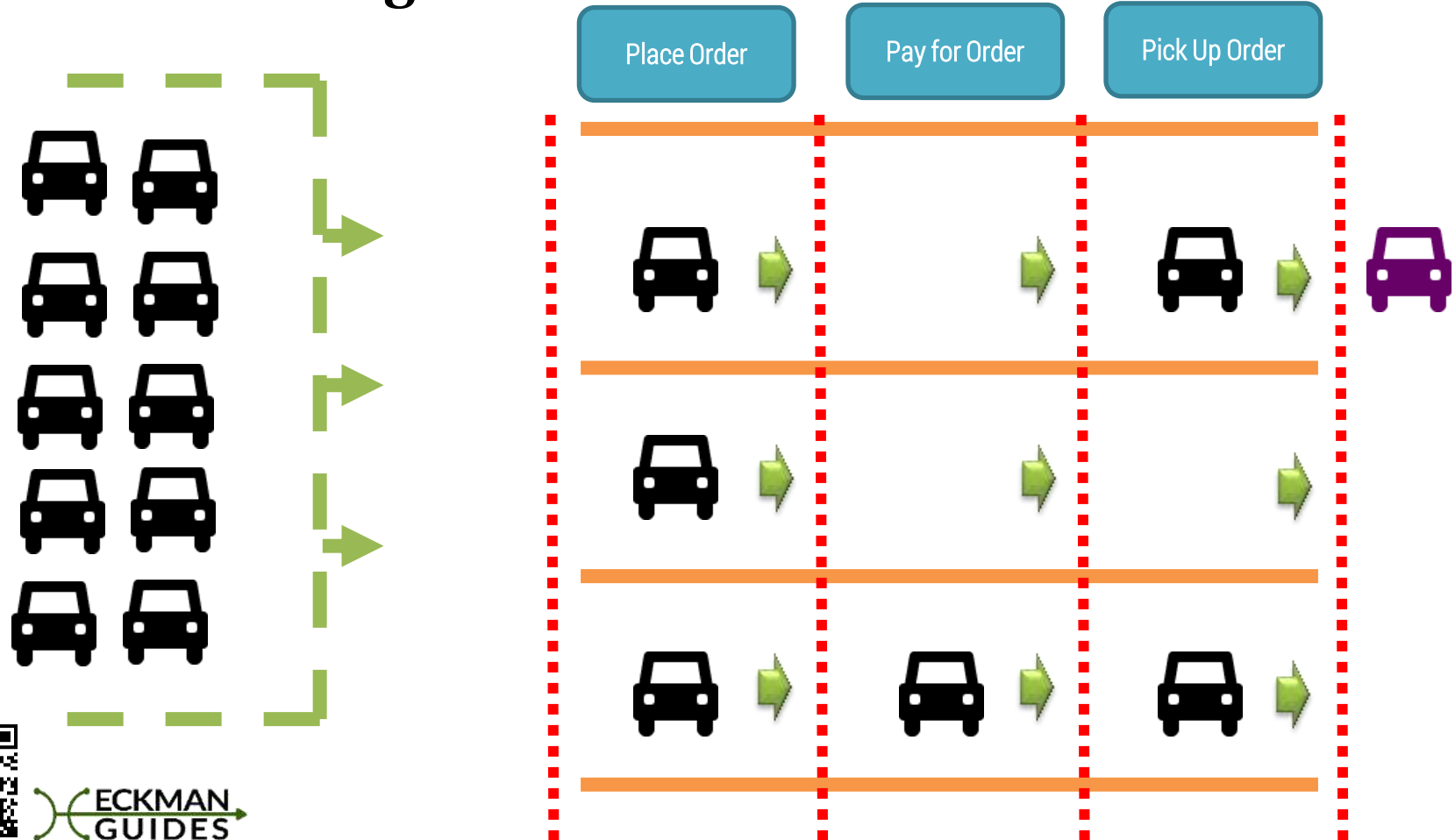
Understanding Work In Progress



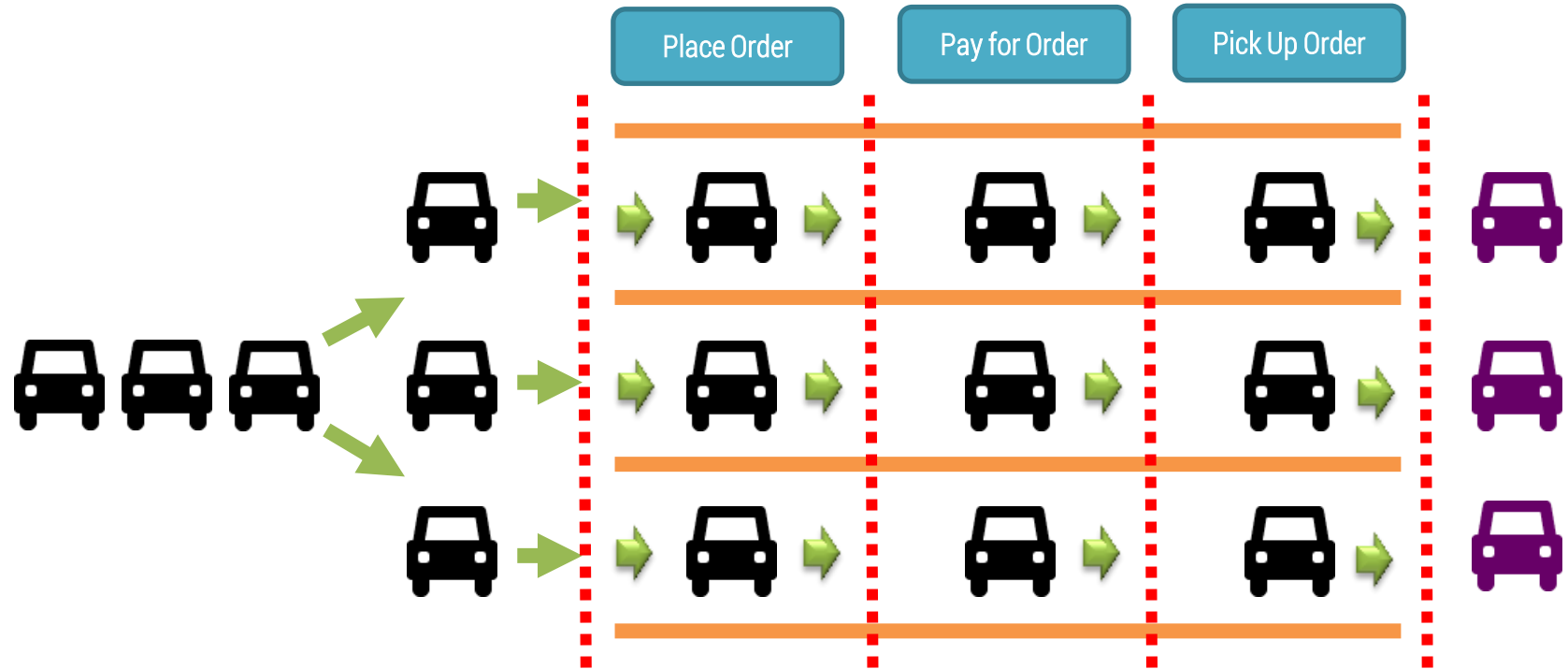
Work In Progress – High WIP limit



Work In Progress – Low WIP limit



Work In Progress – Just right WIP



Professional Service Kanban – WIP Limits

IN PROGRESS				WIP LIMIT = 8	
Task	Service	Priority (Populated from Service)	Importance	Priority	Due Date
DO NEXT				WIP LIMIT = 8	
Task	Service	Priority (Populated from Service)	Importance	Priority	Due Date
BACKLOG					
Task	Service	Priority (Populated from Service)	Importance	Priority	Due Date



Timebox Your Tasks into Themes

- Block out time for specific types of work or “focus time”.
- Limit interruptions.
- Move blocks, don’t delete them.

CT	ET			
7 AM	8 AM	DNB - Answer emails, review calendar for the week	DNB - Blueprint	+1 DNB
8 AM	9 AM			Busin Work Info-Mich Micro Allison
9 AM	10 AM	DNB - Blueprint	Info-Tech Research Group – Implement Agile Practices T Conference Bridge Details in Invite Body	
10 AM	11 AM	Team Standup; Microsoft Teams Meeting; Hans Eckman	DNB - Call notes	
11 AM	12 PM		Allison/Hans connect; Microsoft Teams Meeting; Allison	
12 PM	1 PM	Lunch break	Lunch break	
1 PM	2 PM	DNB - Email for exceptions	DNB - Blueprint	
2 PM	3 PM	Team Therapy Session Microsoft Teams Meeting; Hans Eckman	Info-Tech Research Group Conference Bridge Details	Product Vision with Info-Tech
3 PM	4 PM	Info-Tech Research Group – Application Prioritization P; Conference Bridge Details in Invite Body	DNB - Call notes	
4 PM	5 PM	DNB - Call notes	Compare APM tools and journeys; Microsoft Teams Me	
5 PM	6 PM	DNB - Prep for tomorrow, answer priority emails	DNB - Prep for webinar	
		OFFLINE - Message for APAC exceptions	AOS Keynote Interview; tom.henricksen@gmail.com	
			DNB - Prep for tomorrow, answer priority emails	Disc
			Offline - Email for APAC exceptions	



Activity: Capacity Planning

WEEKLY CAPACITY PLANNER

Total Working Hours	40
Total Allocated Hours	0
Available Time	40

Non-Service Activities	Hours	Estimated2	Notes
Administrative tasks		1-5 hours/week (2-10%)	Expense reports, approvals, time tracking, HR tasks
Documentation		2-8 hours/week (5-15%)	Creating, updating, and maintaining knowledge bases
Email and messaging		5-15 hours/week (10-30%)	Reading, responding, triaging, Teams/Slack communication
Meetings		5-20 hours/week (10-50%)	Status meetings, 1:1s, planning, reviews, coordination
Mentoring and coaching		0-8 hours/week	Increases with seniority
Planning and prioritization		1-4 hours/week (2-8%)	Weekly planning, roadmaps, task management
Process and compliance activities		1-3 hours/week (2-5%)	Audits, quality reviews, governance requirements
Project coordination		2-10 hours/week (5-20%)	Tracking dependencies, follow-ups, status reporting
Recruiting and interviewing		0-5 hours/week average	More common for senior employees and managers
Stakeholder communication		2-10 hours/week (5-20%)	Updates, presentations, customer/internal partner interactions
Training and learning		1-4 hours/week (2-8%)	Required training, certifications, skill development

[Breaking down the infinite workday, Microsoft, 17 JUN 2025](#)
[How work about work gets in the way of real work, Asana, 17 APR 2026](#)





How are you going to fill your moments?

“There is only one time that is important -- Now!”

- Leo Tolstoy, What Men Live by and Other Tales

Photo by [Jill Burrow](#) from [Pexels](#)

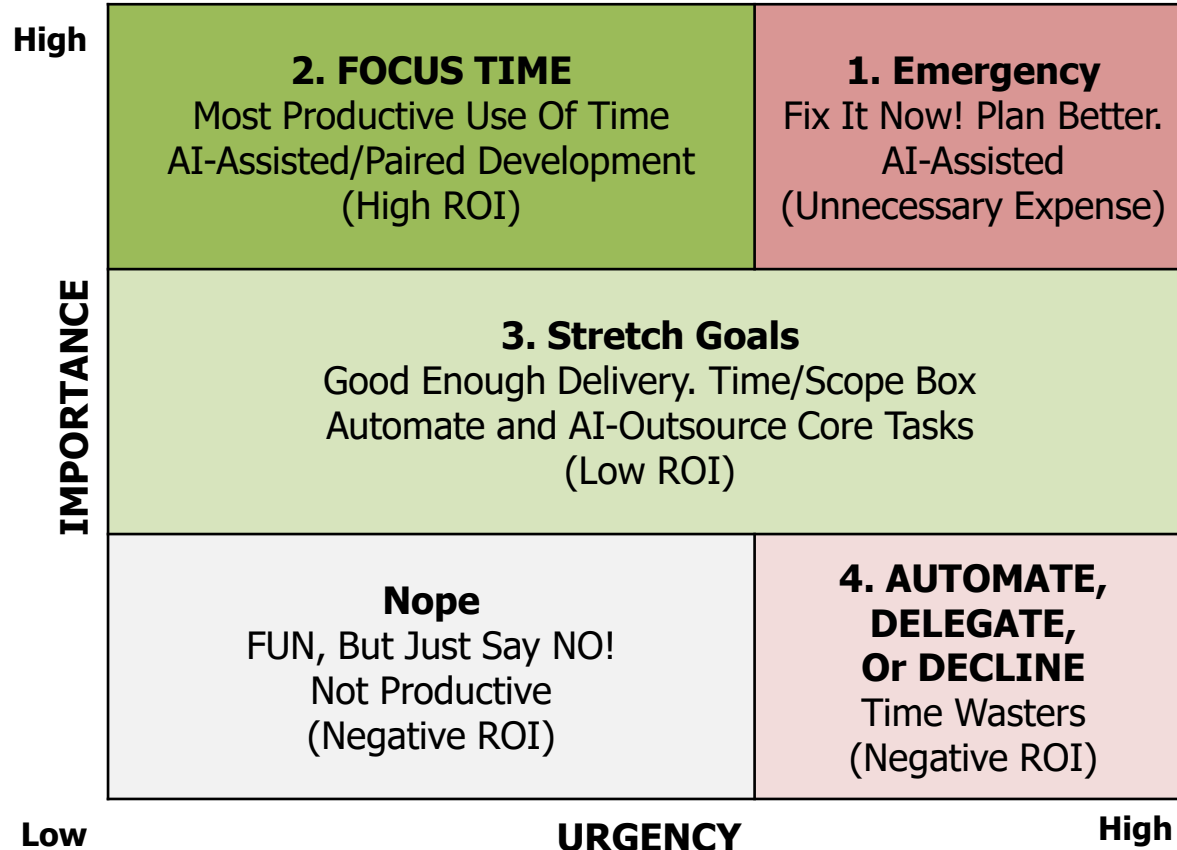
Achieving More by Doing Less Workshop

- EckmanGuides.com
- [Download the workshop materials:](#)
- Live polling: SLIDO.COM
- Event code: ###
- Scan the QR code.



[illegible]

Setting Priorities: Modified Eisenhower Matrix



BACKLOG

[illegible]

Total Working Hours	40		
Total Allocated Hours	0		
Available Time	40		
Non-Service Activities	Allocated Hours	Estimated2	Notes
Administrative tasks		1-5 hours/week (2-10%)	Expense reports, approvals, time tracking, HR tasks
Documentation		2-8 hours/week (5-15%)	Creating, updating, and maintaining knowledge bases
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