

# Time Management: Balancing Clinical Commitments with Research

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A story...

of balancing clinical commitments with research –  
control (not management) of time is key

What is the challenge?

# “Has the environment for physician-scientists changed?”

Michael Brown (2011), Nobel Laureate in Physiology or Medicine, 1985

<http://www.nobelprizeii.org/videos/environment-physician-scientists-changed/>

What is the solution?



# 7 tips to control (and expand) your time

- **Decide what you want to do.**

1. **Choose a mentor.** Talk to your mentor. Listen to your mentor.
2. **Define your goals.** Don't try to do everything you want to do.
3. **Set priorities and schedule activities.** Set aside time to accomplish your priorities—don't leave it up to chance.

- **Structure your time and support.**

4. **Learn to say no.** Negotiate protected time. Don't accept every assignment you're asked to do.
5. **Identify chores and tasks that are tedious, then pay someone else to do them.**  
This creates more time.
6. **Find a PhD collaborator.**
7. **Learn to flip your brain.** It gets easier with time—and practice. We learn from our patients.

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# Mentors

- **Essential for the health of the medical profession**
- **To help you understand that your struggles aren't unique and you're not alone**
- **Win-win: Experienced and new investigators learn from each other**
- **Mentees should look for mentors who are:**
  - **at the cutting edge of their field**
  - **well-published, well-funded**
  - **humble and self-aware, and**
  - **support and promote their mentees**
- **Mentors should look for mentees who are:**
  - **independent**
  - **unafraid to ask questions and**
  - **have an open mind**

# “What should you look for in a mentor?”

Michael Brown and Joseph Goldstein (2014), Nobel Laureates in Physiology or Medicine, 1985

<http://www.nobelprizeii.org/videos/look-mentor/>

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# “Focus on one central question”

Jules Hoffmann (2017), Nobel Laureate in Physiology or Medicine, 2011

<http://www.nobelprizeii.org/videos/should-phd-students-focus-on-a-single-question/>

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“The young doctor should look about early for an avocation, a pastime, that will take him away from patients, pills, and potions...”

William Osler: Aequanimitas 'After 25 years' 1914:212

- **Find your passion**
- **Find a hobby**
- **Find the right spouse**

“In your whole life, there’s only one make or break decision”

Michael Brown (2011), Nobel Laureate in Physiology or Medicine, 1985

<http://www.nobelprizeii.org/videos/whats-important-career-decision-scientist/>

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# It's all about protected time (and money)...

- **Negotiate your protected time up front.**
- **Get it in writing.**
- **Confirm that your research start-up funds roll over year-to-year.**
- **Get it in writing.**
- **What happens if you get funded?** Are you required to use a % of those funds to cover your salary?
- **What about clinical trial residual funds?** Does the institution keep a % of residual funds?
- **What about indirect funds?**
- **Get it in writing.**
- **Everyone has your best interests at heart – but...**
  - People hear different things
  - People forget – or leave
- **Even if you get it in writing, circumstances & needs change.**
  - Being a team player is crucial to your future success.
  - But it's still better to have it in writing, if only because you'll feel more in control.

What if you have no protected  
time or infrastructure support?

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# “How important is interaction between scientists and clinicians?”

Michael Brown (2011), Nobel Laureate in Physiology or Medicine, 1985

<http://www.nobelprizeii.org/videos/important-interaction-scientists-clinicians/>

# Find a PhD collaborator/mentor

- **“Engineers have solutions without questions; physicians have questions without solutions.”** UPitt Prof of Bioengineering
- **They have what you need:**
  - Time
  - Lab space
  - Lab facilities
  - Staff
  - Skill set to address scientific problems.
- **You have what they need:**
  - Patients
  - Clinical expertise
  - Data
  - Questions
  - Skill set to address clinical problems.



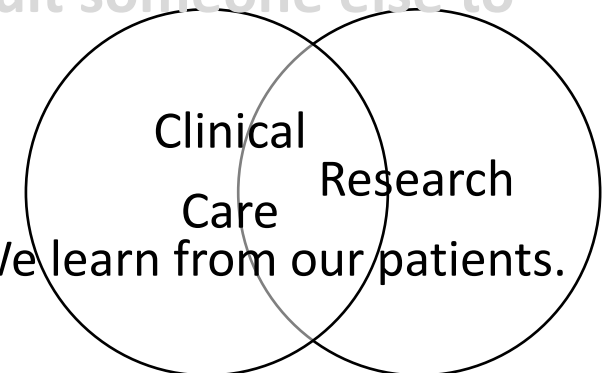
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“Why did you decide to stop practising as a physician?”

Michael Brown (2011), Nobel Laureate in Physiology or Medicine, 1985

<http://www.nobelprizeii.org/videos/decide-stop-practising-physician/>

“Meet the patients.”

Françoise Barré-Sinoussi (2016), Nobel Laureate in Physiology or Medicine, 2008

<http://www.nobelprizeii.org/videos/meet-the-patients/>

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Thank you!

Questions/comments?