



From Lisa Lanier, Executive Coach and Founder/CEO

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# Just Three Things

Three things for *you* for *your* leadership journey

Something to **Know**  
Something to **Do**  
Something to **Share**



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**Saying "Yes" to saying "No"** is something we *all* need to do more often. This issue is all about taking back control of your time, finding more balance, and even has some advice from my dad!

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## #1 **Something to Know:**

### **Time is your most precious commodity**

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**Each day, you start with 24 hours. No more, no less.**

What you do with them and how you use them is up to you. If you spend too many hours working, what do you take time away from? Family? Sleep? Health?

I'm hearing from many clients that they often feel a strong lack of control over their own time. Taking more control over how you utilize your time needs a *conscious, concerted, and consistent effort*.

**Here are three things that might help as you assess, make decisions, and take action:**

1. Stop being the "Easy Button."
2. Give it the time it deserves.
3. Reconsider your priorities.

#### **1) Stop being the "Easy Button."**

*Are you always on Teams or Slack responding to IMs? Are you answering emails at 6am or 11pm? Do you regularly schedule meetings over the time you blocked?*

**What if you stopped?**

Before you say respond to every email or IM within 10 minutes or say yes to the next meeting, consider:

- Am I the best person to do this? Am I doing work my team should do?
- Is this the best use of my time?
- What would happen if I didn't respond?

**If you don't respond right away**, chances are in many situations a team member or a colleague would find the answer themselves or just take care of it. It could empower a team member to find a new approach or create a new opportunity.

So instead of reacting to every request or always being available, ask yourself the questions above. *Stop being the "Easy Button."*

## 2) Give it the time it deserves.

**Being a perfectionist means that you want to give 100%** to everything on your "to-do list." Even knowing it's just not realistic.

One of the most trusted people in my life challenged me to **look at my priorities through a new lens** by saying: "*Give it the time it deserves.*" Assess what actually needs 100% of your effort and what would be fine with 90%, 80%, or even less.

Did that prep for the presentation run-through need 100% when it was going to change anyway? Did I really need a deck for that internal brainstorming session?

**Give it the time it deserves.** Those six words, changed my life both personally and professionally. Try it.

Thanks, Brad.

## 3) Reconsider your priorities

**My story:** I flew from a conference via the redeye finishing the bday slide show on the plane to be home in time to bake the birthday cake and then drive three hours to attend the family birthday weekend for my dad. We arrived and I came down with a 103 degree fever and *I missed celebrating my dad.*

The next week my dad sent me this note, which is still hanging next to my desk:

**Your priorities in life need to be:**

1. *Your health*
2. *Your family*
3. *Your job*

**And you can only move them around for short periods of time. I love you.**

My dad's advice was spot on. What might it mean for you if you follow it too?

Thanks, Dad.

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## #2 Something to Do:

### "Spring Clean" your Calendar

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**Wowza -- It's that time of year for Spring Cleaning and for getting rid of "messes".** Just imagine if you did the same for your calendar!

Instead of automatically attending all those meetings that suck up so much of your day, why not take an hour to "clean" your calendar. It can help make time in your day where you can *actually think*, work on your "to-do" list, or go for a walk.

**Here's how to get started:**

**1) Look at all of the recurring meetings on your calendar that YOU own:**

- Do they still need to happen? *Really?*
- Can they happen less often? *Monthly instead of weekly, etc.?*
- Can they be shorter? *30 minutes instead of an hour?*

**2) Look at the recurring meetings that OTHERS own:**

- Why were you were invited to the meeting? *Is it still relevant?*
- Do you still need to attend the meeting? *What would happen if you didn't?*
- Are you the best person to attend the meeting? *Who else could attend?*

**3) Then change/decline/forward those meetings. Free up at least 3-4 hours.**

- Commit by blocking that freed-up time for you (in your favorite color!).
- If your calendar is shared, mark it private so others don't schedule over it.

After 4 weeks, assess the impact. *I bet you'll feel a bit better!*



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**#3 Something to Share:**

**What I'm learning**

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**HBR: The Two-Minute Burnout Check-up (or why you feel the way you do)**

[This is a great "gut-check"](#) on what burnout looks like, if you're on your way (or already there). Or maybe you're just cranky...?



**ideas.Ted.com: When you say "yes", you're saying "no" to something else**

An important reminder that what we do each day (in work and in life) is all about making trade-offs. And might need more thought.



**HBR: How to focus on what's important, not just what's urgent (and some strategies)**

The age-old dilemma that we each face every day. It seems urgent so we do it without even considering if or why it's important.



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**Let's talk about you!**

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