perfunctory

adj. characterized by routine or superficiality
2: lacking in interest or enthusiasm
“Anything worth doing, is worth doing right.” – Hunter Thompson

“Nothing in the world is worth having or worth doing unless it means effort, pain, difficulty...” – Theodore Roosevelt

“Always do your best.” – Every Kindergarten Teacher Ever

“We have to do the best we can. This is our sacred human responsibility.” – Albert Einstein

“Doing your best at this moment puts you in the best place for the next moment.” – Oprah Winfrey

"In order to do your best, you have to do your best." – Every Kindergarten Teacher Ever
#1 Earth is the problem

This is the direction the experts say the Earth rotates.
#2 Biology is the problem
#3 TIME IS THE PROBLEM

10 lbs of “To Do”  
5 lbs of “Time”
THE SOLUTION:

YOU MUST CHOOSE

BUT CHOOSE WISELY

What to work on?

How to work on it?
NOW FOR A SEA STORY
PERFECTING PERFUNCTORY

- “The best is the enemy of the good.”
  – Voltaire

- “A good plan violently executed now is better than a perfect plan executed next week.”
  – George Patton

- “80% of results come from 20% of our efforts.”
  – Pareto Principle
PARETO DISTRIBUTION

- From Wikipedia:

\[ F(x) = \Pr(X > x) = \begin{cases} \left(\frac{x_m}{x}\right)^\alpha & x \geq x_m, \\ 1 & x < x_m, \end{cases} \]

Definition [edit]

If \( X \) is a random variable with a Pareto (Type I) distribution, then the probability that \( X \) is greater than some number \( x \), i.e. the survival function (also called tail function), is given by

\[ F(x) = \Pr(X > x) = \begin{cases} \left(\frac{x_m}{x}\right)^\alpha & x \geq x_m, \\ 1 & x < x_m, \end{cases} \]

where \( x_m \) is the (necessarily positive) minimum possible value of \( X \), and \( \alpha \) is a positive parameter. The Pareto Type I distribution is characterized by a scale parameter \( x_m \) and a shape parameter \( \alpha \), which is known as the tail index. When this distribution is used to model the distribution of wealth, then the parameter \( \alpha \) is called the Pareto index.
80% RESULTS FROM 20% EFFORT
80% RESULTS FROM 20% EFFORT

Total Time Spent Working

Super Productive!

Not so much
**WHEEHOUSE ACTIVITIES**

- “Time for Leadership” by Pierre Khawand

- “Wheelhouse” = Activities that are:
  - Closely connected to results
  - High-Traction/High-Mileage
  - High gear ratio
  - Giant levers

  - Tends to be things that:
    - That you’re best at.
    - Only you can do.

- “Weak Links”
  - Not closely tied to desired results
  - Low-traction/wheel spinning
  - Pushing boulders up a muddy slope
WHAT IF I TOLD YOU...

• You could shift time:

Weak Links ➔ Wheelhouse
TIME SHIFTER

Total Results

Total Time Spent Working
§ Before engaging in ANY task:

§ Wheelhouse? (This is “The Art”)
  § Do your best work.
  § Take the time needed.
  § Ace it.

§ Weak link? (This is “The Science”)
  § Finish it faster.
  § Reduce scope.
  § Reduce quality. Goal=“Minimum Acceptable.”
  § Delegate if appropriate.
  § Eliminate it altogether.
CULT OF DONE MANIFESTO

- Bre Pettis and Kio Stark
- Written in 20 minutes in 2009.
- 13 points

- #2 – Accept that everything is a draft. It helps to get it done.
- #6 – The point of being done is to get other things done.
- #7 – Laugh at perfection. It’s boring and keeps you from being done.
- #10 – Failure counts as done.
- #13 – Done is the engine of more.
You and your boss must have common understanding of:

- Definition of “results.”
- “Minimally acceptable results” for weak links.

You must understand:

- What’s in your wheelhouse? What activities bring you the most results as defined above?
NOW FOR A SEA STORY
"Anything Any Wheelhouse worth doing, is worth doing right." – James Seddon

"Nothing in the world is worth having or worth doing unless it means effort, pain, difficulty...Unless it's a weak link, then get that crap done quickly."
– James Seddon

"Always do your best on Wheelhouse activities and none other."
– Some enlightened teacher somewhere

"We have to do the best we can on Wheelhouses. Plowing quickly through weak links is our sacred human responsibility."
– James Seddon

"Doing the best at this moment Wheelhouse puts you in the best place for the next moment. Doing the best at this weak link is a huge waste of time."
– James Seddon
THE BORG BLUNDER AND VADERBURGERS

- Recognize the Vaderburger when you get it!

- NEVER spend significant % of time to it takes to complete a task resisting its existence.

- Rather
  - Rapidly recognize it as weak link that you can’t eliminate.
  - Rapidly apply the other techniques.
ACTUAL WARTIME MOTIVATIONAL POSTER

A CHEESEBURGER

When Lord Vader asks you to go get him a cheeseburger
don’t spend alot of time arguing with him, just do it.
Do it fast.
FOCUS TOOLS

- Work in cycles with a timer
  - Focused (on either Wheelhouse or Weaklink)
  - Collaborative
  - Breaks

- Pomodoro Technique
  - 25 minute “Pomodoro” intervals with regular breaks (short and long)
MORE TIME MGMT TOOLS

- Microplanning
  - Microplan for “Submit budget”
    - Read Alison’s email carefully
    - Send call for inputs to subordinate staff
    - Review last year’s input
    - Open Finance’s templates and understand them
    - Make scratch copy to work on
    - Begin inputs
    - Review with boss
    - Make final edits in Finance’s copy
EVEN MORE TIME MGMT TOOLS

- During focus time, DESTROY DISTRACTIONS
  - Turn off email
  - Headphones
  - Do not disturb signs
  - Park “oh yeah” thoughts in a log
- Limit 50% scheduled meetings with others
- Schedule your needed focus time
  - Work on project A
  - Write report X
EMAIL

- Destroy the “Inbox as Todo List.”

- “Email” is now an activity/pomodoro that is:
  - Timed.
  - Focused.

- You are focused and engaged on only ONE of the following activities:
  - Reviewing “new” emails?
  - Or working “previously prioritized” emails.
THE “REVIEW NEW EMAILS” CYCLE

- “Review new emails” Pomodoro:
  - Scanned quickly for decision
    - Wheelhouse or Weak Link?
    - Complete in 2 minutes? Then do it.
    - If not, file/categorize/color/organize it by priority (not date).
THE WORK PRIORITIZED EMAILS CYCLE

- “Work prioritized email” pomodoro:
  - Listed and addressed in order of priority, not date
  - Read carefully once.
  - Respond to it in that pomodoro if possible.
  - Microplan / transfer to your separate do list / schedule time to focus on it.
TIME MGMT CHEAT SHEET

- Wheelhouse?
  - Do your best work.
  - Take the time needed.
  - Ace it.

- Weak link?
  - Finish it faster.
  - Reduce scope.
  - Reduce quality. Goal="Minimum Acceptable.”
  - Delegate if appropriate.
  - Eliminate it altogether.

- Cult of Done Manifesto.

- The Borg Blunder and Vaderburgers
  - Recognize quickly when resistance is futile.

- Pomodoro Timed Cycles.
- Microplanning.
- Destroy distractions during focus
  - Park important distractions in log.
- 50% rule on calendaring.
- Email
  - Treat as two types of pomodoro:
    - Review new
    - Act on previously prioritized
  - Scan once: Act or file.
  - Sort/act by priority, not date.