



**Getting your
faculty career
off to a
good start**

**Rebecca Brent &
Richard Felder**

How long to reach full productivity in research & effectiveness in teaching?*



~95%: 4-5 years



Quick starters (~5%): 1-2 years

*Based on Robert Boice, *The New Faculty Member*

What's the difference between the 95% and the quick starters?



Make 4 common mistakes



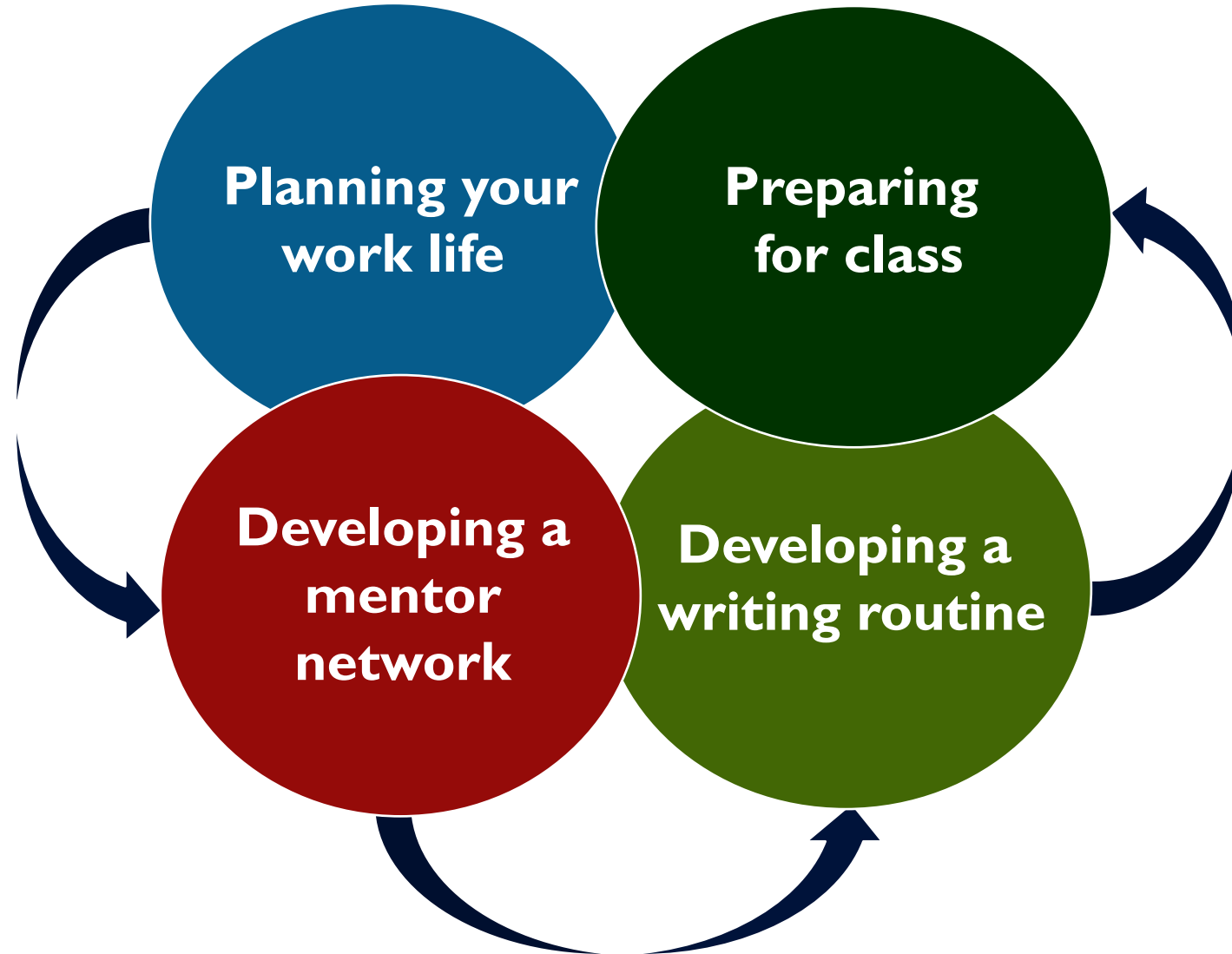
Avoid those mistakes

Activity

1. Form groups of ~3, introduce yourselves.
2. List mistakes new faculty members commonly make that limit their productivity and effectiveness?



Success Strategies



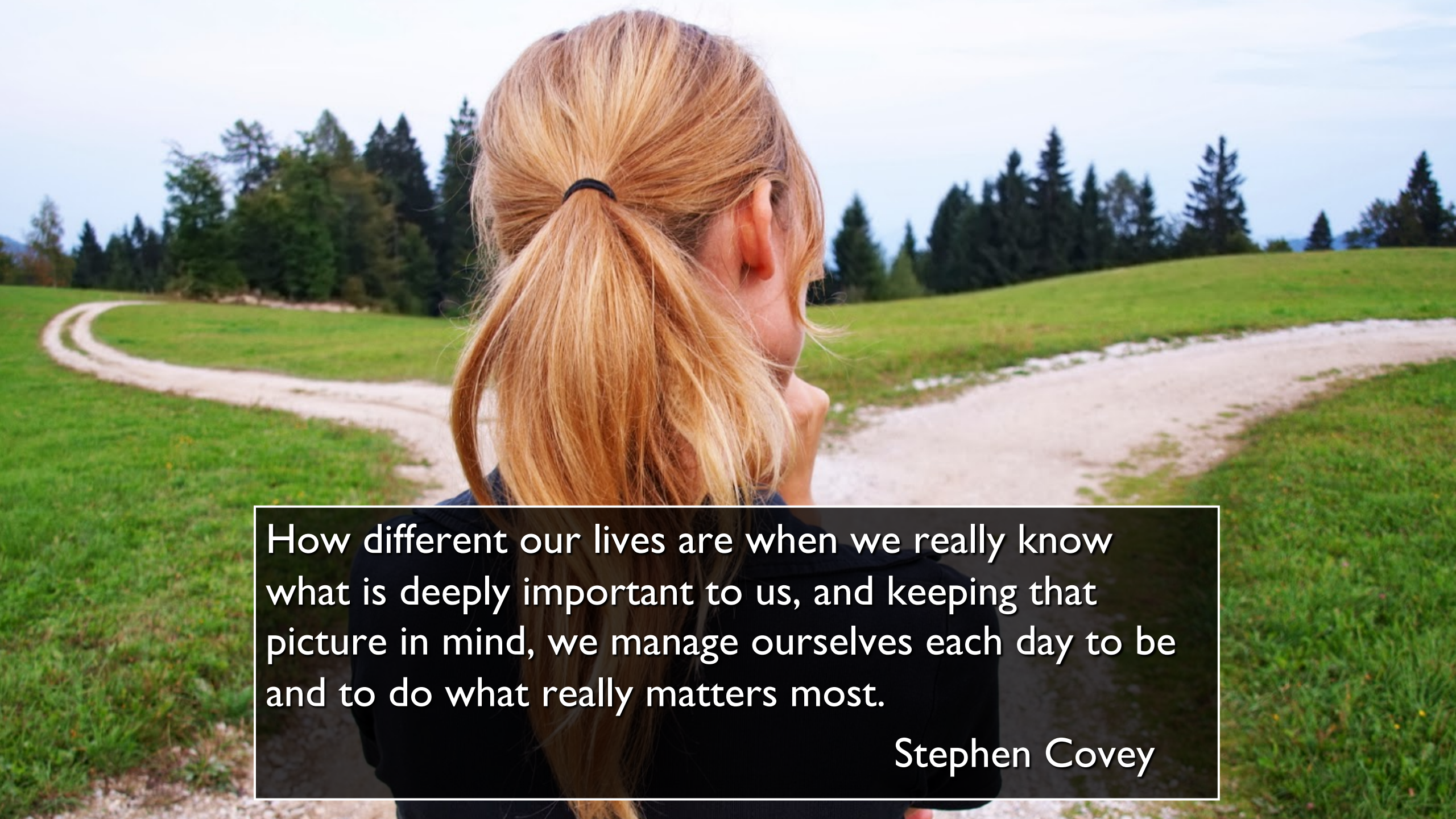
Mistake #1: Work without clear goals and plans

- **Accept unproductive commitments**
- **Fail to take steps that *will* help**



Consequences

- **Become spread too thin**
- **Fail to meet expectations**
- **Anxiety, depression**

A woman with long, light brown hair tied in a ponytail is seen from behind, looking out over a vast green field. A dirt path winds through the field, leading towards a line of evergreen trees in the distance under a clear sky. The scene is peaceful and open.

How different our lives are when we really know what is deeply important to us, and keeping that picture in mind, we manage ourselves each day to be and to do what really matters most.

Stephen Covey



Success Strategy #1

Develop clear goals & a detailed plan to reach them. (more on next slide)

Results

- Make commitments wisely
- Maximize chances of reaching goals

Plan for coming year



- What are my major areas of responsibility?
- What are my specific actions for each area in the coming year?
- Get feedback from dept. head and mentor.
- Check your progress regularly.
- Keep a running list of all commitments.
- Memorize & use the most important word in the language.

Mistake #2: Work non-stop & alone

Wait for colleagues to offer help



Consequences

- Don't get available support
- Don't learn local culture
- Isolation, depression

Success Strategy #2

Network at least 2 hrs/week to develop a group of mentors.

Results

- Quickly get help, learn culture
- Discover campus resources
- Cultivate allies and advocates





Mistake #3

- Spend little time on scholarly writing
- Put out fires, wait for “blocks of time”

Consequences

- Lack of productivity → anxiety

Activity

List several strategies for writing that you have found helpful.



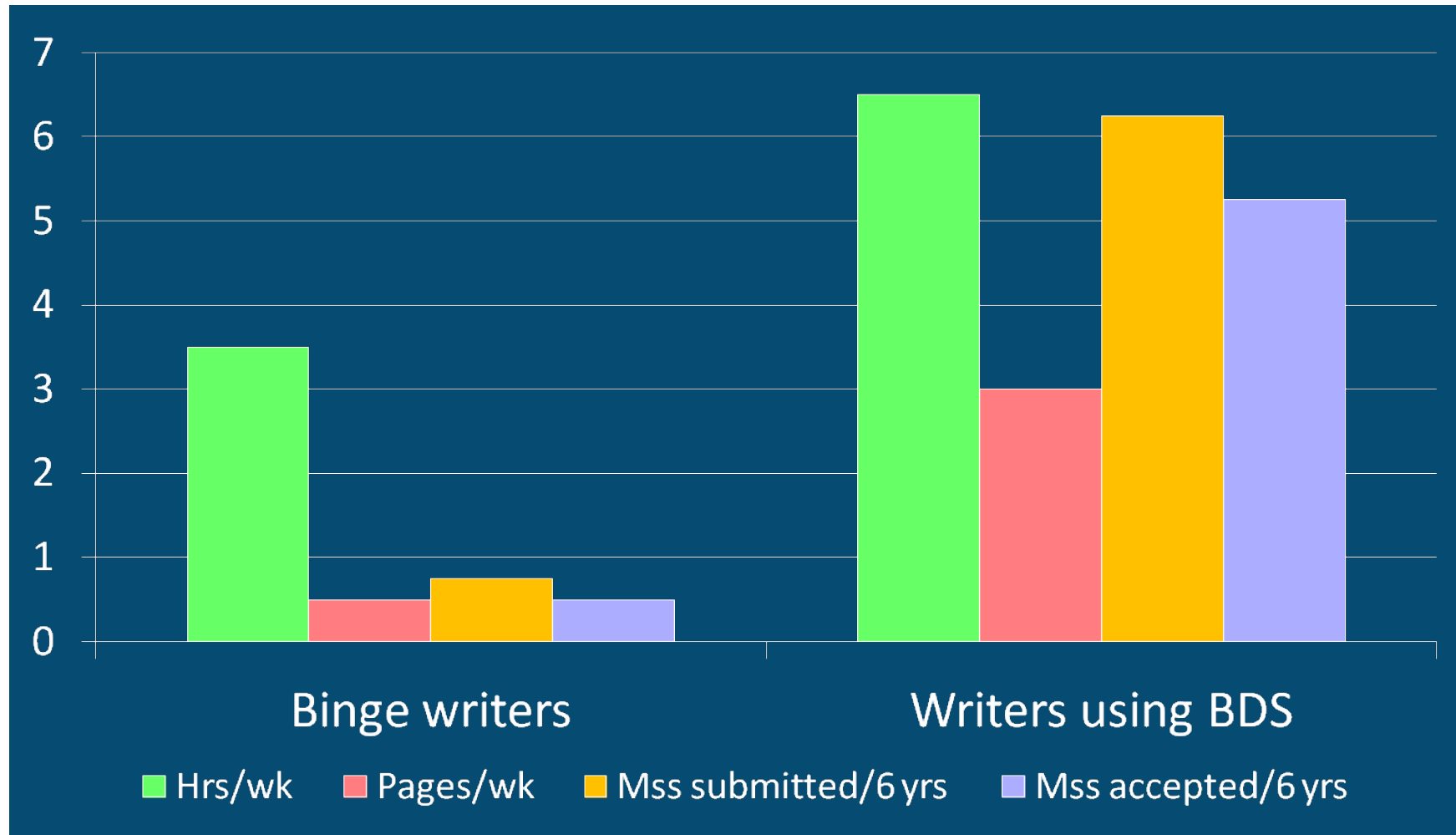
Success Strategy #3a

Schedule regular time for writing projects → 30-45 minutes daily or 2-3 longer blocks weekly.

Results

- Minimize “warm-up” time
- Steady progress → less anxiety

Effects of Brief Daily Writing Sessions*



*Figure adapted from *Advice for New Faculty Members*, Robert Boice (2000)

Success Strategy #3b

Hold yourself accountable for writing regularly.

Pomodoro
technique



Writing
partner



Writing group

Success Strategy #3c

Separate creating and critiquing*



* See "How to write anything" in handout

Mistake #4

Overprepare for classes

- 9+ prep hrs per lecture hour
- Good teaching = complete content, ready for any question

Consequences

- Rush to cover material, poor evaluations
- Little time for anything else (research, life)

Need
to KNOW

vs.

 NICE TO
KNOW

Is course material

- (a) addressed in your learning objectives?
- (b) assumed known by instructors of courses for which your course is a prerequisite?
- (c) something you would ever put on a test or major assignment?

Yes to any = *need-to-know*

No to all = *nice-to-know*



Success Strategy #4

- Limit prep time for class (Target: 2 hr prep/hr class)
- Cover need-to-know material, minimize nice-to-know
- Results:
 - More questions & activities
 - Time for other responsibilities

Tips on teaching a class for the first time*

Don't reinvent the wheel!

- Ask for course materials from previous teacher
- Search materials online



*See "How to prepare new courses while keeping your sanity" in handout.

Final activity

- Write down your main **takeaway messages** from this session.



