Getting your faculty career off to a good start

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Planning your work life
Developing a mentor network
Preparing for class
Developing a writing routine

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WORKSHOP FACILITATORS

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Drs. Brent and Felder are coauthors of Teaching and Learning STEM: A Practical Guide (Jossey-Bass, 2016, educationdesignsinc.com/book/). Separately and together, they have presented over 500 workshops on effective teaching, course design, mentoring and supporting new faculty members, and faculty development, on campuses and at conferences around the world. They co-directed the American Society for Engineering Education National Effective Teaching Institute from 1991 to 2015. Visit their company website—including a blog with their ideas on teaching and learning—at educationdesignsinc.com, and their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/felderandbrent.
NEW FACULTY MEMBER MISTAKES AND SUCCESS STRATEGIES

Robert Boice studied career trajectories of hundreds of new faculty members. He found that roughly 95% of them took 4–5 years to meet their institutions’ expectations for research productivity and teaching effectiveness, and the other 5%—the quick starters—met or exceeded research expectations and scored in the top quartile of teaching evaluations within their first 1–2 years. Boice identified four mistakes the 95% routinely made that limited their productivity and effectiveness and strategies the quick starters used to avoid the mistakes, and he also found that new faculty members could be taught to use the same strategies successfully.

**Mistake #1. Working without clear goals and plans.** Accepting too many commitments that don’t help achieve long-term goals and failing to take steps that *would* help.

- **Consequences:** Becoming spread too thin. Falling behind in tenure quest. Anxiety, depression.
- **Success Strategy #1.** Develop clear goals and specific milestones for reaching them (proposals, papers, conference presentations, new course preps,…). Get periodic feedback from department head and senior colleagues.
- **Results.** Make commitments wisely. Maximize chances of reaching goals.

**Planning for the coming academic year:**

- What are my major areas of responsibility?
- What are my specific actions for each area in the coming year?
- Get feedback from department head and mentor
- Check your progress regularly
- Keep a running list of all commitments (work and personal life). Look at it and your plans before accepting any new commitments.
- Memorize and use the most important word in any language: ______

**Mistake #2. Work non-stop and alone.** Wait for colleagues to come to you with offers to help.

- **Consequences:** Failure to get available support. Failure to learn faculty culture. Sense of isolation, depression.
- **Success Strategy #2.** Network at least two hours per week. (Quick starters averaged six.) Visit colleagues, go to lunch, have a cup of coffee with colleagues in and out of the department; discuss research, teaching, campus culture. If you’re facing a specific problem (writing a paper for a journal with a high rejection rate, approaching a tight proposal deadline, dealing with an unproductive graduate student or a rebellious undergraduate class,…), figure out which colleagues are likely to be helpful and seek them out.
- **Results.** Quickly get needed help, learn culture, discover campus resources, cultivate allies and advocates.

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FACULTY GUIDE TO TIME MANAGEMENT

or

How to simultaneously write proposals, do research, write papers, teach classes, advise students, grade papers, serve on committees, eat, sleep, and occasionally visit your family.3

• Set 2–3-year goals along with reasonable steps necessary to reach them. For example
  1. Stay in good health
     — Exercise 3 times a week
     — Get sufficient sleep
     — ...
  2. Get promoted to associate professor
     — Write ___ papers in refereed journals
     — Write ___ proposals.
     — ...
  3. Learn to wind-surf
  4. Remain married

• Prioritize goals. Find an order that satisfies you now—you can always change it. Suggestion: Make staying in good health top priority—it will make the others possible.

• Develop a Gantt chart to track your progress in meeting your professional productivity goals.

• Create and frequently update a to-do list. Use a 4-quadrant system4:
  I. Urgent and important. (Deadline-driven activities that further your goals.)
  II. Important but not urgent. (Long-term professional, family, and personal activities that further your goals.)
  III. Urgent but not important. (Much e-mail, many phone calls and memos, things that are important to someone else but don’t further your goals.)
  IV. Neither urgent nor important. (TV, computer games, junk mail.)
  
  Commit to several hours a week on Quadrant II items and cut down on time spent in Quadrants III and IV.

• Work on Quadrant I and II items when you’re at peak efficiency.

• If you’re trying to write a book or dissertation, put it on the Quadrant II list, otherwise it will never get written.

• Keep a log for time spent writing (30-45 minutes daily or longer blocks 2-3 times a week) and preparing for lectures (2 hours or less for each lecture hour) until the work pattern becomes a habit.5

Office Hours and Mail

• Set office hours and let students know you will be faithful in keeping them. When students come to see you outside of office hours and you’re busy, ask them if they can come back during office hours or make an appointment.

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5 Boice, R. (2000). *Advice for New Faculty Members*, Boston: Allyn and Bacon. This book is filled with terrific suggestions especially designed to help new faculty develop balanced work habits.
Be mindful of time spent reading and responding to email. Limit response to email to one or two time periods each day. If you encourage email from students, have a special address set up for each class. Read and respond to student email no more than once or twice a day and let students know when you are likely to respond.

Learn how to get people out of your office when you don’t have the time to spend. (“Good talking to you, but I’ve got something I need to attend to now.”)

Meet in the other person’s office, not yours. (Easier to get away.)

Handle each mail item once, if possible. Open, respond, file, or discard.

**Working smarter**

- Schedule blocks of uninterrupted time to complete larger tasks. If necessary, work at home, in the library, or at an out-of-the-way desk in the department.
- Avoid perfectionism—don’t keep revising until the deadline, and don’t revise unimportant letters and memos at all. Be aware of the point of diminishing returns.
- Be careful of computer graphics—they’re a time sink. Good enough is good enough.
- Piggyback work—use the same notes or manuscripts for multiple applications.
- Keep research projects in the pipeline. Well before a project ends, start writing the next proposal.
- Reward yourself—take breaks.

**Learn how and when to say no!**

- Always give yourself a chance to think about a commitment overnight before agreeing to it. The time will give you a chance to see if it fits in with your goals and priorities.
- Keep an updated list of all your service responsibilities. Refer to it when the next request comes in.
- Check out service requests with your mentor or department head. Consider showing the latter your list if he or she is the one making the request.
- Practice declining requests:
  1. “That sounds interesting, but can I call you back tomorrow? I need a little time to think about it before I can decide.”
  2. “I’m sorry, but I’ve just got too many other commitments right now.”
  3. “I’d love to help, but I really don’t have time for a formal commitment. Maybe we could just talk once or twice.”
  4. “I’m afraid I’m not the best person to help you with this. Have you thought about asking ______?”

(Penny Gold)
Mistake #3. Spend little time on big writing projects (papers, proposals, books). Focus on tasks with tighter deadlines (like preparing lectures) most of the time, wait for blocks of time (the weekend, fall break, summer,...) to work on the big projects, binge-write when deadlines approach.

- **Consequences**: Other things (like family) rush in to fill up blocks of time, and long warm-up time when and if writing time materializes. Lack of regular productivity, anxiety about it.
- **Success Strategy #3a.** Schedule brief daily writing sessions (BDS)—30–45 min/day, or 2–3 longer blocks weekly—for scholarly writing (proposals, papers, reports). Work away from office, or in office with notifications of messages and calls on computers and cell phones turned off. (Research cited by Boice shows up to 10X increase in productivity results, compared with usual binge-writing approach.)
- **Success Strategy #3b.** Hold yourself accountable. Use the pomodoro technique: Set a timer (say, for 25 minutes), and don’t do anything but write during that interval. If you succeed, reward yourself (break, snack, nap). Get a writing partner or group, periodically report progress to one another.
- **Success Strategy #3c.** Separate creating and critiquing rather than trying to do both simultaneously. Free-write first (straight ahead, no editing) until several pages or more are produced, then critique and revise.

- **Results.** Much greater writing productivity, lower levels of anxiety.

Mistake #4: **Overprepare for classes**. Spend nine hours or more preparing for each lecture hour (plus time to prepare and grade assignments and exams). Equate good teaching with complete & accurate notes. Attempt to be ready for any question students might ask.

- **Consequences**: Cramming too much material into the course. Rush to cover syllabus, little time for questions or activities in class, and little time for anything else, including writing and personal life.
- **Success Strategy #4.** Limit preparation time for class, especially after first offering. Shoot for two hours preparation per lecture hour. Often won’t make it, but if it’s 8–10, it’s a problem. Be sure to cover need-to-know material (see below), and insert nice-to-know material (see below) in whatever time is left.

- **Results: Less material to cover \(\rightarrow\) more time to cover it well, better learning, higher course evaluations. Less preparation time \(\rightarrow\) more time for writing and personal life.

**Addendum: Need-to-know and nice-to-know course material**

Look at each body of material you are thinking of including in the course lecture notes, and ask yourself: Is this material (1) addressed in my core course learning objectives; (2) assumed known by instructors of courses for which my course is a prerequisite; (3) something I would ever put on a test or major assignment? If the answer is “yes” to any of these three questions, it’s need-to-know material, and it should be in your learning objectives and on tests. If the answer is “no” to all three questions, it’s nice-to-know material—you teach it because you like it and/or you think students should be “exposed” to it. Include it in the lecture notes only if you’re sure that you’ll still have enough time to fully cover all the need-to-know material, including time for questions and activities. (You often won’t—and if you omit nice-to-know material, no one will miss it or be hurt because you skipped it.)

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I write when I’m inspired, and I see to it that I’m inspired at nine o’clock every morning.
(Peter De Vries)

Here’s the situation. You’re working on a big writing project—a proposal, paper, book, dissertation, whatever—and in the last five weeks all you’ve managed to get done is one measly paragraph. You’re long past the date when the project was supposed to be finished, and you just looked at your to-do list and reminded yourself that this is only one of several writing projects on your plate and you haven’t even started most of the others.

If you’re frequently in that situation (and we’ve never met a faculty member who isn’t) we’ve got a remedy for you. First, though, let’s do some truth in advertising. Lots of books and articles have been written about how to write clear and persuasive papers, proposals, dissertations, lab reports, technical memos, love letters, and practically everything else you might ever need to write. We’re not going to talk about that stuff: you’re on your own when it comes to anything having to do with writing quality. All we’re going to try to do here is help you get a complete draft in a reasonable time, because that usually turns out to be the make-or-break step in big writing projects. Unless you’re a pathological perfectionist (which can be a crippling obstacle to ever finishing anything), once you’ve got a draft, there’s an excellent chance that a finished document suitable for public consumption won’t be far behind.

We have two suggestions for getting a major document written in this lifetime: (1) commit to working on it regularly in brief writing sessions, and (2) keep the creating and editing functions separate.

- **Dedicate short and frequent periods of time to your major writing projects**

  See if this little monologue sounds familiar. “I don’t have time to work on the proposal now—I’ve got to get Wednesday’s lecture ready and there’s a ton of email to answer and I’ve got to pick the kids up after school tomorrow...BUT, as soon as fall break (or Christmas or summer or my sabbatical) comes I’ll get to it.”

  It’s natural to give top priority to the tasks that can be done quickly or are due soon, whether they’re important (preparing Wednesday’s lecture) or not (answering most emails), and so the longer-range projects keep getting put off as the weeks and months and years go by. If a major project has a firm due date, you panic when it approaches and quickly knock something out well below the best you can do. If it’s a proposal or paper, subsequent rejection should not come as a surprise. If there is no firm due date, the project simply never gets done: the book you’ve been working on for the last ten years
never gets into print, or your graduate students leave school with their research completed but without their Ph.D.s because they never finished their dissertations.

The strategy of waiting for large blocks of time to work on major writing projects has two significant flaws. When you finally get to a block, it’s been so long since the last one that it can take hours or days to build momentum again and you’re likely to run out of time before much gets written. Also, as soon as the block arrives other things rush in to fill it, such as your family, whom you’ve been neglecting for months and who now legitimately think it’s their turn.

A much more effective strategy is to make a commitment to regularly devote short periods of time to major writing projects. Thirty minutes a day is plenty, or maybe an hour three times a week. One approach is to designate a fixed time period on specified days, preferably at a time of day when you’re at your peak, during which you close your door, ignore your phone, and do nothing but work on the project. Alternatively, you might take a few 10–15-minute breaks during the day—times when you would ordinarily check your email or surf the Web or play video games—and use them to work on the project instead. Either way, when you start to write you’ll quickly remember where you left off last time and jump in with little wasted motion. When you’ve put in your budgeted time for the day, you can (and generally should) stop and go back to the rest of your life.

These short writing interludes won’t make much difference in how many fires you put out each day, but you’ll be astonished when you look back after a week or two and see how much you’ve gotten done on the project—and when a larger block of time opens up, you’ll be able to use it effectively with very little warm-up. You can then be confident of finishing the project in a reasonable time...provided that you also take our next suggestion.

Do your creating and editing sequentially, not simultaneously

Here’s another common scenario that might ring a bell. You sit down to write something and come up with the first sentence. You look at it, change some words, add a phrase, rewrite it three or four times, put in a comma here, take one out there...and beat on the sentence for five minutes and finally get it where you want it. Then you draft the second sentence, and the first one is instantly obsolete and has to be rewritten again...and you work on those two sentences until you’re satisfied with them and go on to Sentence 3 and repeat the process...and an hour or two later you may have a paragraph to show for your efforts.

If that sounds like your process, it’s little wonder that you can’t seem to get those large writing projects finished. When you spend hours on every paragraph, the 25-page proposal or 350-page dissertation can take forever, and you’re likely to become frustrated and quit before you’re even close to a first draft.

At this point you’re ready for our second tip, which is to keep the creating and editing processes separate. The routine we just described does the opposite: even before you complete a sentence you start criticizing and trying to fix it. Instead of doing that, write whatever comes into your head, without looking back. If you have trouble getting a session started, write anything—random words, if necessary—and after a minute or two things will start flowing. If you like working from outlines, start with an outline; if the project is not huge like a book or dissertation and you don’t like outlines, just plunge in. If you’re not sure how to begin a project, start with a middle section you can write easily and go back and fill in the introduction later.

Throughout this process, you will of course hear the usual voice in your head telling you that what you’re writing is pure garbage—sloppy, confusing, trivial, etc. Ignore it! Write the first paragraph,
then the next, and keep going until you get as much written as your budgeted time allows. Then, when you come back to the project the next day (remember, you committed to it), you can either continue writing or go back and edit what you’ve already got—and then (and only then) is the time to worry about grammar and syntax and style and all that.

Here’s what will almost certainly happen if you follow that procedure. The first few sentences you write in a session may indeed be garbage, but the rest will invariably be much better than you thought while you were writing it. You’ll crank out a lot of material in a short time, and you’ll find that it’s much easier and faster to edit it all at once rather than in tiny increments. The bottom line is that you’ll find yourself with a completed manuscript in a small fraction of the time it would take with one-sentence-at-a-time editing.

We’re not suggesting that working a little on big projects every day is easy. It isn’t for most people, and days will inevitably come when the pressure to work only on urgent tasks is overwhelming. When it happens, just do what you have to do without beating yourself up about it and resume your commitment the next day. It may be tough but it’s doable, and it works.
Think of a two-word phrase for a huge time sink that can effectively keep faculty members from doing the things they want to do.

You can probably come up with several phrases that fit. “Proposal deadline” is an obvious one, as are “curriculum revision,” “safety inspection,” “accreditation visit,” and “No Parking.” (The last one is on the sign posted by the one open space you find on campus minutes before you’re supposed to teach a class, with the small print that says “Reserved for the Deputy Associate Vice Provost for Dry Erase Marker Procurement.”)

But the phrase we have in mind is “new prep”—preparing for and teaching a course you’ve never taught before. This column describes the usual approach, which makes this challenging task almost completely unmanageable, and then proposes a better alternative.

Three steps to disaster, or, how not to approach a new course preparation

1. Go it alone. Colleagues may have taught the course in the past and done it very well, but it would be embarrassing to ask them if you can use their materials (syllabi, learning objectives, lecture notes, demonstrations, assignments, tests, etc.), so instead create everything yourself from scratch.

2. Try to cover everything known about the subject in your lectures and always be prepared to answer any question any student might ever ask. Assemble all the books and research articles you can find and make your lecture notes a self-contained encyclopedia on the subject.

3. Don’t bother making up learning objectives or a detailed syllabus—just work things out as you go. It’s all you can do to stay ahead of the class in your lectures, so just throw together a syllabus that contains only the course name and textbook, your name and office hours, and the catalog description of the course; invent course policies and procedures on a day-by-day basis; and decide what your learning objectives are when you make up the exams.

Here’s what’s likely to happen if you adopt this plan. You’ll spend an outlandish amount of time on the course—ten hours or more of preparation for every lecture hour. You’ll start neglecting your research and your personal life just to keep up with the course preparation, and if you’re unfortunate enough to have two new preps at once, you may no longer have a personal life to neglect. Your lecture notes will be so long and dense that to cover them you’ll have to lecture at a pace no normal human being could possibly follow; you’ll have no time for interactivity in class; and you’ll end up skimming some important material or skipping it altogether. Your policies regarding late homework, absences, missed tests, grading, and cheating will be fuzzy and inconsistent. Without learning objectives to guide the preparation, the course will be incoherent, with lectures covering one body of material, assignments another, and tests yet another. The students’ frustration and complaints will mount, and the final course evaluations will look like nothing you’d want to post on your blog.

There’s a better way.

**A rational approach to new course preparation.**

1. *Start preparing as soon as you know you’ll be teaching a particular course.*

   Dedicate a paper file folder and a folder on your computer to the course and begin to assemble ideas and instructional materials. While you’re teaching the course, continue to file ideas and resources as you come up with them.

2. *Don’t reinvent the wheel.*

   Identify a colleague who is a good teacher and has taught the course you’re preparing to teach, and ask if he/she would be willing to share course materials with you. (Most faculty members would be fine with that request.) In addition, try finding the course on the MIT OpenCourseWare Web site (<ocw.mit.edu>) and download materials from there. Open courseware may contain visuals, simulations, class activities, and assignments that can add considerably to the quality of a course and would take you months or years to construct from scratch. The first time you teach the course, borrow liberally from the shared materials and note after each class what you want to change in future offerings. Also consider asking TA’s to come up with good instructional materials and/or inviting students to do it for extra credit.

3. *Write detailed learning objectives, give them to the students as study guides, and let the objectives guide the construction of lesson plans, assignments, and tests.*

   Learning objectives are statements of observable tasks that students should be able to accomplish if they have learned what the instructor wanted them to learn. Felder and Brent recommend giving objectives to students as study guides for tests and show an illustrative study guide for a midterm exam.

   Before you start to prepare a section of a course that will be covered on a test, draft a study guide and use it to design class sessions (lectures and in-class activities) and assignments that provide instruction and practice in the tasks specified in the objectives. As you get new ideas for things you want to teach, add them to the study guide. One to two weeks before the test, finalize the guide and give it to the students, and then draw on it to design the test. The course will then be coherent, with mutually compatible lessons, assignments, and assessments. Instead of having to guess what you think is important, the students will clearly understand your expectations, and those with the ability to complete the tasks specified in the objectives will be much more likely to do so on the test. In other words, more of your students will have learned what you wanted them to learn. The objectives will also help you avoid trying to cram everything known about the subject into your lecture notes. If you can’t think of anything students might do with content besides memorize and repeat it, consider either dropping that content or cutting down on it in lectures, giving yourself more time to spend on higher-level material.

4. *Get feedback during the course.*

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It’s always a good idea to monitor how things are going in a class so you can make mid-course corrections, particularly when the course is new. Every so often collect “minute papers,” in which the students anonymously hand in brief statements of what they consider to be the main points and muddiest points of the class they just sat through. In addition, have them complete a survey four or five weeks into the semester in which they list the things you’re doing that are helping their learning and the things that are hindering it. Look for patterns in the responses to these assessments and make adjustments you consider appropriate, or make a note to do so next time you teach the course.

5. *Do everything you can to minimize new preps early in your career, and especially try to avoid having to deal with several of them at a time.*

Some department heads inconsiderately burden their newest faculty members with one new prep after another. If you find yourself in this position, politely ask your head to consider letting you teach the same course several times before you move on to a new one so that you have adequate time to work on your research. Most department heads want their new faculty to start turning out proposals and papers in their first few years and will be sympathetic to such requests. It might not work, but as Rich’s grandmother said when told that chicken soup doesn’t cure cancer, it couldn’t hurt.
THINGS I WISH THEY HAD TOLD ME

Richard M. Felder

Most of us on college faculties learn our craft by trial-and-error. We start teaching and doing research, make lots of mistakes, learn from some of them, teach some more and do more research, make more mistakes and learn from them, and gradually more or less figure out what we're doing.

However, while there's something to be said for purely experiential learning, it's not very efficient. Sometimes small changes in the ways we do things can yield large benefits. We may eventually come up with the changes ourselves, but it could help both us and our students immeasurably if someone were to suggest them early in our careers. For whatever they may be worth to you, here are some suggestions I wish someone had given me.

- **Find one or more research mentors and one or more teaching mentors and work closely with them for at least two years.** Most faculties have professors who excel at research or teaching or both and are willing to share their expertise with junior colleagues, but the prevailing culture does not usually encourage such exchanges. Find out who these individuals are, and take advantage of what they have to offer, if possible through collaborative research and mutual classroom observation or team-teaching.

- **Find research collaborators who are strong in the areas in which you are weakest.** If your strength is theory, undertake some joint research with a good experimentalist, and conversely. If you're a chemical engineer, find compatible colleagues in chemistry or biochemistry or mathematics or statistics or materials science. You'll turn out better research in the short run, and you'll become a better researcher in the long run by seeing how others work and learning some of what they know.

- **Whenever you write a paper or proposal, beg or bribe colleagues to read it and give you the toughest critique they're willing to give.** Then revise, and if the revisions were major, run the manuscript by them again to make sure you got it right. THEN send it off. Wonderful things may start happening to your acceptance rates.

- **When a paper or proposal of yours is rejected, don't take it as a reflection on your competence or your worth as a human being. Above all, don't give up.** Take a few minutes to sulk or swear at those obtuse idiots who clearly missed the point of what you wrote, then revise the manuscript, doing your best to understand and accommodate their criticisms and suggestions.

  If the rejection left the door open a crack, send the revision back with a cover letter summarizing how you adopted the reviewers’ suggestions and stating, respectfully, why you couldn't go along with the ones you didn't adopt. The journal or funding agency will usually send the revision back to the same reviewers, who will often recommend acceptance if they believe you took their comments seriously and if your response doesn't offend them. If the rejection slammed the door, send the revision to another journal (perhaps a less prestigious one) or funding agency.

- **Learn to identify the students in your classes and greet them by name when you see them in the hall.** Doing just this will cover a multitude of sins you may commit in class. Even if you have a class of over 100 students, you can do it—use seating charts, labeled photographs, whatever it takes. You'll be well compensated for the time and effort you expend by the respect and effort you'll get back from them.

- **When you're teaching a class, try to give the students something active to do at least every 20 minutes.** For example, have them work in small groups to answer a question or solve a problem or think of their own questions about the material you just covered. In long class periods (75 minutes and up), let them get up and stretch for a minute.

  Even if you're a real spellbinder, after approximately 10 minutes of straight lecturing you begin to lose a fraction of your students—they get drowsy or bored or restless and start reading or talking or daydreaming. The longer you lecture, the more of them you lose. Forcing them to be active, even if it's only for 30 seconds, breaks the pattern and gets them back with you for another 10-20 minutes.

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• After you finish making up an exam, even if you KNOW it's straightforward and error-free, work it through completely from scratch and note how long it takes you to do it, and get your TA's to do the same if you have TA's. Then go back and (1) get rid of the inevitable bugs and busywork, (2) make sure most of the test covers basic skills and no more than 10-15% serves to separate the A's from the B's, and (3) cut down the test so that the students have at least three times longer to work it out than it took you to do it.

• Grade tough on homework, easier on time-bound tests. Frequently it happens in reverse: almost anything goes on the homework, which causes the students to get sloppy, and then they get clobbered on tests for making the same careless errors they got away with on the homework. This is pedagogically unsound, not to mention unfair.

• When someone asks you to do something you're not sure you want to do—serve on a committee or chair one, attend a meeting you're not obligated to attend, join an organization, run for an office, organize a conference, etc.—don't respond immediately, but tell the requester that you need time to think about it and you'll get back to him or her. Then, if you decide that you really don't want to do it, consider politely but firmly declining. You need to take on some of these tasks occasionally—service is part of your professorial obligation—but no law says you have to do everything someone asks you to do.13

• Create some private space for yourself and retreat to it on a regular basis. Pick a three-hour slot once or twice a week when you don't have class or office hours and go elsewhere—stay home, for example, or take your laptop to the library, or sneak into the empty office of your colleague who's on sabbatical.

  It's tough to do serious writing or thinking if you're interrupted every five minutes, which is what happens in your office. Some people with iron wills can put a "Do not disturb!" sign outside their office door and let their voice mail take their calls. If you're not one of them, your only alternative is to get out of the office. Do it and watch your productivity rise.

• When problems arise that have serious implications—academic misconduct, for example, or a student or colleague with an apparent psychological problem, or anything that could lead to litigation or violence—don't try to solve them on your own. The consequences of making mistakes could be disastrous.

  There are professionals at every university—academic advisors, trained counselors, and attorneys—with the knowledge and experience needed to deal with almost every conceivable situation. Find out who they are and bring them in to either help you deal with the problem or handle it themselves.

13 However, if your department head or dean is doing the asking, it's advisable to have a good reason for saying no.
RESOURCES ON STARTING A CAREER IN ACADEMIA


  Rebecca Brent and Richard Felder’s website. From the home page, you can browse or download
  - Biographical information about Drs. Brent and Felder
  - Their blog with teaching tips and reference recommendations
  - Outlines and participant reviews of the various teaching workshops they offer

- **Felder & Brent Publications (https://www.ncsu.edu/effective_teaching)**
  A collection of resources for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education, where you can access
  - A bibliography of Richard Felder’s and Rebecca Brent’s publications with links to online versions of many of them
  - Reprints of all of Felder’s *Random Thoughts* columns published in *Chemical Engineering Education* from 1988 to 2017

- **Chronicle of Higher Education advice columns (http://www.chronicle.com/advice)**

- **Lecture Breakers (https://barbihoneycutt.com).** A resource-rich website created by Barbi Honeycutt, with strategies, podcasts, and blogs focusing on active learning and classroom flipping.