



The Ohio State University

The OSUAP Connection

Issue #16

March 17, 2017

*Know an Admin who is
new to OSU?*

*Please forward this
Newsletter to them!*

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OSUAP Goals

- ◆ *Align activities with the University's goals and values*
- ◆ *Encourage professional development*
- ◆ *Develop leadership skills*
- ◆ *Network with peers*

Special Notes:

- *Don't forget to donate to your favorite Campus Campaign Fund by the April 30 Deadline!*
- *Spring is right around the corner so do something fun to put a SPRING in YOUR step— grab a friend and take a walk around our beautiful campuses!*



Four Types of Questions To Ask Your Mentor

By Jo Miller

Have conversations with your mentor gotten a bit repetitive lately? Perhaps you approached someone you admire, and bravely asked that person to become your mentor. And they said “yes!” But a year into the relationship, those monthly mentoring conversations don’t seem to invigorate you like they used to, and aren’t quite as energizing for them, either. In short, you suspect the mentorship may have run its course. The fact is, sometimes it’s not the relationship that’s stale – you just need some fresh material to discuss. So



why not re-invigorate those mentoring sessions by preparing a thoughtful, diverse slate of questions ahead of time.

Here are four types of questions to prepare ahead of every mentoring conversation that will keep things interesting – and valuable –

for you and your mentor:

1.) Stories

Hey, everybody likes to talk about themselves! Ask your mentor to tell a story from his or her own career. For example, you could ask, “How did you get to where you are today?” or “Was there a time

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An appeal: Campus Campaign Professional Development Fund



Dear OSUAP Colleagues,

It’s that time of year where we are asked to donate to our favorite Campus Campaign funds. It’s a time when we can support funds that touch our hearts and benefit others in a vast array of disciplines. Whether you support

or other funds that have “spoken” to you, we ask that you consider donating to the OSU Administrative Professionals Fund # 314852. This fund is a professional development fund. OSUAP provides grants to assist eligible Ohio State staff

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"When we're able to float in the air, to separate ourselves from our roots—not only by crossing an ocean and two continents but by distancing ourselves from our condition as stateless refugees, from the empty space of an identity crisis—we can also laugh at what ever might have happened to my acrylic bracelet the color of the gums on a dental plate, the bracelet my parents had turned into a survival kit by hiding all the diamonds in it"

Kim Thúy
from the best-selling novel *Ru*, 2012

Looking for Inspiration?

Kim Thúy: The Success of My Failures

Monday, March 27, 2017 - 4:30pm

Mendenhall, Room 100

This Spring, on Monday, March the 27th, join the Department of French and Italian at OSU for a delightful and engaging meeting with award-winning author Kim Thúy who will share with us her unique journey from a homeless refugee to an inspiring storyteller. There will be a reception and a book signing after the talk.

Born in Saigon in 1968, Montreal writer Kim Thúy left Vietnam with the boat people at the age of 10 and settled in Quebec, Canada as a child of war in 1979. A graduate in translation and law, she has worked as seamstress, interpreter, lawyer, and restaurant owner. A kaleidoscope of life experiences prepared her with an intimate relationship with words. Her first book, *Ru*, a best-seller in Quebec and France and translated to over 25 languages, gathered numerous literary awards, including the prestigious 2010 Governor General's Literary Award (Canada) and the 2010 Grand Prix RTL-Lire at

the Salon du livre de Paris (France). The English edition of *Ru* won the battle of the books organized by Canada Reads and was declared "the" book to read in Canada 2015.

Author of *Ru* (2009), *À Toi* (2011), *Mãn* (2013), and *Vi* (2006), Kim Thúy continues to explore central themes of literature such as identity, history, and mother-daughter relationship in the context of cross-cultural migration. Her therapeutic and poetic writing proposes a place of attachment against diaspora, a search for hope amidst tribulations, and a call for reconciliation in cultural collisions.

Upcoming Important Dates

03/22/2017	OSUAP Bi-Monthly Meeting – Thompson Library 150, 12-2PM Special Presentation: Working Through Difficult Conversations
04/30/2017	Last day for Campus Campaign Drive 2017
05/07/2017	Spring Commencement
05/29/2017	Memorial Day – Offices Closed

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members with education and training costs, and funds OSUAP sponsored professional development events.

The OSUAP Executive Committee is dedicated to our membership — and that is reflected in our no fee membership and our efforts to

provide our annual conference at the lowest cost possible. In partnership with our committee, you can support these initiatives by donating to our fund.

Your donation will provide training opportunities for our OSUAP peers. Whether it is covering the cost of attendance for one of our members whose

university office is unable to fund his / her attendance at our conference or to pay for a content expert to speak at a training session, your contribution to OSUAP has impact. Just think — if every OSUAP member gave just \$1.00 to our fund, seven scholarships could be granted to members who would otherwise be

unable to attend our conference.

On line donations to our fund can be located here or if you are completing the Campus Campaign form our fund # is 314852.

Thank you for your consideration and support!
OSUAP Executive Committee

10 Reasons Tasks Never Move Off Your To-Do List (And How to Fix It)

By Laura Stack

I recently surveyed my readers on the eternal question of productivity: Why is it that some things on your to-do list never get done? Some great responses rolled in, ranging from the classic (too many interruptions) to the matter-of-fact (I don't feel like doing it).

But as diverse as the responses were, it didn't take long to see certain themes emerge. Below are the top ten issues at the heart of the problem and some guidance on how to deal with them.

1. You haven't made the necessary decisions. Your to-do list should be full of clear, actionable ideas—in other words, things you can actually do. If you have a vague goal, like, "Have a sale," you've still got a lot of thinking to do before you can hit the ground running and make real progress. Take a minute to figure out exactly what you need to accomplish: What kind of sale? When will it take place? What will it promote? Once the task is more fleshed out, you'll be more likely to make progress on it.

2. You haven't talked to the people involved. Are you worried that you don't have the necessary support to make your idea happen? If you need buy-in, go get buy-in. Chances are that your first step should

be to pick up the phone or schedule a meeting. Even if you don't get the answers you want, at least you'll know where you stand. From there, you can move forward, adjust your strategy, or simply move on. Wherever the idea ends up, at least it isn't festering on your list.

3. You haven't done your homework. Perhaps you know you need to schedule a teleseminar series, but haven't gotten around to researching which platforms are available. Figuring out the mundane logistics is now keeping you from making an important decision. Carve out some time to do the legwork, or better yet, delegate that part of the task to someone else. Once you have a better idea of your options, you can focus on the real issue at hand.

4. You're ignoring your internal clock. We spend so much time focused on schedules and deadlines that we often forget to pay attention to our body's natural rhythms. Yes, your Outlook calendar might say that a block of work will fit perfectly on Wednesday afternoon, but if that places your big task in the middle of a low-energy period of your day, you don't stand a chance. Keep your daily energy levels in mind as you plan your day. Start high-energy projects early if that's when your concentration is at its best.

5. The task is unpleasant. The first step is admitting it! If you're being honest with yourself, you probably have an item on your list that hasn't been done simply because the task is unpleasant and you'd rather not do it. If that's the case, it's time to get tough. Make a decision right now to either do the task, delegate the task, or forget about it altogether. If you need to do it, stop thinking about it and just get it done. If it can be delegated effectively, go ahead and make arrangements with someone else. And if you're going to eliminate it completely, cross it off your list and for goodness' sake, move on already!

6. The task is overwhelming. You don't know where to start. Is there an item on your to-do list along the lines of Complete Huge Multifaceted Project XYZ? No wonder you aren't making progress! The task is too big. Large or complicated projects need to be broken down into manageable chunks or else they'll always take a back seat to the smaller, more manageable things on your list. After all, would you rather spend the afternoon completing five smaller items on your list or barely making a dent in one? By identifying a few key steps, such as "Gather Project documents" and "Outline project scope," you'll know exactly what needs to be



done next and be less likely to hesitate as you take action.

7. You are plagued with distractions and interruptions. Seemingly innocent interruptions like checking email, answering the phone, or chatting with coworkers will eat your productivity alive. And although many of these interruptions aren't necessarily your fault, managing them is your responsibility. Identify your time wasters and take immediate steps to correct the problem. You might need to set regular times each day to check email or close your door to let coworkers know you're temporarily unavailable. Not sure where your time is going? Keep a detailed log for a few days and find out once and for all.

8. You are constantly putting out fires. Does it seem impossible to achieve any real long-term focus as you jump from one urgent, immediate priority to the next? Good leaders understand how

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THE OSUAP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Effective Sept. 1, 2016

President: Tricia Hohl
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Membership Chair: Roxann Damron
Member-at-Large: Matt Sikora
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Have suggestions for the Newsletter?

Want to share some good news?

Let us know!

Email: [Michelle Pennington](mailto:Michelle.Pennington@osu.edu)

Chair, Communications Work Group

Please be sure to submit suggestions by the 1st of each month to be included in the Newsletter!

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(MENTOR Continued from page 1)

you messed up and felt like you'd failed? What did you do to recover?" or "What do you wish you had known before your first management role?"

2.) Situations

Bring a situation to your mentor. One that you'd like help navigating. For example, "I tried to delegate a task last week and it did not go as well as I'd expected. Can you help me think through what to do differently next time?" or "I have these two very different career path options and would like your help making a decision" or "How can I let my boss know that I don't need to be micromanaged?"

3.) Self-awareness

One of the greatest gifts you can give yourself is the gift of self-awareness, meaning the ability to see yourself as others perceive you. That way, if you like how you're perceived, you can embrace it and take steps to strengthen that positive perception. If you don't like how you are currently perceived, you can take steps to change that perception to a more positive one.

Your mentor can help by "holding up the

mirror" and giving you feedback on how your actions and communication are impacting the way others see you. Ask a question, such as, "When I presented in that meeting last week, how did I do?" or "Could you give me feedback on ways to improve my leadership presence?" or "Am I coming across as high-maintenance when I send my boss weekly status updates?"

4.) Skill-building

Is there a skill you're currently working to enhance, such as project management, long-term strategic planning, delegating, or public speaking? Ask your mentor for advice and resources that will help you polish that skill.

The Takeaway

By preparing a new variation of each one of these four questions before every mentoring conversation, you can all but guarantee that you'll have interesting conversations for years to come.

Conversely, if you share this list with those that you mentor and encourage them to prep ahead of time, you need never sit through another mentoring conversation wondering if the other person is finding this useful!

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(10 REASONS Continued from page 3)

important it is to make time for true high-value activities, even if they don't present themselves as urgent, deadline-driven issues. If you spend every day jumping from one issue to the next, you might help avert disasters, but you won't ever accomplish anything substantive. Instead, focus on the cause of all those urgent interruptions. Do they come from lack of planning, procrastination, or a team that isn't empowered to handle simple issues on their own? Once you address the underlying problems, you'll be able to focus your time and energy where it belongs.

9. The task requires a lot of work for little reward or recognition. Recognition is nice, but don't live and die by it. If the task is worth doing, it is worth doing regardless

of whether you will be recognized for the contribution. If it's not worth doing (but you have to do it anyway), just get the darn thing done and move on to something more fulfilling. In the meantime, your paycheck is your reward.

10. Your day is overscheduled before you even sit down in the morning. You schedule time and bend over backwards for everyone else...why don't you do the same for yourself? Make appointments with yourself and treat them with the same level of importance as you would a meeting with a client or coworker. If you know you need three hours to get something done, schedule three hours to get it done. And I mean really schedule it. Put it on your calendar, eliminate distractions, and treat the task with the same respect you would a one-on-one meeting with a live person.

So there you have it: ten huge productivity bandits — decide which ones best apply to you. Be relentless as you kick them to the curb and get those tasks checked off your list!

Make it a productive day!(TM)

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© Laura Stack, MBA, CSP, CPAE, aka The Productivity Pro®, gives speeches and seminars on sales and leadership productivity. For over 25 years, she's worked with Fortune 1000 clients to reduce inefficiencies, execute more quickly, improve output, and increase profitability. Laura is the author of seven books, including Doing the Right Things Right: How the Effective Executive Spends Time. To invite Laura to speak at your next event, visit www.TheProductivityPro.com