



EXECUTIVE summary

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This Issue's Theme: **Proposal Health: Importance of a Healthy Mind and Body in a Demanding Industry**

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Make Fun a Priority

by Maryann Lesnick, CP APMP, APMP-NCA President

As proposal professionals, we know the reality of hard work, long hours, deadlines, and stress. Members of the proposal team often have “day jobs,” too. Creativity, productivity, and contemplative abilities can be compromised by stress. The quality of our proposals can be compromised by stress.

According to a report from the American Institute of Stress, a non-profit dedicated to research and education on the subject, job pressures are the #1 cause of stress in the U.S. and 35 percent of Americans say their jobs are harming their physical or emotional health. Persistent stress can cause heart attacks, stroke, kidney disease and rheumatoid arthritis. Stress is often caused by too many thoughts competing for your attention at the same time. The dictionary defines stress as “physical, mental, or emotional strain or tension” or “a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize.” Stress is what we feel when our life or our jobs become overwhelming and too much for us.

There is a definite link between productivity and stress. We are less productive when we are stressed and more productive when we are not. In stimulating, positive and happy environments, the team enjoys and



excels at their work. A fun workplace and happy proposal team are not only more productive, is more likely to produce a winning proposal.

Joy and laughter can bring us together in positive ways. Incorporating more fun and play into the work of your proposal team will improve the team's interactions, mood and outlook. A positive mental attitude produces increased oxygen, endorphins, and blood flow to the brain, enabling us to think more clearly and creatively.

It's true what they say: laughter is the best medicine. Laughter is a powerful antidote to stress and conflict. Laughter makes you feel good. And that good feeling remains even after the laughter subsides. Play and laughter can keep your proposal team productive and motivated. It gives them a positive, optimistic outlook even when working on a proposal. Fun is attrac-

tive. We like to be around those who are having fun.

Here are suggestions for making the job of producing proposals more fun.

Don't be so serious all the time. It is possible to take yourself lightly and still be viewed as a competent and productive Proposal Manager. Fun and work do not have to be antonyms. Seek opportunities to interject humor with your proposal team. Show your human side and share fun things that are happening in your life. Remember that making the job fun helps the team to perform.

Smile! A smile is a curve that sets everything straight. Like laughter, smiles are contagious!

Give out compliments. Make it a habit to compliment someone on your team every day. Show your

Make Fun a Priority

appreciation. Thank individuals for their contributions. Compliments make them feel good and make you feel good.

Put someone in charge of celebrating. Plan fun things to do to take a break during and after work. Celebrate milestones. Celebrate with a submission party and a win party. Celebrate the lessons learned on losses. Is anyone celebrating a birthday or work anniversary during the proposal period? Create some “happiness-boosting traditions,” like bagels on Fridays, or brownies on Wednesday afternoons. How about a lunch outing to go bowling or play mini-golf?

Add fun to you meetings. Bring in fun things like a Nerf ball to toss to the speaker in a brainstorming session. Start the meeting with a humorous story or joke. Add cartoons to your slides. Look for ways to bring fun into the process.

Collect and share your favorite funnies. Collect relevant comic strips or fun articles, and hang them on your office door or in the war room.

Tell Stories. Hold engaging and energetic solutioning sessions where you craft your solutions into a story that involves the customer and has a happy outcome. Create a compelling picture that tells the story. Bring erasable color markers and have some fun on the white board.

Make everyone’s job easier. Set clear objectives and realistic schedules. Avoid overtime and planned work on the weekends unless absolutely necessary.

Eliminate negativity. You can be the positive influence – the driver of positive thinking in the group. Be a cheerleader for success! Keep the glass half full!

As the Proposal Manager, part of your job is to continually evaluate the

morale of your team. If it’s suffering, a break for fun can lift spirits, boost morale, and improve chances of success. Give your team opportunities to enjoy themselves. It will create a friendlier, happier, and all-around healthier environment for everyone.

Dale Carnegie said, “People rarely succeed unless they have fun in what they are doing.”

Make fun a priority!

Maryann Lesnick, CP APMP, PMP, CSM - Principal Consultant with Lohfeld Consulting Group, has more than 30 years of technical, management, and BD experience. Currently the APMP-NCA Chapter President, Maryann served as the 2012 and 2013 Vice President, as the APMP-NCA 2011 Logistics Chair, and on the APMP-NCA Boot Camp Committee for three years (2008, 2009, 2010), serving as Boot Camp Chair 2010. Maryann is a Practitioner Level APMP certification mentor, an ACT-IAC Fellow, a CMMI Level 2 Internal Assessor, ISO 9000 Internal Auditor, certified Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS), and holds a BS in Mathematics and Master’s Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies. mlesnick@lohfeldconsulting.com

2015 APMP-NCA Mid-Atlantic Conference and Expo

APMP-NCA will hold our popular annual event on October 22, 2015 at the Waterford in Springfield, VA. This year’s theme is: ***Navigating the Procurement Obstacle Course***. The conference offers business development, capture, proposal and pricing tracks as well as a corporate sponsor expo. Mark your calendar now to attend the region’s largest gathering of proposal professionals. For further information and sponsorship opportunities, contact events@apmpnca.org.





Capture and Proposal Innovations: Proposal Yoga

by Lisa Pafe, APMP CPP Fellow, APMP-NCA Vice President

Yoga has several aspects that are beneficial to capture and proposal professionals. These include breathing, mindfulness, meditation, and the poses themselves.

Breathing: Did you know that yoga is more about breathing than about poses? Stress and hurrying (every day hazards of our profession!) cause us to breathe shallowly and too quickly. Every cell in the body requires oxygen, and our level of vitality is a product of the health of our cells. Shallow breathing does not exercise the lungs sufficiently, so they lose some of their function, causing a further reduction in vitality and productivity.

Mindfulness: The practice of mindfulness can help you focus your brain and accomplish more that matters. Mindfulness is about awareness. It also involves acceptance. Try to pay attention to your thoughts and feelings without judging them. Focus on the task at hand without rehashing the past or worrying about the future.

Meditation: Meditation relaxes the mind and body. A simple meditation to do at your desk is a breathing meditation, during which you focus on your breath, thus practicing mindfulness. This will calm your mind and relax your body.

Begin by finding a comfortable position, but one in which you will not fall asleep. Sitting with your hands resting



lightly in your lap is a good position to try. Or, gently touch thumb and forefinger together.

Roll your shoulders slowly forward and then slowly back. Lean your head from side to side, slowly and carefully lowering your left ear toward your left shoulder, and then your right ear toward your right shoulder.

Focus inward on your third eye (between your eyebrows). Set your intention for the day ahead. Set it as a positive affirmation. For example, if you want to be productive, think I am productive. If you want to relax, think I am relaxing.

Relax all your muscles. Unclench your jaw and your brow. Observe your breathing. Notice how your breath flows in and out. At first, make no

effort to change your breathing in any way, simply notice how your body breathes. Sit quietly, seeing in your mind's eye your breath flowing gently in and out of your body.

When your attention wanders, as it will, just focus back again on your breathing. If you can't focus easily, you can think to yourself, I breathe in... I breathe out...

Notice the stages of a complete breath... from the in breath... to the pause that follows... the exhale... and the pause before taking another breath...

Enjoy the slight breaks between each breath.

As thoughts intrude, allow them to pass, and return your attention to your breathing.

Capture and Proposal Innovations: Proposal Yoga

Feel your chest and stomach gently rise and fall with each breath.

Now, as you inhale, count silently... one two three.

Hold for a moment.

As you exhale, count...one two three.

Hold for a moment, and now let's repeat two more times.

Inhale...one two three.

Exhale...one two three.

Inhale...one two three.

Exhale...one two three.

Notice now how your body feels. Gently open your eyes if they are closed. Feel rejuvenated.

Proposal Yoga: I have written and presented extensively on the benefits of proposal yoga. Try this detoxifying spinal twist:

Sit in your chair, cross one leg over the other and grasp your top knee with your opposite hand. Hold the back of your chair with your free hand and slowly twist your upper body

and head towards that arm, keeping your back and neck as straight as possible. Hold for 10 counts. Switch your legs and arms and twist in the opposite direction.

You can access my article with additional proposal yoga poses [here](#). Learn how to reduce stress, increase flexibility, and regain composure – at your desk. Namaste!

Lisa Pafe, CPP APMP Fellow and PMP, is Principal Consultant at Lohfeld Consulting Group, Inc. and a LinkedIn Publisher. She serves on the APMP-NCA Board of Directors as Vice President & Publicity Chair and was formerly Chair of the Speaker Series Committee. She holds a B.A. in Political Science from Yale University, Masters in Public Policy from Harvard University, and Masters in Information Systems from The George Washington University. With more than 24 years of experience in capture and proposals and eight years' experience in yoga, she credits her practice with increasing her flexibility, balance, empathy, patience and serenity. Namaste!

Getting Value From Your Membership

The APMP-NCA Chapter has made investments the past two years in our infrastructure, most noticeably the [apmpnca.org](#) website. Our new structure is much easier to navigate and to maintain. If you haven't visited it lately, here are a few things to check out:

1. Want to improve the prospects for success with your next proposal? Tap our Body of Knowledge for more than a decade's worth of educational presentation notes, our [Executive Summary](#) e-zine.
2. View [videos](#) of past Speaker Series events.
3. Did you miss one of our Webinar Series? They are recorded and available in our [Body of Knowledge](#).

4. See APMP-NCA's [blog](#) for frequently updated content.

Other resources available to you include our Social Media sites:

1. [LinkedIn](#) discussion group
2. [LinkedIn](#) Company page
3. [Facebook](#)
4. [Twitter](#)

Finally, if you would like to be on our email list for announcements and our popular 5-Fact Friday, use the sign up link on the [apmpnca.org](#) home page



How Do You Stay Upbeat When Working a Demanding Proposal?

by Mike Parkinson, CPP APMP Fellow

When overwhelmed by a deadline, I can fall into unhealthy mental habits. I get stressed, frustrated and exhausted. However, years ago, I started using three techniques to ensure a happier, healthier and more successful me. I learned these strategies from successful business professionals and life coaches. The following strategies work well together to help me remain positive and less stressed. Use what works best for you.

1. The Platinum Rule.

The Golden Rule recommends, “Treat people as you want to be treated.” In my experience, the Golden Rule has a critical flaw. It assumes that everyone is like me. (*Thankfully, that is not the case!*) Everyone I work with is unique. They have unique experiences, personalities, ideology, hopes, fears, biases, and so on. I do not assume everyone wants to be treated the same.

Personality tests such as Myers-Briggs and DISC prove that people have different communication preferences and styles. For this reason, I follow the Platinum Rule, which states, “*Treat people as they want to be treated.*” To do so, I must—per the rule’s requirement—learn how others prefer

to be treated by applying the next two strategies.

2. Seek first to understand then be understood.

Habit Five in Stephen Covey’s book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, states that we should seek first to understand then be understood. (*I use this approach to create winning graphics.*)

A communication breakdown usually occurs after I make false assumptions. When I listen twice as much as I speak, my proposal team becomes stronger. I often include the reason for my requests or task assignments so my teammates understand the goals behind the activity. When everyone understands why we are performing a certain task, my team and I execute with greater precision and frequently improve what or how we perform.

3. I am responsible.

Several years ago, I read an inspiring book about a prisoner in Auschwitz, which taught me a life-long lesson. In the true story, the protagonist

suffered in ways I cannot imagine. When asked how he survived, the author said that he held tight to his last true freedom. No matter what atrocity was done to him, what he thought and did was always up to him. He was completely responsible for his conscious thoughts and how he reacted. Believing that he was completely responsible—and in control—helped ease his mind and focus his actions accordingly.

Similarly, I believe that, no matter what happens, I am responsible for (*have control of*) my response. I have a choice. For example, if a misprint occurs on the final proposal cover, I can get upset or I can focus my energy on finding a solution. I can’t travel back in time and fix the incorrect cover, but I can put aside my frustration to reevaluate the situation and react in a positive way that will solve the problem.

These three strategies help me through the most challenging proposals. I hope some or all these strategies will help you as well.

Mike Parkinson, CPP APMP Fellow is an internationally recognized visual communications guru and proposal expert, professional trainer, and award-winning author. He is a partner and head of marketing at 24 Hour Company (24hrco.com) specializing in bid-winning proposal graphics. His Billion Dollar Graphics website (BillionDollarGraphics.com) and Get My Graphic website (GetMyGraphic.com) share best practices and helpful tools with professionals. Contact Mike at mike@24hrco.com or call 703-533-7209.

Fun Fact...

You are about 1 centimeter taller in the morning than in the evening.



Be the Change You Want to See

by Elspeth Payne

I stepped into a proposal manager position more than four years ago, and slowly put on the pounds as we worked nights and weekends to deal with short-notice projects on tight deadlines. I felt like sludge. When work was over, all I wanted to do was sit on a couch and read something easy. My house got dusty, minor repairs went untended, and it was all rather depressing.

I was spending at least two hours a day, and more often three to five, getting to the office and home again, so I began to telework. Now, if I needed a five-minute break, I would put the laundry in the dryer. What a luxury! I assumed I'd automatically be more active and stop gaining weight; I could imagine how great I was going to feel. However, while teleworking did remove a whole layer of stress, I kept putting on weight. I eventually realized I had to make some intentional changes.

I wasn't going to "start an exercise program." If I loved pumping iron and managing my heart rate, gym activities would be fun. For me, they're a means to an end. I needed activities I enjoyed for their own sakes, so I'd look forward to them and make an effort to include them in my days. The key word was active. What did I like to do?

As a pretty thorough introvert, I cherish my quiet time. Though I like



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interacting with my colleagues and particularly enjoy cross-functional, multiple team projects, they do exhaust me. Then I would go home and sit quietly; however, I was taking far more time than I probably actually needed to recover.

I thought hard about what I really enjoyed, and what my days would be like if I had complete choice. I was amazed. I had allowed the ever-increasing load of a typically complex adult life take over at some point. How did I let that happen?

Among other things, I used to like to ride a bicycle, and I loved to dance. Those are things I could probably afford and would want to keep doing if I tried them again.

Living in a big urban area, there are lots of kinds of social dancing that

are available for pretty minimal entry fees. Most of them have free beginner's sessions. Contra dance, salsa, tango, balboa, swing, and ballroom were all within easy driving distance. All I had to do was go. Once I went, I enjoyed every minute. I could choose how much I danced in an evening. I felt positive and mentally energized when I left. I slept like a baby. It took all of two to four hours a week. What a buzz!

Years earlier, my bicycle was stolen, and I hadn't gotten around to replacing it. I started to save money, and set a target price range.

I like long road rides, so I began shopping for a decent bike. That turned into a fun project of its own. I looked up five or six bike shops that would let me test ride different models on

"Last season my big goal was to ride the 53-mile Tour de Cure for diabetes, and my big goal now is to ride a century – a hundred miles."

nearby streets and trails. Yes, I still really liked riding!

One shop in particular became a favorite. The folks there turned me on to a local volunteer network that organizes fun road rides. They rated their rides for hilliness and the speed the group was expected to travel. I

could pick accessible routes that would travel at a manageable speed and ride about as many hills as I could. It gave me small but steady improvement goals. Soon I was riding most Sunday afternoons for three or four hours.

Prioritizing these fun, relaxing activities started to change how I managed my time. My Sunday afternoons were no longer available, so I had to finish those errands on Saturday or early Sunday morning. I started taking short rides over lunch or right after work when weather and daylight allowed. Friday nights became dance night. I needed to leave by a certain hour, so I stopped lingering online for a couple of hours after work. Last season my big goal was to ride the 53-mile Tour de Cure for diabetes,

and my big goal now is to ride a century – a hundred miles.

Of course there are weeks when proposals eat up my Friday nights and Sunday afternoons, but they have become fewer as I get more efficient, more alert, and able to focus better for longer periods. Weight is coming off slowly, and my doctor is very happy about how much healthier I am. I get over colds faster, sleep better, my blood pressure is lower, and it's all because I'm doing what I really wanted to all along.

Elsbeth Payne works for Oracle America, Inc. as a proposal manager in the greater Washington, DC area. She rides a Specialized Dolce Comp bike and dances at Glen Echo Park in Maryland.



APMP-NCA Mourns the Passing of Gary Lyles

It is with great sadness that we announce the sudden passing of Gary Lyles, APMP-NCA member and Principal at n8 Consulting, LLC. Gary helped companies improve their ability to win government contract business through comprehensive, compliant, competitive, and compelling cost volumes. An active APMP member, he recently participated in the March Speaker Series event, Winning Against Lowball Bidders, and wrote an eZine article and APMP-NCA blog post on pricing strategies. Gary was a seasoned consultant and entrepreneur with a 35-year career supporting more than \$25B in competitive acquisitions. He was recognized for his excellent qualifications as a cost and pricing lead on large and challenging engagements.



Social Media

Strategies and Tactics: How to Get Creative and Connect in the New Government Market

by Russell Smith, Speaker Series Chair

This article reports on the Social Media presentation at the May 20, 2015 dinner meeting of APMP-NCA.

The panel discussion was excellent and the information presented there and summarized here is of high value. Joyce Bosc, who runs an area marketing communications agency, moderated the 5-member panel. Panelists were: (1) Mark Amtower, an expert on LinkedIn and radio show host; (2) Douglas Burdett, with a Norfolk B2B marketing agency supporting DoD contractors; (3) Naveen Krishnamurthy, a web development and social media guru at a federally oriented agency; (4) Jessica Primanzon, a Senior Manager on the Global Field Marketing Team at Deltek; and (5) Valeria Quinonez, the Communications Director for AOC Key Solutions.

When introducing the program, moderator Joyce Bosc opened with the statistic that 50% of government executives access social media, and 85% of government decision makers use digital media to follow hot topics and trends. Clearly, social media marketing should be of interest to federal contractors. The remaining presentation and Q&A provided information on success stories, social media tools, best practices, content development tips, and analytics.

Success Stories. One panelist shared how a company used a blog



to reach the procurement personnel active in working a solicitation they were bidding. The blog tagged the procurement personnel, recognizing their good work. In addition to the blog, the company and their partners identified the evaluators and tweeted to them to build a relationship. The procurement personnel's appreciation of blog and relationships developed through twitter helped the company win the contract. Mark related a similar example in which a bidder used twitter to establish a relationship with the procurement group working on the NASA SEWP proposal.

Tools and Techniques. Naveen said retweeting is a strong strategy and pointed out how effective automated techniques for distributing

content are. Doug recommended HubSpot and Social Nymph. Valeria uses Rap Social, which costs \$10/month, provides great analytics and works across platforms. Doug suggested SocialRadar.com, which provides reports on all tools. Check the tool capabilities carefully before investing to get the tools most appropriate to reach your audience, given your goals and budget. Communications personnel should use a mix of automatic and real time activity, because people can tell when postings are robotic.

Best Practices. Throughout the presentation and in response to questions, presenters shared several overall tips and best practices. Some notable recommendations follow:

- For best times to post, it is important to experiment. The blog at <http://danzarella.com/> includes a researched attempt to define what are the best times; however, Mark pointed out, this research does not distinguish between B2B, B2C, and B2G.
- Use mostly “*curated*” content (content from others) with 20% of original content in social media forums. Even the thought leaders use an 80/20 mix of relevant material from others and their own material.
- Companies must have a content plan. Doug said, “*Having no content plan is like a car without gas.*” When preparing a plan, consider who you are trying to reach and which stage of the buying cycle they are in.
- To become a thought leader, don’t call yourself one! Share your knowledge, experience, and judgement in interest group discussions and let others ascribe you the title.
- Give more than to take in a social media discussion so the attention isn’t always on you and your content.
- Find the hash tags for your government customers on Google and Twitter (*they are flattered by the attention*).
- Use both social media and traditional media appropriately. Make choices based on research and validation. Mark said, when he posts on LinkedIn, he also sends the material to traditional media,

and some of it is published.

Content tips. Regarding content, these ideas were shared:

- Take some reusable material and add a graphic - use the same type of artwork a journalist would use.
- Place white boards and bulletin boards in common areas and invite the company personnel to participate in the organic development of blog ideas.
- Blog headlines have to be really good (*many are not!*).
- According to Doug, research at Battelle showed that blog post titles need to be between 65 and 70 characters.
- When you are writing a title to a Blog post, it is good to make a claim on an ODD number (*for example: “7 Techniques to win more proposals than you ever thought possible”*).
- In your twitter streams, include some of your good, long-tailed search terms.
- For a popular blog platform, consider Word Press, which runs 20 – 25% of the blogs in the world.
- Several of the panelists commented on the value of constructive re-use. One company never produces any content without the goal of making 10 re-uses. Nearly any document produced by your company could potentially be repurposed to become emarketing content. To be successful, have a systematic way to capture content and share it.

- For new bloggers, wait to start posting until you have about 10 pieces of content. Once you have a small content library, you have the flexibility to start posting once every week or two.
- Expend as much time promoting your social media content as you do developing it.
- “*Don’t be afraid to break a few eggs,*” encouraged Naveem. Stand out and get noticed.

Analytics. If you are serious about succeeding, track your activities and have the capability to generate reliable, useful statistics. Strive to create a “*closed loop*” where you can adequately measure all input and all results in a timely manner. Recommended tools include Facebook Insight Tweets, Tootsuite, and Infusion Tweets, and Google Analytics.

For more information about social media, presenters recommended the following resources: *The Art of Social Media* by Guy Kawasaki, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR* by David Meerman Scott, *Jason Miller’s Welcome to the Funnel*.

Russell Smith has been a proposal industry professional for over 35 years. For the past 30 years, he has been president of Organizational Communications Inc. (OCI), a leading proposal consultant firm. He has been a member of APMP for 20 years, previously serving as president of the NCA chapter and currently serving as Speakers Series Committee chairman. He completed the doctorate degree in education at the College of William and Mary and completed previous degrees at the University of Texas.



Time On Your Side: Proposal Management and the Pomodoro Technique

by Brendan Murphy, CF APMP

For proposal professionals, the clock is always ticking. When a solicitation drops, we need to facilitate and complete numerous tasks in a limited amount of time. The physical and mental demands of working on a complex proposal with a tight timeframe can be intense. While we can't change the time we are given, we can harness and use that time more effectively.

The Pomodoro Technique is a simple personal time management process. While not specific to proposal management, you can use the Pomodoro Technique to work more efficiently through complicated proposal efforts. Best of all, the Pomodoro Technique doesn't change the way you work, but adapts easily to your own unique creative processes.

Overview

The Pomodoro Technique was conceived in the late 1980s by Francesco Cirillo, an Italian university student, as a method of increasing concentration and minimizing distractions while studying. Using a kitchen timer shaped like a tomato ("pomodoro" in Italian), Cirillo divided his study into short but specific blocks of time, including planned breaks. These blocks became known as Pomodoros.

Cirillo found that the Technique had multiple benefits, including increased focus during study/work blocks, the ability to track and analyze progress



(and therefore plan future tasks better), and breaking down large, complex tasks into smaller, less daunting pieces.

Breaks at the end of each Pomodoro encourage the user to literally "*step away*" from the task at hand, regroup, refresh and get ready to take on the next Pomodoro.

The Pomodoro Technique in a nutshell

Practicing the Pomodoro Technique requires the use of a timer: either a physical wind-up timer or a cell phone app. At the beginning of your workday, write down on a log sheet or plain sheet of paper the activities you plan to accomplish that day – one activity per line. These activities should be targeted enough that you expect to finish them in three hours or less. Any activity expected to take more effort should be broken down into sub-activities.

Once you are ready and focused, set your timer for 25 minutes and start working. Try not to allow anything – co-workers, telephone, email, the call of nature – to distract you during this time. If any distractions arise, make a quick note on your log sheet for later action, and continue the Pomodoro. If something comes up that can't wait, cancel the entire Pomodoro, deal with the distraction, and then start the Pomodoro again when you're ready.

When you first start using the Pomodoro Technique, it's important that your timer is visible so you can see how much time you have left. Once you've used the Technique for a while, you may prefer just to hear the ticking of the timer. Whatever your preference, the timer should always be used as an active reminder to keep you focused on the Pomodoro at hand.

Once the timer rings, stop working and make a check mark on your log

sheet next to the activity – you've completed one Pomodoro. Take a three to five minute break; get up from your chair, get some coffee, use the restroom, stretch or walk around the office. It's important to use this break to refresh and revive. Your break can be longer than three to five minutes, but should not be shorter. Once you're ready, take a deep breath, reset the timer and dive into your next Pomodoro.

After four Pomodoros in a row, take a longer break (15 to 30 minutes or more). It's important to understand that break times are as crucial as work times. Pushing through numerous Pomodoros without proper breaks will inevitably result in burn-out and frustration. Following the Technique properly can help you refocus your effort during the work day and result in greater productivity and less stress on mind and body.

At the end of each day, your log sheet will provide crucial information about the amount of time and effort expended on each task, which in turn will allow you to plan future activities

with a better understanding of the expected effort.

Using the Pomodoro Technique in the proposal process

One of the most obvious applications of the Pomodoro Technique to proposal management is the division of major tasks into more manageable sub-tasks. Proofing a 300-page draft is mind-numbing, and often difficult to quantify. However, after a few Pomodoros, you'll be able to gauge your pace and better predict your expected effort. You'll also have the feeling of making steady progress, as opposed to plodding through the middle of a vast desert.

Crafting the Pomodoro Technique to your own unique style

When you first experiment with the Pomodoro Technique, you may feel rushed at times and at as if the timer will never ring at others. This is normal. Once you adapt the Technique to your own workflow and rhythm, you may find yourself looking back at the end of the day, amazed at how much you did, how quickly it went by, and

how much quantifiable information you have about your work methods.

The Pomodoro Technique is designed to be flexible and personal, and can easily be incorporated into other organizational or productivity methods. More detailed documentation on the Pomodoro Technique can be found online at the official site (<http://pomodorotechnique.com/>), and elsewhere on the web.

Maintaining a healthy mind and body while completing your proposal work isn't just about effort... it's also about time. The Pomodoro Technique may help change the perception of time from your sworn enemy to your greatest ally.

Brendan Murphy, CF APMP, has been involved in technical publications and proposal management since 1992. He is currently a Senior Proposal Manager with MAXIMUS, Inc., a leading provider of government health and human services worldwide. This article was written in six Pomodoros over the course of two days, using the Pomodoro Timer Lite for Android by Tatkov Lab. Contact Brendan at brendanmurphy@maximus.com.

Note From the E-Zine Chair and Chief Editor, Sareesh Rawat, CF APMP

We are always looking to improve the E-Zine and would love to hear from you!

What did you think of this issue of the Executive Summary? What did you think of specific articles? Have questions, comments or suggestions for the authors or the editors? What articles, and themes would you like to see in future issues of the Executive Summary?

Please drop us a line at ezine@apmpnca.org or contact Sareesh directly at (301) 523-5157. We look forward to hearing from you!



APMP-NCA Board of Directors Meetings are Open to Members

The Board of Directors for APMP-NCA meets the first Tuesday of every month. Two out of every three meetings are virtual meetings. If you would like to join a meeting, contact us by going to <http://www.apmpnca.org/contact/>.

Special thanks to...

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