

The Professional Balancing Act

10 Tips for Teaching Effectively with a Side Hustle

Session Materials

Host, Susan Smith

Panelists, Jacob Kohut, Jerell Horton,

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1. The *10 Tips* List
2. The Energy Road Map
3. The Magic Wand
4. Characterize Your Work
5. Healthy Reminders
6. Recommended Reading
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From “The Professional Balancing Act”
**10 Tips to Teaching Effectively
with a Side Hustle**

- 1. Prioritize Research and Development**
Build in time to get better at your craft
- 2. Cut the Fat, Not the Corners**
Get rid of the excess in your life
- 3. Finding Flow**
Figure out when you work best; play to your strengths
- 4. Get Good Sleep**
Dark room, same time each night, get 8 hours
- 5. Eat Right**
Avoid processed food, prioritize vegetables
- 6. Exercise**
Find your favorite physical activity that you’ll enjoy
- 7. Maintain Social and Emotional Relationships**
Prioritize the bonds you’ve already built
- 8. Study Your Market**
Find out what people want, not just what you want
- 9. Steal from the Best**
Copy the tricks that are making others successful
- 10. Stack Your Skills**
Combine your skills to provide a unique skill set

Bonus Tip: Prioritize Happiness

Nothing is worth doing if it doesn’t lead to happiness

The Energy Road Map

A Typical Energy Day with Activities

Example from Jacob Kohut

Time	Energy Level	Best Activity (when I can choose)
6AM	Alert/Low	Editing
7AM	Alert/Medium	Editing
8AM	Calm/Medium	Lesson Plan
9AM	High	Teach or Compose
10AM	High	Teach or Compose
11AM	Medium	Teach or Compose
12PM	Medium	Walk
1PM	Dull/Low	Teach (while standing) or Exercise
2PM	Dull/Low	Teach (while standing) or Exercise
3PM	Spacey/Medium	Teach (while standing) or Read
4PM	Spacey/Medium	Compose
5PM	Alert/Medium	Socialize
6PM	Alert/Medium	Socialize
7PM	Calm/Medium	Read
8PM	Sleepy	Get Ready for Bed

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The Magic Wand

1. **If you could wave a magic wand and accomplish anything, what would it be?**
2. **If you had an infinite amount of money, how would you put it towards accomplishing that goal?**
3. **What’s a realistic way to accomplish that?**

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The Magic Wand

Professional Level Bassoonist

Example by Jacob Kohut

1. **If you could wave a magic wand and accomplish anything, what would it be?**

After I began teaching, I still wanted to explore my bassoon ability. I didn't want to leave teaching to play for a living, but I wanted to play at a “professional level.”

2. **If you had an infinite amount of money, how would you put it towards accomplishing that goal?**

For performance on any instrument, studying with master level players and teachers in addition to engaging in as many performance opportunities as possible is the best way to develop.

3. **What's a realistic way to accomplish that?**

I couldn't afford to stop teaching to pursue a degree in bassoon performance with top ranked people in the world. So I split the difference and doubled down my work ethic practicing, performed as often as I could and played for anybody better than me who would listen. I went to concerts and tried to meet the bassoonists afterwards to get insights. I would play for them if the situation allowed. When I traveled I used the opportunity to try to meet new bassoonists. After 18 months of this and 2-3 hours of practice before and after the teaching day, I found myself having several performing engagements with professionals who gave me their blessing of peer respect.

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Characterize Your Work

- 1. How physical is it?**
- 2. How mentally challenging is it?**
- 3. Does it require creativity?**
- 4. Does it require attention to detail?**
- 5. Where does it belong in your day?**

From “The Professional Balancing Act”
Characterize Your Work

Teaching

Example by Jacob Kohut

1. How physical is it?

Very Physical, ideally. I like to teach with a lot of energy, so I have to be careful to control it.

2. How mentally challenging is it?

Each class requires a different amount of mental energy. Good lesson plans minimize emergencies. The curve balls that come from working with kids can be challenging.

3. Does it require creativity?

Teaching effectively requires creativity.

4. Does it require attention to detail?

Yes, but I know I only have so much bandwidth, so I try to have brain breaks for everybody during each class.

5. Where does it belong in your day?

Very few people have control over this, so I have tried to schedule my how bedtime/wake-up time around maximizing my energy to fit teaching into the right spot.

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Characterize Your Work

Reed Making

Example by Jacob Kohut

1. How physical is it?

Requires a lot of work with my hands. I can only do it for about an hour.

2. How mentally challenging is it?

There is little that is mentally challenging with it.

3. Does it require creativity?

There is little that requires creativity because the process is mostly the same.

4. Does it require attention to detail?

Making reeds requires extreme attention to detail. No two pieces of cane are the same and there is great precision required by the hands.

5. Where does it belong in your day?

I like to make reeds whenever I can. I have a set-up at home that allows me to make a reed from start to finish in about 15-20 minutes so I can do it whenever I have that time available. I make a yearly goal and try to accomplish it as soon as I can in the year.

From “The Professional Balancing Act” **Characterize Your Work**

Composing

Example by Jacob Kohut

1. How physical is it?

Not physical but can be fatiguing to use the mouse so much. If there’s not a lot of music being entered, then I can do a 2-3 hour block.

2. How mentally challenging is it?

Very mentally challenging. I’m never more mentally engaged than when composing.

3. Does it require creativity?

Composing requires half creativity, half craft. Nevertheless, that’s much more creativity than anything else I do.

4. Does it require attention to detail?

Creativity and “attention to detail” are almost opposite ends of a spectrum in composition. Towards the editing process of a composition, it requires tremendous attention to detail.

5. Where does it belong in your day?

Composing is great either first thing in the morning or mid afternoon. It all really depends on the type of work that needs to be done on the composition.

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Healthy Tips

10 Genius Foods

According to Max Lugavere in “Genius Foods”

- 1. Almonds**
- 2. Avocados**
- 3. Blueberries**
- 4. Broccoli**
- 5. Dark Chocolate**
- 6. Eggs**
- 7. Grass-fed Beef**
- 8. Olive Oil**
- 9. Spinach**
- 10. Wild Salmon**

From “The Professional Balancing Act”

Healthy Tips

Sleep Tips

- 1. Limit PM Caffeine**
- 2. Maintain Consistent Times**
- 3. Absolute Darkness**
- 4. Cool Temperature**
- 5. Avoid Phones 1 Hour Prior**
- 6. Get Sun During Day**

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Healthy Tips

7 Deadly Sins of Music Teachers

- 1. Not Sleeping Enough**
(4 hours during the week and 11 on Saturday doesn't even out)
- 2. Not Drinking Enough Water**
(Diet Coke isn't Water)
- 3. Equating Fitbit Steps with Health**
(19,000 steps on concert day won't fix a bad diet)
- 4. Not Working Out**
(Lifting and Cardio save lives)
- 5. Eating Convenient Food**
(Wendy's will stay in business without you)
- 6. Stressing What's Outside One's Sphere of Control**
(Students spend 97% of the time outside of our classrooms)
- 7. Not Knowing One's Real Purpose**
(Trying to impress people who don't like you isn't serving students)

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Recommended Reading

1. ***Range* by David Epstein**

For anybody looking to balance their life better, *Range* showcases the power of diversifying your energy. As a music teacher it also serves as a good reminder that sometimes kids can switch instruments or paths and it can turn out really well!

2. ***Drive* by Daniel Pink**

Most great musicians and teachers have a natural drive. We wish our students did as well. *Drive* has been around for more than a decade but the ideas are still fresh and still haven't made their way far enough into the music class.

3. ***Focus* by Daniel Goleman**

Diversifying activities can take a lot of energy and focus. Our limited bandwidth is little understood. On the music teacher's path to ultimate life balance, knowing the limits and abilities of your bandwidth is a must.

4. ***Grit* by Angela Duckworth**

Extremely well-known and slightly controversial, it's a must read for anybody asking their students to push through, and for any music teacher looking to push through themselves. Grit is a major defining factor in success. It's a great question to ask ourselves how it fits into our life balance equation.

5. ***The Talent Code* by Daniel Coyle**

Understanding what the current science says about “talent” is important for all music teachers. While this book might not have all of the answers, it should be the starting point for our conversations.

6. ***When* by Daniel Pink**

The science of timing from music to our body clocks is explored. This book has many useful tricks to maintaining your own energy to do everything that needs to be done and more.

7. ***The Power of Habit* by Charles Duhigg**

Musicians know habits. Teachers know routines. Here's more science behind what we inherently know and ways we can pass it along to students.

From “The Professional Balancing Act”

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