Raymond Sidney-Smith 0:15
Hello, and welcome to Anything But Idle. The Productivity news podcast today's show is brought to you by productivity voice. I'm Ray Sidney-Smith.

Augusto Pinaud 0:26
I'm Augusto Pinaud.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 0:27
And we're your hosts for Anything But Idle. Happy US Presidents Day. This is Episode 44. Important but not urgent. And we're recording this on February 15 2021. And of course, each week we cover and discuss the productivity news headlines of the week. And to do that we have brought today, Art Gelwicks. You know, Art, he's been here on the show before Art Gelwicks is a productivity and collaboration consultant. He's a blogger at the idea pump calm. And he's the host of the being productive podcast, as well as he joins us each week on ProductivityCast. And so welcome to Anything But Idle art.

Art Gelwicks 1:05
Hey, guys, how you doing?

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:06
Good, doing really well doing really well. And so today, in honor of Presidents Day, I thought we would talk a little bit about Eisenhower, that is not just the president, but the matrix, well known in the personal productivity space as the Eisenhower matrix. And so I thought we would have a little discussion in terms of what you know about the Eisenhower matrix. And what we can do utilizing the Eisenhower matrix in our own productive lives. Who wants to walk us through the Eisenhower matrix?

Augusto Pinaud 1:42
Art, go for it.

Art Gelwicks 1:46
Thank you, Augusto. All right,

Augusto Pinaud 1:48
I was going to do it, I saw you think I thought you were ready to so I

Art Gelwicks 1:54
decided it was urgent, but not important for you to do it. Okay, Eisenhower matrix is actually very straightforward. It's literally a quadrant. If you happen to be watching this online, you'll see the image, if not, you can just Google it, because it lays out its four cubes in a quadrant. And it goes important, not important, top and bottom, urgent, not urgent, left to right. And really, it's a matter of how it breaks out as to helping you determine when to act on things, and what to do with them. Some people take it and apply extra layers to that. But the the representation that we've got up here right now is, if it's urgent, and important, you do it now, which kind of makes sense. If it's not urgent, but it is important, you need to pick a time that you're going to do it. That means that you're committing to actually doing it, if it is urgent, but not important. And this is where I struggle with a little bit, you delegate it, who can do it for you. If you have that as an option, you can do that. And if it's not urgent, and not important, you should delete it or eliminate it. Well, I don't know if you're necessarily able to do that in all cases as well. But that's the basic Eisenhower Decision Matrix.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 3:10
Exactly. And this was popularized actually, not necessarily by Eisenhower himself, but by the Merrill's Rebecca and Roger Merrill, along with Stephen Covey. And so you will hear me refer

to this as the miracle covey matrix. And so the idea is, is, as Art noted, you're capable of dividing your world up in terms of priority based on time and value, time being a form of value but value to you how what is the value to you in this sense, and so you're capable of using the Eisenhower matrix or the Merrill covey matrix in so many different areas of your life. And it helps you prioritize the work that is actually most important to you, that doesn't necessarily always get the space to be done. So often than not, we find ourselves in this, I'm going to take this down now. But we find ourselves in a place where we we know that there are important projects we want to complete each week. But instead of doing those projects, we go to the latest and loudest, the most urgent, the thing that we believe is on fire. And most often than not, it's on fire because someone else told us it's on fire, not because we believe it's on fire. And that tends to lower in priority, the things that are going to provide us with the greatest amount of fulfillment in life. And it just happens over and over again. I see people come in they say I'm not doing this, or I'm not doing that. I'm not I haven't gone back to school. I haven't applied for this, you know, really interesting grant, I haven't done this project that's really going to provide me with such great future acts. they they they delay these things, not because they're bad people or immoral or anything like that. It's because they just simply haven't seen it shown to them in a way that makes sense. And as soon as they start to grok that they're like, Oh yeah, why am I not prioritizing this thing? Oh, that's right. Because every time bill walks into my office, and says jump, I say how high when it reality, he does that every week. And it's never important. And I never really get those things done that need to get done. And by just putting a little bit of importance on those things, and scheduling those things that are most important, you start to see some real traction on important projects.

Art Gelwicks 5:14
Just a couple with that. When you think about the things on the importance line, moving from, from not urgent to urgent, so often happens because people fail to plan. So even though you have something that's highly important, they have not allocated, adequate time to address that thing. So that it's not a fire drill. But now it's become a fire drill, because it was allowed to sit around. So movement between the quadrants can be indicative of many of the problems that you're trying to resolve with the quadrants themselves. But I have to agree with you completely on this idea of problems and items showing up in the quadrants, not from your own origin, you know, getting delegated on so to speak, somebody went through their own quadrants and decided that it was urgent but not important. Therefore, you go get to go do it. Well, now it's on your quadrant listing. And guess what it has now been declared urgent and important. Why? Because somebody else put it off for a while, and you're delivering on their promises. It's not, it's not good by any stretch from a feel good standpoint. But it is a way to help you kind of get your hands around what could be a very amorphous pile of things to do.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 6:34
What I always find to be important, and not urgent, are things that tend to be important to me, and important to other people in my world. But they have not prioritized it in their own world. And so the collaboration is not happening, that otherwise would be happening. And or I find myself in a place where I actually need somebody else's help not, it's not that I need somebody else's help I want somebody else's help in making that project move forward. And it's actually not being done because I want to collaborate with someone and it's holding me up. And so it actually gives me that opportunity to say, Okay, this is important. It's not moving forward, what help do I need? What help do I want? And let me go find those people to help me make that happen. And that's a frequently useful heuristic for me to recognize is, is the thing holding up and important, but not urgent project?

Art Gelwicks 7:25
Yeah, I think, for me important is often defined by saying, what happens if I don't do this? What are the ramifications of this not being completed. And if it's, I can't think of anything, then it's probably not important. It also could be something though nothing bad may happen from it.

But it's something I really want to do, or really feel a need to do it. And to me, that becomes that bad thing that unmet need. So I can still use that measure of what what are the ramifications, I have to just take into consideration my own feelings and sentiments as well as the rest of the world around me.

Augusto Pinaud 8:05
You know, one of the things I really like about this matrix is that it's really the first step for for productivity, I don't care how solid your system is, how good your system is, how much do you know or gig or love productivity, you can always come back in here and put things on this quadrant, and then get into the more advanced complicated things, you know, and so having a conversation, somebody recently where this person was feeling that everything in his life is urgent and important, and it's overwhelmed because of that, and the question was, okay, let's go back to this question. Okay, where can you put the stuff in these buckets, because as I said, always, we have to, there are two problems with productivity. One is we all believe that tomorrow, we will have more time. And the second problem is, we, when we are overwhelmed, and we start feeling all that pressure, instead of a stop and plan. We tend to try to do as much as we can, and what happened and what I tell people normally is you need to understand that when you are on those positions, planning is more critical. Because what happened is you can only are you're only going to be able to make X amount of movements. Every movement you make means one that you will not be able to do. Therefore if you are in that high pressure place. You need to be able to make the precise movement and that only happen with planning and this tool. This matrix is a great One to get you into a really easy, you know, just this is urgent This is scheduled this delegate this need to wait, this is under maybe. And then you can take it from here to a more much more a much more complicated

Art Gelwicks 10:17
level. One of the things I've recommended to people is sometimes they'll get into a bind, where they wind up with too many things in one quadrant, they wind up with a whole slew of important but not urgent, for example, or urgent but not important. And what I do in those cases, I tell them nest the quadrants put the same quadrant inside one of those quadrants take all of that big chunk of important but not urgent, and now apply the exact same set of questions to those, it takes a little bit more thinking, but it gives them an opportunity to get it again down to that level of smaller part, I don't normally recommend people go beyond three levels at the worst, because then you're just getting crazy granular, but two levels is usually enough to get a good framework around where you want to start and how you want to start to rank things.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 11:11
Yeah, so So in essence, I really think of the important not urgent matrix as 16 squares, as opposed to just the four. And that is, again, taking what you're doing, which is splitting each square into an additional four. And everything for me is in shades of gray in when it comes to prioritization and I always find that there is a there's a tertiary dimension to the matrix, which is not just the the importance and urgency, but the value it's going to bring to me. So what's in what's importance, there's importance to others, which could be the fact that there's a deadline to someone and that that urgency requires it to be done. But there's also what's in it for me, what's the thing that I'm going to get out of this, the importance may be to the organization. And so you need to start making that a little bit more aware in your world, which is what does important mean? Is it? Is it important to your job? Is it important to your family? Is it important to someone outside of yourself? And if that's the case, then you always need to look at it from the opposite perspective, which is, why do you want to do it what's important to you. And by placing it on the chart as well, this is really low importance to me, but really high importance to the family, then the value needs to be the the middle ground to that it needs to be the the difference between the two. And that helps to better align where things map out on your system. And I've seen some fairly sophisticated matrices created using and starting with

the Eisenhower method so that people can really start to understand that the other is that these terms may not suit you, you may decide that there are there's a different x and y axis, and that there are different values that you want to be able to see to be able to prioritize things, there's also the Pew matrix, you may want to look at the Pew matrix. And in essence, that is just another way in which you can, I'll put this in here a Pew Decision Matrix, and the Pew decision matrix P gh, gives you the capability of going ahead and looking at various decision models by virtue of ranking these items. So you know, there are other decision matrices as well, you can use the concept of what we do in March Madness, right. And they have all the various, you know, items on on one column, you compete them against each other, you compare them against one another, and then they move forward by virtue of you deciding which one is more important than the other, and so on and so forth until you come down with the with the primary focus for any given day, week, month, quarter here. So

Art Gelwicks 13:46
one of the exercises I've had people do and I and it has nothing to do with actually the quadrant, but it uses the same quadrant methodology. I'm doing a combine layout, and doing four columns in the Commonwealth five, one is a backlog of all the items themselves. And then you do first column which is urgent and important than urgent, not important, important, not urgent or important, not urgent, and then not urgent not important. By doing that. And then dragging the cards into those columns, you do two things. One, you help your mindset framework it second by doing the urging columns. First, you're dealing with things that are time sensitive, before they are scale sensitive for lack of a better term. And then finally, the third thing, which isn't always the case, but I can find it helpful. Once you get it into the column. You then resort the cards into how you're going to address them. It's a it's a baby step into a bigger system. But often I find that teams This is really good too. If you have a team that's trying to come to a consensus as to what's urgent versus important. Just that four column layout getting away from the actual visual matrix makes it easier for them to wrap their head around things and get things moved to the right spots.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 15:00
Any final thoughts regarding the Eisenhower matrix, the middle covey matrix and using decision decision matrices for purposes of productivity? I'll take that as a no. And so with that, that closes out our theme discussion this week to get us started and takes us into our stories of the week. And so each week we cover and discuss the productivity news headlines of the week. And so with that, let's get into our headlines at gousto. What is our first story this week?

Augusto Pinaud 15:31
The first story of the week, is an article that came on nine to five mag about what's happening with the airports and you know, all day, it doesn't matter what wireless headphones you use, after so many hours of use the battery's going to start dying. So I was one of those who had the original purpose that the battery die, they are sitting in a drawer because of that, but then you have an issue. Okay, what do you do? Do you recycle? How do you recycle, or do to demand the trash? That is, you know, at the end of the day, it's going to end up in a landfill not good. So now there is a new service called hot swap, you could do from a while take it to the Apple store, and the Apple store will kindly exchange it to you for the same price of new ones. that have never worked for me because of that. But now, there is this new company called port swap that allows you to receive the replacement for a significant lower price. So we are talking about the the replacement is $59 instead of what Apple charge, and if you get one of those you get Lisa. So it is a really good option. If you have one of those carpets, and the battery's failing the battery's dying, this is a great way to get that battery refresh and get more life out of them.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 17:08
So I'll note also,

Augusto Pinaud 17:10
yes.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 17:11
Oh, yeah. So I'll note also that there's a company called Batteries Plus, and maybe they're called batteries, plus bulbs. Now, I don't know, either way, I believe they're a franchise that have local franchises. So you can find a local one, hopefully by you. But for things that have batteries, batteries, plus or Batteries Plus Bulbs, provides a really amazing service. So say you have a small tractor trailer on your farm, and you want to get the battery replaced on that, you could take the battery to Batteries Plus, and they will literally recharge the battery, they have the capabilities of recharging that. And then you can walk in and say like my phone battery has died. And they can actually remove the battery from your phone, that's probably gonna break a warranty. And they're gonna, they will be able to recharge that battery. So I would call them and ask them, Hey, I've got these air pods and the battery has died, could you recharge the batteries, and if they're capable of doing it safely, then they will. So this is again, one of those cases where I'm a huge advocate for not just recycling materials, but breathing new life into them. Because many times the thing that causes something not to work anymore. THE MEANTIME before failure for every product in life today that has electronics in it is usually the battery, not just the battery that's powering it, but the battery that's powering the onboard system. So those two batteries tend to be the things that go and it seems like Batteries Plus is doing, I think a great service to both consumers and the environment.

Art Gelwicks 18:36
I just say being the old curmudgeon that I am that if you have a headphone jack, this is not a problem.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 18:44
I'm wearing physical headsets here. But I do have my fair share.

Art Gelwicks 18:47
I have a wire, I have a wire

Augusto Pinaud 18:52
I do a wire for the podcast because I same same reason the computer is hard wire. I know that but I love these things.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 19:03
I have many, many wireless headsets. And I i really i appreciate them for all of the various capabilities that they provide in different contexts. Especially I recently got I think I've already talked about this on the show, but I got these aftershocks, which are a birthday present. And the aftershocks are bone conduction. And so they go on over the ears, but they do not actually go inside of your ears. And I I've actually been having some ear pain from one of the silicone buds. They've just been a tip is just been irritating me and I'm not allergic to silicone, or silicone. So it's not that it's like for some reason, it just irritated it. And so being able to put those on and go to town, you know, go do what I need to do has been really wonderful and it keeps your ear canals open so that they can breathe and heal and whatnot. So just know that there are different headphones for different situations. And and, you know, I'm all for For the right tool for the right job and being physically connected all the time is not going to be the best. But I do that I'm physically connected right now. I mean, I'm wearing I'm those

Art Gelwicks 20:12
aftershocks at least once I would have to put them on backwards and cosplay Jordi laforge. So I'm just saying it would happen.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 20:20
You'd have to, I guess you'd have to like put a little visor piece on

Art Gelwicks 20:23
Yeah, well, that's that's a sports addition.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 20:25
Yeah. So; I'm all for it. I'm all for it. And by the way, I was tricked this weekend into believing that William Shatner passed away and and art corrected me and so, but art, you know, William Shatner is not dead, just in case anybody else was fooled by the trolls on Twitter. I was I was like, I was shocked and dismayed, being a Trekkie. And thankfully, I was like, Oh, good. Shatner has a few more years hopefully, left in his in his life. Already.

Art Gelwicks 20:54
He's not dead yet, Jim.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 20:57
On to the next story this week. Augusto

Augusto Pinaud 20:59
the next story, we are going to let our tells us everything about it is the online workspace startup notion. He outage sitting DNS issues, hoops that we passed, and Ark was kind enough to report it to us. So I'm going to let you all take all the credit for that news.

Art Gelwicks 21:20
No, actually, I'm glad you brought that up, because they released an article just this afternoon talking about some more detail with it. And it's it's a little bit more worrisome than it was before. notion went down for pretty much the better part of a day, because of DNS access prevention. They weren't you couldn't pull up the notion dot s o website and go to the site. Just nothing was there. Turns out that what happened was their DNS provider flagged notion, because there was a phishing site that was accessible from within notion. Well, what really happened was a user of notion linked to a phishing site from one of their pages and then shared that page notion or the DNS providers internal scans saw that flagged it flagged the domain and brought the domain down, which, on one side, I say, Well, good on them that they're helping block filter or phishing stuff. The other side of me says, Wait, one chuckle headed user took down the entire service for 12 hours because of this overreaction of the system. Now, the DNS provider and notion have both said that they have been made modifications to prevent this large scale impact ever occurring again. But I don't know this seems to be a fairly big oversight in my books. So I, there has been a lot of the natural reaction to this of people going, what are the alternatives and in Ocean State, just as many, we need an offline mode. So just be aware that this can happen, no matter how big or how small, you know, cloud based web based service can go away for extended periods of time for no reason of their own?

Augusto Pinaud 23:04
No, but I think I think if that will bring an offline mode, that's going to be a great thing for notion users,

Art Gelwicks 23:14
I hope. So. It's a fascinating platform. It's got a lot of opportunities. I'm starting to worry a bit a little bit about all the different interconnection pieces in the back there, the API supposed to be coming out hasn't quite gotten there yet, there's a lot of things that haven't quite gotten there yet. So I'm looking at it with cautious optimism that this problem will never occur again. But

they are not new to having outages they've had a few over the years. And that just doesn't go a long way in in building confidence in your service.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 23:48
Right. I'm also i'm not particularly worried about this from from one level, they have done remediation to be able to fix this. And akin to the Twitter blue whale. I mean, for those of us who remember seeing the fail whale over and over again, for us heavy Twitter users, Twitter, nothing really happened to Twitter based on those failed well, other than some memes. So the reality is, is that, you know, when you're scaling at millions and hundreds of millions of users, it becomes an issue notion is much smaller than that, though. And so that that's the part that worries me in terms of their ability to scale well and easily. And, again, this goes to show that this is not easy to do any program that is taking data from individuals and publishing them online. And going further to say that even now, with the US really having an eye on section 230, and what it looks like to put data into someone else's tool and sharing that data publicly, right, this wasn't an issue of the DNS provider, seeing someone put private information into notion they were publishing it publicly. And by virtue of sharing it publicly through the notion service. It brought the entire service down, what is going to happen over time with All of the surfaces, Evernote, OneNote, and otherwise, where you're capable of sharing something that can be indexed by Google and the other search engines. And therefore, providers are saying, Hey, we don't want this information, both for malware purposes, or ransomware attacks or those kinds of things, vectors for botnets, to be accessible, and we don't want the kind of contentious content being put out there, that would cause some government authorities to provide further and greater oversight over the content being published, eroding free speech, in essence for its citizens. So we're kind of in this fine line here. And we think, oh, notetaking software, or a database software, you know, and all of the doodads associated with it for productivity purposes. But there was this bigger conversation that I think is very important for us to keep in mind, as we move forward with this, I think it's, it's it's detrimental to the market to have a DNS provider, going ahead and doing this kind of stuff. But then on the other side of that it's detrimental to our free speech, if this becomes a reason, like a ticked off checklist point of see the reasons why we need to limit speech online, right? Like, it seems like a silly thing to us. But it's one of those things that can be used in any number of banana republics to make, honestly, you know, here in the States, we've we've, you know, we got our own bananas. Yeah, we've skimmed leaves skin, the edge of of banana republic here as well. So we have to be mindful in the states just as much about that, you know, democracy is the thing you want to keep. It's it's not the it's not the it's not the inverse. It's not just de facto, it's not the standard, it is the thing we need to constantly work for. And I think this shows it even in such a weird, small niche, productivity technology.

Art Gelwicks 26:41
Yeah. But also, I mean, it could have been a bigger player. And I could envision the same type of thing happening to Evernote for happen. Absolutely. So I mean, the the scale, is there. Now, I'll spin it positively. What it did compel me to do when I saw it, I wasn't I hadn't been using notion heavily as of late. But it kind of poked me to go look at some of my other tools that I've been using, and haven't given them a look for a while and see. So I've actually started using workflowy quite a bit again, just to go back into that space and see what are the options? And what are the vulnerabilities? So yeah, you you need to be aware of your tools, you need to keep track of those and make sure that you're comfortable with how they're operating. And when they have hiccups. Are you willing to live with that hiccup?

Raymond Sidney-Smith 27:30
Right, and knowing how to backup and failover to another system, you know, one of the things that I'm always, you know, very confident in is that if for some reason one of my services is not available, will I be able to continue operating that continuity of my own personal productivity system, not just of the business continuity, but the personal productivity system is important to

me, I want to make sure I'm continuing to work when something fails. And even then, something's just happening. And I'll give an example this morning, I realized that my browser instance, had killed off a set of tabs. Now, this is very strange for me, because I've never had this happen before. my browser had about five different windows open, and probably close to 60 or 70. tabs open across those five windows. They had different instances on different virtual desktops with different things open. And the first browser that I had, you know, my primary browser instance that was open it for some reason, blipped it just disappeared. No, no recognition of it. When I went to restore, you know, it ended ended up quitting the browser, I opened it up and said restore tabs, sure, restore tabs. And that should have opened up all of the windows and all of the resident tabs, they were gone, missing an action. Now of course, I know that I can go into my Chrome history and browse and see every tab that I've opened over time, but some of them I opened over different timeframes. So they're not all together in one space, which of course was a huge hiccup to my productivity, because I had, I had those browser tabs open, it was probably about 12 or 13 different browser tabs open for a very specific reason. I recreated it fine. It was a minor hiccup. But that's one of those cases where knowing what you're working on and why you're working on them is so important. And one of my own rules every day, which I just didn't follow this morning was that I go through and I purge all of my tasks, so that I have a a a clean browser window. When I start the day if I didn't capture it the prior evening, and yesterday, I worked late. And so I just ended up getting up this morning had those tabs open. And I should have gone one by one and processed every tab and I didn't and because of that I suffered. And so this just goes to show the importance of maintenance in your productivity system to make sure that you're tracking these things as as you need to to make sure that technology doesn't hold up your productivity. A gousto What's our next story the week

Augusto Pinaud 29:54
so our friends of Microsoft on build Viva Microsoft Viva their employee experience platform. They February 10, date announced the launch of Viva the first employee experience platforms and tools for employee engagement learning, well being a knowledge discovery.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 30:18
So more ways for employers to track you.

Art Gelwicks 30:24
Yeah, kinda sorta.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 30:26
Well, I was actually I recently read an article about how much information teams tracks about users. And that information being available to the, the Microsoft 365 administrators. So the reality to me is that I see Viva as being useful and some right. But it really is just a mechanism for employers to keep Well, we

Augusto Pinaud 30:48
will allow employers to be able to run graphs and stuff that they can put on their PowerPoint to show to other people. Well,

Art Gelwicks 30:55
I don't, I think that's only one aspect of it, though, when I take a look at Viva, I mean, it does have the section about productivity and well being and you know, what are you doing? And how much are you doing and things like that. But it also extends into areas such as being able to do globalized topics across an organization, you know, finding somebody who is the Power Apps expert in your org, maybe you have no idea. And you're able to leverage across people who have this common interest finding, establishing, they're talking about culture and connections and learning platform. So I think, I think what they're trying to do is take

advantage of the fact that just about everybody's got teams if you're working within the Microsoft environment, and all the information that that makes available, and then leveraging the Microsoft Graph in the back end, to start to bubble that information up when it's needed. And when it's accessible. It can be creepy, I'll be honest with you, anybody who's ever looked at Microsoft Delve, and you go in, and you see all of a sudden you see documents from other people. And absolutely, you know, they're working on this, they were working on that. And if you ask them, they're like, yeah, until everybody was working on that. It's the system populating it. There's definitely an uncanny valley that you wind up crossing. But I personally, I don't worry too much about things like the insights because having looked at the Microsoft insight, functionality, before, there's very little that's actionable by a manager in that content, it's very high level stuff, it's very broad category, if anything, because there is insights that you can get through things like email, it's good content for an employee to take to a manager. You know, if you're having discussions about your workload, and things like that, it gives you metrics to be able to share, but not something that a manager can go and say, Oh, you only did 47 emails today, you were supposed to do 48 Yeah, that that type of thing is not in the system.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 32:53
And I think ultimately, what is going to happen is that we need to have an understanding of what machine learning is doing with this data. And the ability for us to be able to understand ourselves better, so that we can be more productive. And this is not about, you know, I'm very much against this idea that we should be trying to squeeze every bit of, of productivity out of every human being. We are generative creatures. And so our innovation and our ideas behind things are much more important and powerful than squeezing out another hour of productivity from individuals. So you know, I, I happen to be I get, I tend to be very skeptical of a platform like Viva, I do like the idea that they're pulling together the this knowledge graph concept, I like the idea that they're pulling in learning into the Viva platform. I'm very excited about those pieces. But I also am always very skeptical about what the real reason is behind Microsoft giving these tools to not the user, but to the employers and managers. In this case, I think you're right, for now, the managers are probably not necessarily capable of using this in any grand fashion. But the more you know, Azure Machine Learning Tools come into be where you can ask natural language questions. And Azure will be able to do all the crunching in the background and with Power BI or otherwise giving real answers like who's your least productive employee, Bill. All of a sudden, Bill is now pink slipped, because a computer told them. So those are the kinds of things that I'm concerned with. Because bill, bill, bill may be a very important vehicle to say a relationship with a client. And while he does nothing, his relationship with that client is going to lose potentially, you know, a large amount of money for that business by virtue of them firing him or terminating him. Those are the kinds of things that are not baked into a system. They're human. And that's, that's not that's not capable of being kind of sourced in all of this.

Art Gelwicks 34:52
Yeah. And usually that's not a question that they have to ask. It's metrics that are used to justify a decision that's already been made. And that's where a lot of a lot of this stuff comes back to.

Augusto Pinaud 35:03
Yeah, what but what what is what a platform like Viva will allow them to do that he's maybe interested in is to see what are the skills that are not obvious for the organization? And that what what, what is exciting about it, I mean, aside, there is a lot of things I don't like about the idea, but I understand a big part of that is in Microsoft product. I also understand that it will, as we get more into this accelerated process to distribute workforce, you know, I, I, the people who believe that we are going to come back to January 2020, no, that's not going to happen, we're going to go to something new. And there is going to be a lot of distributed workforce, a

lot of people working, you know, not that thing that we're talking in 2018, that hotelling thing, no, not really people, you will not see in that office ever again. And getting those skills, those soft skills that you could get now walking into the hallways, that's going to maybe be something interesting,

Art Gelwicks 36:21
what looking at the product itself, it does, it does raise my mind and interesting framework. And that's because of the change in the work environment that we've gone through over the past year. I think, looking at 2021, we're gonna see a much greater push into internal online communities, within organizations, regardless of the platform of the tool, whether it's teams Yammer, Slack, it doesn't matter. The the soft skills and expertise needed to grow and facilitate those communities so that they're effective and productive. Are is going to be a deciding factor for a lot of success.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 37:03
I would agree. I agree. All right. Moving right along to our next story,

Augusto Pinaud 37:09
we will continue in the Microsoft world and to do God now widgets on for iOS 14, so you will be able to get widgets and bring your to do to the widgets on the iOS. And

Raymond Sidney-Smith 37:30
so this is Microsoft to do

Augusto Pinaud 37:32
Microsoft to do yes, on iOS.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 37:34
So or 14, right? iOS 14 and above. Correct?

Augusto Pinaud 37:38
Yeah. So I don't know many things for which I like the widgets. I'm not sure task is one of those. So let's see, let's see what happened. But it still if you use or you leave in to do that will be you know, it's it's an improvement on Microsoft is one of the things we have seen with Microsoft in the last month, if they are finally bringing those features to iOS much faster. You know, we laugh about having excel in the two screens or into half the screen. You know, it took them just two years to develop. And I don't think it took them that I think it finally was it time to release it. And they were holding it back. But it's good to see that finally, they are trying to keep things with what they iOS capabilities.

Art Gelwicks 38:35
Yeah, I'm a big widget fan. I love widgets on Android, and I don't use iOS for that stuff. But task lists are have always been a struggle point for me is widgets. Because there's so much information that has to be crammed into that widget for it to be useful, that it's hard to park it on your screen with other things you wind up with. On Android, you wind up with it being in many times its own page, or half a page within the launcher, the launcher I've been using as of late action launcher has the option to swipe out from the right side, the widget screen. So you just pop that out. And then you can have a couple of widgets there. And I have one for to do with that's in there. And that's somewhat useful because then I can quick reference my to do list but it's just there's too much stuff. Otherwise, you only get two or three items. And then you're scrolling up and down through it. And also, I'll be curious to see how much it gets adopted. But widgets are always one of those things in my book that you added added there and you take it away and you add another one. Take it away. The only thing that stays

consistent for me is the weather is the weather. Yeah, the weather. My weather apps widget is on top of the screen always there.

Augusto Pinaud 39:46
Yeah, weather, weather and calendar are the two for me. I love the fact that I can see the calendar, the next 30 to demand calendar and next week, what are the next two or three appointments and that's it. That's useful, but the To dues, I don't use it on the iPhone, it's the screen is too little. And then when you get to the iPad, I prefer the iPad, I prefer to open the application.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 40:10
Yeah, I've actually found myself with the, I just got the new Google Pixel five and or not the new but I got a Google Pixel five and the ability for it to show me the next event. And the weather next to it is really useful. And I find having the widget that shows me the next few events was useful until I was using my watch. And my watch shows that now, so I don't need it on the phone, because I could just look at my watch and see the next few events. And then the only other widget I use does not show actual tasks, it just gives me the ability to quickly input tasks and search for actions in my system. So I don't like the tasks displayed because it doesn't know what I want to work on, I want it to, I want to be able to quickly access those items, not necessarily see them. I just don't think of it that perspective in that way. But I do know a lot of people who use calendar widgets effectively, and that is the thing that is the most useful widget in iOS and Android today. So I like this action launcher concept, the ability to have like a swipe out from the screen. But I've decided that I'm only having one screen on my phone. And all of my folders are gonna be on that one screen. And so there is no swiping right, any longer on the phone, there's one screen, all of the apps are in their domain. And that's it, I don't want to have to swipe, you know, multiple screens to be able to see things. And on Android, you swipe left in order to see the Google what is I guess the will snapshot and then you can you view Google News and whatever or whatever else. But I don't want to ever have to swipe right to be able to get to other pages, it's just used, it's not as productive for me, I want everything to be accessible there. Otherwise, I'll just search for it in the tour,

Art Gelwicks 41:55
then you might want to try action launcher because it has two features that go along with it. One is you can take a group on action launcher, and make the swipe up from the group pop up in a widget. And you can also tie that to like an application. So like your weather app, you can swipe up from the icon for your weather app and open the widget you designate for that app. That's one thing. The second is they're they've just started to introduce stackable widgets. So you can put a stack of widgets at the top and by scrolling up through, you can flip through the widgets. Now, that's still in beta because some widgets have an internal vertical scroll, and that just makes a mess out of it. But just that ability to optimize that screen real estate, I kind of like the other one to think about too, if you're thinking about something that just have one screen, Microsoft's launcher gives you the option to have vertical screen orientation, instead of pages. So instead of flipping left or right, you can just keep scrolling up. So it's like a continuous unlimited screen. Just depends on the metaphor that you want to get to for what the experiences but there's a bunch of them to try.

Augusto Pinaud 43:04
Yeah, that's that's interesting, too stackable came with iOS 14. And yeah, that was that is that is fantastic. Because the the iOS 14 even get to change out you sent me magically, you know that widget depending on the time and what your behavior is. So they do some kind of artificial intelligence to tell you Okay, it is denied or denied. You don't look too much of the weather, but you tend to look at this other widget and then it it kind of sorted them but they are the two or three of them are there and that kind of useful.

Art Gelwicks 43:39
Yeah, I'll post over on the idea pump a couple of screenshots of my launcher, the homepage, and then with this side window popped out so that people can see what it looks like with the widgets and without

Raymond Sidney-Smith 43:50
antastic wonderful. And with that we have reached the end of our first half of our stories this week. And when we get back we're gonna have more stories this week. We have some really fun new tools this week that we want to share with you all. And so let's head into our break with our sponsor this week. cowork productivity voice productivity voices our sponsor this week, and so we'll see right after the break.

Sponsor Voice Over 44:14
Are you feeling that you need help implementing a personal productivity system a goal or a habit like the weekly review? Do you need help making your current system more robust? Do you want a quick checkup of your current systems to ensure they are the best solutions for you? With more than 20 years of experience in technology, personal productivity and GTD productivity voice can help you review renew create or fine tune your system and your personal productivity. Visit productivity voice.com forward slash Anything But Idle for a free 30 minute consultation. Let's achieve more enjoy more and feel more wins in the game of being productive. Head over to productivity voice.com forward slash anything But idle today. And now back to the show.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 45:05
Welcome back everybody to Anything But Idle I am here with a good steppin out in our guest Art Gelwicks from the idea pump. And we were just in the midst of our stories this week. And so let's continue on with our next story this week. Okay, so what's our next story?

Augusto Pinaud 45:20
Our next story is an article for cable dog or G says COVID-19 10 apps at ko boost, working from home. And normally, I will think that the article is kind of, you know, out of time, but the reality is that for for a lot of there is a lot of people realizing that this is not going to be three months, or six months or nine months, and they probably have a long time to go before things get to, to better. So there is people now a lot of people looking for Okay, what can I do to make the next improvement I already solve? You know, the emergency situation, put all the patches to be able to work. Now, how can I turn those patches into permanent improvement. And so this brings an interesting list. You know, they talk about rescue time that we have talked here, they talk about quip. They talk about 15 five that I'm not particularly familiar with. They talk about expensively for planning. They talk obviously about our friend soom TeamViewer Trello. Be focus, a center, and the Scrivener. And it was really interesting for me that the last option was a Scrivener. Because as much as it's an app that I have used for many years to write books, it's not an app that I will have recommend to anybody who unless they want to write up. So it was really interesting to see that that was their their last option that said, some of the things you know, that they have really cool in there is they're giving you the app and on and on their opinion and alternative. So when they talk to a Senate or about a Senate, they also talk about air table as an alternative to that. Yeah, I've

Art Gelwicks 47:24
seen I've seen Scrivener a couple times, I've looked at it, and it scared the heck out of me and I went rather than the other direction. You're right, it looks like it has a very singular purpose. And what I've seen it does that job really, really well. I just don't have that job to do.

Augusto Pinaud 47:40

And that's what it is, is Scrivener is an incredible application, if you are looking to write something like a book. Okay, there is few things in the market that will do the job better than that. But he's not, or I don't think it's an app for things outside of that world.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 48:02
Yeah, and I think all of these articles that tend to be listicles of things that are interesting and useful. I tried to kind of relegate them to the bottom of the list. But once in a while, they have just a few interesting pieces of the puzzle that I'm like, you know what this is worth sharing, because it has some unique applications that maybe you weren't aware of. All right, moving along.

Augusto Pinaud 48:27
Well, moving along, we have an article from solutions review, talking about employees believe that mobile devices play a key role in productivity. And, you know, one of the interesting things with the pandemic, especially the beginning of this is how much people discover that they did Didn't we were not prepared to have kids at home, those parents was kids, they were not prepared to work from home. You know, I told the story in this show. And I told her in other places, you know, the first thing we did was for my wife was get a second monitor because she was going crazy. Okay. And, and at that time, we were lucky, we were able to find one because there was a moment in the beginning months, a year ago that there was none available in the market. So for a lot of people, their mobile phone turned almost into their main machine so they could manage, you know, all these kids at home devices until the finances and the availability and everything else, create a new and establish a new system of devices to be able to do work, and kids to school and everything else. So I'm not surprised that a lot of the employees believe that and not only that, discover how much power their phone had and how much work they could do on the phone. That because of all the availability of devices was not something in consideration before.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 50:03
Right. And so this was a study done by truce software. And the report was called My life, my work my phone. And what they did was they surveyed 1500 workers about their mobile productivity. And they found that, you know, of those 1500, folks, 42% of them were working more than they were a year ago. And of the of those people who were working, you know, more than they were a year ago, a lot of those people were doing a lot of their work on their mobile devices, which is just remarkable in, in the way in which we think about it, you know, 36% of them relied even more on their mobile phones to get work done in that process. So it's, it just goes to show, as you said, gousto, that, you know, we weren't aware of what was going to happen when we first, you know, got into the the immediate response to the pandemic. But now that we're, you know, far into it, say we're halfway there, halfway through it, hopefully, hopefully, we are understanding that all of our devices need to be used in Confluence to be able to be productive. And so how can we decide on what these mobile devices uses are in our productivity, if it's our main device, how can we buy or augment its utility, for example, you know, I have a keyboard here where I have my phones docked into them both. Both phones are, you know, sitting in the keyboard, and I'm capable of switching between either of them to type on them, so that I don't have to constantly be picking up my phone to just type a message back and forth. Also, I have my phone connected to my desktop machine. So I can send messages through Google messages. You can do this with, you know, other other messaging apps as well, from the desktop. So I'm not having to constantly pick my phone up and down, which of course, my phone includes things like Facebook messages, and other distracting personal communique. So I don't want to constantly be picking up my phone, I only want to be dealing with the things that are important to me. And that allows me to tie the phone to the desktop and do that. So if you're in the apple ecosystem, you got imessages. If you are on the Android operating system, with Windows, you have the capability ability of tying Google messages to the desktop, if that's the application you're using or otherwise. So use

these tools to your best effects so that you're not tied to mobile necessarily, but that you can stay productive while using it.

Art Gelwicks 52:32
It's interesting if you take, and you guys both bring up a really valid point with this. The phones that we have nowadays, if you have anything from a mid range phone up, it is more powerful than a laptop from three years ago. Well, that laptop from three years ago was probably getting the job done just fine. And yet we've got something in our pocket that blows the doors off. I mean, I know my phone credit, my phone's flagship one, it could be my full machine in a heartbeat. Matter of fact, using Samsung dex, it has been my phone machine more than a couple times. So it is critical, not so much that we think about the devices. But those of us who are involved in these types of organizations and planning out technology, and planning out the culture around this, recognize that mobile access mobile flexibility has got to be worked into this, it can't be an afterthought. It can't be another feature that's you know, bullet point on the listing, it has to be understood that for some people, this will be their primary method. And you need to design and test and refine policies and procedures around being able to use that as your primary device. And there shouldn't be any hesitation to doing that.

Augusto Pinaud 53:50
getting done is interesting when we when me and Michael solinsky wrote the iPad only book some years back. That was one of our arguments. The problem with the iPad, even at that time, even that first iPad was not that the device was not capable. The biggest challenge were two things. One, the addiction, people have to demand that over the years people have been getting more used to touch the screen. But let me remind you that at that time, that was a new concept. And the second was that people struggle to change the way they're used to do things. What this pandemic has done is break that pattern. Okay, get everybody out of the comfort zone and that comfort zone at once and seeing Okay, now you need to figure it out how you're going to make the Google team meets in here so your kid can make sense, you know, soom at school until you get the replacement device and change how you are going to be more effective using this device or other devices. And the interesting thing is as that person This is happening. You have seen many employees discover, wow, I can do this better I can do this simpler, you know I, I love on scanning. Okay, there was a moment where people thought that the only way to scan was going to their multiple thing in the office put in the big paper, okay, but never thought that they have a scanner in their pocket all along and that the software has got so good at doing that. And the ability to you know, even make, you know, great copies, compile them into a PDF and everything else. All those things that has been available for a while for a lot of people came as drinking from a firehose in the last 6, 7, 8 months.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 55:52
You're muted, sir.

Augusto Pinaud 55:54
And you got the prize?

Art Gelwicks 55:56
Yes. Hi. Man, we made it almost an hour in. That's impressive. Um, I have to admit, I don't think I've used my flatbed scanner in about four months. I haven't, I haven't used it. I haven't seen any freakin reason to because I have an even better scanner on my phone. And it goes right to the cloud. And I don't have to think about it. And I can rescale and the tools right there. So why would I bother? Why would I not use what I have?

Raymond Sidney-Smith 56:27
Yeah, I think I think the flatbed scanner is useful for scanning, I do have a flatbed scanner, I do use that for scanning pages out of books. And I just happened to be I'm a heavy researcher.

And so I like being able to get a book out of the library, and then scan the pages that I want to reference for later. And the idea of holding the book and getting the picture of my thumb in the photo, while I'm holding the book is just I've actually thought about getting a piece of acrylic, you know, like a thick pieces of acrylic so that I can lay on top of the book and then scan because it would be then flattened and be able to do that. But it just seems like an awful mess. When I have I already have it when the when the scanner dies, I'm going to go to that method where I just get basically a large enough piece of acrylic that's heavy enough to weigh down the book pages so that I can let lay the book flat and scan it from above. Because the reality is that this flatbed scanner is inferior to the, to the to the to the phone that I have in front of me. So or to the many devices, all my mobile devices that have cameras.

Art Gelwicks 57:29
So somebody asked me one time and I think we talked about it in one of the pot ProductivityCast episodes about using your phone as a scanner, and one of the tricks that I have for it is get yourself a gooseneck stand like you have for a desk clamp. And then you attach to the end of it a phone clamp. And what you can do then is you can swing it out over the open section of your desk, layer papers on it, tap a button, take a picture, move the next paper, tap a button, take a picture, everything's out of the way there's no fingers in the scans, and it's all consistent. And even then even lighting, if you're going to do a volume of documents I highly recommend it's like 25 bucks, and you're set with the stand and and the clamps.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 58:10
Yeah, and there is a a specific product for that. And it's escaping me now. But there is one even with a foot pedal and everything that you can purchase that if you are doing a high capacity scanning of books, the device actually knows how to take the photographs, scan the pages. And then of course, you know, flatten the pages, you know, because the books going to be you know, curved it knows how to re associate the page and reorganize. There is a product out there if I if I remember it before the show was over. I'll put it in the in the in the comments, but it's not coming to me right now. But there are products explicitly for that as well. You know what, what artists talking about is using what you have with a little bit of augmentation to make that happen as well. So all good there. Okay, good. So let's move on to our next story.

Augusto Pinaud 58:56
So our next story, it's an article in wired and is called the secret essential geography of the office and you know it I really laugh as I begin to read this article and I'm going to read it nautical star saying I was work for a few weeks in a big VC company. And one day I asked jokingly Where do I go to cry and an hour later I was taken aside until in a seriously about a specific stairwell and another person there led me to a five minute walk to the skyscraper to a tiny hidden conference room and then made me promise to keep the location a secret. I bow I have get also I have cried. And you know this is this is really interesting. I may not have a place to cry. Okay, but I have a place to think Again, and I, before, before the pandemic, I was working at home, and there were certain areas on the house that I use for certain things. You know, I didn't have any, any place to cry that I'm going to assume that's a good thing. Okay, but I had a place to work a place to do certain things. And the reality is for a lot of the people working at home, they also have those specific spaces, you know, that were done for certain things I have told this show as well as ProductivityCast, the story of my client who, when the pandemic start, he was struggling, because he did not have any board. And he was working in the living room, and he needed to, we saw that going to Amazon and buying, you know, markers for for the windows. So he could do that. And he needs to still clean them every night, his wife to not kill him, but okay, but at least he was able to solve the problem. Not everybody had, that, that ability and for for a lot of people, those specific spaces, who are part of the working and you're almost your mental health, you know, are lost in, in all this. And the question now is, what's going to happen when you come back?

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:01:25
Yeah, and I really, I just, I fell in love with this article, because it, it talks about something that we all are aware of, but we have not formalized in so many ways. And then the author actually takes it to the next level, which is our digital offices. So he talks about this idea that things happen in places. And they are, they're not necessarily organic, because a good a good interior architect in a commercial environment has crafted where people will do things they have designed by virtue of that interior design process and the interior architecture to make sure that there is flow from the front of the building, to where people congregate to where people work independently and otherwise, at home, that is not necessarily the case. It's a much more organic process, usually, and that by by its very nature creates some struggle for us. And what he's saying is bring more awareness to that and bring more thought, fullness to what's happening. But he also says it from the perspective that you know, what, if you actually just create a map of the geography of your space, you can actually determine where things happen, based on where things happen. You can you can actually say, you know what, most people gravitate toward this place for positive stuff, the family communes in the kitchen, maybe? And that's where positive, fun, friendly conversation happens. Maybe that's also where arguments happen. But that's just because we're most people group. Where do people have quiet contemplation time? Where do people have concentrated focused work time? Where does you know little Susie, practice piano? Well, guess what she practice his piano at the piano in the den. And so if that's where your office is, that's going to be a problem. Because come four or five o'clock when his piano lesson time, and she opens up zoom or Google meet to be able to go ahead and access her instructor. That's, that's going to be problematic for you. So how do we manifest this for both home, but also in the digital space. And I just think this is such an empowering, empowering article to recognize that we do have the ability to manifest a better place for us both physically and digitally. And if we take that time and energy, we can actually do that we can actually be more productive in our spaces, and in our digital spaces, by virtue of thinking about it from this kind of emotional, but also energy and performance geography of our digital and physical space.

Art Gelwicks 1:03:52
Yeah, I couldn't, couldn't agree more that the relevance of a location to a mindset, to me is just so important, even now, more so than ever. Because when we had a larger number of locations to go to, it was easier to subdivide. Now, if you're limited in the number of your locations, because you're working from home all the time or whatever, it becomes more difficult to separate and segment, and I do that I do that specifically for myself. You may have heard me talk about in the past, I have a woodworking workshop, I go out and I work in the workshop. One of the primary reasons why I do that is because I can't take any tech out with me. I can't take a laptop out with me because it's outside my Wi Fi range. The sawdust will kill anything I take out there. It is a forced isolated environment, which changes my mindset as soon as I walk in that door. I know colleague who at one time they had in their house, the classic because they had little kids they had a timeout chair in the corner and the timeout chair had a little table next to it and it had a kitchen timer on it. He Started claiming that timeout chair for 20 to 30 minutes and he wouldn't take any tech over with him, he would take his iPad, he would take a book, he'd set the timer, and he put himself in the timeout chair for a period of time. And he said, the biggest thing for him was the fact that he knew is the minute he sat down, his brain chemistry changed, he stopped thinking about things that he could not deal with or or address in that moment, and really gave himself an opportunity to disconnect and reconnect. And I think that's hugely important. Now,

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:05:32
I will note that there was at least one comment on the article that we are discussing, that was completely antithetical, or at least opposed to the idea of the physical office space. And, and said something to the effect that they're glad that the the pandemic basically has forced us to

leave the office environment. And I will respond to it only in saying that not everybody has that luxury, there are some that must go into the office. And I'm not just talking about low wage workers that are considered essential, and so on, so forth. But there are very high, you know, intense positions, high level and intense positions that require you to be physically present in, in an environment. And so we can't get rid of physical spaces altogether. And I honestly think that when this is all over, there is going to be a huge, probably half of people are going to go back to an office environment, at least half. And that's, that's just the nature of the beast. Once this is all over, unless we really, really try very hard, we will forget that the pandemic happened and we will go back to normal life. And, and that doesn't mean that we won't have remote work, it doesn't mean that society and culture won't have changed. But we will try as best as we can to forget that this happened. And that is actually what has happened in every prior global pandemic. So it's not because I feel like you know, somehow we're flawed or otherwise, it's just human nature. For us to say, that was a bad chapter in our history, we'll set it aside and whatever changes happened happened. In this particular case, I think, the technological, the technology involved, and the pandemic being a forcing function of us moving into a more remote work has changed something fundamentally. But I don't think that all of us are just going to stay working at home forever, I think a good good portion of us will vote. And for that change, we will have all of these kind of collateral components change about how we get work done. And we have to think about equity, we have to think about the the inclusion of people that otherwise are going to be unseen, generally, because they're not working in the physical space, and how we make this an equitable environment for those folks who have the luxury of working away from the office, but who are just as important to the organization and making sure they feel valued and heard. in in in among those pieces.

Augusto Pinaud 1:07:51
Yeah, I think solutions like Microsoft Viva we talk early are going to be that I'm not saying that approach. But solutions of that of that kind will be really key to that.

Art Gelwicks 1:08:03
Yeah, after, I think afterwards, what we're going to find is that making the choice between working remotely and working in the office is going to be no more involved than what meeting room you used to choose when you were in the office, it's going to be that level of difficulty. The technology has shifted, it's proven that it is viable and capable. We've proven as individuals that this can be done. And hopefully management has understood that they don't have to sit on your shoulders to get you to work. So with that combination, then yeah, I could choose to work from home and participate equally, and, and be engaged, I can be in the office, if I determined that I need to be, we have those as options now that before really weren't executed options. They were novelties and luxuries. And I don't think that's going to be the case anymore.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:08:53
I want to underscore that, that that is the point that I want, which is that I want choice. I want to be able to see my clients in person, I want to be able to see my audiences in person again, you know, doing your doing seminars, and in person and doing in person trainings. There's nothing for me, like being able to see faces and to shake hands and hug and, you know, engage with humans in real life. When you're doing my kind of work, especially when I feel the importance of being able to affect those business owners that come to my trainings. I'm teaching them stuff that hopefully will, we'll have all kinds of downstream effects, positive downstream effects on their businesses for years to come. And, and those people come back to trainings over and over again over the years. And you know, sometimes they just want to see me and they want to embrace me and I love that I love knowing that I'm doing something good for for their community for you know, for their family, for them individually, and certainly for the business. And so, you know, I want the choice to be able to do that. I like the idea that I'm forced to not be nuts. See my my customers and my clients and otherwise. But that doesn't mean that I will

want that all the time. I like the idea that I can work remotely and get the work done from anywhere. And I think you're absolutely right, giving people the choice to be able to work where they need to and making it just another option in the panoply of options for being able to get work done is the powerful change that I think we're seeing happen. Already Cousteau, we're coming up on our final story this week before we go to new tools of the week, and then our featured story of the week. But what's our final story and our stories of the week segment?

Augusto Pinaud 1:10:37
Do you know it really liked this article, it's an article from Fast Company, and a successful entrepreneur with a DD and this is my go productivity technique. And one, there is a lot of things about it I like about this one is the talk about adnd. Because it is good to see that we have somehow is starting to grow up I don't think we have completely mature but at least we are starting to grow up to the point that said, I have ADHD or I was disorganized because of this. And I'm trying to work with this is acceptable, not only on intrapreneurship, but also in, in the workplace, it's saying that you have a DND now, it's not something that will barred you to grow into the organization as it's not dyslexia anymore. And other things. So, so that is awesome, from from the first perspective, but the second thing is how much this person goes into the Pomodoro Technique, and explain how they're using the Pomodoro Technique not only for their own, but also to work in teams, you know, we, in the personal productivity club, we do these co working sessions, there is not a pomodoro per se, but we come in groups of usually two hours, hour and a half, depending who is leaving the session and work that way. And it is really interesting to read in this article and validate how effective that is, in the recent, you know, it's done in the personal productivity club is because everybody who comes to this berko co working sessions have experience really a benefit to this. So it was it was really read an article that that it was it left, you know, my my spirit and of course, as this person right? At the end, you need to eat the frog doesn't matter if we put one tomatoes, two tomatoes, three tomatoes, or a five tomato, you need to eat the frog.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:12:51
Yeah, no, I will. I will note that some people sometimes confuse a DD and ADHD. So just so that you're aware, add is a form of ADHD, it just lacks the sometimes fidgeting or other kinds of behavioral pieces that we see folks who who have inattention, you know, add is a brain based disorder. And so those who do suffer from it, they have to deal with the various components and symptoms, you know, varying symptoms, depending upon how severe your particular version of a DD is, but know that ADHD is a subset it's a version of ADHD in case you sometimes hear the two terms and you think that they are different things, or maybe one is not real. And the other is, they're both real. They're just both versions of ADHD. And so, so I think one of the cases that I always think about when I think about neurological disorder like this, or any other issue that compromises our productivity is that when we see mechanisms that help people with a disordered mind, you know, and we can use those in normative minds. Also, that we don't lack symptoms for these various disorders, I have inattention at times, I get distracted, I have interruptions from both within and from without. So when when we look at these kinds of this person is supporting themselves through these tools like the Pomodoro Technique, to be able to be more productive, that is reinforcing for me that using the Pomodoro Technique, in my normative mind world is also great. And so and you know, I have and have suffered with anxiety and depression in my own personal life. And so I know that when I am struggling with those things, I have the support of say something like the Pomodoro Technique or other validated techniques as behavioral interventions to support me in my productivity. So don't just think about it from the perspective that Oh yeah, well, if I have a DD or ADHD then I can use this. It should be when I am symptomatic This particular thing, then I should be able to utilize these techniques to support myself in that in that way, you don't have to, you don't have to be diagnosed with something to be able to benefit from those pieces.

Augusto Pinaud 1:15:14

You know, and I'd remember that when you look things from a surgical perspective, I always tell a story of a friend of mine who I got call from the same feature, I got a call from a teacher because of my daughter. And she told me that my daughter was not mature enough to what I look at her and say, Well, you know, I'm way older than myself mature. So, you know, you may need to deal with this. But to make the story even better, the next person who was on the parent teacher conference was a friend of mine. And as soon as he works, the teacher told her well, we have a problem with your daughter because my daughter or my daughter, we're really good friends, because your daughter as soon as she walks into the classroom, she took her shoes off. Okay, Funny enough, he wasn't this parent teacher conference with no shoes. Well, let's go to the new tools of the week.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:16:15
Yes. And so each week, Agusta and I come across many personal productivity tools and services each week. And in this segment, new tools of the week, we try to bring you a tool we think you might like among those. And so this week, we have, it looks like four tools, one from Augusto and I and then two from Art, we'll see. So I'm gonna, hey,

Art Gelwicks 1:16:38
I get it, I get it, I was gonna little once it was really easy. The other is a normal tool. There's nobody else here. So I'm taking the double.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:16:46
Hey, that's perfectly fine. All right. Our first tool this week is a tool that I think you are going to really enjoy. We were talking about the Eisenhower matrix at the top of the show. But I wanted to bring this tool because I think it's really interesting. This is more of in the vein of pomodoro. And it's called Cuckoo. And you get to it by going to cuckoo dot team. And in essence, it creates a timer for you to be able to go ahead and create these it says it says team. But I've been using it as a progressive web app for myself personally, not for a team. But I'll just type in test here. And you can also skip this and go directly to the app itself. And it's super simple. In essence, you can invite people to this particular session if you want to. But you don't have to. And you can set different times for people, I guess you add them down here, I guess there's a little button for you to add folks. But anyway, you could just share the link. And you then can set different times. And if I click on a particular time, it goes ahead and just shows that on screen and it sets the time and then it goes ahead and times at the end of that particular time, you can pause it. And when you get to the end, you can then put in a break. And you can choose the length of the break very similar to Pomodoro Technique or anything else. And this is just great for you to be able to as a team be working on things together. And you also have the ability to look at the various sessions and change the timeframes, and just all kinds of other things. You can also have feedback to them, get some feedback, all kinds of fun things. But either way, I just find it to be really simple and easy to have a communal productivity timer that you're sharing with others, you can share it on screen, you know, using screen sharing, or whatever else you want to be able to do. But I I've really enjoyed using this tool with others just by myself that is, but I'm I'm planning on seeing how we might be able to use it together, where we're displaying it on screen together. Now the idea is is that you share this link and everybody sees the same timer on their own local device. So it's kind of nice to be able to utilize. So I again, like I said, I've been using it individually. And I've really enjoyed the interface, it gives you the ability to create a progressive web application, which means that see this little button here, you can click on it. And it will go ahead and open in its own window that you can manipulate just like any other application. So you just go to go to town with it and use it as you want to. So that is my tool this week. Okay, so what is your new tool this week?

Augusto Pinaud 1:19:22
So my next tool or in my tool is called key mash or key ma.sh and it came I I have told that you know, the biggest, one of the biggest obstacles we have is the keyboard you know, if you don't

type spending the hours we all spend the computers you are an advantage and when I work with clients, this is something that we always work and so I was talking to a new client, he told me I hate people. And but I found these people this person in particular was pretty competitive. So I began searching For something that I can give this competitive person, something to look for, and, and I understood the argument, the argument is, you know, when I get to the end of the day, you're asking me to practice this 10 minutes. And I don't want to, I don't want to type anymore. But somehow making points become competitors, is something that this particular person has been enjoying. So if you want to improve your typing speed on that, you understand the importance of that, but it's been a challenge towards the end of the day, and you are that competitive person, hey, do yourself a favor, check came at sh, sh. And, you know, you will find they have an algorithm that will match you with people around your skill level. So you will be able to try to work and learn a little typing as you are competing against others.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:20:55
I take him by keyboarding.

Art Gelwicks 1:20:57
Yeah, that takes me back to the old days of Mavis beacon typing Deuter.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:21:01
Oh, yeah, I have a CDs.

Art Gelwicks 1:21:03
Oh, I used to install the CDs for schools. Oh, yeah.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:21:07
Oh, yeah, that's

Art Gelwicks 1:21:09
alright. So I have to, I have an actual tool. And then a quick tip. My tool is on Android. It's an app called sketch do. And what sketch do is is a vector drawing application allows you to draw using a stylus. If you want to create diagrams, artistic architectural pieces, I wouldn't say quite architectural pieces. But floor plans, designs, anything like that. What I like about it is that it has a built in grid snap capability. And it works beautifully on Chromebooks. So when you load this app on a Chromebook, you blow it up full Street, full screen, you get this blueprint, blueprint grid layout, and then you can just start drawing, drawing and snap to grid immediately. You can output the content as PDF files, it is just it's a great, easy way if you're trying to do some diagrams, or if you're trying to do some drawings, to just be able to draw them right away using a stylus on a device. It works on the phone. But I have found that is just spectacular on a Chromebook. And speaking of Chromebooks, my other little tip is in the latest version of Chrome OS, they have released a feature so that you can go into the personalization and turn your Chromebook into it or turn on the screensaver for your Chromebook. And what it does is it emulates a lot of the functionality that you see on the Chrome or on the Google. I forget the name of them the desktop assistance on the home hub, okay, same thing, you have the screens, while you can turn your Chromebook into that too. So you get the same weather display and the photos. I thought, Okay, fine. This is no big deal, you can point it at Google Photos. So now I get all my good family photos coming up on my Chromebook when it's not being used. I haven't turned it off since I turned it on. It is just a wonderful mental cleanser to be able to look over at that Chromebook that you've been running all day and see your family photo cycling. So two tips

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:23:07
are fantastic. Thank you art. And with that, that takes us on to our featured story this week. gousto What is our featured story this week?

Augusto Pinaud 1:23:19
debunking is again, Fast Company and he's three time management myth that he's messing up with your productivity. And the first one is improved time management, increased performance. The second one is time management success is about managing your time. And number three meetings are a complete time waster. So

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:23:48
what's my one? Yeah, so let's, let's

Augusto Pinaud 1:23:51
start on the first one.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:23:52
So, so, in essence, the article author is trying to propose that there are time management myths, which I would agree with. And then they went on and said Myth number one is that improved time management somehow is a performance booster. And the reality is that we know from research, that when people increase their time management skills, they tend not to actually have an increased level of performance. This is this is for me, because this comes out of the Academy of Management, some research that they did in the Academy of Management perspectives, which is a publication of of theirs, this is one of those cases where the myth itself is is really looking at the like slicing very, very fine lines. And so the the underlying research study that they are recommending, as as proof of this is that the study was called it's about time new perspectives and insights on time management. And here what we see is that You know, people who improve their understanding of the psychology of time. You know, what ultimately happens in terms of their time management outcomes. And so it says, from the abstract here, we rely on the behavioral economics literature describes how cognitive biases influence individual time management decisions. Integrating insights from a diverse set of field fields results in a better understanding of past research, and allows us to reinterpret conflicting results prevalent in the time management literature. And then finally, we offer directions for future research and discuss implications for how organizations and individuals can implement interventions resulting in a stronger and positive relationship between time management and desirable outcomes. In essence, what this particular article is is noting is that they did this kind of survey of all of the various research, you know, they basically looked at all of the various research, and they came out with came up with some interesting findings that I don't particularly think apply to personal productivity as much as it applies to how management sees these things. So organizations like the International Association for time use research that takes the concept of time logs, and allows us to be able to understand how people utilize their time, they're in essence, saying that by educating people about time management, somehow people don't actually gain greater time management skills. I would argue that when you teach time management skills, people get better at managing their time. But we can't, we can't leave it to just that, when we let me leave it to teaching people skills around time management, we also have to teach them the technology that supports that. And I don't just mean software, if someone is given a planner, and then given time management skills, you are presuming that they can connect those two dots to be more productive, you would be wrong, I see it all the time, you teach people how to effectively understand time and time management skills. And then you give them a tool that doesn't match up with that, that, that methodology. And they're lost. You can even use things like the bullet journal, which provides a very clear roadmap for how to use it very opinionated perspective in terms of how to use it. And people will find different ways in which to change the methodology that otherwise wouldn't be utilized. And that's an analog space. Now take that to a digital space, you've got even more complexity and more confusion as to how to use it. So this is not necessarily because time management itself being taught to people is the problem. It's because there is more to all of this than meets the eye. And we're consistently trying to hedge the the specific pests, the specificity of time

management skills as being the only thing we need to teach. And that is not the case, we need to teach this in terms of methods, skills, and the the techniques, the technology that's being utilized, so that they all match up together, methods, skills, and tech tools need to be taught in Confluence. Otherwise, though, the whole notion of teaching Time management is kind of moot.

Art Gelwicks 1:28:05
Yeah, there's an analogy, there's an extension on the classic analogy that I like to use for this. You can teach someone how to fish, and they can catch a fish. If you don't teach them how to cook the fish, it's not going to be a pleasant experience. So this is part of the challenge. We talk about these kinds of things. We talk about establishing skills, but no direction as to how to use them, or what you should even expect out of those skills. And we see that all the time on the technology side, because people will look for an application. That is the perfect application of a methodology. I mean, we we did an episode on ProductivityCast talking about the perfect GTD app, that there isn't one, you know that that type of thing where just make it do what it's supposed to do and everything will be better, doesn't exist. And we have to look at this kind of learnings or these kinds of learnings in that vein.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:29:02
And the only argument I would say to that is the perfect GTD app is the one you're using. The one you're the one you're not using is not the perfect GTD app. And it goes to your point art which is that most often than not people are are trying to find a solution to solve a problem that actually cannot be solved by technology alone. Better yet cannot be solved by a method alone. Better yet can't be solved by skills alone. You can have really great skills for example, I may be really good at, you know, chopping wood. But that's not really helpful if I don't have a really great axe. If you give me a screwdriver and go tell me to chop wood, I'm going to have a problem. Okay. You know, and even more than that, if you teach me the skills of chopping wood, but there are particular methods for being able to chop wood for say, logging as opposed to chopping trees down just for purposes of you know, calling the yard i don't know i'm not a forest management guy. But you know, like that. There are probably important methods for being able to organize the wood for fire, you know, for your, for your home fireplace that are probably different in the logging industry, where you're logging, you know, huge amounts of timber for purposes of trucking away. If I use the forest management technique for logging wood, then that's going to be a problem. And I go to try and shove a whole, you know, tree into the fireplace, we forget that these particular methods aren't are not translatable always, to the tools and the skills needed. We need to think about context for all of this. And so often than not, we're trying to train people, and I spend a lot of time training people. So I see the problems, I see us being able to, you know, shove that square peg into the round hole, and thinking that somehow we're going to have a fix on the other side. Okay, I'm gonna get off my soapbox, and we're gonna move on to Myth number two. Myth number two, is that meet that time management success is about managing your time. And I think we've pretty much beat this dead horse. In in our discussion here. Any further thoughts there, gentlemen? And then we'll talk about mythri?

Art Gelwicks 1:31:08
No, just just the whole concept that it's not managing your time, it's managing what's filling your time.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:31:13
Right? And there are different management's right, so so I always say when when I talk about personal productivity, which is that it's not just time management, it's time team performance, energy task project, you keep going, there are so many different kinds of management's that fit inside of the umbrella. That is personal productivity. And when we think about it from just that one perspective, that somehow if you manage your calendar, well, you're going to be

productive, you're not because again, if you're not understanding the skills, strategies, tools, and otherwise, that you need to be productive in all of those paradigms, then you're really lacking in one of them. And that's going to create some trouble for you down the road. So our final myth, of course, is Myth number three, that meetings are complete time wasters. And someone else start so that I don't have to get on my soapbox,

Augusto Pinaud 1:32:03
so. So I'm going to start there. And I'm going to start with a couple of things. One is meetings are not a complete waste of time, what is a complete waste of time is trying to create a meeting to solve an issue without thinking in the issue. You know, meetings without an agenda, in general, are a waste of time. But it they're not because they're the meeting, per se is a waste of time, is because people have not clarified, what are we meeting about? We just have a meeting period. So yes, in those cases, they are. The second thing is, I don't know why I don't know who decided that 60 minutes was a good time for a meeting. But one of the things that is interesting is, we go into this longer than necessary meetings, because we did not pre clarify who need to be there, why they need to be there. And what we're trying to accomplish, when you start doing those three things, meetings can be incredible. Effective, and meetings can be really awesome. But it requires that time it requires that time to think, are we meeting Why? You know, and this is a this, this, this may or may not be the perfect example, but this show has an agenda, okay, and the three of us right now have access to a document that has an agenda that has all the articles that are going to be discussed, all the apps, everything. This is what make this podcast live, it's no other than a meeting, okay? And art will have his opinions, Ray will have his opinions, I will have my opinions. But everybody was having access to the information ahead of time. If instead of this, we come to this meeting, and we start pulling the ideas out of a hat, well, the meeting will most likely be a waste of time, instead of something productive.

Art Gelwicks 1:34:10
So it's interesting because I flip it around a little bit, because to me, and this is one of my favorite soapbox issues. There's three types of good meetings and the rest are garbage, brainstorming meetings, because you feed off of each other's energy, persuasive meetings, where you're trying to literally get somebody to change their mind about something. and decision making means where you're coming to a consensus. Aside from that, if you're having a meeting, to review, something that everybody could read, go over a PowerPoint deck that everybody could walk through on their own. Go through a bunch of metrics that everybody can access when you are wasting everyone's time if you if there is no direct benefit from having the people interacting with each other. There is no reason to have the meeting in my book.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:35:01
I think I agree with Art. And I posted a link in the chat to an episode that we did on ProductivityCast called an anatomy of a successful meeting. And I'm pretty sure that I soapbox to all of my thoughts on meetings. In that episode, I'm sure that there are many, many more. I mean, we've covered meetings several times on ProductivityCast in different episodes, but that one, especially, really encapsulates a lot of all of our thoughts here on the panel, as well as Francis Wade thoughts on meetings and really making sure a successful meeting is happening. My biggest takeaway from researching meetings and understanding meetings over time, is that so much of what happens in a meeting happens before the meeting happens. And if you're coming to the to the meeting, having not prepared for that meeting, especially as the person who's leading the meeting, then you are failing out the gate, it's really important to be prepared for every meeting, which means meetings take more time than the button chair time, it is really important to make sure that the time before the meeting is done, so that when you show up to the meeting, it can be a great, it's not performative solely, but it gives everybody a space in which to operate well. And that's what you want a productive meeting to be is one in which if you are going to be in a decision making meeting, you should know the decisions of every

person showing up to the meeting before you sit down to the meeting. If that is not true of the person who's leading the meeting, you're missing the ball, the ball, the ball is in somebody else's court. If you don't know what people are going to decide in the meeting, that means you haven't done the persuasion and the work upfront to understand what the outcome is going to be in that meeting. And therefore you don't control you're not in control of the meeting. And that's the whole point. As the meeting leader, you're calling the meeting, you should know what's going to be happening in the meeting. And yeah, maybe it's not going to go your way. But you should certainly know. And there's all kinds of things like that, that I think we discussed in Episode 58 of ProductivityCast. That I think is really useful to everybody there. But the idea that meetings are time wasters is is again, only true. If what Art said earlier is not true, right? If if the meeting is is, is purposeless, and is not covering those three components, then you are really calling a meeting for meeting sake. And that's just gosh, it just it pains me because it gives meetings a bad name. It gives meetings a bad rap, when in reality, bringing people together is an important faculty for organization just groupings generally, to be productive. It just needs to be done in the right ways.

Art Gelwicks 1:37:37
There's a particularly insidious type of meeting, and that is the delegation meeting. And the delegation meeting has this tendency to propagate. And here's, here's the case that I'm sure people will be familiar with. Monday comes you have this half hour meeting, that a bunch of work gets delegated. And during that meeting, they decide, okay, Tuesday, we're going to have a touchpoint meeting, to talk about the work from today's meeting. And then on Tuesday's meeting, you realize that not enough work has gotten done. So you're going to have a touch point on Wednesday to make sure progress has been made. At no time is anybody considering that the work getting delegated has to happen within the next four hour or six hours cycle to the next meeting, along with all the other work, and then more work, it's compounded. And it's at that point somebody is going to get backed over by a bus. So you have when I get into this issue about meetings, I'm climbing up on my soapbox now and I apologize. To me, meetings are insidious when they are volumetric when they start to multiply, like locusts. And unfortunately, this virtual environment that I'm in, I have found this is worse than it has ever been in my entire working career. meetings in physical locations are different because you got to get to them. Here, you can have back to back to back to back to back to back to back meetings and nobody bats an eye. And to me that's, that's more destructive to anyone's productivity than pretty much anything else you can get into right now. I

Augusto Pinaud 1:39:19
know, you're making me laugh in here, because before the pandemic, there were a lot of meetings that I wish that the client on the other side, you know, we'll use Google meets or zoom for the meeting because we'll be much more effective. Sadly, we have now crossed that line and gone to the opposite extreme where you go like we could have made this a five minute phone call instead of a 1520 minute Sukkot so

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:39:50
well. I've been making it very clear to people that just because they're scheduling a meeting with me, the default in my calendar schedule is 15 minutes and I say to them, we are only using the time needed to handle what we need to in that in that timeframe. And before we started recording, I called a potential client back. And that meeting, that call took more time than I had planned for. And it again, it goes against my absolute every fiber to, to to just call someone back. And in this particular case, I understood why I was doing it, it's good. You know, it's good courtesy to call people back, and so on and so forth. But in general, what I would have normally done, and I just didn't, today was the day of not doing what I normally do. But in normal times, I would have actually just had someone reach out to that person and schedule a 15 minute call. Why? Because that call took more than 15 minutes. But if the time in the calendar was you have 15 minutes of race time, and no more than it wouldn't have taken more

time than that, because I would have said, I need to move on to my next meeting. And we booked this time in the calendar. And there's some sense of that, that people have that when, when there's a time boundedness because it's in the calendar, we know that. But when people set calendar items as default 60 minutes, it just it drives me crazy, because there's no way that I want 60 minutes with you, unless you're paying me to be there for any reason. So unless it's it's billable hours, I frequently will say let's choose the lowest amount of time that is necessary for us to have that meeting. And let's start from that point forward, then we can negotiate, oh, can I have 30 minutes? Or can I have 20 minutes? I'm a reasonable person, I'll say, Sure. Okay, I'll give you 20 minutes, but not a minute more. And the reason for that is, is, you know, work expands to the space we give it and meetings expand to to the to the weakest, you know, boundaries given to it that we need to make sure we say what, how much time is this meeting going to really take provide me with an agenda and how much time each agenda item is going to take. And then I will approve the meeting. And you'll see those those numbers and the amount of meetings start to trickle down. And I just find it to be useful to say, Listen, I want to make sure I'm prepared for this meeting, I want to make sure that we have the right amount of time to cover the issues. And if if those things are not in the system, then I can't approve the meeting, because I'm not going to be bringing my best self to the meeting. And by doing that we solve for so many of these problems, including the problem I experienced today, I wouldn't have had that problem had I followed my own protocol and said, You know what, this, these are the boundaries I've set up for all people, this I'm not, you know, picking on you. I'm just saying for everybody. For me to be my best self, I need to basically do that. And today is my lesson that I will not be any longer taking exceptions into my meeting.

Art Gelwicks 1:42:47
I mean, I've changed my behavior. Now, I used to be very sure, let's talk, let's jump on the phone, let's get going. For some reason, you can guess I like to talk. But the behavioral change has been that if you're gonna, if we're going to have a meeting, I will send you my position, my framing my mindset, my recommendations, whatever, I will email that to you. And the time we have will be to address any questions or ideas you have based on what I just sent you. We don't need to waste time me just expounding on that to you. Because that's just that's not helping anything because you need to absorb and process. I can do that in writing. Let me send that to you absorb it, process it, put your questions together. And then let's take advantage of the face to face time. If you come into that and say, Okay, tell me what's in there. I'm like, no, go read it. And we'll reschedule this. Because, again, that's when that benefit from the interaction is so critical. And we have to get better at that we have to recognize that I think that's one of the biggest stress factors that people are having in these remote work environments, is they're living in these kinds of instant on demand face to face sessions. And if you think about in the office space, we would always complain about shoulder taps. somebody walked by and Tabby said, Hey, let me talk to you for five minutes. That's interrupt driven? Well, this isn't much better. It's actually much worse. Yeah, you wind up with meetings that are coming through to you at you know, somebody sends you an invite for 7am meeting and they send it to you at six from six o'clock at night the previous night. Well, it's because that's when they were working, which is totally fine. But then they have to recognize, well guess what, I didn't even see the invite until 830 that morning. So but let's be cognizant of how adults and professionals work and give them the respect necessitated by that kind of relationship. And don't allow the technology to run rampant over it and create these unnecessary face to face sessions.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:44:51
And I ruined the day that Windows decided to add that meet now button in your taskbar. I immediately hit it in mind and I was like Forget it. I don't want to See that, again,

Art Gelwicks 1:45:00

it has to meet now, but I think they they redeem themselves slightly because within teams now, when you get to the end, towards the end of the meeting, it'll say your meeting has five minutes left, and it puts it right across the top of the screen. There's also an option in Outlook now where you can tell your meetings to end a certain number of minutes before the hour, which I like that control, because then it's starting to reinforce to people, Hey, you know what, just stop, just stop, get to the point and move on. Yeah, which for me, getting to the point is really important.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:45:32
Because I never do. Google Calendar had that, like 15 minutes, like you could end every meeting 10 minutes beforehand, and has had it for quite a long time. It started out as a Google Calendar, labs item, and then it made its way into the into the core product. And my problem with that is that people then started scheduling meetings at like, 350, right after the prior meeting. And so the 10 minute meeting, the 10 minutes were were filled in, and like I just literally, like from a visual perspective could not see a meeting starting at 350, or 150, or 1158. I was like, No, I cannot have. And so thankfully, my scheduling software enforces that meetings now start on the hour or the half hour, so that I can I can restrict things to that nature. But when it first started, it really made me crazy, just the the anal retentiveness of my world, I just didn't want to see things starting off our off the half hour, I just can't, can't deal with it.

Art Gelwicks 1:46:24
One of the favorite macros I ever wrote in Outlook was a macro that you would, you would put it on a meeting that you was assigned, and run the macro, and it would go immediately before the meeting and create a placeholder for 15 minutes and one immediately after for 15 minutes. And nobody could book those bookend those times. Wonderful, wonderful thing I wish it was available and everything, but I haven't used it since then.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:46:46
Yeah, I tend to block out those times before and after, in, in, in pre pandemic times, it was because of travel time. Now it's just to have buffer in my world, I want to make sure that I have time to do a meeting, pre briefing, so that I am prepared for the meeting, but also doing a debriefing after the meeting to make sure that I've taken any actions and anchored them into my system, move notes to where they need to go, and, and so on and so forth. Because you know that that time is lost if you don't do it right after the meeting.

Art Gelwicks 1:47:16
Since I'm still standing on my sandbox or soapbox, I do want to read one thing. There is this new, really bad behavior that some people are demonstrating, which is attending multiple virtual meetings at the same time. I have seen this behavior starting where they will be double booked, or even triple booked at times. And they will actually run those multiple sessions, and then chat in one and verbally participate in the other. Don't go to any of them. Just please Matter of fact, if it's my meeting, feel free to skip it if you're going to do that. Trust me.

Augusto Pinaud 1:47:50
You know, it is interesting. You mentioned that and it is so distracting. Because you suddenly seen these people moving their, their mountain their lives and all this and you're like, no, you're in mute, and then the person coming up? Oh, no, no, no, sorry. Sorry, wasn't with you. And you're like, so

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:48:12
I chopped liver?

Art Gelwicks 1:48:14

If we were in it, would you be sitting there on the phone? During the meeting? I mean, you don't you don't do that that's a courtesy thing, much less a productivity thing of actually being able to focus on the work that you're doing. But yeah, I'm finding that behavior is actually almost becoming acceptable. And if I catch people doing it, I totally call them out on it. Because I just think it's, it's flat out rude is one. But it's just not something we want to encourage from a productivity standpoint. It's a terrible, terrible habit.

Augusto Pinaud 1:48:47
Yeah, I have seen that. I have seen that that you described where I have seen now the people who are in the meeting, and suddenly they turned the camera off mute themselves. And you're like, did you leave this? Here? What? What just happened?

Art Gelwicks 1:49:02
I'm, I'm okay with the camera on camera off. And we could actually do a whole discussion just on virtual meeting etiquette. I'm totally fine with camera on off. Some people aren't comfortable with it. Some people have weird backgrounds. Some people have large Wiener dogs that wander through Fine, whatever. The big thing, though, is as long as they're participating, that's great. If you're not going to participate if you're just going to sit there and listen. I'm actually okay with that too. But just don't set any expectations of me engaging you then. Because literally, you are doing the virtually equivalent of being a carbon copy. And I'm like, okay, that's fine. I admit I do that too. But then just record the meeting and I'll watch it later.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:49:44
Yeah, I've actually opted out of certain meetings that I know are going to be recorded because I can just watch it after the fact and two x or three x speed and get the same thing or I will run the meeting through transcription software and I'm usually better at gleaning context from the written Material faster, because I don't need to, I don't need to, you know, all the polite, polite ease at the start of of a meeting, I can just skip those pieces and get right into the agenda items and then match them up to what was the decision in the meeting. And so I've been able to be more productive in some of these meetings by not attending them when I know that they're going to be recorded. So that's been actually really useful when I know that the company is already transcripting. All the meetings anyway. And so that's been actually quite helpful. Okay, thank you, gentlemen, for this discussion on our story this week about meetings and time and time management myths, and so on and so forth. We are now at our announcements this week. Before we close out, Augusto, we have two announcements. What are our two announcements quickly.

Augusto Pinaud 1:50:43
So the first one is a free program called natural vision. If you use glasses, and you get, like many of us getting really, really tired of this screen, this is a great thing to go, they will show you some techniques, how to look out of the screen, how to lubricate your eyes better. It's a really interesting thing. And the second one is Apple released their preview 124 Safari. And as much as we laugh into this, we will always announce it because it's one of the things that I check it was just now move to the announcements. But that's pretty much our two and a half cents for this week.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:51:27
Fantastic. And so with that, that brings us to the close of today's episode. And so I wanted to thank Art Gelwicks for joining us here today. Art, how can folks keep up to date in and with what you're doing out there in the world? You are muted

Augusto Pinaud 1:51:49
twice in this? No, no,

Art Gelwicks 1:51:51
you did that to me. Because I was typing. I was misbehaving and doing work while participating in a meeting. And that was not good behavior on my part. So I deserve that.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:52:00
It's okay, I wasn't gonna call you out. But no,

Art Gelwicks 1:52:01
I've totally called myself out. I admit I did a naughty and I deserve to get smacked for that. You can find me two places the idea pumped calm, where I write all kinds of nonsense. Matter of fact, the screenshots from earlier talking about the action launcher are already up and live. So you can take a look at that. Second, you can follow me on twitter at Art Gelwicks. And I post whatever comes to mind there as well.

Raymond Sidney-Smith 1:52:24
Fantastic. As always, Art. Thank you for joining us. My pleasure, but idle. All right. All right, a gousto. And then there were there too. Thank you so much for joining me each week and preparing us for Anything But Idle. It's my pleasure. Fantastic. All right, folks, we are at the end of the show. And if we missed something, if there was a story this week that you thought was really important and powerful for us in the personal productivity space, feel free to let us know you can either tweet or dm us on Twitter at Anything But Idle, and we can respond to you there. You can also visit Anything But idle.com, click on contact. And you can go ahead and message us through the contact form there. If you have a question or comment about anything we've discussed during the show. If you visit the Anything But idle.com page and click on the show itself there at the bottom of the page, you can go ahead and leave a question or comment there on the episode page itself while you're on Anything But Idle. And on an episode, you'll find our show notes with links to all the stories that we discussed our tools of the week, and any extra stories or announcements, that kind of thing. It also includes a text transcript directly on the page, you can just click that Read More link and it'll expand it. So while you're listening or watching the episode, you can go ahead and see the written form and follow along there. There also is a PDF that you can download and access offline if you wanted to listen on your you know on your on your way. And also look at the PDF of the transcript it's machine generated, but it should be good enough for you to be able to get along. If this is your first time watching us and the live stream Feel free to click the subscribe button so you get notified when we go live weekly. If you're listening to the podcast show, please consider adding us to your favorite podcast app. And you can go ahead and find those instructions on the Subscribe tab on Anything But idle.com as well if you've enjoyed listening or watching us today, feel free to click the thumbs up icon on YouTube. Feel free to go ahead and leaving a leave and add a review on Apple podcasts or Stitcher and of course your compliments are appreciated. But really it helps to expand our personal productivity listening community by virtue of signaling to Apple in the ecosystem and to YouTube and otherwise, that we're here and so thank you for doing that. With that. See you all next time on Anything But Idle history productive life