

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:05.0] DC: It takes the right skills and the right innovation to design and manage meaningful print marketing solutions. Welcome to Podcasts from the Printerverse, where we explore all facets of print and marketing that create stellar communications and sales opportunities for business success. I'm your host Deborah Corn, the Intergalactic Ambassador to the Printerverse. Thanks for tuning in. Listen long and prosper.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:00:32.1] DC: Hey everybody, welcome to Podcasts From the Printerverse. This is Deborah Corn, your Intergalactic Ambassador. More specifically, we are here with the Time Management Tips in 20 podcast series, which means I am here with the time sherpa herself, Sarah Ohanesian from SO Productive. Hello Sarah.

[0:00:49.1] SO: Hello Deborah.

[0:00:51.3] DC: How are you today?

[0:00:52.5] SO: I'm doing great, how about you?

[0:00:53.8] DC: Excellent and I'm really happy to share with everybody, we did a little plotting and planning for the rest of the year, and based upon the content that we've put out for the last three years and the topics that we covered, we are going to take a little mini vacation in order to give people time to catch up with all of those great episodes, which really, honestly, when it comes to time management, I went back and listened to a bunch of the earlier ones just to make sure I was making the proper recommendations.

People are still having prioritization and scheduling problems today, the same ones they were having two years ago, you know? So, we never spoke about anything time-wise specific. So, I believe, they're all still valid but I'd like you to share about the content that we've been creating

for these last couple of years. The intention behind it and why it's worth to go back and take a listen.

[0:01:56.6] SO: Absolutely. Well, it's really been, Deborah, my life's work that I have shared on these episodes. So, I am so happy for people to go back and have a listen, and the real key with all of it is productivity is something that you're never finished with and so, that's not something that you check it off the box and you get a degree in productivity, and then you move on with your life. I often equate it to being like a muscle.

So, you have to work it out, and the muscle grows and then it hurts a little bit and then it breaks down and then it gets weaker and then you have to build it back up again. So, productivity is like, this muscle that you've got to work out all of the time, and the thing that makes productivity a tried and true, and a time management topic that's probably never going to go away is that at different seasons of life, at different points in life, at different times in your career, you're actually going to need different tools.

So, my encouragement for everybody is to use this time, go back, and find those episodes that you think, "Um, my muscle in how I organize my work is a little weak right now, and I want to strengthen that muscle." Or, "My ability to prioritize and my feeling of overwhelm right now is feeling a little bit weak. I want to go back and listen to some of those prioritization episodes." So, find what muscle in your productivity time management toolbox is feeling a little bit weak right now, and I would go back to those episodes because we've really – we've covered it all.

We've covered organization, we've covered how do you tackle tasks, how do you manage your work, what tools should you be using, how do you come off of a big event or a conference and implement everything you've learned, how do you in different seasons of life, and we've covered so many things. So, think about where are you at right now and which one of those muscles could use a little bit of strengthening.

[0:03:44.5] DC: And as you were speaking, I was actually perusing the Time Management Tips in 20 playlists on Podcasts From the Printerverse, and you're right, how to stop having unproductive meetings, another great one, how to delegate, maximize your golden hours, that

was one of my favorite ones. Like, doing things at the best time of the day for your brain to handle them.

Improving organizational productivity in your office, powering through procrastination, which I could have used yesterday. So, event follow-ups. I'm sorry, I could get obsessed with our playlist but I think Sarah is making an excellent point. If you feel like, "Ugh, I'm overwhelmed, I don't know how to manage this stuff." You could literally go back to the playlist and scroll or search for an episode where you have given some valuable information on how to deal with those things.

I certainly have found them very valuable. You also are a proponent of time management tools and we did speak about this a bit in our last episode but I just want to give you this space right now to speak about any of the tools that you personally work with and recommend to your customers, clients, and colleagues.

[0:04:59.6] SO: Yeah. Absolutely. So, there's so many tools and I just want to say, a pen and a paper will always work. So, if you're like, "I don't want to learn something new." Pen and paper are amazing and they can really, really work well for people. So, don't let the tool or the cost of the tool get in the way of your productivity. That being said, what I have found is the tools enhance our ability. It makes us faster, it makes us stronger. So, the tool that I love, certainly, Deborah's been using, Todoist for quite a while and has been a –

[0:05:32.3] DC: For free.

[0:05:32.7] SO: Huge fan. For free, right?

[0:05:33.6] DC: For free. It doesn't cost me anything. I get five boards but if I wanted more, then I could start paying for it.

[0:05:39.5] SO: Exactly, and then, the tool that my team is certified in that we do most of our work in is called Asana, and that also, there's a free version of that. If you are a company who wants to implement that with your team, I would highly, highly encourage you to upgrade to a paid version, even more of the advanced enterprise-level version because it's going to enhance your automation, it's going to make work faster, tests are going to move through.

So, a lot of printers and people in production have a very structured workflow for how the work gets done, and a tool like Asana can be very, very helpful for that when there is a very systemized process and a series of steps that you go through. So, think about using, how could a tool help you, and again, if you need help with that, my team is fully certified in that. We do that all day, every day, helping companies and their teams, not only build a customized tool for them that's specific to their workflow.

But we help train your team and how to use it, which is a huge deal. It's one thing to get the software, it's another to be using it six months to a year still down the road.

[0:06:45.1] DC: Right, and I always include links to Asana and Todoist in the show notes because we speak about it so often, and one little plug for working with Sarah's team, versus like the Asana team, which I'm sure they're lovely people but they're engineers and they're like, product people, and they might not have as much of a perspective on how a regular person might need to use it in a specific office, especially the printing industry and marketing, which you happen to have personal experience and knowledge with.

[0:07:17.7] SO: Yeah.

[0:07:17.9] DC: Speaking of partnerships, I would like to let everybody know how they can work with you, some of the things that you offer everybody. So, when they're listening to this amazing content for the next couple of months and catching up with us, and if they're like, "Man, I need a little more Sarah in my life." Or, "My team needs a Sarah." Or, "Hello, our entire company is seeing a little, you know, fallen productivity." However they're measuring it and we could use a little Sarah's help too, how that all manifest?

[0:07:59.4] SO: Yeah, absolutely, and I think, Deborah, the way you just said it is really a solid way to think about it because is it that you or one person on your team needs help. That could be someone who needs coaching. So, they needed the ability to work with someone one-on-one, they're struggling individually with their productivity, with their time management, and that's where coaching is a really good opportunity.

And that can be anywhere from one quick hour where they just need a little jump start, to, we've got coaching clients that we work with on retainer. And they're with us for months, because they need more of that. Not so much, coaching is great to get them over that initial hump but some people need help with just ongoing accountability. So, week in, week out, how can we prioritize, and some people do really well having an accountability coach for that.

So, there are two ways to work out in the coaching space, then I do a lot of corporate training and consulting. So, what that means is coming in and interviewing everybody on the team is one of the – I love – this is like my favorite package Deborah, is interviewing everybody on the team and finding out what are some of those blind spots, where do we have weaknesses, and helping to identify those, and then also helping you to actually do something about it.

So, do we need standard operating procedures in place? Do we need a meeting agenda that we use? I mean, some of these things seem kind of simple and perhaps, basic but the amount of teams that I work with are like, "We never took the time to actually write that process down, and now, that's saving ourselves so much time." So, that's more of a corporate consulting type of package.

And then, I also, of course, do, we've done a lot of this work together, Deborah, as well but keynote speaking and corporate training. So, if you're having an upcoming event, or maybe you're industry or association that you're a part of is having an upcoming event, I can come and be a keynote speaker for that event as well.

[SPONSOR MESSAGE]

[0:09:52.5] SO: I'm Sarah Ohanesian, founder of SO Productive, a productivity training and consulting company. Teams I work with get more done. They experience improved processes, greater productivity, and increased efficiency, all without stress and burnout. If you want to improve your performance or the performance of your team, visit so-productive.com and get started today. I offer conference keynotes, one-on-one coaching, and hands-on corporate workshops, all focused on increasing productivity and time management. Let's discuss how SO Productive can supercharge your organization. Links are in the show notes.

[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

[0:10:35.7] DC: We've spoken about Command the Chaos before. I'd like you to talk about that, but also, if you're able to, about your new program about accessibility, which I think is so important.

[0:10:47.7] SO: Yeah, absolutely. So, the Command the Chaos is my digital course that's been around for about two years now as well, and that is a self-service course. So, that's great for someone who is self-motivated, they want to learn about time management and productivity. It's a seven-week digital course, they can come in and one module releases every single week. It also comes with all of my templates and my worksheets and my PDFs to help someone who is really more interested in learning on their own.

Deborah, thank you for bringing up the work in the neurodiversity space that we're doing. So, I do that with my business partner, Jeff Gibbard, and what's powerful about this is neurodiversity just means that different brains work in different ways, and 20% of the population is neurodivergent, meaning, they might have ADHD or autism or dyslexia, and we're finding that this is something that just a lot of people aren't talking about because it's a little – it might not be something that you want to share with your team.

So, our work in this space is about helping managers and also helping people on the team to feel like, it's a safe enough work environment that I feel like I can bring it up but if you're a manager, knowing that there are these different brain types on your team, imagine the awareness and what we can do when we can actually help people thrive when we know how their brain actually operates. It's been quite powerful to help companies with this.

[0:12:10.5] DC: Sarah, can you give an example of how someone who might be neurodivergent has to think about time management in a different way or – well, I'll leave it to you to elaborate on what I'm asking you?

[0:12:26.3] SO: Sure. Yeah, and, your question is actually perfect because that's exactly it. When we think about a concept like time management, different brains think about that in different ways, and here is a great example I will give you. My business partner has ADHD and

autism, and so what we were finding was, me, I am considered to be neurotypical, meaning, my brain is the most common type of brain.

But what's interesting about this is I love to see a long list of everything that's coming up. I want to plan ahead, I want to know what's coming, give me a list of 200 things, I want to see, and I want to kind of keep a pulse on everything as we go. Take his brain now, he's like, "No-no-no, no more than three things." His brain doesn't process all of that at one time. So, as you can see from that example, that's not right or wrong, it's just different.

It's just that our brains look at those lists and I'm like, "Yes, give me all of this information." He's going. "No-no-nom, that's too much." Where I look at a shorter list and I'm like, "Where's all the details?" I'm kind of freaking out because I feel like we're missing a bunch of things. Again, no right or wrong, it's just different, and so that's what we're trying to raise awareness of our teams is that it's not that anybody's brain is good or bad or right or wrong.

It's just, we process that information in a very different way, and again, when you know that about the different brands and your team, you can really unleash some pretty powerful creativity tools there.

[0:13:54.7] DC: What I'm hearing you say is that there is more to consider about creating and managing a successful team of individuals. Everybody's not the same. In your example, I'm definitely not at your partner, I cannot — three tasks, I would be losing my mind, like, "No-no-no, I need to know the last thing." And I work backwards from being an advertising person but I'm probably a little in between you and him, in the sense that I want to know steps but I don't want anyone telling me how to do them or that.

Like, just give me the information so I can figure out the best way I needed to do it, but you know, maybe your prompts will help. So, probably a little less OCD than you, which is where that, "Give me all the details." Comes from more than likely, and I only say that because Sarah and I do record this on video and I can see her shelf behind her.

[0:14:55.1] SO: And my books are color-coded.

[0:14:56.4] DC: If there was a book out of place and not in the size order that she has them, then I'm sure that there would be a little –

[0:15:02.2] SO: But Deborah, I'm really happy we're talking about this because this is a reason why you hire a productivity consultant. This is why you hire a team like mine to come in and help because we have this outside perspective and so when we come in and build you a – you know, we customize your Asana software for example, we are literally going to talk to people on the team and say, "How do you want to see your work?"

"How do you want to process this information?" So, I see the same work that Jeff sees. My view is just tailored to me and his view of the exact same work is tailored to him, and that's the kind of thing that we can do to really supercharge the productivity on your team because we're considering how those different brains need to be productive and manage their work.

[0:15:45.3] DC: I have one last question about this that I have to assume there are people listening, thinking the same thing which is, where does human resources fall into all of this? Companies are identifying people with neurodivergence I'm assuming or maybe they are, I don't know what the rules are about it. So, if there are people out there that want to take advantage of this but they're like, "Oh my God, I'm going to get sued" or something like that, I mean, what is the way that it works for everybody?

[0:16:17.2] SO: So, true consulting answer, it depends. It's different for every organization and so, what our goal is, is to really just make sure that the tools and the systems that are in place are helpful for the people on the team, and that can be as safe as, "Hey, can I see a smaller list or can I sort mine in alphabetical order instead of date order?" Like, "Okay." We don't have to attach a label to that or say, "Deborah is neurodivergent because she wants it a certain way."

We could just say, "Deborah wants her lists sorted like this and that's okay." So, for us, we are trying to, even in a small way, just make a work environment a little bit easier to someone to be their natural selves the way that their brain likes to operate at work, and if using a productivity to help somebody get there, that's a way for us to support that.

[SPONSOR MESSAGE]

[0:17:09.8] DC: Are you looking to elevate your game, take your bottom-line customer relationships, and events to the next level? Then, I want to work with you. I'm Deborah Corn, the Intergalactic Ambassador to the Printerverse. I engage with a vast, global audience of print and marketing professionals across all stages of their careers. They are seeking topical information and resources, new ways to serve their customers and connect with them, optimize processes for their communications and operations, and they need the products and services and partnership you offer to get to their next level.

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[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

[0:18:09.3] DC: Sarah, does your consulting work also touch upon people who might be, you know, interacting with people, neurodivergent, or maybe they don't know but they just feel like there is something that is not connecting on their communication?

[0:18:29.5] SO: Absolutely. So, there's – you know like I mentioned earlier, there's 20% of the population is neurodivergent. So, naturally, and it is an invisible diversity, right? So, naturally, you are, I can confidently say, interacting with people throughout the day who see the item or interpret the item differently than you do, and so one of the things that's really important, I think especially in the printing and the production space, is you're interfacing with clients all the time.

So, one of the workshops we do is around, we call it, Creating Your User Guide and this is a really fun activity to do with teams, but then also we do a session on communication because how are communicating with each other, while it can be so frustrating, like, "Deborah, I just want you to see it and think about it the way that I am." When I know that that's not a possibility, like, that end result should not be the goal because it's just not going to happen.

We can adjust how we're communicating, how we're interacting, that's a game-changer. So, that's a whole other workshop that Jeff and I do with teams but it's one of the most powerful because instead of saying, "I wish you would just do it the way I need you and how I want you to

do it.” It’s like, “Oh, you’re not going to? Okay, well, how would you like to see it?” Now, we can have a conversation around that.

Now, we’re back to being really productive and being collaborative in a space. So, it’s quite powerful work that I think is relatively low-hanging fruit. It just takes a matter of, “Oh, I understand that there’s different brain types, and I understand that we might just see it differently and that’s okay.” It’s pretty cool actually, the possibilities there.

[0:20:07.3] DC: It really is, and what a amazing thing to have one of your customers just say, “I just want to work with this person, they know how to work with me, you know?” And maybe, they don’t realize that there was a subtle change in the things that you are asking or how you were asking for them or when, you know? It could be a different time of the day that is just better to ask someone a question.

So, I just love that you're doing this work, and it is brave work because, I mean, you are touching upon a little bit of an HR thing but you know, the more we speak about it, and the more that people feel comfortable saying, “You know what? This would work better for me this way.” Or, if they’re not going to do that, at least you can step up and say, “Hey, would you prefer if we did it this way, this way, or do you have any suggestions? How can I help you?”

[0:21:06.5] SO: Open it up, the conversation.

[0:21:07.4] DC: Yeah, open up the conversation without making diagnosis’s or pointing at anybody but just understanding that you may be having a difficulty communicating with other people or they’re having a difficulty in your communications, and instead of just writing the email over three times and banging your head on the desk or reading it three times and banging your head on the desk, you know, you can get some help that might actually be pretty significant.

So, thank you so much for that, for everything you do. For everybody in the Printerverse, links for everything we just discussed including the neurodivergence piece will be in the show notes. I’ll see you in a few months, Sarah. For everybody else out there, now you have some time to catch up with the podcast, they’re 20 minutes or less, although, this one might be a little longer

but we appreciate you giving us your time and your attention. Until we meet again everybody.
Time management long and prosper.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:22:12.6] DC: Thanks for listening to Podcasts from the Printerverse. Please subscribe, click some stars, and leave us a review. Connect with us through printmediacentr.com, we'd love to hear your feedback on our shows and topics that are of interest for future broadcasts. Until next time, thanks for joining us. Print long and prosper.

[END]

Mentioned in This Episode:

Neuroinclusive Training and Information: <https://getsuperproductive.com/>

Project Management for Agencies: <https://getsuperproductive.com/agencies/>

Todoist: <https://todoist.com/>

Jeff Gibbard: <https://jeffgibbard.com/>

Sarah Ohanesian on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/sarahohanesian/>

SO Productive: <https://www.so-productive.com/>

Asana: <https://asana.grsm.io/sarahohanesian308>

Command the Chaos Course: <https://www.so-productive.com/productivity-course/>

Deborah Corn on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/deborahcorn/>

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