

# Solving the puzzle of staff+ time management

**Blanca Garcia Gil**

Engineering & Data

<https://www.blancagarciagil.com/>

@blanquish



I thought staff+ engineers had superpowers

Hi 🙌,  
I'm Blanca

- I have my own data consulting business
- I am a former principal engineer
- I spent 8 years building data platforms
- Why do I love this topic?



# 2023: the year of operational efficiency

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<https://leaddev.com/process/what-recent-data-tells-us-about-developer-productivity-and-team-health>

2023

## Top Priorities

1. Efficiency
2. The ability to allocate resources to business priorities

2023

## Top Challenges

1. Maintaining high-performing teams
2. Quantifying the value of engineering work

2023

## Top Engineering Team Needs

1. Clarity in priorities and focus areas

# 2023: the year of operational efficiency

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## Top Priorities

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## Top Engineering Team Needs

1. Clarity in priorities and focus areas

**We need to be more intentional  
with the work we take on, and  
enable others to do the same.**

# Agenda

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1. Intro 
2. Understand your role and expectations
3. Strategies for knowing what to work on
4. How do you do your best work?
5. Summary
6. Wrap up

# 1. Understand your role and expectations



# Are these two roles similar?

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Senior engineer



Staff+ engineer

# What do you need to move from one role to the next?

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Senior engineer

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Staff+ engineer

# Spend time understanding your new role

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Senior engineer

Mindset  
shift




Staff+ engineer

# Are you clear about what do your team(s) expect of you?

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(\*) **Spoiler alert:** Sabrina Leandro will be speaking on the topic of setting goals

Sometimes... we have  
to let go of some  
things 

# Deep work



# Meetings

# Maker's Schedule, Manager's Schedule

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Paul Graham

<http://www.paulgraham.com/makersschedule.html>

# Maker's Schedule, Manager's Schedule

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*"But now that I've realized what's going on, perhaps there's a third option: to write something explaining the two types of schedule. Maybe eventually, if the conflict between the manager's schedule and the maker's schedule starts to be more widely understood, it will become less of a problem."*

Paul Graham

<http://www.paulgraham.com/makersschedule.html>



## 2. Strategies for knowing what to work on

# Understand the business context



Help your teams be  
more effective by  
translating and  
sharing with them



# Where is your role in your organisation? 📌

What is your contribution towards the longer term organisational goals?

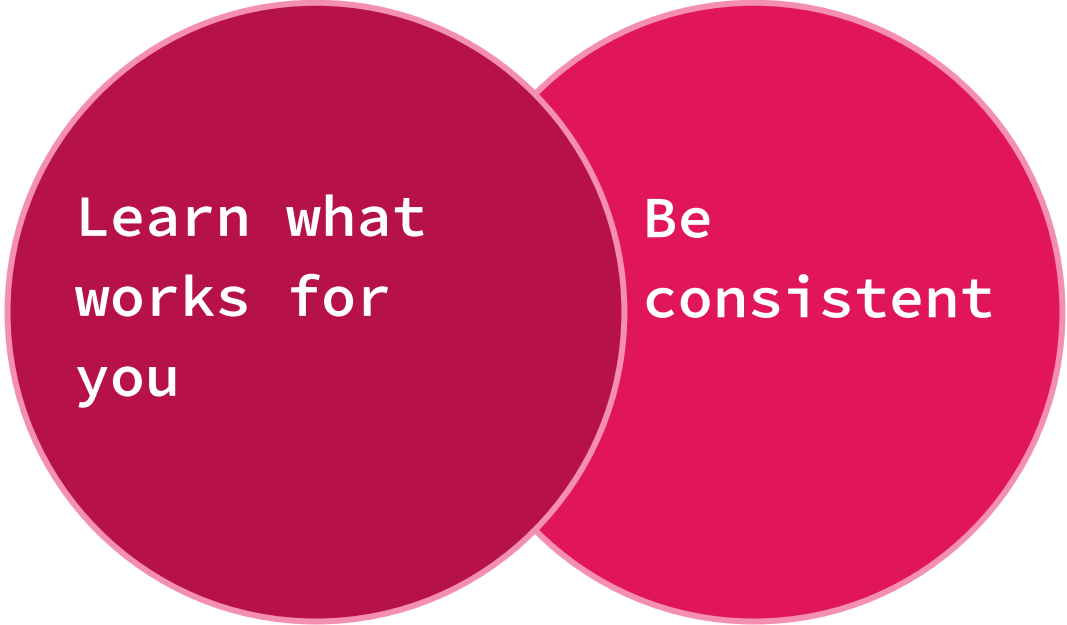
**3. How do you do your best work?**

Do you know your  
personal strengths?



# Be realistic about what you can achieve

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Learn what  
works for  
you

Be  
consistent

Manage your energy  
not your time



# Plan your week





# Different weekly calendars for Staff+ archetypes

<https://staffeng.com/guides/staff-archetypes/>

Tech Lead's Weekly Calendar

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
8 AM	Primary On-Call This Week!					
9 AM		Prep proposal for Arch Review				
10 AM	Standup		Standup	Sprint Planning	Standup	
11 AM	1:1		Interview			
12 PM	1:1			1:1	Incident Retrospective	
12 PM	Lunch					
1 PM					Interview	
2 PM	Focus Block / Coding	Interview	Arch Review	Focus Block / Coding		
3 PM						Sprint Demos
4 PM						
5 PM						
	Child Care					

Solver's Weekly Calendar







	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
8 AM						
9 AM		Deep dive into upcoming scalability issue for enterprise launch	Scalability work	Team Meeting	Scalability work	
10 AM			Interview	1:1		
11 AM	1:1			1:1	Incident Retrospective	
12 PM	1:1					
12 PM	Lunch					
1 PM	"Quick chat" about scalability				Interview	
2 PM		Interview	Scalability work	Scalability work	Interview	
3 PM	Deep dive into upcoming scalability issue for enterprise launch					
4 PM		Urgent sync on scalability for upcoming enterprise launch				Scalability work
5 PM						
			Child Care			



# What does a realistic week look like for you?

— — —







1. Add your non-negotiables
- 2.
- 3.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
...	Exercise 	Dog walk 	Exercise 	...
...	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	...	...
Lunch 				
...	...	...	...	Dog walk 
...	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	...	...
Dog walk 	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	...	...

# What does a realistic week look like for you?

— — —







1. Add your non-negotiables
2. Time for planning and reflecting
- 3.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>Weekly planning</b>	<b>Exercise</b> 	<b>Dog walk</b> 	<b>Exercise</b> 	...
...	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	...	...
<b>Lunch</b> 				
...	...	...	...	<b>Dog walk</b> 
...	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	...	...
<b>Dog walk</b> 	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	...	<b>Weekly reflection</b>

# What does a realistic week look like for you?

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1. Add your non-negotiables
2. Time for planning and reflecting
3. Use time blocking to allocate specific tasks

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>Weekly planning</b>	<b>Exercise</b> 	<b>Dog walk</b> 	<b>Exercise</b> 	...
...	Business case review	...	1:1s	Present proof of concept results and discussion
...		...	1:1s	
<b>Lunch</b> 				
Write business case for data collection change	...	Department town hall	Proof of concept for metrics consolidation	<b>Dog walk</b> 
	...	...		Engineering leadership
	...	...		...
<b>Dog walk</b> 	...	...		...
...	Training	...		<b>Weekly reflection</b>

# Weekly reflections



Take time to pause, reflect and adjust

You have to learn to lead  
yourself in order to lead  
others



LeadDev London, 2017

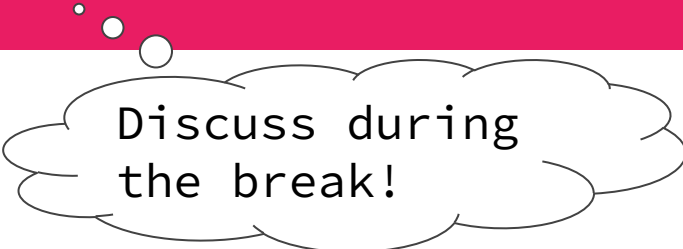
# Summary

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1. Work on the right things: align your priorities to business goals, empower others to focus too
2. Break down your goals, plan, reflect
3. Tailor your weekly plan to your unique strengths



How are you going to be more intentional with your planning?



Discuss during  
the break!

# Thank you!

<https://www.blancagarciagil.com/>

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Slides and links:

