

How to avoid making your  
professional life your whole life:  
strategies for effective  
management of a busy practice

Julia R. Fielding, M.D.

[Julia\\_fielding@med.unc.edu](mailto:Julia_fielding@med.unc.edu)

# Congratulations!

- You made it to this lunch!
- So you have already
  - Completed residency training
  - Found a job
  - Balance work/personal/family life

# In the past....

- Before Fedex...
- Before PACS.....
- Before 24 hour a day have it your way health care.....
- The work day began at 8am, ended at 5pm and you spent the rest of your time with your family
- Your kids did not have multiple scheduled activities
- You knew your neighbors

## In the past...

- You were also much more likely to make less money than your male peers
- Encounter overt discrimination
- Lose your job when you had children

# Background

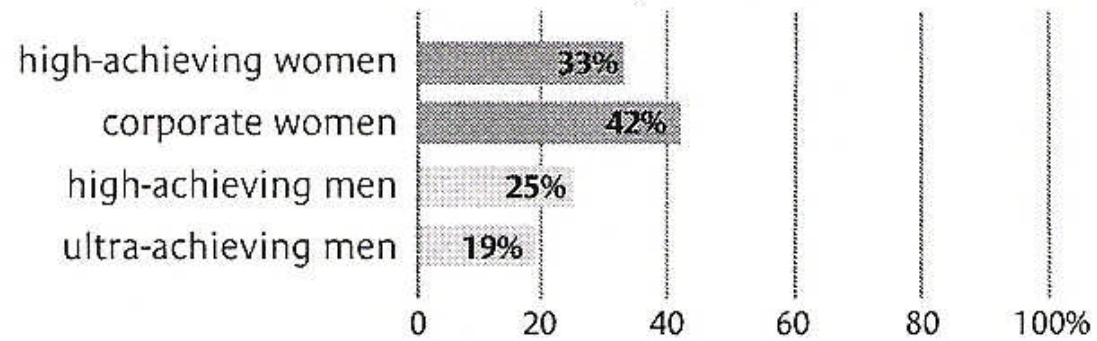
- 2001, Study performed by Sylvia Hewett in conjunction with Harris Interactive and National Parenting Association
- 1168 high-achieving career women
- 479 high-achieving non-career women
- 472-high-achieving men
- High-achieving >\$65,000/year
- Ultra-high achieving >\$100,000/year

Harvard Business Review April 2002

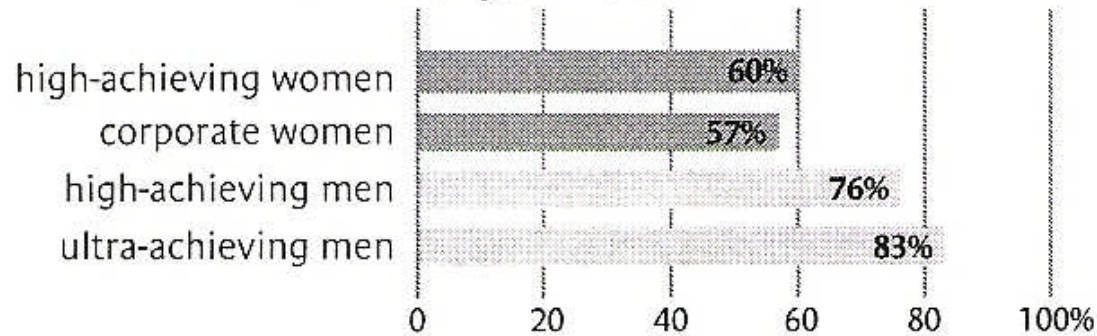
# Background

- 49% of ultra-achieving career women ages 41-55 are childless
- 33% of high-achieving career women ages 41-55 are childless, 57% are unmarried
- Only 19% of ultra-achieving men are childless and 17% unmarried

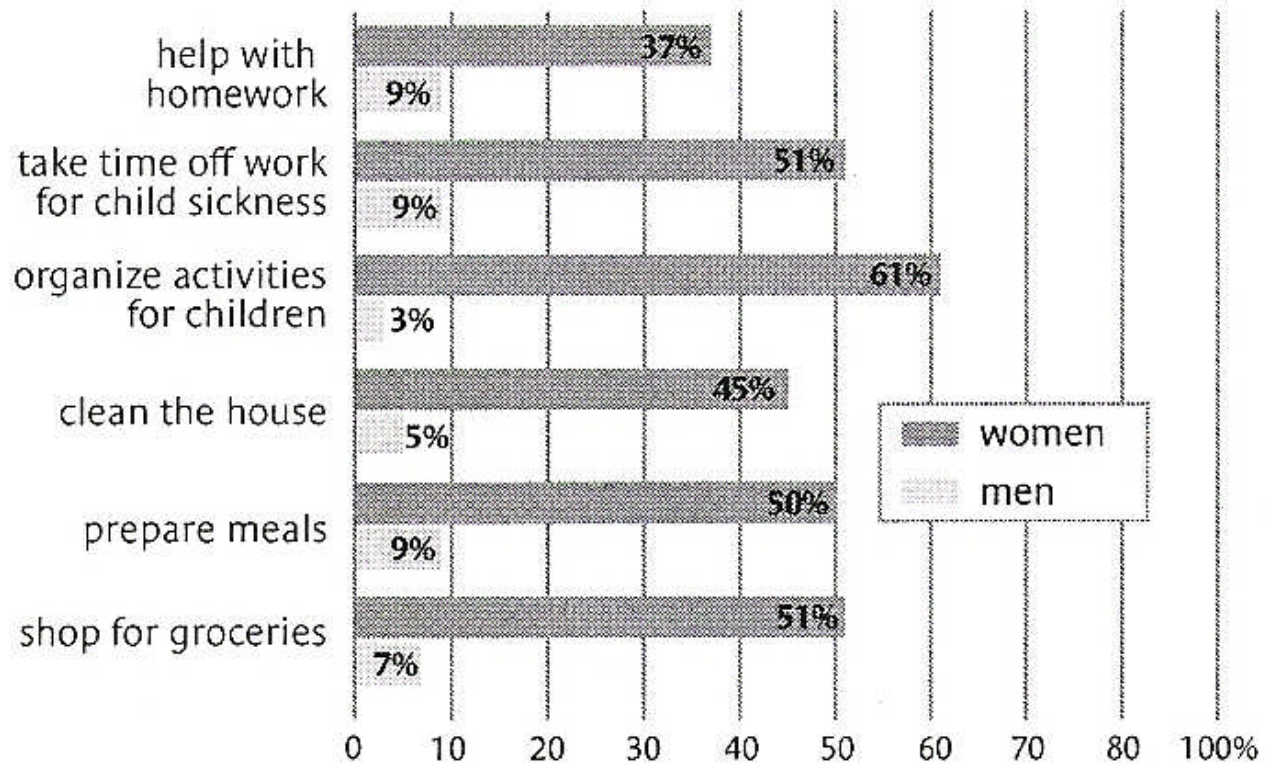
Percentage of professionals  
childless at ages 41 to 55



Percentage of married professionals  
at ages 41 to 55



## Primary Child Care and Household Responsibilities High-achieving Men and Women



Source: National Parenting Association



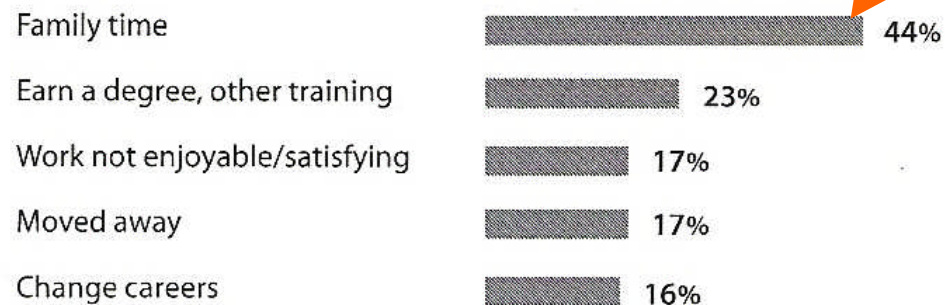
# Background

- In 2004, 3 finance companies combined forces with Center for Work-Life Policy and Harris International
- Survey sample size 2443 women
- 653 men
- Assessment of career paths
- Women and men do take time out from work, but for different reasons

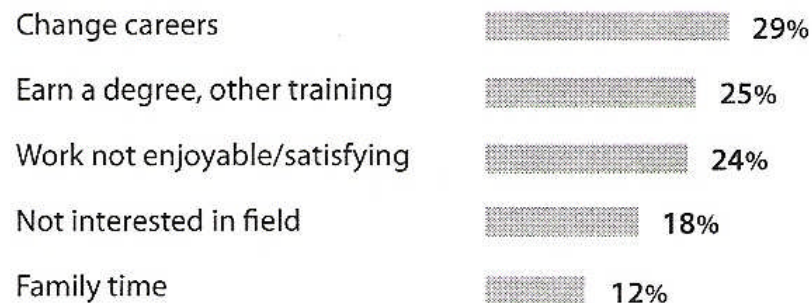
## Why Do They Leave the Fast Lane?

Our survey data show that women and men take off-ramps for dramatically different reasons. While men leave the workforce mainly to reposition themselves for a career change, the majority of women off-ramp to attend to responsibilities at home.

### Top five reasons women leave the fast lane

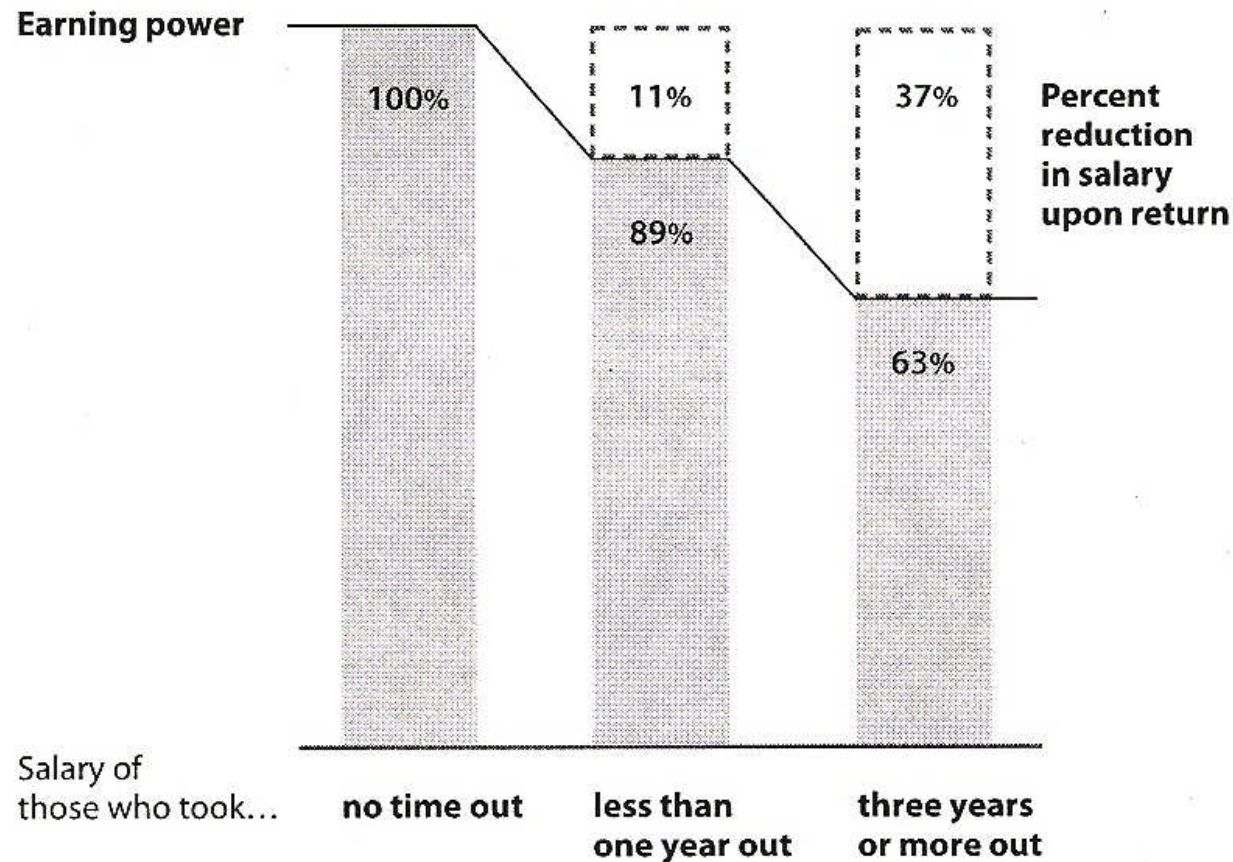


### Top five reasons men leave the fast lane



## The High Cost of Time Out

Though the average amount of time that women take off from their careers is surprisingly short (less than three years), the salary penalty for doing so is severe. Women who return to the workforce after time out earn significantly less than their peers who remained in their jobs.



# Work strategies

# Be honest about your ambitions

- Do you want to be an employee or the boss?
- Are you happiest doing more or less administrative work?
- Is your career an integral part of your personality/life?
- **Tell your colleagues and your boss your ambitions – this makes your plans concrete and public**

# Take chances

- Both professional and personal advancement requires risk
- Consider the possible drawbacks and if they are not too severe, go for it!
- Small failures can be rectified
- **Risk-takers make good leaders-and others notice**

# Be efficient

- Compartmentalize worktime as much as possible
- Focus your mind like a laser beam on cases, teaching, writing, administration and allow no interruptions
- Consider – you might finish early!
- **Limit the ways in which others can contact you**

# Maintain your integrity

- Mean what you say and say what you mean
- Keep your credibility, finish projects on time
- Be cordial with your colleagues
- **If you must gossip, try to make it positive, avoid office politics**



# Limit meetings

- Find the balance of face time that maximizes collegiality while minimizing wasted time
- Make an agenda and cover it before allowing new business
- Allow 3 positive and 3 negative comments on any provocative subject
- **Always finish on time**

# Work to your strengths and benefit

- Institutional knowledge makes you very valuable
- Volunteer for assignments that are aligned with your talents
- Avoid taking on more than your share of unrewarding tasks
- **Make sure you learn the finances involved in running your practice, including the salary structure**

# The power of 3

- Engaged in a turf war?
- Got an irascible colleague?
- Need more time/space/money for your group?
- **Approach your boss with 3 proposals that are feasible, fair and do not put you at a disadvantage - I guarantee he/she will choose one of them**

# Always do the best job you can when presenting information

- Limit even formal presentations –it is always best to finish early
- Don't use too much animation in slides – it is distracting
- Use the pointer to do just that – make a point – do not continually circle the text
- You never know who is in the audience, your next boss or your next hire
- **Dress for success**

# Make decisions quickly

- If the answer is no, then say it plainly
- Administer your group using a clear set of rules regarding time off, promotion and division of labor and follow them – this includes you
- **Handle your mail only once – trash, follow up or answer**

# Find a mentor – Be a mentor

- You will likely need several mentors
- Each person may have a specific skill such as scientific or grant writing, career advancement or child-rearing
- It is especially important for women to have male mentors

**Being a mentor forces you to codify your strategies for success**

# My list of professional mentors

- Dr. Steven Seltzer
- Dr. Ewa Kuligowska
- Dr. Neil Resnick
- Dr. Ron Kikinis
- Dr. Marla Polger
- Dr. Etta Pisano
- Dr. Harry Mellins

# What about delegation?

- It depends on your style
- Delegating important tasks to competent individuals helps them grow – but in general it does not decrease your workload
- **All paperwork should be done by assistants whenever possible**



# Make your days worthwhile

- Is your work fulfilling?
- Are you on the side of the angels?
- Do you respect your colleagues/boss?
- Are facilities and mentors available to help you advance?
- **If the answer is no - leave**

# Personal life strategies

# Marry the right person

- Successful marriage/career requires a spouse who will shoulder equal amounts of house and childcare duties
- Both partners must be flexible in career choice/location

# Purchase your time

- The first thing you do is send out your laundry
- Next, get a housekeeper – no one cares how the cans are arranged in the pantry
- Pay whatever it takes to get peace of mind with your child care – that may mean 2 helpers, day care or a combination
- My indulgence: A COOK!

# Take your vacations

- You earned the time, don't let anyone tell you that "the practice needs you."
- Vacations are when family memories are made
- Relax re-energize
- You will be more creative when you return

# Live within your means

- You make plenty of money
- Time and peace of mind are more important than material things
- Worrying about debt saps your energy

# Take care of yourself

- Do not overschedule your children or yourself. Everyone needs to be able to handle downtime
- Find an exercise regime you love and do it
- Get your annual medical care
- Make friends – school groups, women's groups, common interests, neighbors

# Revel in beauty

- Outdoors – botanical gardens and mountain hikes
- Indoors – folk art and castles
- Performing arts – music and theatre
- Visual arts – sculpture and painting
- Sport – the perfect sprint or catch
- This will make your life richer and put life's small problems in perspective



Thank you

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