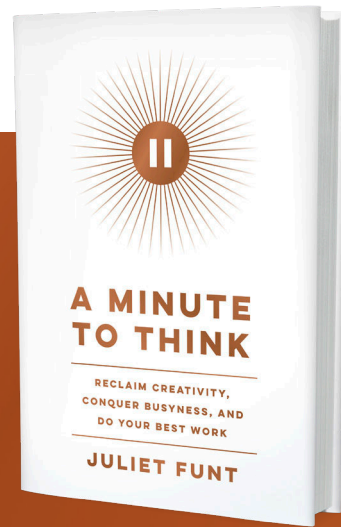


# A MINUTE TO THINK

## Core Tools Guide



### Urgency Tools

#### The Wedge

A small portion of time—a “sip of white space”—inserted into your day, especially between two actions or events, to buy you a moment to think, plan, or compose yourself.

#### Categories of Urgency

A simple system to tame our “hallucinated urgency” for everything on our plates and to reframe our next actions based on actual urgency.

### Communication Tools

#### Phone Narration

A technique to maintain relationships when we disappear into our devices.

#### 2D vs 3D

To communicate more effectively, this framework helps us pair our message with the right communication medium.





# 2 Urgency Tools

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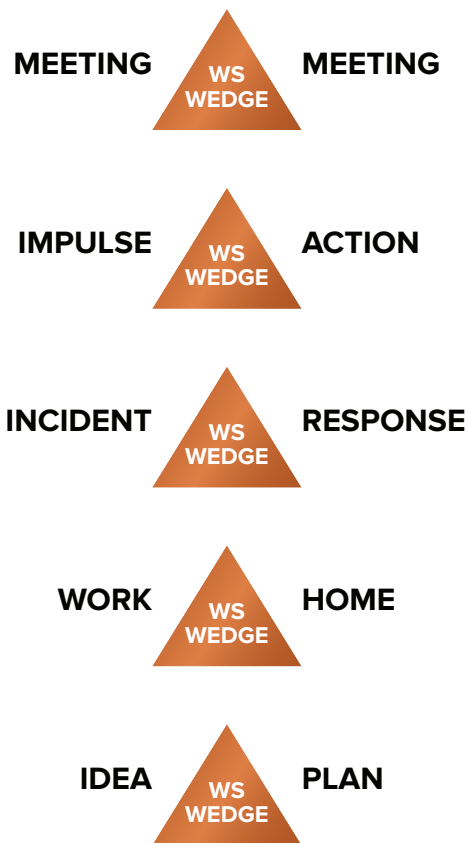


# Urgency Tool 1

## The Wedge

*A small portion of time—a “sip of white space”—inserted into your day, especially between two actions or events, to buy you a moment to think, plan, or compose yourself.*

The Wedge is a small portion of time that you insert anywhere in your day when you need to get off the train for a moment. It pries apart two actions or events that previously would have been connected, buying you a moment to think, plan, or compose yourself.



The Wedge brings clarity and focus by helping us quickly zoom out. It creates a moment to think before acting. Examples:

- Instead of diving into your inbox first thing, you take a wedge of white space to plan your morning.
- Instead of accepting a meeting without thinking, you take a wedge and realize you are not needed and craft a cordial decline.
- Instead of going over a capable associate's final draft, you pause to catch your controlling, perfectionist self and approve the version sent.
- Instead of being reactive, you gather yourself when you are thrown.
- Instead of taking someone else's definition of urgency and making it your own, you pause and assess the best way to proceed.

The Wedge stops us when taking the next action mindlessly would be a mistake or when a moment of time could help us create a more thoughtful response.

# Urgency Tool 2

## Categories of Urgency

*A simple system to tame our “hallucinated urgency” for everything on our plates and to reframe our next actions based on actual urgency.*

By taking on only one task, one interaction at a time, we can shift away from a culture of now and spread the benefits of moderated urgency. Taming urgency offers a myriad of results. Our personal brand is elevated with the calm that comes from a confident opinion of what's dire and what's not. As a leader and team, we spare others from misguided efforts, the waste of shifting priorities, and the stress and inefficiency of false urgency.

There are three broad categories of urgency. Use them to assess any request, action, or decision to regain control of your and your team's time and effort:

**Not Time Sensitive.** It's important to acknowledge that a need can be “not time sensitive.” Clarifying this category out loud to a team, an assistant and of course, ourselves, does magic for everyone's ability to prioritize.

**Tactically Time Sensitive.** This means that speed is tied to a business result. This is where your business or your career is furthered by going fast. But even when an item is urgent, that doesn't make it an emergency. Staying calm and intentional will make it easier for you to prioritize deadlines and pour on a chosen burst of speed for high-value actions.

**Emotionally Time Sensitive.** These needs masquerade as Tactically Time Sensitive, but they are not. Urgency comes from our emotions—positive and negative—curiosity, anxiety, worry, control, discomfort with ambiguity, excitement, or intrigue. If Spock, the Vulcan master of emotional neutrality, was weighing in, the need would not be urgent.

### Use this framework before you:

- Request any kind of data or unscheduled report.
- E-mail asking about the progress on a project.
- Create or participate in a fire drill.
- Spend money from your business.
- Interrupt anyone with chats, messages, and calls.
- Casually ask for feedback on your latest idea.
- Ask a tangential question in a meeting.
- And, of course, when you're on the receiving end of any of the above.

Once you're adept at playing with these categories, they will become automatic to you. These categories also become a powerful shorthand for teams and colleagues who share them.



# 2 Communication Tools

## Phone Narration

A technique to maintain relationships when we disappear into our devices.

## 2D vs 3D

To communicate more effectively, this framework helps us pair our message with the right communication medium.



# Communication Tool 1

## Phone Narration

***A technique to maintain relationships when we disappear into our devices.***

Present Absence, a concept generally attributed to Swarthmore Psychology Professor Kenneth Gergen, is what happens when you're physically present yet not present—when you're "there" but "not there." This happens constantly in our world, where a cell phone is in every hand all the time. But when you dive into your digital device without explanation, colleagues may think you're rude, "spacey," bored, or socially immature, none of which serve your goals.

The Phone Narration technique can help. When you use a device around others and the action you are taking is unclear, the idea is to loosely narrate your screen-based actions. The same thing can apply if you need to leave your video conference to look up something urgent in your e-mail.

- Tell your conversation partner or meeting attendees where you are going and what you're doing.
- Let them know when you'll be back.

This gracious habit can be as simple as saying, "I just need to respond to my boss," or "Let me look up that regional manager stat." It has a positive affect on everyone's focus and engagement. And don't forget to practice this technique with loved ones, including your kids. They will appreciate you ending the mystery of, "What is daddy or mommy doing all day on their phone?"

Often when you begin to narrate, you'll realize you picked up the phone for no reason at all. It happens to all of us, and that's a wonderful reminder of our addictive relationship.

# Communication Tool 2

## 2D vs 3D

*To communicate more effectively, this framework helps us pair our message with the right communication medium.*

Every request or conversation has a preference for being expressed in a 2D or 3D mode. We must learn to use the right tool for the right job, and mismatching content and medium has a cost.

### 2D content is:

- Simple, yes or no, fact-driven, and information based
- Static and asynchronous, meaning it doesn't need to happen in real time

### 3D content is:

- Nuanced, contains emotion, and the opportunity for creative thinking
- Synchronous and requires a live element
- A way for us to exchange critical cues through our tone, pace, and gestures
- A way for us to discuss ideas, ask complex questions, and connect interpersonally

### 2D mediums:

- E-mail
- Text
- Slack
- Chats
- IM

### 3D mediums:

- Zoom
- Phone
- In person

		MESSAGE	
		2D SIMPLE	3D COMPLEX
MEDIUM	2D STATIC	✓ EFFICIENT	✗ COMPROMISES DEPTH
	3D LIVE	✗ WASTES TIME	✓ EFFECTIVE

If you're trying to build consensus for an important decision through a sputtering e-mail thread, you probably should've used a 3D conversation. If you want to discuss ideas thoughtfully or ask complex questions, use a 3D conversation.

If you need approval for next week's agenda, that's 2D. If you want to efficiently deal with details and communicate straightforward decisions, it's 2D.

Before you start a conversation, ask yourself:

- "What am I trying to communicate?" or "What is the need or goal?"
- "Is a 2D or 3D medium best to meet that need?"

Choose the right tool for every job—in this case, the right medium—and you'll be rewarded with more time and more richness in every exchange.

## Juliet Funt

Featured in top media outlets such as *Forbes*, CNBC, *Fast Company*, and NPR, Juliet Funt is a globally renowned keynote speaker, tough-love advisor to the Fortune 500, founder and CEO of the efficiency training firm, Juliet Funt Group. Juliet is the author of *A Minute to Think*, nominated for the Next Big Idea Club curated by Malcolm Gladwell, Adam Grant, Susan Cain, and Dan Pink.

She is an evangelist for freeing the potential of companies by unburdening their talent from busywork, and she has brought her powerful concepts to Spotify, *National Geographic*, Anthem, Vans, Abbott, Costco, Pepsi, Nike, Wells Fargo, Sephora, Sysco, and ESPN.

