

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:05] 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.

[EPISODE]

[0:00:33] 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, which means I am here with Sarah Ohanesian, CEO, Founder of SO Productive. Hello, welcome to your own program.

[0:00:56] SO: Thank you. Thanks for having me again.

[0:00:59] DC: Just a little pre-warning for everybody, Sarah is having some allergy issues today. If she doesn't sound like her cheery self, give her a break, but she still has great information to share. Speaking of great information, we are hot off the heels, literally, of the Girls Who Print Annual Event. It just happened last week, where you were my closing speaker, as you always are, because after everybody gets great information about, in this case, the theme was "Standing Your Ground" and all the different ways that women in the workplace need to step up and take responsibility for things and also, just be aware of what's going on around them and navigate through it, and they can't do that if they don't have the time, and if they don't have — go through pretty much what we talk about on this podcast all the time, creating your priorities, understanding when to delegate, knowing when your golden hours are. I mean, everything ends up here. What you were talking about was standing your ground in regards to time. Can you explain that to everyone? You made three points that we're going to review today.

[0:02:19] SO: Yeah. I have to say, Deborah, I loved the theme so much, because when I speak and I travel around and I work with clients, the thing that comes up so often is that men and women, but I would say, slightly a little more women, come up to me afterwards. They often say like, “You gave me permission to do something I didn't even know I needed.” I think that that stand your ground theme is so strong, because often, we need permission to even stand our ground in the first place.

For someone to say like, “Do it. Stand your ground. It's important. It's empowering.” When I first heard that theme from you, I just have to say, I loved it. It's so in alignment. I think that piece of we need to remember that we are allowed and empowered and encouraged to do it like, “Ooh.” I just have the chills, because that's a really – it's just so tremendously powerful. I just, one, thank you for giving the group the space to even talk about it, no less have the permission to do it. That's the start.

The three things that we cover, we often give three tips on this show, but because I felt like permission was so important — these are tips and permissions. The first one was to have boundaries. The second was to say no, which can also be framed as saying yes to the right things. Then the third was to delegate. Having boundaries, saying no, and delegating.

[0:03:43] DC: All right. Let's start with, are we giving ourselves permission to have boundaries, or are we giving ourselves permission to communicate that we have boundaries with others?

[0:03:54] SO: Very good question. It's both. I run into a lot of people who will say, “I have boundaries. Of course, I have boundaries.” Then, the next question is, well, did you tell anyone what your boundaries are? What we discussed during the Girls Who Print Day, and I think this is such a good message for everybody is the best way for us to stand our ground is to have those boundaries, know what they are, and really live in those boundaries with some conviction, and being able to then communicate what those boundaries are.

Because so often, we think we have a boundary, we think we've shared our boundaries with other people. We often assume people are going to know what our boundaries are, but I think it's just really important again to remember that your boundaries are only so good as your ability to communicate those boundaries.

You can obviously do that in a really nice way. But again, having that permission to say, "Hey, this is not okay, or I'm not going to do that, or maybe I'll do that tomorrow instead of today." being able to communicate those boundaries is huge. Let's think about, number one of the things that I think was powerful to share is what we went through with some of the exercises and we can do this now. If you're driving, pull over, maybe save this episode for when you're not driving. But a great exercise to do is to often think about where do you need boundaries in your own life?

Because again, we think boundaries have to be this black and white, crystal clear, like, "I have a boundary or I don't." It's not actually that straightforward sometimes, so I often like to lead people through a series of questions. Again, you can write these down if you're listening in with us today, but what boundaries do you wish you had? What physical boundaries are important? I would love for people to think about this at work, certainly, but also at home. This is the time management podcast. What time boundaries do you need?

A good thing to think about here is, are you taking on too many things? Are you saying yes to things when you really maybe should be saying no to things? Then I often think about people boundaries. What people boundaries do you need? Is there a person in your life that could use a boundary? That can be a family member, a friend, a co-worker, but maybe there's some relationships that need a boundary. Then the other area is just to think about, what areas in life might you need a boundary? That could be a spiritual boundary, a health and fitness boundary. Maybe there's a food boundary.

Then the final question I love to ask is, what stopped being fun? What started to stress you out? The answers to those questions can often be a signal to you that that might be an area where you need a better boundary. Those are just some good questions to ask yourself.

[0:06:24] DC: A few of those overlapped into the saying no territory. Historically, you and I don't necessarily see this one point in the same manner. For example, I can't do that, because I need to go pick up my kid at school. That is a very fair boundary, but don't tell me you're not going to get judged on that saying no about something that could be deemed a personal problem and not a work problem. I'm just being realistic here, right? Same thing.

By the way, that could be a man, or a woman saying that. Does not have to be just a woman saying it. I'm just saying that there's some overlap. There's also, it tweaks me a little, because being a Gen Xer, never being able to – I mean, I'm sorry. I have boundaries. I can't do that. They'd be like, “Well, take your boundaries. Clean up your desk. Get out of the office, because now you no longer have a job, because you just crossed my boundary by saying no.”

Now, I understand the world does not function that way anymore. However, there are junior people that will never feel empowered and should not feel empowered through this podcast to just say, “Well, Sarah said I could say no to that.”

[0:07:45] SO: Exactly. Yeah. Please don't use me as the excuse. Although, I would love for you to become clear on what you are and are not willing to say yes to. I think that picking your kids up from school is a really good example. Because if that's something that's really important to you to be there at school, pick up, that boundary, it's not for me and Deborah to say that's a good boundary or bad boundary. It is about communicating that with the co-workers, with the team, and with your boss, because at some company, picking up your kid might be totally acceptable, where at another company, it might not be.

I think the key here is about finding that conversation, having an open conversation about this, and also, being willing to say, “If I do that, in exchange, I'll do this.” It's always around that conversation of here's what's in it for you. I'm going to have a boundary, but you're going to get something out of it as well. I think that that's really important.

I'm hoping I can do this. I'm asking permission to do this. In exchange, I will start the work day at 7am, so I can get out of here at 3pm, or I'm going to get back on at night afterward and I'm only going to be gone for 30 minutes. When one of the things that we talked about during the Girls Who Print Day was there are so many ways to get creative about boundaries. This isn't a me versus them type of moment. This is a, let's get creative and collaborate on how my boundaries and your boundaries can work together.

[0:09:12] DC: Right. Okay. That is totally fair. I want to give you another example, because when it comes to picking up children and things of that nature, I need to go home and I'm a caregiver for someone in my family, whatever it might be, you would hope that people have human empathy and don't give people a hard time. This is an honest response I got from someone who was a millennial.

"Hi. I work from 9 to 5. I don't read, or respond to my emails after that. If you need something from me, these are my hours." Which again, a Gen Xer like me, I stare at that email for 10 minutes and I'm like, "Are you kidding me?" Instead of, "You go setting your boundaries and telling me, helping me get what I need from you by working within your timeframe." But on the other end, I skew more to who in God's name do you think that you are? Not that they're wrong, by the way. You have work hours, you're supposed to have life hours.

[0:10:18] SO: Yeah, a 100%. I think this is where the perspective is so interesting. We can look at that and be like, "Who do they think they are? Mind me now, and now I have to make sure I'm emailing you after 9am." It can get so frustrating. Also, what is your expectation for that person? Email them at 5.30pm and they're not going to get back to you until tomorrow. Is that fine? Yeah, it's probably fine. If it's not fine, perhaps, it's about, again, communicating with them. "I know your boundary is you end the day at 5pm. I can't get that you till 6. Do you think because we're in a bit of an emergency situation this one time, it would be okay if you hopped on at night?" I think there's, again, ways to communicate around it. My other suggestion here is like, what's the worst that's going to happen? Is it an okay to get an answer the next day? Probably. I think, again –

[0:11:08] DC: That's [inaudible 0:11:09].

[0:11:11] SO: But again, our boundaries might be different, where we have to figure out and communicate is when our boundaries are not aligning, that's where we got to figure out, well, how are we still going to compromise to work together? I may think your boundaries are ridiculous. You might not like my boundaries. But if we have to work together, we got to figure that out, so that we can compromise, come together and get through this at the end of the day. We got to still get the work done.

[MESSAGE]

[0:11:39] 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 keynote, 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.

[EPISODE CONTINUED]

[0:12:22] DC: Okay, I know a lot of this is literally my attitude about it because again, I'm going to judge that person virtually in my head when I get that pushback. I'm still going to do the way that they want it, because if I need something, then I have to understand that I have to get it in these hours. Would I recommend that person? Would I refer them? I'm just being honest, probably not, because I don't function that way.

We might have to have like, bring a psychologist around to this at one point to literally sit the Gen Xers down and say, "Okay, you've got to let all of this go. We understand that you were abused for your entire careers until now where the millennials showed you that you were idiots for 30 years. Now, you've got to let it go in bigger ways." I can't imagine that that does not

affect people's lives in some manner, but let's not harp on it now. We do need a mental health professional. Go ahead.

[0:13:28] SO: Well, I think there's so much here. There's a lot to unpack here. For the point of today, I think what's really critical is really getting back to like, yes, you're right. We live in a very judgmental world, in a very judgmental time. Am I going to judge you for how you act and respond to me at work? 100%. We're going to be honest about it. But what are the repercussions of that? Is it worth it to you?

I might very well say, my boundary is 5pm and I actually don't care if that affects my career, because I'm happy with where I am. It's good enough. I don't have to work at night. I work during the day. I've got some balance. I get a decent paycheck and that's fine. I think it's hard for some of us who are high achievers, overachievers, ambitious, and we want to grow, we want to succeed, we want the company to grow. It's hard for some of us to imagine that that's okay. But for some people, it is. I think that's, again, opening up a conversation around like, yeah, that works for you. Good for you.

[0:14:25] DC: What I'm saying is like, when your manager's a millennial, that's like, "Oh, okay. No problem. Go on. Go make your jam. Go brew your beer. Go bake your banana bread."

[0:14:35] SO: Sourdough bread.

[0:14:37] DC: Whatever you're going to do at home with your free time. Go live your best life, girl, boy, whatever it might be. But again, to someone like me, I always – my new favorite thing is to bring up the scene in *A League of Their Own*, where Tom Hanks is trying not to yell at the center fielder who keeps missing the cutoff person at second base. He's just like, "Arrgh" without screaming, he's trying to hold it back. Try to work on hitting the cutoff person but you know that he's completely – all he wants to do is scream and yell and kick the dirt and be a baseball manager. You can't act like a lunatic anymore as the person.

Okay, we melded permission to have boundaries and permission to say no into one little section there. Let's skip to permission to delegate, which really falls into all of this as well. Do you have a definition for what you mean by delegate?

[0:15:37] SO: That's a great question. I would define it as it's just not something you have to do. Then this is a key right now. Because I often think that we think, I have to delegate, but I have to take care of everything immediately. When you don't have a big team, or you don't have someone you feel like you can delegate to, a way to delegate is just to say, I'm going to put that on the back burner for now because I'm going to focus on some of these other things. If you're on a small team, if you don't have a big budget, if you don't control the staffing budget, that can be a really good way to think about it. I might be delegating this essentially to myself, but I'm delegating it for a later time because I just can't do everything right now. It's, what are you able to get off your plate, whether that's to another person, to an outsourced vendor, or to save it for later?

[0:16:23] DC: Okay. I mean, I'm going to speak personally about this, because a lot of times, I'm in a position where I can't delegate anything because the things that people want are me. I say that with full humbleness. I'm just saying that, well, no one else can speak at that event, no one else could write that content, no one else could do that. I can't delegate. I know during the conference, you were giving advice for people in that position to look at other things that maybe they could delegate.

[0:16:56] SO: Yeah. I think sometimes at work, especially, again, with small teams, small budgets, it's hard to find that stuff to delegate, which means we might have to work after 5pm, or a little bit longer of a work day. I would encourage you to think about things you could delegate at home. Could you get your groceries delivered? Could you get the landscaping done? Can someone cut the grass for you? What are those small things? My favorite example is get your kids to do the dishes, or if they're old enough to help you chop some vegetables and prep for dinner.

I often think, we think we have to do all these things ourselves. When we really, really think about it, and I think this is a good time to ask another person, there are actually a few more things in life that you can delegate. I would say, Amazon for all the good and the bad, that's the thing that Amazon has done for us. We delegate a lot of shopping and running to the store and running to get groceries. Now, get it delivered. I think this is a good example of list out all the things that you do and really, really, really evaluate and maybe talking about with a good friend or a partner, what are those things that you actually could get off your plate? Who in your life could help you with those things?

Then, like I said, Google the service. Find a service to possibly do this for you. If you don't want to spend your money on that stuff, which I totally respect, then maybe just say, "I don't need to clean my house this week." How bad is it? Go for two weeks. It's okay. Part of delegating, again, is I'm just going to push it off a couple of extra days, or I'm going to wait a little while, until I do have more bandwidth. Because one of the critical things, when we've got a goal, whatever that goal is, when we are working towards that goal, you're in a bit of a sprint. During a sprint, something's got to give.

Deborah, you're prepping for a big event. You're speaking at a big event. In the days leading up to that, you might have to let go of a couple of things, delegate them to someone else, or delegate them for later because you're focused on something so big right now, you're in a sprint. When I say delegate, also, it might not be forever. It might be for this moment in service of a larger goal.

[MESSAGE]

[0:19:02] DC: Like what you hear? Leave us a comment. Click a few stars, share this episode and please subscribe to the show. Are you interested in being a guest and sharing your information with our active and growing global audience? Podcaster trending as a potent direct marketing and educational channel for brands and businesses who want to provide portable content for customers and consumers. Visit printmediacentr.com, click on podcast, and request a partner package today. Share long and prosper.

[EPISODE CONTINUED]

[0:19:36] DC: I want to call back another podcast episode that we did, where we talked about blocking off time on the calendar. This is when it comes in really handy. Those two hours on Monday, two hours on Wednesday, two hours on Friday that you block off your calendar, that you use for your time, for your emergency meetings and things that you just – you know you could immediately say yes to during those hours without going back and forth, because you have them blocked off, this is a great time to look and say, “Okay, I can't delegate this to anybody, but I might be able to move around some of the things I had planned for my personal block off time and work it in that way.”

[0:20:24] SO: Absolutely. I think when we're thinking about dinner or house chores, that's a great example. You can ask my husband about this. The days leading up to me traveling, and prepping for an event, I'm not making as much dinner as I am the week following the event. That's a delegation that we as a household are like, we're okay with it. We'll get something delivered those nights, and then I'll cook next week. That's fine. It's not forever.

I think that's where we get so stuck on delegation. It doesn't have to be a full-time employee. It doesn't have to be that we're ordering dinner out for the rest of time. It's just for this period that we're in, the next three days are going to be crazy. We're going to make some delegation adjustments during that shorter period of time. I think if you think of it that way, it's a little bit easier to digest.

[0:21:09] DC: Quick, to Sarah's family, get her husband a cooking class so he can cook dinner

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[0:21:14] SO: I shouldn't fuss on him. He's actually great. He grills. Yeah. No, he's great.

[0:21:20] DC: I'm only kidding, he likes all my posts. I told you, he stalks me a little on LinkedIn. I was just making a little gender-specific joke there because unfortunately, I think we all fall into

it. I just wanted to make sure that it was clear that just because you're the woman, doesn't mean that that's necessarily why you're making dinner. You might be a better cook or something like that.

[0:21:41] SO: It's also a great example. That could be a wonderful exercise to do in your household. Is this a mom thing, or a dad thing? Or is this a, who in our household is better at this? For this week, could someone else do that chore? I love that. I'm actually glad, you'll laugh at this episode, but I'm glad you brought that up because there are times where it's like, we also got to be okay to ask for help. I think we're all shy to be like, "Well, that's my job in our relationship." It's like, maybe for this week, you just need some help, and that's okay.

[0:22:07] DC: It could be something actually fun if it's something that your family can afford to do and just say, "Okay. Next week, Mom and Dad, or Mom and Dad together, or whatever the situation is in the house, are off dinner duty." Everybody gets a day to pick what they want to either get delivered, or if you want to make it, we'll get the ingredients this week and turn it into something that ends up being delegated and freeing you up for work stuff, but also, doesn't –can become something fun."

[0:22:45] SO: If you get creative with it, it'll work. Yep. Love that.

[0:22:48] DC: Okay. Last thing before we wrap this up, we introduced a leadership workshop that you and Kim Wunner are running. Can you please share about that and the dates, so that if people are listening to it after it happens, they know that they missed it this time, but they can connect with you on LinkedIn, or your website, join your mailing list, which you should. If you're not on Sarah's mailing list, she sends out great tips. Go ahead.

[0:23:18] SO: Love that. Yes, Kim and I are doing a leadership workshop. We're going to be doing these quarterly workshops, and every quarter is going to have a little bit of a different flavor. This week, week, month next month, we're going to be focusing on leadership, of course, and with a real focus on networking. How do we find the time to network? Kim is always going to be giving you some of those tangible leadership skills. Then I'm always going

to be giving you, well, how did you actually find the time to do all the great stuff that Kim has taught you? You can get more information. It's so-productive.com/leadership. That's where all the information is. Our next workshop is November 14.

[0:23:55] DC: Okay. I just wanted to make that clear, because this podcast probably isn't going to come out until November. It's not actually next month. It's this month on that. By the time you hear this, you should already see everything being promoted through all the channels, including Print Media Centr and Girls Who Print, as well as Sarah's and Kim Wunner's. [Kimwunner.com](https://kimwunner.com). She killed it at the Girls Who Print event. My God, it was amazingly powerful. Those replays will be out soon, everybody.

Sarah, just thank you so much for your time and for everything else. Until next time, everybody, time management long, delegate long, have boundaries long, give yourself permission to say no long and prosper.

[END OF EPISODE]

[0:24:44] 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.

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Mentioned in This Episode:

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

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

SO Productive Leader Skills Workshop: <https://www.so-productive.com/leadership/>

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/>

Print Media Centr: <https://printmediacentr.com>

Project Peacock: <https://ProjectPeacock.TV>

Print Across America: <https://printacrossamerica.com>

Girls Who Print: <https://girlswhoprint.net>

Girls Who Print Day: <https://girlswhoprint.net/girls-who-print-day-2023-stand-your-ground/>

Kim Wunner: <https://kimwunner.com/>