

Application Guide

CAREY NIEUWHOF ON WORKING AT YOUR BEST, PART 2



BOTTOM LINE:

Seasons have beginning and endings. If your “busy season” doesn’t have an ending, it’s not a season. It’s your life. To live and work at your best, you have to learn the art of saying “no” nicely.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

For high-capacity leaders who love progress, overworking and overcommitting can quickly become a way of life. But with burnout on the rise, many are wondering if there’s a better way. Bestselling author, speaker, podcaster, and former attorney Carey Nieuwhof shares how to leverage your daily energy levels to overcome chronic stress and do your best work.

I. Performing at Your Best

- A. The Stress Spiral*: The ongoing state of feeling overwhelmed, over-worked, and over-committed
- B. The Thrive Cycle*: Characterized by doing your best work when you’re at your best
 - 1. Live in a way today that will help you thrive tomorrow.
 - a. Ask yourself, Does my calendar reflect my desire to remain...
 - b. Emotionally and/or spiritually healthy?
 - c. Relationally healthy?
 - d. Financially healthy?
 - e. Physically fit?

II. The Zones of Productivity

- A. The Green Zone: The 3–5 hours every day when you’re most productive and engaged
 - 1. Use your Green Zone for your most important tasks.
- B. The Red Zone: The 1–2 hours every day when your energy is lowest
 - 2. Use your Red Zone for low-stakes tasks that don’t require high mental energy.
- C. The Yellow Zone: The middle ground between your most productive and least productive time of day

III. Practical Implementation

- A. Focus on what you can control, not on what you can’t. How much of your time is determined by your boss? Identify how you can better control the time that isn’t set by those obligations.
- B. Express desires, not demands. Ask your boss if there’s flexibility in changing meeting schedules to match your Thrive Cycle.

*The Stress Spiral and Thrive Cycle are on page two.

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QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION OR TEAM DISCUSSION:

1. Think through how you currently approach your time, energy, and priorities. In what ways does your approach leave your time unfocused, your energy unleveraged, and your priorities unrealized?
2. Categorical decision-making helps you focus on areas you can control. Are you giving yourself permission to say no to categories that aren't beneficial?
3. Are you comfortable with quiet? What would it look like to specify a time in your green zone, turn off notifications on all of your devices, and allow yourself the freedom to explore what comes to mind?

RESOURCES MENTIONED:

Pre-order *At Your Best: How to Get Time, Energy, and Priorities Working in Your Favor* by Carey Nieuwhof. Available September 14 wherever books are sold.

