

## Monday Message, Monday, December 1, 2025

Multitasking: according to analysts as reported in the Globe and Mail on Nov 28 from which I have taken this information, multitasking has "added' 8 hours to our day. Of course this is impossible. In fact the brain is not doing numerous things at once, it is just moving " frantically between jobs causing increase cognitive load and leaving people stressed and contributing to burnout. Of course the multitasker looks productive, but their work may be superficial, substandard, because they haven't had the time to focus on the task at hand. We see this everyday in power point presentations where the presenters cut and paste information and there is no attempt to synthesize. Our residents do it too. They copy and paste tables from papers that can't be read by the viewer -and then they apologize that you can't read it.

What happened to the rules of powerpoint? Font 28, no more that 8-10 lines on a slide? And what is it with the templates that have titles in 40 Font and the actual info of importance in 16 Font?

According to Microsoft's 2025 Work Trend Index employees at interrupted every 2 minutes during core work hours or 275 times a day. How can anyone get anything done? Most people don't have the luxury to not answer their email, text, or phone in real time. Somehow we need to be able to protect our work time just like we are learning to protect our personal time. As health care workers we need to be available to our patients but perhaps we should work toward more sharing/ cross coverage? How this would look will vary depending on the specialty but I think our patients will accept it as long as they can reach someone and not just an answering machine.

As part of our new communications strategy I am included some key points from last weeks DOS executive meeting.

On Wednesday members of the AFP will receive a package for the Dec 9<sup>th</sup> business meeting including the minutes from the Finance retreat. Please read this before the business meeting.

Other news:

We will be establishing new departmental awards: Watch for the announcement in January  
We will be utilizing the Bethune and Beardsley funds to support 2 endowed scholars. We will share details on this in January.

We have revised the annual review document to include whether or not members have met an education deliverable of 90% completion of EPAs within 2 weeks and 90% of ITERS within 6 weeks. Dr Todd Howlett gave a presentation on physician assistants. It sounds promising that surgery will be able to access these physician extenders in the future. However, funding is still a barrier.

Have a good week everyone.

Don't forget to set some time aside for " monotasking"

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## Monday Message, Monday, December 8, 2025

Saturday Dec 6<sup>th</sup> was the 36<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Montreal Massacre in which 14 young women were murdered at Ecole Polytechnique at the University of Montreal simply because they were women in Engineering. In Canada, a woman is murdered by an intimate partner every week. The biggest threats to Canadian women are the men closest to them. They are most at risk in their own home. The solutions aren't for women to take self defence classes, or carry pepper spray.

As we have encouraged and supported girls and women to become educated, to work in fields traditionally dominated by men, we have not supported boys and men. We still socialize boys to be strong, to be in control, to not give in to their emotions. Boys maybe disadvantaged in school because of their different learning style.

What happens when a woman stands up to a man and says I am leaving you? How does the man regain control?

You might think that two adults would sort this out perhaps with the help of their lawyers. But sometimes, the man kills the woman. Education or wealth or social stature do not protect the woman, or prevent the man from harming the woman.

Femicide is murder. Our criminal justice system needs to improve how the incidents leading up to femicide are managed-- because there are almost always warning signs, lesser incidents. But importantly, we as a society need to pay attention to our boys and support them, allow them to feel and teach them that they don't always have to be strong and in control.

The Hallmark Christmas is fiction for many families. The holiday season can be stressful for families. It isn't unusual for family feuds to erupt or reignite, simmering tensions explode, and physical violence to occur. Alcohol which is so much a part of celebrations, is disinhibiting which in turn lead to hurtful words or worse.

As we head into the holidays, give yourself and your family permission not to be perfect. Remember the Hallmark Christmas is fiction-- even for Martha Stewart!

Have a good week and don't forget to join in for our Department of Surgery business meeting Tuesday Dec 9<sup>th</sup> at 5pm

Contact Giselle if you don't have the link

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## Monday Message, Monday, December 15, 2025

Last week we had our DOS business meeting. There were two main items discussed. As part of the OPOR update we shared information regarding the necessity of us signing an acknowledgement that as the employer of our admin assistants (most surgeons employ their admin assistants directly, they are not NSH employees) we are responsible for their actions including privacy breaches. This is actually not something new, this has always been the case. What is new is the written documentation of this and our clear acknowledgement that we are ultimately responsible. Also as independent small business owners we are responsible for the data in our personal EMRs and this data could be a target of a cyber attack. Although most patient data will be protected as part of OPOR and thereby insured through NSH, our personal EMRs such as those used for billing, will not be protected by NSH insurers.

As small business owners, we can purchase insurance to provide coverage for cyber attacks/ hacking/ privacy breaches, including any breaches committed by our admin assistants. Each of us need to consider purchasing this kind of insurance. We are going to look into this further and will report back in the New Year.

The other main topic of the business meeting related to the DOS financial management. We have a number of action items from our recent Finance retreat which were summarized in the minutes from the Finance retreat that were circulated in the materials for the business meeting. Our finance chair, Dr Mark Taylor, reviewed these action items at the business meeting. Minutes from the business meeting as well as the powerpoint presentation will be sent later this week.

I would ask that all of you read the materials sent prior to the business meeting and the minutes that will be sent out this week.

My focus for 2026 will be to get our financial house in order and put the department on solid footing to invest in our people going forward.

This will be my last Monday message for 2025. I wish you all a very Happy Christmas season.

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