

TIME OUT!: TAKING STOCK OF YOUR ACADEMIC CAREER TO DATE AND PLANNING FOR GREATER-THAN-YOU OUTCOMES IN THE FUTURE

Mark Mitchell, Coastal Carolina University; mmitchel@coastal.edu

Michael Collins, Coastal Carolina University; mcollins@coastal.edu

Kay Keels, Coastal Carolina University; jkeels@coastal.edu

Michael Latta, Coastal Carolina University; mlatta@coastal.edu

ABSTRACT

Time Out! We'd like to introduce the **Halftime** paradigm to our academic colleagues to encourage them to think of (even dream of) greater-than-you outcomes given our work and skill sets as academicians. Colleagues in their 40's or 50's may reflect on their academic careers and begin to channel some part of their future efforts to activities they believe contribute to a greater good. Further, colleagues looking to retire in the coming years have significant skill sets that can be put to non-academic use (including grant writing, mentoring, volunteerism, etc) in the years following retirement from the academic life. The session itself may be viewed as the beginning of a journey for participants rather than a destination itself.

INTRODUCTION

Bob Buford was a successful entrepreneur actively developing his business, a collection of television stations and cable systems in the southwestern United States. A number of events, both personal and professional, caused Bob to re-evaluate his life and the relative balance between his personal and professional goals. He wondered why he was increasingly successful at work (increasing sales revenue, increasing net income, increasing market share, etc) but experiencing lesser and lesser joy from these 'successful' efforts. He had entered, to use his term, **Halftime** (See Buford 1994; Buford 1997; Buford 2001; Buford 2004). Below is a brief description of **Halftime**:

Halftime (Bob Buford) – the opportunity, after some of our life has passed, to evaluate what has taken place during the first half and to choose which new goals and dreams we may want to pursue during the second half of our lives. **Halftime** is the start of an exciting journey that can take us past success and lead us toward significance.

Buford's work is a subset of a growing literature stream which seeks to help readers transition their orientation from success to significance (see, for example, Maxwell 2004; Reeb 2004, Ziglar 2007). This literature serves as the foundation for the preparation of this special session.

THE PURPOSE OF SPECIAL SESSION

According to the **Halftime** paradigm, most of us begin taking stock of our work (for that matter, our lives) in our early 40s (though some may do so earlier and some may do so later). The analogy of a sporting contest ... time divided into halves with a break in between ... is used to model life's events. This paradigm is presented graphically below:

First Half	Halftime	Second Half
You acquire the skills and develop the talents to be successful.	You decide to take stock of your success and plan for a transition in your life to a greater-than-you outcome.	You find ways to use your skills and talents to achieve a greater good ... from success to significance.

Academics have developed and value-added skill sets. Daily, we engage in teaching, research, and service work. We position our students for success in the classroom and beyond. We experiment with new paradigms in the interest of continuous improvement. We mentor developing colleagues. We add to the collective knowledge base of our disciplines. We consult with stakeholders hoping to help them improve their efforts. We participate in the governance of our institutions. We have predictable measures of success in the profession, such as promotion, tenure, professional recognition, and so on. But, we lack any unified measure of significance for the academic life. As such, many of us may not think about the greater impact of our work (or, the possibility of our work having a greater impact) as we move from semester-to-semester, quarter-to-quarter, or academic year-to-year. This lack of broader thinking may hinder us from such a transition in orientation from success to significance.

The purpose of the session is to introduce the **Halftime** paradigm to our academic colleagues to help them think about their past work and how their existing skill sets may be able to be used for a greater good in the future. Colleagues in their 40's or 50's may reflect on their academic careers and begin to channel some part of their future efforts to activities they believe contribute to a greater good. Further, colleagues looking to retire in the coming years have significant skill sets that can be put to non-academic use (including grant writing, mentoring, volunteerism, etc) in the years following retirement from the academic life. We believe a presentation of the **Halftime** paradigm could be beneficial for all colleagues and add value to the SOUTHEAST INFORMS meeting.

DELIVERING THE SPECIAL SESSION

The session may be viewed as a coach calling, "**Time Out!**" Then, having gained the attention of the team, the group reflects on their prior work and plans for improved performance in the future. The interactive panel discussion will consist of a collection of colleagues familiar with the **Halftime** paradigm. From their collective input, a series of self-evaluation tools has been developed to help audience members begin to think about their personal transition from success to significance.

The session itself may be viewed as the beginning of a journey for participants rather than a destination itself. Through the presentation of the paradigm and the self-discovery exercises, we hope to encourage our academic colleagues to think of (even dream of) greater-than-you outcomes given our work and skill sets as academicians. If we can effectively do so, the developers of the special session will have, in some small way, contributed to a greater good themselves by spurring others toward similar thinking. We look forward to sharing our ideas with our colleagues.

SUGGESTED READINGS

Buford, Bob (1994), *Half Time: Changing Your Game Plan for Success to Significance*: Zondervan.

Buford, Bob (1999), *Game Plan: Winning Strategies for the Second Half of Your Life*: Zondervan.

Buford, Bob (2001), *Stuck in Halftime*: Zondervan.

Buford, Bob (2004), *Finishing Well: What People Who “Really Live” Do Differently*: Thomas Nelson.

Maxwell, John C. (2004), *The Journey From Success to Significance*: Thomas Nelson.

Reeb, Lloyd (2004), *From Success to Significance: When the Pursuit of Success Isn’t Enough*: Zondervan.

Ziglar, Zig (2007), *Over the Top: Moving From Survival to Stability From Stability to Success, From Success to Significance*: Thomas Nelson.