Speaker 1 ([00:00](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/bo-G0Wl85rYuMVPOkj9XP6e4BrWJ1LODoZiOycp7GavN4xsewD6AyLQuUvnrwXNiMy9CFpLTr_QG-lIOpaK1_g-bhCw?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=0.45)):

You are watching Drive With NAR, the REALTOR®-to-REALTOR® series, powered by REALTOR® Magazine. Tune in as real estate professionals talk tools of the trade and share stories of inspiration. Get ready to step up your business. I'm your host, Marki Lemons Ryhal. You've heard the saying, “fail to plan, plan to fail.” Much of your success depends on how you leverage your time. You need to manage it wisely, but how do you craft a business strategy that includes your professional and personal time management? I have two experts here with advice you can learn from and actionable tips to prioritize your business and have a life. Vanessa Franz Barnes is a broker-associate and speaker from Celebration, Florida. And Natalie Davis is a real estate agent and speaker from Denver, Colorado. I want to welcome you here today, and I'm elated that we can be face to face for this episode.

Speaker 2 ([01:01](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/kEqWrGADaUqyxg3j6BRKCXfThwH5ZL9EPx0L05mJhgBeukelPWjqNTJPIf843K7QYTkLtKW08csjNpaqm8ldondRY7M?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=61.26)):

Thank you so much for having us, Marki.

Speaker 3 (01:02)

Yes. Looking forward to it.

Speaker 1 ([01:04](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/Mwvlf_qV8rqSoo4oiTjhoVamsKI6Fu8ZJ8862WcQdR_4iMnXtnlgG2YCa1Pmkb9aLR_4Wdc-8zsZG99JsxfTK8eFQZM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=64.83)):

We can't talk about time management without addressing the fact that so many real estate professionals tell their clients they're available 24/7. Give me your thoughts on that and how it can potentially hurt your business.

Speaker 2 ([01:19](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/KOa-IP2qRWbpsX1OlMA0sOHThjvIDa5xIPCdbcwQgD9h8vFZQg4IiFE7912KuNtGhWllg94-4ixW18rGeOWDa6PmSew?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=79.11)):

Alright, Marki. Well, I mean, this is such a great question, and I feel many real estate agents struggle with this, and what I find is that—and I struggle with this too, so I totally understand—is we think exceptional customer service means that we don't have boundaries about our time. And what I found is that over time, learning the hard way—missing soccer games and bedtimes and pickup at my son's school—is that it really doesn't go hand in hand. It's really two separate things. We can still provide exceptional customer service and an experience for them and have boundaries and time with our families.

Speaker 1 ([01:53](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/C_HRy8uEldYlVoTZ3IxDt8MNsADufZG7AWmsMs-2iduNZHjG5KDWjl6lsROBSkGG1j3Tzilztqci67O9mYCTz_sioeE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=113.49)):

Natalie, what are your thoughts?

Speaker 3 (01:54)

I have to agree 100% with Vanessa. I think when we initially get into this business, we have that expectation that we have to be available or we'll miss opportunities, and that's really coming from a scarcity mindset, right? Thinking if we're not available, then we're going to miss the opportunity and nothing else will come after that. And I too learned the hard way by thinking that I needed to be available. But that's not the reality. I think as soon as you're able to prioritize what's important to you, identify the goal and how you're going to get there, and then setting some clear boundaries and expectations for yourself, for your loved ones and especially for your clients, helps in creating a smoother experience for everyone.

Speaker 1 ([02:33](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/gzohlufmlPJiGPo9kem3djg_PrLMT1qa9zvJLFRia6VUpFJOK1aJH7B7ek5a49Osxb2qBzb_r9XAvKYGUU5KPHLbj44?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=153.69)):

I agree.

Speaker 1 ([02:35](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/l1d6K9m3D2jP6ZV76Sv0TshDWVLaNE0EQJ4dMfjEUJLU8esVhAWVtysd6bsYlrmSsJ5RjMoH3_qNFcunCf6tEyLPr3Q?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=155.01)):

So we can see how time mismanagement can have a negative effect on business. How do you decide how to spend your time in a typical workday, and how do you track that? Natalie?

Speaker 3 ([02:47](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/iMLBvnuaLZWyOlDtJv-Y8IKoFv9BmVpNOy6HyiXBMBrWYlxtmP4AXZGTAkRRAOqdYe38ov-dxSMm8BEhenLaGUfQonQ?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=167.28)):

That is such a great question. So, I actually live and die by my calendar. I have a meeting with myself every Sunday, um, and it's Sunday afternoon. And it really is a trigger for me to understand and let my body know we're getting ready for the upcoming week. And a couple of things happens during that time. I'm able to synchronize my calendar because I'm still a paper planner person and I like to sync my electronic calendar with my paper planner to make sure that they match. It also lets me know who am I showing up for during that week, and how do I need to prepare for the upcoming week? Where do I need to be? There are oftentimes that we need to get on a plane or make hotel arrangements, so making sure that we have all of those things aligned as well. And so, when I'm able to be proactive in understanding where I'm going, who I need to be, how I'm showing up, it sets a fabulous stage for me in terms of how I'm going to appear and have an opportunity, or address the opportunities, for that upcoming week.

Speaker 1 ([03:43](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_OywIwG7NqUbySR48MWL_6I3PA1OQT8VzzLE-UrU3gn0jKt_YYTVx3aov08EzpTLVs7EwF0KUN--K5FLQPpJdTVCQiA?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=223.66)):

I was a paper planner in high school.

Speaker 3 (03:46)

Yes.

Speaker 1 (03:47)

I have always lived by my calendar.

Speaker 3 (03:50)

Same.

Speaker 1 (03:51)

And those who live by their calendar have the ability to tell people no because they just won't fit on the schedule.

Speaker 3 ([03:58](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/3Z12OsPYVu8LFQGsPQc4ooeIdLPBLuqVuHRbYWUGy8F9qpsAygsNxzOV-kNYIEIcQSOAH3-5x-13ywXVOmIlEgo3snA?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=238.9)):

Exactly.

Speaker 1 ([03:59](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/OwRGdLEiV1wxaSra8YvFeMXZanNihdif_qgNLsoSR-QoBwUTHOYfC59no5hgzs9HyqGlsJGbsxm3qi_Hh_2avy2eI0c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=239.44)):

What about you, Vanessa?

Speaker 2 ([04:00](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/eLaW60agwYJ40QiNWz41QZk9nKNvuBbT10igfW6j_fq82GkI11A126ythF-E-dhDUMzYH5QvbTBNZd5s5tZ-bqiofTU?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=240.88)):

I agree. I love my paper calendar. It goes everywhere with me. And I think it's really important, and I do a similar exercises, you know, at the beginning of the week, you have to decide what is prioritized? And I like to look at it as the 80-20 rule. So, what are my 20% activities that need to be prioritized first? Which are your income-producing activities? These are those fundamentals. And then everything else really should fall after that. And they say “eat the frog,” right? So you do the hard stuff first, which are those activities, and then everything else should come after.

Speaker 1 ([04:30](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/mjySLzC8JtPispr-0JBYWwDOveg0rWr56vQPz4KFfS6kF8FepHRfrMKjPrxjs0_2NwNXDK09s4_YPHzfKrt341K41RM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=270.79)):

Did you read the book “Eat the Frog”?

Speaker 2 ([04:32](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/KOQqwYVQfd4BlsxvIsbrR9HO07Gnlec7bcrC52Y1uK4TNlaQ5f-01bzMSyk-LSEtyRho7KGxRwePs5ikiagi2mYJzXA?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=272.95)):

A long time ago, and it really stuck with me.

Speaker 1 ([04:35](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/KmQ0lSA-oG1ynBilrdt4ztbNiP0WYB5OhNZY1DUjOYDfVqrF3tFC-hxB1UngiqHpjgDMlYBKSp8GrUG9w6shLwHDaE4?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=275.23)):

And that book is available via the REALTOR® library because I've also read that book. When you think about your schedule though, Vanessa, can you elaborate on how you incorporate that into your business plan?

Speaker 2 ([04:46](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/U39JUVrfzcxHM6orE4IYE8IjksSBaELz9tRawvLVSJsZKfo0jWuHF7UZ2AfJK9kE0QN1jtkrMLkDpMAmzNjg1uYhCLk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=286.69)):

Yeah, I think I talked about this before with other people, is you have to really prioritize how you wake up in the morning. And I think this is really critical because I find that many agents, real estate agents especially, check email or they scroll social media—that's the first thing they do. And that's, to me, the worst thing that we can do because then we become reactive instead of proactive. And we're letting the email or the social media dictate what we're doing every day. And it really, honestly, I don't know anybody that checks email and gets in a good mood. Rarely do we do that, right? We find ourselves in a negative kind of mood. So, I think it's really important to set the stage early on in your day and figure out what your morning routine looks like. Is it a time for yourself? I tell my kids, “don't talk to me before 6:15 a.m. because this is my time.” So, I think it's incredibly important to make sure that we limit distractions and we prioritize our schedule first and block the time on our schedule—physically block it. I think that's really critical for success.

Speaker 1 ([05:46](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/lLqEaAt7Qlw4QzetTpFmiQHztTr5KHcP5DuVHsyxJlZLXJHFlek6h8N_u9R2ylyjrc2uHZgjg9RbcuhP1m-G7me55SM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=346.45)):

One thing that I often recommend to agents is an eight-by-eight strategy, strategically reaching out to eight people before 8 a.m. based on their Ford, their family, their occupation, their recreation and their dreams. But before they reach out, making sure that they post some form of content that solves problems to start engagement while they're strategically reaching out because it's kind of like a two-for-one. New agents have a harder time figuring out what time management looks like for them. Are there any certain tips that you have for a rookie brand new to the world of real estate?

Speaker 3 ([06:27](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/iEEa2m5K0WRrsFe14y1aJLWchN7_Fy92_u7Zi8YeGxqyhOWljHcTvzn8dCI465zsJPLPUiMgDm2SV8cvHyXBNkeZ8JM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=387.35)):

I think that the best thing you can do is start by taking the tips that we've shared previously. If you're entering into this business, start out by having a structured schedule where you know you're going to be and what you need to do. Definitely focusing on those income-producing activities, that 20%—that's going to generate the 80% of the results that we see. The other thing is having an understanding that there are seasons within your business. I have been in the business for quite some time, but I still remember being a brand new agent. And one thing that I did, I was a brand new agent in a brand new community, starting a brand new business. And so I had to invest significantly more time during that season of building the foundation. Definitely the learning curve that you have to really take on in learning and building a brand new business and building out the business fundamentals itself. And so, for me, I committed to a year in that space. I said, “in one year I will dive in 100%,” and sometimes that does require working 50-, 60-hour weeks, but that was seasonal. And then I knew once I was able to establish those foundations, the foundation for my business that was going to work, from there, I could start to peel back and not have that mindset of being available 24/7 that we talk about.

Speaker 1 (07:46)

What about you?

Speaker 2 ([07:47](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/iwoL7jC7p5n1iEnackod6g_kqEX408BgTtYwh37VBf8yJush_FIRWm3Z788kVmKCy9yAznR7ucKC82iQwZ2Ct87z8Ng?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=467.45)):

Well, I always say flexibility can be our worst enemy sometimes, or that freedom that we feel because so many new agents especially say, “I got into real estate because of the freedom and flexibility that I have.” And I think oftentimes that is to their detriment because they still need to have a schedule. You need to think of this still as a J-O-B, and you still need to have structured hours. What time are you going to go to work every day? And what time are you going to leave work every day? And I think having that structured schedule and then making sure those fundamentals are in there, prioritized first before anything else, right? Email can wait, but we need to be on the phone calling people and making connections.

Speaker 1 ([08:26](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/fZ7gS5bocem4OvafVs4Wn8WwPC8ljuDh7I0Mve6lnvYZ5_aXbRRv9dDEhvOKVBsl4q85CrB7eAcV0OvoiaJ8VC-OW6M?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=506.84)):

As we're more tenured in the business, we can then start to tweak and add additional streams of income. We can become avid volunteers and you have to then readjust your schedule. But spending that first year Natalie, like you stated, is so important because you don't even know what you need to do. You don't know what that structure needs to look like for you and your life. And we always need to put, I call it beautification day, on our schedule. What I realize, if my nails aren't done, I'm consistently looking at them so they become a time distraction. So I make sure that I put that on my calendar so that I don't waste the time looking at them because I don't like how they look. Anyone who owns a piece of technology knows how easy it is to get distracted. Many other things like a client emergency also can interrupt your workflow throughout the day. When you get distracted, what do you do in order to get back on track?

Speaker 3 ([09:26](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/h8bWB2hS2BflpY1mi50hDdPk34xPTi6ZsPkgzQZ-lbWKqavpcIyhZLz4SV2KpKBY3CTeiOhXXV8e3tk7CL9aS3-ejPc?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=566.01)):

So, I'm a little bit more proactive in terms of controlling the distractions. When I know that I'm heading into a space where I need to focus my attention or focus my time and energy on reaching out to clients, working through contract work. If it's even a time segment where I'm cleaning up email, I turn all other notifications off because I know that's my weakness. If I keep the notifications on, I will go down that rabbit hole with whatever has just popped up in front of me. So, I turn all of my notifications off. I try to use devices that don't have notifications on there. I don't have a smartwatch, so I'm not constantly ringing and vibrating throughout the day, but that's because I know my weakness. If I have the distraction in front of me, I'll dive down that path. There's also this philosophy of understanding if you know that something's going to stop in your way of being productive, to make it harder or more challenging to take part in that thing.

([10:17](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/NOB8pxsSCvNq9NfqsreC4jD9JH66JZ3zICWS564Yvm2aaiWg3JLHZMkAxJjtPZLL8GraKGBdFQVxBWBIH2pcHzFVhdA?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=617.79)):

So, before starting my day, I have my phone on focus mode, and so that lasts until 7:30. So, it's harder for me to get to emails when we look at getting to email notifications or even getting to social media because I have to get into my phone, unlock my phone, turn the focus mode on or off, and then dive into whatever application I'm trying to dive into. So, I make it more challenging so that the distraction's not there. But we do have emergencies that pop up. So, when looking at that, I want to prioritize what's really urgent and important and needs my attention in that very moment. And what I've found is those are the things that are—the house is on fire, somebody's at the hospital—that's urgent and important where you have to drop everything right away. There are things that we need to prioritize that are important, and then we start to just navigate through those. What do we need to prioritize? And then how much time are we going to allocate to that? Not a list of five things that we have to get done today, but I have these five things that I'm going to get done today and I'm going to allocate 20 minutes to each, and I know that I'll get through that list.

Speaker 1 ([11:20](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/4sNElE6qqxacjBnS2EnZyk_vGlWz2_JYosxX5Bd40F42jiRCuSWxZROqVz5GhwisCVXxLgrfB3C74104ggBNMWFnbic?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=680.25)):

Great strategies.

Speaker 2 (11:21)

Yeah, I love it.

Speaker 3 ([11:21](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/XliEHX2dIsD-KIiJao7hpgYJUHWrSl4db6A0gF2r4tWtAlaSG335BORTHPj_A3kTsmQVfx5joZjvC0Rk6NsdcrhQATk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=681.9)):

Yeah.

Speaker 1 ([11:22](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/J8P83nUDSSP6Ik1CcOxR62oRUsY8eYoGopdxFsPoGxz5g2ciOM4T8O4vDUEzoEW7Ru-C6py8_mQ4D36HWSlH5nc5dhM?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=682.23)):

Vanessa.

Speaker 2 ([11:23](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/KE_RQSYnIGSh6rqldFLS0mwcPAyfQFZX-CtBs3RkbJ6B5HyJhoh-XhZ7Cvn4d7BMYrcDM6VmmvZdGPZW8yfSAOE5Qp4?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=683.04)):

I mean, I use focus mode too, as well, to make sure that I've got that time protected. And I do agree. I think that we have to look at emergencies on a case-by-case basis. I agree. It's like, okay, is your roof on fire? Is a house on fire? Is someone in the hospital? Because it can it really wait one hour? Most real estate related items can wait at least one hour. And I do find that it's hard for many of us to get back on track. So, we need to be mindful of that and be aware that, okay, is it really a priority? Does it go into that bucket or not? And if it can wait, let's wait and focus on those 20% activities first, then we can dive into the challenges that we have.

Speaker 1 ([12:03](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/VEbg_MNI1deutUuL_eezDTxZQ3_WK_GSTdGR_lTGZCAFDR-8zTLyM38GRY4xuXiZSrZy6H2d5erirbTiY2X6BwB4VoE?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=723.07)):

Time management means creating boundaries for yourself. And sometimes, you must hold those boundaries with clients and colleagues. How can you do that without risking your business relationships? And you know what? For me, it's not the business, it's the family. And I have so many boundaries around my house because they see us at home and instantly they believe that we are available. But what are you doing in regards to your clients?

Speaker 2 ([12:33](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/L7WttoTIUyjqbeRRHApkCRMrB9zsswtFrq1XYgD5-FBO3zWSx7FxQZTaXbJuahgaqNEE9GE4l8EOpx_tpsDpdW_slXU?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=753.43)):

Well, I think it comes from piggybacking on what you said earlier. It's like the scarcity mindset. If we say no to a client, we're not going to necessarily lose that client. And when I finally started setting boundaries on the client's side, actually my clients respected it. I put my voicemail after 6:30, I'll return your call the next business day. And I even have on my voicemail, “this is why.” I even have a statement of my why, which is spending time with my family. And I'll be honest, I was so shocked when I started to do this, and clients would actually say, “I know you're spending time with your family. Call me tomorrow.” And I was blown away. I'm like, where's this been all my life? And I think it's, we just need to take one small step. And I think for the audience listening, this isn't an all or nothing thing. If you are in that overwhelm and exhausted phase of no boundaries, just do one thing tomorrow to set that boundary with your client and have that conversation early on, at the consultation when you're talking to your client, say, “these are my available dates and times,” and making sure that they understand that and acknowledge it. I guarantee you they're going to be okay with it.

Speaker 1 ([13:41](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/-zCb2IpqbX3_t6w1i7dRT2bWuHqS0XV-KKB1A-ElJ9b_p7kxKRZVRVJ5umCwQd-YeJlEzuxGKq3ruO5Wh9rWeK-0Pq8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=821.74)):

Natalie.

Speaker 3 ([13:42](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/VNqB4sWIQruPAfhIPwvEfO1ZVxsb47ChbwcoawPE8vI-28NM2iseE66_nUYbEQ2kSqO2FmC5kk5A6y7iD59gqk530cU?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=822.37)):

I think it all comes back to the piece that I mentioned my first year in the business, realizing I needed to invest more time in my business to understand what the fundamentals were going to be. And that's where you have that opportunity to learn, okay, this is what works for me within my business. And so, as you mentioned, when we're talking to our clients and saying, “here's when you can expect to hear from me.” I'm going to reach out to you every Monday and Thursday of the week so that I can answer any questions that you have or bring you up to speed with where we are in the process. That sets the foundation with your clients and they know that they can expect to hear from you on Monday and Thursday. Here's a caveat, you have to call on Monday and Thursday. And so just following through with that, and I now also make it very clear with my clients, I'm not going to respond to you afterhours.

([14:28](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/hF2gUKDfSNmpupGoQyuN5MuP7ay9OOLVsXViw82usgsKlVE4iUcQ5vXCxnWIYdlLmZa3ujvNszNwL9IVHpdyCe_Bp5Y?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=868.63)):

I'm not going to reply to text messages that come in at 9 p.m. You may hear from me at 5 a.m. because I'm getting my day started. And I say it jokingly. It doesn't have to be regimented and stiff, and here are my office hours Monday through Friday, eight to five. Don't call me after that time, but let your clients know, here's why I'm in this business. Here's what's happening in my own life. I have a family. I have a significant other. I want to travel and see the world. Whatever that may look like, share that with them, but also let them know because I have systems and processes in place, you’re not going to feel the impact of me honoring what's important to me because I'm still here to serve you.

Speaker 1 ([15:06](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/2vspq4W_OminiMKcJfBUvey6pzAvUZiufwLCZ98OmOoErYRwtf3veOckMDCyc9geYzMfmQSdZJtZkoYk0n5xcPP15z8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=906.35)):

Wow. I want to thank you both for being here face to face, to share with our members tips that can actually save them mentally, physically and not lead to burnout if they take any of these strategies and implement them in their lives. And thank you for spending time with us today.

Thank you for joining us at Drive with NAR, the REALTOR®-to-REALTOR® series. Tune in every month at magazine.realtor/drive or subscribe wherever you watch your podcast. Find more tips to boost your business at magazine.realtor.