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ChangeAbility
The Newsletter of Redpoint Business Coaching
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www.redpointcoaching.com
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Welcome!

You are reading ChangeAbility, a newsletter from Redpoint Business Coaching run by Urs Koenig PhD, MBA.

ChangeAbility is a bimonthly newsletter bringing you hands-on tips and cool resources for starting or building your business.

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I Get More Done

One of the beauties of business ownership is that you have a lot of freedom. Not only does the buck stop with you, but so do the decisions about how to spend your time.

Often though, we tend to forget that we have this power. In my work with clients, I frequently point out to overloaded entrepreneurs that we in fact have a lot more freedom than we think, even if we feel bogged down with too many tasks on our 'to do' list.

Freedom is all about having choices, and though our business might keep us very, very busy, we always have the choice to decide how we spend our time both at work and at 'play.'

I was reminded of this point again when I started to implement a new time management system at the beginning of 2004. Now, I am always very skeptical when people talk to me about the latest 'revolutionary' time management fad which is going to change my life; however, this one I really like because it is based on three basic assumptions which I strongly believe in:

- (1) We work best when we group similar activities together
- (2) Interruptions must be avoided at almost any price (I know, I know there are exceptions...)
- (3) Structure provides freedom (coaches of course love structure, and I am no exception ;-)

The basic idea of the system is to split your week into:

- (1) Spirit Days
- (2) Buffer Days
- (3) Work Days

Spirit Days are days during which you are disconnected from anything work related. Spirit days are when you are rejuvenating yourself and your creativity: No work, no errands, and no guilt!

It's important to remember that spirit days are not a reward but part of your schedule. As the Dalai Lama says, "I have so much to do today, I need to meditate twice as long."

During spirit days, what you do is not as important as who you are and how you feel while you are doing it.

I currently have one spirit day per week (Sunday). I mostly spend it outdoors, together with people I feel close to, or by myself reading.

Ask yourself:

- +When did I last have a spirit day?
- +What were the benefits of that spirit day for my emotional well-being?
- +What were the benefits for my business?
- +How can I incorporate at least one spirit day per week?

Buffer Days are days during which you handle everything that is not either work- or spirit-related: you might have meetings with prospective clients, work on your marketing materials, take care of your admin or run errands.

Most of us need personal and business buffer times.

I use my buffer days to do my billing, supervise the work of my personal assistant, do marketing, prepare speeches and workshops, and write articles. I have three buffer days: Monday, Friday, Saturday.

Ask yourself

+Which tasks on my 'to do' list should be done during buffer days? (this most likely is a long, long list)

+Which of those tasks can I outsource and delegate? (Then set yourself a deadline by which you will have delegated or outsourced these tasks).

Work Days are days during which you spend all of your time and energy on the things which you are best at, the things that bring you the most joy and your business the most money.

During work days, you focus all your energies on what in management consultant slang is called your 'core competency'. It's the thing you shine at, the one thing you are doing way better than anyone else, the thing which makes your business prosper. Drop all other activities from your work days and leave them for buffer days, or even better outsource them.

During work days, you tolerate no interruptions: no errands, no admin, no new business meetings.

I spend my work days coaching clients, running workshops and teaching classes. I have three work days: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday.

Ask yourself:

+How do I add the most value to my business?

+What are the three things I do which bring me the most joy and the business most money?

+What changes do I need to make so I can focus solely on these activities during work days?

Note: Several coaches and consultants have written about this concept. One of the first ones was Sherry Lowry (1997-2004 Sherry Lowry/*The SeamLess Life*)

II Leadership Lessons from Colin Powell: 'Being responsible sometimes means pissing people off'

Read what Colin Powell, U.S. Secretary of State, has to say about trying to please everyone:

"Good leadership involves responsibility to the welfare of the group, which means that some people will get angry at your actions and decisions. Trying to get everyone to like you is a sign of mediocrity: you'll avoid tough decisions, you'll avoid confronting the people who need to be confronted. Ironically, by procrastination on the difficult choices, by trying not to get anyone mad, and by treating everyone equally 'nicely' regardless of their contributions, you'll simply ensure that the only people you'll wind up angering are the most creative and productive people in the organization."

Ask yourself for your business:

- +Who have I been avoiding because of my discomfort with confrontation?
- +What phone calls, meetings have I been putting off because of my discomfort with confrontation?
- +What action steps will I take over the next week to rectify that situation?

III Resource For You

<http://www.nwvg.org/>

The Northwest Entrepreneur Network website offers a wealth of information for your small business. Check out the 'Focus' area where 'been there, done that' advisors, senior executives and entrepreneurs have listed useful materials and resources.

The Referral Of a Lifetime: The Networking System that produces bottom-line results... every day! by Tim Templeton

This fun little book uses an entertaining fictional story to emphasize the importance of 'putting the relationship first' – building an ongoing relationship with customers based on genuine respect and caring, rather than just making the sale and moving on. The book contains a step by step plan which inspired me to start my own '2004staying in touch with

my network program'. This is an easy read and a must for anyone in sales or in professional services.

IV Upcoming Workshops

For Seattle subscribers:

BUSINESS PLAN WORKSHOP AT THE U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (SBA) BUILDING?

March 10th

April 14th

I will be teaching the Marketing Plan and Operation Plan section of the Small Business Administration workshop 'Building a Business Plan' in downtown Seattle. To register and for more info on this and other small business workshops, see the SBA and the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) website: <http://www.sba.gov/wa/seattle/>, <http://www.seattlescore.org/index.htm>, or call the SBA at 206-553-7310.

BUSINESS START-UP WORKSHOP - "THINKING OF BECOMING YOUR OWN BOSS?"

If you are thinking of, or are in the process of, starting your own business, or if you want to learn how to run your business better, please join me for this 3 hour workshop at Centerpoint, Seattle's leading center for life and career renewal, based in downtown Seattle. For more information, please send me an email or check out: www.centerpointonline.org

The workshop will be offered on:

- March 23rd 2004 at 6pm

The fee is \$54 for non-members and \$45 for Centerpoint Associate Members.

+++++LET ME KNOW WHAT YOU THINK+++++
Simply reply to this newsletter. I welcome your feedback!

ChangeAbility is a publication of Redpoint Business Coaching which is run by Urs Koenig MBA, PhD.

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