

The Finish Line

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Staying Motivated In A Struggling Economy

Fear is a very powerful emotion. When we live in fear, even of the unknown, there is a tendency to isolate, exert control and be on the defensive. It drains our energy and creates exhaustion.

The majority of coaching conversations I am having these days are about this fear generated by a struggling economy. Worry over business progress, finding a job, salary and bonus eliminations, increased job performance expectations have taken over people's mindsets thus decreasing motivation and focus for themselves and their business.



While no one has a crystal ball to know exactly what will happen with the economy, you do have the keys to move through this time by the actions you take to minimize the fear and maximize your choices. Following are three key tips on how to refocus and regain motivation during a challenging time:

Tip #1 Go Back To The Basics

What are the critical items you need to do to maintain positive movement forward in your career and in your life? What can you take charge of?

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Ask the Coach

I often find myself Over-Committed. What can I do Differently?

'Overcommitted' is an interesting term I hear often. Use of the term and your underlying assumptions may be a problem. The verb "commit" means "to obligate or pledge oneself", so you may have pledged your time and energy too broadly. You are likely involved in a number of activities and roles at work, at school, in the community, and at home. You probably struggle "finding the time" and energy to keep your obligations. But are you really committed?



Reconsider the concept of commitment. Are you over-committed or are you under-committed? Over-commitment is an oxymoron. Too many "obligations" creates a watering-down effect, so none of them receive your true commitment. How might your problem look differently if you considered that you may really be under-committed to your real priorities? What new solutions does this shift in thinking generate?

If you find it difficult to say "no" or have ever used the phrase "I didn't have time" you may be under-committing; worse, you may be blaming the clock or your other roles.

- ✓ *What is important to you?*
- ✓ *What opportunities do you have that relate closely to your core goals and purpose?*
- ✓ *Have you prioritized your opportunities before obligating yourself?*

'Over-committed' people prioritize their schedules. The person of integrity schedules his or her priorities. Consider this critical distinction before you make promises in the future.

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ONE MINUTE IDEAS

Back Up Important Data

What would you do if your computer suddenly and completely failed, all the contents of your hard drive lost? Do you have a backup of the important information on your computer? It's a good idea to keep regular backups, including some offsite in case of fire or flood.

Web Site of the Month

This website is a one-stop national resource to learn about the crime of identity theft. It provides detailed information to help you deter, detect, and defend against identity theft.

On this site, Businesses can learn how to help their customers deal with identity theft, as well as how to prevent problems in the first place. Consumers can learn how to avoid identity theft – and learn what to do if their identity is stolen.

Check it out at

<http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft/>



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There are critical items that you need to focus on day in and day out in whatever your work effort is about. If you are unemployed, there are critical items. If you run a business, there are critical items. What are they? Identify, simplify and take action.

Key: Think of this also in your personal life. What critical items do you need to have happen in order to maintain joy and relieve stress? Is it time with family? Time to golf? What critical items do you need that may have been ignored due to your focus on fear?

Key Tip #2 Define And Honor Your Genius Work

In Ernest Oriente and Judy Feld's book *Smart Match Alliances*, they describe genius work as "Genius work is the highest and best use of your time. When you do your genius work – the activities that produce the greatest results in the shortest period of time for you – the struggle ends....fast."



What is your genius work? What is the work you do that suspends time and delivers the greatest results? Define it, honor it and spend the majority of your day doing it.

Key: To define your genius work, answer the following question:

What are three areas of focus and corresponding activities that would constitute the best and most valuable use of my time today?

Key Tip #3 This Too Shall Pass

Because there is no crystal ball, we cannot predict when this economy will take a positive, sustained turn. However, history proves that it will turn. It has always done so; there is no reason to think it will not do so again.

Key: History also shows that YOU have been through challenging times in the past and moved through those times as well. Perhaps it has not been the economy but other life events. Identify for yourself what life challenges you have faced in the past and how you have navigated the uncertainty. That should give you clues as to your ability to face this current challenge AND specific things you could do to make the process less painful.

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The reward for work well done is the opportunity to do more.

— Jonas Salk

Failing Employees

Are your employees failing? Want to save time, money, and a lot of energy for you and your organization? Set employees up to **succeed** not fail. Make sure your employees know:

- **What the job is.** Make sure you explain to each person specific directions and/or goals about the job or task.
- **Explain how to do the job.** Be available to answer questions or give directions on how to do the job or task.
- **Make sure a person or situation doesn't interfere** with employees' ability to do the job.

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