

Connecting

MAY 2021

NEWS FOR MANAGERS & MECHANICS

Don't Work So Hard...Redevelop Your Focus

Understand the dangers of multitasking—Start by understanding the impact that distractions, like a constantly pinging phone or quick Facebook break, have on your brain. There's the *default mode network*, which is responsible for analyzing the past, forecasting or planning for the future, and reflecting on oneself and others. We're in this mode at least half of the time. But when you need to focus your mind, you tap into the *direct attention network*, which allows you to put aside thoughts and stay on task. Distractions, in whatever form they take, pull you back into default mode, and the cognitive cost of regaining your focus is high. Some research shows it can take 10–18 minutes to get the same level of attention back. This is why it's critical to reduce interruptions.

Allow for your emotional response, but stay in charge—Feeling overwhelmed can bring up a lot of emotions — frustration, anger, anxiety — that take a further toll on your productivity. So you have to break the cycle. Label your feelings and then ask yourself questions about them. You might say, "OK, I'm feeling angry, but who's in charge — the anger or me, the person having the emotion. You want to acknowledge that these feelings are there — they're legitimate and significant — but not get swept away by them.

Gather your attention—When you do find yourself distracted, pause, be aware that you're being triggered. Then switch the spotlight of your attention. This might feel easier said than done, but remind yourself that most of the things we worry about "aren't immediate threats." To reconnect with the logical part of your brain, focus it on "something more visceral, like your breath." You might say to yourself, "I've become consumed by this bus issue. I'm going to stop and pay attention to my breathing to pivot away from what's causing the anxiety.

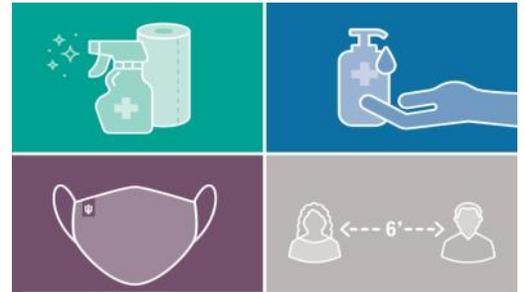
This isn't the same as trying to ignore the distraction: "You don't have to stifle it or suppress it. Make note of it, acknowledge it, and put it in a mental parking lot to think about later, when you can discuss it with someone else, or when you're not at work and have lots to do.

Put up boundaries—Once you have more awareness about what distracts you, set rules for yourself. If you realize that checking news in the morning means that you're upset and unfocused when you get to the office, tell yourself that you won't catch up on world events until lunchtime. Or you can decide that you're going to get a certain amount of work done before you go on Facebook. You may have to practice. Most athletes train their focus by telling themselves, for example, "I'm not going to leave the free-throw line until I make 10 free throws." So spend time training your brain to stay on task.

Choose whom you interact with wisely—If you have coworkers who are constantly distracted themselves, or who tend to pull you away from work, try to spend less time with them. You don't have to be rude; you can say something simple like, "Can we continue this conversation later? I want to get this report done and then I can take a break."

Give and get support from your coworkers—Instead of avoiding your distracted colleagues, you could try to encourage each other to stay focused. Make a pact with your coworkers. Set up a time where you will work without interrupting each other or without getting on social media.

Take care of your body—If you're tired and worn out, you're going to be more vulnerable to feeling overwhelmed. It's important to get enough sleep and exercise. Also, make tiny tweaks in your environment that improve your well-being. Take breaks, eat a healthy lunch, put your phone on silent. If you normally spend your lunch hour on Facebook, leave your phone behind and go outside for a walk instead.



Spring Has Sprung!

It's the busiest time of year and one of the most challenging for nearly every bus company. Here are four key points to remember as we enter into the last month of school.

Good Communication—means not only responding to emails and phone calls promptly, but also keeping the school updated on the status of the schedule that is in progress.

Anticipate Their Needs—If you can consistently prove yourself to be a strategic problem-solver and a reliable partner, your school officials will grow to trust you even more.

Be a Problem Solver—Try not to put yourself or your team in a position where you won't be able to fulfill the daily schedule, but also make it clear to school officials and coaches that you're prioritizing their highest needs and adjusting your focus accordingly. You might often have to manage expectations on both the school side and with your drivers, and this requires a certain degree of diplomacy. If you can remain calm and professional throughout this process, you're more likely to find a solution that works for everybody.

Collaborate— If school officials have a lot of trust in you and you've built a strong, collaborative relationship, they might look for your expertise on strategy or creative direction. You might have valuable insight or experience that you can offer to help increase its chances of success.

The goal is for you to develop the critical thinking skills you'll need to succeed during this race to the finish line.

Leave everyone and everything better than we found them—Mike Hennek

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SPRING BUILDING CHECKLIST

- CHANGE FURNACE FILTERS, VACUUM FILTER AREA IS NEEDED. VACUUM HEAT EXCHANGE RADIATORS
- INSPECT ROOF FOR LEAKS, MISSING SHINGLES OR FASTENERS
- REPAIR LOOSE OR SAGGING GUTTERS AND DOWNSPOUTS
- CHECK EXTERIOR DRAINAGE. NOTE CONCERNING WATER POOLING
- TEST SMOKE AND CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS
- FLUSH HOT WATER HEATER AND REMOVE SEDIMENT
- REPAIR/REPLACE DAMAGED WINDOW SCREENS
- LOOK FOR SIGNS OF WATER DAMAGE
- CHECK FAUCETS, BIBS, TOILETS, HOSE BIBS, AND SHUTOFF VALVES FOR LEAKS
- CHECK WATER SOFTENER, ADD SALT IF NEEDED
- REMOVE LEAVES, DEBRIS, AND ROOTS FROM GUTTERS, VENTS, AND OUTDOOR HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING UNITS
- CLEAN WINDOWS. INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR
- TRIM TREES AND SHRUBS
- INSPECT AND CLEAN OUTDOOR LIGHTING
- RENEW LOOSE SIDING AND TRIM
- OIL GARAGE DOOR TRACKS, ROLLERS, AND HINGES
- APPLY FERTILIZER TO LAWNS
- MAINTAIN YARD GROWTH

SUMMER 4.0 WORKSHOP

Thursday August 12th & Friday August 13th

More information in a future newsletter.

Mandatory for all Full Time Employees

BIRTHDAYS

MAY

2nd Dylan Evenson
6th John Brandt
23rd Glenda Gerold

Exploring Self-Awareness, Persuasion, Conceptualization, and Foresight in Servant Leadership

Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is the ability to look at yourself, think deeply about your emotions and behavior, and consider how they affect the people around you and align with your **values**.

You can become more self-aware by knowing your **strengths and weaknesses**, and asking for other people's feedback on them. Also, learn to **manage your emotions**, so that you consider how your actions and behavior might affect others.

Persuasion

Servant leaders use persuasion – rather than their authority – to encourage people to take action. They also aim to build **consensus in groups**, so that everyone supports decisions.

There are many **tools and models** that you can use to be more persuasive, without damaging relationships or taking advantage of others. You should also build your **expert power** – when people perceive you as an expert, they are more likely to listen to you when you want to persuade or inspire them.

Conceptualization

This characteristic relates to your ability to "dream great dreams," so that you look beyond day-to-day realities to the bigger picture.

If you're a senior leader in your company, work through and develop a robust organizational **strategy**. Then, whatever level you're at, create **mission and vision statements** for your team, and make it clear how people's roles tie in with your team's and organization's long-term objectives. Also, develop **long-term focus** so that you stay motivated to achieve your more distant goals, without getting distracted.

Foresight

Foresight is when you can predict what's likely to happen in the future by learning from past experiences, identifying what's happening now, and understanding the consequences of your decisions.

The three black lines on a school bus serve a purpose....

Rub rails are placed at very specific spots on the bus body. The lowest one is installed at same level as the buses interior floor, while the middle one is situated at the level of the bottom of the passenger seats, and the top rail sits at about the same height as either the top of the seats and/or the bottom of the window. That strategic placement would prove useful in the event of a bad crash if the school bus doors and/or windows couldn't be reached or opened. Because of the rub rails, rescue teams would



have a better idea of where to cut into the sides of the bus to be able to evacuate students, and they'd also be able to tell where the impact occurred. For instance, if it were below the bottom rail, then that would mean the impact would've occurred below the floor, meaning the bus's passengers may have avoided the worst of the crash.

MAY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>Tough times don't last. Tough people do."</p> <p>—Unknown</p> <p><i>Stay Positive...</i></p>						1
2	3	4 PAYROLL	5 PO LISTS DUE	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19 PAYROLL	20 PO LISTS DUE	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31 <i>Memorial Day</i> <i>4.0 Holiday</i>		<p><u>2nd Period Random Tests</u></p> <p>2nd period ends on Aug 31st, BUT an effort should be made <u>to get the tests done</u> BEFORE the last day of school</p>			