Find Your Focus: Prioritizing Work and Life

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Whole U | The First 90
• Have you ever found yourself stretched too thin?
• Have you ever felt both overworked and underutilized?
• Have you ever found yourself majoring in minor activities?
• Do you ever feel busy but not productive?
• Like you are always in motion but never getting anywhere?
“The wealth of information (and choices, decisions, etc.) means a dearth of something else….a poverty of attention.” – Herbert Simon, 1971

The skillful management of attention is the *sine qua non* of the “good life” – Winifred Gallagher, Rapt
Our Attention at Work

53% Mind on task

47% Mind off task

Source: Potential Project
# Covey Urgency vs. Importance Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Urgent</th>
<th>Not Urgent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>• Crises</td>
<td>• Preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pressing problems</td>
<td>• Values clarification</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Deadline-driven projects, meetings and preparations</td>
<td>• Strategic planning</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Relationship building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td>• Interruptions</td>
<td>IV.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Some phone calls, emails, meetings</td>
<td>• Busywork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Many proximate pressing matters</td>
<td>• Some phone calls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• “Escape activities such as TV &amp; social media</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Irrelevant emails</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
High performance organizations spend their time...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>Urgent</th>
<th>Not Urgent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td>I: 20-25%</td>
<td>II: 65-80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25-30%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Important</td>
<td>III: 15%</td>
<td>IV: &lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50-60%</td>
<td>2-3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bold type represents high performing organizations
Normal type represents typical organizations

Source: First Things First, Stephen Covey
5 Second Centering Exercise

• Extend your posture
• Extend your awareness in front of you, behind you and to your left and right.
• Settle
• Breathe
• Smile
“The way of the Essentialist means living by design, not by default. Instead of making choice reactively, the Essentialist deliberately distinguishes the vital few from the trivial many.”

– Greg McKeown
Essentialism

Explore and Evaluate

Execute

Eliminate
Strategies to find your focus

- Take a social media “sabbatical” – and or set limits to your social media consumption
- Create rituals for starting and ending work periods
- Create time for planning and preparing (Q2)
- Minimize distractions (Q3 and Q4 activities) by task-batching and/or time blocking
Strategies to find your focus

- Be present and mindful
- Make intentional choices; accept trade-off decisions
- Reframe your thinking...intentionally choosing where you want to put your attention and energy
- Build in time to recharge and reenergize