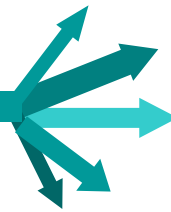




Pressure Points



For those who perform under pressure

Summer 2006

Volume 1, Issue 2

4 Steps to Better Balance and Productivity



Please don't read this issue of *Pressure Points* and simply smile, nod and put it aside. While we do hope you enjoy this issue, we really want you to use these ideas and principles to improve your performance and quality of life. Take a concept, make a SMART goal based on it, and experiment with integrating it into your daily routine. Let us know how it goes...

Charlie Brown PhD
Director, FPS Performance

FPS Performance congratulates

Team Red Helmets women's

cycling team in their recent

Race Across America in 7 days,

21 hours and 15 minutes.

Inside this issue:

Quick Tips – Goal Setting 2

Contact Information 2

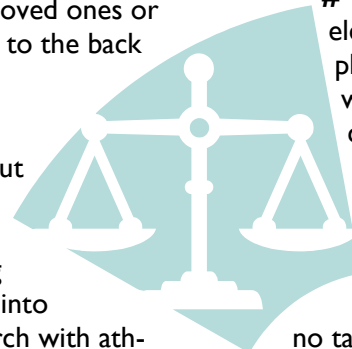
"Yeah, I know I need to exercise and take time to smell the roses; but I just don't have the time right now; I'm going to start right after this next deadline!"

Sound familiar? As the deadline draws near, another project demands attention and so the notion of exercise, more time with loved ones or leisure is shifted again to the back burner.

If you are serious about being a peak performer, you must be serious about building balance and recovery into your life. Early research with athletes demonstrated how balance – having an identity as something other than an athlete – prevents burnout. Insufficient recovery reduces athletic performance and increases the likelihood of both injury and illness. Recent studies on job performance and weekend activities has affirmed what many have intuitively known for years: balance prevents burnout in the workplace and increases productivity; meaningful social activity with significant others is particularly potent in improving performance. Like Stephen Covey's example of the lum-

berjack attempting to fell a giant tree, your work will be much more efficient if you simply take time to routinely "sharpen the saw."

Here are four tips to break out of a well-intentioned rut and begin sharpening your saw.



1 - Stop communicating... electronically that is. With cell phones, PDA's and home networking it is possible to be in constant communication with work. That's a great idea for work, but a bad idea for balance. Set a 15-20 minute DFP (Device-Free Period) every day. No phone, no television, no talk radio. Music is allowed (preferably instrumental) and face-to-face conversation is the goal.

2 - Commit yourself to an institution... such as a school, church or other organization. You've been thinking about volunteering with a civic group, taking a course at the local community college, signing up for a class at the Y or becoming more involved in at your place of worship (unless you are worshiping your work). Go ahead and sign up rather than deluding yourself that you will wait until things ease off, and then

4 Steps to Better Balance (continued)

you'll take the plunge. That lull may never come; make the commitment, and you'll find the time.

3 - Eat an elephant.

The children's riddle provides good guidance: How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time. The task of achieving balance may seem overwhelming, just like eating an elephant. Start by thinking of baby steps to improve your health, relationships and faith— use the stairs at work rather than the elevator, have breakfast with your family, take 10 minutes to reflect and plan. Target transition times during your day when patterns and inertia are most receptive to change.

4 - Reduce speed in the final descent and celebrate every landing.

The most important 15 minutes of the day occurs when a person returns from work to be reunited with loved ones. Those first 15 minutes sets the tone for all contact that follows. Most people will say they work to provide quality of life for their loved ones; if you are still preoccupied with work during those initial 15 minutes the implicit message is, "Work is the most important thing in my life; these relationships are distractions."

Start your re-entry before you hit the door: Listen to music on the way home (not the news; it will only irritate you). Take a few

moments before you get out of the car or prior to walking up your steps to be fully present and focus on the celebration that is about to occur. As you engage loved ones, be mindful of matching the rhythms of their day. Make a beeline to your significant other as soon as you come in the door, even if you are carrying an armload of gleeful children who greeted you along the way. Take a few moments to ask about his or her day – no problem solving; just listen, acknowledge and connect. After your exquisite re-entry and celebration THEN you can go and check your emails; but don't be surprised if you decide that those emails can just wait a bit.



Let FPS Performance be part of your next business, community or athletic organization event. We welcome the opportunity to share our message with others.

Call 704-333-2988

"If you don't know where you are going, there is a good chance you will never get there"

Quick tips... on goal setting

- **Confidence** is related to your accomplishments; therefore setting **SMART** goals is the first step to improve confidence

Specific

Measurable

Action-oriented

Reasonable, but challenging

Time-oriented.

- Focus on process goals— the small, building blocks or "baby steps" that are under your control and help you direct your moment-to-moment efforts
- Most common mistakes in goal setting
 - Failing to set specific goals
 - Focusing only on outcome goals rather than process goals
 - Setting too many goals, too soon
 - Not following up, evaluating and adjusting goals if needed

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