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5 Quick Steps You Can Take to Find Your Focus

In order to get where you want, in order to be who you want to be, in order to live the kind of life you want to live and lead the way you want to lead, you need to be strategic.



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IMAGE: Getty Images

There is a quote by Stephen Covey that I love: "The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing." Essentially what he's saying is that we, as entrepreneurs, need focus.

In order to get where you want, in order to be who you want to be, in order to live the kind of life you want to live and lead the way you want to lead, you need to be strategic and find that focus that will make it all possible.

My book, *The Inner Edge*, outlines many practices that can help you zero in your focus, so that when you're leaving your office each day you can confidently say you were "productive," not just "busy." And how to gauge the difference.

Below are five quick steps you can take to take back your focus, and set yourself up for success instead of burnout:

Step 1: survey the scene. The question here is, "What do you want?" Briefly review your vision so your focus will be aimed in the right direction. In other words, take a step back and take in the panoramic view of your life. Remind yourself of the long-term vision, but zoom in on the near-term vision. Write down your answer to the question in one sentence, and keep it where you can see it often

Step 2: choose your focus. The question to ask is, "What areas do you want to focus on to achieve your vision?" Name 3-5 specific areas that need your attention if you're going to successfully attain your vision, and write those down under your statement of what you want. Identify the aspects of that vision that deserve your time, energy and attention right now.

Step 3: study the subject. Ask, "Where are you now? Where do you want to be? How will you know when you get there?" Get specific about what each focus area means. The answers to these questions can be a big reality check--for example if you have to get to California, it helps to know if you're starting in New Zealand or New York. The same is true for your focus area. If you know where you are now in relation to what you want, you increase your chances of getting there quickly.

Step 4: sharpen your focus. The question here is, "What will you do and when will you do it?" Make a commitment. For example, let's say you have a focus area called "financial growth." Right now you are in debt, and you want to be making money. You'll know you're successful when you've got 12 consecutive reports showing your company to be in the black. The question, "What will you do?" forces you to consider how you'll get there. Will you eliminate debt? Make an acquisition? Your answer is your commitment.

Step 5: take a snapshot. Ask, "What do I want to remember?" When you've gone through all of the steps above, write down your focus areas. Keep them where they can serve as a reminder of what's important to you now.

Is anything missing from your focus areas? That's an absolutely critical question to ask, and one many people overlook. Make a conscious effort to step back and think about the bigger picture of your life, and all of your focus areas logically will be designed to lead you to that end.

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PUBLISHED ON: JUL 30, 2015

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