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It's a glorious time of year. I love watching the leaves turn brilliant hues of yellow and orange and feel the brisk air on my face. (Okay, I'm not in Arizona today; I'm working in upstate NY!). For me, Autumn signals a shift from the hazy, crazy days of summer to a more pensive mood, a time to be thankful for what I have and thoughtful for the future. This is the time where I start thinking about the upcoming year - what I want to start doing, stop doing, or change the way I do things. I start noticing what I like to do and what I don't like to do. I clean my office, tossing out old items that seem to be collecting dust in order to make way for new possibilities.

It's only a matter of time before all the leaves have fallen, so take some time to reflect and be thankful.

Kristin

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IMPORTANCE OF CIRCADIAN RHYTHM AND 6 TIPS TO PREVENT JET LAG

BY JOE SHERREN

When I recently traveled from Prince Edward Island to Istanbul then Iran, returning to Toronto, San Francisco, and finally Phoenix, I experienced significant jet lag. I also noticed swelling in my legs and my energy was much lower.

This surprised me, because I have traveled around the world many times before. But this time, it hit me like a ton of bricks. It happened because I did not follow a standard ritual and my friend's advice.

You see, every animal (and plant) is governed by the earth's daily rotation which affects us at a sub-cellular level. Animals that have been able to attune their daily rituals, sleeping, eating, hunting, working, reproduction, and hibernation to the earth's cycles, have survived the longest and progressed the most.

If you follow the sun's patterns, go to bed when the sun goes down, and get up when the sun comes up, you will live a more healthy and balanced life. People become more

productive and stay healthier when their natural pattern is in alignment with the rhythm of the earth's rotation.

This has led to what we know as our circadian rhythm (meaning "daily rhythm"). When your physiological rhythm is out of sync there are implications to your health, (including obesity, diabetes, cancer, heart problems and mood disorders). [Jet lag](#) is a classic example of circadian misalignment.

The internal workings of the human body adhere to circadian rhythms, which coordinate the activity of the body's organ systems. The good news is we can regulate these rhythms to maintain good health.

The bad news, it is hard, because we are living in an age of circadian dysfunction. Modern routines, global travel, and technologies cause our natural rhythms to clash. Some we can manage, such as eliminating artificial light at night, which confuses the body, putting our health at risk.

Other ideas include: Dim lights a couple of hours before going to bed; keep your bedroom completely dark; go to bed and get up at relatively the same time every day, including weekends; eat your biggest meals early in the day; do not exercise at night; decrease night-time exposure to laptops, cellphones and other (blue light) devices.

Because I travel regularly, there is a ritual which I learned from my friend Brian Tracy. It is guaranteed to minimize the effects of jet lag if followed correctly. So, for anyone who travels extensively, keep this little guide handy, it is amazing how much better you will feel:

- As soon as possible, remove your shoes. Walking on bare feet will help the body sense the change in rhythm of the earth's rotation.
- Before going to bed, take a bath (five minutes for each time zone) in water as hot as you can possibly endure.
- Do not consume high amounts of alcohol during the flight.
- Drink water constantly throughout the trip.
- A day or two before the trip, start adjusting to the upcoming time zone.
- Drink caffeinated coffee first thing after waking up the first day.

Unfortunately, because of my accommodations and situation this time I was not able to follow this ritual and I was significantly affected.

My question for [managers](#) this week: "Do you provide your staff with the time and flexibility when traveling on business to adjust to their new time zone to ensure better health and productivity?"

7 STEPS TO HAVING A DIFFICULT CONVERSATION

It's never easy to initiate a difficult conversation. You have something to say that is unpleasant or uncomfortable and/or you believe that receiver of the message will not take it well. All in all, it's never any fun for the sender or receiver of the information.

BUT, you believe it must be said.

When you find yourself needing to confront someone with bad news, try these seven steps to make the conversation less difficult for you AND the receiver:

- **Don't Wait Too Long.** Bad news never gets better over time. It might get swept under the rug, but it usually festers. Whatever the issue was, the receiver won't know about the first instance and could be perpetuating a bad thing. So nip it in the proverbial bud and have the difficult conversation before it escalates.

- **Set the Stage.** Difficult conversations are best done in private. Make sure you have thought out what you are going to say by using these steps - and make sure that you are in a cool, calm and collected mental state to have this conversation. Ask them if you could have a minute of their time and lead them to a quiet, private place where you won't be distracted. You may even heighten their listening by saying, "This is not easy for me to say....."
- **Be Direct, Clear and Concrete.** Bring up the issue without beating around the bush. Start with "I" statements and specific descriptions of the issue. "I noticed that three days this week (Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday), you were between 15 to 30 minutes late." Try not to exaggerate ("You're always late!"), be indirect ("I rely on you to come to work on time"), or speak for others ("Everyone is pissed off that you're always late").
- **Separate Your Imagination from Impact.** Our imaginations powerfully interpret words, actions or appearance into a story - that may or may not be accurate. So rather than sharing your interpretation of the events ("Evidently, you just don't care about coming in on time"), share the impact of the behavior ("As a result of you being late three days this week, I wasn't able to complete my work on time and had to stay late on those days").
- **Accept Responsibility For Your Involvement.** Rarely are we as innocent as the driven snow. We may have had a hand in this: You weren't clear about your expectations, you have been allowing this to go on too long, etc. Fess up and share the possibility that you contributed to the issue. This will help support a healthy dialogue in the next step.
- **Look for the Win-Win.** Rather than arguing about positions ("You need to be here on time" and "Traffic is always a mess"), brainstorm possibilities about how you can both have a mutually acceptable solution. Reassure them that you ARE looking for a "win-win" and then clarify what that mutual objective is ("We do great work here!") If there are some non-negotiables (those things that you have NO control over), now is a good time to mention it (these typically involve conversations around time and money!). When brainstorming, just offer the possibilities vs. evaluating each and every idea. That will just shut down the conversation!
- **Agree on a Path Forward.** Once you have all the ideas out on the table, you'll see some patterns or trends or maybe even one idea resonates with both of you! Agree on how you both will proceed. Finish the conversation on a positive note with what you will do and what they will do. Continue to show your support to make this rather difficult conversation a non-issue!

Try these steps next time you need to confront someone or have a difficult conversation with someone on your team and [contact me](#) or comment on how it worked for you. [Share the podcast](#) with your colleagues.

ATTENTION MEETING PROFESSIONALS: THE MAIN REASON YOUR PANELS ARE BORING

This week at IMEX America in Las Vegas, I was speaking about how to make your panel discussions go from boring to bravo. Before the session began, a meeting professional said, "I'm not a big fan of panels. They are just too boring."

My dear meeting professional. One of the main reasons your panels are boring is that YOU have not set your panel up for success. Sure, you identified a slot of time, selected a topic and wrestled up a moderator and some panelists. You consider your job to be done.

At this point, your job is HALF done. You still have some fundamental groundwork to cover with your panel moderator who will bring your vision to reality.

Oh? Your vision is a stultifying, boring panel? Well then, that's what you'll get. And if you have NO vision (or don't bother to share it), then your panel moderator will step in. And if your panel moderator doesn't have a vision, you'll get the same old boring, draped table with name tents and microphone stands.

It doesn't have to be that way. PLEASE meet with your panel moderator (either face-to-face or virtually) and have a chit-chat about what the panel *could* be. Some key questions to discuss are:

The Event. The panel discussion is typically one session within an entire event. Share the panel date, start and end times and location. Also discuss where this panel is within the arc of the entire event agenda, what comes before and after the panel discussion. Share the event website URL, marketing materials and any other logistical information (including attire).

Panel Title. An [intriguing title](#) will capture your audience's attention. Work with the panel moderator to develop a catchy and effective title that is consistent with the event theme.

Panel Objectives. Clarify the stated objectives for the panel – especially if marketing material has already been published. What do you want them to know, think or feel about the topic?

Panel Format. Discuss your vision for the panel. How formal or informal? Traditional or more unique? Confirm how much latitude you have to play with the format and agenda.

Sponsoring Organization. Review the mission of the business, association or organization. Ask about their past experiences of having panels on their program – the good, the bad and the ugly.

Audience. Confirm the audience size, demographics and expectations for the panel discussion.

- What's the expected level of expertise in the room around the panel topic?
- What are their key interests, needs and concerns?
- What questions are they hoping to find answers to?
- What will be the impact of the panelists' comments on their work and lives?

Panelists. Share the names, bio and contact information for any panelist who has already been invited or confirmed to participate, why they were selected, as well as a copy of what has been communicated to them. Ask for recommendations (*see Step 2*). Determine any inducements you can offer additional panelists to serve and if there are any promotional policies or prohibitions you need to be aware of.

Success Criteria. Discuss how you will determine and evaluate the success of the panel. Evaluation forms? Hallway buzz?

Room Logistics. Share any details you have about the room size and layout, furniture setup and color of the backdrop.

Audio/Visual. Discuss audio (microphones), visual (video projection) and internet (Wi-Fi) requirements.

Rights. If the panel will be recorded (audio and/or video) or live streamed, you'll need the moderator and panel to sign a release form.

Support Staff. Mention if you intend to have any additional support in the room, e.g., room monitors, microphone runners, etc.

Promotion. Ask for the moderator's help to get the word out and any post-event messaging to reinforce the panel discussion.

As you discuss these items, you'll find the answers to be less defined and you and the panel moderator will have the opportunity to create an amazing experience for the audience and the panelists. [Try this checklist](#) to help the conversation move along. When you make intentional choices in collaboration with the panel moderator, you greatly increase the probability that your panel discussion will be a home run!

FROM THE BOOKSHELF: 59 Seconds: Change Your Life in Under a Minute

I can't remember who told me about 59 Seconds: *Change Your Life in Under a Minute* by Richard Wiseman, but I am insanely grateful this book is on my bookshelf.

Aha! That's one thing you can do is to "develop the gratitude attitude." That's quick and easy to do. Less than 59 seconds, as a matter of fact.

What I find to be most interesting is the WHY. For each topic, Wiseman shares a number of fascinating research experiments (both his own and ones done by others) and then offers a number of specific suggestions on how to make it work in your own life.

The first time, I read it from cover to cover. I found that it's better the second time around where you pick it up, read a section, then put it down, and try it out. Some of the suggestions I don't really need (e.g. how to build instant rapport on a first date) but are interesting, nevertheless.

Some of my favorites stories or suggestions:

- **Musical Chairs.** "There are two schools of thought relating to group dynamics and creativity. One believes in not changing team membership, arguing that people then feel more comfortable with one another and so are happier to suggest the kinds of weird and wonderful ideas that are the hallmark of creativity. In contrast, the other point of view holds that it is better to generate new patterns of thinking by constantly mixing up the membership." Which is better? Weisman cites a study conducted by Charlan Nemeth and Margaret Ormiston at the University of California that concludes mixing it up is better.

- **Choose the Middle Way.** If you want to increase your chances of making a good impression in a meeting, sit toward the middle of the table. Psychologists Priya Raghurir and Ana Valenzuela analyzed episodes of the TV game show, The Weakest Link and found that the contestants in the center of the semi-circle won the game more frequently than those on the extremities. (Reminds me of the presidential primary debates!)

-**The Most Reliable Cues to Lying.** Pay attention to the words that people use. "Liars tend to lack detail, use more "ums" and "ahs," and avoid self-references ("me, "mine," "I"). In addition, people are about 20% less likely to lie in an email than in a telephone call, because their words are on record and are more likely to come back and haunt them!"

UPCOMING WEBINAR

10 Life Hacks to an Amazing Presentation

Thursday, December 10, 2015

Life-hacking refers to any trick, shortcut, skill, or novelty method that increases productivity and efficiency. In this webinar, award-winning author of the book Boring to Bravo, Kristin Arnold shares her shortcuts to preparing for an extraordinary presentation.

If you ever give a presentation, then this webinar is for you!

Register here today at www.ExtraordinaryTeam.com/webinar-series/

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