

Gaining Focus – A Simple Exercise

Do you ever feel like you have so much going on that you can't focus on what needs to get done?

Does it seem like, no matter what you do, the stress and anxiety rules the moment with no relief in sight?

Well, here is a simple exercise* that you might find useful. You may need to practice it several times to get the desired effect, but remember practice makes perfect!



Objective: To collect your attention.

Instructions: Take a walk and count forms until thinking diminishes or ceases entirely, and the world appears brighter. For example: Look at a car, count one: look at a leaf, two; look at a building, count three, etc. It makes no difference *WHAT* you look at, just every time you observe an object count one more number. If you lose track of your counting, just start from one.



Expected Results: Insight, improved well-being, and Recovery of Focus and Attention. **ENJOY!**

Reprint permission Dr. Cheryl Leitschuh *Taken from *Resurfacing Techniques for Exploring Consciousness* by Harry Palmer.

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Build A Workforce That Will Work Wonders

At the end of the interview, you should know all there is to know about a potential employee.

Why then does it often seem as if an interviewee walks out of the office as an enigma? After all, you're holding all of the cards. There's no reason to feel blindsided, but you do.

An interview is your chance to get to know a potential hire and to understand those things about him or her that would best suit your business. But not everyone knows how to get the most out of an interview.



To maximize the helpful information you get from a potential worker, you must do each of three things. First, you must develop interview questions which will elicit answers that identify skills specific to the position for which you are hiring. Secondly, know *exactly which answers* you are looking for with each question asked. Finally, you need to have the courage to challenge the answers candidates give you, to make absolutely sure that you have the information from them that you want.

Being unprepared for an interview can prove disastrous down the line. The employer who does not properly prepare for an interview is the employer whose workplace is defined by high turnover, low morale, low productivity and frequent accidents.

Preparation is more than having good interview questions. If you are unprepared for the answers to those interview questions, you will still employ a good number of misfits.

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ONE MINUTE IDEAS

Steps to a Happier Life

- ✓ **Think and Act Happy.** You will create that state of mind for yourself and inspire it in others
- ✓ **Take Control.** Make effective changes in your life
- ✓ **Set Goals** that urge you forward, yet are still realistic
- ✓ **Engage Your Skills.** Seek activities that use your abilities
- ✓ **Be Healthy.** Eat well, exercise regularly and get plenty of sleep
- ✓ **Surround Yourself with happy** people and nurture these relationships
- ✓ **Be Compassionate** and help those in greater need
- ✓ **Stay Open to new people** and experiences so you continue to grow
- ✓ **Take A Moment each day** to reflect on the positive things in your life

Author Unknown

*The problem with communication ...
is the illusion that it has been
accomplished.*
George Bernard Shaw

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Dedicated to helping individuals,
teams and organizations achieve
their dreams and goals.

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Well-developed questions without a plan to process the answers may eliminate the stupid and the slow, but the smooth talking low-producers will slip through those big holes in your screening process.

The good and prepared interviewer designs questions to identify specific skills and talents and looks for specific answers and the manner in which the applicant responds. The result is employment of better performers, lower turnover and higher morale.

What makes this interviewer so much more successful than the others is the quality of questions asked and the manner in which he or she processes the answers received. Behind every great workforce is a selection process that includes a well-developed interview process designed to ask questions that produce detailed information. The process also includes methods of challenging answers that allow qualified applicants to rise above those that merely talk a good game.

Develop interview questions to identify specific skills, and know what answers you are looking for from each question. Challenge answers to be sure you have the information you want. By consistently doing these three things, you will build a workforce that will work wonders.

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Helpful Tips For Effective Computer Use

In today's environment using a computer has become an essential part of most professions. To avoid undue stress of fatigue, loss of work, or eye strain, follow these suggestions:

- ♦ Keep your monitor screen clean by using one of the many cleaning pads available. This will cut down on your eye strain.
- ♦ If you are working on your computer and start to experience visual fatigue, blink more often. As you blink your eyes you lubricate them. It may also be helpful to get up and walk around the office for a couple of minutes.
- ♦ One of the most frustrating things about using a computer is when you lose your work due to power failure or computer failure. Avoid losing the information and time spent on it by saving your work often. An easy way to remind yourself that it is time to save your work is by using an alarm. Set an alarm for about 15 minutes after you start working on your computer project. When the alarm sounds, save your work and hit the snooze button. Most alarm snooze buttons are pre-set to go off after 9 or 10 Minutes. When it goes off again, save your work, and hit the snooze again. Then if you have a power or computer failure, in the worst case scenario you may lose only the last 9 or 10 minutes of work.



Author Gary Sorrell, Sorrell Associates

You can never solve a problem on the level on which it was created.

Albert Einstein



What's More Important: Experience or Attitude?

How can you stop hiring for skills and firing for attitude?

Most people in the hiring process place a higher value on the experience of an applicant. However, most failures are a result of attitude rather than a lack of experience. The employee's attitude is simply not fit for the job.

We tend to hire for skills and fire for attitude. As professionals, we must change our way of thinking and consider attitude first, then the appropriate experience



necessary for the position. Remember, the experience may not relate directly to years on the job. An applicant may have 10 years of "experience", but in those 10 years, he/she simply has one year of experience repeated 10 times, with no growth from year to year.

We should determine what the ideal candidate looks like by considering:

- What attitudes are needed for the job?
- How does the job reward superior performance?
- If you had an employee with the right attitude fit for the job, how long would it take to give them the right experience?

Often times this way of thinking will provide positive, long-term results. Thus, before you consider the individual for the job, consider the job itself through a benchmarking process.

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Books to Consider

Engage! Roadmap for Workforce-Driven Change in a Warp-Speed World by T. Elaine Gagné, 2005, RoseHill Press. "The Engage! Process is an award-winning organizational system that involves your entire workforce in creating successful change. The process includes a unique approach to organizational vision, scorecard, and strategy, and a comprehensive coaching component."

Successful Entrepreneurial Management, How to Create Personal and Business Advantage by John Butler, 2000, Century Communications.

This book is a synthesis and consolidation of the best ideas, techniques and strategies in personal achievement, professional success and creating business advantage the Mr. Butler learned and practiced throughout his career.

The New Science of Selling and Persuasion: How Smart Companies and Great Salespeople Sell by William T. Brooks, 2004, John Wiley and Sons, Inc. Mr. Brooks shares his observations of eight common practices that "smart companies" practice when sales staff are performing well.

Develop Your Future Leaders

There are a variety of excellent training and development programs on the market these days. One of the best methods of developing your future leaders is with your personal commitment and involvement. One of the best role models is St. Paul, who committed himself to developing leaders. When you read Acts 19:8-10, you might consider:

1. Know yourself; be familiar with your strengths and weaknesses.
2. Know the person you wish to develop.
3. Clearly define the goals and assignments.
4. Teach the "why" behind the assignments.
5. Discuss their growth process as you go.
6. Spend relational time with them.
7. Allow them to watch you serve and lead.
8. Give them the resources you need.
9. Encourage them to journal during the process.
10. Hold them accountable for their work.
11. Give them the freedom to fail.
12. Evaluate and affirm regularly.

Adapted from The Maxwell Leadership Bible

What do managers think are major priorities that need to be addressed by organizations worldwide? Click on the article below for all of the details:

<http://www.marketwire.com/mw/release.do?id=843186>

*You are today where your thoughts have brought you;
you will be tomorrow where your thoughts take you.*

James Allen

You never achieve real success unless you like what you are doing.

Dale Carnegie

Integrity is the quality most needed to succeed in business.

John C. Maxwell

Perspective of a Life - Emily's "Memorial Services"

Following Emily's death on December 29, 2007, two memorial services were held to celebrate her life, death, and resurrection. The first service was on Thursday January 3, 2008, at the Orange United Methodist Church in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Music by Clay May included "You are my light" and "Jesus, Lover of my Soul" (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dD-ZdMOx_HY&feature=related). Christiana Murphy did a liturgical dance to "Breath of Heaven" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VrYVd5hbro&feature=related>). Reverend Ray Warren read **Psalm 23** and **1 Corinthians 13:1-13** and shared "Reflections of Life."



Following the sermon the congregation was invited to share stories as witnesses to Emily's life and journey in North Carolina. We were blessed with a photo show put together with the help of Mark Hulbert, Laurie Bearden, Amanda Bilbo, Beth Burge and Clay May to the music of "Come to Jesus" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGR944fq-Yg&NR=1>). After the service we had a time of gathering where we heard more stories of Emily's life and relationships of the last three years in North Carolina. We wish we had all these stories in a written form to read and re-read. We are aware of one young man who made a profession of faith after this service, and several others related "a planting of the seed" experience.

The second memorial service was on Sunday, January 6, 2008, at the Clinton First United Methodist Church in Clinton, Mississippi. During visitation prior to the service, Emily's life as witnessed through photos and music played as a way to share the joy and blessings of her life. The service began as State Representative Toby Barker (College classmate of Emily's) sang "Come to Jesus" (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e_4g8_e16dc). Helen Tindel did the "Naming" and read **Psalm 149:3** and **Ecclesiastes 3:1-4**. The congregation joined in singing "Hymn of Promise" (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YXFX5KTP_88&feature=related) and "It is Well with My Soul" (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tnLOBwRbg_M&feature=related). Reverend Dr. Connie Shelton brought the sermon and read **Psalm 23**, **I Corinthians 13:1-13**, **Romans 6:8**, and **John 14:1-4, 20, 27b** (these were scriptures verses that Emily had highlighted in her Bible). Marlena Duncan performed a liturgical dance to the music of "I can only imagine." (This was a powerful, emotional, and passionate dance filled with tears. Marlena spent the Friday before the service reviewing videos of Emily's dances and choreography at the University of Southern Mississippi and incorporated Emily's movements and style into the dance.) Marlena was a classmate with Emily in the Dance Performance program at the University of Southern Mississippi. A poem "Em" written by Tawnia Vollstedt was read by Bethany Nelson and Natasha Casely Hayford. All three were also classmates with Emily in the Dance Performance program. Another classmate of Emily's, Beth Burge gave a witness of Emily's life. (Beth was Emily's college roommate whose friendship continued through the years with Beth joining us to be with Emily in her last hours. Helen Tindel, one of the two ministers, was the Children's Minister and Emily's supervisor at First Baptist Church Hattiesburg during her years at the University of Southern Mississippi. Dr. Shelton was the minister who sat holding Emily's hand, praying with her, reading Scriptures, and singing to her in the Surgical Intensive Care Unit at University of North Carolina Medical Center until we arrived at the hospital.) The service ended with Dr. Shelton

singing the old hymn, "Lord of the Dance" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=13eBCf1gIgc&NR=1>) as the Benediction. After the service we had a time of gathering where we heard more stories of Emily's life and relationships. We are aware of one young woman who made a profession of faith after this service. Several shared that their life would never be the same.



Witness to Emily's Life

By Beth Burge

To get me to speak of Emily for a only a few minutes is like asking me to eat one potato chip, or just one cookie; pretty much impossible. Through all of this, God has encouraged me to go to the Scriptures for comfort and I encourage all of you to do the same. In there I found the resounding answer to what God has been saying to me, "I am real." Not only that God is real, but because of Emily and the way she lived her life, He has been able to be revealed.

One verse in particular has stood out. **1 Corinthians 4:18** "*Things that are seen don't last forever, but things that are not seen are eternal. That's why we keep our minds on the things that cannot be seen.*" The characteristics of Emily, her smell, her touch, her giggles, the way she pointed her finger when she was mad or screamed bloody murder at the sight of a roach, all those things are gone. But the things about Emily that cannot be seen, those things are eternal. Her love, her bravery, her strength, her faith, her kindness, those things are still here with us and will never go away. I remember of her speaking of the Judge that Connie spoke about attending her memorial service in North Carolina. Emily told me about him and asked me if I thought he liked her, totally not knowing how much that one interview affected him. She was so humble and had no idea what an impact she really had on people's lives.

When you reflect on Emily in this way, and hear the stories of how God has done a mighty work through her death - saving 5 lives, planting spiritual seeds, working even in this memorial; God is showing us day after day that He is real and has not left us in this storm. I have to remind myself that God does not promise to save us from life's storms, He will however, with faith, hope and love, save us in them. We are faced now with a mighty storm.

Losing Emily hurts so much. It has hurt, it hurts, and it will continue to hurt until we see her again. However when seeing that Emily lived her life with that faith, hope, and love, we can say "Death has lost the battle! Where is its victory? Where is its sting?" Thank God and to Him be the Glory for letting our Lord Jesus Christ give us the victory!



Em

By Tawnia Vollstedt

Head tilted and turned towards the warmth of the sun.
Feet bare and dancing between the blades of grass.
Shoulders strong but unburdened, embracing the afternoon's glow.
Smile wide and unbridled, greeting the world with striking confidence.
Your music is a song no one can imitate.
Your heart is a friend to the treasured honored.
A passion of red intensity and conviction.
An independence of amber and twilight.
Toes wiggled in excitement and joy.
Laughter escaped in purity and truth.
Your travels a testament to your dreams.
Your home a testament to your faith.
Light from your brilliant soul now slumbers.
Echo of your unique voice, now dust of the stars.
Head tilted and turned towards this earth of mortals.
Feet bare and dancing between the clouds of Heaven.
Wings strong and unburdened.
Smile wide and unbridled.
Your music is a song no one can imitate.
I miss you, Em. Love Always!

Witnesses of the Services

Without others' expressions of love and walking with us through this darkest time in our life, we would not make it through each day. There are times when one of us will ask the other something about the service and/or people at the service and we don't recall. That week of our life and our memory is sometimes a blank or a blur with the exception of knowing and experiencing the loss and the pain we felt and feel. We thank all for their participation and

celebration to honor Emily's life, death, and resurrection to God's glory and honor. Some cards or emails about the service have been helpful to affirm her beauty and God's presence in our lives.



"This note cannot convey all that I want to express concerning the Memorial Service for Emily. Often the word celebration of a life is mentioned, but Jim and I both felt that we were in fact, truly celebrating Emily's life, especially so in the words of the young ministers and dance. It was uplifting and strengthening to all of us. Though there were many tears, there was such sweetness - and victory."
Virginia Hughes

"Words can never express the depth of feelings and awe experienced at the Memorial Service. Heaven joined earth in a tribute to a beautiful person, Emily." Barry Click

"No words can really express what a beautiful service that was for Emily. I hope it will bring comfort as you recall it in the future." Judy Watts

"We have never experienced a more beautiful and touching service than Emily's. What a celebration of an obviously remarkable life and daughter. We left feeling we knew her, yet with a sense of longing that we never met her. We have been inspired by her forever." Nancy and Irma Newell Hart

"Emily's Memorial Service was the most beautiful and inspirational service I have ever experienced. It was such a tribute to her precious life and my life will be forever changed because of this experience." Marilyn Jackson

"I was so touched by the service on Sunday - one could only hope for all the kind words and stories I've heard about Emily!" Dawn Martindale

"Emily's Memorial Service, Epiphany Sunday, was the sweetest and most loving memorial I have ever attended. Her life definitely reflected the teachings and affections of those closest to her in her upbringing, her friendships and her work associates. I saw how very proud and honored you were to have called her daughter and it was evident from all who knew her how honored she was to have been able to call you Mother, Father, and Sister. What a precious gift she was for 26 years and forever will be in your hearts." Joni Keeton

"Emily's service was so beautiful! We only knew Emily through you. . . but wish, after the beautiful remembrance, that we had known her." Jack and Mimi Davis

"We spoke with you briefly at the memorial service at Orange United Methodist Church in Chapel Hill. We had never had the privilege of meeting Emily in person, but after hearing the stories that were shared, we feel as though we knew her well. It is obvious she was a tremendous person who continues to have an amazing influence on many people. What a legacy that is!" Rick Strunk

"You should be very proud of Emily. The service yesterday was such a testimony of the passionate and inspiring life that Emily lived." Ashley Powell



On the inside cover of her Bible on a sticky note Emily wrote, "***God always picks from what we think is little. God sometimes makes heroes out of little people.***" This was followed with Psalm 143:8 which reads "*Let the morning bring me word of Your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in You. Show me the way I should go, for to You I lift up my soul*".