

CLARITY BREAK™

Keeping your head clear, your confidence high, and your focus strong is vital in maintaining forward momentum. Most leaders spend most of their time overwhelmed, tired, and buried in the day-to-day routine, unable to see beyond tomorrow. As a result, they don't solve problems as well as they could, they don't lead their people as well as they could, and they're not a good example for them. Great leaders have a habit of taking quiet thinking time. That means escaping the office on a regular basis for an hour or so. By working on yourself and the business, you will rise above feeling frustrated and overwhelmed to a clearheaded and confident state. As a result, when you come back into the business, you will be laser-focused and in the right leadership frame of mind.

You can do this wherever works best for you, but it should never be in your office. You have to go to a place where your thoughts are uninterrupted. You can do this daily, weekly, or monthly, whichever works best for you. Some clients have a favorite place in the morning on their way to work. Sam Cupp would do it for 30 minutes in his den every morning. I do it once a week for two hours in a coffee shop. I knew a man who would take about half a day every month at the library, and that did the trick for him.

Such free time to think is vital. As Henry Ford said, "Thinking is the hardest work there is, which is probably the reason why so few engage in it." Take the opportunity to review your V/TO™, review your plans, read, think strategically, look at the EOS Model™, or fill out the Organizational Checkup. What I recommend for someone who doesn't know what to do is to sit with a blank legal pad and a pen. I promise you, through this simple exercise, all of the right thoughts will come to mind. It's important that none of the work you're doing is busywork. This is not an opportunity to play catch-up.

After taking a Clarity Break™, you will come back into the business clear, focused, and confident. You'll be ready for anything. You'll solve problems better, you'll be clearer with your people, and you'll set a better example. When you're having trouble solving a problem, check out for a Clarity Break™. Take a deep breath, and put the necessary time into thinking clearly through the problem.

To start, pick a one-hour block of time next week, block it out, and do it. If you wait around for the right time to appear, it never will. It must be an appointment that you schedule with yourself. Give it a try. Just do one. I have yet to have one person tell me that it was a waste of time. You might be wondering where you're going to find an hour. The amazing paradox is that the hour you spend will save you more than that hour later because of the clarity that it creates. You end up being much more efficient and effective.