

THE LEADERSHIP LENS Newsletter

February 2004, © Mark Sincevich, Staash Press

A monthly resource providing insight, opinion and practical information on leadership, creativity and balance

Not Always Connected

I'm starting to see more cell phones clipped onto belts and the backs of purses, and even hand-held computer devices such as Palms and Blackberries right next to the cell phones. In many cases these computer devices replace the need for a cell phone while at the same time making us more connected (all of the time). With them we have instant messaging, e-mail and voice mail.

I was speaking with the Vice President of a fairly large high-technology company. He told me that he and his wife had gone to the symphony the previous night. He was even more proud of the fact that he sent a message or two from his Blackberry to close an important software deal right in the middle of the performance! I asked him what type of classical music was being performed at the symphony, and more importantly, I asked, 'how did the music make you feel?'

He rattled off Beethoven in name only, but gave me a completely blank expression when he attempted to answer how he was feeling. I am sure that this had quite a lot to do with his preoccupation on 'closing his deal.' He was so connected through his technology that he was disconnected from the experience. This separation anxiety happens while on vacation too. According to a study of large firms conducted by Mindy Fried at Boston College, 32 percent of employees worked while they were on 'vacation' while 58 percent of managers did. This percentage is probably much higher if leisure activities such as symphonies are taken into account.

A major benefit of practicing photography is that it requires being present. I need to take the time to study a scene so I can anticipate the shot. If there are children running around a fountain for instance, I need to have my eye constantly in the viewfinder to capture the best expressions. If my cell phone is ringing or if I sat down to answer my e-mail, I would miss the moment and the photograph.

According to Joe Robinson in his book, "Work to Live," "The speed and seduction of E-tools has forced a massive abdication of personal boundaries." The illusion of increased technology is that we feel we can get more done in less time. In effect we get less done because we become too busy trying to juggle all of our activities, rushing from work, to pick up the kids from soccer practice and then to a quick dinner. We need to slow down and stay in the moment so that each of our activities has more meaning whether it is having an intimate conversation, enjoying the symphony, or writing a work-related proposal.

I make it a point to turn off my electronic devices during an assignment. I don't want to miss a good conversation with the employees of a company event I am photographing or with the participants after one of my professional speaking engagements. When I go to a performance, I leave my camera in its' case, and when I am on vacation, I don't check e-mail or voice mail. I am able to be more effective and present when I am working, playing and on vacation by setting clear boundaries. By not always being connected through technology, I find that I have a much better connection to myself.

About Mark Sincevich:

Mark Sincevich is a photography expert who speaks professionally to organizations on creativity, balance, leadership and personal development. Mark has been practicing photography for over 21 years and continues to sharpen his skills as an instructor at the Washington School of Photography. He is an active member of the National Speaker's Association and brings over 17 years of experience in public accounting, and high technology sales and marketing into his programs. He has written two books and numerous articles. For more information on Mark's professional speaking programs, photography, books and CDs contact Staash Press at (301) 654-3010, info@staashpress.com or www.staashpress.com.

Remember to book Mark Sincevich as a professional speaker for your next function.

We will never sell or give away your personal information, and you can remove yourself from our list at anytime by replying to one of our messages with "Remove" in the subject line. If you would like to reproduce this article, please contact newsletter@staashpress.com.
Staash Press, *enhancing people and business*SM