

## THE LEADERSHIP LENS Newsletter

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*A monthly resource providing insight, opinion & practical information on creativity, life balance & personal leadership*

### Perspective Control

As I stepped out of my studio apartment for another morning of architectural photography work, the warmth of the morning sun massaged the tops of my feet. Walking in flip-flops, jeans and a t-shirt to my seminar, I felt both privileged and humble to be studying my passion, photography, in the beautiful Florida weather of Del Ray Beach. I was away from my normal routines and had the space to actually decide what I wanted to do each day. The challenging part was balancing my interest to learn with my desire to be outside in the sun and sand at the end of Atlantic Avenue.

On one day I photographed the Palm Beach Convention Center, something I wouldn't ordinarily have had the opportunity to do. It was a modern structure with large rectangular windows letting in plenty of natural light. The building also had high polished wood ceilings with large designer lights creating an inviting spaciousness. The instructor showed us how to use a few photographic tools and techniques to increase the quality of the final image. His major piece of advice was to use a perspective control (PC) lens. A PC lens allows the photographer to shift the horizontal and vertical axes of the image while at the same time disguising the effects of distortion caused by a normal lens. This new found fiddling came with only one requirement. I would need to spend more time setting up the photograph on site and less time attempting the quick fix in front my computer in Adobe Photoshop. In other words, an ounce of effort at the prevention stage would be required to save a pound of work later.

Afterwards all of the seminar participants wanted to go to lunch, but I really wanted to explore the area. I yearned to get a different perspective on Palm Beach than just indoors. Why was it different? How did the people live down there? Where was the beach? I looked at the seminar not only to increase my skill, but as a great opportunity to have time for myself. As I was leaving, one girl in the group remarked, "I can't understand why you don't stay with the group." I almost had to justify why I wanted to spend time exploring. It's about stepping back, minimizing my stress levels and getting in touch with myself. In other words exploring my environment both externally as well as internally is a way to gain perspective.

Gaining perspective is also a good way to minimize the effects of continued stress. According to an article in *The Washington Post*, Stanford University Professor Robert Sapolsky stated, "sustained stress can damage the hippocampus, a region of the brain central to learning and memory. Under continued stress, neurons shrivel in another part of the brain, the prefrontal cortex, the center of emotion and executive function. Meanwhile, the amygdala, which processes fear and anxiety, grows neurons, essentially trapping us in a state of fear. The body stops its repair work, compromising the immune system, and constant pressure on the cardiovascular system eventually leads to high blood pressure and heart disease." Stepping away and learning in the different environment of a seminar is very important. It allows for the effects of stress to be minimized.

In addition to continual exercise as a way to keep the excesses of stress in check, it's important to put the stress that you have in perspective. One of the best ways to do this is to schedule time to step away from your job and your daily responsibilities. You need to ask yourself some questions such as what is bothering you? How realistic is the stress? And one of my favorite questions ... what's the worst that can happen? During your time of gaining perspective, take your journal with you. It's a great place to record your thoughts and feelings. It can serve as a central document from which to analyze your situation and the positive affects of gaining perspective. Journaling will also help you figure out the cause of your stress, allow you to find ways to correct the situation, and definitely allow you to develop a plan that can minimize the 'feelings' that the stress can generate. However, it's most important to do this now!

"I believe every problem can be solved by forcing yourself out of the negative, defensive cycle we all find ourselves in, and getting into a positive creative cycle where every obstacle becomes a signpost to a better way of doing something." This is the opinion of Andy Law, the author of *The Creative Company* and founder of St. Luke's Advertising Agency in London. By pushing past those areas where we feel stuck or ill equipped to confront the task at hand, we gain a new perspective. The employees at Andy's company share everything so that the entire building becomes everyone's working space. He goes on to further state, "You now have to know what you're doing, before you know where to go. And this represents a fundamental shift in the way you work. It changes your work pattern from one dependent upon geography, to one dependent on project." When you change your approach to work, you literally change the way you think. It seems that St. Luke's has integrated perspective control into their organizational culture.

On the last day of my photography seminar, my thinking was radically altered by a medium format Arca-Swiss 6x9 FC view camera that is able to produce 6x9 centimeter black and white negative. A key feature of this camera is that it gives the maximum amount of perspective control (more than the PC lens). We used a Polaroid back so that we could get instant results from the image. After waiting 45 seconds for the 'instant' developing to occur, the resulting photo was amazing and timeless. I was instantly hooked on this new way of photographing. The things I liked about this particular view camera were it's compactness, ease of use, and, most importantly, it made me slow down and think. I needed to think about the relationship of the lines to the image and their place in the photograph ... much like stepping away and gaining perspective allows me to think about my work and life and their place in the world. When you understand perspective control, it will help to minimize the effects of distortion (stress) caused by a normal lens or a normal routine! What are you going to do to gain perspective?

### About Mark Sincevich:

Mark Sincevich is a world-class photographer and works with organizations and individuals who want to tap into their creative power. This creative power is a source of positive energy and new ideas. Mark's photography brings a unique angle to his professional speaking programs on personal leadership, creativity, life balance and of course Photography. He is an active member of the National Speaker's Association and an instructor at the Washington School of Photography. He is frequently quoted in the media and his articles and photography have appeared in newspapers and magazines around the country. He is the author of three books including the soon-to-be released, "Snap: the ultimate guide to digital photography for the consumer." Mark also enjoys spending time with his family and writing in coffee shops with character. For information contact Staash Press at 301-654-3010, or [www.staashpress.com](http://www.staashpress.com).

**Slow down and learn how to get more creative by booking Mark's program, "The Press for Creativity" for your next event!**

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