



Be clear how your job serves you
Find the right fit
Set your thermostat
Do
Make
Create a lily pad



Have a toad-le blast!
Chill once in a while
Handle the office jerks
Key
Be grateful and
Perform a balancing act

Sharon Hoyle Weber

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Slow Down To Save Time

Dan was in a meeting when he received an email from a staff member reporting a tiff he had with Dan's territory manager. This wasn't the first time Dan has had to jump in to smooth things out on this TM's behalf. His first instinct was to shoot this guy an email lashing out about what he did wrong, what he should have done, and what to do now!

"*Slow down to save time,*" he heard someone say in the meeting. He decided to wait until a break. During the break, he decided to wait till he spoke with his TM and at least hear him out. When he spoke to the TM, he realized it was more complicated than he thought, and understood where both his staff member and TM were coming from, but more importantly, they had resolved it themselves. And, more importantly than that, his TM asked him for some advice in handling the internal staff more effectively.

"*I was so surprised how powerful slowing down was in completely changing the direction this went!*" says Dan, "*I can see how sending that email during the meeting would have only made things worse.*"

A stitch in time saves nine and *Haste makes waste* are classic wisdoms. In the work place today they are silenced by the mantras of *Faster! Cheaper! Cut to the chase!* But are we really saving time? Worse, are we spending **more** time, resources, money? What affect does this frantic racing have on relationships and how do you put a price on that?

Of course, we seek to be productive in the most efficient ways possible. Do we even **consider** slowing down as a way to do that? Proofs for the marketing materials have to be at the printer by a certain date, so we rush to get them out, only to have to follow up with supplements to correct misinformation. We don't have time to do it right the first time, but have to make time to do it again.

Too often we resort to heroics and we pay the price. Renee, a business consultant was presenting to senior leadership for Verizon. She had done a similar presentation for AT&T weeks earlier. There was such a rush to get the handouts to the printer and shipped to the client, that as she

began her presentation, she saw that the handouts read, "Partnering with AT&T." I guess there wasn't time to check the version that was going to the printer.

Efficiency takes discretion, knowing when to put on the gas and when to slow down. Next time an issue comes up, try the *Three Sevens* to help you know when to do which.

Take Seven Seconds

It's all you need. Seven Seconds will give you just enough time to acclimate you to the moment and see it with clarity. Only life or death decisions are going to be hindered by seven seconds. When a client challenges you, a staff member makes a big mistake, you used the wrong set of numbers for your data analysis, give your mind seven seconds before responding.

Give Seven Seconds

Allow others seven seconds to acclimate to what you are saying or doing. Give them a crack in the window of time and space. This means don't jump to conclusions, don't crowd their thinking.

Seven Considerations

Every issue that comes up at work is like a twig house, you change one piece; it reverberates through out the house. When an issue comes up, click through these seven considerations before rushing off to a solution:

1. *People* - Who is involved and who is affected by this issue?
2. *Risks* - What are we at risk of losing and what can we stand to lose?
3. *Benefits* - Is there a way to make lemonade out of lemons?
4. *Politics* - What do we need to consider in terms of different fractions within and outside the company?
5. *Budget/Schedule* - What is it going to cost to let this continue or deploy our solutions?
6. *Help* - Are there other departments, vendors, experts, software, systems, etc. we can tap into to help?
7. *Why are we rushing?* - Sometimes we get caught up in the pace of rushing for no reason. Know why you are rushing before you run off into the chaos.

Final Note, slowing down to save time is an internal way of being. If you are talking to someone on the phone or face to face, and your mind is racing around, you are missing information, misinterpreting, jumping to conclusions, missing the important nuance of what the other person is saying. There are many prices for that in terms of time, money, and trust.

Tony, a director of customer service for a power company, says, *"I cross my fingers whenever someone is talking to me, because that reminds me to listen. Otherwise, I'm thinking while they are talking and miss what they are saying."* He's right to have a personal reminder, because slowing down and listening is counter intuitive, it takes discipline.

But, like Dan, you may really begin to reap the benefits of **slowing down to save time**.

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About Sharon:

Sharon Hoyle Weber began her career as a modern dancer and choreographer. Seeing how little money followed when she was doing what she loved, she started working with Forum Corporation, a training and management firm. She was initially a project manager, but soon became certified as a corporate training facilitator.



For fourteen years, she has been traveling around the country teaching skills that help people work most effectively together. Through her relationship with Forum and Results by Design, she has worked for many Fortune 1500 companies such as Deloitte, Liberty Mutual, Bank of America, and Hasbro Toys. Her experience with such a variety of organizations has taught her that the real self is at risk in the workplace.

She describes her own experience as if “my real self was dripping out of me every day.” Once her colleague described it as the “Boiled Frog Syndrome,” she could immediately relate to feeling boiled.

After meeting thousands of employees and interviewing thirty Thrivers, people who make a good living and maintain a sense of authenticity at work, she discovered the Twelve Secrets of Thrivers that contribute to reviving and sustaining the real self in the workplace.

Ms. Weber lives in Cohasset, Massachusetts with her husband, Steve.