

13 days to remarkable leadership

Be Present!
Seven Ways to Be More
Productive and Enjoy Life More

A Companion Learning Tool to this video



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Each day and each moment of each day is a gift that we all have been given. When you stop to think about it, you know this is true.

However, it's an easy fact to forget when you open your email, look at your to-do list or see a steady stream of people asking you for help or to get something done . . . now.

The world conspires to keep us moving faster and to multi-task at every turn.

Unfortunately most of the time when we are moving at that frenetic pace we aren't at peak efficiency or effectiveness. We know this, but too often we don't act on that knowledge. What we need to remember is the value of right now.

And right now...

and right now.

The value of the present moment.

When we stop multi-tasking and live, remembering and valuing the present moment, we will paradoxically get more done. We will have better relationships, we will learn more that we can apply in the future, and we will enjoy ourselves more each day.

To get to these benefits we must get past the pace and seemingly the expectations of the world around us. We must find ways to slow down enough to be present in each moment.

Seven Ways to Be Present and Reap the Benefits of Doing So

Be grateful for the "present." Let's put first things first. If you want to be more present in every conversation and situation, you must be grateful for that moment. Even if you don't like the situation, when you are grateful for the opportunity you are better able to stay mentally in the moment rather than thinking about what you will do "next."

Note: Granted, this first piece of advice is a bit philosophical and doesn't provide you with a specific strategy or tactic, but this philosophy will drive your ability and willing-ness to do all of tactics that follow. Read on for six specific actions.

Take a deep breath. When you find your mind wandering beyond the current situation, start by taking a deep breath. This breath can serve as a reminder to help you refocus and to center you as well.

Focus on the present moment exclusively. Do one thing—just one thing—at a time. The crux of remaining in the present is to focus on the task, person or situation in your current moment. If you are thinking about what you are going to say next, what you are going to do next, or what you are going to have for dinner, you aren't focused on right now.

Reduce the noise. Turn off the iPod, the radio or the television unless that activity is your current focus. The noise and distractions around us can easily pull us away from the current moment, divert our focus and reduce our effectiveness.

Refocus your inner voice. When you notice yourself judging, analyzing or having another sort of mental dialogue in the current moment, shift your mental focus by saying to yourself, “now, now, now” or some other phrase that will help you bring yourself back to the current moment, situation or activity.

Be more observant. Pay closer attention to the present moment! Notice what your senses are noticing, but what you may be unconsciously tuning out. What is the real message under the words you are hearing? What do you smell; what can you taste? What do you hear (in addition to the words)? When you open yourself up to be more observant, you give your brain something to think about that is relevant and helpful in the present situation, rather than thinking about another time, place or activity.

Ask “What do I want to remember about this moment in time?” I once read the advice that when you are on vacation at a place you truly value that you should take an omni-sensory, three-dimensional picture of everything about that place and time in your mind. Taking this “picture” helps you savor the moment in the present and helps you remember it forever. This advice combines the concepts of being grateful and being observant. I believe this approach can be used anytime, as a way to capture a moment for memory, for future reflection and more. You can stimulate this activity by asking, what do I want to remember about right now? Or a similar question that works best for you.

These activities will make a difference in your results – both personal and professional. Plus, the benefits mentioned at the start of this article will all be yours as you perfect the habit of being in the present moment.

Your Now Steps

1. Pick one of the suggestions above and apply it consistently for the next 5 days.
2. Reflect on the benefits you gained from that practice, noting your observations in your journal or notebook.
3. Pick another tip and repeat the process.

Additional Resources

- For some additional thoughts and writing on all things related to goal setting, check out this list of articles from my blog.
- For a more strategies for improving Goal achievement for yourself and your teams, check out our Leadership Goal Achievement Pack 2-CD set here.
- If you want a powerful set of tools for your Personal Goal Setting, check out our multimedia achievement package, Start Today – Make Your Next Twelve Months Your Best 12 Months. Use promo code 20DAYS for either of these products and receive a 20% discount!

ABOUT THE KEVIN EIKENBERRY GROUP

The Kevin Eikenberry Group is committed to making a REMARKABLE difference...for leaders and future leaders, their teams, their organizations, and the world. We deliver that difference through a wide variety of learning experiences. Specifically, we provide thought leadership, workshops, coaching, consulting and a variety of learning products to help individuals (and their organizations) reach their potential.

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ABOUT KEVIN EIKENBERRY

Kevin Eikenberry is a world renowned leadership expert, a two-time bestselling author, speaker, consultant, trainer, coach, leader, learner, husband and father (not necessarily in that order).

Kevin is the Chief Potential Officer of The Kevin Eikenberry Group, a leadership and learning consulting company that has been helping organizations, teams and individuals reach their potential since 1993. Kevin's specialties include leadership, teams and teamwork, organizational culture, facilitating change, organizational learning and more.

Kevin also is the creator and content developer of The Remarkable Leadership Learning System, a continual leadership development process based on his bestselling book, Remarkable Leadership: Unleashing Your Leadership Potential One Skill at a Time, and focused on developing the 13 competencies of remarkable leaders with virtually delivered content to leaders worldwide. He is also the developer of the Remarkable Leadership Workshop, the Coaching Training Camp and the co-developer of the Bud to Boss and Ultimate Communicator Workshops – all offered in both public and in-house versions across North America.

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