

How to Live, Thrive and Survive in Today's Chaos Culture.

“The way we are working isn't working”.

So says author Tony Schwartz of *The Energy Project* and I would have to agree.

In today's chaos culture we are constantly being asked to do more with less, wear many different hats and perform many different functions that we may not have had to do a couple years ago.

And we resent that. It makes us angry and increases our stress levels.

There is no denying that the American workplace has changed dramatically. Due to factors beyond our control, this economy has forced many of us to reevaluate our place in the marketplace and make some difficult decisions in order to survive. We are in survival mode and many of us are hanging on by a thread.

No industry has felt this chaos more than the health care industry.

As we go forward, I believe that success in this day and age, either personally or professionally will depend to a large extent on how you are able to live, thrive and survive in chaos.

There are other factors to be sure. But my contention is the PRIMARY criteria that will determine success and failure in the marketplace is a person or an organization's ability to manage cope and function in the face of great chaos.

I will suggest that what is most important in today's chaos culture is managing your ENERGY, not managing your time.

Time Management is over.

Finished.

Worrying about managing your time is SO 2009 it isn't even funny.

Peak performance experts agree that energy management is key in today's chaos culture. Managing your ENERGY is the most important currency in business today.

According to the Austin Business Journal, taking any time off work;

- Improves worker performance
- Improves creativity
- Increases innovation

This would seem counter intuitive but hear me out. There is a point of diminishing returns in play here. The fatal assumption made by bosses and employees alike is that we operate best in the same linear way that our computers do: continuously, at high speeds, for long periods of time, often running multiple programs at the same time.

WRONG.

We are human beings and we are not designed to operate like computers. As Schwartz says, "Human beings are actually designed to pulse. We are most productive when we move between expending energy and intermittently renewing our energy. When demand exceeds our capacity, we default into the survival zone. We're suboptimal. It's not good for us, and it's not good for our employers."

The sooner you realize this, the sooner you will begin to manage your chaos in a more effective way.

It is NOT about the number of hours you sit behind your desk or the number of hours you are at your facility; it is how much energy you bring to each project while working.

We all need to take time to recharge, refresh and refuel and doing so even in the smallest ways can have a huge impact.

That is where humor comes in.

I think having a sense of humor is the most important survival skill a business person can possess.

Humor can do an amazing amount of things. It can;

- Create rapport
- Reduce tension
- Facilitate Communication
- Increase Cooperation

But most of all, humor can provide a well needed break from the stress and chaos surrounding you in your workplace.

Physiologically, there are enormous benefits provided by laughter. It is like milk, laughter does a body good. Laughter;

- Boosts your immune system
- Lowers your blood pressure
- Increases oxygen in your blood
- Conditions your abdominal muscles
- Decreases serum cortisol (I don't even know what that is...)
- Releases endorphins

And that is the key, right there.

Endorphins.

Endorphins are the body's natural pain killer. They are what makes it feel so good when we laugh. Endorphins also give you a boost of ENERGY, often when you need it the most.

Psychologically, laughter helps us put things in perspective and be able to cope with even the most daunting of tasks. The short break that a laugh provides goes a long way to refreshing our psyche and renews our spirit like nothing else can.

It is impossible to laugh and be stressed at the same time. Think about it. Have you started laughing while trying to move a piece of heavy furniture? What happens next?

Usually a trip to the emergency room.

In today's chaos culture, stress meters are rising and fun meters are falling. Chaos is everywhere and I think it will get worse before it will get better but it doesn't need to get the better of YOU.

We HAVE to find a way add more laughs to our workplace. We NEED to find a way to add more laughs to our LIVES.

A sense of humor is the most important chaos busting skill you can possess.

Seriously.

As the Morale Mechanic, I crisscross the country helping people facilitate fun and manage morale in the modern marketplace.

And even for the humor impaired there is hope. I teach that humor is a muscle, the more you use it, the stronger it will become.

In my workshops and keynotes I share tips, tricks and techniques that can help even the most chaotic of workplaces become more productive, become less stressful and become healthier.

It all starts with adding a little humor to our lives so we can take that needed break and manage our energy more effectively.

Isn't it time to work on your humor muscle and hone the most important skill you have in your toolbox to manage the chaos that exists in the American workplace?

If you are perfectly happy being unhappy, that is fine. You are not alone. But if you want to become happier, healthier and more productive than you have ever been, help is but a phone call away.

The Morale Mechanic to the rescue!