



Keep Your Eye on the Ball

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“How can I focus on my goals with so much death, destruction and loss in the world? Instead of realizing just how lucky I am, I feel overwhelmed with sadness!”

This is a common theme with many of my otherwise brilliant executive clients who spend hours each day watching the news or in serious conversations about all that’s wrong with the world.

As their leadership coach I cannot take this sadness or lack of focus away. I can, however, help them refocus upon what’s most important to them—their values, goals and priorities.

Let’s take client Shawn for example. In college Shawn was a star basket ball player. Now highly successful business leader, Shawn also has a huge heart what happens to those across the country affects on him deeply.

During our last call Shawn explained how challenging his life had become with so much misery in the world, which was translating into lower energy and productivity at work.

One of the most difficult assignments I gave to Shawn was to stay away from CNN for a week. He was amazed at how difficult it was for him. He actually had withdrawals.

We then discussed Shawn’s basketball successes. As he was working hard to become the success he had become, did he also focus on what was happening in the stands or outside of the gymnasium? No, his sole focus was on shooting the ball into the hoop.

Shawn immediately saw the connection of sole focus on goals to attain success. This is something he knew, but had lost in the chaos of negativity.

If you find it challenging to maintain your focus for whatever reason, here are my top ‘7’ tips to keep your eye on the ball.

1. **Recognize your top values.** What is truly important to you? This guides your thoughts and actions. Chances are that family, health, honesty, fun, adventure and a sense of accomplishment are among them. Are you in integrity with your values? Negativity isn’t.
2. **Review your goals often.** If you’ve not reviewed your goals since January 1, now’s the time. Set up a system where you regularly check in on where you are with your goals such as the first or last day of each quarter.
3. **Step away from the news.** Stay as informed as you need to be. Notice just how much of your day is occupied in rehashing the same news story. Use that time more effectively focused on the above two topics.
4. **Eliminate negative people.** We all know who they are. The moment you see them they can’t wait to discuss something a politician did or what’s wrong with this or that. Emotions are

contagious. You may soon find yourself as agitated as this person.

5. **Surround yourself with positive people.** It sounds logical and easy yet few of us seek out new friends. Many of my clients have “expand my scope of friendships” on their annual goal list. Invite that intriguing person to lunch, golf or dinner.
6. **Bring those around you to a higher level.** If you’re stressed it will run through your organization like a cancer. Instead, be the one to elevate conversations. Look for news or other stories to lift up your team. Joy spreads more quickly than stress.
7. **Take time for you.** There are so many moving parts to leadership. Keeping your eye on the ball means stepping back to see the larger picture, not just the next fire to put out. Spend pensive time in silence or in nature. Read something fun. Get a massage.

As a leader it’s easy to lose focus of what’s most important to you, your people and your business. I challenge you to take each of these steps to keep your eye on the ball and to help others who depend on you to do the same.

Read all of Ann's Writing and Wisdom at: <http://gvasuccess.com/writing-and-wisdom.htm>

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