

SWOT your Way to Focus and Flow!

When you run a business, various opportunities often present themselves and persuade you to run off in different directions, pulling you away from your focus. This happens to me frequently, and I find it difficult to avoid being sucked down a path that sounds like the next great avenue for huge success.

Thankfully, my partners, [E0 Forum](#), or my team usually slap me back into reality. Taking a closer look at what you are doing can also help you discover if these opportunities are worthy or if the current focus is best.

As my success coach [Steve D'Annunzio](#) asks: Where have the most profitable clients come from over the past 3 months? What is the common theme across those clients and what is it you are providing that makes the clients happy to pay you? What is the common size of these clients? What category are they generally from? What are their locations?

If the answers point towards the companies paying me the most profit, why would I not want to go get more of the same? Why would I not want to build on this synergy and find a way to get the most scalability possible by giving the clients what they love while also getting paid at the most profitable level?

Steve tells me that when those things happen, you are in "FLOW." When it's right, you notice it in the areas of time, energy and currency because they will all be jamming together like a great jazz band or orchestra.

As we close in on the end of the year, many businesses are looking deeper at what they are doing and may be considering these same types of questions. Another beneficial exercise that can help to open your awareness to all the options is the basic Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats or [SWOT](#) analysis. We utilize this every quarter to challenge our business and ensure we are considering all possibilities and are not about to get eaten by something sitting around the corner waiting to pounce. Remember the [Software Monster](#).



We found that we spent too much time gathering data from all the participants for SWOT, leaving us little time to really dig into the data we had pulled out. To fix this, we built a tool that has helped us ramp this up before we start our

planning meeting and has given us much more time to go deeper. This tool, called [MeetingHabits](#), can now be utilized for free, and it may stay that way as we study how it benefits us. We would also like hearing how it helps you if you would like to share your experiences.

As you work to focus more on bringing the most value to a core group of clients that will put you in the best FLOW, what are you doing to make sure your business is harmonizing the best tune?

Energizing for the New Year!

As this year ends like all the ones before it, we strive to go into the New Year with a fresh outlook and usually one or more resolutions to improve our lives. I often ask others around me about their resolutions and usually find that at least one always has to do with improving health. For an entrepreneur whose world is filled with constant changes, ups, and downs, health and energy are key to pushing forward.

We often hear about how much time we need and how there are never enough hours in a day and so on. We cannot add time. We all have the same number of hours in a day. The level of effort and energy we put into that time can be changed. Much is being written about our need to manage our energy and approach our day and schedule with an energy focus instead of a time focus.



The book [“The Power of Full Engagement”](#) discusses this in great detail. It says, “Managing energy, not time, is the fundamental currency of high performance.” It also emphasizes the importance of having positive energy rituals that are highly specific routines for managing energy. A ritual is a carefully defined, highly structured behavior that is in contrast to will and discipline, thus it requires pushing yourself. A ritual pulls at you.

When we have an energetic lifestyle, it translates into better brain output and greater productivity. This happens the most

for me when I focus my energy on the things that are most important to my work or business. Our brains are made up of about 78% water and have greater output when we are hydrated. When we wake up, we are usually dehydrated, and our bodies need water to kick us back into full performance. Some say to drink a liter of water when you first wake up. I drink that liter of water along with a protein drink and feel so much better once I get the water and protein into my system rather than loads of carbs that will make me crash.

My son Tony and I work out together and have been doing the [P90X](#) DVDs for a couple of years to give us an overall strength, cardio, and flexibility workout. The power yoga and stretching workouts are vital for overall energy and flexibility. I just gave Tony the new [P90X2](#) DVDs for Christmas, and we will start doing this series of workouts together to step up our conditioning and energy levels. This is one of my New Year Resolutions to up my game, so I can bring the highest level of energy possible to my work and company.

Good luck to you on whatever resolutions you create for yourself. As I wrote in last year's [blog](#), I experience the best results to my resolutions and goals when I create a habit or ritual around them.

By the way, if any of you are doing your yearly planning around this time and would like a free tool to help, go to www.meetinghabits.com and check out our [SWOT](#) tool that we use to pull out all the ideas from the team and make our meetings more productive.

Do You Have Rhythm?

I don't mean this in the sense of how well you move on the dance floor. I'm talking about in your business. Do you have a rhythm within your organization that keeps everyone in sync? Do you know the importance of rhythm?

Let me start from the beginning. Rhythm is not limited to the sound of music. Rhythm is the cadence and flow applied to any kind of movement or activity. It's natural and instinctive. If you go back to childhood and think of nursery rhymes, they don't just rhyme, they are rhythmic. You don't have to think about what comes next because you already know.

This is key in the business world. Having regular, rhythmic meetings that keep your team clicking to the same pulse will allow a connect and sync to occur, thus keeping people on the same page and helping to prevent important issues from falling through the cracks.

Here at Efficiency we have set a rhythmic process that consists of: a 10 minute daily meeting (what we call a huddle), a 1 hour weekly meeting, a 3 hour monthly meeting, an all day quarterly meeting and a 2 day annual meeting.

Our daily huddle provides an update on each person's key tasks for the day, a quick review of our metrics, and a chance to present any blockages that are preventing us from moving forward.

Our weekly meeting is set aside for reviewing each person's weekly steps towards reaching the company goals that we set in our quarterly meeting, reviewing weekly metrics, and open discussion on the blockages presented in the daily huddles.

Our monthly meeting replaces the weekly meeting for that week, and in addition to everything covered in the weekly meeting, we add time for learning and a strategic review.

At our Quarterly meeting, we primarily focus on planning the coming quarter by reviewing our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats ([SWOT](#)). We outline the top 3 things that we are going to achieve in the coming quarter and how each person will contribute to meeting those goals. Over time we learned that this process was key to executing our goals, and in turn built a software platform around these ideas to help keep us organized and focused ([FlockGPS](#)).

Our annual meeting works much like the quarterly meeting, except we are planning for the year instead of the quarter. We spend significantly more time on strategy and engage in in-depth discussions around our 3 to 5 year opportunities and threats.

A few books that are great for learning and implementing better meeting processes are [Death by Meeting](#) by [Patrick Lencioni](#) and [Mastering the Rockefeller Habits](#) by [Verne Harnish](#).

In music, there is rhythm from beginning to end. It may change throughout, but it's always there. In business, rhythm can create a smooth foundation to which everything else sits on top of, keeping everyone in time and allowing them to focus on the task at hand.