

A MAGAZINE FOR FITNESS & WELLNESS ENTREPRENEURS

FITNESS BUSINESS

INSIDER

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Robert Mulhall

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LEADING IN UNCERTAINTY

Six Steps to steering yourself and your ship through today's rough waters.

By Robert Mulhall

We are living in interesting and uncertain times – times that seem to move incredibly fast and where change is not only constant but happening at a furious pace. I believe that this is our new normal, that this is an unending trend.

As leaders of teams, of businesses, and of our selves, what are we being invited into? What do these times ask of us, need from us? Throughout my years in public health, leadership development, organizational consulting, and executive coaching, I have been gifted with some useful guidance that I believe serves all leaders today as they face today's challenges. Here are 6 steps to follow:



SLOW DOWN.

When we move too fast in a swiftly moving world, we may miss moments to see more clearly and sense what is really needed around us. The drive to move quickly often comes from an unconscious need to prove ourselves, to make up for a feeling that we are somehow not enough, that if we could just achieve this or do that, then finally we would be content or fulfilled. In all my years of trying this exact approach, it has never gotten me to that place of feeling adequate. So now, instead of pushing forward as I once used to, I encourage myself to slow down enough so that I can be fully present with what is happening right now.



Be courageous enough to be fully present and take care of yourself as you do others. We will not thrive as leaders if we do not return to balanced inner guidance.



REMEMBER YOUR WORTH.

The combination of slowing down and radical self-honesty helps you to remember your worth, that no matter what is going on you have value, you have something to offer, you belong. Even when I have made mistakes, experienced moments of doubt and confusion, or unintentionally caused a team member to feel disempowered, I am still worthy. Remember to say to yourself: "Despite it all, I am doing a great job." This small affirmation will allow you to see in yourself what others see in you and will keep you seated steadfastly in your power.



BECOME RADICALLY HONEST WITH YOURSELF.

The real gift of slowing down is the ability to more clearly connect with yourself. Too often, humans (especially high-achievers), ignore their feelings to the detriment of their physical and emotional wellbeing. Taking time to carefully examine your feelings is like imbibing truth serum. It is a radical act to say, "I'm afraid" or "I feel alone" when you're making big decisions and leading by yourself. However, radical honesty allows self-compassion to surface. While unacknowledged needs may result in broken relationships, poor decisions, missed opportunities, illness, and more, radical honesty yields self-care and success.





FOLLOW YOUR GUT.

From a place of slowing down, radical honesty and worthiness, it is easier to hear the voice of your inner wisdom. Your gut instinct, your internal knowing will inform how you respond to the many challenges you face as a leader. Yes, it is important to speak with our teams, peers, mentors, investors etc., but it is equally important to return to yourself for answers from within. I have found this is possible only when I move through my days and work with slow deliberation. The big mistakes I have made in life have occurred when I was rushing and not listening to or trusting my inner guidance. Taking the time to check in in this way ultimately saves time and unnecessary pain down the road. A gut check based on radical honesty can deliver a true and effective answer.



STAY OPEN AND FOCUSED.

Great leaders can simultaneously hold focus while they maintain openness. They can be razor sharp in their attention yet seem to hold a peripheral awareness at the same time. Cultivating this complimentary skill set helps you to understand what is emerging in the system around you even as you stay attuned to a wider eco-system of people, innovation, intelligence, change and opportunities. Leaders who build this muscle seem to thrive even in times when change is fast and furious, and uncertainty is the norm. Firmly seated in a place of greater inner alignment, it is easier to stay focused on goals, tasks, and the fires that need to be put out without the risk of being blindsided by people or events that lay outside our immediate focus.

Ultimately, a lot of this boils down to being courageous enough to be present in the moment and willing to take care of ourselves as much as we take care of others. We will not thrive as leaders if we are not returning to balanced inner guidance, and how we conduct ourselves as leaders will ultimately be how we are remembered.



KEEP ASKING, "WHAT IS NEEDED HERE?"

The best piece of guidance I have ever received is to stay close to the question, "What is needed here?" Combined with the other pointers I have shared, it is the final step in a delicious recipe for thriving. Rather than the too-common self-centred questions of "How am I doing?" or "Do people like me?" this is by far the most useful and powerful question a leader can ask themselves. "What is needed here?" cuts through the noise and helps us meet the moment by serving others. Asking this question naturally slows us down, helps us get radically honest, allows us to remember our value, drops us into our inner knowing, and supports us as we hold the dance of focused attention and open awareness.



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