

EXECUTIVE VITALITY™: SEPARATING FROM WORK FOR VACATIONS

Vacations are important -- that is a foregone conclusion. We always advocate for vacations for all the obvious reasons and many more. Work-life balance sums it up; it is a big contributor to happiness, and happiness is an essential component of vitality. One of our Executive Vitality tips from the beginning of the pandemic, [Executive Vitality: Get Dirty and Get Lost](#), focuses on the benefits of spending time in nature.

The more senior you are, the greater the demands of your position...and the greater the need for some real down time. In this *Forbes* article, [Take A Serious Vacation: A CEO's Advice To All CEOs](#), the author shares insights about vacations:

“A true leader steps back, trusts his or her people, and allows them to succeed. By taking a break from the day-to-day operations, not only was I spending some much-needed time with my family, but also I was able to focus on the bigger picture of where we were and where our business was heading.”

We strongly suggest you plan at least part of your vacation to be COMPLETELY unplugged from work. Completely separating for a period of time is good for your mental health, it's good for your relationships, it's good for the future. You need to relax, clear your mind, have fun. This will recharge your batteries so you can return to work with renewed creativity and energy.

Prepare a detailed checklist before you go. This is your best insurance against unexpected surprises that could ruin your time to relax, de-stress, and enjoy a break from your routine. Vacation is your time, and it should not be interrupted by work.

Only you know what to put on your checklist because everyone's circumstances are unique. Here are some things to consider:

1. What will be your availability for work, if any? Write down who can call you under what circumstances. If you are the “if you need me, I’m only a phone call away” type of boss, please try to really get away. If you prefer email or text, let people know that. Don’t be afraid to write “don’t call me unless hell freezes over.”
2. Who will be doing what? Make sure your team knows who is covering your responsibilities, and ensure that those individuals know what they are expected to do. Consider the level of accountability you require to be at ease during your hiatus.
3. Make sure you leave behind keys, usernames and passwords, access to your calendar and emergency phone numbers, and the like, so nobody has to call you when you are sitting on the beach with your grandchildren to say, “we need XYZ’s phone number and you are the only one who has it.”

When you take vacation, can you unplug completely? Do you take calls and read email; do you use your down time for long-term strategy planning and envisioning the future? Does inability to delegate keep you or your colleagues from taking vacation? What steps could you take to ensure taking breaks is part of your corporate culture?

Further Reading:

- [Companies Are Battling Burnout By Giving Employees More Vacation Days | Forbes](#)
- [Thinking of Skipping Vacation? Don't! | Harvard Business Review](#)
- [The power and importance of vacation planning in executive leadership | TechRepublic](#)
- [Leading by Example: Why Executives Need More Vacation](#)