



Excel Leader Advisory Letter

ISSUED BY THE EXCEL LEADERSHIP GROUP

November 2011

Excel's Mission Statement

Help business leaders exceed their goals by creating a culture that unleashes the talents and creativity of all associates.

Thought for November

“Exemplary leaders reward dissent. They encourage it. They understand that, whatever momentary discomfort they experience as a result of being told they might be wrong, it is more than offset by the fact that the information will help them make better decisions.”

-Warren G. Bennis



In today's economy, business leaders are being asked to produce more with fewer resources. This situation can certainly lead to higher levels of stress. Since this is such an important and relevant topic, I'd like to revisit the October 2010 issue on stress and how best to manage it.

Did you know that, according to a study by Harvard Medical School, up to 80% of all doctor visits are for stress-related or stress-induced illnesses? Were you aware that, according to The National Institute of Health, people who live with high levels of stress are 4.5 times more likely to die from a heart attack or stroke? Aside from the mortality issues, stressful life events (such as loss of a loved one or a job) are highly correlated with vulnerability to illness and more rapid disease progression. As well, the cost of stress, in terms of higher health care costs and absenteeism, has been estimated to be \$65 billion annually!

Certainly, life events can take their toll on all of us...if we let them. The good news is that we all can learn to more effectively manage stress in our lives. As a matter of fact, according to a study published in [The Journal of Behavioral Research](#), those who learned to alter unhealthy mental and emotional attitudes through self-regulation training were more than 4 times more likely to be alive 13 years later than an equal-sized control group!

To help you on your journey toward better stress management and healthier living, here are a few coaching tips:

- 1. Anticipate change.** Learn to anticipate and develop a tolerance for uncertainty in life.
- 2. Find a relaxation technique.** Practice deep breathing or meditation. Listen to relaxation tapes or music. Take a walk or practice yoga or Tai Chi. Find what works for you and stick with it.
- 3. Be healthy.** Commit to regular exercise and a balanced diet.
- 4. Talk to a friend.** Confide in someone you trust about your worries or problems. Talking through an issue with a trusted source can help relieve tension.
- 5. Budget your time.** Leave early enough to reach your destination on time. Plan ahead and avoid procrastination. Set boundaries on your time and insist that others honor them.
- 6. Focus on the positive.** Keep a journal and write down every “win”. Be grateful for all the good things you have in your life.

I encourage you to try these tips to help you better manage stress and live a healthier life.

As always, I encourage you to contact me anytime at mike@excelleadership.net with your comments and questions. Also, if I can be of assistance with your leadership coaching needs, please contact me. We'll talk to you again in December. Be well, have a great month and best regards.



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*Experience what **coaching** can do for you and others
on your company's leadership team.*