

## J. Michael Locke

### Musings

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#### #17: The Value of Structure April 8, 2020

*Today we debut a website you can use to access older musings and provide feedback. Check out <https://gilesrichard.com>. Thanks to Jennifer Walsh for all of her work.*

For those who have babies, let me recommend a book by Pediatrician Marc Weissbluth – *Healthy Sleeps Habits, Happy Child*. It saved us in the early years. The basic construct is that most babies cry because they are overtired. They should be sleeping 18 hours a day. Get on a system and create structure. Nap time becomes the #1 priority.

Why is this relevant?

Human beings need structure. Babies need it to get in a rhythm of good sleep. Older kids need it for school. Currently, asynchronous online (where your kid goes online whenever and gets what the teacher sent) is performing worse than synchronous online (where you kid has to be online at a given time with classmates and teacher.) I believe families need structure and one of the challenges of the current environment is all of that is thrown out of the window. Monday is no different from Saturday. You don't have to be at the bus stop at 7:45 etc. Kaplan leader Jonathan Grayer had some good tips on creating homeschool structure on a recent *Today* show segment – [watch here](#).

Professionals also perform best when there is a structure or rhythm. Like a good basketball player getting the rhythm stepping into the shot. Most people I know have a “workout routine,” the when, where and what don't change very much. I assume you have 1:1s with all of your direct reports every week. Make those the same time every week and don't adjust. Same for the executive team meetings. It takes a while to get the “rigidity” established but folks generally start to adjust and fly out Monday night because the exec team meeting is Monday morning etc. There will obviously be exceptions every now and then but too often I hear how the 1:1 has been cancelled for three weeks in a row because schedules didn't work out. I say bull\_hit.

For your 1:1, request a brief write up every week before your meeting. Like the “flipped classroom,” this lets you digest the update and spend the meeting time exchanging ideas and not getting a recitation of activities. I am a fan of having a discrete set of topics which the executive covers every week – areas of focus – so you know the conversation is appropriately skewed to the areas of value creation. It is not a meeting to review what someone did on Tuesday of last week. It is about how they as DIR moved the ball forward.

This structure of individual meetings and group meetings should allow everyone to get in a rhythm and be more effective.

So get some structure and rhythm other than the 5:00 pour!

Be safe.

Jml

The Covid 19 world:

