

## J. Michael Locke

### Musings

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#### #8: The Value of a Leader's Time March 30, 2020

Our former Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel taught us not to “waste a crisis” when negotiating difficult items. But how about another take on the opportunity presented -- from Cameron Smith, Co-Founder of Bennett Day School -- “Newton invented calculus and discovered gravity during the bubonic plague in 1665.” In our time efficient, information overload world, the opportunity to step back is precious. Use it. The best investors I know don’t sit watching CNBC all day (thanks Steve Wallman). They reflect on market trends, focus on good companies and play long ball. Who cares what Bill Ackman has to say on Power Lunch today?

There is a biological concept around “getting in the flow” where your brain releases a set of chemicals which allows for superior performance. Think about athletes getting “in the zone.” Time slows down and productivity sky rockets. Different individuals get “in the zone” in different environments. For me, it is quiet morning solitude. Take this quiz if you want to see yours:

<https://www.flowgenomeproject.com/flow-profile>. Personally, I think organizations can “get in the flow.” Organizations are just aggregated individual human behaviors.

Speaking of time management, are you a “schedule maker” or a “schedule taker”? The adoption of shared calendars online like Outlook has led to tremendous time misallocations by leaders IMO. The “norm” is to have your schedule online and folks can look at when you are free and they can book time on your calendar or maybe with your assistant. I would NOT do this. As a leader, you have to allocate your time to highest value use. Only you can make that decision. Control your own calendar!

Personally, I don’t let Jennifer put something on my calendar without checking with me first. Even worse is the “mutually open time seeking game” where folks try to find the one hour that five people all have free. Don’t play that game. As a leader, you set the priorities and groups need to move around other meetings which may be less important.

Be safe. Give thanks to the doctors/nurses/healthcare providers in your network (thanks to my brothers Jon and Mark). Not only can they not isolate and work from home, they have to walk right into the war. Let’s “Imagine,” compliments of orthopedic residents at Mayo clinic (RIP GRL III):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fG97djdaMxU>

Happy 18th to our daughter Cate. The hip recipients can give her a shout out on Insta.