



Today's Quote:

There is more to life than simply increasing its speed.

-Gandhi

Connecting by Disconnecting -By Ralph Simone

Technology has provided a plethora of opportunities to reach out and touch someone. We are able to connect or reconnect with family, old friends, business associates and classmates. But the irony is that being "plugged in" has at times caused us to tune out, and seriously threatens are ability to truly connect at an emotional level with another human being.

"To the extent that technology absorbs people in a virtual reality, it deadens them to those who are actually nearby. The resulting social autism adds to the ongoing list of unintended human consequences of the continuing invasion of technology into our daily lives." Daniel Goleman

The examples of technology run amok are countless. Think of the examples that most of us encounter on any given day - the cell phone, pagers, internet browsing, television, e-mails, Blackberries, and Trios, just to name a few. In fact, sometimes this wireless technology can be offputting; recently I inadvertently interrupted someone who was on the phone (one of those slick wireless jobbies). The individual was wearing a wireless headset and was listening but not talking to the person on the other end. Thinking that he was not on the phone, and waiting to be engaged by me, I made a request only to be disconnected by a polite but clear gesture that said "hold your horses, buddy." Slightly embarrassed and taken aback by this experience, I have been very careful as to how I engage this person in subsequent meetings.

Now, I recognize that this is some of my stuff that I need to work through, but I do want you to consider for a moment how technology may be affecting your ability to connect with people and strengthen relationships. How often do we prevent our human radar (emotions and intuition) from picking up signals because we are preoccupied with this other technology? Are your e-mails terse and potentially offensive? Do you find yourself sending e-mails more often than picking up the phone or meeting face to face? Our point here is not to judge this behavior - but simply get you to notice it, embrace it, and possibly modify these habits to make stronger human connections.



Do you answer your phones or get distracted by e-mails while you are meeting with someone?

Do you find your attention drifting while away from work, unable to resist checking e-mail or answering your cell phone?

Leadership Practice:

Pay attention to your communication patterns by noticing and tracking how you are utilizing technology.

Are you using it to strengthen relationships or is it causing you to be less present and potentially damaging to relationship.

Simply track how many times you are distracted by the technology.

Also consider tracking how often you opt for voice to voice or face to face communications instead of e-mail.

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