

# 7 Principles to Staying Focused

By Brian Hazelgren

Many people have things coming at them every day...and decisions to make to stay ahead of that game we refer to as *Life*. If you're like me, those distractions that we have to deal with sometimes can derail your progress and leave you following a path that is different than what you had imagined. We lose our focus, and before we know it, we are trying to focus on 10 other things and getting further and further behind. It's time to end the insanity!

I like to focus on 7 simple things that help me to stay focused, and they are listed below. In my book *Everlasting Wisdom* I dedicated a chapter to this topic and it became one of the 12 ancient principles that I highlighted. They may not all work for you, but I have found that when you follow these simple principles, you actually do stay focused, and you are much better suited to direct your positive energies to the task at hand.

**1. Establish well-defined goals** – your goals are the foundation of your plan and your plan is the roadmap to lead you to your destiny. Setting goals is not a new concept, but it is a wise principle to use and a habit that you should establish. Remember a goal not written is only a wish.

**2. Create and stick to a priority list** – sometimes a simple list of priorities can keep you stay focused on what needs to be accomplished – and when. I like to have a priority list to refer to when distractions enter the picture...it keeps me...***focused***.

**3. Track and Report your progress** – Remember this: *what gets reported gets done*. Whether you are reporting to your self, your team, or to the board, when you are able to track your progress and show how you reach certain milestones, you can keep on the straight path without deviations.

**4. Break tasks into smaller pieces** – a big project can look so overwhelming at times. I've found that when you take the big picture and break it down to smaller elements, individual pieces don't seem as daunting, and each time you complete one of the smaller tasks it's invigorating and empowering.

**5. Reward yourself** – you need to give yourself a pat on the back once in a while and reward yourself for your discipline. That can be as simple as blocking out time for you to read a book; watch a game; see a movie; go out to dinner; go on a vacation; or watch your favorite TV show.

**6. Visualize the end result** – Constantly seeing the end result in your mind is a great motivator. Visualize what you want to accomplish. If the end result is truly important to you, it can serve as a powerful reminder that your sacrifices along the way will be worth it, and you will live out your vision!

**7. Ask for help** – Unless you have a big red and yellow “S” stamped on the chest of your blue spandex uniform, I would suggest that you reach out to others once in a while and ask for help. The cool thing about asking for help is that it shows a little humanness, and people really do like to help others. Others won't mind helping you because they can share a little expertise and provide a little compassion to

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others...we humans, for the most part, are just wired that way.

**Proverbs 29:18 reads:** *Where there is no vision, the people perish....*

When we take on a task, or to lead others into a new venture, we must paint a picture of what the final result could look like if we apply knowledge, experience and hard work. It is much easier to follow someone who is passionate about achieving the end result, than it is following someone who is just going through the motions.

So, when we talk of visionaries, we should show what a *visionary* is, and why they are important.

“Visionary” According to Webster’s Dictionary: Main Entry: vi-sion·ary  
Pronunciation: \ˈvi-zhə-ˌner-ē\  
Function: *adjective* – having or marked by foresight and imagination <a *visionary* leader> <a *visionary* invention>

I believe there are two crucial elements to being a visionary:

- 1) A visionary is one who can see the big picture and take action; and
- 2) They are able to motivate others to move beyond their natural boundaries, and achieve something extraordinary.

Visionaries are leaders that tend to make others want to follow them. The world is filled today with visionary thinkers, people who have revolutionary ideas about reinventing our post-industrial society and embracing more innovative ideas on making something even better.

Revolutionary thinking pushes the definition of status quo and challenges the current system to improve on what we have.

There are actually two parts to this discussion that are open for debate. The first, is the thinking that rather than simply “going along with the flow,” a more inspirational goal is to “challenge conventional thinking,” and do something good for mankind.

The first element “going along with the flow” is what many visionaries deemed to be boring and uninspiring. So, they along with others, decided to do something about it and think a little deeper, and come up with innovative ways to change how things are done - that is the second part.

You can be that visionary who inspires others to do extraordinary things. People will follow you everywhere seeking your wisdom and advice. You have it within you, and sometimes you just need a little extra focus to help get you there. Good luck on your journey!

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