

BONUS Follow Up Article **Think Like the CEO, Not an Employee, Part II**

As a business owner, you should be working “on” the business, not “in” the business. Owners should be focusing on your company’s purpose, direction, strategy, structure, systems, people, goals, and accountability processes, not the trivial aspects of your business.

Your goal as an owner is to design and shape a business that serves you, your clients, and works independently from you -- a business that is systems-dependent and not owner-dependent. You want a business ideally that runs on autopilot and spits out cash.

To gain greater freedom, fulfillment and financial success, you must function as a leader instead of as a doer. You can hire a doer; you cannot hire a leader. As the CEO, you need to be more strategic, long-term focused and less tactical/technical, day-to-day fixated. If you don’t focus on the entire business, no one else will. So how do you stop thinking and acting like an employee or technician? Here are seven steps to consider:

1. Regardless of your industry or size of your business, start viewing yourself as a Chief Executive Officer (CEO), not an employee. Instead of seeing yourself as a role player, view yourself as the head coach or the director.
2. To help with this CEO mindset transformation, start referring to yourself as CEO. Put it on your business card, stationery, nameplate, website, etc. Using the term CEO will force you to see your company as an entity above and beyond yourself, as a separate and valuable asset that needs to be professionally managed and optimized. For example, focus on how to big picture items such as growing sales and expanding your competitive advantage.
3. Consider that as CEO, you get paid at least the equivalent of \$200 an hour to professionally manage this separate entity and valuable asset – your business. Ask yourself before you touch any task, “Would a CEO do this?” Or ask, “Is this task worth me doing at a cost of \$200 an hour?” Elevate your vision, thinking and tasks. Start asking yourself “Who else can do this task?” Learn to delegate often.
4. If you truly buy into your role as a CEO, you should be willing to give up the urgent, less important, low-value tasks you routinely handle. Realize that 80% of your results come from 20% of your talents and activities. Delegate the 80% of your activities that only produce 20% of your results. Stop doing the wrong kind of work. CEO’s should think, lead and delegate. As a CEO your job is to design/re-design and grow the business; your managers’ job is to improve the business; and your employees’ job is to operate the business. Here are a few more suggestions:
 - Don’t let the urgent control your life. Put your cell phone/pager away more often. Don’t be a slave to email.
 - Instead of creating to-do lists, start creating **not-to-do** lists for you and let go of small things.
 - Quit trying to manage details and start managing your people.

5. Schedule time to think and plan. You must think deeply about important, strategic matters. Make time to get away from the day-to-day distractions and focus on deep thinking, planning, and decision-making. Isolate yourself to concentrate on big-picture issues.
6. On a daily basis, reserve the vast bulk of the day to tackle only your top 3 priorities. Selfishly guard your time and focus
7. Whatever your technical expertise, consider hiring someone else to handle such technical and tactical work so that you can escape the stranglehold. For example, if your background is selling or accounting, hire a competent sales manager or accounting manager to manage such day-to-day details. Stop doing their job.

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