

Leading Out Of Your “A” Game

By Dr. Gregory Wiens

Last week I wrote about each of us having an “A” game. I am convinced that God has wired each of us in such a way as we are able to be the best conceivable at doing what He has called us to do. The problem is that too often we are in a role that requires us to be wired in a different way. My challenge is to take a time to inventory what you think your “A” game is and PLEASE allow others who are discerning to speak into this process.

But, in spite of knowing your “A” game, there are days when you simply have to work on “C” game kinds of stuff. I recently had a day where I had to deal with activity that was clearly out of my league. It was without a doubt my “C” game stuff. But I couldn’t delegate it, delete it or deny it, I had to DO it! By the end of the day, my head hurt and I was simply exhausted. I was drained and I didn’t want to talk with anyone. Since I don’t have an office, I went into the conference room, turned out the light and asked Rachel not to bother me, and closed the door. I laid on the floor with my computer playing music...I took a 15 minute vacation.

In Romans 12 we read: *“³For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. ⁴Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶We have different gifts, according to the grace given us...”*

Paul clearly states you need to know yourself and not expect more of yourself than you should. Be realistic about your abilities and realize that some are gifted much differently than you, so allow different people to function in different ways. So Paul is saying stay away from things you aren’t good at and don’t do things you don’t do well.

As I said last week, the advantage of getting older is that we better understand what we do well (our “A” game), what we can learn to do (our “B” game) and what we should avoid (our “C” game). As each of us learn what constitutes these three kinds of activity in our personal lives we can work smarter in ministry.

This is very important because as we get older our energy level drops as well. It may not be obvious, but it takes more energy to do “C” game activity. When we are young, we have a lot of energy and the energy drain isn’t as apparent. But, like I discovered recently, as I have aged I simply don’t have the energy reserves to handle extended times of “C” activity in my life.

So working smarter in ministry for me entails not only knowing the difference between these types of activities in my life, but also scheduling these three kinds of activities in my calendar. I am learning to develop a weekly, monthly and annual calendar template. I don’t schedule heavy workloads back to back. If I have to do some “C” game activity, I am sure to schedule some down time or restorative time immediately afterwards...even if it is just 45 minutes worth. You must be careful not to overload your schedule with too many draining kinds of activities if you want to be your best in doing what God created you to be.

Another example of how I am learning to apply this in my life is realizing how I can avoid draining activities. This last week I was involved in leading an all day meeting where we had to accomplish a long list of objectives. The objective was to spend creative time in problem solving and visionizing. These are two of my “A” game activities, however, because I was responsible for ensuring that we go through all of the requisite areas (which is a “C” game for me), I was exhausted by the end of the day.

As I reflected on why I was so tired, I realized I should not have led that meeting. I should have asked another person on the team who is much more gifted at process kinds of activity. Had I done that, the team would have been so much better off and we would have benefited from me entering into the discussion creatively, not off task as I was.

The reason I didn’t think of this before the meeting was that I was supposed to be the leader and so I “assumed” that meant “I” had to lead the meeting....WRONG! As the leader, I should have been more concerned about accomplishing the objective in the best way possible and not concerned about filling a role. I have since shared this with the team and future meetings like this will not be led by me. Ironically, I probably wouldn’t have figured this out, if it hadn’t been for how drained I was after the meeting.

I love learning how to lead better and I pray I never stop learning.