

Helping Leaders, Individuals and Teams
Learn, Communicate & Connect

KCS Kacik Consulting Services, LLC



Work-Free Summer Vacations



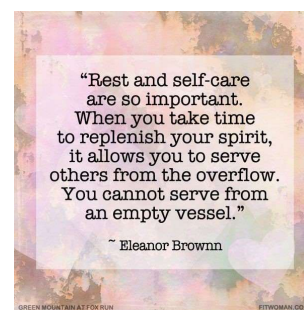
As summer rolls around, we are hungry to get outside and play!



Enough with the work, right? When you think of summer vacation, what do you picture? Softball and little league, digging into the earth, planting and watching things grow, lakes and swimming and canoeing, beaches and playing in the waves, cookouts, camping – what is it for you? There’s so much to enjoy and we want to get to it and leave work behind, but then there’s those pesky emails and voicemails that keep dinging on our



Anxious to get to the vacation?



Do you experience guilt if you choose not to answer work

phones.

Technology doesn't always make our lives easier. I'm old enough to remember life without cell phones. We didn't know what voice messages awaited us at the office and there were no emails scrolling across our smart phones as constant reminders of work.

I'm here to tell you there are ways to put work on hold, disconnect and be fully present to enjoy and experience the sights, sounds and smells of summer vacation. When you do that, your memories will be more vivid and more numerous – and hopefully not the ones of Chevy Chase movies. I could tell you a story about our rented motor home trip, but I digress.



Tips for Relaxing, Uninterrupted Vacations:

Shifting your mindset from work to play takes deliberate action.

You know how far into a vacation it can be before you really feel relaxed and have left the office behind? Well, there are some things you can do to get to that point faster and stay there longer. Last month I talked about the things you could do at work to maintain your productivity and prepare for vacation and the smooth return. If you missed it, check it out on our website www.kacikconsulting.com.

- 1. Start with your out-of-office email message.** Unless your organization requires that you be available while on vacation, customize your out-of-office message to say that you will not have access to email or voicemail until the date you specify as your return and tell them who they can contact if they need assistance while you are away.

Ok, I can tell I need to stop right here, because I can already hear all the buts. Many of you are probably too young to remember Lee Iacocca. He was the CEO and Chairman of Chrysler who brought the company back after the bottom fell out of the US auto industry. Well, Lee had a rule at Chrysler. When you were on vacation, if

emails while on vacation?

What's that about? Our society has become one of "instant". Instant everything. **Technology has contributed greatly to our expectations that whatever we want we can have right now.** There's very little waiting for things anymore.

We don't often have to exercise our patience muscle. Does that make it good? What has that done to us? Just because something is possible, does that mean it's necessarily good?

Creating good things in our lives is often about balance. **So how is balance at play in our guilt about being the instant button our clients or colleagues can push even when we're on vacation?** Your instant response might be good for them, but what is the effect on you?

What happens when you have to walk away from your family or significant other or friends to answer a call or an email? What does it do to the flow of what you're enjoying at that moment. How long does it take you to refocus mentally? You are entitled to time away from the job. It is in your own best interest.

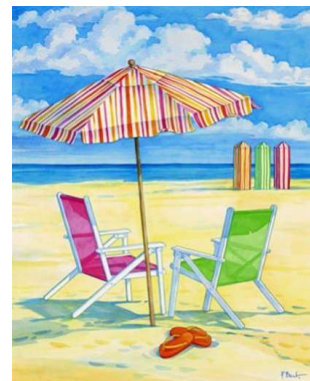
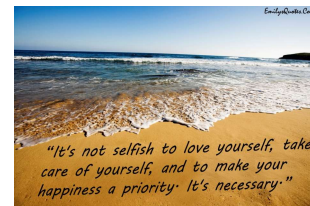
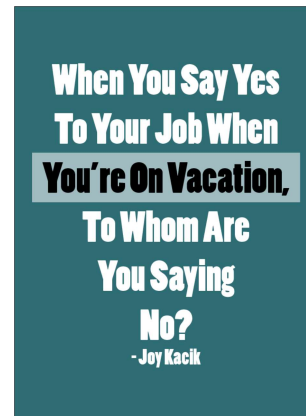
Are you as willing to take care of yourself as well as you take care of others?

anyone from the company called you (in the days before email) then you got another whole free week's vacation. He did that because he felt so strongly that **it was in the best interest not only of the individual worker, but of the organization that people be able to get away from the job to refresh themselves mentally and emotionally.**

I personally subscribed to this philosophy throughout my career. It didn't always work perfectly, but I did my best to get away, let someone else cover for me and not look at my email or check my voicemail.

OK, back to the tips...

1. **Check your smart phone to see if you can actually turn off your work email sync temporarily or turn off your notifications temporarily.** If you can, then it will help you disconnect so the emails aren't constantly in front of you tempting you to reply to "just this one".
2. If you can schedule a day at home before you leave to pack, **take care of the errands and things that need to be done around the house before leaving for vacation, then do it!** There's nothing worse than being so time-pressured getting ready for a vacation that you are even more stressed than usual by the time you actually leave.
3. **Visualize what you'll be doing and enjoying while you're on vacation.** You put planning into work – put planning into the vacation too so it doesn't get away from you before you get around to doing what you really wanted to do. That's a matter of taste, however, as some people like activities and some people need no planned activities or to-do lists. Your choice, but at least visualize what it is you want it to look and feel like.
4. **Be fully present while you're on vacation.** Take it all in. Experience it.
5. **Set some boundaries with your loved ones and let them hold you accountable.** Leave shop talk at the shop. Leave work behind and agree not to bring it with you. If you have to deal with some work emails or calls, then set aside a



Keeping our focus during the lazy days of summer requires deliberate focus and planning. Take time to plan – it makes all the difference.

It's easy to become complacent when our minds want to be sitting on the green grass enjoying the sun not sitting at a desk.

specific time each day for it and keep those boundaries.

That way, the family knows that you're there with them except for that designated time.

6. **If you can take two weeks rather than one, it will make a difference.** It does take time mentally to let go of work and really shift your focus. The first time I took a two-week vacation, I couldn't believe the difference. I was in an altogether new place – mentally that is. I had completely forgotten about work and relaxed at a level I hadn't previously experienced.

I hope this summer you will enjoy great productivity at work and find truly relaxing and enjoyable vacation time with your family and significant others. Get the best of both!

Have a great vacation,



Let's create steps to make sure you have a work-free vacations.

Contact me!



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Our mailing address is:

2408 West Street
Brookfield, VT 05036

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