

Keep Things in Perspective

It's up to every leader to remember what's important. Work occupies only a portion of our entire lives. When things become difficult and stressful, try to remember the things that are important, not only for yourself but for every staff member as well. Will the issue causing the stress be important six days from now? Six weeks from now? Six months from now? Is it worth losing sleep over? Should it be allowed to negatively impact my health, my relations with my family or the health or families of my staff? Maintain perspective. I think perhaps Newfoundland's successful pop/folk music group Great Big Sea perhaps said it best in their song "Let it Go": *Let it go, let it go. This is smaller than you know. It's no bigger than a pebble lying on the gravel road.*"

Here is another little story for you to think about.

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, without speaking he picked up a very large and empty jar of mayonnaise then filled it up with golf balls. He then asked his students if they thought the jar was full and they agreed that it was. The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the same jar and then lightly shook the jar. The pebbles then rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked his students again whether they thought the jar was full and once again they agreed that it was. After hearing that, the professor picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Naturally the sand filled all the remaining spaces and once again the students confirmed that the jar was full. Finally, the professor poured two bottles of beer into the jar (what a waste of good beer!)

The professor then explained to the students that the jar is a representation of their lives. The golf balls are the important things such as their family, friends, health and their favourite passions. If everything else had been lost, their lives would still be full. The pebbles represented the other things that matter such as their homes, their jobs and their car. The sand represented everything else, or all the small stuff. If they filled their lives with all the small stuff, like the sand in this case, there would be no room for the important things like the golf balls and the pebbles. He advised them to pay attention to the big things for everything else is just sand.

Just then one of the students asked what the beer represented. The professor smiled and said "I'm glad you asked. The beer just shows that no matter how full your life may seem, there is ALWAYS room for a couple of beers with a good friend."

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