IMPRESSION: a characteristic, trait, or feature resulting from some influence, a telling image impressed on the senses or the mind



The Vacation's Over. Now What?

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It's your last day of vacation. Your toes are in the sand and the sun is shining brightly on your face as you look over the ocean and get ready to take another dip in the sea. You're feeling calm, relaxed, and well-rested. Nothing can bring you down, except...you have to return to work tomorrow and you're not certain you're ready to do it. You don't know if you can possibly face the mound of emails and voicemails that will surely be waiting for you when you step into your cubicle on Monday. Instead of feeling relaxed, you're beginning to feel full of dread...

Sound familiar? It can be a challenge to return to work after an extended vacation. The daily grind can seem mundane and difficult after a nice, relaxing getaway. But you don't have to let returning to work get you down. It is









possible to use your vacation as a source of motivation and inspiration.

I firmly believe your happiness and success is in your hands and it all boils down to the way you look at things. When you return from a vacation, you have two choices: 1) You can feel bogged down and disappointed that you're back to the daily grind OR 2) You can choose to feel refreshed and rejuvenated, ready to take on new challenges and opportunities.

Doesn't option 2 sound much nicer? But how to adopt that positive attitude? Here are some tips:

1. Make a pre-vacation plan

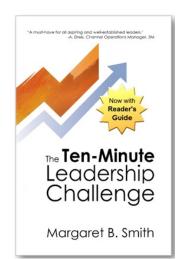
You can cut down on post-vacation stress by getting your ducks in a row before you take off for vacation. If you know you'll have some deadlines to meet after you return, try getting those things done before you leave (or at least get a jump start on them). You'll thank yourself later.

And don't forget to let people know you'll be out of town. If you're working with clients, send them each an email to let them know you'll be out of touch. That way, you won't have to respond to urgent or angry emails immediately upon your return. Also, don't forget to set an automatic email responder to let people know you'll be out of the office for a few days.

Another part of your pre-vacation plan should be making a post-vacation list of things to accomplish upon your return. After a week or two of vacation, you might forget where exactly you left off on a project or task. By writing a "upon my return to-do list," you can get back on track right away.

2. Use your vacation as fuel

Hopefully your time away was relaxing and peaceful. Let that newfound calm carry over into the workplace. Use your vacation as a way to anchor yourself and put things in perspective. Let things like office gossip and negative



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5 Steps to Writing a Knock-Out Proposal co-workers slide off your back—don't they seem small and insignificant after you step away from your bubble for a while?

Sometimes when I'm on vacation, an idea or inspiration strikes me that I can use for work. It may be as simple as coming up with a way to celebrate a co-worker's success or as in-depth as a new approach to a current project. Jot down your inspirations! Get in the habit of carrying around a small notebook and scribble down your thoughts when they occur to you. That way, when you get back to the office, you'll have a list of fresh ideas to try out.

3. Set aside a catch-up day

Returning to a jam-packed inbox, a messy desk, and a mound of requests is daunting. Make sure you build in a catch-up day when you return to work. Try to limit incoming calls and new projects while you sift through your inbox and prioritize the tasks that you need to tackle in the next few days. Or, consider coming back a day early (say, Saturday instead of Sunday). That way, you'll have time to unpack, maybe pick up a few groceries, and get a quiet, uninterrupted jump on your email.

Alternatively, if the thought of thousands of emails will keep you from truly enjoying your vacation, allow yourself an hour (or so) each day during your trip to catch up on work correspondence. That way, your return won't seem quite so overwhelming.

4. Shine!

Face the workplace with a new glow. Let the mere thought of your vacation reenergize and motivate you. People respond well to positivity and hopefully your sunny attitude will be contagious around the office.

It may seem difficult to think about the daily grind in a positive way after a nice vacation, but, if nothing else, think about it this way: You were fortunate enough to take a vacation because you *have* a job. Yes, it's good



Last week, I gave you some general guidelines for presenting that great idea of yours to your boss. In this post, I'm going to hone in on one specific, necessary skill in this process: how to draft a knockout proposal. Click HERE for more!

3 Ways to Sell Your Great Idea to the Boss



It's great to have ideas. It's even better to believe in yourself and be convinced that your idea will really work. But the hard part is pitching it to those who have the power to either make your

to get away, but it's also nice to come back to the stability and familiarity of your job. Besides, there's always next year's vacation to look forward to!

Welcome back,

Margaret

Margaret Smith

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Author of <u>The Ten-Minute Leadership Challenge</u>





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Margaret Smith believes in the strength of your organization.

Learn to harness this strength to create executives & business success!

Margaret is a career coach, speaker, licensed Insights
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