

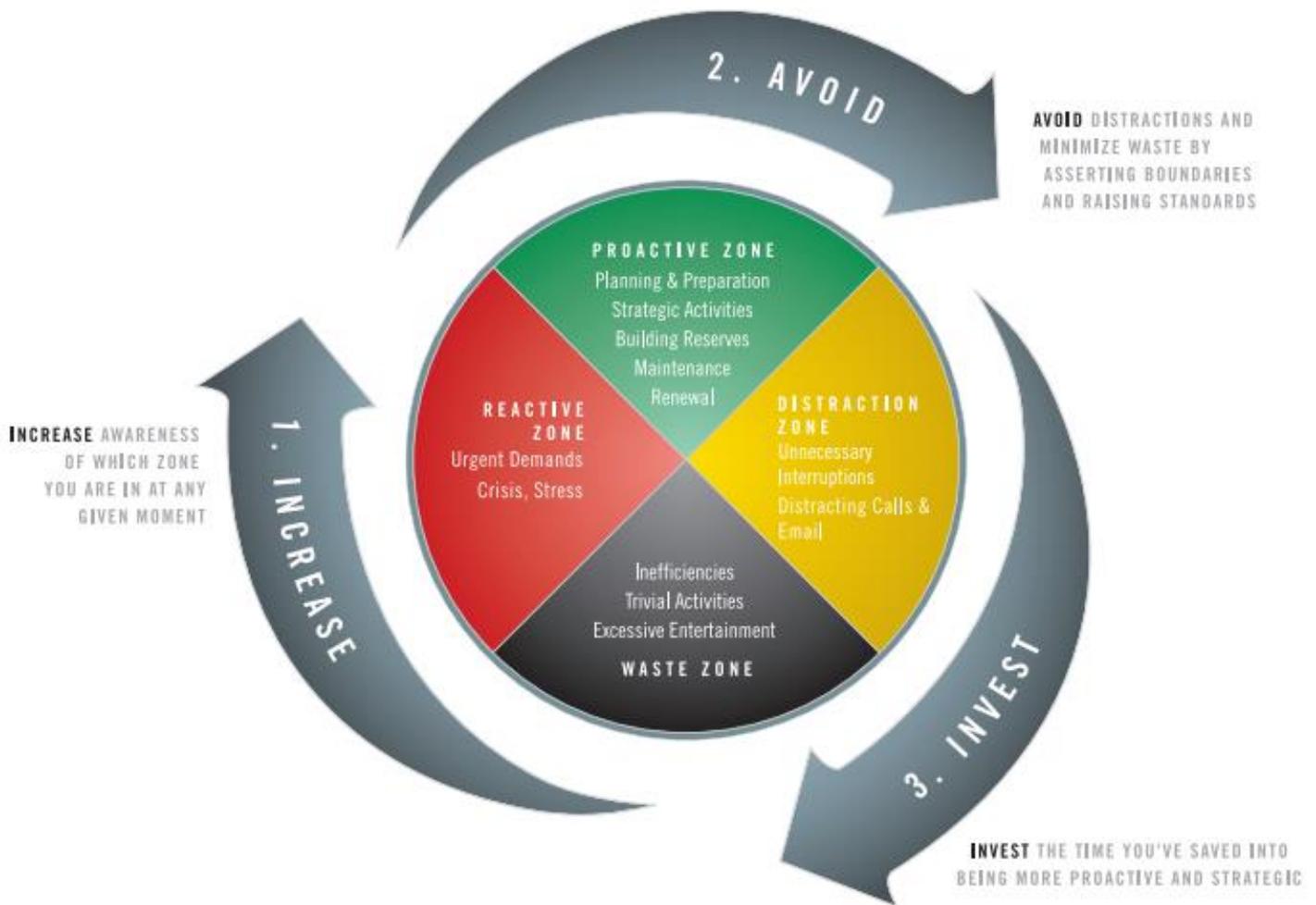
Managing Your Attention, Time & Energy

The normal created by Covid-19 has amplified the need to balance effectiveness and efficiency when it comes to managing your attention, time and energy. The blending of work and home responsibilities has left many feeling overwhelmed and unclear on how stay proactive and focused on the responsibilities that really matter. Many have fallen prey to “urgency addiction”, allowing the “drama of putting out fires to promote the illusion of effectiveness,” when really they are spending far to little time on the activities that are vital to moving their organization (or home) forward.

How can leaders find time to be more practive and strategic when they are already spread thin just tending to all the urgent matters that arise each day and week?

“The Stagen Attention Zones Model is an intuitive framework that answers this question. It provides a practical way to counteract the urgency addition, and the tendency of leaders to get pulled into the “reactivity trap.” The foud zones represent the primary ways leaders spend their time and attention. The numbered arrows represent three fundamental practices that can be used to dramatically enhance productivity while reducing overwhelm and stress.

The Stagen Attention Zones Model™



Adapted from Stagen Attention Zones Model & Rise Leaders

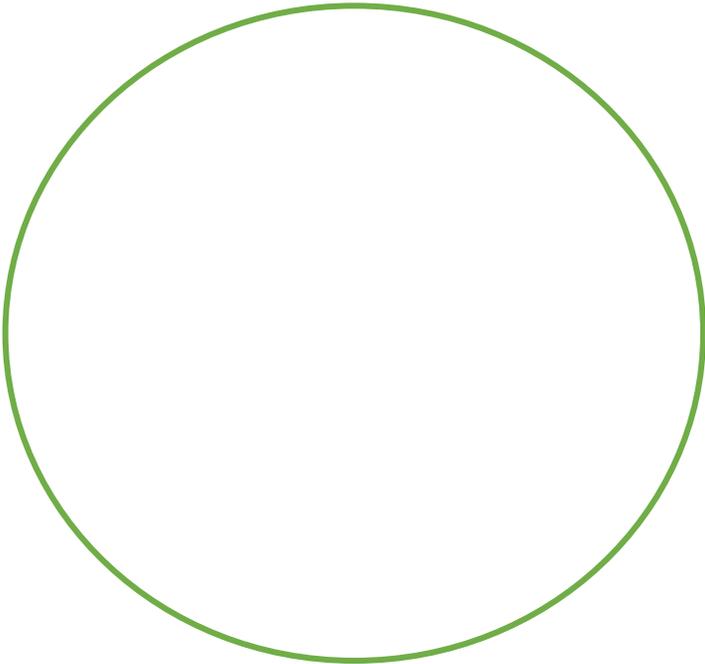
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Attention Zone Reflection & Recalibration

Use this quick activity to check-in on how you are spending your time, energy and attention during the new reality of Covid-19. Then, reflect on your current state, re-calibrate and set goals for how you can manage your time more proactively, eliminate your distractions, and cut back on wasteful activities.

My Current Attention Zones

1. Plot the different activities that make up your day-to-day based on what whether they are: proactive, reactive, waste or distractions. Slice the model to show your current allocation.



2. Reflect on your current attention zones

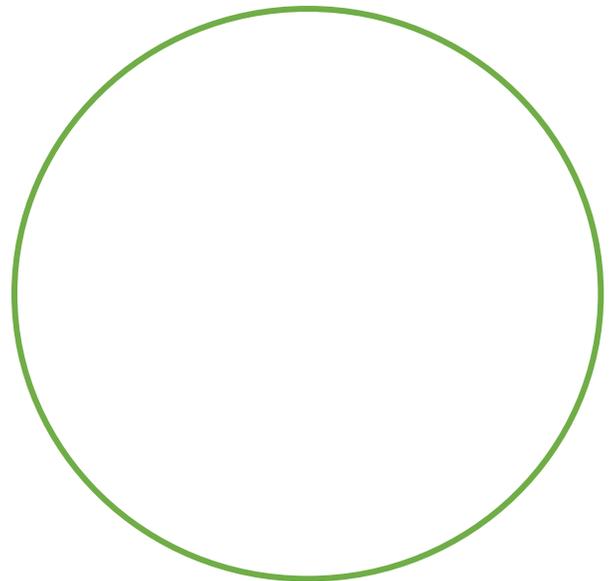
- Where are you spending most of your time?

- How can you proactively plan to handle tasks currently in the reactive zone?

- How can you minimize waste and distractions?

My Desired Attention Zones

3. List your desired activities for each zone in the new chart.
4. Identify 2-3 daily habits you can incorporate in your routine to reach your desired attention zones.



Tactics for Managing Energy, Attention and Time

Tactic	Overview - Rationale
Plan Your Work, Work Your Plan	Engage in <i>weekly and daily focusing</i> . On a weekly basis review your calendar, projects and other commitments and schedule time to complete them. Prioritize so that the highest importance activities garner your best and most attention. At the end of each day, review the following day's schedule and make needed preparations. (See the Weekly Focusing sheet)
Block Your Time	Schedule time in your calendar to get work done and keep it! Securing time in your calendar increases the likelihood that you will complete the work. <i>Timeblocks</i> include regularly occurring activities such as meetings <i>and</i> your personal work time. Effective timeblocking considers the type of task and your personal energy rhythm and flow. For example, you may block time on Friday afternoons to plan for the next week and spend Wednesday mornings on tasks that require heightened and prolonged focus for things like budgeting, performance reviews, report-writing, etc.
Singletask	Giving partial attention to several activities at the same time (multi-tasking) actually decreases productivity and over time negatively affects your ability to focus. We have one unit of consciousness that cannot be split across multiple activities. Commit to completing one activity before going to the next.
Disable Distractions & Lose the Electronic Leash	Alerts (banners, sounds, etc.) grab your attention. They demand your attention and distract you from your intended focus. These alerts can be heard and seen by others, distracting them as well. Turn 'em off! Put away all devices and laptop computers during meetings (and when with your loved ones!). Consider digital downtimes – periods of time when digital devices are off limits.
Choose the Best Communication Channel	Be deliberate about the mode you use to communicate. Real-time, synchronous communication is best used for discussing complex or emotional issues, brainstorming and collaborating. Asynchronous communication includes most digital communication and allows the receiver to respond at a later time. Create clear guidelines on your team for how various channels should be used.
Educate Your Environment	Set a positive example for scheduling time that cannot be interrupted. Educate your team on your desire to be more focused and productive and request to not be disturbed if your door is closed or if they see that you are busy. Explain that you will be able to give your full attention later (offer a specific time).
Take Breaks	After 90 minutes of focus, our energy and attention wanes and we enter the realm of diminishing returns. Disengage from the task at hand and take a walk, stretch or involve yourself in some other activity for 10 – 20 minutes.

Sources: *The Way We're Working Isn't Working* by Tony Schwartz and the Stagen Integral Leadership Program.

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ATTENTION, TIME AND ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Meta Practices: These foundational practices support overall wellbeing, providing the physical, mental and emotional energy needed to perform at your highest level.

Meta Practice	Overview - Rationale
Sleep 7 – 9 Hours Each Night	<p>Sleep is the foundation of physical energy; no single behavior more fundamentally influences our behavior than sleep. Charles Leadbeater, author of <i>Sleep in the 24/7 Society</i> states, “Lack of sleep makes us more inefficient at work and more dangerous behind the wheel of a car. It undermines the quality of our lives and makes us more vulnerable to illness. It is also responsible for making us less able to respond creatively to problems and opportunities, and less original, flexible and divergent in our thinking and thus less likely to generate new ideas.”</p>
Move	<p>Exercise is unique in that it builds physical, mental and emotional energy. It is the opposite and complimentary pole of sleep, and the impact can be felt and measured quickly. Two and a half hours of moderate exercise each week is enough to make a positive difference. Failure to move creates a vicious cycle: the less we exercise the more we avoid it. Less movement means fewer calories burned, more weight gained, and strength lost. Physical activity becomes more difficult and uncomfortable, making us less likely to engage in exercise.</p>
Give Yourself High Quality Fuel	<p>There’s no arguing the importance of nutrition if you desire top performance and overall wellbeing. The exact approaches differ, yet most have this in common: consume lots of veggies, fruits (especially berries), and water. Eliminate processed and high-sugar foods altogether, limit alcohol.</p>
Be Mindful	<p>A mindfulness practice has multiple benefits, acting as an antidote to anxiety as well as strengthening the muscle of attention and presence. Specifically, deep, rhythmic breathing relaxes the body, quiets the mind and calms the emotions. It serves as a source of ‘passive’ renewal.</p>