I was at the airport recently and saw a couple whose luggage weighed too much. They were scrambling to lighten their load and reallocate items from one bag to another. I felt like I could read their minds..."we can't leave anything behind...this is our good stuff that we brought for the BIG trip."

I have noticed that many of us fall into this trap at work these days. Our proverbial "bags" are over stuffed and we can't seem to figure out what to take on our journey and what to leave behind. Our bags keep getting bigger and bigger and we are exhausted trying to carry too much around. Then we wonder why we are so tired all the time.

Let's go back to a simpler time when The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People was first published - way back in 1989. And even though some of my newsletter readers were probably just youngsters back then, and much has changed in the world of work, there is a key principle that still holds true when it comes to lightening our load. We need to focus on what is Important and Not Urgent to determine where to most wisely spend our time and minimize all other activities.

To help you accomplish that goal, here are three questions for you today:

1. What is one urgent, but not important task you can "unpack" and leave behind?
2. What is one not urgent, not important task can you give up for good?
3. And to paraphrase Mr. Covey...What one thing could you add to your "bag" at work that would make a tremendous positive difference?
Now it's time to engage your teammates and supervisor in a productive discussion about letting go and lightening the load. Ask for others' opinions about what you can all let go of.

Is there a report that you've been producing for years that isn't helpful anymore?  
**Lighten the load.**

Are too many signatures required to get something done?  
**Lighten the load.**

Is there a procedure that could be streamlined to save a few steps?  
**Lighten the load.**

Get the idea? Be creative. Look at your big time-suckers through the eyes of an objective person. Use data to support your own conclusions. Be flexible and open to suggestions, but in the end...make sure you lighten your load so that you can take off on the next leg of your journey to Professional Paradise and beyond!

See You in Professional Paradise-

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