

Hello. This is Wayne Rivers at The Family Business Institute. Thank you for tuning in. Don't forget about our upcoming bootcamp class. We'd love to have you there. And as always, we value your comments in the section below.

This week, I want to talk about putting your own oxygen mask on first. My wife and I were traveling, and we were going to the AGC convention, and that announcement came on. I said, "You know what? There's some real common sense in that. And I think this will make for a good blog." So why would this advice make sense for people running businesses? Well, it makes sense. Why does the airline tell you to put your own oxygen mask on first? Well, it's obvious, if you're unable to breathe, you're not going to be much help to the children with whom you're traveling.

You're not going to be much help to the other passengers on the plane if you can't breathe, right? So put your own oxygen mask on first. And this applies to leaders in businesses in the following three ways, and maybe you can think of some more as well. The first, if you're going to be a leader to me, if you're going to be a leader in a company, you have to lead yourself first, you have to take your own medicine. You have to be authentic. Being an authentic example means taking your own medicine, doing the things you tell your employees to do. Read books, get training, hire a coach. All the things that you want your employees to do, you've got to lead by example. You've got to be an authentic leader, if you want to be relatable on the part of your employees.

So, the first thing is being authentic example and take your own advice and do the things that you tell your employees to do. The second thing is you've got to keep the main thing the main thing, as Stephen Covey says. The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing. Makes perfect sense. You've got to focus. If you're going to lead yourself, if you're going to manage yourself, you've got to bring focus to what you're doing. You've got to have a few priorities. The human brain can't juggle 22 priorities. It can handle it the most two. And it's even better if you have a one. So, as a leader, you really need to whittle down the things on which you focus. If your employees see you juggling 30 balls every day, and you tell them to focus on just a few acute objectives, what are they going to do?

Are they going to listen to what you say? Are they going to copy what you do? So, you've got to really bring focus to what you do as the leader and let your people see you focusing on the main things all the time. The third thing is demonstrate work life balance. If you're sending emails at 3:00 AM to employees, if you're leaving voicemails, if people see you staying at the office, they drive by from little league game and they see your car out there at 9:30 at night. You're telling them that you have an awful job, basically. And I can imagine that when people are looking at opportunities for advancement, they might look at you working these inhuman hours and they might say, "Well, gosh, well I don't want his job. Guy works all the time. He's got no balance in his life."

So, try to get better. I know we're all working on it but try to get better in your work life balance. You can schedule your emails. Just because you typed the email at 3:00 AM because you have insomnia, it doesn't mean that you can't schedule the email to go at 8:00 AM. That would be an easy thing to do. So, demonstrate to yourself and to your employees that you understand and value work, life balance. And getting back to being authentic. I found this a Bible verse in Matthew chapter seven, verse three. "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?"

So, the point is that we're finding fault with our employees. We're finding fault with the way other people do things. We're not giving ourselves robust introspection about how we do our jobs. And I guarantee there are some things you can do to

be a better leader and to be more productive in your life and especially to have better work life balance. I'd like to have your thoughts.

This is Wayne Rivers at the Family Business Institute. Thank you.