

## Strategies for Personal Renewal: Part 1

### 1 Recognize and push yourself out of your comfort zone.

Your so-called comfort zone will only get larger when you force yourself to step outside of it. For example: try to build a relationship with a client who has a radically different temperament than you, push yourself to develop a new area of expertise, travel to an unfamiliar foreign country, or study a new language. Think about developmental activities that may make you uncomfortable or nervous, and try one of them!

### 2 Pick a topic and develop some expertise in it.

Michael Jordan, the basketball great, used to pick one shot to work on each year—just one. Every year, be purposeful about a few issues or topics you would like to study in some depth.

### 3 Write an article.

There are endless opportunities to author an article, whether for your firm's publications, a third-party publication, or a website. When you have to write something, you are forced to be extremely disciplined about your thinking and the way you express your ideas.

### 4 Teach.

When you have to teach something, you learn it really, really well, and the act of teaching forces you to deepen and refine your thinking. When you teach you have to be prepared to go several levels deeper than what you may anticipate saying in the classroom, and this takes extensive preparation.

### 5 Cultivate the student mindset.

Great professionals are perpetual learners, and when you have the student mindset, you will find teachers in everyday situations. Even when teaching, great learners will work to expand their own knowledge. Peter Drucker, an expert in the field of management, once said, "Students without a great deal of experience don't learn anything from me because I don't learn anything from them."

### 6 Focus on sustaining your energy.

In their acclaimed book, *The Power of Full Engagement*, authors Loehr and Schwartz argue that energy, rather than time, is our most critical resource. They focus on how to maintain energy in four arenas: Physical, Mental, Emotional, and Spiritual. Executives become stale, bored, and burned-out when they fail to sustain their energy in these four critical realms.

### 7 Be an explorer.

Great client advisors engage in exploratory learning. Once they establish their expertise, they spend a lot of time in undirected, curiosity-driven exploration. For example leadership guru Warren Bennis reads eight different newspapers a day in order to get as many different perspectives as possible.

### 8 Hone your powers of observation.

Great consultants, like great doctors, have well-developed powers of observation. A good example is that of George de Mestral, a Swiss engineer and amateur mountaineer. In 1948, after a walk, he noticed his socks and dog were covered in burrs. Curious about how they stuck to his clothing, he examined them under a microscope and observed the tiny hooks that allowed the burrs to hang onto the fabric. In 1955, he patented Velcro, now a billion-dollar industry.