



7 Execution Killers ...and how to avoid them.

An E-book to help you quickly recognize and terminate obstacles that prevent you from becoming a Peak Performer.



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Letter from the Author

Many years ago, while working as a 13 year old caddie for one of the most successful businessmen in my town, I began a journey of self-improvement. Though I didn't know it then, carrying his bag for him every week and listening to him tell me about life and business was the beginning of a lifelong quest to understand exactly what makes successful people – successful. Since that time, I've been pointedly focused on reading about, questioning and engaging with anything that might bring me a clearer understanding of what components are necessary to drive excellence. Slowly, with the memory of my childhood mentor lingering in my mind, I began to notice that it wasn't really a particular talent or piece of information – no special birthright nor skill that singularly determined success. Rather, excellence seemed to come down to one thing – **Execution!** A person's ability to consolidate what they know, however vast or limited that knowledge may be, and ACT on it!

Hello, my name is Thor Conklin and I don't desire to teach you more. I desire to help you do more! My goal is to look at the parameters of what you've already achieved and give you the additional strategies and psychology to achieve even more. In quantifying this, I've identified eighty-five execution killers that can rear their ugly heads and derail you on your path to success. In this e-book are the first seven execution killers and tips on how they can be avoided to better meet your goals and help you become a Peak Performer.



About the Author

Thor Conklin is an entrepreneur who has made his living founding, running and selling his own businesses over the past twenty years. He is a keynote speaker, corporate trainer and professional execution guide. Thor is also the host of Peak Performers podcast. He has a series called "Life According to Me" and is scheduled to release his first book; "The Ultimate Success Map". His vision is to help people practice what they've learned through years of formal education, self-improvement and/or life experience so they aren't simply vessels of information but rather action centered individuals who apply what they know and execute!

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Execution Killer #1

No Accountability

It amazes me how so many people have no accountability. You've got to start there; you've got to hold yourself accountable. I remember when I made the decision to get into the best shape of my life. The first thing I did was set a date six months out for a photoshoot with a world-famous photographer on the West Coast. Then, I posted my decision on Facebook, along with the date of the photoshoot. There was no turning back.

I'm someone that gives my word and keeps it. Some people don't. But, if you don't have accountability, it will absolutely kill your execution. Let's face it, we are extremely busy and life will get in the way. Something else will creep in. It always does. If we're not accountable, it slips between the cracks and nobody is the wiser.

Now, you need somebody else holding you accountable, as well. You need an accountability partner. One that is not tied to you liking them. Someone who is going to tell you the truth. When I do this for my clients, it can be brutal. However, they didn't hire me to tell them what they wanted to hear. They hired me to hold them accountable. Find someone that will do that for you. I promise you the results will be amazing.

Tips for Finding the Perfect Accountability Partner

When you do get yourself an accountability partner, make sure it's someone who will tell you the truth and not get to the point where they say, "Oh, it's okay. You really tried! You know, you've got a lot going on and there's a lot of emotional baggage..." – NO! That's not an accountability partner. That's a friend.



Keep Your Word, Be Accountable

Put things down onto a schedule and hold yourself to it. Keeping your word is the key to execution and being a Peak Performer. It's easy to make excuses. It's hard to be accountable.

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Execution Killer #2

Doing the Good, but not the Great

Have you ever found yourself going throughout the day, getting a lot done, checking off everything on your to-do list, checking emails, and returning phone calls? At the end of the day, it felt like you got a lot done but none of it moved you closer to your end goal or your vision.

That, to me, is not an effective use of your time. If you're spending all your time simply working on busywork and things that are good and not great, that is a recipe for failure. It's easy to get caught up in doing good. You're not wasting time by sitting on the couch or watching television. You're actually getting things done. But you're taking up your time on achieving the good and leaving yourself no time for the great. What do you want to achieve? Where do you see yourself in five years? Don't sell yourself short. Take the time to achieve the great. You won't regret it.

Good vs. Great

- The good is what you're "supposed" to achieve. It keeps you moving along in the right direction, but never quite gets you to the end goal you want to achieve.
- The great, on the other hand, is that which puts you where you want to be. It's what gives us purpose in life. Do great, not just good.

Are you doing the GOOD or the GREAT?



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Distractions

Some Good Strategies

- Headphones. If you ever notice when you go to the gym, a lot of people wear headphones. Some aren't even listening to music. It's a sign of, *I'm not interested in talking. I'm here to do something. Please don't bother me.* But if you like the headphones and you like to listen to music or something soothing, something that you cannot get distracted by listening to, use headphones. It's a great tool to minimize distractions.
- If you have a door in your office, shut your door. Put a sign outside. Emails – let people know that you're not going to respond to their emails right away. Put in an auto responder. Many people I know just respond to emails once or twice a day. I do not have any time in my schedule that states, "Sit around and wait for somebody just to call. Whoever that is, let me answer the phone." That is not happening in my daily schedule. Don't let it happen in yours.

What are you allowing to creep into your life, into your schedule, and distract you from getting done what you need to get done?

Identify that area and eliminate it.

Distractions! It seems like in this world today, there are more and more distractions coming at us from every different angle. If you've ever been to the racetrack and you've seen a thoroughbred run, a lot of times the owners of those thoroughbreds will put something on their face. They're called blinders. What these blinders do is block off the peripheral view of the horse. All the horse can see is straight ahead. What the trainers and owners of these horses are trying to do is to block out every other distraction except for one thing – one goal – that finish line.

Every day, we've got bells, whistles, pop-ups, dings, donges, emails, phones going off, blinking, flashing. Just sit in front of the computer for two seconds and you see everything coming at you all the time. It is so important that you adjust the settings on your computer, on your phone so you don't see these. I know for many of you this is going to be one of the hardest things you'll ever do. But if you leave these distractions, these noises, these bells, these whistles on, it will do nothing but rob you of your productivity, rob you of your execution.

Execution Killer #4

Motion vs. Action

Let's first talk about motion. What is motion? You're running errands, starting a lot of small things, and finishing none, working on the urgent but not the important, cleaning, organizing, cutting things up, and getting ready to execute. Here's one of my favorites: learning, learning, learning. Listening to podcast after podcast, video after video, going to seminar after seminar. Learning, learning, learning. Now, I'm not saying there's anything wrong with learning, but at some point, you've got to start to execute. You've got to take action.



Now, for some of you, it's going to be difficult to establish what is action and what is motion. I've come up with a question that will help you identify which is which. Take an activity that you've been doing and you're not quite sure whether it's action or motion. Ask yourself - if you did that activity for seven days straight, not 24 hours a day, but everyday, at the end of that week, would you be any closer to your goal?

Figure out, in your life, where you are stuck in motion instead of taking action.

By Definition

Motion, as defined in the dictionary, is the process of moving or being moved. The definition of action is bringing about an alteration by force. These are two very different definitions.

How to Transform Motion into Action

Step One: Identify, in writing, what your goals are. You need to identify what the motions are that you've been caught in. Identify the actions that you need to be taking (or haven't been taking) that are going to get you closer to your goals.

Step Two: Each and every day, you need to schedule 80% action activities and only 20% motion activities. There are going to be some things that you need to do which are motion. Do you need to research? Yes. Do you need to learn? Yes. Do you need to file? Yes. Do you need to plan? Of course you do, but these cannot be the majority of what you're doing.

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Execution Killer #5

Energy

All right, so you've figured out what you want, you have an effective and efficient plan. You've decided what you want, you're going to go after it, you're committed to it, you believe that you can do it, your belief systems are in place, you don't have any conflicting beliefs, you're taking massive action, and you're allowing time to pass in order for those actions to turn into the results.

Everything is looking great, but this one thing can derail the entire process: energy. More specifically, lack of energy. How many times have you found yourself knowing you've got to get something done but, for whatever reason, your energy level is just not there? Are you able to execute? What you want to do is figure out what you need to give up. Most people don't want to give up things, right? Yes, but you need to identify those things that are not supporting you, those things that are not helping you get towards your goal.

Alcohol can be one, food can be another, TV – mindless activities where you're kind of just relaxing, letting the stress of the day, the week, the month just slip away. We find ourselves in a cycle where these things have crept into our lives and instead of renewing our energy, they're sapping it even more.

The Two Tiers of Energy

- The first tier is your physical body. In order to have energy in your physical body, you have to get a good night's rest, you've got to have good nutrition, you've got to have the proper hydration, you've got to be breathing deeply, and you need to have exercise and movement.
- The second tier is emotional and psychological. Have you ever found yourself in a place where you're doing everything, you're getting great sleep, your nutrition is great, you're exercising, you're doing what you love, but there's just some sort of energy drain? Make sure you figure out a way to identify the emotional energy drains and eliminate those.



Without energy, there is no life. With increased energy, that's when life starts to open up. That's when we have the extra time, the energy, to get things done. Energy is fuel. We need energy every single day and we need to renew our energy every single day.

What are two activities that you need to eliminate, or greatly reduce, in order to increase your energy and have more fuel for what's most important to you?

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Execution Killer #6

Staying On the Train

In Atlanta's Hartsfield –Jackson airport, people get off their plane and get on a train that takes them to Baggage Claim and Ground Transportation. The train has a stop called the “T Gate” (in my Ultimate Success Map I use the “T” Gate as a metaphor for the Time it takes to reach your goals). The attainment of goals takes time.

Many times, many people get to the “T Gate” and they think they're at Baggage Claim. They've been riding for a while, they've passed all the other gates and, frankly, they're tired. It seems as though the T Gate SHOULD be Baggage Claim because, in their opinion, *“I've been on this train long enough, how much longer should I have to ride?”*

So, they step off the train. They look around, and they notice, *“this doesn't look like Baggage Claim”*.

Suddenly, the doors close and they run back to the train, but it's too late – and the train leaves them behind. If only they had stayed on an extra stop they'd have arrived at their desired destination.

I have certainly been distracted, gotten tired, stopped what I was doing short of the goal line and gotten on a different train. I've been guilty of this many times. As I've gotten older and wiser, I've learned to stay on that train. I'll see you at the final station.



It's Like Riding a Bike...

About three years ago I did a bike ride with a group of friends and we rode from Alabama back to Atlanta. It was 60.3 miles. On a bicycle. The key is to keep pedaling and get into a rhythm. It's a pump – boom, boom, boom. You just get into this rhythm with your legs and it doesn't take a lot of effort to keep that bike going 15, 18, 20 miles an hour because of the gearing ratio. But as soon as you stop, two things happen: one, your muscles start to cramp up. Two, you've lost all that momentum and now you've got to start all over again. That's what so many people do. They've got all of this momentum going and all of a sudden, they quit, they stop, they find something different, and they've got to start all over again.

Here's the Irony

The more successful we become, the more opportunities come our way. I'm always looking at my ultimate vision, my Ultimate Success Map and I ask myself: is this new opportunity in alignment with my ultimate vision? Next I ask, is it going to add to the momentum I already have in this direction? If not, then this new opportunity might not be the right one to focus on.

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Execution Killer #7

Is This Urgent? Is It Important?

If you constantly find yourself doing the urgent, putting out the fires, taking care of that storm going on around you, but never taking care of the important things, well, this section is for you. President Dwight D. Eisenhower came up with a famous matrix: The Eisenhower Matrix. He talked about urgent and important.

Have you ever gone through a day or week (or even a month) and thought, "Wow, I got so much done. I was so busy it was crazy!" But you got no movement on your long-term projects, those things that are really, really important to you. Why is this? We put it on our calendars, right? And then all of a sudden, that phone call comes in, that employee comes in. Something happens that takes us off our game and we end up taking care of that emergency – that immediate urgent matter – instead of focusing on the important items.

Well, let me give you some of my strategies. One of the most important things that I do is my annual planning. I can tell you when I am recording my podcast, when I'm working on my plan for 2017 and when I'm going on vacation; it's non-negotiable. I will not have my phone on, I will not have my computer on and I won't be replying to email. I am focused on the scheduled item until it's time to move onto the next item on the calendar.



Important vs. Urgent

- **Urgent:** That means a task that requires immediate attention. It's an employee with a major issue, a client with a major issue, a baby crying, etc. It's a reactive mode, right? It's somebody else putting their pressure, their deadline, on us.
- **Important:** These are things that contribute to our long-term success: our mission, our values, our goals, and those big projects that take time. We're in a proactive mode when we're working on these. So often the important things don't get done. Why? Because we're spending our entire day focused on the urgent.

Where have you been spending time – way too much time – on urgent items whether urgent and important or urgent and not important?

Spend time on the things that are important, but do them before they become urgent. Schedule block time in your calendar. Start with 60-90 minutes of block time. Don't go crazy at first, but schedule time to work on that project. Lock your door, and mute your computer. I promise you'll feel great afterwards.



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In Closing...

**ARE YOU
EXECUTING
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HIGHEST
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Be sure to check out the Peak Performers podcast on iTunes:

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/peak-performers-tools-strategies/id1111951597?mt=2>

Also, be sure to visit Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and the website for additional resources: <http://www.thorconklin.com>

For more information about Thor's signature live event, the Business Execution Summit, click here:

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