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Changing Perception

PART 7: SLOW DOWN TO GO FAST

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Many of our customers have been fortunate to rebound nicely over the last six months following what was a difficult 2020. For some, they have even greatly surpassed their growth targets from prior to the pandemic. This has meant a great rebound for Clientek as well; allowing us to continue to grow our staff, take advantage of new opportunities, and directly invest into key growth drivers that we had put on hold last year.

Like most professional service businesses, we don't carry a large bench of people waiting for project work to come our way. We take a measured approach to hiring based on a combination of known and projected growth metrics for our business - always keeping some extra capacity to handle unforeseen project needs.

Sometimes, our growth comes quickly with new project demands arriving faster than our expectations. Through project expectation management and onboarding new

employees we arrive back in balance quickly, but there can be a period where we are running at full throttle.

When there is a high demand, it's human nature to try and deliver as quickly as possible so you can move to the next task on your list. The list is long, and continually being added to which leads to prioritization becoming an activity that occurs multiple times each day.

If this goes on too long, we can begin to lose sight of our project goals, delivery expectations, and ultimately, the value we deliver could be diminished.

In these circumstances, we must actually slow down in order to go faster. When overwhelmed with tasks and work, the first thing we naturally do as human beings is abandon any sort of plan. Instead, we turn into task cranking machines moving from one task to the next as quickly as possible to try and accomplish a never-ending list of to-do's.

This leads not to accomplishment, but to chaos. Portions of numerous chunks of work get completed but the whole piece of work never gets done. Think about a sprint board with five user stories on it. Should the team start working on all five, doing random tasks on each over the course of the sprint? The likely output would be five incomplete stories.

Instead, we build a plan and understand the priority of each of the stories. The team works the stories in order, delivering one after another. Perhaps at the end of the sprint a story falls off, but you still have four of the five stories that are fully complete.

This approach can be applied just about everywhere in life. Slow down, prioritize, make a plan, and then work that plan. You'll find that not only is your delivery accelerated, but this level of focus also produces higher quality results.

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