

Weekly WorkPlace Wisdom

A Weekly Service To The Business Community From Saddleback Church

SURVIVING INFORMATION OVERLOAD

By Rick Warren

We now live in the Information Age. The Industrial Age is over. Knowledge is the new capital. By the end of this decade nearly half of all the labor force will be "Knowledge Workers" - involved in *collecting, analyzing, organizing, storing, retrieving, or communicating* information.

Information and time are two of your most valuable resources in the 1990s. Benjamin Disraeli once said, "The most successful person is usually the one with the best information." Right now there is important information *out there* that is vital to your success. But do you ever feel overwhelmed by the information you are bombarded with each day? You have good reason:

- The last 30 years have produced more information than the previous 5,000 years.
- Nearly 50,000 books and 10,000 magazines are published in America *every year*.
- Every *single day*, researchers and scientists produce 7,000 new scientific papers!
- The average American is confronted with about 140 advertising messages a day, or about 50,000 a year.

Today we are drowning in information. This morning's edition of the *Los Angeles Times* contains more information than a typical person in the 16th century would encounter *in a lifetime!* What's more - it's getting worse! The amount of information available to you now doubles every five years. That means five years from today, there will be twice as much known in your field as there is today. Once recent survey discovered that the average desk in the average office in America has 36 hours' worth of work stacked on it - and much of it is reading! How can anyone keep up?

Solomon, who the Bible called the wisest man, understood this problem. He said, "*Be warned: there is no end of opinions ready to be expressed. Studying them can go on forever and become very exhausting!*" *Ecclesiastes 12:12 (LB)* He also said, "*To increase knowledge only increases distress.*" *Eccl 1:18 (LB)* in other words, knowledge alone is not enough. You need 3 skills:

1. You need to know ***what's worth knowing*** and what isn't. Selection is the first key to survival.
2. You need to understand the ***meaning*** of what you know. This comes from seeing the Big Picture. Perspective enables you to see how things relate.
3. You need to know ***what to do*** with what you know.

These 3 skills are called having ***WISDOM!*** Wisdom is even more critical to your success than knowledge. Wisdom turns information into power. How do I get more wisdom?

First, ***ASK GOD FOR WISDOM.*** Amazingly, He wants to help you! "*If any of you lack wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.*" *James 1:5*

Second, ***READ THE BIBLE AND FOLLOW GOD'S INSTRUCTIONS.***
"*Anyone who looks intently into God's perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it--he will be blessed in what he does.*" *James 1:25*

Until next week...

Discussion Questions:

1. Practice seeking God for wisdom in all of your comings and goings at work.
2. How does technology get in the way of your relationship with God?
3. What can you take from the Bible this week to apply to your work life?