

Sitting quietly alone¹

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The French philosopher Pascal said that “*all of humanity’s problems stem from man’s inability to sit quietly in a room alone*”. It is a valid statement today. Modern life, organisational life, business life is not terribly conducive to letting ourselves be with ourselves ‘in a room alone’. But the need to find that ‘lost space’ is greater than ever.

All this stuff about psychological spaces and protection of time will also sound incredible stupid to the always-on executive, the one who never switches off. As Michèle’s husband says, this kind of leader and the company’s server are a continuum via a wireless umbilical cord recently called, amongst other names, Blackberry.

As leader, or leader-to-be, or leader in development.... you should look into all these issues seriously. Some people take a view that it is simply logistics, a question of good time management. Other people however tend to think that there is a more fundamental problem behind the pervasive and ubiquitous busy-ness of executive life.

There is little question that concepts of reality are different depending on what view you take. And - as I said in the introduction of my book *Leader with Seven Faces* and repeat in my Leadership seminars - the answers to these questions are personal. Unfortunately, the consequences of the answers are not.

As a leader who builds organisations (ideas projects, common purpose around a vision), how you choose to answer matters. And not only to you but to everybody else depending on you. Not a minor burden.

¹ Initially posted on www.theleaderwith7faces.com, January 2008

You can read more about this dimension (Time and Space) by choosing from this list:

- [It's time, stupid!](#)
- [Protecting time](#)
- [The 'always on' leader](#)
- [Leadership and the end of time](#)
- [Leadership is creating spaces](#)
- [Social space](#)
- [But I never heard the builders](#)
- [100K investment lost](#)
- [Intrapreneurs at the gates](#)

You can also read more about the other two dimensions by choosing from this list:

2. [Homes](#)
3. [Legacy](#)

If you want to read more about leadership or want to continue reading from the above, you can read it all in my book [*The Leader with Seven Faces: finding your own ways to practice leadership in today's organization.*](#)