

## All.Net Analyst Report and Newsletter

### Welcome to our Analyst Report and Newsletter

#### Vacation

Many entrepreneurs don't take much in the way of vacation. When I had a full time job and was also building businesses, I took my company vacations, like Thanksgiving, as opportunities to do new software package development. One Thanksgiving, I developed Deception ToolKit. But for most of my career life, I was on my own running companies, no full time 'job', no net, living by my wits - which some would say demonstrates that miracles do happen - because I am still here.

One week my wife and kids went with me to visit my parents-in-law along the Jersey shore. Out of 5 days away, I slept for most of 4 of them. And I was energized when I drove the family back home. Of course that was a holiday weekend, Friday departure, Monday return, so nobody really missed me, and I had carefully not planned appointments those days. I had my cell phone and a portable computer with me just in case, but handled almost no calls

#### Slowing down - sort of

In the last few years, I have tried to enforce vacations on myself. I started with the ambitious plan of 1 week per quarter (9 days including both weekends), but that lasted for one quarter. I was willing and able, but the rest of the family had other things to do.

So this week - the week where I am writing this article, I am only working early mornings and one end-of-day check-in and spending the hours from 8-6 with grandchildren and their parents. My regular meetings were canceled and nothing critical is scheduled for early next week. I am in fact moving toward this more than once per quarter, and it is helping me stay more alert and innovative.

#### Vital stuff

Without vacations, people ...

Sorry - took a break - got breakfast - tickled a grandchild - sang a song - talked about rainbow pajamas...

#### Vacation requirements

In the security field, we have requirements for workers to go on vacation. It's not for their health or safety or anything like that, of course. And it's not a justification for taking time off. It's because of things like kiting and requirements for redundancy and business continuity.

- **Kiting:** This is a technique where people steal by writing a check on one account that doesn't have enough money in the bank to cover it, and by the time it is supposed to clear (during the float), they put the money in that account by writing a check on another account. Round and round she goes, and where it stops, nobody knows. As the money grows from the float never sinking, the amounts can get quite high.

**Vacation is the solution:** because during vacation, someone else handles all of the duties and access is temporarily disabled for the person on vacation (or it's supposed to be). Unable to act in a timely fashion, the float sinks the fraudster as

the kiting is detected. Requiring a 1-week vacation every quarter, for example, limits the loss from an attempted kiting to whatever they can float over a 90 day period.

- **Redundancy:** We notion that sound management practices for a company of substance requires that redundant people be available to handle issues, for example, when someone gets sick. Of course we don't want them to get sick, and hopefully they don't get sick too often, but if and when they do, their work stops, and if they are too important, the business also stops.

**Vacation is the solution:** to making sure the actual human redundancy actually works, as opposed to the theoretical redundancy that managers may claim to have (or not have because they need more budget). By actually using the redundancy quarterly, the overall system gets tested, and all of the replacement people get to use their less used brain and body parts in the redundant tasks. Failed updates to documentation and process mechanisms are detected, errors that were covered up by people who knew the work-arounds are exposed, and all sorts of good things happen.

- **Business Continuity:** People do get hit by trucks, fall off mountains, and...  
Took a break to put my breakfast bowl in the dishwasher, play with the grand kids a bit, discuss the plan for play for the day, ...

◦

## Conclusions

Take a break - it's good for you.