

8-9-2017

Yes, You Can Do More Than 1 Thing at a Time Successfully

Jim Smith

University of Central Florida, jim.smith@ucf.edu

Find similar works at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/ucf-forum>

Information presented on this website is considered public information (unless otherwise noted) and may be distributed or copied. Use of appropriate byline/photo/image credit is requested. We recommend that UCF data be acquired directly from a UCF server and not through other sources that may change the data in some way. While UCF makes every effort to provide accurate and complete information, various data such as names, telephone numbers, etc. may change prior to updating.

STARS Citation

Smith, Jim, "Yes, You Can Do More Than 1 Thing at a Time Successfully" (2017). *UCF Forum*. 265.
<https://stars.library.ucf.edu/ucf-forum/265>

This Opinion column is brought to you for free and open access by STARS. It has been accepted for inclusion in UCF Forum by an authorized administrator of STARS. For more information, please contact STARS@ucf.edu.



Yes, You Can Do More Than 1 Thing at a Time Successfully

By Jim Smith
UCF Forum columnist
Wednesday, August 9, 2017

Growing up was a little hectic in my family's household during the 1970s and 80s, but something I learned was that you can do more than one thing at a time and be good at all of them if you just apply yourself.

Here's my example – and if I learned from it, so can you:

My father, the ultimate salesman, could sell anything to anyone and when he entered a room he knew no strangers. On many occasions I would go with him and marvel at how he would strike up conversations with complete strangers. This was a gift.

If someone is good at something, hopefully this gift will be passed along to their children. I think I was lucky enough to inherit this “gift of gab” from my father, but my brother, on the other hand, ran from it whenever possible.

When I was not in school or church, I was working with my father and mother on whatever projects they were working on. As young as 13, I was driving the service truck for our fruit-harvesting business or working with our septic-tank business or maybe answering service calls from tenants in our rental houses or apartments.

This biggest challenge hit our family in 1985 as my father developed health issues and our business ventures started to falter. After several visits to the VA Hospital in Miami culminating with triple bypass surgery for my father, we continued the hectic pace. At the busiest time we were involved with septic-tank services, fruit harvesting, property rental/management, a Shaklee distributorship and a used-furniture and appliances venture. By 1987, my dad's health started to decline again and he was hospitalized more than two months. He returned home in January 1988 and resumed his schedule while recuperating, but passed away later that month.

After the shock subsided, my mother, brother and I decided to close the businesses and sell the property and equipment. To say this was a stressful time is an understatement.

But what did I learn from this experience? I learned that with God's guidance you can get through anything, big or small. Did I have to lean on these experiences at other times later in my life? Yes.

Over the years, I have had to deal with different types of adversity from the death of my father and mother, the death of a spouse, and my own health issues requiring surgery.

Did I simplify my life and not overcommit my daily schedule? No, at least not yet. I work at the UCF Valencia Osceola Campus and am entering my 22nd year at UCF. I own and operate my own DJ company, volunteer as a regional chapter officer for UCF Alumni, cheer on UCF athletics whenever possible, serve on my church board, participate in the church music ministry, facilitate a job club at church via online consultation, lead a weekly small-group study with my wife at our home, and coordinate the men's ministry conference trips annually.

Am I overcommitted? Maybe. Do I love what I do? Yes.

Do I see my lifestyle changing or slowing down soon? I hope not.

Am I my father's son who inherited the "gift of gab" and love working with people? Definitely.

To reiterate what I started out saying: You *can* multitask successfully if you just apply yourself.

One thing I *can* scratch off my accomplishment's list is writing for the UCF Forum this month as my term on the panel concludes. Thanks for the opportunity to share my comments one last time.

Jim Smith is assistant director of the UCF Valencia Osceola Campus. He can be reached at Jim.Smith@ucf.edu.