

AXE MEN

There once was an old wood chopper way up in the mountains. He worked hard all his life and chopped wood for the local mill. One day on the job site he was challenged by a very young wood chopper with massive muscles, and was clearly one of the best lumbermen in the region. They picked a date for the challenge and both men showed up early and well rested with their favorite axe by their side.

Bang! The starting gun fired and both men began to chop at a very rapid pace. The younger lumberman would look over occasionally and check out his progress against the older man. They seemed about even in the event, but he also noticed the old man sitting and taking a break every once in awhile. This impassioned the younger man to pick up his pace and chop even harder, so that he might pull ahead of the old lumberjack. Before long the finishing gun fired signaling the end of the contest.

Both piles of wood were counted and the old man had won. The

young man was shocked and said, "That's impossible! I saw him sitting and resting several times during the contest!" The older man replied "Yes, I was sitting and taking a rest. But I was sharpening my axe at the same time."

This brings me to my point regarding locksmiths, and most small business people that are reading this article. What are you doing to keep your axe sharp? Your key cutter sharp? Your mind, skills, and soul sharp?

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Your mind, skills, and soul sharp?**

One of the best ways is just to take a vacation every year. I'm not talking about some expensive European trip. But something that feeds your soul and refreshes you. This can be something so simple as a four day fishing trip with the family. What about books on business? We have required readings here

on such great books as, "Thou Shalt Prosper" by Rabbi Lapin, "Good to Great" by Jim Collins, and anything by Stephen Covey is always informative. Industry publications are also vital. Get a subscription and read it.

With that being said, a very good opportunity is coming upon very quickly. That is the ALOA Convention & Security Expo in Baltimore, MD this year. Getting to see and talk with other locksmiths is always helpful. Face to face communication is the true sharpening of ourselves.

During ALOA in Baltimore you should have a time of relaxation and time to take a fresh look at how you do business. I teach on retailing at the show, but I also get loads of ideas both from locksmiths and from other vendors that are in attendance. Proverbs 27:17 says, "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." That says it all. We all get sharper when we come together as a group. I know that every time we go, we get feedback on our company and products. We see it all as constructive, embrace the information, and move forward as a company and as a family.

