

# Consider the impact

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"How can I learn to slow down?" I asked a friend. "I've been working on talking more slowly and moving more slowly for over half my life. I'm just wired to go fast." I was upset because I had received feedback that I was presenting information on a conference call too quickly for people to fully understand it. And while I knew the feedback was fair and constructive, I just wasn't sure how I could go much more slowly.

"Well," he started. "I always consider the consequences. What happens if I move too quickly?"

Huh. That's a smart question.

Sometimes there aren't very significant negative consequences for moving too quickly. A typo won't bother most of my friends when I'm sending a quick text. If I miss something at the grocery store, I can turn around and go back. And I've often been rewarded for my speed, whether with stolen bases when I played softball, victories in certain card games (especially "Speed"), professional opportunities when I finished my "regular" work quickly, or compliments when I can calculate something quicker than others in the group.

On the other hand, there are many situations in which moving too quickly leads to a negative impact. Speaking too quickly on a client call, leaving people confused, for example. Or making a typo on a critical word in a text leading to someone showing up at the wrong time or wrong place. Speeding on the way to swim lessons, receiving a speeding ticket with my 1-year-old in the backseat. Or saying yes too quickly when I really should have said no, leading to an unwanted commitment. Indeed, there have been more instances than I can count in which I've had to repair what was really preventable damage. If only I had moved a little slower.

Because of my tendency to act without thinking things through, I had identified "Consider the impact" as one of my [personal commandments](#). This recent conversation was a good reminder that considering the impact could help me slow down.

You may not move too quickly, but chances are there is another area in your life in which you could benefit from considering the impact. I encourage you to be on the lookout for this. And the next time we're on a conference call together, please remind me to slow down!