

# Personal Excellence

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The Magazine of Personal Leadership

Oliver Demille  
Author and Speaker

October 2011

**Be  
Original**

**Power  
of Progress**

**New Definition  
of Success**

**Find Meaning in Life**



*"Personal Excellence is the only reading you'll need to do for continual self-improvement both personally and professionally!"*

—Sharlene Hawkes, Former Miss America, award-winning ESPN broadcaster

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# Personal Excellence

October 2011

The Magazine of Life Leadership

INSPIRATIONAL • SUCCESS

## New Definition of Success

*Beyond the religion of prosperity.*

by Oliver DeMille

THE LASTING LEGACY OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY MAY be its materialistic definition of *success*. Indeed, the *religion of prosperity* has grown to dominate politics, philosophy, religion, family, community, and education, as people now send their children to school with financial goals.

Even enemies of prosperity have learned to argue in materialistic language: Marx believed in a world dominated by conflict between poor and wealthy classes; Hitler argued for economic supremacy of one nation (based on his horrific view of racist supremacy); and Stalin, Mao, and a host of dictators amassed power and wealth to themselves and those who served them.

Altruistic movements from various religions and philosophies (such as feminism, tolerance, and environmentalism) struggled to gain support until they learned to make their case in terms of *profitability*.

The approach to materialism by intellectuals has usually been either to denigrate mankind's natural materialism and its excesses as "unfettered greed," or, less frequently, to side with the "virtue of prosperity" perspective.

The debate between the *virtuous poor* and *virtuous wealthy* made its rounds through politics, academia, media, religion, art, and science. Economists even got into the mix. John Maynard Keynes said that as societies become more prosperous, they begin to seek success in things beyond financial increase.

*In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a new consensus is emerging*—and it's not what you might think. In fact, like the earlier materialistic debate (*Success 1.0*), there are two main perspectives

on the new definition of *success (Success 2.0)*. The first is the *meaning* view. In this view, depression and poverty are bad; financial prosperity is good; and financial prosperity along with a life of real meaning is success.

Steve Jobs popularized this view when he told a graduating class that we should all spend our work lives doing things we really care about and enjoy. Popular courses at Harvard, Stanford, and other schools on

*Happiness in Life, or How to Be Happy*, have received a great deal of media coverage—and more students than typical science, history, or even finance classes. And why not? After all, *happiness is a concrete feeling that brings its own rewards*.

### Positive Psychology

A new field, *Positive Psychology*, has risen with a focus on happiness as the real measure of success. The findings are interesting:

people typically have more power over their *immediate happiness* than their *immediate wealth* or *attractiveness*; our thoughts have great impact on our happiness; and focusing effectively on happiness brings instant results that are often more pleasant than the noticeable rewards of food, alcohol, sex, or exercise.

Moreover, the growing *Success 2.0 movement* has adopted some assumptions from both sides of the debate on materialism: it argues that *some material success is needed to maintain long-term happiness*; and also that *at some point, enough is enough and people will find more happiness by enjoying family, fun, and service*.

This view rejects the extremes of both the *unfettered greed* and *virtuous poor* arguments,



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while adopting the moderate views of both: meaningful work and a liberal flow of money boost happiness, as does *working to live* (rather than *living to work*), spending time with family and friends, and giving needed service and monetary donations to others.

In short, the new definition of *success* argues that *financial prosperity is good* and that those who attain it will find more happiness by seeking lives and work with real meaning including *service to others*.

A review of *Flourish* by Martin Seligman put it: "We are hungry for a new definition of *the good life*. Fractured relationships, crumbling economies, environmental crises, and a continuous state of war all have chipped away at what was once thought to be the basis for happiness." Seligman introduces the *New Prosperity*—a concept based in *optimism*—and shows how it affects everything from "the health of a marriage, to recovery from illness, to fluctuations of the stock market. His new vision of *prosperity* combines *wealth* with *well-being*."

But not everyone is buying the new definition of *success*. For example, while men are three times more likely to find a happy woman more attractive than a proud woman, women are five times more likely to find a proud man more attractive than a happy one. And as the Tiger Mom debate shows, many parents are still convinced that *success* for their children means *prosperity* through an Ivy League degree and a highly-compensated profession, even if such a life is likely to be less about *leadership* or *meaning* than "*high class drone work*." Likewise, there is a darker side of *Success 2.0*.

## The Glory Years

Instead of a moderate combination of the following mantras 1) *work hard to build financial success*, and 2) *don't lose your life in work, but use work as a support to a great life with family, friends and meaningful service*, some are taking the de-emphasis on career success as permission to avoid work and accomplishment altogether: *Have fun, hang out with friends, party, live with your parents to avoid expenses, and forget about anything that takes hard work* is gaining popularity.

This view is not lost on marketers who see college as the glory years of partying.

*Today, students are more likely to want all three—a fun social life, a quality education, and preparation for a meaningful and rewarding career.* Even where past students combined two of these goals (e.g., *fun social life* and *career preparation*), they tended to clearly prioritize one over the other. Most students today want all three—at the same level of priority. In short, the *old formula* of *Success = Financial Prosperity* is being replaced with a *new view*: *Success = Real Happiness*

(*Financial Prosperity + Meaningful Work + Flourishing Relationships + Significant Service*).

With this new math, keeping score may be more complex and more accurate. The theme of *people giving up relationships for their work* is replaced in movies and TV with *people putting relationships above career but finding ways to make them both work*. They want to have their cake and eat it too—or to *just enjoy cake*.

*There is little need to worry about those who have decided, for now, to loaf through life—it won't last.* Success, both 1.0 and 2.0 varieties, is a widespread de-facto American religion. As one author wrote of Americans: "*What a curious people. Their mania for self-improvement encompassed everything that touched them, and they resented the cost of every change. They were proudly self-reliant and quick to assign blame to others for their disappointments. They were certain theirs was the most enlightened and envied society on earth, that human history was mostly a chronicle of their achievements, and that their country was*



*constantly in need of repair. Everything they had was better, and nothing was good enough. For all its power and influence, its abundance and enterprise, America was still an immature society: impatient, demanding, not comfortable with introspection, frivolous and audacious."* But when it comes time to do the big things, America rises to the occasion. It

often takes crisis, but once we come, we sway everything in our path. The current generation will do the same. Churchill quipped, *Americans can be counted on to do the right thing—after they've exhausted other possibilities.*

Clearly we need to overcome a few challenges: 85 percent of 2011 college graduates are moving back home after graduation—an alarming reality for their Boomer parents. Likewise, Gen X (born 1965-1985) has avoided taking on the responsibilities of past generations. But I believe that when the times require, they'll grow up and lead out. Many members of Gen X and Y worried that 9/11 was such a time, then relaxed as things seemed to normalize. They worried that the Great Recession was their call, even while they cling to disappearing hopes of *perpetual youth*.

Their time will come, and trends indicate that they will approach it with a new view of *success*. In the 1980s-90s, many people wanted to *get rich and get out*. Today, many people are restructuring their careers or engaging in entrepreneurial and other non-traditional enterprises to combine their hard work with more money, more time with family and hobbies, and more service and charitable contributions. *Success 2.0 is a good change*—as it

enables everyone to truly succeed. PE



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**ACTION: Aspire to Success 2.0.**

## Volume 16 Issue 10

*Personal Excellence* is published monthly by Executive Excellence Publishing, LLC (dba Leadership Excellence), 1806 North 1120 West, Provo, UT 84604.

**Editorial Purpose:** Our mission is to promote personal and professional development based on constructive values, sound ethics, and timeless principles.

**Basic Annual Rate:**  
US \$59 one year (12 issues)  
US \$119 two years (24 issues)

**Corporate Bulk Rates (same address)**  
US \$30 each per year for 5 to 25  
US \$20 each per year for 26 and up  
\*Ask about logo and custom editions and foreign bulk rates.

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Back Issues (print): US \$25  
Permission PDF: US \$100

**Submissions & Correspondence:**  
Please send any correspondence, articles, letters to the editor, and requests to reprint, republish, or excerpt articles to Editorial Department, Personal Excellence, 1806 North 1120 West, Provo, UT 84604, or email: [Editorial@LeaderExcel.com](mailto:Editorial@LeaderExcel.com)

**Customer Service/Circulation:**  
For customer service, or information on products and services, call 1-877-250-1983 or email: [CustomerService@LeaderExcel.com](mailto:CustomerService@LeaderExcel.com)

**Internet Address:** [www.LeaderExcel.com](http://www.LeaderExcel.com)

**Executive Excellence Publishing**  
Ken Shelton, CEO, Editor-in-Chief  
Sean Beck, Circulation Manager

**Marketing Offices:**  
**Leadership Excellence**  
1806 North 1120 West  
Provo, UT 84604  
1-877-250-1983  
1-801-375-4060

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# Your Leadership

It's your very personhood.



by Gregory Gull

THE COMMON PERSPECTIVE on leadership—indeed, the very use of the term *leadership*—is often synonymous with top management positions (hence, the common phrase, *leadership position*).

This perspective informs how we think about organizations and how we manage and lead people. Those who realize *success* in this effort are frequently labeled *leaders*. Acquiring a *leadership position* is the Holy Grail of gaining influence over people and things. The many who haven't yet realized such (positional) success but aspire to do so, look to the movers and shakers searching for *the one thing* (trait, technique, skill) that would afford them greater influence over others. Consequently, the question often raised is, *how does one assume/gain a leadership role/position?*

To help those with such aspirations, *position holders* are the focus of research among business-minded academics, as well as writers in the popular business press. And many seminars, workshops and even degree programs claim to give us the tools to lead out—as if *leadership* is simply a skill to acquire.

**Why are there so many theories of leadership but rarely real leadership?** The models and theories advanced by business-minded academics include the belief that reality is comprised of separate, discrete and mostly independent moving entities that at times bump into each other in pursuit of their self-interest. They attempt to not just offer *descriptive* but also *prescriptive* information on leadership. However, given the rarity of the leadership experience in practice, these descriptions and prescriptions have not brought clarity to the nature of the leadership experience.

For example, researchers have developed essentially two types of leadership, *transactional* and *transformational*.

In *transactional leadership*, the focus is largely on exchange between *the leader* and *the led*. The transaction is about the leader presenting *the led* with the prospect of meeting someone else's unmet need or desire in return for doing what those in authority wish done. Basically the transaction involves the proposition, *if you do this then you will get that*. The

leader administers a psychologically focused kick-in-the-butt through a *transaction* to instigate the desired behavior. We mustn't confuse this with *inspiration* or *motivation*, it is simply behavior caused by an external force.

The popular, though less practiced, *transformational* style of leadership doesn't focus so much on the follower's needs/wants as the lever of movement, as it does on the leader finding a *connection* with the follower that both can find motivating and morally appropriate. In practice, this approach tends to point to a leader's *characteristics* for which followers are believed to have an affinity. Given our *cultural bent* for *outward image* and *style*, the *charisma* of the leader attracts most attention—even though *transformational leadership* includes supporting follower's growth.

## It's About We, not Me

Unfortunately *leadership* can't be defined as a *characteristic* of an individual, since it is an emergent property of the relationship between and among individuals. This likely could explain



why so many academic researchers, informed by the dominant system of orientation, have failed to reliably model or predict *effective leadership* by examining the *traits* or *characteristics* of high-level position holders.

Today, we understand that the reality of life is not simply a collection of independent individuals bumping into each other as each strives to have it all for *Me*—an egoic conception of self. We are not simply instrumental to each other's needs—a meaningful life is *not* about *Me* securing mine.

Leadership has to do with a *We* and not with a *Me*. Analogously, neither *hydrogen* nor *oxygen* has the characteristic of *wetness*, yet water is wet, since it's *the synergy* of the two from which *wetness* emerges: so too with leadership.

Position-to-position, objectified individual-to-objectified individual can't possibly form a *We*—since two *its* don't make a *We*! The *leadership experience* does not emerge between *object-to-object*, such as *boss-to-subordinate*, or *leader-to-follower* or *manager-to-employee*.

*Leadership is a human experience that emerges from two or more people in person-to-person relationship*—not an *economic*, *quid pro quo*, or *enlightened self-interest* relationship. It is an *I* relating to an *I* in the process of forming a *We*—a partnership among equals wherein each *I* is acting congruent with his/her *I-We* nature and in the process each facilitates the unfolding of potential in each.

While you and I are different individual *I's*, we must not think of each other as separate *Me's*—though we may think we are. This *I* that I am, and the *I* that you are, are deeply connected. By acknowledging and acting on this connection, we become a *We* and thus enable the emergence of *the leadership experience*.

What we are speaking to is not so much about relating to each other in *the first person*, but rather *first as persons*. Then and only then can a *We* emerge from the coming together of *I's*. Recognizing our *I-We* nature puts us in touch with the individual and collective aspects of being human and to the responsibilities we have as a result.

We need each other for more than satisfying our material desires. We have a deep interpenetrating responsibility to both our own and each other's unfolding. It is through this unfolding that we actualize our potential and ensure the viability of our enterprises.

**First Be.** We've become so engrossed in acquiring *the tools* we think we need, we've forgotten *our essential nature* and *what is required for leadership*. We already have the two essential elements: we are human beings, and we have each other. These enable us to develop productive relationships to actualize our potential.

*The experience of leadership* involves the process of *coming into being*—emergence, revealing and actualizing the human aspect of yourself that is in potential. People acting out of their *personhood*, not as functionaries holding a position, will enable this emergence. You must develop and express your *personhood* to facilitate the emergence of a *leadership experience*; doing otherwise is mere folly and an affront to the human spirit. To quote e.e. cummings, "If you can be, be. If not, cheer up and go on about other people's business, doing and undoing unto others 'til you drop."

**Lead from an unchanging center—your personhood.** Seize each moment to use your *personhood* as the way to provide *the experience of leadership*. Seek to *connect* and *guide*, not *command* and *control*. PE

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**ACTION:** Lead from your personhood.

# Little White Lies

*Fibs and half-truths hurt you.*



by Dave Anderson

**E**VERYONE TELLS A WHITE LIE every now and then—but that doesn't make it okay.

White lies can do serious damage to your reputation and lead to much bigger issues.

**Imagine this:** It's 4:30 p.m. on Friday after a hard week. You're at a good stopping place, and plan to leave by 5 p.m. Suddenly, the phone rings. You glance at your Caller ID screen and cringe. It's your most talkative client—the long-winded one who typically calls “just to chat” and keeps you occupied for hours.

So, do you take the call and resign yourself to a late start on the weekend? Or do you have your receptionist tell him that *you've already left for the day* so you can deal with him on Monday?

If you opt for the *white lie*, you're not alone. We're all guilty of stretching the truth every now and then, and some of us do it so often we barely notice anymore. But those *harmless little fibs* reflect on your character—after all, *lying is lying*—and they can open the door to bigger, darker, more destructive lies.

**White lies are the gateway drug to bigger offenses.** Get away with them, and you're tempted to tell bigger ones.

Eventually, your lies *will* catch up with you and damage your relationships—and that's not a risk you should take.

While most *white lies* seem harmless, consider the potential consequences. What if the client happens to find out you actually *were* in the office? He may feel offended enough to leave, or to tell other clients about your behavior.

*White lies* can also harm your psyche. They work much the same as other *lesser offenses* (say, flirting with a married coworker). Basically, you become desensitized to the feelings of wrongness and guilt, and, soon, you are finding ways to excuse more serious infractions.

If you start classifying lies as *white* or *whoppers*, you might as well categorize different levels of stealing. The *white lie* version of embezzlement could be taking office supplies home, or making personal copies on the company machine. Is that the standard you want to set?

To create a *no lying zone*, take **four tips:**

**1. Tell the truth at all costs (literally!).**

You should tell the truth, *even when it is not easy, cheap, popular, or convenient.* Selling a product at the right price (rather

than an inflated one that you think you can get away with) may cost you more short term, but *dishonesty and deception can cost you much more in the long run.*

**2. Don't give false impressions.** In business, false impressions are everywhere. From misleading ad campaigns to padded resumes, people are trying to make others believe things are better than they are. *This is just another form of lying!* Be upfront and honest with those you work with (or risk losing your credibility and building bitterness and resentment in a relationship. Think about ways that you may be misleading others, and stop it. Don't spin feedback to make someone feel good. And don't mislead potential employees about pay or promotion.

**3. Never ask someone else to lie on your behalf.** This is an abuse of your power, position, relationship, and friendship.

## PROFESSIONAL • LIFTOFF

# Liftoff Leadership

*Take yourself to new heights.*



by Betty Shotton

**W**HEN MY FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR hopped out of the Cessna, said, “You're on your own,” I knew it was *my time of reckoning.* Being alone on my first solo flight drove home an extraordinary truth: no one can save you when you are alone in an airplane. *It is lonely at the top.* There are no lifelines up there. You're *the ultimate decision-maker* in a life-or-death situation (true of all leaders).

**Leaders affect people's lives.**

The impact of their conduct and character is pervasive and powerful in determining the trajectory and outcome of the lives of others—and the likelihood that they'll deliver on their promise and potential. *Your leadership can and should extend beyond the bottom line to impact people and society in positive and purposeful ways.* Sadly, many people fall short of delivering on that promise, as we see a general lack of trust and confidence in leaders that paralyzes their effectiveness.

**It is an honor to be a leader.** It's also a big responsibility. Reflect on your *leadership character and conduct:* *What kind of leader are you? What kind do you want to be? What do you stand for? What effect does your conduct and character have on others?*

You need *strength of character* to tackle big issues, face failure, resolve problems, and elevate perspectives. To be a

Asking an employee or colleague to lie for you can do permanent damage to your integrity and reputation—and it opens the door for them to lie to you, and those you do business with, as well.

**4. Beware of four words that signal you are headed for trouble:** *Just tell him that . . .* For example, “*Just tell him that the offer has already expired,*” or, “*Just tell him that I'm not here,*” are lies that can lead to big trouble.

**Dishonesty creates scandals and shatters lives.** Even though telling the truth is often hard and unpopular, *honesty is rule #1 to developing character.* Tell the truth because it is the right thing to do and encourage others to do the same. **PE**

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**ACTION:** Stop telling little white lies.

great leader takes knowledge and expertise, courage and integrity, vision and resolve. When the future is clouded by doubt, others must be buoyed by your commitment to what is possible and your unflinching faith in them. The strength of your character forms the foundation of your leadership.

**Your character is made up of what you value—your guiding principles.** Your character is defined by what you hold to be important and meaningful in life. What is it *about you* that inspires people and motivates them to work hard, with passion and purpose? What do others see in you? *Who do you choose to be?*

As a leader, you can be profitable and provide meaning. You can be

accountable and require others to be the same. You can elevate perspectives and create a culture that fosters cooperation, collaboration, and innovation. You can inspire others to reach their potential and deliver service that puts smiles on faces and makes people feel valued.

**You have choices.** You can become so distracted and narrowly focused on numbers that you forget the big picture. You can lose your *enthusiasm* and *inspiration* and fail to recognize opportunities to bring meaning and purpose into the lives of others through your choices.

Recognize and respect human dignity, and bring meaning and purpose into your decision-making. Step up and *make meaningful and lasting contributions to the lives of others* and to our world. **PE**

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**ACTION:** Lift off and explore new heights.

# Are You Mentally Tough?

*Train your brain to think like a champ.*



by Alex Jakobson

REMEMBER THE GATORADE commercial from the 1990s, *Be Like Mike*? Of course, 99.99 percent of us can't dunk or dribble like NBA superstar *Michael Jordan*—no matter hard we try or how much we practice—yet you and I can and should learn to *Be Like Mike*.

To become a world-class athlete like Michael Jordan, you need to possess more than physical prowess. These elite champions have developed a *mental toughness*. This enables them to persevere when faced with adversity or challenge. In work and life, mental strength helps you cope with pressure, competition, obstacles, set-backs, and other challenges. It enables you to muster the courage to focus on the tasks at hand so that you perform at or near your best—even when success seems far away and the pressure seems overwhelming.

You surely know people who are mentally tough. They tend to be optimists who rise to the challenge instead of crumbling under pressure. These people seem to be born with an innate belief in their own capabilities.

*Optimism* and *pessimism* are not traits you are born with, but rather patterns of thinking that are learned over time. Your parents, family and culture help shape the way you look at the world. If you've learned to be a pessimist, you can just as easily re-train yourself to think in new, more productive ways.

So, *how tough are you?* The *Fortius –Mindset™ Assessment Tool*, developed by rogenSi's Dr. Cory Middleton, tests mental toughness in four core areas. Cory developed this tool after spending several years researching world-class athletes and other professionals who face grueling challenges daily—soldiers, firefighters, and business executives. He found that these elite performers have a strong awareness of *four mental characteristics*: self-belief, motivation, coping, and focus. Self-belief and motivation provide an overall drive and determination to keep going; whereas focus and coping are essential mechanisms you can use to get through the heat of battle.

To test your own mental toughness, *rate these five statements* on a scale of 1 to 4 (with 4 being the lowest level of

agreement, 1 the highest): 1) The quality of my thinking is *significantly impacted* by outside influences; 2) I start to doubt myself under pressure; 3) I have the tendency to blow things out of proportion; 4) My drive for results is at a level where I put a lot of pressure on myself; and 5) I can be sensitive to the approval of others. *Now, add your points.*

Use these *four categories* to score your test and gauge your mental toughness:

- **Mentally fit** (17 to 20): Your mindset is strong and consistent. You're self-driven in your determination and commitment to deliver quality performances. You handle pressure very well and cut out distractions and focus on the right thing at the right time. You have a positive and enduring mindset that enables you to consistently perform toward the upper end of your potential.



- **Proficient** (13 to 16): Your mindset is reliable, resilient, and often keeps you in the game. However, you're likely affected by higher stress and pressure. You bounce back quickly, but in the moment, pressure can have a negative impact on the quality of your work. You are a little tough on yourself with regards to the how you judge your work.

- **Opportunity to improve** (9 to 12): Your mindset can be fairly inconsistent, going up or down based on your environment. Your mindset rises and falls based on various factors. For some, it's related to creating a pressure-cooker-type drive toward achieving your goals. For others, it may be related to a lack of drive or perhaps self-doubt under pressure. You are likely to blow things out of proportion and react negatively to others' expectations and pressures.

- **Needs major improvement** (5 to 8): You feel the effects of stress on a regular basis and may struggle to maintain your drive and confidence under pressure. Lower levels of performance ener-

gy make it hard for you to stay committed to your goals in the face of challenge and distraction. You tend to blow situations out of proportion and may find it difficult to remain positive from time to time. The state of your mindset greatly affects the quality of your performance.

Once you know how you measure up, work to strengthen your mindset. If your score indicates there is room for improvement, try these strategies.

- To gain higher *motivation*, focus on process as a means to outcome, set aspiring goals and assign meaning and purpose to tasks.
- Boost *self-confidence* through practice and specificity. Practice self-control to cultivate belief in your potential and listen to feedback from yourself and others. Whenever possible, step outside your comfort zone to draw strength from experiences.
- To cope with *difficult situations*, ask yourself questions to gain a realistic perspective and greater emotional control; choose to learn rather than dwell on failures; tackle challenges step-by-step and engage in learned optimism.
- To improve *focus*, assess your knowledge and skills and develop a learning journey; exercise emotional control and selective attention to achieve heightened concentration; and use a *look-aim-fire* strategy to create focus/follow-through.

The *Global Financial Crisis* has created a tough test for millions of Americans faced with loss of jobs, homes and financial livelihoods. As with any tough situation, those who rise to the challenge will not only survive; they will thrive.

*Our greatest presidents faced the gravest challenges:* George Washington was tasked with leading a fledgling nation and setting important new precedents; Abraham Lincoln saved the union and united a divided nation; Franklin D. Roosevelt guided the nation through World War II and brought an end to the Great Depression. Were it not for these unprecedented tests of leadership, these presidents would not be near universally regarded as our nation's greatest.

Think about these lessons when you practice these strength-building exercises. Whether managing a bigger workload, parlaying your skills to take the business in a new direction, or starting out in a completely new career path, leaders who maintain a positive mindset will, in the end, be better off for having mastered the challenge. PE

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**ACTION:** Train to become mentally tough.

# Lead with Genius

Find your sweet spot of power.



by Gina Rudan

**T**IMES OF TECTONIC SHIFTS and tumult are challenging, but also offer *tremendous opportunities to unleash genius*. Down economies produce groundbreaking innovation, reinvention, collaboration, and creativity. While most folks hunker down to ride out the storm, *you can race into the rough surf* to see what's possible.

How often do you demonstrate a fearless, creative, entrepreneurial, initiative-taking, problem-solving, risk-taking style that results in new ideas, products, and opportunities? Will you come out of this recession waving the golden ticket, rising to a new level of excellence?

As the leader, you're the torch-bearer—the *only one* who can give yourself and others the permission and inspiration to realize your potential. If you want others to step up, take risks, and defy the status quo, *you need to show them the way*.

In you is a *sweet spot of powerful potential—a practical genius*. It's found at the place where your *hard assets* (talents, strengths, and skills—your 9-to-5 self) and your *soft assets* (your values, passions, and creative instincts—the weekend you) meet.

Think about your personal values, passions, or character strengths. Self-reflection and self-awareness are vital for leaders. You need to know your hard and soft assets—where your genius lies—and how to project and communicate that unique genius—marketing it boldly.

*Marketing your genius has nothing to do with personal branding or self-promotion—everything to do with paradox*. When you *integrate and exude the opposing forces within you* and market the whole, original, fully-realized you, instead of sharing parts of you that you *think* matter most to others, *the world opens up*. By boldly living your paradox—you *set a course to new heights*.

**Richard Branson is the poster-child for paradox**. He accepts and leverages his contradictions without apology. He is the master of paradox and surprises us with his seamless authenticity. *He leads with his genius*—and all of the creative, energetic, resourceful people who comprise the Virgin family follow.

When you lead with your genius, *three good things happen*:

- **You show 'em what you've got**. From a competitive standpoint, that's very valu-

able. From an *inspirational standpoint*, it's incredibly powerful. People *want* to be led by those who *know what they believe* and have the skills and resourcefulness to *make things happen*. When you're flexing your *creative muscles* as much as your *strategic decision-making abilities* or flaunting your *passions* as much as your *intellectual prowess*, you're *selling confidence*—the best definition of leadership.

- **You show 'em what they've got**. This is classic *behavior modeling*. If you want to see *heroics* in your team, *act like a hero*. If you want to see more *empathy, creativity* or *collaboration*, be more *empathetic, creative, or collaborative*. Be in the trenches, side-by-side with your people, living your genius out loud. Others will see a reflection of themselves in you—so give them something great to look at.

- **You blaze the trail of infinite possi-**

**bility**. Seeing that Starbucks had lost its mojo, **Howard Schultz** put himself back in charge to shape a new future. He led with his genius—his passion, focus, and street smarts—and rallied people to quit complaining and *do something entrepreneurial* about it. In one bold act—a loud, colorful projection of his paradox—he showed us all what is possible.

**You are not trapped** in a miserable economy, imperiled by *global uncertainty*, or mired in an *intractable political dynamic*—you're just not seeing the *infinite paths* that can take you toward an amazing future. Be the out-there, out-loud genius who inspires, ignites, and unleashes the *genius potential* in yourself and others. **PE**

*Gina Rudan is author of Practical Genius (Simon & Schuster/Touchstone) and President of Genuine Insights, a leadership development firm. Visit GenuineInsights.com.*

**ACTION: Start leading with your genius.**

## MENTAL • MISTAKES

### Why You Make Mistakes

You can quickly reduce your number.



by Peter Demarest

**Y**OU ARE NOT IMMUNE TO making mistakes, and then hating that moment when you realize that *you just screwed up*.

When it hits you that you've made a mistake, you have that instant of *Wow, that was stupid, what was I thinking?* before you move on to *solve the problem*. Eliminating that time between *when you screw up* and *when you realize you've screwed up* is *practical enlightenment*.

For years, I've studied mind-brain science to see if there is a better way to think so we make fewer mistakes and create a better life.

**But you can go beyond preventing mistakes—you can dramatically improve how you think, make choices, act, and react without having to fix your so-called weaknesses**. I derived these ideas from research in *neuro-axiology*—a combination of *brain science* and *value science*. *Axiology* is about *how our value perceptions influence our thoughts, choices, actions, and reactions* and how value gets created.

**I invite you to start thinking better** by asking yourself *The Central Question* of life, love, and leadership. It's simple, but very helpful. Whenever you're feeling confused, upset, reactive, conflicted, confronted, or frustrated, or at anytime that you simply want to be thinking the best you can, just ask yourself, *What choice can I make and action can I take, in*

*this moment, to create the greatest net value?* You will make better use of the strengths and wisdom you already have as you get better at answering *The Central Question*.

Success in life is not about *the value you get*—it's about *the value you create*. When you think in terms of *The Central Question*, you make fewer mistakes, make better decisions, and create greater value in your life and work.

**Usually, you act out of habit**. You allow yourself to be controlled by your emotions and mental programming. You let your weakness and self-centric perceptions of the world run the show. *Do you really need to let your upset over the guy who cut you off on the way to*

*work ruin your day and keep you from being as happy and productive as you could be?* You get angry out of habit, but if you shift your perspective from self-centric upsets to what you value and the value you can create—you can change your life.

*The Central Question* helps you gain more confidence, satisfaction, joy, and fulfillment. You get better in your work *and* relationships. You argue less, empower others more. You are more productive *and* more at peace.

There is so much more to life than money, power, and status. When you focus on the question of *what creates greatest net value*, you'll develop more *practical enlightenment*. You'll have a greater sense of meaning, purpose, and fulfillment. You'll be *more successful*. **PE**

*Peter Demarest is a life coach and co-author of Answering The Central Question and co-founder and President of Axiogenics. Visit www.axiogenics.com.*

**ACTION: Focus on the Central Question.**

# Be Original

## Opt out of ordinary.



by Seth Godin

ONCE, WHEN YOU WERE A child, the system set out to persuade you of *something that isn't true*. Not just persuade, but drill, practice, reinforce and, yes, *brainwash*. The mission: to teach you that you are average; that compliant work is the best way to a reliable living; that creating average stuff for average people, again and again, is a safe and easy way to get what you want. Step out of line and the system would nudge (or push) you back to the center. Show signs of creativity, originality or genius, and well-meaning parents, teachers and authority figures would *eagerly* get you back in line.

Our culture needed compliant workers who would contribute without complaint, and we set out to create them. So, you were brainwashed into fitting in—and then discovered that the economy wanted people who stood out instead.

You were trained to be a compliant cog—someone who could mindlessly follow instructions as opposed to seeking out innovation and surprise. Public education turns out compliant workers—not educated voters, or passionate idea-makers. Exceptional teachers are not only rare, but they're almost always in trouble for bending the rules.

You were *brainwashed* to believe that you're stuck with what you've got, so you need to punch a clock, follow a manual and do what you're told. Is this the best it's going to get? *Same job, but more work, less pay. Same path, fewer options.* It's possible that you've trudged as far as you can go on this road, and that the slog will just be *more of the same*. But I don't believe it. Why? Because *there's more leverage, more degrees of freedom and more opportunity today than ever before—if you're up for the choice.*

The *new revolution* has opened doors. If you've got the time, intellect, and access to get your hands on a big idea, you can reinvent yourself, regardless of what you do, who you do it with, or what the people around you expect.

The pillars we grew up with (things like General Motors, TV, the postal service, retirement, top-down media and commodities) are disappearing, being replaced with new ways of interacting, making a living, and *making a difference*.

*Look around. Who are the successful people today?* The system that nurtured our parents/grandparents has shifted. You were *brainwashed* into believing a set of rules that aren't true any more. So, rather than use the tools of today to support your effort to do yesterday's job better, *reinvent your role in the system.*

*Are you serious about transformation*—a *reinvention* that changes the game, an *overhaul* in what you believe and how you do your job. If so, then right here, right now, you can start.

*Do work that matters.* You now have the *leverage* to make a difference—the *leverage* to spread your ideas and have impact. You have more *leverage* (more *chances* and *power*) to change the world. What will you do about it? When?

### Use Seven Levers

Here are *seven levers of reinvention*:

**1. Connect.** *Social media is a crack in the wall between you and the rest of the world.* Digital media enables you to make *real connections*, to earn permission and gain insights from people. *We were isolated, now we're connected.* A few years ago, you lacked the time, money or connections to be heard. Today, *the door is wide open.* If you can reach and touch or change people, you'll gain in influence, authority, and power. *The past was isolated; the future is connected.* You grew up interacting with a small circle; now, *you can interact with just about anyone.* This changes everything—if you let it.

**2. Be generous.** The new economy often involves *trading in things that don't cost money.* There's no incremental cost in writing an essay, composing a song, or making an introduction. So, *you can give before you get.* The *generosity economy* rewards people who create and participate in *circles of gifts.* Not the direct *I-gave-you-this-you-give-me-that*, but a tribal economy of talented individuals who are connected, mutually trustful and supported by one another, and in a position to create a movement, to *deliver items* of value, to *move ideas* forward.

**3. Make art.** Art is an *original gift*, a connection that changes the recipient, an ability to make a difference. Art isn't a painting or a poem—it is *something that anyone can do.* If you interact with others, you can create something new that changes everything. I call that *art.* Art doesn't follow instructions or orders. Instead, *art is the human act of creating the uncreated, of connecting with another person at a human level.* Markets



will reward art handsomely, and hand out the compliant work to the lowest bidder. *Art feels risky because it is—you might not like it, might not be touched, might even laugh at the effort.* Taking these risks leads you to rewards.

**4. Acknowledge the lizard.** The prehistoric *lizard brain* doesn't like being laughed at. And so it shuts down your art. This *resistance* is the little voice that encourages you to follow instructions. It lives in fear, and doesn't hesitate to shut you down at the first sign of possible derision or ostracization. *Resistance is the sole barrier between today and your art.* So, acknowledge the voice of skepticism—hear the voice of the lizard brain—but then stand up, walk to the podium, and do the work. Acknowledge the lizard so you can then ignore it.

**5. Ship.** *Scarcity creates value—people pay extra for things that are hard to get* (surplus things go cheap). So, what's scarce? The ability to ship. *If you can get something out the door while others cringe in fear, you win.* If you make things happen, you become *indispensable.* If you can get things done, close the sale, ship product, and make a difference, you're *the linchpin*—someone we can't live without. Shipping is hard because of resistance (if you ship, you might fail—and then be held accountable).

**6. Fail.** A key part of shipping is *the ability to fail, often and with grace, and in public!* The old economy was based on things that took a long time to build. No one at Buick or the Metropolitan Opera was interested in failure. It took too long to create these institutions for them to relish the idea of *growth through failure.* Today, the only way to grow is to ship risky things, to create change, to make art, to change people. And yet, shipping risks failure. And you must risk failure.

**7. Learn.** This pillar is the key to the other six. School used to exist to learn a trade. You apprenticed, then worked your life in the same job, doing the same work. Today, to bring the *school-as-event mindset* to work is to court failure. *School isn't over—school is now.* School is blogs, experiments, and experiences and the *constant failure of shipping and learning.*

The path to reinvention is just that—a path. The opportunity is to discard what you think you know and learn what you need to learn—every day. PE

Seth Godin is author of *Linchpin: Are You Indispensable?* and a dozen other books. He writes a blog: Seth ships. Visit [www.SethGodin.com](http://www.SethGodin.com).

**ACTION:** Reject ordinary: Be an original.

# Power of Progress

Harness it to excel at work.



by Teresa  
Amabile and  
Steven Kramer

**T**O PERFORM AT YOUR MOST PRODUCTIVE and creative, you must be *fully engaged* in your work—and feel that you are making progress. The term *inner work life* describes the confluence of emotions, perceptions and motivations that you experience at work, and your *inner work life* can dramatically affect your performance and progress.

What happens at work that makes people *happy, engaged, creative, and productive*—or not? We asked people to keep a *diary of events that stand out in their day*, and we collected nearly 12,000 event-of-the-day narratives. Here is just one entry, from *Marsha*: “Today our office worked like a real team again. It was wonderful. We forgot the current stressful situation and have all worked around the clock to get a big project done. I have been here about 15 hours, but it has been one of the best days!”

When we saw this entry, we were stunned, because we had read *Marsha’s* earlier entries. A reorganization in her company had frustrated *Marsha* and her colleagues. In fact, just two days earlier, *Marsha* had written: “*Our team is falling apart*—the contractors don’t care about the work. I think they are all interviewing for other jobs. If management set out to destroy teamwork and to purposefully make people unhappy they couldn’t have done a better job.”

**What changed?** How does a person go from being *disengaged and concerned about her job* to working around the clock and feeling great about it? How does a team go from *falling apart to working together beautifully* in two days? Initially, we looked for obvious motivators. Recognition? No. *Marsha* and her team did receive some recognition from top management, but it came at the end of this project. And, the team received no tangible reward for putting in extra time and giving up a long weekend.

We’d witnessed *the power of progress*: making headway on meaningful work brightens *inner work life* and boosts long-term performance. *Real progress triggers positive emotions like satisfaction, gladness, even joy*. It leads to a sense of accomplishment and self-worth, as well

as positive views of the work and, sometimes, the team or organization. Such thoughts and perceptions (along with the positive emotions) feed the motivation, the deep engagement, that is crucial for blockbuster performance.

On a majority of peoples’ *best days*, they make *progress* in their work. On most *worst days*, they experience a *setback*. This pattern is the *progress principle*: of all the positive events that influence inner work life, the single most powerful is *progress in meaningful work*; of all the negative events, the single most powerful are *setbacks in the work*.

**Making progress is the best way to boost your inner work life.** Even when progress happens in small steps, your sense of steady forward movement toward a key goal can make the difference between a *great day* and a *terrible one*.

## EMOTIONAL • ESTEEM

# Boost Your Self-Esteem

Don’t believe everything you think.



by Louise Hart

**S**OMETIMES YOU NEED TO stop the busyness of life to quiet your mind and sort things out; to go back a few steps in order to move forward; to shed what you don’t want in order to make room for what you *do* want; to put aside your fixation on externals and go within. It takes honesty to listen deeply; it takes courage to be open to change, to growth, to transformation.

Your *self-image, self-concept, self-esteem* is controlled by what you repetitiously tell yourself. Your ongoing messages greatly impact your emotions, actions, relationships, and results.

**Self-talk is the powerful inner voice that you hear in your mind.** Often the *volume* is so low that you are unaware of the messages. Yet the *tone* of the inner dialogue determines if you are your own best friend or worst critic. With self-talk, *you plant seeds in your unconscious mind* that grow in your life.

You can *encourage or discourage* yourself, lift yourself up or put yourself down, repeat your history or change its course. Only when you *consciously tune in* to the self-talk and turn up the volume can you hear those old messages and begin to free yourself of their grip.

People who tell themselves how incapable, unlucky, and awful they are tend to believe it. Without realizing it,

Your inner work life will lift or drag depending on whether your projects move forward, even slightly. *Small wins* have a surprisingly *strong positive effect*, and *small losses* a *strong negative one*.

**Your inner work life is much better on progress days.** You are more *intrinsically motivated*—by the interest, enjoyment, challenges, and involvement in your work. You are *highly engaged*. So, every day protect some time to make at least incremental progress on the work that is most meaningful to you. And when setbacks occur, don’t treat them as *failures*, but as *challenges and opportunities* for learning. You can then harness *the power of progress* to excel at your work. **PE**

*Teresa Amabile and Steven Kramer are authors of The Progress Principle (Harvard Business Review Press). Visit [www.progressprinciple.com](http://www.progressprinciple.com).*

**ACTION:** Experience progress daily at work.

they replay blaming and shaming statements and re-inflict the abuse.

## Obverse Eight Tips

Here are *eight tips* to enhance your self-esteem and self-worth:

- 1. Listen to your inner dialogue.** Once aware of what you are saying to yourself, you can begin to *change your mind*.
- 2. Don’t believe everything you think!**
- 3. Stop stinkin’ thinking’.** You might say *Cancel* to erase a negative statement. Or label it *spam* and toss it as *junk mail*.
- 4. Turn negative thoughts into positive affirmations.** For example, change “I can’t do anything right”, to “I succeed when I put my mind to it.”
- 5. Think of what you could have done,** instead of berating yourself for what you *should have done*.
- 6. Use positive self-talk** to create what you *do want in your life*. Encourage and support progress. Affirmations can help you move from “I can’t” to “Of course I can!”
- 7. Focus on your strengths.** Write this: *I’m terrific because . . .* and finish the sentence; do it again. Your negative self-talk may protest; do it anyway.
- 8. Be your own best friend.** Like a loving parent, have compassion with yourself and nudge yourself positively to do the right thing.

Realizing that *you have control over your thoughts* empowers you to make better choices that bring more positive results into every aspect of your life. **PE**

*Dr. Louise Hart is a community psychologist and author of On the Wings of Self-Esteem. Visit [www.upliftpress.com](http://www.upliftpress.com).*

**ACTION:** Boost your self-esteem.

# Optimal Performance

Learn to gain and stay in state of flow.



by Daniel Goleman

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN stress and performance has been known for a century in psychology. It's the *Yerkes-Dodson Law*, wherein **three main states** are depicted: *disengagement*, *flow*, and *frazzle*. Each impacts your ability to perform at your best: *disengagement* and *frazzle* torpedo your efforts, while *flow* lets them soar.

Boredom and *disengagement* trigger too little of the stress hormones—and performance lags. As you get more motivated and engaged, *good stress* brings you to the *optimal zone*, where you perform at your best. If the challenges get too great and you become overwhelmed, you go into the zone of *burnout*—where stress hormone levels get too high and hamper performance.

- **Disengagement.** People stuck in *disengagement* are bored, uninspired and disinterested. They have little motivation to give their best, instead just doing well enough. In top-performing teams, there are 10 times more fully engaged workers than disengaged; in average-performing outfits, there are just two engaged employees for every disengaged one. Engaged people are more productive, attentive, and loyal.

As you move from *boredom* toward the *optimal zone* on the performance arc, your brain triggers increasing stress hormones, and you enter the range of *good stress* where your performance picks up. Challenges—like getting motivated to reach a goal, or exhibiting your best skills, or racing to meet a deadline—focus your attention and elicit your best efforts. *Good stress* gets you engaged, enthused and motivated, and mobilizes just enough of the stress hormones cortisol and adrenaline—along with beneficial brain chemicals like dopamine—to do the job effectively. *Good stress* mobilizes their benefits.

- **Frazzle.** When demands become too great, when pressure *overwhelms* you—too much to do with too little time or support—you enter the *zone of bad stress*. Just beyond the *optimal zone* at the top of the performance arc is a *tipping point* where the brain secretes too many stress hormones, and they interfere with your ability to work well, to learn, to innovate, to listen, and to plan and perform.

The costs of *chronic stress* go beyond performance. In this zone, *allostatic load* means that the damaging effects of stress hormones predominate, creating imbalances in the immune and nervous systems. You're then more susceptible to illness, and can't think clearly. Your body clock becomes confused, and you sleep poorly.

**At the maximal output of stress hormone, you become overwhelmed, which**

**greatly impairs your cognitive abilities.** For example, performance in math and language can drop 50 percent; you respond in a rigid way; you can't adapt to new situations or concentrate—you are easily distracted; your capacity to learn is diminished; you lose memory.

**The biological effects of bad stress endanger your health in many ways.** There's an increase in abdominal fat, and insulin resistance goes up. Your body becomes more prone to diabetes, heart disease, and artery blockages. The effectiveness of your immune system plummets. Cortisol degrades the myelin sheath that coats nerve pathways, impairing the transmission of signals from one brain area to another. So, the neural, cognitive and biological effects of extreme stress are severe.

- **Flow.** Flow is the *zone of optimal performance*—a peak of self-regulation, the maximal harnessing of emotions in the service of performance or learning. In *flow* you channel positive emotions in an energized pursuit of a task at hand. You feel a spontaneous joy, even *rapture*; you may *outdo yourself* and achieve a personal best. Flow characteristics include rapt concentration; flexibility in responding to challenges; executing at the top of your skill level; and taking *pleasure* in what you do—joy.

This *optimal performance zone* is a state of *neural harmony* where the disparate areas of the brain are in synch, working together. This is also seen as a state of *maximum cognitive efficiency*. Getting into *flow* lets you use whatever talent you may have at peak levels.

People who master a domain of expertise and operate at the top of

their game typically have practiced at least 10,000 hours—and are often world-class in their performance. When they're engaged in their skill, their level of brain arousal tends to become lower, suggesting that for them this activity has become relatively effortless, even at its peak. In *flow*, only brain areas relevant to the activity at hand are activated. In the brain of a bored person, you see *randomly scattered neural activation*. In the brain of a stressed person, you find much activity in the emotional circuitry, suggesting *anxious distractedness*.

The more moments of *flow*—or of staying in the *zone of engagement and motivation*—the better the performance.

Here are several pathways to flow:

- **Adjust demands to fit your skills.** Try to gauge your *optimal level of challenge*. If you're *under-engaged*, increase the challenge to make your work more interesting or challenging (perhaps a stretch assignment). If you are *overwhelmed*, reduce the demand and increase support (whether emotional or logistic).
- **Practice the relevant expertise** to raise skills to meet a higher level of demand.



- **Enhance concentration abilities** so you can pay more attention, since attention is a pathway into the *flow* stage.
- **Notice when you leave the zone of positive stress and peak performance and apply the apt remedy.** Watch for declining performance, wandering attention, loss of focus, boredom, *being off* compared to how you normally do, being rigid in how you respond, or being cranky. This signals that anxiety is impairing your cognitive efficiency.

The *formula* for eliciting *flow* includes a balance between the demands of the situation and your skills. *Flow* often occurs when you're challenged to use your abilities to their utmost.

**Regularly practice methods that enhance concentration and relax you.** For example, *meditating each morning* might help you stay in a positive, calm, and more focused frame of mind. Regularly give your brain and body the chance to recover and relax. Concentration can be enhanced by practice. *Distractions abound*; and the more you are distracted, the less effective you become. When you bring your wandering mind back to a concentrated state, you enhance the *muscles of the mind*—concentration and attention. PE

Daniel Goleman is author of *The Brain and Emotional Intelligence: New Insights*. [www.morethansound.net](http://www.morethansound.net)

**ACTION:** Live and work more in a state of flow.

# Unstoppable Life

How to make your dreams come true.



by Larry Jacobson

**I**KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO HAVE *a dream that seems nearly impossible to realize—and how to make that dream come true.*

I grew up on the beaches of the Pacific Ocean, sailing, kayaking, swimming, and scuba diving. I remember being a curious kid looking out at the docks in Long Beach from behind locked gates that led to the pier. I saw this montage of beautiful sails and gleaming boats and the vast expanse of the sea, and I knew it's where I wanted to be. I simply had no idea how to get there.

That's where my journey started; and if I had followed the course that most people follow, it would have ended there, too. But after becoming a successful entrepreneur in the travel business, those memories from my childhood and teen years sailing any small boat I could put in the water, started flooding back, and I knew I was ready to live my dream and *sail around the world.*

I knew *what I had* and *what I wanted*, and all I saw was this *wide gulf* between the two. So, I put together a *plan*, and started to build a bridge between *what I was dreaming* and *what I was doing.*

Here are **four steps** that I followed:

- **Write it down.** Something magical happens when you *write down your dreams.* They become a lot more real. How do you identify your dreams? Ask the right questions. What lights your fire? What makes you want to bound out of bed every morning? Those are very broad questions, with even broader answers. When you think of those answers, write them down, as I did.

- **Face fear.** Fear can be a giant wall, *seemingly impossible to scale.* When we left the coast of Mexico to sail 2,750 miles across the Pacific Ocean without seeing land, I had never navigated a boat across an ocean (it's not like you just sail south, and soon you're dancing in a Tahitian skirt). I was petrified. And the only way I could move through my fear was to haul up the anchor and say, "Let's go." If you're waiting for a marching band to herald your big decision, you'll be waiting forever. I'll never forget the arrival in the Marquesas Islands, 21 days later. At first, you don't see the land, you just smell it. It smells like dirt, soil, vegetation. And then you

see the clouds that form over the island. Finally, you see land. When I did, I knew I had done it. I had *faced my fears* and navigated across 3,000 miles of open ocean. To live an *unstoppable life*, you must lift anchor and voyage out beyond your comfort zone to embrace fear and use it to sharpen your senses.

- **Mark the worth in every day.** This is not about *smelling the roses*, but about *recognizing the value you have in your daily life.* It's about remembering to listen, to feel, to see what you're doing and appreciate each moment of your life. Just before crossing the Indian Ocean, I was sitting up on the foredeck, looking out over the expanse of ocean that would be my home for the next 19 days. I had to pinch myself. "Look at what you're about to do. You're going to sail your boat across the Indian

Ocean!" And after missing a tsunami that surely would have killed me in a wall of water, avoiding deadly pirates and surviving almost drowning while being tangled in an anchor line at the bottom of the Red Sea, I now mark the worth in every day that I live on earth.

- **Check in with yourself every day.** Do you wake up in the morning looking forward to the day, or have a knot in the pit of your gut that makes you dread the day? The *primary rule* of living an *unstoppable life* is to *live it with laughter, passion and love.* Your life is an adventure. If you live with laughter, love, and passion, and with every ounce of energy you have, then you'll live an *Unstoppable Life.* PE

Larry Jacobson is a motivational speaker and author of *The Boy Behind the Gate.* Visit [www.larryjacobsonauthor.com](http://www.larryjacobsonauthor.com).

**ACTION:** Make your dream come true.

# Overcome Fear

Know your style, choose a path.



by Andy Lothian

**W**HEN THE GOING GETS tough, the path rocky, *what do you do?* You can't

control conditions, but *by knowing your preferences, you can achieve desired outcomes.*

Since *change* can be scary, the *first emotion* you experience may be *fear* (*Fantasized Experiences Appearing Real*). You can harness this fear, turning it into *positive energy* to deal with the change and create success. You must look inward and believe that what you're doing is right. You can't control external events, but you can control your *thoughts* and adapt your *actions.*

**To reach the peak of success, and take others to the top with you,** first you need a *map* that shows you *where you've been, where you are, and different paths* you could choose. By evaluating your preferences and attributes, core capabilities and skills, *you can choose your best route.*

**Leadership is manifest in four forms:**

- **Visionary Leaders identify possibilities,** apply foresight to create options, and generate an enthusiastic following through the *inspirational communication of vision.* Like George Mallory, the first Englishman to attempt to climb Everest, *rather than be daunted by the biggest mountain, be inspired by it.* Create a vision and a plan to make it a reality.

- **Relationship Leaders harness the power of teamwork.** They foster rela-

tionships, create *community*, and cultivate *collaboration* to release potential. They seek understanding by listening as much as talking. They express sincere appreciation of others' efforts and share rewards and recognition, as did Tenzing and Hillary the first to set foot on the summit of Everest. To this day, *no one knows who reached the top first.*

- **Centered Leaders prepare for the journey.** They demonstrate *authenticity, integrity, and purpose.* They say what they mean and mean what they say. When seeking crew for his expedition to Antarctica, Earnest Shackleton wrote this ad: *Men wanted for hazardous journey. Small wages, bitter cold, long months of complete darkness, constant danger, safe return doubtful. Honor and recognition in case of success.* Do you communicate clearly and honestly?

- **Results Leaders push on to the summit.** They get things done, and sustain commitment through a process of initiation, delivery, and completion. *Tenacity, resilience or determination* gets them through tough times. They set clear and compelling targets, have a sense of urgency, and foster a can-do attitude.

**Transformational leaders,** while having a particular preference, work with and effectively integrate all four.

When you have *your own personal Everest* to conquer, know your *leadership style* and decide your best path. The climb can be exhilarating, the journey rewarding, the view magnificent. PE

Andy Lothian is CEO of Insights Learning & Development. Visit [www.insights.com](http://www.insights.com).

**ACTION:** Overcome fear to reach the peak.



# Your Time Is Now

Use the power of collaboration.



by Vickie Milazzo

**I**SEE AN OPPORTUNITY-FILLED future for women because the qualities that are valued in today's socially driven culture—*participation, engagement, collaboration, relationship-building, and appreciation for the greater good*—come naturally to women.

Inside every woman are the skills and forces necessary for succeeding today; unfortunately, many women temper their expectations. Rather than go after a promotion, they stay in their current position or make a lateral move.

The rise in social media and a growing appreciation for collaboration, participation, and relationship-building have created a perfect storm for entrepreneurial and enterprising women.

Men exhibit many of these qualities, but women synthesize these strengths into a potent energy. Eight feminine factors make women primed to succeed:

**1. Women take action.** Social media has made taking action easier. Know how and when to take action. Success is not about what you do when the road ahead is golden and every dip and turn smooths your way—it's about how you respond when you hit the roadblocks. *By taking action every day, you develop the habits and discipline to make your vision a reality.* When you focus not just on the idea but on making it happen, you stay in motion—not merely dreaming your passions but *living them.*

**2. Women ask for help.** Be it through message boards, questions posted on Facebook, or informative YouTube videos, social media can help us to help each other. For most women, helping each other is a common practice. When you encounter challenges that you don't know how to handle, you seek someone who has already successfully handled that challenge. Know what you don't know and seek answers. Aggressive learning helps you to achieve any goal.

**3. Women trust their intuition.** *Women are more in touch with instinctive inner guidance.* Women are not more *right-brained*—they fluently engage the *limbic brain*, where higher emotions are stored, and *instinctive brain*, responsible for self-preservation. This combination of emotion, instinct, and cognition equates to women's intuition. Many of our social

interactions are driven by intuition. We can instinctively sense if we should ask a friend why she's upset or continue a conversation that is heading down the wrong path. So, trust your intuition. You can accomplish big things—it all starts with your intuitive vision.

**4. Women are relationship-builders.** Most women want to *give their all to every relationship they have*—be it with a coworker, significant other, child, family member, friend, client—and when they can't, they often feel guilty. Our society of family, friends, career, spiritual and social obligations constantly pulls us in different directions. Social media adds more complexity, and our *always-on* devices *give us instant access to the world* via email, texting, and Skype, but they also *give the world instant access*



*to us.* Many women over-commit in relationships, but when tempered to a manageable scale, relationships set women up for great success. When you pursue a great opportunity, you can harvest more energy from positive relationships. You know at least one person who lifts your spirits and makes you feel more alive. Surround yourself with positive relationships, especially with those who support your passions, and you'll be eternally rechargeable.

**5. Women are natural multi-taskers.** Women with a variety of talents, emotions, and intelligence are juggling a dozen different projects, a handful of important relationships, and at least one pressing dilemma. Flexible and adaptable, women handle unexpected change gracefully. We're not thrown by 10 things hitting us at once. We're *wired for agility.* Hand a woman an iPhone, and she'll set appointments, answer email, snap and send photos to friends and family, update Facebook, arrange a party, make dinner reservations, and text her husband to pick up the dry

cleaning. We've learned to bend technology to fit our needs and increase our agility for handling complex situations at increasingly higher and faster levels.

**6. Women collaborate.** The rising use of Wikis and other collaborative software indicates the rapid acceptance of a growing need to share knowledge, ideas, and energies. Office technology has advanced to provide a platform for sharing, reviewing, editing, and rethinking documents or graphics. When we come together and engage in conversation, we raise new questions and think of possibilities that we would not have considered on our own. *Collaboration is not just connecting with people—it's also an attitude of helpfulness.* Playing nice is a sign of strength. Inside every woman is a *natural collaborator.* That's an advantage we can leverage at the highest level.

**7. Women know the importance of mutual support.** Fusion occurs when you merge diverse, distinct, or separate elements into a unified whole. That's happening in our highly connected global society. Women benefit from this connectedness more than men. The bonds women form with each other also benefit their health and longevity—these bonds help to fill emotional gaps and lower the risk of early death. Men experiencing stress go into a fight-or-flight response. Women's broader response system may explain why they consistently outlive men. When women come together and share their *passions, visions, experiences, fears, and promises*, an amazing bond occurs. From that bond emerge sparks of brilliance and inspired insight. Female fusion is a truly powerful force.

**8. Women understand the power of giving.** Using social media, you can easily lift a person's day, and in doing so lift yours up too. *Giving* does not always mean pulling out your wallet. Time is a valuable gift. Mentoring is a valuable gift. Spiritual or emotional support is a valuable gift. You can Facebook, text, or leave a quick voicemail message reminding people that you are thinking about them. Sending a person positive thoughts costs nothing and benefits you as much as the people you're thinking about. If there's something you want more of, give it away. If you want more money, encouragement, or love, give it today and you will receive it tomorrow, but not necessarily from the people you give it to. It comes through other manifestations. By giving back, you'll receive more *abundance* in your life. PE

Vickie Milazzo, RN, MSN, JD, is owner of Vickie Milazzo Institute and author of *Wicked Success Is Inside Every Woman* (Wiley). Visit [WickedSuccess.com](http://WickedSuccess.com).

**ACTION:** Use the power of collaboration.

## Buckets of Wealth

Be financially responsible.



by Denis Waitley

WITH A LITTLE DISCIPLINE and patience, you can make your journey to abundance and personal fulfillment a downhill flow instead of an uphill struggle. The key is to use *overflowing buckets* to create financial independence.

Picture your life as a *five-step stairway*, with you at the top and *Fulfillment* waiting for you at the bottom. Place an empty bucket on each step and label the buckets from top to bottom: *Survival*, *Financial Stability*, *Quality of Life*, *Financial Security*, and *Financial Independence*.

Your objective is to fill each bucket with dollars as you progress down the stairway, so that when one bucket overflows, it begins to fill the next bucket.

- The *Survival bucket* is how you pay for your basic needs of food and shelter.
- Any extra money flows into *Financial Stability*—the ability to keep solvent in the event of sudden, unforeseen changes and emergencies in your life—insurance against catastrophic loss. To be financially stable, you must have an *emergency fund* in a savings account equal to a minimum of three month's income, and preferably six months' income. You also must have adequate permanent and transferable medical *insurance* that remains in force, regardless of your employment status, as well as life insurance, including some whole life, in addition to term, that accumulates cash value and has a level premium. Have a non-cancelable, individual permanent disability income insurance, equal to at least 70 percent of your monthly pay, preferably 100 percent. Don't forget that the possibility of loss of income resulting from an injury or illness is much greater than that of loss of life. Not only are you without income when you are sick or injured, you also do need to be cared for—and the expenses continue even though you're not able to work.
- When bucket two is filled with contingency dollars for your financial stability, you can sit down with your inner circle and determine what standard of living will give you the *quality of life* you want: your home, family, education, recreation, and possessions. These considerations should be budgeted with a monthly savings amount.
- A little extra discretionary income

will trickle over the lip and fall into the *Financial Security* bucket—the amount of assets that will give you the amount of after-tax income you need to maintain the *standard of living* necessary to have the *quality of life* you want, at some predetermined point into the future, without having to depend upon day-to-day employment. The ability to fill this bucket is not based on salary. Many people in the top income brackets never reach *financial security*. Many middle-incomeers do. To get there, you need to put 10 percent of your spendable into an appreciating investment fund every month.

• *Financial Independence* is achieved when you beat the target date you set for retirement. The object of creating personal assets is to be financially independent of having to work, while you still have your health and are still young

enough to enjoy those assets.

See your life as a stairway to fulfillment. Put your dollars in the right buckets, in the right order. You'll be amazed at the way *cash flows from bucket to bucket*.

### Your Financial Independence

The only way to reach financial security is to plan for it now, regardless of your age. You have to define financial security in your own terms. Have you defined the amount of assets that you need for *financial independence*?

I believe it is more than you think, but if you define it, you can likely reach it in 10 years or less. What are your financial goals and what is your time line? PE

Denis Waitley is an author, speaker, and CEO of Denis Waitley International. Visit [www.deniswaitley.com](http://www.deniswaitley.com) or email [subscribe@deniswaitley.com](mailto:subscribe@deniswaitley.com).

**ACTION:** Start filling your buckets of wealth.

### FINANCIAL • SOUL

## Beat a Bad Economy

The secret? Start with a little soul.



by Melissa Evans

DEBT-CEILING DEBATES, credit-rating crises and international economies teetering on a double-dip recession might be enough to scare you out of the risky business of pursuing your ambitions—but you can beat a bad economy.

As a *self-made success story*, I believe that if you come to know your true strengths and align your business with your purpose and natural abilities, you will succeed even in turbulent times.

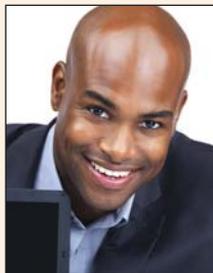
You need to have a clear understanding of who you are and operate with certainty and confidence. These are the two things that people want most in these troubled times.

Everyone is not broke in this economy—in fact, some are thriving. Monetizing your purpose is the best way to have an abundant life.

This is simply a spiritual take on a classic economic theory: You are most successful and efficient when you know what you do best and focus on it. Whether you are seeking more control over your financial future or looking to remake your career after a layoff, you aren't out of luck if you look inward and define your natural talents.

Here are *four tips* for swimming against the economic undertows:

- *You start by looking inward*—you must know, love, and be yourself to succeed.



• *You must inspire yourself and other people to become aligned with your strengths* and natural abilities and to put those skills to good use and to work for the good of the team or community.

• *You must be clear about your product or service* so customers can find you.

• *Your clarity and forthrightness, in turn, will help you monetize the talents and skills you offer*, while removing limits to your growth.

These times call out for you to clearly define what makes you powerful, unique and able to move forward.

You'll experience financial growth and success when you embrace your gifts, talents and purpose and *come from a place of genuine service*.

The economy won't likely improve soon, but a defeatist attitude is the worst path for you to take. Having interviewed scores of people who succeeded despite the odds against them, I believe that the path to prosperity is clear:

If you will work toward a single-minded, soul-inspired goal, you'll be successful—and, in turn, create abundance for others.

Yes, you can monetize your *soul purpose*, but it's not all about the money—it's about your gift and what you offer to others. If you see what skills and traits make you special, and then develop a purposeful plan and know how to remove the barriers that stand in your way, you'll succeed, even when facing a barrier as big as a recession. PE

Melissa Evans, MHA, PMP, Master Coach, self-made millionaire at age 31 and "The Guru of Implementation," founded The Broshe Group in 2001. Visit [www.soletosoulbook.com](http://www.soletosoulbook.com).

**ACTION:** Start working with a soul purpose.

# Serve Children

Relieve overstressed kids.



by Todd Patkin

**A**RE YOU PUSHING YOUR KIDS so hard they're in danger of cracking? Examine the demands you place on them and help *overstressed, overscheduled, overwhelmed* kids create happier, healthier lives.

We live in an achievement-obsessed, competitive education culture. From government-mandated standardized test scores to “tiger parents” to college admissions requirements, our kids are facing immense pressure to perform. For many students, every minute of the day is devoted to school, studying, homework, and other activities ranging from sports to service work—to the exclusion of free time and fun. There's much fear from parents that their kids can't compete—and kids are at risk of being *overwhelmed* by all that's expected of them.

In pushing your children to excel, you may be pushing them over the edge.

Of course you want your children to lead fulfilled, successful lives, but subjecting them to relentless academic and extracurricular pressure is not the way.

I speak from experience—as a child and teen *I was obsessed with achievement at school and suffered from bouts of anxiety*. As an adult, my *unhealthy focus on doing and being the best* caused me to suffer a breakdown at age 36. Since then, I've re-evaluated my priorities as well as what makes people happy/unhappy.

As the parent of a teenage son, I've seen just how oppressive our system can be when the emphasis is on *outcomes* instead of on *true education*. Many teens are under immense pressure to succeed, to get the best grades, to be accepted to a good college—and many are burning out and making *self-destructive decisions*.

Many kids suffer from anxiety and depression—cutting themselves, using prescription medications, drinking excessively, and doing drugs on weekends to escape this pressure. Suicide is the third-leading cause of death among teens: 60 percent say they've thought about it, and 9 percent of high schoolers admit attempting it.

*Those realities are unacceptable*. Forcing children into a mold of perfection doesn't work. If you want your kids to become capable, creative, and inspired problem-solvers, focus *less on*

*their scores and more on their happiness.*

Here are 14 tips:

**1. Realize you are doing damage.**

Note how your expectations affect him. *High expectations put high pressure on children*. Ask yourself: when your son comes home with four As and one B, do you celebrate the As or ask, *Why did you get the B?* By celebrating the As, you let your child know that *top marks are the goal—in a healthy way*.

**2. Accept that not all kids are the same.** Don't compare your children to each other, to classmates, or to your friends' children. *Love them for who they are*. Kids develop at different rates, and have different talents. *No two are alike*, and that's a good thing! Your kids will be happy adults if they learn to love and be okay with themselves as they are and for who they are.

**3. Let some things go.** Evaluate what expectations are realistic and *what achievements matter most*. Resist the urge to micro-manage every task. Instead of fixating on little things that *aren't* done perfectly, focus on your children's successes!

**4. Seek balance and happiness for your child.** Have a feel for your child's strengths and weaknesses, and set reasonable expectations and requirements. Know what your child's personal best looks like. Don't push for more. If you focus on your teen's happiness rather than on his report card, he'll feel that his life is not overbalanced by stress—and he'll learn and achieve more.

**5. Get help if it is needed.** Your child will likely have some *bad subjects* in school, so get a tutor who is affordable and qualified. You might also ask your child's teacher if she can spend a little extra time with her or *recommend someone* who could give out-of-school help.

**6. Teach kids to be easier on themselves.** If you suspect that your child tends to beat himself up, help him to refocus the way he looks at life. Try to direct your child's attention to all of the things he does well. Show more compassion and love. We're all human—and fallible. So instead of *demanding perfection* in the situation, cut some slack.

**7. Discourage overscheduling.** It's easy for kids to become overextended and to crack under the pressure of 16-hour days. Outside of what's required of them in school, encourage your kids to focus on activities that bring them joy. Develop their skills in a few things they're good at—and passionate about.

**8. Discuss perceived stress vs. what is real.** Talk with your teen about what is stressing him out and to help him determine which worries are productive and which aren't. Talk about *reasonable expectations* for each week, month, and year. Share your experiences to help your child put his situation into perspective.

**9. Help kids live in the present.** If your child *obsessively* thinks about what she could have done better in the past or stresses about what might go wrong in the future, she'll miss out on living her life. Help her to focus on all of the good things in her life now. Enjoy the time you have with your child right now.

**10. Focus on the importance of organization.** Teach your children to keep an updated calendar, to make thorough to-do lists, and to keep their school papers in order. Being organized will make them more efficient and will cut out needless worry. Help your children with school and home to-do lists. Also, create an organized *homework area*. Being organized sets you up for success!

**11. Teach kids to take advantage of the most efficient times of their day.** You might not be able to decrease your child's workload, but you *can* help him to work as efficiently as possible. If your child is a morning person, encourage him to get up 20 minutes early to practice violin or review for a test. If he's a night owl, let him sleep as late as possible. Within reason, allow and encourage him to do what's most efficient.

**12. Help kids work toward the big things.** Help them learn to approach major milestones with a plan and a realistic perspective. Break a big project down into manageable chunks.

**13. Promote exercise.** Encourage your children to get involved in a sport or any activity that he enjoys. Exercise is a key to being less stressed and happier now. You might consider making physical activity a family event! Go for a hike, a swim, or a walk. You'll all benefit.

**14. Encourage kids to spend time with positive people.** Encourage them to spend time with people who approach life with positive attitudes and healthy perspectives and are positive influences.

Cultivate happiness and balance to set your child up for success. PE

*Todd Patkin helped grow the family business and sold it to Advance Auto Parts in 2005. He is the author of Finding Happiness (StepWise Press). Visit [www.toddpatkin.com](http://www.toddpatkin.com).*

**ACTION:** Serve children who are over-stressed.



## See the Winning

*It's the best way to serve.*



by Joel Boggess

WITH JUST A FEW TICKS LEFT on the game clock, the home team trails by a point. This is *the* big game. The players have waited all season for this moment.

As the last few seconds of game time tick away, soon a *victor* will be crowned, hailed, and celebrated. Which team will pull out the victory? Is it the team that plods out onto the field, runs the designated plays, and tries their best? Or is it the team that visualizes and senses the sights and sounds of the win first?

Let's take a brief look at history. Hockey great *Wayne Gretzky* chose to skate to where the puck was going to be, instead of spending a lifetime chasing after it; *Muhammad Ali* made no apologies in letting people know that he was indeed "the greatest" in the professional boxing world; *Michael Jordan* saw his name reappearing on the high school roster after he had been cut; and *Rudy Ruettiger* knew he was born to play Notre Dame football.

These people knew that whether you are raising your children, bringing up the next generation of students, serving people in your community or church, or coaching high-achievers in sports or business, there is one simple truth: *you have to see the winning in your mind's eye, before you can do the winning in the public eye.* You will see people do amazing things—*once you help them learn how to tap into and feel the electricity and heat of a victorious possibility.*

Borrowing from the ideas of John Maxwell, here's why:

- **When people sense victory:** They sacrifice to succeed. They look for ways to win. They become energized. They follow the game plan. They help other team members.

- **When people sense defeat:** They give as little as possible. They look for excuses. They become tired. They forsake the game plan. They hurt others.

Where are you today? Are you sensing your victory and looking for ways to make it reality? It is not enough to just see it—you have to *create a game plan* and then *work that plan with commitment and tenacity.* You can do it!

*You can't help yourself and others to deliver optimal value until you place your own sense of well-being, balance, and meaning at the center of your life.*

Failure to do so will result in over-selling your time, underselling your value, and being paid for functions far below your intrinsic value—all of which are paths toward burn-out and frustration. Your life will revolve eternally around your work—and that's a death spiral.

*In your service and coaching, explore options that reflect the life you want.*

This process involves identifying your purpose, and success in different areas of your life. After clarifying what success means to you, you can then determine what work and service is best for you.

*When you focus on things over which you do have control, you eliminate feelings of being trapped or victimized.* You have too many choices to assume that it

makes little difference what you really want. As soon as you identify what the ideal would be, you put yourself back in the driver's seat; the challenge then is simply *how to get there.* Recognizing your *areas of competence* and believing you can change will open up multiple options.

Any service or occupation, no matter how worthy it sounds, or socially acceptable others think it is, can't be called *good work* unless it is good for your *spirit, emotions, relationships and health.* For anything to bring you *meaning and fulfillment, it must nurture you from the inside out.* PE

Joel Boggess is a life coach and CEO of 4 Points Coaching and author of *One Woman's Journey to the Work She Loves.* Call 972-523-7758.

**ACTION:** Determine what service is best for you.

## SERVICE • EDUCATION

## Serve Teachers

*Get involved in education.*



by Paddy Eger

**T**EST CHEATING SCANDAL! Budget Cuts! Accreditation Lost! Such headlines are

associated with school districts around the nation. With issues like these mounting, even the best and brightest teachers need reinforcements.

*That's where you come in.* When adult assistants become part of classrooms and study groups, they help our education stay strong. When

all we read about education today revolves around budget cuts or the standardized test cheating scandals, it's clear that *blaming teachers* won't yield any answers. I believe that most teachers are doing the best they can, but some feel pressure by administra-

tors to focus on hitting mandated test score goals rather than encouraging critical thinking. Add to that higher student to teacher ratios and it's easy to see that *something needs to be done to help our educators help our kids.* Where do we start?"

*Anyone who is concerned about the seeming downward spiral of public education can help by becoming an adult assistant.* Children, teachers, schools, communities all benefit from the help of adult assistants. Participation on this level is a viable way to promote local involvement in school districts where the main concern has become test score quotas tied to funding. When the focus on education becomes budgets and test scores, we can never go wrong by adding a more human element like this



as part of the solution.

As a veteran teacher of 20 years, I've seen how the sluggish economy and unfunded mandates like the "No Child Left Behind" law has left classrooms overcrowded and teachers stretched and stressed. Because performances on standardized tests are tied to funding, some teachers can be pressured into the "education of regurgitation" to meet district goals, quotas and bonuses.

*We can avoid classroom environments like those by getting involved locally as an adult assistant,* whose presence allows teachers to create extra learning groups and provide one-on-one time for students. Additional hands and minds enhance student learning

and help them reach their potential. I believe every good educator would prefer to focus on instilling a love of learning and fostering critical thinking. While that's an admirable goal, the realities of our educational system mean that a teacher must also concentrate on helping students pass standardized tests. *Having another adult in the classroom can help teachers find the time to serve both masters.*

*Becoming a difference-maker at your local school only requires a desire to help* and any amount of consistent time you can spare. With a little training and a handful of strategies, most adults can successfully assist teachers in guiding students along their educational paths. The bottom line is that the amount of time and effort to be an adult assistant is miniscule compared to the number of benefits and advantages enjoyed by the students who get that extra attention. PE

Paddy Eger is a 20-year teaching veteran who also trains adult classroom volunteer assistants and author of *Educating America.* Visit [www.paddyeger.com](http://www.paddyeger.com).

**ACTION:** Serve and support good teachers.



# GOAL GETTERS



*As a leader and performer, you set goals, but are your goals as powerful as they could be? Goals help you*

to cut through the clutter of a crowded mind and keep your thoughts on the things that matter most. They help you focus. To be effective, you can't just set *random goals*—long lists of wishes that pop up and then fall away. You can be *smarter* and *wiser* with your goals.

You've likely been trained to set SMART goals: *Specific, Measurable, Action-Oriented, Realistic, and Time-Bound*. SMART goals have helped many people move from vague unattainable goals to clear, specific action. You might want to use this standard to transform your commitments into powerful goals. Set SMART goals at work or at home: the SMART criteria get you to be very concrete about your goals, which makes them easier to attain.

The problem with SMART thinking is the tendency to *limit* instead of *inspire*. SMART goals can work against you if: you neglect to write them and keep them fresh; they're isolated from other parts of your life; they conflict or compete; or they lack spirit and conviction.

*To avoid these pitfalls, ensure your goals are both SMART and WISE: Written, Integrated, Synergistic, Expansive.* Use these four criteria to improve your goals.

- **Written.** Write your goals. Writing forces you to be clear in your thinking. It allows you to look at your plans with objectivity. It instills commitment and puts your thoughts in a durable form you can revisit again and again.

- **Integrated.** Integrating your ideas means bringing them together in the same place so you can look at them all at once. Allow your personal and professional lives to mix. It's okay if right under "increase profit share" you have "get more rest." They both improve your quality of life. They both contribute to your definition of success. You get to have it all. There are no rules. *You* make it up.

- **Synergistic.** Whereas integrating your goals means *bringing them together*, synergizing means *making*

*them work together.* Synergy happens when one idea advances another. Keeping a vision of what you want in mind when you think about your goals will help create that synergy. You lose something when you decouple your goals from your vision; they become just another prioritized list. The most powerful and peaceful way to think about your efforts is to see how they can coalesce into one complete vision for your life.

- **Expansive.** Think big. Your goals should *inspire* you to stay on the path to your dreams, not lock you into a pattern of ticking off bite-sized action items.

This may be the biggest differentiator between SMART and WISE thinking. Spending too much time and energy boxing your objectives into a hard and fast formula can squeeze the life right out of them. The best goals are both SMART *and* WISE. SMART thinking gives your goals specificity. WISE thinking gives them heart.

Your goals will help you stay on track to achieving your bigger vision, day after day, and the SMARTer they are, the more productive you'll be. However, make sure that your goals are also WISE enough to inspire you, excite you, and move you in exciting ways. You'll find you don't just *meet* your goals—they actually improve you.

—Joelle K. Jay, [www.joellekjay.com](http://www.joellekjay.com)



*You will receive big benefits from doing just a little more.* If you want to get

ahead, you have to do more than everyone else is willing or able to do. Doing a little more requires lot more *strategy* and a little more *effort* and *follow through*. Everyone says they follow through, but few people actually do follow through on what they promise. Demonstrate your great follow through *discipline*. The key to success is going the *extra mile* (or even *one extra block*), just because you want to, not because you expect anything in return. Be competent *and* considerate. That will set you apart from the pack.

—Jean Van Rensselaar, [SmartPRCommunications.com](http://SmartPRCommunications.com)

# PersonalCOACH



## Start Over

*Make a New Life.*

by Zig Ziglar

ONE FEBRUARY I DROVE PAST THE PLANO, Texas, Recreation Center where I used to exercise. I drove past it because there were no parking spaces. The next day I found a parking spot, but people were lined up three deep behind every machine in the weight room. I asked the young man at the desk *what was happening*. He said that in three weeks, things would be back to normal. "These are our 'New Year's Resolution' people."

*Most resolutions quickly evaporate.*

However, making a resolution is the most important step in goal-setting because it is the first step—and if you don't take the first step, there'll never be the second and subsequent steps. When you repeat that resolution enough times to yourself and to friends, family and others, an interesting thing happens: *Repetition is the mother of learning, the father of action, and the architect of accomplishment.*

Repeat your resolution enough times, and one day you'll verbally stomp your foot and say, "I'm going to do it!" Your resolution has become a *decision*—and later an *action*.

*Once you've made a decision, you must develop a plan of action.* To build a home, improve your marriage, or get a better education, you need a plan. With a logical plan of action, your confidence goes up, and you make a commitment. As a responsible individual, you don't make a commitment unless you have reason to believe that you can fulfill that commitment—to maintain the marriage, lose weight, get an education.

## Have Hope, Courage, Commitment

It takes a person of great *hope, courage* and *commitment* to forge ahead and do what he honestly believes to be right, especially when he faces critics and opposition (only those who don't attempt anything of worth will remain above criticism). A person without *hope* will take no action; indeed, hope is the starting point for all accomplishment. A person without *courage* will not pursue projects with boldness and determination.

*With a commitment*, when difficulties arise, your first thought is, "How do I solve this problem?" *Without commitment*, your first thought is to bail out. You never finish.

So, make your resolutions today, then expand those to a *New Life's Resolution*—and I'll see you at the top! PE

Zig Ziglar, aka America's motivator, is the author of 29 books. Visits [www.Ziglar.com](http://www.Ziglar.com).

**ACTION:** Start over and make some resolutions.

## Prepare for Leadership

Learn 10 life lessons from sages.



by Jann E. Freed

**H**OW CAN YOU BEST PREPARE for leadership?

Surprisingly, the answers to questions about *leadership* are all about *life*. You can't be an effective leader if you are not a good person. So, *personal development* is *leadership development*.

I've learned 10 lessons from the sages:

**Lesson 1: Know thyself.** Self-knowledge is empowering: the more you know about yourself, the more you can self-regulate your behaviors in positive ways. Develop *emotional intelligence* and *soft people skills*—the *fluff* is the *stuff*. Improve *interpersonal relationships*, since *leadership* is more about *relationships* than about *products* and *positions*.

**Lesson 2: Be present.** Since technology enables you to constantly multitask and be connected 24/7, you're more likely to be *mindless* rather than *mindful*. It takes *conscious effort* to listen and *hear* what's being said to build *healthy relationships*. When you're present, you don't *worry about the future* or *regret the past*.

**Lesson 3: Recognize the dark side.** You need to understand positive and negative aspects of ego and keep your ego in check. When you don't recognize the dark side, ego can manifest as greed, envy, fear, manipulation, and jealousy. When you display these behaviors, you create a toxic environment.

**Lesson 4: Understand death, loss, and grief.** We're living and working at a time when people are losing money, jobs, equity, and companies. Those who survive layoffs also grieve. Unless you *exercise empathy* and *learn how to handle grief*, you can't help others who are grieving.

**Lesson 5: Have an attitude of gratitude.** Expressing gratitude keeps you in a positive and optimistic mindset. You create an environment in which others want to live and work. In a concentration camp, Viktor Frankl realized that "life is not primarily a quest for pleasure or power, but a *quest for meaning*. You can't control what happens to you in life, but you can always control *what you will feel* and *do about what happens to you*."

**Lesson 6: Vulnerability is a strength.** Since you can't have all of the answers, surround yourself with people who complement your skills and build strong teams. Admitting mistakes communicates that you are human, allows others to be accountable, and provides space

for forgiveness, compassion, and empathy. To learn from mistakes, *be aware of how you respond* when mistakes are made.

**Lesson 7: Understand life's transitions.** Working with four generations is easier when you understand life's transitions. Knowing the phases of life helps you to better understand yourself and others. Since most of life is made of transitions—beginnings and endings—seek to understand the feelings and emotions.

**Lesson 8: Disconnect to connect.** Yes, you can be *connected* 24/7, but technology isn't necessarily helping you to build healthy relationships. Instead of *Facebook*, you need more *face time*. While you may have more *connections*, the relationships are likely shallow. It is hard to build a *community* when people don't know each other. The definition of a *good neighbor* has changed from one where we *hang out together* or *borrow a cup of sugar* to

one where *we don't bother each other*.

**Lesson 9: Model resilience.** You build resilience through *renewal*. Since *burn-out* can result in *unhealthy behaviors*, find ways of re-energizing yourself. Beyond exercise, sleep, and healthy diet, you might go on retreats, write in a journal, or practice yoga and meditation. Have a sacred time and space for reflecting on *what's most important to you*.

**Lesson 10: Live and leave a legacy.** You leave a *legacy* every time you leave a meeting, room, or conversation—after each decision or encounter. People notice how you behave, what you say and how you say it. So, focus on *what matters most*, as you are living your legacy daily. PE

Jann E. Freed, Ph.D., is CEO of her own leadership development firm and Professor Emerita at Central College. Visit [www.JannFreed.com](http://www.JannFreed.com).

**ACTION:** How do you want to be remembered?

## Show Courage

Take one giant leap.



by Bill Treasurer

**B**EFORE LAUNCHING MY business career, I had to overcome a debilitating fear of heights to make the U.S. High Diving Team—performing 1,500 high dives (often as the fire-diving *Captain Inferno*) into waters 100 feet below. I've also mustered the courage to deal with addiction, cancer, and as a father, both the loss of a child and, today, my young special needs daughter.

### Apply 10 Principles

You can become a more courageous leader by applying these 10 principles:

- **Go first.** Be a courageous role model. Jump first—whatever the leap—and other people are more likely to follow your lead.
- **Provide a view.** Forget the canned vision statement. Provide a point of *view*—a smaller, more personalized vision—to help yourself and others see the big picture and how, individually, courage will be rewarded.
- **Set up safety nets.** You likely won't take a chance without some degree of support. Create safety nets—from protecting jobs to preserving reputations—to reinforce courageous actions.
- **Give permission.** You may think that you aren't to do courageous things. Loud and clear, give yourself and others permission to go for it.



- **Value good mistakes.** Making no mistakes is just as dangerous as making too many. So, value "good" mistakes—strong effort, weak results—and let others know that you value good mistakes. Odds are, you'll then step out of your comfort zone.

- **Have their backs.** People want to know that you've got their back. Show them you do by going to bat for them—consistently and courageously.

- **Normalize fear.** Fear is a normal part of life and work. See your doubts and fears as a natural occurrence; you can then *refocus your energy to the job at hand*.

- **Modulate comfort.** Adjust your *comfort* and *discomfort* with incrementally greater challenges. You'll stretch your capacity to deal with uncomfortable situations and exert more courage.

- **Ask the holy question.** Find out what really matters to you and others by asking the holy question—*what do you want?* Only then can you give

yourself and others goals or assignments that are personally meaningful and worth stretching for.

- **Clarify courage.** You can't be courageous unless you're afraid. Remind yourself and others that courage isn't the absence of fear, but an ability to carry on in its presence.

Courage lies beyond fear. Fear is prerequisite to courage. To have courage, you must first be fearful. In fact, your intense feeling of fear is a sign that your courage is being activated. PE

Bill Treasurer is CEO of Giant Leap Consulting, and a consultant, speaker, and author of best-selling book, *Courage Goes to Work*. Visit [www.couragegoestowork.com](http://www.couragegoestowork.com).

**ACTION:** Apply these 10 principles of courage.

# Leadership Excellence



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