
The Courage to Win®

Mental Toughness for Peak Performance and Success

Why Mental Toughness?

If you isolate ONE THING about peak performers -- the one thing that has put them at the pinnacle of career success, above anything and everything else, it is their inner game. Call it mental toughness, confidence, courage - it is the profound ability stay in control and triumph when facing problems at work.

The opposite of mental toughness is fear. If a person is not exhibiting peak performance at work, he has three common denominators, all driven by fear:

1. He is *stressed*. The average person is overwhelmed with different types of work stress - deadlines, fear of failure or rejection, pressure from others, or confusion about his priorities. He then procrastinates, works on the wrong things, or does the bare minimum.
2. He is *communicating poorly*. The two most common mistakes are a) passiveness - failing to address issues (leading to poor results) and b) aggressiveness - complaining and criticizing (leading to low trust).
3. He is *de-motivated*. Without a strong inner game to deal with daily challenges from clients, co-workers, and his personal life, the average person falls prey to episodes of low motivation. This creates low productivity and job dissatisfaction.

The Intangible “Mental Toughness” Factor Hardly Anybody Understands

For the first time, there is a step-by-step formula for gaining the intangible mental toughness factor needed to conquer work challenges at lightening speed.

Those who possess this highly valuable, intangible mental toughness factor are prized for their results driven nature. Want to know what kind of performer grows his efficiency constantly, makes brilliant decisions that guarantees the success of projects, and leads others with assertiveness and trust? It's someone who knows how to master fear at work using the intangible “mental toughness factor.”

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Mental Toughness for Peak Performance and Success

The Power of Commitment

The power of commitment is obvious when you reflect on your own life. Yet commitment, the drive to act, eludes us all too often. The question, "How do I motivate myself?" has confounded us for centuries.

Training Objective

In today's session, you will learn the mental toughness practice of commitment so can become a person of action and influence at work and home. We will teach the practice of commitment by asking you to apply it to a specific challenge you wish to master.

Implicit in this journey is that you will be accessing strengths you already have.

Training Agenda

- ❑ Introduction to Lisa
- ❑ Training objective and agenda
- ❑ Selecting your challenge
- ❑ **The Practice of Commitment**
- ❑ Disowning desires
- ❑ "Honour your desires."
- ❑ What do you want?
- ❑ **The Practice of Competence**
- ❑ "The future belongs to the competent."
- ❑ Making Requests
- ❑ The 10% Harmony Strategy

The future depends on what we do in the present.

Mahatma Gandhi

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The Power of Commitment

Write down and share with your buddy one of your most cherished accomplishments. How did your burning desire to win help you achieve this goal?

Your Definition of Mental Toughness

What is your personal definition of mental toughness? Describe a time when you displayed it in your life.

Your Challenge

The first step in developing the intangible mental toughness factor is to write down the challenge. Please describe your challenge in writing **as you currently perceive it**. Here are some examples:

“I need to be more assertive when it comes to asking for deliverables from certain employees.”

“I want to socialize more with colleagues and develop better relationships in my department.”

“It’s hard for me to ask for help (both at work and around the house). Instead I seethe with resentment and take it out on other people later.”

“I want to speak up at meetings. I dismiss my own ideas too easily.”

Your challenge:

Why People Fail

The Phenomenon of Learned Helplessness

Enroute to winning, you will encounter setbacks, problems, adversity, and loss. Your natural reaction to these situations will be to fall into learned helplessness. Learned helplessness is a reaction to a previous disappointment, failure, or loss.

Because you've been disappointed in the past, you come to believe that *nothing you do will make a difference*.⁵ Here are some classic examples of learned helplessness:

- Your assistant has missed several deadlines despite reprimands from you. You stop mentioning it and do her work, reducing your own efficiency.

Your unconscious conclusions: "She's not conscientious," and, "She won't listen."

- Your boss is not as enthusiastic about time management as you are. You want to make suggestions about streamlining the office, but stay quite.

Your unconscious conclusion: "He won't listen."

- You want to save money, but every time you try, an unexpected expense crops up, and you start spending again.

Your unconscious conclusion: "I'll never get ahead."

- You admire your project partner, but he rarely listens to your ideas. Gradually you stop offering them.

Your unconscious conclusion: "He doesn't respect me," and "His ego is too big to listen."

The source of all negative emotions

Learned helplessness is the source of all negative emotions. Consider the following definitions:

Anger	Desire contaminated by helplessness
Frustration	Lesser form of anger
Sadness	Rage at being attached to a desire we cannot fulfill
Grief	Extreme sadness
Disappointment	Milder form of grief
Resentment	Form of anger related to others (belief that others have limited my opportunities to fulfill my desires)
Fear	Desire for the future contaminated by helplessness ⁶

Why People Fail

The Phenomenon of Learned Helplessness

Virtually all negative emotions are a variation of the same theme:
We desperately want something, but feel helpless to attain it.

How learned helplessness creates poor performance and failure

Learned helplessness leads to giving up, depression, and passivity. Instead of seeking solutions to problems, we justify our pessimism. A quiet despair overtakes us, and we retreat into our comfort zone.

Why Top Performers Win

When top performers encounter problems, they also experience learned helplessness and unhappiness. But, they react to it differently than most. Instead of avoiding their learned helplessness, they confront and reverse it.

The Courage to Win™

The Courage to Win™ is a practical approach for reversing learned helplessness, creating peak performance, and winning. Today is the dawn of a new era for you. As you learn to defeat learned helplessness, you will gain the courage to win in your career, finances, and relationships.

As your courage grows, your actions will transform, and your problems will fade. You will think that life is less troublesome, but it will be you who has changed.

I was always looking outside myself for
strength and confidence but it comes from within.
It is there all the time.

Anna Freud

The Courage to Win®

Mental Toughness for Peak Performance and Success

There are four practices of mental toughness that you can use reverse learned helplessness, solve any problem, and win. They are:

The Practice of Self-Acceptance

What you resist persists.

Every problem is confusing initially. When not winning, we do not know why. We lack clarity. In the practice of self-acceptance, you harness the wisdom of your negativity to discover what you feel helpless to attain.

Emotionally, the worst is behind you. You have faced your inner chaos and nurtured yourself through your anger, fear, and sadness.

The Practice of Commitment

Honour your desires.

At this stage, you have clarity about what you feel helpless about. However, you still must *act* and solve the problem in front of you.

In the practice of commitment, you shift from diagnosing your problem to imagining a perfect outcome for it. You provide leadership by asking, “What do I want with respect to this problem?” By creating a vision, you trigger an intense, burning desire for your goal. You become a person of action and activate the law of attraction in your favour.

The Practice of Competence

The future belongs to the competent.

Having invoked the commitment, you are now highly motivated to solve your problem. At this stage, you drop all blame and focus only on your actions.

However, all actions are not created equal. To win, you must take the right actions. The future belongs to the competent. In the practice of control, you apply proven success principles to your problem.

The Practice of Confidence

Master fear for maximum achievement.

The final step to overcoming helplessness is to restore your confidence. To stay confident when pursuing goals, you need to master the fears that impede you along the way. You learn how to perform your best consistently, especially under pressure.

The Practice of Self-Acceptance

What you resist, persists.

Negative feelings are really a request

When you experience physical pain, you intuitively realize it is a request: something is wrong in your body, and you need to address it—fast. Remember, all negative feelings are all a variation of the same theme: you desperately want something, but feel helpless to attain it.

Emotional pain is no different. Your feelings are a warning system, asking you to address an unmet need. Your feelings are based on past disappointments, and are asking you to change your behaviour in the present to get new results.

This occurs because if your desires are in jeopardy, *your body wants you to know this* so you can evolve and attain them. Negative emotions are instinctive, energetic responses that arise deep in the unconscious mind. They arrive unbidden to signal you that something is wrong - your heart's desire is not being realized.

The practice of self-acceptance is the opposite of suppression. It is the courage to experience your feelings without resistance.

Tremendous relief comes from not having to pretend, cover up, or suppress your reactions to life problems. You enjoy an inner relaxation that is heavenly. If you truly open to your feelings and listen to them, you heal yourself of the fear, anger, or sadness that has been plaguing you. You feel whole again.

What do you feel helpless to attain?

You must discover what you feel helpless to attain with respect to your challenge. There is a finite number of things we become helpless about. To identify yours, simply review these categories.

Money

We feel helpless to:

- Earn money and take care of ourselves without help
- Save money
- Become financially literate and invest money wisely

The Practice of Self-Acceptance

What you resist, persists.

Career

We feel helpless to:

- Sell a product, service, or idea (including ourselves as employees)
- Motivate our colleagues, boss, or team to do what we want
- Learn new skills
- Make good decisions

Love & Friendship

We feel helpless to:

- Attract lovers, spouses, or friends
- Inspire people to love you and give you physical affection, time in shared activities, compliments, listening, empathy, or help
- Persuade others to do what we want at home
- Assert our needs in relationships

Self-Mastery

We feel helpless to:

- Establish disciplined habits in fitness, eating, and time management
- Follow through on goals
- Create emotional stability in ourselves
- Live with integrity, with our habits matching our values
- Perform our best under pressure

Write down your worst fears about your challenge. This simple exercise will reveal the unconscious learned helplessness you are holding about your problem. What do you feel helpless to create, do, or have? Does it fall into one of these 4 categories?

You grow up the day you have your first real laugh, at yourself.

Ethel Barrymore

The Practice of Commitment

Honour your desires.

The inspirational film **Rudy** tells the story of a football player whose mission in life is to play for Notre Dame University. Since Rudy is only 5 feet tall and without a speck of athletic ability, and his dream seems unlikely to materialize.

Yet Rudy is selected for the team because of his unequivocal commitment to it. Just before putting him on the team, the coach says, "You want on the team pretty bad, don't you?"

Rudy replies, "Coach, you have no idea. *I'll do anything.*"

Have you ever heard anyone say this...and mean it?

When is the last time *you* said it?

There are 3 mental habits that de-motivate us.

1. Disowning Desires

What Most People Do

When we are not winning, it's tempting to disown our desires and pretend that we don't care about them. In a naive bid to avoid disappointment, we disconnect from what we want. This is known as self-alienation, and it is definitely not for you.

In practical terms, we reject our needs in our mind. In the extreme, we become hostile to the object of our desire. If we want the acceptance of another person, we claim we 'don't care about him.' If our desire is money, we pretend we 'don't need wealth.' If our desire is the approval of a superior, we claim we're 'sick of the politics'.

Here are some real life examples:

We pretend we never wanted the goal

"I recently flew a guy out to audition for a band. This guy was really excited to do the gig.

After he auditioned he didn't get it, and he immediately started with, 'Well, you know, the money wasn't good anyway; it's only a part-time thing.' I really felt like stopping the guy and saying, "You just didn't play well enough."¹¹

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Honour your desires.

We force a negative outcome

"I got a negative performance review from my boss, who said he's going to defer my promotion for six months now. He seems ambivalent about me. I went on vacation, came back, and said, "I need to know whether I'm getting my promotion. I can't wait six months. He transferred me out of the department, and I am devastated."

We silence our voice

"For months I've been hinting to my project co-lead that I want to attend the professional development seminars with him...but whenever I bring it up, he puts me off, so I've stopped mentioning it."

We become hostile, denying our need for approval

"My boss told me that I did not meet his expectations that I would get 'overwhelming reviews across the board' from my team. This has left me feeling very hurt – and all I can think about is how cruel he was, and when I can quit."

We lower our expectations

"I wonder what it would be like to lead a project. I've never even allowed myself to apply for the role."

At first, it makes sense to disown desires that seem out of reach. "There's no point in wanting something I can't have," we reason.

However, this does not work, because we never truly relinquish our desires for money, love, fulfilling work, and self-actualization. There are desires we never give up on, no matter what obstacles we face. In order of priority, they are:

1. Physical security and survival (safety, food, air, water, sex)
2. Loving relationships with others
3. The need to feel competent and esteemed at work
4. The need for self-esteem, confidence, achievement
5. The desire for self-actualization as expressed in knowledge, creativity, truth, spirituality, and financial independence

2. Lack of Self-Assertiveness

The second de-motivating mental habit is lack of self-assertiveness. This is the reluctance to place your desires first.

The Practice of Commitment

Honour your desires.

What Most People Do

Growing up, most of us were encouraged to be selfless and put other people's needs before our own. We were told that a good person is someone who gives, whether giving is in his self-interest or not.

Most people are guilty of subordinating their desires to others'. It can be frightening to assert our needs when they contradict what parents, spouses, or authority figures have in mind for us.

At work, we say things like, "*My job doesn't matter to me. I'm just going to get a job that pays the bills.*" Then we spend 8 hours a day doing things we don't want to do.

At home, we say things like, "*I don't care which movie we go to,*" or "*I don't mind doing more than my share of household work.*"

Do not be deceived by the fact that these are small things. If you cannot assert yourself with small things, how will you assert yourself with large things?

What Top Performers Do

Top performers approach their problems with healthy self-assertiveness. Self-assertiveness is the conviction that your life belongs to you and that you have the right to be happy.¹²

Top performers believe *they matter*. They take their desires seriously when life presents a challenge. The very act of asking, "What do *I* want?" in response to a problem shows healthy self-assertiveness.

Re-train your mind in self-assertiveness

To start, I want you to decide that *you matter* with respect to the problem you are facing. Here is a practical exercise to accomplish this.

Keep your in mind when you complete this exercise. Next, generate 5 different endings for the following sentence each day:

The Practice of Commitment

Honour your desires.

If I were 5% more self-assertive today--¹³

Here are some sample endings:

- I'd ask my boss for more responsibility at work
- I'd offer my ideas in meetings more often
- I'd give my team member a deadline for that report
- I'd ask my friends to go to the restaurant of my choice
- I'd take piano lessons instead of taking my kids sailing

Complete this exercise every day for two weeks. Gradually, you will come to see which needs you are subordinating, and how you can express them in an appropriate way.

3. Self-alienation

The third mental habit that de-motivates us is self-alienation. Self-alienation is most commonly expressed in the statement, "I don't know what I want."

My answer: To solve any problem, you must set a goal. To set a goal, you must discover what you want.

What Most People Do

We lose touch with what we want by focusing on the current reality of our problems--our bills, our troubled relationships, our limited skills.

If you focus on the current reality of your problem, you alienate yourself from your desires without realizing it. You feel an emotional void, a sense of meaninglessness, and a vague discontent--without knowing why. Try as you might, you cannot pinpoint what you want.

We forget that all problem-solving requires our imagination.

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Honour your desires.

What Mentally Tough People Do

Top performers focus on possibilities, not limitations. They live out of their imagination long enough to dream. They do this through the practice of goal-setting.

Mentally tough men and women admit what they want *even when they are not winning*. This is frightening at first; admitting your desires makes you vulnerable. But once you take this leap of faith, you rescue your motivation.

We overcome helplessness by triggering intense, burning desire for what we want. This is called honouring our desires. When you do, your motivation is high; you do not need to use intellectual psyche up techniques to motivate yourself.

To win, you must be a leader in your life

To win, you must be a leader in your life. You must provide a vision. You do this by asking, "What do I want?" You shift from analyzing your problem to imagining a perfect outcome for it.

This is the practice of commitment: honouring your desires by pursuing them in the world. By creating a vision, you re-activate an intense, burning desire for it despite your learned helplessness.

Honouring your desires shifts you from passivity to action. Suddenly, you know who you are. You become a person of action, activating the law of attraction in your favour. The practice of commitment makes you whole. When your actions mirror your values, you live a life of perfect integrity.

The law of attraction

Goal-setting is the practical tool for re-connecting to your desires and activating the law of attraction. Most people avoid goal-setting because they fear failure. Only 3% of people have clear, written goals complete with an action plan to achieve them. Incidentally, it is the top 3% of the population (at least in terms of financial success). However, the only way to guarantee failure is to do nothing. Goal-setting is a powerful, magical process that activates the sub-conscious and super-conscious mind. It activates the law of attraction and draws people and circumstances to you that help you materialize your desires.

The Practice of Commitment

Honour your desires.

What Do You Want?

What do you want with respect to your challenge? Please be specific.

Non-Specific

1. I want more self esteem and self confidence.
2. I want to take action more and procrastinate less.
3. I want more balance in my life.
4. I want to communicate better at work.
5. I want my ex-spouse to be more respectful.
6. I want happier clients.

Specific

1. I want to overcome my fear of rejection and make excellent sales calls.
2. I want to finish my proposal for the IT department by mid-November.
3. I want to improve my efficiency so I am working a maximum of 60 hours per week.
4. I want to make \$100,000 this year without increasing my hours.
5. I want to reconcile with my spouse.
6. I want to learn exactly what to say when clients complain about fees to turn the conversation around.

Your Goal:

We are what we repeatedly do.
Excellence, therefore, is not an act but a habit.

Arisotle

The Practice of Commitment

Honour your desires.

Set a Goal You Can Control

To complement your major goal, set a sub-goal that is under your direct and immediate control. This is one of the critical lessons about winning that sport has taught us. In sport, the only way you can win (achieve the performance goal) is by focusing on a goal under your control (a process goal).

In the 2000 Olympics, I watched U.S. track star Marion Jones warming up for her first race, the 200 metre sprint. As the cameras zeroed in on Jones, the announcer turned to Olympian sprinter Michael Johnson and said, “All eyes are focused on Marion. *What* is going through her mind right now?”

The camera panned to Michael. Politely he replied, “Well, I’d imagine she’s thinking about how to get a good start out of the blocks.”

An elite athlete himself, Michael knew that Marion’s best focus would NOT be on the outcome of the race. The only way she could win would be to focus on a goal *under her control*, such as how to get a clean start out of the blocks. The 200 metre is a short race. If you get a good start, and you’re Marion Jones, you’re going to win. Here are some examples of goals under your control:

- I will ask my boss if there is anything I can do to ease his workload or stress.
- I will read one book this week on how to deliver moving anecdotes in presentations.
- I will learn one technique for writing reports faster.
- I will listen with understanding when my daughter talks about her job.

Set A Sub-Goal Under Your Control Here:

The Practice of Commitment

Honour your desires.

A New Day

Celine Dion is widely considered the top live performer in the world. Her Las Vegas show, *A New Day*, sold out 200 performances a year. Having seen the show, I can assure you she is a genius on stage.

But it wasn't an easy road for Celine.

Years ago, during her Unison tour, Celine's voice broke: "My voice broke all of a sudden. It came apart like wet paper. It was like entering a vacuum, total darkness. At that moment I believed my voice would never return."

This experience led Celine to the best throat doctor in the world. She learned that stress, fatigue, overwork—and mistreating her vocal chords—had put her voice in jeporady.

The doctor told her that to protect and enhance her voice, she would need to completely change the way she sang.

This meant doing singing exercises for hours each day.

Celine's husband, Rene, asked how long it would take to see results. The doctor replied, 'You won't notice much for three years. In five years, Celine will have a better voice.' Rene was dumbfounded. He told Celine that he wouldn't blame her if she quit singing altogether: five years is too long to work without reward.

But Celine didn't hesitate. She knew genius was within her grasp. After five years of carefully training her voice, she said:

**My voice had never felt so flexible and powerful.
I'd never gotten so much pleasure out of it. It was my
companion, my sister, my best friend, my confidante.**

**That voice, which I love, is the surest and shortest route
between what's inside of me and others.⁶**

Remember, the Practice of Commitment is not simply the art of creating a vision. It is expressing yourself by pursuing it in the world.

The Practice of Competence

The future belongs to the competent.

The third practice of mental toughness is to gain a sense of control over our life problem. We do this by gathering as much awareness, knowledge and skill possible about the technical aspect of our challenge. The future belongs to the competent.

What Most People Do

Most people blame. Blame is a mental habit that keeps our feelings of inadequacy and rejection at bay by attributing our failures to outside causes.

When we are heavily into blame, we are focused on the past. We think or talk incessantly about the person or situation that has upset us. We immerse ourselves in hostility and self-pity. Instead of being solution oriented, we are caught up in the desire to extract revenge.

What Mentally Tough People Do

Mentally tough people focus on what they can control in the present. They **carefully invest their energy** on outcomes they can influence that will bring about the result they desire.

Success involves an important paradox: the moment we stop investing energy on an outcome we *cannot* control and re-invest it on one we *can* control, we begin to achieve our desired outcome.

This is the origin of the well-known axiom: ‘What happens to us isn’t nearly as important as how we respond to what happens to us.’ Dr. Stephen Covey, states this idea another way: “If we ever think the problem is ‘out there’, that very thought is the problem.”¹⁵

With respect to your challenge, you may have been expending emotional and physical energy on things outside your control. This investment may be in the form of time, work, or mental and emotional attention. If you have, it’s likely that these efforts have been ineffective. By ineffective, I mean that you are not getting the results you want. You may also be suffering about the situation.

The Practice of Competence

The future belongs to the competent.

The only thing we can control is our behaviour. To win, we must drop blame and focus on our actions.

You must learn how to solve your problem

Yet, focusing on your own actions is not enough. You must also take the *right* actions. You must learn how to solve your problem. There are proven principles for winning in relationships, career, and money. If you apply them, you will gain superior technique, which helps you win. The future belongs to the competent.

To develop superior technique in relationships, career, and finances, we need humility. If we are not winning, someone on this earth has the solution—we just don't know what it is yet. We need to find help and learn from our actions.

This is the practice of control. You take control of a problem by focusing on your actions and developing superior technique. Few people train themselves long enough to discover how good they can truly be.

Success principles = superior technique

Every domain of life is governed by success principles that work, no matter who applies them. These principles separate top performers from everyone else in their field. When we internalize these principles, we develop superior technique.

Whether you are parenting your 5-year-old, playing the violin, performing heart surgery, selling advertising, or trying to get a date, there is no substitute for good technique.

Consider Edwin Moses, the most accomplished hurdler in the history of track and field. He won the 400 M hurdles for 10 years. For 10 years, he didn't lose a race. Primarily it was because he was the only guy in the world who could take 13 steps between hurdles. He just had superior technique.¹⁶ When you have superior technique, you understand tiny nuances that no one else sees. Hank Aaron, long-time holder of the Major League Baseball records for home runs, was a guy who approached hitting in a novel way.

You must do the thing you think you cannot do.

Eleanor Roosevelt

The Practice of Competence

The future belongs to the competent.

Unlike most hitters, who worried about their batting form, Aaron focused on the pitcher. His unique focus set him apart from all other hitters of his generation. Aaron didn't stay up nights worrying about his hands or his hips. He stayed up thinking about the pitcher he was going to face the next day.

His whole pattern of thinking would be focused on that pitcher. He would say to himself, "What is good for Koosman, what works good for Koosman, and how is he going to try and get me out in different situations?"¹⁷

Stop Your Divorce

There's a well-known story of the client whose wife was coming home every day saying, "I don't love you any more. I want a divorce."

Of course, he was very upset.

He sought help from a therapist with 45 years' experience on re-uniting couples.¹ The therapist told him *exactly* what to say the next time his wife did that.

The next day, the client called back his therapist, very excited. He said: "She came home and again said that she didn't love me and she wanted a divorce. I told her the three things you told me to say and then stayed quiet: 'You're right. It will never work. I would prefer to stay married, but you're not happy. I'll look for an apartment next week.'"²

She got up, walked around the house for about five minutes, and then returned to the bedroom and said, "You know, I think this marriage CAN work. And I want it to work."

Before this, he used to argue with her and tell her all the reasons why they should stay together. Although he has sped up the legal divorce, the emotional divorce has come to a grinding halt. Now she is finally open to talking to him about why she wants the divorce.

What he perceived as a **confidence** problem (he feels rejected and insecure because his wife is leaving him) is really a **competence** problem (he doesn't know how to communicate effectively with his wife).

The Practice of Competence

The future belongs to the competent.

Why This Approach Worked

1. The husband agreed with her instead of arguing. Most people relax their position when you agree with them and defend their position when you argue with them.

2. He listened to her, which gave her a feeling of being understood.

3. He told her that he preferred to stay married to her, placing the responsibility for the divorce solely on her. Since there is usually a lot of good in a marriage, people don't want to be completely responsible for ending them.

4. He showed her he wasn't afraid to be rejected or alone, which demonstrated his personal confidence. Confidence is universally attractive, and fear is universally unattractive. Understanding this principle allowed him to start turning the situation around.

You can use these principles whenever someone is rejecting you to being reversing the situation.

The Practice of Competence in Relationships

The one area we must succeed in is relationships. Woody Allen once said, "80% of problems come with hair on top." In this session, we are going to focus on two techniques: a) making effective requests, and b) the 10% harmony strategy.

How to Make Effective Requests

The following are sample phrases you can use to make requests

1. "Would you be willing to..."
2. "How can you help me..."
3. "Would it be OK if you..." (especially when dealing with an alpha-dog)

Here are 'softer' requests that will usually be very well-received:

At work: "It really motivates me when you..."
"I notice I work more efficiently when you..."
At home: "I feel really close to you when you..."

The Practice of Competence

The future belongs to the competent.

Workplace Scenario #1

A client asks you to complete a deliverable for the next business day, but you are already committed to other projects. Other than working all night, it is unlikely you will be able to finish his work on time.

Ineffective request-making

“This is coming in pretty late...I’m backed up with several other projects today. I will try to complete it, but unfortunately I won’t be able to guarantee it.”

- ❑ Focuses on your dissatisfactions and stress vs. what you want. This is not a request yet, but it needs to become one.
- ❑ Makes the issue personal (about your feelings); not centered on the solving the business problem at hand

Workplace scenario #2

You have an executive assistant who has begun a pattern of lateness and absenteeism.

Ineffective request-making:

“I’m really unhappy with all the times you’ve come in late...I don’t feel I can trust you. I’ve been flexible about your start time and you’re taking advantage of it.”

- ❑ Focuses on feelings, not the facts
- ❑ Makes the issue personal, not centered on the business problem at hand
- ❑ Does not solicit personal accountability because the focus is on the past; encourages defensiveness

Effective request-making:

“I’ve been reviewing your attendance record and I’ve noticed that in the last 60 days you’ve called in sick 6 times and arrived late 7 times. Is there a health reason (or alternative reason) you cannot make a full time commitment here?

Can you please come to work on time and be here a full five days each week?”

- ❑ Focuses on the facts (behaviour) only
- ❑ Solicits a possible explanation (moves to problem-solving mode)
- ❑ Focuses on future behaviour and what the organization needs from the employee

Effective request-making

Step 1. Immediate agree to the priority (unless it is outside of your role). This makes him or her happy because you are not showing task resistance.

You: “Absolutely.”

Step 2: Take control of the conversation and gather information

You then take control by asking questions about the task. Determine all the tasks involved and when they must be completed by. This way, you can determine the order of your priorities. This is also a good time to clarify his expectations about the job.

You: “So I can organize myself, which items in this project are the most urgent?”

Boss: “We need to code the site to customers can pay online so we don’t lose sales. I need that done today. The new bios can wait until the end of the week.”

Step 3: Negotiate for Time

Now you can negotiate for time so that you can accommodate all your priorities.

You: “Great. I’ll make the changes to the online payment source code right away. Would it be okay if I completed the bios on Monday? I am waiting for some photos from several employees first.”

Boss: “Yes, that’s fine. I appreciate you being so organized.”

10% Agreement Strategy

When most people sense conflict, they defend their position. While this is natural, defending your position causes the other person to entrench himself in his. Both people become competitive, and finding solutions takes a back seat to winning.

There is a way out of this cycle.

The key is to find 10% of what someone else is saying you can agree with and focus on that part of the conversation. I've never found anyone who was 100% wrong.

When you do this, you relax and other person and diminish his need to be right, because you've already demonstrated that he is right about something. This causes him to become more open to your perspective, and you can now establish common ground and mutual listening, which will pave the way for a solution to the conflict. Here are the steps in the strategy:

1. Say, "Fair enough." This is a phrase that establishes benevolence between you. It says, "I believe you are a reasonable person."
2. Empathize/reflect what you are hearing. "You're not getting anything out of this course." "You feel as though this has been a complete waste of time."

Notice that you have not agreed with him; you have reflected what you are hearing. You do this to find out if you really know what he's talking about.

3. Look for 10% agreement. "You're right. When you came in this morning I was a pre-occupied with setting up the VCR and didn't take the time to listen to you as long as I should have. I probably didn't make you feel as though I was interested in you as an individual."

Sometimes, you may need to ask questions to get to this point. "What were you expecting out of the course?" "Yes, I can see that if you were expecting an hour on time management, you would be pretty disappointment right about now."

4. Find a solution to the problem. "I'm so glad you talked to me. Provided the rest of the group is interested, what if I worked in a mini-session on time management this afternoon?"

Your Inner Genius: Sample Sentence Completions

With respect to your challenge, complete the following sentences 6-10 times. If your challenge involves a person, select a specific person and do the completions with respect to that person. If the challenge involves yourself only (e.g., I have trouble motivating myself to get started on a particular task), then do them with respect to yourself.

Example: The trust is low in my relationship with my supervisor, Bill.

One thing I do that doesn't work in my communications with Bill is—

- Try to make him feel as though he's making a bad decision by telling him what other departments are doing.
- Try to make him feel guilty by implying his standards are unreasonable.
- Resisting a request because I disagree with the procedure.
- Being negative about a task.
- Being silent when he's excited about an idea.

One thing I do that works in my communications with Bill is—

- Being direct and realistic with him about deadlines.
- Telling him if I need more training on the computer system.
- Trying to solve my problems before asking him questions.
- Resolve problems quickly rather than let my resentment build up.

Example: I don't agree with a new procedure that is being implemented because it makes my job more difficult.

One thing I do that works with myself is—

- Realize that it's OK to resist change at first—and that it's OK to feel powerless.
- Try to understand why the procedure might have been developed.
- Try to see some advantage in it for myself.
- Try to see something interesting about doing it this way—is there something new I can learn?
- Getting into a rhythm with it so it feels normal and natural.

One thing I do that doesn't work with myself is—

- Complaining about it to my colleagues.
- Blaming management for the fact that I feel a little powerless and insignificant because I wasn't consulted on something central to my job.
- Telling myself how stupid it is.
- Ruminating on all the negative consequences of the procedure.
- Putting off doing it because it annoys me.

The Practice of Competence

The future belongs to the competent.

Sentence Completions (your challenge)

One thing I do that works when communicating with [Bob] _____ is—

One thing I do that doesn't work when communicating [with Bob] _____ is--

One thing I could do to today to immediately make the situation better is—

What you pay attention to grows.
Deepak Chopra

The Practice of Competence

The future belongs to the competent.

Why People Fail in Relationships: The 5 Relationship Mistakes

When a relationship is struggling, there are 5 main reasons:

1. You are pressuring another person for more love, affection or respect, which is causing him to her to withhold it.
2. Another person is pressuring *you* for more love, affection, or respect, and this is triggering negativity in you.
3. You are being inappropriately selfish and dominant in the relationship, i.e., primarily concerned with your own needs as opposed to the other person's.
4. You lack self-assertiveness and are passive in the relationship; you habitually place the other person's needs before your own.
5. You do not genuinely understand (have empathy for) the other person, and therefore aren't communicating effectively with him or her.

Sometimes, all 5 of these problems are occurring in at the same time, creating tremendous stress in the relationship.

Begin somewhere.
You cannot build a reputation on what you *intend* to do.
Liz Smith

Commitments For Tomorrow

Two specific next steps you will take to resolve your challenge are:

Outer game step:

Inner game step:

Final Thought

Thank you for attending this seminar. It has been a pleasure working with you. Please send me success stories anytime to lisa@lisabrown.ca. I hope to see you again in future training.



Mental Toughness Training with Lisa Brown

Lisa Brown offers a 4-week, exclusive, intensive online training program called **Catapult Yourself to Breakthrough Confidence and Success**. You receive a lesson a week for four weeks including in-depth, personalized coaching from Lisa Brown on the goal(s) of your choice. For information and to register, go to www.thecouragetowin.com or call Lisa's office at 780.498.6300

Footnotes

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