

# **THE 11 MINUTE LEADER**

**11 POWERFUL HABITS OF WORLD CLASS  
BUSINESS LEADERS**

**BRAD HENDERSON**

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**Brad Henderson**

Brad has worked at board level with leadership teams from global brands including: Oracle, Ferrari, Coca Cola, Merck, Unilever, Cap Gemini, The Gap, Armani, Cafe Nero, Bloomingdales and Selfridges.

This book is for leaders at all levels, particularly CXOs, VPs or Senior Managers who are expected to deliver business results. It outlines the realities of building and leading (not managing) high performance teams.

Having worked in the UK, Europe, USA, Australia, Middle East, Singapore and Hong Kong, Brad fully understands the challenges, pressures and issues involved in living in different countries with different cultures, as well as the dynamics and politics of life at the top of the corporate ladder.

No AI has been used or abused in the creation of this book.

## FOREWORD

“Hi Brad, wishing you the best of luck with the upcoming book!”

**- Richard Branson, Founder of The Virgin Group**

“Brad’s book is refreshing — authentic, practical, and rooted in real boardroom experience. Having worked with him in the Middle East, I’ve seen his sharp strategic mind and grounded leadership firsthand. This isn’t another generic leadership book; it’s a play-book for senior executives who want to truly elevate their impact. Highly recommended.”

**- Kevin Lawrence, CEO Advisor and Author of Your Oxygen Mask First and The Four Forces of Growth**

“Truly insightful, I wish I’d read this 10 years ago.”

**- Tom Callaghan, Head of Global Creative for Saatchi & Saatchi and Author of A Killing Winter**

“As a world leader in psychology, I can recognise the modern psychology techniques written in this book, blended with business knowledge, and it works.”

**- Dr Kate Ellen, Doctor of Clinical Psychology, Founder of Superpower Learning**

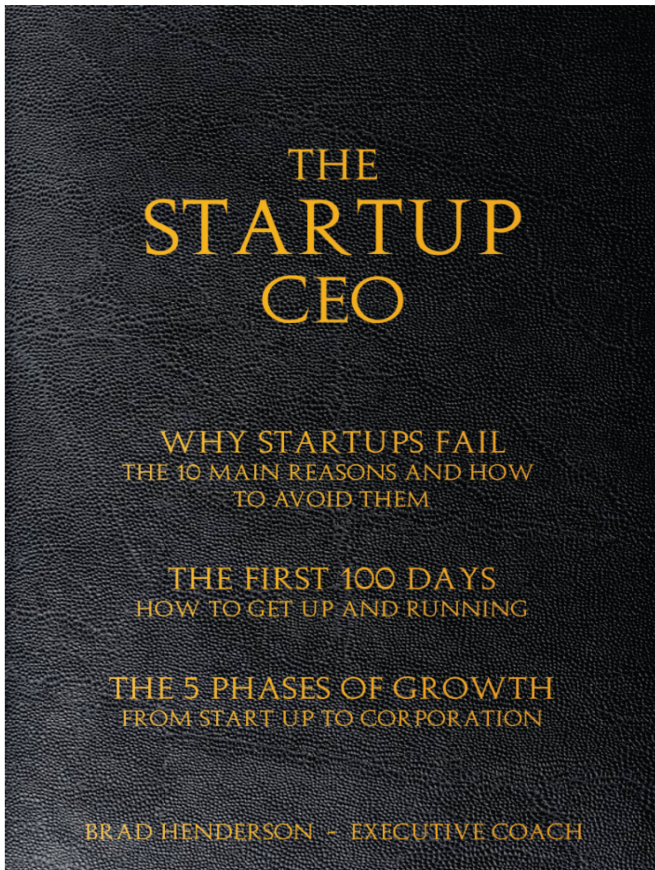
# DEDICATION

To my daughter Kelly for pushing me to start this.

To my son Kevin for making it happen.

To Dr Kate Ellen for her editing skills, keeping me on track, and her ability to steal coffee cups.

While this book is written for executives and senior managers, to those of you starting a new company for the first time, the habits in this book will help you on the journey you are embarking on; and The Start Up CEO book is on its way.



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# PROLOGUE



Every one of the 11 habits I have applied myself across multiple board level roles, projects and consulting assignments, including:

- Developing global strategies
- Building transformation road maps
- Developing enterprise architectures
- Restructuring global supply chains
- Optimising key processes
- Cultural transformations
- Centralising and decentralising organisations
- Leading teams of 100 and more
- Mentoring VPs as direct reports
- Leading multi-year, multi-million dollar projects with cross-functional and insourced teams in the hundreds
- Corporate and departmental restructures
- Helping organisations to optimise outsourcing - when is it valuable, when is it not
- Implementing differential distribution
- Developing risk management strategies
- Delivering webinars to groups of CXOs around the world

**T**hroughout all of this, my key focus area has been leadership development. I have always coached and mentored high performers so all these transformational initiatives don't go to waste.

Looking back at all of those projects, initiatives and responsibilities, I can assure you that each step you take towards building the habits covered in this book, will make you a better leader, and result in better outcomes.

# INTRODUCTION



I have been fortunate enough to work with some of the greatest business leaders in a generation, including; Sir Richard Branson (Virgin), His Excellency Obaid Humaid Al Tayer (Al Tayer Group), Sir Bernard Ashley (Laura Ashley), Anita Roddick and her husband Gordon (The Body Shop), and many others including Kevin Lawrence, the Business Transformation Coach.

I have worked at board level with leadership teams from global brands including: Virgin, Oracle, Ferrari, Coca Cola, Merck, Unilever, Cap Gemini, The Gap, Armani, Cafe Nero, Bloomingdales and Selfridges.

I have had the opportunity to collaborate with Franklin Covey on a Transformational Leadership Development Course, and John Zachman on a new model for Enterprise Architecture.

I learned so much from spending time with such gifted people and the teams around them, and honed in on what made them so special. It enabled me to identify key characteristics of great leaders which are consistent across generations from Napoleon, to Abraham Lincoln, to Elon Musk today.

In all arenas, *solid habits and discipline*, equal success:

Tim Cook (Apple) wakes around 3:45 AM for emails and exercise.

Satya Nadella (Microsoft) focuses on gratitude, reading, and meditation.

Jeff Bezos (Amazon) prioritizes waking naturally and a slow start without an early alarm.

Tony Robbins (world-renown results coach) recommends you lay out your exercise outfit, spring out of bed, get dressed and get going; before you have time to think about whether you want to exercise, or make excuses not to.

A common thread here is they all incorporate early rising, exercise and dedicated time for reflection, reading or preparation before starting work.

Yes, these people have talent, but if that talent wasn't supported by regular positive habits, they would be another 'flash in the pan' or 'wasted talent'. It doesn't matter if they are *tired or not in the mood*, they just get ready and show up every day.

Before we dive in, let's be clear about two things:

1. What makes a habit so powerful is that it becomes *something you do without thinking*.

Anyone can learn, practice and master these 11 habits so that they become as natural as breathing. Every habit will deliver a serious uplift in performance.

2. World Class means operating at the highest level in your sector or your specialist function.

This is not measured in awards or accolades, it's measured by results and the only people who can judge you are your boss, your team and yourself. You will know when you are at that level, trust me, you will know.

In the upcoming chapters we are going to cover the 11 habits I've spent over three decades using when coaching global CXOs, which have had extraordinary results; for example taking one company from a turnover of 500 million to five billion gross revenue.

Ok, let's go.

# HABIT 1

## MAKE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE YOUR SUPERPOWER



In 1995, Daniel Goleman wrote that Emotional Intelligence contains five elements; self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. I have reinterpreted that work, together with some inputs from philosophy and psychology, and applied it within a business framework.

In this chapter, I'll outline a more practical version of emotional intelligence, that could make you almost invincible.

This habit is the most important one to start working on because it comes into play when you practice many of the other Habits (e.g. Make Meetings Work and Lead Don't Manage).

### **Be The Calmest Person In The Room**

If your leadership is at the mercy of your emotions you will come across as weak and not in control of yourself. So how can you be in control of the many situations that leaders will be faced with?

World Class Leaders' understand the importance of remaining calm in every situation. The reality is you won't always feel calm, so different individuals have different strategies for *appearing calm* because they have different personalities.

## **Emotionally Detach**

Later in the book we will discuss business outcomes. It is critical that you focus on them but it is equally important that you do not become emotionally attached to them.

Emotions are temporary but decisions last and they have consequences long after the emotions have faded.

It is perfectly normal to get emotional about things (it's part of being human) but World Class leaders recognise that emotions come and go. You do not have to react to them or let them influence your decision making.

Controlling your thoughts is a key element of a World Class Leaders success kit that we will explore further.

## **Thought Control**

Be aware that thoughts are not reality. Most of us have around 150,000 thoughts a day. If you respond to thoughts in a random manner as they arrive, you will not be focused.

You run a high risk of diverting energy into things that don't matter, or things you haven't thought through, or that shouldn't be prioritised.

Think of your thoughts as clouds passing through the sky of your mind. Your subconscious will generally just let them go. You see a cute dog and just for a moment you think about getting one, you come across an advertisement for food and you are tempted by it, for a few seconds.

Then there are thoughts that you might explore for a moment, a colleague says something insightful, or you come across a new development in your sector. You can just acknowledge them and let them go, or you can make a note to consider it later.

The point is this. You have control over your thoughts and whether or not you take any action on them.

We all have repetitive or unwelcome thoughts that keep appearing even if we don't want them to.

It could be a conversation with a partner or a colleague that you keep ruminating over and thinking of different things you could have said. Or it could be that you keep reliving a mistake you made, or have a song stuck on repeat in your head.

Imagine you are holding a remote control to the thought channels in your head. Simply change channels.

This takes a bit of practice but it is a highly effective technique.

Start by finding a *safe channel* (e.g. the golf thought channel, the cooking channel, the holiday channel, or anything you enjoy thinking about). Turn that channel on, then when you are comfortable, choose the channel you need (strategy, budgets, an upcoming meeting).

After some practice, you will be able to move seamlessly to any thought channel you choose, and unwanted thoughts will no longer steal your time, attention and emotional energy.

## **Be Aware Of The Effect You Have On Others**

This includes your team, boss, colleagues, and stakeholders.

If you aren't aware, you won't know when to intervene, when to lead, when to listen, and you won't have control of the scenario because you don't understand whether or not your team is in alignment with you.

You will assume what they understand, and they will assume what you expect of them, along with a lot of things that are outside of your control.

Being World Class, is being aware of what's going on with everybody, which is not easy, especially in a meeting situation with multiple people, but you need to step up to be able to see everybody.

You need to spot the quiet one in the room who knows everything that you need to know.

You need to deal with the talkative one who is talking about things that no one cares about.

You have to see the dynamic of what that is doing to other people.

You're like a football referee, you need to be able to see the whole game.

As the leader, you need to take responsibility for all of that dynamic. See the effect you are having on the quiet one and the talkative one, and then redirect the talkative one, and get the information out of the quiet one.

Then the team will perceive you as a person who is taking care of their space and giving each person a platform to speak, and their trust in your leadership will grow.

After the meeting you can speak to the talkative one if they are having a negative impact on the others, and the dynamic needs to shift.

In meetings, watch for body language, eye contact, and volume levels.

A leader examines the content of what people are saying, and also evaluates whether or not they are on board with what the leader is trying to achieve.

They should also reflect on themselves and whether they are setting the example they want to see, and acting the right way, because they accept that it's their responsibility to create a healthy culture.

You are responsible for how your team is behaving at the end of the day, so you have to be aware of how others are perceiving you.

Are you encouraging them to talk? Are you closing them down in the right way? Are you being perceived as being in control of the room? Are you perceived as seeing what is really going on?

Someone might see something that shouldn't be happening, but do they perceive that you picked up on that as well? Or are they feeling, “my leader isn't in control, they haven't seen that, they don't know what is going on, this guy is on his phone in a meeting, and the leader hasn't seen it, he's let them get away with it, the troublesome team member got a pass”.

You have to be perceived as being impartial, in control, and emotionally detached.

You cannot be seen to have favorites, and you must ensure that everybody gets the same level of treatment, credibility, and empathy.

### **Learn How To Be Persistently Perceived As Strong In Any Situation**

There is a misconception, driven by company structure charts, that the leader sits at the top of the pyramid. In reality, the leader sits at the bottom and is carrying the whole team.

In order to carry a team you have to be strong. Even if you don't feel it, you have to be the strong one in every situation.

Strength is perceived as a strength, by everyone. Those in senior positions are seen as role models. People in your team will need to be carried, they will need to be supported, they will need to be helped, coached, mentored; they are looking for strength.

If they see weakness in their leader or signs of weakness appearing, their loyalty, their intentions, and their certainty starts to vaporise.

However you feel inside, you have to give the right impression, and act with strength, and understand how important that is, how to deliver it, and the amazing invisible impact that has on your team. You are their rock.

Do not confuse being strong with being macho or aggressive; sometimes strength lies in being quiet. There are many different ways to demonstrate strength, and it's important to be aware of every situa-

tion, and what strength looks like in that situation, before you even begin to decide how to demonstrate strength.

For example, it could involve telling someone to stop talking in a meeting. It could involve holding your tongue and waiting for someone to share something that they wouldn't have shared if you had jumped in. It may be taking the blame for something that was not your fault, or it may be standing up for your team when something goes wrong.

They also understand that there will be times where their team will challenge them, especially if they have a Super Team.

People are going to stand up to you, and tell you uncomfortable truths, and you need to be able to hear that without wilting, and without looking weak.

You need to take that feedback without emotion, process it, and be big enough to say something like “You’ve got a point, let me think about that”, without undermining your own position.

Just because a team member has come up with something they didn't think of, doesn't change anything; it means the team member is doing what the leader hired them to do.

It doesn't matter if they look smarter than you, but if they start to behave as though they are smarter than you or disrespectfully, that's a different conversation.

That conversation should be taken offline, and considered to be a part of coaching and mentoring.

A World Class leader doesn't treat it as revenge or putting someone in their place. You need to understand if someone is behaving in that way, their behavior is your responsibility because you are their coach and mentor.

Even if you've outsourced the mentoring to a coach or colleague, you still maintain overall responsibility for the functioning of your team.

## **Be Conscious Of The Example You Are Setting In Terms Of A Leader, Mentor, And Coach**

You need to understand what you are looking to achieve when you are in leader mode, mentor mode, and coach mode, and be very aware of the signals you are sending to the recipient during that process.

You don't mentor someone the same way you coach or train them. Getting this wrong will mean that the team member will spend a lot of their time doing nothing, because they don't know how to do it, and are scared to come and talk to you.

A World Class leader focuses on, how do I enable this person to grow, and become a better contributor, and help them find their own way to be able to stand on their own two feet.

Once they've worked that out, they let that drive the way they express themselves, talk, listen, debate, the material they refer to, and the topics they talk about with a team member.

Leaders understand that mentoring and coaching is a big investment of their time, and they won't waste it by not being on the same wavelength as the recipient, as they know the person won't grow, won't turn into the team member they are looking for.

When that happens, the leader will start getting dragged back down into things they can't delegate.

## **Take Responsibility For Success And Failure In The Right Way**

Responding confidently and respectfully to success and failure, demonstrates and maintains a healthy culture. It also secures everyone's respect and trust in you as their leader.

A leader does not confuse accountability with falling on your sword, blame, or fault.

They take accountability for everything, and are seen by the team to take accountability for everything, because it's *their team*.

Being World Class involves understanding that failure doesn't mean you have egg on your face every time something goes wrong, nor that you deserve the trophy every time something goes right.

They moderate the way they accept praise and accountability in different scenarios and they're very clear about how they pass on both praise and accountability.

They accept that they deserve both praise and accountability because at the end of the day everything is on them, but they understand that this doesn't mean it's all their fault when things go wrong.

For example, if a team member doesn't show up to a meeting and there is a flow on effect that a task isn't done, that isn't the leader's fault, but the leader is accountable for it. So they put a brave face on, don't ditch their team, and don't put someone else in the firing line.

If they have something to say to a team member that has let them or the team down, they deal with that in private.

A World Class Leader understands they win as a team, and fail as a team.

### ***World Class Example Of Emotional Intelligence And Connecting With Your People***

The best example I've seen of this was Richard Branson who throws a party for all his staff each year on his estate in Oxfordshire. Richard stood for several hours and shook the hand of every single person (over a thousand) who arrived; from Virgin key executives, to flight staff, to store operators. He connected with everyone and showed them all the same respect.

All of Richard's businesses are founded on the same values. It begins with a desire to delight the customer and is backed up by a fun, respectful, highly-motivated culture. Forget B to B and B to C, Richard was always focused on P to P (People to People).

***Knowing how to apply emotional intelligence in different situations in a business setting, can make you almost invincible.***

# HABIT 2

## THINK AND ACT LIKE A WORLD CLASS LEADER



**W**e are what we repeatedly do, and how you consistently act becomes who you are, and *how you are perceived*. This impacts your team, your colleagues, your boss, and even spills over into your personal life.

This chapter is all about YOU in the context of your work and how you can adopt the mindset and behaviors of a World Class Leader.

For each area below, think to yourself “Am I OK at this? Or good? Or World Class?”

### **Structure Your day**

Structuring your day and maintaining a consistent routine, sets you up for success.

For example, if you don’t get to work an hour early, the day can take control of you, instead of you controlling the day.

Phone calls, emails, issues, meeting requests can swamp you and you will lose your ability to lead, because life will be leading you through the day.

World Class Leaders' get up and get ahead of the game. World Class executives either get to work an hour before everyone else, or ensure the first 30-60 minutes of their day is meeting free.

This enables them to focus on planning their schedule and ensuring the strategy is on track.

No one who consistently gets up at 5am, exercises, and plans out their day, turns into a failure.

### **Delegate And Get Out Of The Way**

Delegating allows everyone to use their strengths and grow, and allows you to stay focused on what is important, and what only you can do.

Micromanagement leads to frustration and poor delivery, because your team will get frustrated and think “You do it then”. They stop working because you’re getting in their way.

World Class leaders focus on hiring well, and staying aware of what their team is involved in, so they can see obstacles on the road ahead and move them before the team gets there.

Managers solve problems, leaders solve the root cause or they see the problem coming and deal with it early.

Allowing each person to fulfill their role leaves you free to focus on the things a leader should focus on (e.g., networking, strategising, coaching the team, and influencing stakeholders).

### **Learn What Makes The Company Tick**

If you don't know the company's top level KPIs, strategy, plans, objectives and key initiatives, how can you ensure that you and your team are contributing to the success of the business?

Simply delivering your own KPIs is not World Class, and you will be in the ‘steady performer’ box.

World Class leaders view the organisation as if they own it and familiarize themselves with the strategy and key initiatives.

They learn what matters to the CEO and the shareholders. Is it revenue, profitability, growth, diversification or something else?

They learn the key financial metrics (e.g., ROI, stock turn, and shareholder value), and understand the lead indicators in the market (e.g., exchange rates, customer demographics, and product or service innovation pipelines).

To be World Class ask yourself “How can I contribute to this above and beyond delivering my own KPIs?” Focus your attention on what the key stakeholders are looking for, and ensure you and the entire team are working towards that.

### **Make Yourself Redundant**

Making yourself redundant is about ensuring you are doing the tasks unique to your position as leader. If you are busy ‘doing stuff’ you won't have time to lead, and can easily become *the captain of a rudderless ship*.

To be a World Class leader, let your Super Team manage and deliver. This will free up your time to do what a leader should be doing; strategise, network, lead and follow industry trends, focus on business activity outside of your area.

Real leadership is what happens when you are not there, and your aim is to walk into your department and not be needed. Your team should be pleased to see you, not think “look out, the boss is here”. They should be equally comfortable and efficient, whether you are there or not.

### **Change Is The Only Constant, Always Be Ready To Adapt And Lead Your Team Through It**

If you are not mentally prepared for things to go wrong, it will be very painful when they do, and you may get spooked into reacting instead of calmly responding. You can end up making bad decisions just because you were caught off guard.

World Class Leaders' accept that they are going to have failures, and it's ok. You will encounter challenges and setbacks, that's perfectly normal.

Beating yourself up when you feel like you make mistakes now and again or you lose motivation, is not helpful. Just keep going, this is a transformational journey, not a sprint race.

World Class is not some state of perfection that is beyond your reach. Tiger Woods was the best golfer in the world, but every player in the PGA is World Class. This applies to many sports and other industries, but it is an easy example to understand.

The standard we are setting is to do what you do as if you were working for the best organisation in the world and delivering the best results.

Rome wasn't built in a day. It is better to aim for steady and incremental improvements than aim for perfection, and set yourself up for disappointment.

Richard Branson often says "If you want to succeed, fail more often."

Elon Musk said "If things are not failing, you are not innovating enough."

### **You May Think Others Are Brilliant, But They Are Not**

Believing your competitors are better than you, is disempowering and can give you FOMO. It can damage your self-belief, makes it easier for you to give up or settle for the status quo, procrastinate, and not push to achieve your best.

Trust me, I have consulted to some of the biggest global brands in the world and many of them do not even conform to best practice, let alone World Class. Sometimes they just have a great product or they beat the market despite their own dysfunctional management, just because no one else is better.

Believe in yourself, your team, your offering, and stay focused on progress over perfection.

### **Be Your Authentic Self**

Being authentic breeds trust and allows your team to know what to expect from you. Not everyone is a great actor, and pretending to be someone you are not drains your energy. People recognise authenticity and respect it.

World Class leaders deliver results and do it within the spectrum of their values and their authentic self. They are aligned with the strategy of the business and Organisational KPIs.

Doing this will allow others to notice your value and position you to take on extra responsibility and expose you to new opportunities in your career.

But those opportunities and decisions are beyond your control. All you can do is focus on improving yourself and your team and strive to prove to yourself and demonstrate to others that you are the real deal.

There are many different styles of leadership but it's important that you find one that works for you and represents who you really are. You don't have to adopt anything, you can just be yourself if that works for you.

### **Understand Your Leadership Style**

It's no good trying to be a shouty leader if you're not a shouty person. People will see right through it.

World Class Leaders' use their own authentic style when leading others.

The important thing is you feel comfortable in your own skin and you are not wearing a mask when you go to work.

Here are some generally acknowledged leadership styles; one of these may suit you perfectly, or you may feel like adapting one or combining two or more, that's ok:

- Autocratic
- Democratic
- Delegative
- Transformational
- Transactional
- Bureaucratic
- Coach
- Pacesetter
- Charismatic
- Authoritative
- Visionary

As you can see, there are many styles of leadership. Do you recognise yourself as any one of these?

To be a World Class leader you need to be adaptable and be able to transition between several of these styles depending on the situation and the characters involved. But you must remain authentic or people will see straight through you.

### **How To Manage Your Boss**

If you don't manage your boss, you end up wasting your energy and efforts on things you don't believe in. You will also be more likely to deliver things that hurt the company, instead of helping it.

You restrict the ability of you and your team to perform. You restrict your boss's ability to drive the best performance out of the business and might forget to treat them on equal terms.

Everyone is equal but the office is not a democracy. There should be a level of equality to discussing issues but a good leader (your boss in this instance) should always know when it's time to end the debate and call the shots.

Even after heated debates, as long as you have made your contribution, there are times when you must agree to disagree, emotionally detached from the outcome, take a deep breath, and move on.

Subjugating your own instincts and abilities on a regular basis is doing a disservice to yourself, your boss, your teammates, and organisation.

If your boss continually chooses a path that does not sit well with you, it's time to consider looking for a new position.

Before you jump ship, you should consider having an open conversation with your boss.

The temptation is to have this conversation one-on-one for privacy and allow for a bit of opening up. But if it's not personal, just a disagreement over policy or decisions, you should consider having another person in the room.

Choose the third person wisely. Someone who can back up the facts, has the respect of the boss, someone who is also going to stay calm and debate respectfully and openly.

In the meeting, stay calm, state the facts, explain your perspective and why you are considering your situation.

State the options, the outcomes and the consequences of each outcome.

Encourage open debate, turning to the third person when necessary.

At the end of the day you need to accept and respect your boss' authority, then decide what is best for you and your career.

### ***World Class Example Of Authentic Leadership***

I was sitting in a boardroom at The Body Shop headquarters in Littlehampton, UK. It wasn't a board meeting, it was just myself and a couple of directors discussing the Canadian franchise.

The door opened and a lady came bursting in and slapped a handful of mud on the boardroom table; her face was bursting with happiness and excitement.

This was the first time I had met Anita Roddick, she had spent a few months in the jungles of Brazil, looking for a certain type of mud. And there it was, all over the boardroom table with a few splashes on some expensive suits for good measure.

She is one of many leaders who display a level of authenticity that people are drawn to and naturally follow.

She was passionate about the products and the brand but she left the business side of things to her husband Gordon, who was equally charismatic but understood how the operation worked at every level.

***World Class leaders structure, delegate, strategise, make themselves redundant, and lead with authenticity. Think like one and you will become one.***

# HABIT 3

## STRATEGISE DAILY



**S**o now that we've talked about blocking time at the start of your day, let's go into detail about what to focus on. Strategising daily is how you keep your entire company in alignment and working towards the correct goals. Regardless, whether it's a new huge opportunity that has walked through the door, or there is an unexpected event coming. If you don't constantly review, live and breathe your strategy, you will constantly be knocked off course by events that are outside your control and awareness.

### **Strategy Versus Planning**

I've reviewed dozens of business strategies in my time and usually they're just big plans.

There are various approaches to developing a strategy but I will share one approach with you that is adopted by many successful companies:

Step 1 - Define your "why". What is the purpose of your organisation?

Step 2 - Articulate and socialise a BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goal)

Step 3 - Construct a Transformation Roadmap

This guides what needs to change in every part of your organisation, what needs to be built, acquired, outsourced to become the organisation that can deliver your BHAG.

Great examples of how to launch a strategy with a BHAG:

Ford - “We will make automobiles affordable and accessible to every American family”

Amazon - “To be Earth's most customer-centric company”

Space X - “Our purpose is to make life interplanetary”

Netflix - “To entertain the world”

These BHAG's are aspirational and often impossible to fully achieve, but their purpose is to capture the imagination of their customers and their workforce in order to articulate their dreams and let everyone know ‘what they are all about’.

Another example is Toys R Us; their BHAG was to be “The world's leading specialty retailer”, and was broken down into strategic objectives:

- Product range - Every toy under one roof
- Pricing - To be competitive on price and volume
- Experience - To be the ultimate toy destination
- Brand strategy - Global expansion with a strong mascot identity

This was hugely successful throughout the 80s and 90s, but emerging competitors, including Amazon, Walmart, and Target ate their lunch by adapting more quickly to the e-commerce world.

Many great companies have gone bust by failing to adapt to changing technology, customer requirements or demographic/economic changes.

Step 4 - Appoint a senior executive to oversee each stream of activity (e.g., Human Resources, Manufacturing, Supply Chain, Purchasing, and IT).

That group of executives form the Strategic Transformation Committee and ensure that all activity, timelines and resources are aligned to deliver the BHAG.

This is when the “Planning” begins.

Usually there will be subcommittees for each business area and they will appoint a project manager for that stream of activity. If there are multiple projects then a programme manager is often appointed.

These roles are often given to specialist contractors or to a consulting firm, but it is absolutely vital that accountability for delivery is with an Executive Sponsor from the business.

From there on, it is a pretty straightforward process; but rarely an easy one. A project or programme methodology is adopted, trained into participants, and *if followed rigorously*, will usually result in a successful outcome.

Examples of such methodologies are:

- PRINCE2
- WATERFALL
- PMBOK
- AGILE

These are all solid, proven methodologies. The choice of which one to use is determined by the nature of the project or programme combined with the culture of the organisation. Some large corporations will have their own Project Office and a standard methodology. It is also common to appoint a consulting firm who will advise on the appropriate approach.

All of these activities must align with strategic and operational plans and activities of the business (e.g., growth, ROI, and profitability). This is usually articulated in a five-year-plan, an Annual Budget and a Quarterly Review.

Which leads us to always starting with the end in mind.

### **Start With The End In Mind**

If you don't know your final destination, how can you come up with a plan to get there?

Transformation maps can be an essential element of planning out your company's trajectory. They define the final state you have designed, and on the same page they illustrate the roadmap for each stream of activity required. For example:

- Build new warehouses
- Acquire new skills/people
- Find an outsourcing partner
- Develop new product or service lines
- Expand into new territories or countries

These can then be turned into detailed project plans for each stream, but their combined progress can be tracked in the context of the desired end game.

### **Have One Eye On Yours And One On Your Team's Key Objectives**

Keeping a birds eye view of your company goals, enables you to keep the big picture in mind and keep your teams on track to reach those goals. It also helps you decide which key objectives are yours versus your teams.

World Class Leaders' take the business strategy and supporting initiatives, and work with their team to brainstorm how they can make the biggest contribution to the business objectives.

You can adopt a variety of brainstorming techniques such as Mind Mapping, Rapid Ideation or Starbursting, but there are some key principles to set out to your team up front:

- Defer judgment
- Encourage wild ideas and ‘out of the box’ thinking
- Focus on quantity in the beginning, you can throw stuff out later
- Build on each others ideas
- Leave your ego at the door
- Have it facilitated by someone who understands the process but has no stake in the outcome
- Make a mess, then clean it up

Ultimately, the output should shape your objectives in alignment with those of the business, then you need to assign accountability within your team, and track progress.

### **Practice Zoom In - Zoom Out**

The world changes every day, things in your business change every day, and people's perspectives change every day.

Some of these things may affect your strategy, your planning, your projects, your objectives, or even your KPIs. Taking a zoom in, zoom out approach allows you to see key details when necessary but also maintain an overarching outlook across the company.

Before and after every meeting, at the end of each day, and as they plan your schedule for the next day, week, month, or year - check that everything you do is focused on your top priorities.

Strategic leaders focus on:

- Creating and sustaining an organization's competitive advantage by establishing a long-term vision and driving alignment across all levels

- Anticipating future trends
- Developing actionable strategies and inspiring their teams to execute them effectively
- Continually keep up with industry trends, developments and lead indicators
- Creating a clear and compelling vision for the future, which serves as a road map for their organization or their function

This will enable you and your team to adapt your strategy in real-time in response to an ever-changing world. However, in my role as Business Solutions, I have often seen real-life diverge from the strategy with nobody noticing.

Strategic planning and motivating teams to deliver is all well and good, but you should never take your eye off the ball. Make sure you are setting strategic goals for you and your team, and don't just monitor them at Strategy Meetings.

### **High-Level Change Control**

You should adopt a high level Change Control system to help you identify issues that could detail your objectives. This is a real-time radar system and should raise agenda items for project meetings.

World Class Leaders' do this by ensuring their own goals and targets are in line with business KPIs, and following:

- The market
- The big picture
- Their organisation's industry
- Their functional industry
- The competitors activity
- What is going on in their company
- What is going on in their department

## **Bid Control Meetings**

This applies specifically to businesses that involve a sales process but the approach can be applied anywhere to ensure you are maximising your effort / reward ratio.

It's your job to differentiate between the lakes and the puddles.

Which opportunities will suck your energy for little reward and possibly dry up? Which ones can deliver a sustainable revenue stream and play to your strengths as a company?

Mavericks (extraordinary employees who often function very well in a high stakes environment) can bring in huge opportunities that you need to make time to hear, and understand, in regular weekly bid review meetings.

If a big opportunity comes in, call a review meeting immediately, gauge the revenue stream, pipeline, competitive activity, risks associated, the chance of sealing the deal, and take it from there.

Beware of focusing too much attention on opportunities that will:

- Yield little benefit
- Require substantial effort or investment
- Are better suited to your competitors
- Have a limited revenue stream

## **Keep Your Strategy Front And Centre, And Review Daily**

Think of a battle leader. They always have their map laid out on a large table with key people, positions and progress mapped out. They need to check their map daily, or risk losing the war.

Many World Class leaders constantly keep their objectives and strategy front and centre at work.

They might use a giant whiteboard, facing their desk, which maps out:

- Progress
- Departments
- Strategy

To map and monitor progress daily, they will also have a continually updating IT system which is tracking:

- Progress of departments
- Merchandise
- Sales
- Website engagement

They also:

- Follow the market
- Their organisations industry
- Their functional industry
- Competitors' activity
- What is going on inside their company and their department

They maintain alignment of:

- Business strategy
- Business initiatives
- Corporate KPIs

And keep perspective of whether their own targets and objectives are aligned.

They track the status of everything they and their team are doing, and measure daily progress on all initiatives that are part of their strategy.

### ***World Class Example Of Strategise Daily***

At Cap Gemini, we invited the top 100 executives from Unilever (representing over 100 countries) to spend one week in London at our offices in Shaftsbury Avenue. We set up stages and hired actors to play out use cases based on their current operation, illustrating good and bad outcomes. We covered examples from up and down the corporate chain and across the global supply chain. We helped them to shape a new organisation, strategy and five-year plan. One of the practices they adopted was “the daily huddle” where leadership teams met first thing everyday for 15 minutes. It was a stand up meeting, often over coffee and had a concise agenda:

- 1 - Did anything big happen yesterday
- 2 - Is there anything coming up that we need to know about
- 3 - Are we delivering on our Strategy

This simple daily practice ensured that the entire worldwide organisation was strategising and in alignment daily.

***Never take your eye off the ball or it will end up in the net or the red zone.***



# HABIT 4

## EMBRACE CHANGE



Change is inevitable.

One of the biggest examples of change coming your way is AI. I haven't used AI to write any of this book, but this could be the last book you read that hasn't involved AI. Nobody really knows the ultimate impact AI will have but it will be enormous so we all need to get ready for it, both in our personal and professional lives.

Building a change mindset allows you to be open to things that are coming and adapt quickly and efficiently, and embrace changes to your company's benefit. In this chapter we'll cover two key distinct differences - Proactive and Reactive change.

But first there are two things you need to adopt, the "be ready" mindset, and emotional detachment.

### **The 'Be Ready' Mindset**

Winter is coming. If you pretend nothing is going to change, change will hit you like a truck that you didn't see coming. If you expect change you will look for it on the horizon, and be able to prepare, adapt for or mitigate the outcome.

World Class leaders embrace the idea that 'nothing is permanent' and that their 'comfort zone is temporary', they live and breath change at every level of the organization and industry.

They identify the lead indicators that tell you change is coming, this could be; exchange rates, customer demographics, or technology in your sector.

They build their radar by implementing risk management. A risk management framework will tell you the things that are on the horizon and you can evaluate where the risk is to your business. You can also look at the positive aspects and see where opportunities lie.

## **Emotional Detachment**

We mentioned emotional detachment briefly in Habit 1 - Make Emotional Intelligence Your Superpower, but we're going to focus on it more now.

Emotional detachment is particularly relevant when Embracing Change, because if you let emotions determine your actions you're likely to go off track and follow the wrong thing and the project could fail.

Emotions can cloud your judgement and you can:

- Hire and fire the wrong people for emotional reasons
- Choose projects and solutions for emotional reasons
- Stick with old habits because you're emotionally attached to them

If you can learn to remain emotionally detached from outcomes, even if you might not like the outcome, it won't affect you emotionally, as long as it's the best outcome for the company.

As a World Class leader your first responsibility is to the shareholders of the company. If you abide by that responsibility, you cannot let emotions cloud the judgements and decisions you take, even if it means you resign. If the best thing for the company is you resigning, you resign.

If you buy into this, you'll take care of yourself somewhere else because you're world class.

World class, sometimes means saying no. You've got a higher perspective, you've got a higher responsibility, and therefore you are duty bound to adopt a more rigorous approach to emotional detachment.

Detachment is a practice, it's really hard. The further you go up the food chain the stronger you get at it because you're forced into it. You have to practice, it's like a muscle that gets stronger with practice. Sometimes you have to put on a brave face, rationalise, focus on the process, distract, let time heal things, there is no magical wand or silver bullet to this.

Okay let's look at Proactive change, where you or the business have decided to make something happen.

### **Proactive Change**

If you don't manage change, change will manage you, and you end up in a mess because you don't control the outcome. You can restructure a company inappropriately, end up with scope creep which turns a project from 12 months into 24 months. Or spend twice as much as you thought (e.g. the tunnel from UK to France).

If you don't manage change well, your team won't understand what they are supposed to do. They won't understand what the change is, they won't have the documentation to support them in their education, or training material to support the change you are trying to implement. Nobody else outside your circle will understand what is going on.

If you or your business decide to make a change, such as a company restructure or a system implementation, it is normal practice to adopt a Project Manager from the business. This could be you.

Often an advisory company such as Accenture or Cap Gemini or McKinsey will be appointed to ensure a professional methodology is adopted.

Project management methodologies including Prince 2, Agile, and Waterfall are usually follow a sequence like this:

### **Initiation or “launch”**

The first step is to understand why we are doing this, what are the project objectives and scope. What is the expected duration of the project and the key milestones. What are the high level costs v benefits. This is also when the project is ‘socialised within the business’, especially to those involved or affected.

### **Planning stage**

This is where the road map is put together and refined into a project plan, including defined outcomes, tasks, timelines, resources and project governance.

### **Execution phase**

This is where the rubber hits the road and the project is actually delivered. Project governance is crucial at this stage to ensure any problems are identified, discussed and resolved as quickly as possible. Progress will be monitored and there will be close evaluation of costs and timelines.

### **Review stage**

Once the project is complete there will be a final review and formal sign off. All aspects of the project will be reported and analysed to assess the success of the project. This will include looking at costs and timescales as well as benefit realisation. This is done on a projected basis as in many cases the benefits are only delivered in the months and years after the project has been implemented. The team will also look for lessons learned and experience gained.

Sitting alongside the project management process is another key process, Change Management.

## **Change Management**

This is often overlooked as people naturally focus on project execution.

But change management focuses on the human element to ensure that the project is understood, accepted and adopted by people in the business

Done well, change management enables you to see progress, control progress and ensure the education, communication and training are well designed and provided in order to achieve the desired results.

It also addresses topics such as empowerment, engagement, involvement, encouragement, motivation, explanation of why that change is happening, removes barriers, and socialises it within the organisation.

In my opinion, failing to apply change management alongside a project methodology risks delays, misunderstanding, and often leads to disillusionment or even resistance

Again, it is normal to appoint a Change Manager from the business and an advisory partner who can draw on various approaches to support the project and remove people-based obstacles and issues.

Ok so now let's take a look at reactive change.

## **Reactive Change**

This is when change is imposed on you. For example, it could be a company restructure at senior level, or a system implementation that has been launched from above and could change the way you work or even eliminate your role.

In this situation, we all go through similar emotional and behavioural phases. These are covered in a tracking system called the Change Cycle.

## The Change Cycle

This has been developed over time by business psychologists and there are several versions, but I will share with you the version developed by Prochaska and DiClemente.

This breaks down into five phases that we all go through in our own way; here is a high level overview:

### Phase 1 - Precontemplation

This is the original situation before you are even aware that the change is coming. It helps if you have built up the capacity to respond well to change (emotional intelligence). A *ready for anything* mindset is the best frame of mind to adopt at all times.

### Phase 2 - Contemplation

You become aware of the upcoming change and you begin to think about it, but it's still in concept mode so you don't really worry about it. This is often referred to as the *denial* stage.

### Phase 3 - Preparation

The change begins to take shape and you begin to accept that it will happen. You start to think about the implications and you begin to plan how you will deal with it. This is the most difficult stage and many people let their imagination run wild and start to think in extremes (e.g., maybe I should look for another job? Maybe I will report to someone new? Maybe I will have to relocate).

### Phase 4 - Action

You have begun to understand what is really happening and you are working on plans and activities to prepare yourself for the new situation. This can be exciting for some people and daunting for others.

### Phase 5 - Maintenance

This is the adjustment phase where you come to terms with the new situation and adopt new processes and habits until you become un-

consciously committed. This can take a while before it feels normal.

As well as applying this to ourselves, it is important to understand how this will impact your team or others in the business when you initiate changes that impact them.

If you don't understand the psychological impact of change on your staff and team and the knock on effect on the business, you will misjudge:

- Your timings
- Approach
- Style
- The cultural impact

And part way through that cycle there is a window of opportunity where people leave, and it's early in the cycle, *about three weeks* in.

Essential team members can leave because they feel:

- Uncertain
- Scared
- Feel vulnerable
- Negatively perceive the potential outcomes
- Imagine their position is going to become redundant

Without clarity, guidance, and some kind of affirmation to them, their minds run wild because they're presented with a change and they don't know what's going to happen.

This is where you apply the principles of change management to any change initiative.

### ***World Class Example Of Embracing Change***

A great example of this would be Netflix at a corporate level and Ronald Reagan at a personal level.

Netflix was basically a DVD rental operation; however, when the internet, digital content and streaming changed the market, they adapted. They turned themselves into an online business and went on to transition into one of the world's largest media companies.

Ronald Reagan had a successful acting career but felt a yearning to do something more meaningful. He entered politics and went on to become the 40th President of The United States.

***Change is the only constant - “No plan survives contact with the enemy” (Sun Shu - Art of War). Or as Mike Tyson put it more bluntly, “Everyone has a plan until they get punched in the face.”***

# HABIT 5

## BUILD SUPER TEAMS



I have never been close to burn out because I have always hired the best people in. I then empowered them with the knowledge, resources and authority to deliver beyond expectations. I would rather have an empty chair than the wrong person in the team.

### **Fearlessly Hire Better Than You**

If you hire average people you will get average results. If you are protecting your ego or lack self confidence I would urge you to think differently. Remember you are a leader and your performance is completely in the hands of your team. If you want to be the best, you need to hire the best.

As a leader you will be judged on results. Those results will only be World Class if you have a World Class team. It is not possible to be the best at everything and your job as a leader is different from theirs.

If your direct reports are VPs, Senior Managers or are in a highly specialised role, you need to go a step further. You need to provide them with the best resources, be it people, funding, equipment, or environment.

How can they deliver, if they don't have what they need?

## **Empower Your Team**

I call this business at the speed of trust. Without the appropriate authority and permission to think and act for themselves, they will be in your office or on the phone every day seeking your approval. This will slow everything down, use up precious time and energy and could result in them leaving.

This about:

- Giving up control
- Sharing the big picture
- Giving a sense of perspective
- Delegating ownership
- Delegating accountability

It also requires trust and support on your part.

Just like the business strategy we discussed earlier it begins with sharing the *why*. This links their work directly to the strategic goals of the business and gives a greater sense of purpose.

Then you need to be clear about your expectations. What authority and resources are available to them, and how will you assess progress together?

Focus on the what, not the how. If they are competent, they will know how to do their job or they will figure it out; but let them know your door is open if they get stuck or need advice.

## **How To Hire And Retain The Best People**

Let's look at each step and the things you need to consider:

### **1 - Identify The Need**

If you aren't clear about what is missing from your team, you cannot hire the right skillset or experience. Think through what you need to deliver your results and what is missing. Don't just fill a

missing spot on the org chart. Consider the people you already have. Can you rebalance the team? Is this an opportunity for someone, can you train or develop an existing team member?

Ok, now you have identified exactly what you need and you are clear that you need to hire.

## **2 - Search**

This is usually handled through HR but many key positions are filled through networking. There are also a number of agents or headhunters who will specialise in your sector.

It's important to use every option available to you to scan the marketplace for the right individual.

## **3 - Identify The Talent**

If things go well, you will compile a short list and begin the interview process.

Focus on:

- meaningful questions
- don't just go over their CV and qualifications
- find out what makes them tick
- what do they consider their greatest achievements
- what do they consider their greatest failures
- understand their personality and character
- ask questions that give you insight into their experience
- ask questions that give you insight into their capability
- ask questions that tell you how they will gel with their colleagues

Some people have *go to* questions to differentiate between top contenders. For example:

- tell me how you first made money
- what excited you about this role
- where do you see yourself three years from now

You can Google tons of content on suggested interview questions as well as guidance on psychometric testing and personality profiling.

After selection you will have assessed the individual's skills, experience and cultural fit. You are now ready to begin the hiring process.

#### **4 - The Hiring Process**

During this phase you have an opportunity to observe some additional skills and behaviours (e.g. how do they negotiate).

It is also good practice to put the final candidate through a series of informal interviews:

- firstly with one or two members of your peer group
- Secondly with the team they will lead

This gives you a 360 degree perspective and a good idea if they will fit in, both from a capability perspective and on an interpersonal level.

So far so good, but this is where some companies drop the ball, because the onboarding process is critical but often overlooked.

#### **5 - Onboarding**

It is important that you spend quality time with them on the first day and check in with them at the end of every day of their induction. You should also assign one of their colleagues as a 'buddy' to help them through logistics, where everything is, and who is who.

## **6 - Mentoring**

You can mentor them yourself, but it is not uncommon for them to be mentored by one of your colleagues. This is a more productive option, you can do “on the job” mentoring anyway but your colleagues can offer a different perspective and engage them with other parts of the organisation.

## **7 - Development**

You have invested heavily in an expensive resource. You need to nurture that investment and help it to grow. Set stretch targets, increase responsibility, send them for appropriate training, assign them to work on cross functional programs.

## **8 - Motivation**

If they are performing at a high level, look for ways to recognise that. It could be a job title or a grade uplift or invitations to contribute to high level meetings. If they feel that they are being recognised and they are moving forward, they will be motivated to perform at a high level.

## **9 - Career Management And Expectations Setting**

It is important that you understand where they see their career heading and manage their expectations based on how you perceived their performance and potential. It is good practice to keep stretching them, setting new challenges and assessing their leadership skills in different situations.

If they are ready for promotion, then see how you can prepare and guide them for the next step. This may sound counterintuitive, but if you don't have a bigger role for them and they find one outside, consider that as a win. It reinforces that you are hiring the right people and it creates an opportunity for someone else in your team

## **10 - Parting Of Ways**

Nothing in life is permanent. Businesses are dynamic organisms and everyone comes and goes at some time.

You should try to create an environment where people feel comfortable, productive, and fulfilled, but always be aware that the best people will grow, they will be presented with opportunities or head-hunted, or face a personal crisis, or a change in family circumstances.

I have lost great people to external promotions within a few months of them joining. It's frustrating but it's life, suck it up, get over it, and move on with dignity and emotional detachment.

### ***World Class Example Of Building Super Teams***

Real Madrid are one of the most successful teams in the history of world football. They focused on 'The Galacticos', they hired the best players in the world and allowed them to play with freedom.

This approach brought unrivaled success to the club and made them one of the richest sporting organisations in the world.

***If someone can do something better than you, hire them and get out of their way. If you pay peanuts, you get monkeys.***

# HABIT 6

## LEAD - DONT MANAGE



**G**et it into your head that you are here to LEAD, not MANAGE. If you don't embrace your leadership role you are by definition a follower.

At best you will be a senior manager disguised as a business leader. You will get whooped by your competition, replaced by someone who will lead, or you will run your company like a disorganised colony of ants with no queen.

### **The Difference Between A Leader And A Manager**

A Leader focuses on:

- Deciding what the strategy is and defining the outcomes - often consulting their team in the process
- Deciding what is important and not important
- Being clear about *why* they're doing what they're doing, not just what they need to do
- Shaping the culture
- Ensuring their team has the necessary direction and resources
- Providing mentorship, advice and support

A Manager focuses on:

- Delivering the strategy
- Delivering outcomes
- Managing day-to-day operations
- Executing delivery of plans and projects
- Keeping the leader aware of operational performance
- Keeping the leader aware of any issues that arise
- Managing the performance of their own team

A manager is someone who takes a plan or a set of KPIs and turns them into reality by leading and overseeing their team to deliver those KPIs.

The corporate world is not a democracy but as long as the ground rules are in place your team should be comfortable to debate issues with you and put forward their own ideas and suggestions.

You should feel comfortable hearing hard truths or ideas you disagree with. Don't be afraid to say yes or no, maybe their idea is better than yours; that's why you hired them.

Maybe they don't have your experience, or don't have the full picture, or for some other reason you are not persuaded.

It's not about who is right or who has the best idea. It's about building a culture where everyone feels comfortable that you are actively listening and considering suggestions without your ego getting in the way.

At the end of the day it's your call, but it helps if you explain your thinking and the reason why you are going in a different direction.

Now don't get me wrong, I am not suggesting that you have to continually explain yourself to your team, just that you find a balance where they feel valued and involved.

I have seen so many executives behaving like they are still senior managers. This happens especially in technical areas like production, supply chain, and IT.

Sometimes it's ok to wear more than one hat, especially in tech companies or start ups (e.g. think Steve Jobs, Elon Musk, or Bill Gates) but let your managers manage and only get involved when you can make a genuine contribution, or they need your help, sometimes they seek it, sometimes you have to observe that they need it.

### **Leadership Is What Happens When You Are Not There**

Your team shouldn't breathe a sigh of relief when you leave the building. They should be comfortable when you are there, the latest terminology is 'psychological safety' but all that means is the people in your team should feel comfortable discussing things with you and screwing up now and again without fear of blame or a dressing down.

They should feel equally comfortable and comfortable whether you are not around. They should be capable of covering everything if you are on vacation or a business trip.

It is often useful to have them join you in meetings with your peers so they can build relationships, gain insight into what is going on, get a glimpse of high level politics, and gain the trust of your peers if they ever have to stand in for you.

### **Strategy, Goals And Plans Of The Executive Team**

As a leader you have access to the strategy, goals and plans of the executive team. It is important that you share as much of that with your team as you can; obviously there are *some plans* that need to remain confidential for various reasons.

This will:

- enable your senior managers to understand the big picture and manage their teams accordingly

- direct your team's energy to the things that are important to the organisation at any point in time

You need to:

- provide them with clarity
- double check alignment
- monitor progress, mentor and support, but do not manage
- fight for resources for your team

Then give them space to deliver and to grow.

### **Self-Awareness**

Being self-aware is useful in decision making circumstances. By understanding their own thought processes and biases, self aware leaders can make more informed and effective decisions and are more likely to include their team.

This also promotes adaptability. World Class leaders tend to adapt their leadership style based on the situation. The needs of their team members and the feedback that they receive.

It also supports continuous learning. Through seeking feedback and actively working to improve their leadership skills, either by taking external advice or by seeking feedback internally or by self reflection, which is obviously more effective if one is self-aware.

In summary, the benefits of being self-aware are reflected in:

- Improved relationships
- Enhanced decision making
- Increased team performance
- Greater trust and respect
- Effective conflict resolution
- Stronger organizational culture

## **Clear, Specific, Achievable Goals**

Setting clear, specific and achievable goals that align with the overall organizational objective.

Provide a Road Map for the team and help them track progress.

It's also important to acknowledge and celebrate achievements both big and small. This reinforces positive behavior and motivates individuals to continue striving for excellence.

It's critical to foster a positive and supportive work environment where team members feel valued, respected and encouraged to contribute their ideas and talents.

It is vital that you understand the individual needs of different team members. They may have different motivations and the leadership style for each needs to be approached accordingly.

## **Discipline**

Motivation comes and goes. It waxes and it wanes. But *discipline* gets you across the finishing line at the end of the day.

Discipline is about showing up, whether you're tired, whether you've had a bad day before, whatever mood you're in.

Discipline is a system. It's about doing the same thing again and again and again.

It's about showing up and doing what you know you need to do.

Part of your Leadership role is to keep motivation alive, but instill discipline in your team.

Disciplined teams consistently follow through on commitments, maintain their focus, and show up every day.

As a leader it is your job to set the standard for your team to follow and walk the walk.

Tools and techniques can be used to support this, including time management and prioritisation.

To deliver a task on time, you need to:

- Effectively prioritise the use of your time
- Decide how you tackle problems and challenges that get in the way
- Ensure that efforts are directed towards the most important objectives

It's important to accept that there will be failures. There will be problems, and many disasters along the way.

Disciplined leaders take responsibility for their actions and decisions, fostering a culture of accountability within the team, and a can do attitude.

When things go wrong, a disciplined and resilient team will put them right, or do what needs to be done to get things back on track.

## **Confidence**

This is a crucial leadership skill as it enables leaders to inspire and guide their teams effectively.

It's a belief in your own abilities and vision which allows you to make decisive decisions, communicate clearly, and maintain composure under pressure.

Confident leaders inspire trust and respect, creating a positive and productive work environment.

There are many benefits that follow from leaders displaying confidence. Here are just a few:

- Inspires trust and respect
- Builds trust and respect amongst their team members
- Makes the team more likely to follow and support the leader's vision.
- Encourages action

- Your team are more likely to take calculated risk
- Your team are more likely to make decisive decisions even in the face of uncertainty because they've followed your example, and they become inspired to do the same.
- Creates a positive and motivating atmosphere where team members feel empowered to contribute their best work
- Team members will take on challenges without guidance
- Increased communication and an openness of teams to feedback and to join in with problem solving tasks
- Builds resilience
- Teams maintain a positive outlook
- If there is a setback on the way, they can get over it, get around it, get through it, find a way to get to the end objective.
- Builds a sense of perseverance which comes through habit.

Confidence is contagious. It inspires others to believe in themselves and their abilities, fostering a culture of self belief and ambition. All of this helps to inspire confidence, and unlocks higher levels of performance and productivity.

## **Resilience**

This is the ability to bounce back from setbacks and always maintain a positive outlook and learn from experiences to grow stronger. We covered some key aspects of this in Make Emotional Intelligence Your Superpower.

This is particularly relevant where the understanding and management of your own emotions, as well as those of others, is crucial for navigating difficult decisions, situations and building trust within a team.

Resilient leaders create stability, encourage innovation, building stronger and more adaptable teams.

Another aspect of resilience is to focus on solutions. A resilient team maintains a solutions oriented approach even when faced with uncertainty or setbacks, rather than dwelling on problems.

This generates a positive outlook and a sense of optimism, which enables them to persevere through challenges and setbacks.

## **Mentoring**

This is another key leadership role that involves guiding and supporting individuals to develop their potential and achieve their goals.

It's also valuable to:

- Foster leadership development
- Enhance team performance
- Build a strong organizational culture

The key aspects of mentoring involve:

- Knowledge transfer and skill development
- Openly sharing expertise and experience to help mentees acquire new skills and knowledge
- Teach specific technical skills
- Teach broader leadership competences

It's important that a leader is in a giving mode in this situation and not protective of things that they know.

Good mentors:

- Provide personalized guidance and support
- Help mentees navigate challenges,
- Help mentees make informed decisions

- Help mentees grow both personally and professionally.

Especially when applied to specific situations, problems, projects and challenges.

Building a strong relationship as a mentor develops relationships which foster trust, open communication and mutual respect.

This creates a:

- Positive and supportive environment for growth
- Enables you to connect more directly with your team
- Gives the team a closer insight into your challenges
- Gives the team insight into your goals, aspirations and the way you like to see things done.

By mentoring others as a leader, you are developing your own:

- Leadership skills
- Communication
- Active listening
- Giving feedback
- Problem solving

You can learn so much by teaching. Some of the questions your team asked you will be thought provoking. Be ready and prepared to be humbled by the occasional spark of brilliance from a team member that you didn't see coming.

Another benefit of good mentoring is that you create a leadership pipeline. This helps organisations identify and develop future leaders, ensuring a strong talent pool for key roles in the future.

### **Accountability**

If something is successful or if something is a failure, own it. Take responsibility but don't panic. Come up with a plan, involve your

team in building that plan; but you as a leader need to take ultimate accountability and responsibility.

You need to own it and be the one who ultimately decides what to do about it.

***World Class Example Of Lead Don't Manage***

Love him or hate him, Donald Trump has perfected the art of making it clear to his team exactly what he wants and then leaving them to deliver it. If they don't deliver he replaces them. A pretty brutal approach, but highly effective.

***Leaders lead. Managers manage. Workers work.***

# HABIT 7

## FOCUS ON BUSINESS OUTCOMES



**B**usiness outcomes can include adding a new office, creating a new product or service, adding a new region. If every function only focuses on its own delivery there will be no synergy and possibly no end result.

The main elements of any business are:

- Customer
- Revenue
- Margin
- Cash
- Growth
- Stock Turn
- Workforce capability and capacity
- Brand Management
- Culture

There are more and each of these can be broken down in detail. There are also elements which are relevant to specific industry sectors and business types; you need to understand what they are in your organisation. If you focus on those things and you can find a way to make a positive impact on them then you are adding value to the business.

## **Functional delivery**

If you don't meet your own functional KPIs you are letting the team down because you're not delivering your part of the deal. If you can't do your job, how does the company achieve results?

World Class leaders benchmark themselves against industry and World Class standards, and enterprise architecture. They adopt best practice processes.

If you build a warehouse but don't have stock to fill it, you've achieved a functional outcome but you have wasted your time and money because you've added nothing to business outcomes and bottom line.

As a leader it is your job to make sure that your functional outcomes contribute directly to the business outcomes (e.g. bottom line/market share).

Let's take a look at some key business outcomes to focus on and to analyse where you and your team can have an impact.

## **Customer Value Proposition**

If you don't focus on the customer outcome then you're not attracting new customers or retaining existing customers, or increasing wallet share/market share. Meaning you are losing revenue and profitability.

World Class leaders understand their customer service offering. They achieve this through networking with their colleagues who are in direct conversation with customers, and understanding customer expectations and competitor offers. They then deliver solutions that impact the customer experience, speed up delivery time and make services easier to buy. You can also consider issues like how to reduce waste, and improve product presentation.

## **Share of Wallet**

If you don't understand your share of wallet, you cannot maximise your margins because you don't understand your customers spending patterns. You can't change or improve customer spend without measuring it.

World Class leaders measure customer spending patterns by benchmarking them against the competition, often using agencies which:

- Conduct customer surveys
- Customer interviews
- Product tests
- Carry out focus group sessions
- Mystery shopper exercises

Once they understand the customer experience and requirements they focus on where they can improve product pricing or customer services.

In the retail industry this can be shortening queue times. In furniture manufacturing this could be having readily available stock in multiple colours. In the automotive industry it could be the introduction of agile manufacturing to reduce lead times between purchase and delivery.

## **Understand How Other Departments Work**

These are your internal customers. You must know what other departments do and what they need from you.

If you don't know you will:

- Drop the ball because you don't know what they require
- Not know how to work collaboratively and effectively with them

- Reduce the efficiency and effectiveness of the company as a whole

It's good practice to have someone from your team appointed as a liaison officer for each of the functions you interact with. They act as the key point of contact to keep your team appraised of operational performance, issues and upcoming projects within the department.

You can also have someone from your team on any cross-functional projects. It is also not uncommon to arrange short term 'job swaps' with other functions.

This helps to develop a much deeper understanding of your internal customer's issues and also strengthens relationships and collaborative working.

## **Market Share**

Failing to understand your market share and its trajectory is like flying a plane with your eyes closed. You won't know where you stand in relation to your competitors. You won't know if you are moving forwards or backwards, and your biggest competitor could be eating your lunch and you wouldn't know it.

It's also difficult to understand what is going on if your revenues go up or down:

- Is the whole market going through the same phase?
- Is it a reflection of your own companies performance?
- Is it a new entry into the market?
- Is it an aggressive discount campaign from one of your competitors?

You must understand the strategic, operational and short term drivers of the market and your own business.

The easiest way to think about this is to start with the customer, and ask “*How am I contributing to gaining or retaining customers or increasing how often they purchase or how much they spend?*”

Explore every source of income and explore opportunities to increase it. Next, turn inward and look at the main items of business costs:

- Salaries
- Stock
- Distribution
- Marketing

Look to see where you can have an impact, then move on to strategic initiatives, these could be about:

- Business culture
- Geographic expansion
- Developing new processes
- Developing new services

The Finance or Marketing department will usually provide a regular update on market share, lead indicators and upcoming events. You can analyse how to respond or contribute positively to market fluctuations depending on the underlying cause.

Beyond this you can familiarize yourself with the key drivers of any business:

- Market share
- Turnover
- ROI
- Profitability
- Stock turn

- Liquidity ratios

These are widely available on Google or through the use of A.I.

After you have analysed all this, check to ensure that your own strategy, plans and projects are aligned with and supporting Key Business Outcomes.

## **Hype Cycles**

You can also check *Hype Cycles* for where investment in your specialist area can add value.

Hype cycles are predictive curves about techniques or technologies, or other developments in your functional area, that are being worked on by trusted thought leaders and industry specialists.

These will cover a variety of things, think:

- Internet banking
- Global supply chains
- Robotics
- Virtual warehousing
- AI

It's your job to assess and interpret these future developments and discuss them at leadership level to decide if there is merit in investing, preparing or just following developments.

Consider points like:

- Is it just hype?
- Is it one year out?
- Five years out?
- Ten years out?
- What impact could it have on your business?

- Do you want to be at the cutting-edge?
- Do you want to be an early follower, or a later adopter?

Make sure your team understands the whole picture and don't get myopic about their own area of expertise.

Brainstorm with your direct reports regularly, and with the whole team annually.

### ***World Class Example Of Focus On Business Outcomes***

Elon Musk is a divisive figure, but he is the world's richest man because he is laser focused on business outcomes. Elon has a natural aptitude for starting with the end in mind. He visualises the impact or change he wants to make in the world (cars, rockets, education, media, robotics) then converts it into business outcomes that are then expressed as financial models. This is how he's been able to successfully build: Zip2, X.com, PayPal, SpaceX, Tesla, Neuralink, XCorp etc.

***If you are not contributing to the performance of the business, why are you even there?***



# HABIT 8

## MAKE MEETINGS MATTER



A meeting should have a purpose and a desired set of outcomes. These outcomes should be measurable in terms of business performance. Or at the very least, the performance levels of your department. To make meetings matter, focus on clear objectives, preparation and active participation. The key point here is to ensure that you prepare for meetings. And I mean really prepare.

Yes, there are some meetings which are routine and have to take place in order to keep things going; these should be minimalised and structured.

Let's look at how we can optimise our use of meetings.

### **Define The Purpose And Objectives**

If you aren't clear about the purpose and objectives of a meeting you should find out, or consider cancelling. Meetings cost money in lost work time and staff hate them unless they actually achieve something.

If you don't understand your role, e.g. chairing/ contributing/ learning, you won't fulfill the purpose of you being there.

Before scheduling any meetings, clearly define its purpose:

- Is it strategic or operational?
- What are the specific outcomes you want to achieve?

Ensure the meeting is necessary and not better-suited for a different format like an email or document.

Communicate the purpose and objectives to all participants beforehand, being sure to start with a well defined purpose.

### **Create And Share A Detailed Agenda**

A well structured agenda is essential for keeping the meeting focused and productive, include:

- Clear objectives
- Discussion points
- Allocated time for each item
- Distribute the agenda in advance
- Allow participants to prepare and contribute effectively

### **Invite The Right People**

Overly large groups can lead to distractions and reduced participation, as well as introduce topics that aren't on the agenda.

Invite only those who are essential to the meeting's purpose and objectives to ensure efficient, concise, and impactful discussions.

### **Engage And Encourage Participation**

Active participation, including engaging discussions and feedback, is crucial for maximising the value of each meeting.

Start the meeting with a clear introduction outlining the purpose and objectives. Encourage active participation by asking questions, soliciting feedback, and fostering a welcoming environment. Use visual aids, interactive exercises, and other techniques to keep participants engaged throughout the meeting.

## **Manage Time effectively**

Meetings cost money, your workforce has stopped work to meet with you.

Start and end meetings on time to respect everybody else's workload and allocate a specific amount of time for each meeting point.

Stick to the agenda but allow a little extra time at the end in case a problem must be solved or a point isn't fully understood. Consider breaking down longer meetings into smaller, more focused sessions.

## **Ensure Actionable Outcomes And Follow Up On Them**

Preparation and execution matter, but so does follow up:

- Summarise key decisions
- Action items
- Timelines
- Assign clear ownership
- Assign deadlines for action items
- Regularly follow up on action items to ensure progress and accountability

If you have to make a speech, always start with the end in mind. What is the objective you are trying to achieve?

Consider the fact that the frequency of a recurring meeting (e.g. monthly, weekly) will affect the follow up approach you take.

For monthly or major milestone/project meetings, you could consider taking a secretary or appoint a facilitator to take notes and manage the meeting.

You shouldn't be facilitating any meeting where you are the chair person, this will only distract you from:

- Listening
- Questioning
- Contributing
- Making decisions

Make sure everyone understands and respects the role of the facilitator, it's not an easy job and they need the authority to control the room.

### **Build Credibility, Authority And Strength**

How you conduct yourself in meetings matters. This is a platform for you to demonstrate you:

- Credibility
- Authority
- Calmness
- Strength
- As well as achieving the outcomes you desire

If you find yourself needing to think on your feet, you can always buy yourself time by using the questioning routine. Simply ask basic questions like:

- Can you elaborate on that?
- Does anyone have a different perspective?
- Ask some simple “what if?” questions

Preparation and deep planning will enable you to be prepared for any situation and avoid you getting blindsided. Think about:

- Other people's agendas
- Consider what questions might come up
- Think through the possible outcomes

- How you will behave in that meeting
- Practice deflecting aggressive situations, attacks or accusations

### ***World Class Example Of Make Meetings Matter***

The best example I can think of is from the Apollo 13 space mission

The spacecraft was 200,000 miles from earth when one of the oxygen tanks exploded leading to one of the most famous sentences ever “Houston we have a problem.”

This was beyond critical. There was no playback for this situation and every second was precious. There was no time for “meetings” in the traditional sense but thousands of *micro meetings* were necessary to solve one of the most complex problems in history.

Every meeting was critical. As was the up, down, and sideways communication of any idea, test, outcome, and planned activity.

They made every second of every meeting matter

***Know your purpose and objectives, create an agenda, invite the right participants and ensure follow up actions are clear.***



# HABIT 9

## CONSISTENTLY OVER DELIVER



Many essential components of a thriving business rely on this Habit:

- Customer satisfaction
- Customer retention
- Customer loyalty
- Customer pride
- Cultural definition
- Pipeline development
- Competitive advantage

**I**n this chapter we will focus on aspects of building a culture of Over-delivery.

This impacts all aspects of the business including: the hiring, onboarding, and training processes. Setting stretch targets and then stretching them again, helps to set high expectations with the client, and higher expectations within the team.

### **Set Appropriate Expectations**

It can be tempting to deliberately set low expectations so it becomes easy to deliver. However, that is not what we are talking about; that's the route to mediocrity.

We are talking about setting customer expectations, whether they are your internal customers within departments or divisions, or external customers through bids or service contracts or physical products.

There are various ways you can exceed expectations. You can deliver:

- Ahead of time
- Under budget
- A higher quality product
- A higher quality service
- Bundle in an extra product service

To build a culture of *consistently overdelivering* you need to prepare your team, share with them what the customer expects, and how you expect them to deliver more.

### **Build Workplace Attitudes and Culture**

Your team won't understand that you are trying to overdeliver, or why, or what it means for them, so they won't understand what the current expectation is, or how to achieve overdelivery. If you haven't got the culture of overdelivery you're going to have to explain it every time something new comes in. You want the culture to drive their thinking.

At Cap Gemini, it was written on every piece stationary "We deliver above and beyond customer expectations". This is about attitude and making an, *I'll take care of that* attitude, part of your team culture.

An example of achieving this is calling your team into a room to tell them we have won the bid to deliver a finance system into Coca Cola. Provide them the details, the need to deliver before January, and outline the following functionality.

Emphasise that as a team you need to deliver above and beyond that, and begin to brainstorm how to achieve it. Before you add your ideas, ask them for their ideas, what they can contribute, and brainstorm how we can overdeliver.

Ask questions like, “Have we got the knowledge and skill set in the team currently?” (e.g. “Do we have a process modeling expert?”).

### **Develop Capability And Capacity**

As an organisation you should have a sales forecast or an opportunity pipeline.

You need to ensure that you have the:

1. Capability (skills and experience), and
2. Capacity (enough people and resources)

To deliver beyond expectations.

The approach is different in various industries. It is expensive to carry staff or capacity but it can enable you to win and deliver while the competition struggles to compete.

### **Constantly Monitor Speed And Quality**

Ok. You have made a commitment to your customer, you need to assign accountability for each stage of the production / delivery cycle.

Double check with each stream owner that they are clear about the customer expectations and your own stretch targets.

This level of clarity and accountability often results in higher performance, buy in and a sense of growth or career progression.

Then you need to establish a tracking process and a risk management strategy so that you are constantly aware of how you are performing and what could go wrong.

## **Put a Feedback Process In Place**

If it's a project delivery or an ongoing service you should build in a regular feedback mechanism for the customer, such as:

- review meetings
- smart reports
- conference calls

But you need to ensure you set it up in a way that allows the customer to truly express themselves, not just tick boxes.

There needs to be a corresponding feedback process in place for team and any other third parties such as suppliers or other internal functions (e.g. HR or IT).

## **Build Up Collateral**

Capture stories about current delivery to use in future opportunities.

Make customer references part of the sales agreement.

For similar delivery projects consider investing in *off the shelf* solutions. This is very attractive for you and the customer because it costs you less to deliver and it costs them less to buy. It is also quicker to implement, this benefits everyone.

## ***World Class Example of Consistently Over Deliver***

When I joined Cap Gemini as Business Solutions Director I viewed it as my opportunity to learn how the best businesses in the world were operating. As Business Solutions Director it was my role to work with CEOs and CXOs on business strategy, corporate transformation and leadership development.

The company slogan was “Deliver above and beyond customer expectations” at first this seemed like a great idea for internal communications but this was printed on documentation that went to the customer. I was a little nervous that we were opening the doors for

certain types of customers who always expect more, demand more, and then argue about the price.

This turned out to be true, but there was a solution. The cost of the over delivery was built into the initial price. Repeat customers and regular customers were comfortable with this because they always knew they would get the right result.

We only ever had problems with certain types of customer at the outset who decided that that slogan allowed them to complain at the end and nothing was ever over delivered. It was a tactic of theirs, but it was already built in and if they weren't the right type of customer we were quite happy to walk away.

It was a company with a lot of integrity and it backed up what it said. A lot of the meetings that we had were about how we were going to over deliver, and those meetings were held before we signed a deal, so we made sure that we had the capacity to beat what we promised.

It wasn't just some kind of trick, it was a mantra. It was a genuine desire to be the best at what we did and commercially the benefit was to retain customers again and again and again. In the world of consulting it's quite common for people to over promise and under deliver, swap out staff for junior staff, and generally not keep the customer happy.

***“The key to success is to set realistic expectations and then exceed them, preferably in unexpected and delightful ways” (Richard Branson).***



# HABIT 10

## SYSTEMISE CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT



If you stand still you're falling behind. If a knife that doesn't get sharpened gets blunt. Your industry will evolve around you, your team and competitors will develop quicker than you. If you lose the ability to learn, you will lose your ability to deliver. If you stagnate it will be obvious to everyone else. You snooze, you lose. Build into training programs, either use existing training material or push for company wide leadership development, Attend industry conferences and events, join blogs/groups, understand hype cycles for your industry and function. All of this costs in terms of time and energy invested but the reward is a motivated, multi skilled, high performing and adaptable team. You won't see the results overnight but you will see the benefit when challenges and opportunities arise and your team can take it in their stride.

### Hype Cycle

If you don't keep your eye on the future, it will just happen around you and you may lose current relevance as well as missing specific opportunities.

A hype cycle (as previously mentioned in Habit 7 - Focus On Business Outcomes), is available from most consulting firms and shows future trends and technology innovations within an industry.

It also gives a perspective on the maturity level of the development process from hype, to bleeding edge, to leading edge, to early adopter, to best practice and to mass market adoption.

You should scan for emerging innovations and evaluate which ones could have an impact on your business.

## **Learning-Centric Culture**

If your organisation doesn't have a learning-centric culture, each part of the organisation will learn and develop in different ways and at different speeds. This will lead to misalignment and damage corporate performance.

If all VPs choose their own methods and approaches then the execution of projects and meetings will suffer because the teams are using different styles and language.

This culture starts with YOU. The top tier should set an example by openly embracing continuous learning and development themselves. Take the initiative and try to get a learning-centric culture started.

Set learning goals and targets for yourself. These could range from:

- gaining a deeper understanding of other functions in your organisation
- attending industry network events
- going on formal leadership training courses
- reading books and articles (e.g. set a goal - I will read one book every month and apply that learning to make me better at my job).
- listening to a certain number of podcasts

Keep in mind that Warren Buffet spends more than 50% of his working day reading.

Work with your teams to develop common learning programmes around leadership development, managing meetings, delivering projects etc.

Learn something new every day, maybe about your industry or your specialist subject area or developments in relevant technologies.

### **Your Personal Growth Targets**

If you are not growing you are falling behind. Maintaining the status quo is a failure as a business strategy. The world changes every day and you need to keep with it at the very least. As a leader you should aspire to keep one step ahead and build in regular time to focus on your own growth and development.

Be specific about your growth targets, For instance, don't just try to 'improve communication skills', also set goals around 'how to explain things in a more effective way'.

Get regular feedback from trusted sources. Whether it is a mentor from within the business or someone external. It could be 360 degree feedback from your team or your colleagues. Be ready to accept a few wake up calls and receive them with gratitude; you can't improve if you aren't aware of your weaknesses.

### **Your Team Growth Targets**

If your team doesn't keep abreast of emerging technologies, business methodologies or industry developments, you can be sure that your competitors will take advantage of this, and you will begin to fall behind.

Encourage a growth mindset and recognise personal growth, achievements and new capabilities. Support your team in attending training and development initiatives by allowing time off and appreciate them for taking the initiative.

Look for opportunities to allow them to apply new skills within their role or on relevant projects. Integrate learning into daily activi-

ty and culture by giving people stretch targets, projects that require them to learn new skills or allowing them to stand in for a colleague from a different discipline when they are on vacation.

### **Company Wide Growth Strategies**

There are many ways to do this, here are a few:

1. Invite external speakers and other leaders from your organisation to attend away days and give updates on what's going on in their world, or share details about their objectives and how they operate
2. Leverage technology, computer based training, online courses and even YouTube to support the acquisition of new skills, understanding and awareness
3. Put in place formal mentoring and coaching programs, and encourage cross training and job rotation.
4. Appoint someone to set up “lunch and learn” sessions, invite a different person once a week to explain what they do and what is going on.
5. Incorporate growth and development into the annual review process and other feedback / evaluation sessions.

### ***Example of World Class Systemised Continuous Development***

Toyota is the global benchmark for continuous development in their product, using the Kaizen techniques. They also apply the same process to their personnel development.

Their philosophy is “if their people keep growing the product will keep growing and so will the whole business.”

***“Keep sharpening the saw” (Stephen Covey). To maintain your role as a World Class leader, you must keep learning, growing, and improving your skills. This applies to yourself and your team.***

# HABIT 11

## MAINTAIN A POSITIVE WORK-LIFE BALANCE



**Y**ou can't be world class if you show up, tired, worried, and without mental clarity. Avoiding burnout, a divorce from neglect of your marriage, missing your children's childhood, losing yourself, defining yourself by your title, and using work as a substitute for a social life is going to lead you away from a more balanced life.

To be clear this is only about your personal life in the context of your career. You are going to work to earn money to enjoy your life, it's not the other way around. I have spent a lot of time talking to retired clients and I have never heard anybody talk about regrets in terms of wishing they had spent more time in the office, or made more money.

Most regrets focus on not spending enough time with children when they were young, not doing the things that they really wanted on their bucket list, or being stuck in the same job, in the same routine, and in the same area through inertia, or fear of change.

### **Keep Your Career in Perspective**

Apart from sleep you spend more time at work than any other place. It's important that you are working on something that leaves you fulfilled and something that you enjoy. Just remember that your job title does not define who you are as a person.

Your career plan should be part of your life plan. Start by building your life plan and then make sure that your career is aligned with it.

Take a little time to reflect on what you are doing and ask yourself:

- Is it fulfilling?
- Is it what I really want to do?
- Check how you feel about what you are doing and ponder if there is an alternative path out there for you.
- Could you be world class at something else?
- Would you like to start your own business?
- Would you like to do something that aligns with your hobbies or things you enjoy?

Take some time to make sure that you are full. Life is not just your career.

### **Prioritise Your Physical Health**

You only get one body and one mind.

I'm not going to walk you through personal training or give you an exercise routine. But it's important that you find a way that works for you to make sure you get a balanced diet along with sleep and exercise to keep your body in decent shape.

If you are not problem driven when it comes to health, remember that you also need mental clarity, and there are many exercises that you can Google just to get yourself in the right frame of mind before you go to work.

### **Consistently Monitor Your Mental Health**

We covered Emotional Intelligence earlier in the context of work; this is equally important in your personal life.

Yes, the scenarios will be different. When you face personal challenges it can be more intense, but the principles are the same.

Mental health and terms like ‘psychological safety’ are common issues at work but you also need to focus on your mental health in your private life.

The internet is full of advice on this subject and it's important to find someone like Mel Robbins or Steve Bartlett to follow, or someone who resonates with you.

Here are just a few tips to get you started:

1. It's ok to not be ok. Most of us have been messed up at some point in our lives, denial is your biggest enemy.
2. Practice self compassion. Give yourself a break, none of us is perfect, don't beat yourself up when things don't work out. Give yourself a pat on the back for trying, learn what you can and look to the future.
3. Don't be afraid to look for support. This could be from family or friends. We are ready to help each other but we can't if we don't know there is a problem.
4. With someone close you can probably open up a bit and let them know you need support or advice. With others you can take a different approach like “Can I run something past you?” Or “Have you ever felt like..?”
5. Spend time doing things that stop you overthinking. Sports, hobbies, anything that gives you a sense of purpose and joy and takes your mind off everything.
6. Actively manage stress, even better see it coming and prevent it. There are many techniques for this including exercise or journaling or meditation. Again, find a technique that works for you.

7. If things get too much, find a professional life coach or therapist or just talk to your doctor before you become overwhelmed.

Your mind is:

- who you are
- your character
- your personality
- your imagination
- your decision making engine

And so much more; you need to protect it *and* strengthen it.

### **Stay Calm And Practice The Power Pause.**

This is the difference between reacting and responding.

When something happens that you didn't see coming or someone says something unexpected, take a few breaths while you consider your options and the likely consequences.

### **Practice Thought Control**

Remember that thoughts and emotions are not reality, they only live within you and you need to control them or they will control you. Habit 1 covers Thought Control in detail.

### **Empathy**

This becomes even more important when you are dealing with children, your partner, family and friends.

Develop a positive outlook on life and build up your resilience for when life smacks you in the face, which it will.

## **Financial stability**

This is a great opportunity to practice keeping the end in mind. If you know what your target is for retirement you can work towards it. So many people underestimate the cost of living in their golden years.

Start with a target of what you expect your monthly outgoings to be and work towards that. It's the most important financial decision you will make. Apart from that you just want to adopt some basic habits such as:

- spending less than you make
- avoiding borrowing (with the exception of a mortgage)
- never borrow money to buy luxuries
- invest \$15 out of every \$100 you make
- keep six months living money in some kind of bank account in case you lose your job or have a big unforeseen expense.

Plan for the future:

- Car
- House
- Wedding
- Kids
- College fees
- Medical bills
- Retirement funds

Consider discussing all of this with a qualified financial advisor and set some form of savings or investment fund.

## **Relationships**

If you have issues with relationships in your personal life they will often stay on your mind while you're in the office and hold you back from delivering your best

It's important to apply emotional intelligence as a baseline for how you approach relationships and never be afraid to approach a professional counsellor for advice, you have nothing to lose from learning

## **Relationships with alcohol and other substances**

No lectures coming up, just some advice based on experience. When I was working at Virgin I wasn't operating at a world-class level, it was a role full of opportunities to party. We were in the music industry, there was a party every night in London and we went to quite a few.

As a board of directors we were friends as well as colleagues and drinking was part of our social culture. It was only when I moved to Cap Gemini that I began to understand what world class really was.

It's almost impossible to operate at a world-class level unless you have a totally clear mind and are not held back by brain fog or even worse, showing up on Monday morning with a hangover.

I looked around for some advice on just cutting back, but all I found were evangelists who were banging the drum for complete sobriety.

My drinking habits changed. I didn't become a teetotal, but I did start to cut back on weekends and stopped drinking during the week.

You can put water in your wine, and move to alcohol-free drinks sometimes just to fill in the gaps and replace your habit of drinking beer, wine or spirits with something that won't affect you the next day.

## **Extended Social Life**

Sports, hobbies, and entertainment are effective to clear your mind. Can you remember when time stood still when your playing sports or running along the beach with your partner or your kids? You forget about everything when you find that zone of happiness and distraction. You need to empty your head, give your brain time to rest and reset.

Don't worry, your subconscious mind will still be slowly and gently working on your problems in the background.

You need to find something reactive like tennis or something that absorbs your attention, even hobbies like chess, painting, or surfing.

## **Sleep**

Sleep is essential to support your mental state and ability to cope with stress.

It also ensures you save what you have learnt for the day, and are ready to learn again the next day.

It ensures you can maintain your morning schedule, routine and be consistent at work.

A few tips from the world-leading sleep expert Dr Matthew Walker include:

- Maintain a consistent sleep time that helps regulate circadian rhythm and melatonin production
- Keep your bedroom dark and quiet
- Limit alcohol and screen time before bed
- Avoid stimulants (e.g. no caffeine 10-12 hours before bed)
- Avoid large meals and excessive fluids before bed

## **Mindset**

You cannot perform like a World Class Leader if you don't show up every day in good shape, physically and mentally.

It helps if you have a positive outlook on life; this is something you can develop.

It also helps if you can build resilience and an understanding of emotional intelligence in your personal life to the degree where you become unbothered by things, so you remain calm and you understand how to deal with issues and manage your expectations.

It's okay to strive for great outcomes, just don't become too attached to them. Life has a habit of deciding what happens all by itself, if you learn to accept what you cannot change and focus on the things that are within your control, life feels easier.

Focus on:

- Perspective
- Positivity
- Health
- Sleep
- Relationships

This is about taking care of yourself and your lifestyle away from work.

## **Adaptability**

It's okay to strive for great outcomes just don't become too attached to them, life has a habit of smacking you in the face when you least expect it.

Learn to accept what you cannot change and focus on the things that are in your control.

### ***World Class Example of Work-Life Balance***

Samuel L Jackson always has a clause in his contracts that guarantee him the chance to play two rounds of golf a week.

Jack Nicholson had a similar clause guaranteeing that he would not work on a Sunday.

These guys understood that they needed to step-off set and out of character to retain their sanity and their own identity.

***“Give me six hours to chop down a tree, I would spend the first four sharpening the axe” (Abraham Lincoln)***



# HABIT X

## THE 11 MINUTE HABIT



For 11 minutes a day, refer to the content page and spend one minute on each habit and ask yourself:

- Did I use this habit yesterday?
- Do I need to use this habit today?
- Do I need to use this habit tomorrow?
- How am I performing on this habit - Am I Ok, Good, or World Class?

You can score yourself out of ten based on how you feel you are doing, it's useful to track this over time and see how you are growing into your leadership skin.

It's amazing how much your brain can achieve in 11 minutes. You might find your own approach and you are not restricted to 11 minutes, that is just to focus your mind amid a hectic schedule.

Personally, I would spend the first 30 minutes or even an hour going over these things, especially making sure that I was aligning strategy, ensuring that we over deliver, and preparing for any upcoming meetings.

That may seem like a luxury but two of the old sayings spring to mind:

1. To fail to prepare is to prepare to fail
2. Fire, ready aim is not the best way to hit the target

# CONCLUSION



How close you get to World Class will depend on two things:

- 1. Your motivation levels**
- 2. Your discipline**

**T**he ultimate aim is for you to perform at the highest level and position yourself to take advantage of future opportunities.

By the way, it's ok to 'fake it till you make it' just as long as you move forward from faking it to making it.

If you have the right mindset and the self-belief that you can be the best, you will get there, but it will require discipline and resilience.

If you have gotten this far in the book, you have already demonstrated that you are motivated and you had the discipline to finish it.

Keep going and keep learning, there are many inspirational characters out there and tons of free content on the internet for you to absorb.

I hope this book has either helped you to see things from a new perspective or reminded you of things you already knew but haven't focused on.

Whatever your role and your ambition I wish you every success,

Brad



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