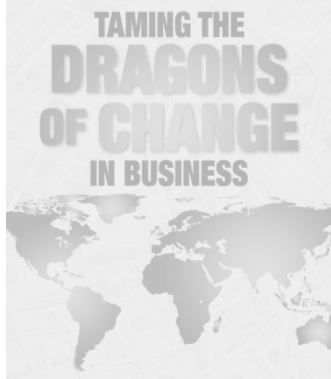


Using Change to Produce Success
THREE DIMENSIONS OF POWER

Influence is more powerful in the relationship economy than control. Are you exercising all of your influence?



A government executive took on the task of transforming his agency's workforce. Transformation included three initiatives: pay-for-performance, aligning competencies with mission, and increasing diversity. He developed a plan of action and identified the obstacles, which were formidable. Some were under his direct control within the agency while others needed support from the unions and action by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

The number and difficulty of the obstacles did not deter him from pursuing his goal. He formed a project office and allocated resources to manage day-to-day tasks. Those obstacles were under his direct control. Next he established liaison with union representatives to discuss and resolve issues, an area in which he had direct influence but no control. Third, he enrolled the department's Legislative Affairs Office to obtain OPM support for fundamental changes in personnel rules and practices. In that area, he had no control and only indirect influence. Today, as I write this vignette, this multi-year initiative is a work in progress, but so far the forward momentum is impressive.

This government executive understood that your power as a leader in the relationship economy has three dimensions. To achieve your truly big goals, you must exercise all three dimensions. The three dimensions of power are:

- **Direct Control.** Eliminating obstacles that you control directly, usually by allocating your personal time and attention, your staff, and other resources to areas that you manage. Eliminating such obstacles requires that *you change yourself*.
- **Direct Influence.** Eliminating obstacles over which you have firsthand influence but not direct control, such as actions by clients, suppliers, and competitors. This dimension is often a frustrating dragon because, despite your influence, they may make decisions you don't want or like. By using direct influence, you try to change someone that you deal with regularly.
- **Indirect Influence.** Eliminating obstacles over which you have no control and no firsthand influence. Weather, world events, laws, and regulations fall

in this dimension. It may seem like you are powerless to change them. But, while your unilateral power is limited, you can band with others (e.g., in associations) who face similar obstacles and together eliminate them. Most people focus on the first dimension, but actions in the second and third dimensions are really what will determine the magnitude of your success in the relationship economy.

Notice that all three dimensions of power involve achieving results through relationships. In exercising direct control, you are leading the people whom you supervise, a significant task in itself.

Exercise your power in all three dimensions to achieve your most important goals.

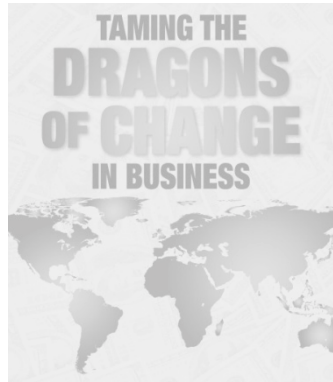
In exercising direct influence, you are enrolling clients, strategic partners, and other parts of your own organization to support your goal.

Many books have been written on the topics of strategic partnerships, negotiations, and customer care to help in the second dimension. The third dimension, indirect influence, is where the relationship economy provides opportunities and tools (e.g., blog sites and YouTube) that were not available in the past.

Your actions in the second and third dimensions will enable you to achieve your biggest goals. In the industrial age, it was difficult to accomplish changes through actions in these dimensions. But the relationship economy opened the floodgates to change by connecting like-minded people around the globe. The bigger the goals you set, the more your success will depend on exercising your personal power in the second and third dimensions.

THE JOURNEY

A clear purpose provides criteria for making choices on your journey toward success.



One of my regular interview questions is: "What's your career goal and how can we help you achieve it?" Candidates usually answer with vague notions about rising to a management position or learning a new skill. However, one interviewee answered quickly and clearly: "Government service is my purpose and my goal is to rise to a Senior Executive Service (SES) position. Working for your company, I expect to learn more about how government agencies operate."

We hired him. He was an exceptionally effective leader, excellent at motivating people and satisfying clients. I helped him toward his goal by introducing him to SESes who had done what he planned to do: They began in industry and shifted to government service. After four years, he left the company for a GS-15 position in a government agency, one step below SES but well positioned to apply for open SES positions. I'm confident that he'll be an SES soon.

In my experience, only one in five people choose a position because it advances them toward a specific career goal. Most resumes I review list prior positions like steps on a ladder but rarely describe where the ladder is heading. Such candidates are generally job-hoppers who may be highly skilled, but they capitulate to the career-limiting dragon of a larger paycheck or a more interesting project.

My follow-up question during interviews sometimes is: "What are your strengths, and how can they be expanded?" or "What are your weaknesses, and how can they be reduced?" If the candidate looks back with a blank stare or answers in terms of improving their skills and diversifying their experience, I conclude that they have no idea what their strengths or weaknesses are. Are you aware of your strengths and weaknesses? Stop thinking of your career as a series of loosely related positions. Instead, view it as a progression of learning experiences that amplify your strengths, ameliorate your weaknesses, and enable you to fulfill your purpose.

In the relationship economy, you must set the direction of your team and your career. The gray flannel suit days of the industrial age when companies prepared people for lifelong employment are gone. Since people have different preferences, styles, and strengths, it follows that you'll need a specific type of workplace to achieve peak performance. It's essential that you understand yourself thoroughly, so you can find the working environment and the position where you will thrive and grow.

There are several elements in an ideal work environment. These days you may find yourself working at home or in the field as often as in an office. Do you learn best by seeing, by hearing, or by doing? Do you produce your best results

View your career as a series of experiences that enable you to fulfill your purpose.

with a team, or working alone? If it's with a team, do you like being the leader, a technical guru, or a supporter? Do you thrive in a structured work environment, or work better under the pressure of a tight deadline? Do you enjoy an environment of chaos and uncertainty, or not? When you can answer these questions, you will know a lot about the next position you should seek.

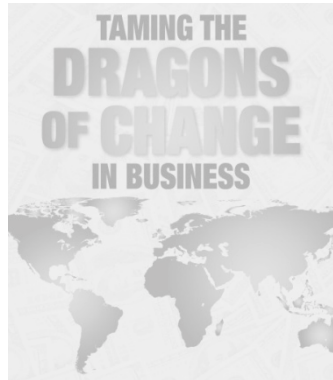
Today, the journey toward a successful career isn't based on luck or precise planning. Rather it's seizing the right opportunities as they appear. That being said, if your current position doesn't allow you to apply your strengths, to work in a stimulating environment that brings out your best, and to achieve your purpose, then look for one that does! That, of course, assumes you know your purpose. If you aren't sure what your purpose is, try:

- Writing down your personal definition of success;
- Stating why you are passionate about achieving that success;
- Telling yourself how it will be fun and how it will help others;
- Linking your vision of success to your unique qualities; and
- Identifying indicators that demonstrate you are succeeding.

Knowing this about yourself will help you evaluate opportunities and pick the best one *for you*. You will know when you have the right job because you will feel that you are making an essential contribution and a measurable difference to others. You will build a successful and rewarding career through a series of such positions.

THE PAIN OF CHANGE

The journey to success frequently will require you to endure the short-term pain of change.



My sister-in-law is an animal lover who often keeps five or more dogs in her home. She protects them with an electric fence. But Hubert, a springer spaniel, was one dog she couldn't contain. Hubert knew the pain of the electric fence, but it didn't stop him. One day, I watched as he stood ten feet from the fence and focused on his escape. Then he sprinted as fast as he could go and leaped through the electric fence with a yelp. His momentum carried him through the pain to freedom. After brief adventures in the neighborhood, Hubert would return home and wait for my sister-in-law to let him in the front door. He wasn't willing to suffer pain to go back where he used to be.

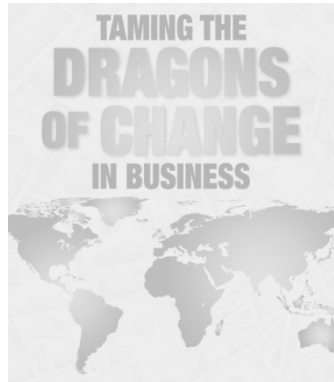
Many barriers to success are like electric fences. To get where you want to go, you might have to endure transitional pain like Hubert jumping through a fence. Ever wonder how successful leaders always seem to be in the right place? It's because they put their organizations and themselves in position to succeed by taking action to prepare for new opportunities. They tame the dragon of short-term pain that holds their organization inside today's comfortable "box."

Psychologists say humans are driven more by pain-avoidance than by pleasure seeking. Therefore, to achieve the pleasure of future success, you must conquer a natural resistance to change (which, for the most part, is painful). Similarly, an organization moves forward when it consistently makes small changes to prepare for the future. When change becomes normal and comfortable, organizations increase their chances for success.

Successful leaders don't waste precious time trying to avoid the pain of change. Instead, they tolerate pain, and make change a habit in their organization and their personal routines. Your success momentum depends more on the actions you are taking today than on your past successes, your resources, or your luck. Don't avoid action because of the short-term pain of the first step.

BUDGET SHORTFALL

In the relationship economy, success accrues to those who find innovative ways to transform scarcity into abundance.



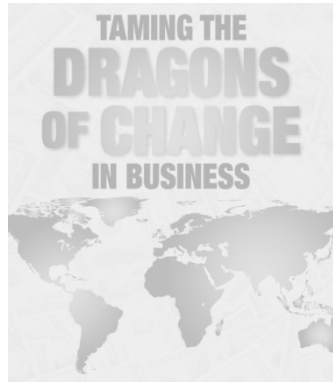
An Ohio high school earned a prestigious *Innovations in American Government* award for transforming a budget shortfall into a landmark learning program. The curricula required computers for 2,000 students, but the budget allowed just \$100,000 for computer support. The first reaction was to abandon the curricula, but school officials and parents tamed the *no-way-out* dragon by forming a student-led company to provide the needed services. Class schedules were restructured to offer industrial courses in computers and network fundamentals. Students supported the school's computer system and received hands-on experience at the same time.

Starting as freshmen, students could elect classes in software, Web design, and network maintenance. Roughly 10 percent of freshmen, 25 percent of sophomores, and 30 percent of juniors and seniors selected the program, which included one class every day and extra time before or after school. The students also learned customer service and business management skills. Local businesses hired new employees from the student-led company, and the computer training increased the college acceptance rate.

The school's solution to a budget shortfall defies fundamental rules from the industrial age. First, those scarce skills are hard-to-find and expensive. And the corollary, when scarce skills become plentiful, they will be devalued. The relationship economy, as illustrated by this high school's innovative program, is reversing scarcity-based rules. In the relationship economy, value is driven by abundance. For example, e-mail, cell phones, and BlackBerrys are valuable because they are abundant. Everyone is connected. The devices allow communication with anyone at almost any time. Success in the relationship economy goes to those who transform scarcity into abundance. Abundance thinking will create abundance.

NEWSPAPER SAFARI

It's relatively easy to find an innovative solution once you empty your mind of habitual thought patterns.



When I find myself struggling to solve a problem, I treat myself to a newspaper safari. My habit is to read the front page and the business, sports, and metro sections of the Washington Post each day. But when I'm stuck on a problem or need a new perspective, I take a safari into the health, style, food, or apartment-living sections. Alternatively, I take an Internet safari by Googling a topic totally unrelated to my problem and being open to receive a new perspective.

Newspaper safaris work because the real challenge is not finding a new solution; it's emptying my mind of the old ideas that produced the problem in the first place. So for an hour or so, I browse through strange newspaper sections that I ordinarily would never read. I don't read every page. I just get a feel for the issues and solutions from the strange subjects and use them to find an innovative solution for my problem. Try a safari yourself.

Innovative people link old concepts together in new ways, often by adding just one small new idea. They have an uncanny ability to frame the problem in a way that leads to new alternatives. Then they find a creative solution by connecting ideas that others see as unrelated or useless. They find the missing links that connect jigsaw puzzle pieces into an exciting new solution.

In the relationship economy, innovations happen so fast in so many fields that many of tomorrow's innovations are likely to be the combination of smaller, specialized innovations from today. You may discover a new concept by combining several other innovations from your organization or other organizations. Turning your innovation into a major commercial breakthrough may require relationships with like-minded innovators in other fields. That's why it's so vital for you to build new relationships today to ensure your success tomorrow.