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# CAREER MASTERY™ PLAYBOOK

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50 WORLD-CLASS EXPERTS SHARE THEIR TOP  
CAREER ADVICE TO BE MORE SUCCESSFUL IN 2019

We asked each of the experts of the Career Mastery™  
Kickstart 2019 Summit the following question:

***“What is the single most important thing we need  
to do to be more successful in our careers?”***

Here are their answers...

## Improve Your Self-Awareness

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Improve your self-awareness. What are you good at? What are you not good at? What do you enjoy? What don't you enjoy? And self-awareness is not just knowing the good stuff but it's also knowing, what are your fears? What are your insecurities? What keeps you up at night?

Sometimes, in order to get real self-awareness, you need to ask other people. For example, I may think I'm a great active listener but if the people around me don't think I am, then I'm not very accurate with my awareness. This is why it's important to build trust and connection with people so that they can tell you what you need to hear, rather than what you want to hear.

The more aware you can be, then the more intentional you can be with making your strengths even stronger and buttoning up your applicable weaknesses.



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## Become More Aware

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Monitor your thoughts, feelings, and behavior, and become more aware. Even if you don't necessarily implement changes, pay more attention.

What do you do? How do your feelings affect how you behave? How do your thoughts impact the choices that you make?

Simply raising your awareness makes a huge difference.



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## Build Habits

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Every single day, the first person you have to manage is yourself.

Human beings are creatures of habit, whether they're good habits or bad habits. This is where you have to make a choice. You're either the victim of your habits or you're the product of your habits. So, be aware and try to build habits that make you stronger, faster, better, smarter, healthier, and more centered.

Your habits are what define how you experience the world and how you show up in the world, so build good habits.



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## Know Ourselves

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Self-awareness.

We need to know ourselves so that we can understand our triggers, know how to position ourselves for success, and be the champions driving our paths forward. It all starts with self-awareness.



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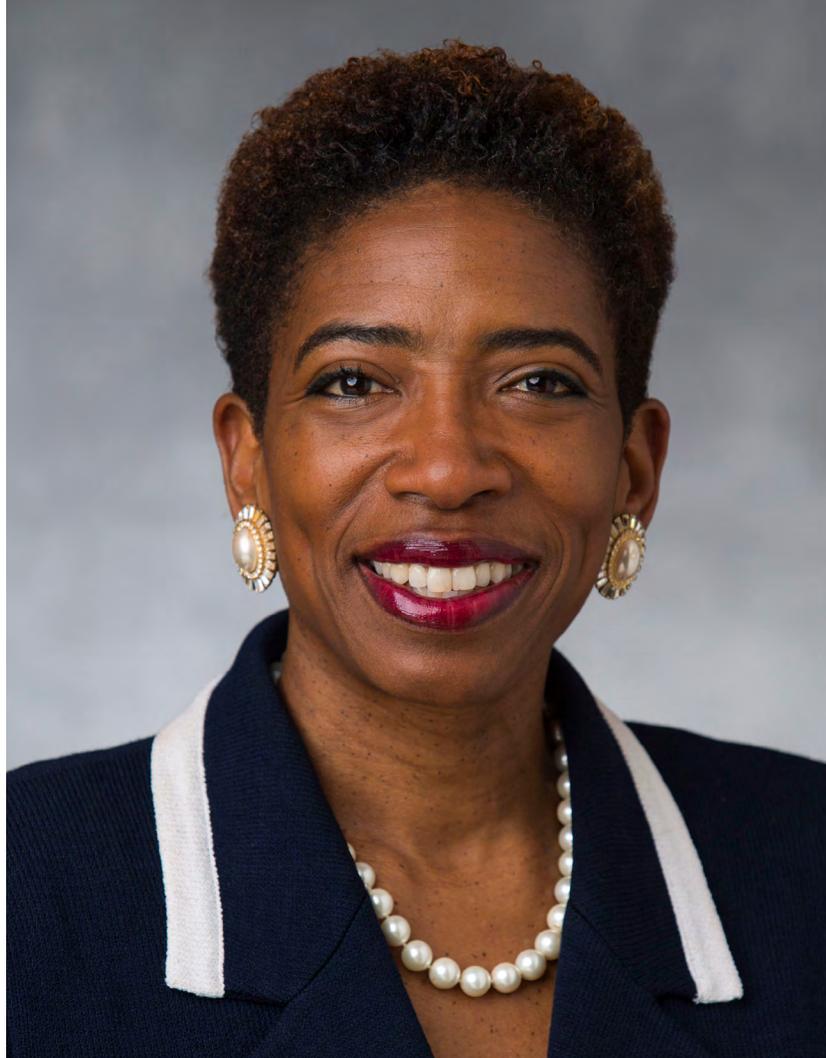
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## Invest in a Sponsor Relationship

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Make sure that you have a sponsor and invest in a sponsor relationship.



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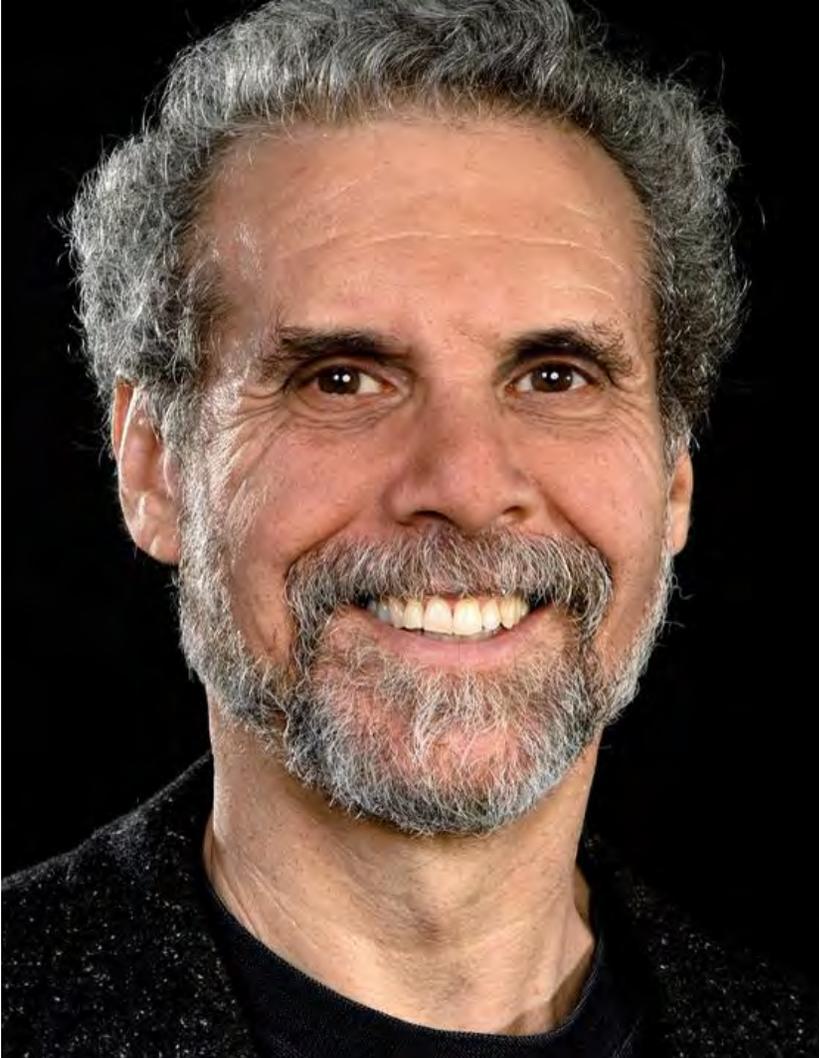
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## Tune into Your Self-Awareness

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Tune into your self-awareness. It's the foundation of well-being.



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## Start with Your Own Vision

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First and foremost, before you even start with the team, start with your own vision. Do this for yourself.

If you don't have a written document or something tangible that's an indicator for you of where you're going over the next two to three years, create that first. It's a wonderful starting point.

Once you know that, not only do you have a better sense of how you fit into the larger vision but also you'll do a better job of asking your team and being all ears about the things that are important for their careers and their own visions.



### Dave Stachowiak

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## Know What You Stand For

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Someone gave me this advice when I first made partner: “Never need a client or an opportunity more than you want the client.” And I’ve translated this into my own feedback, which is, “know where your line is”.

Know what you stand for on everything. Know what’s important to you and bring that to work because that affects the things you do and what you speak to.

Knowing yourself is just as important as the work that you do.



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## Pre-Write Your Resume

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An executive named Lenny Achan developed a process for himself called pre-writing your résumé. I thought this process was so fascinating that I profiled him in my newest book, “Entrepreneurial You”, and I also wrote about him in the Harvard Business Review.

Once a year he would update his resume. But instead of updating his resume for the present year, he would write a resume for five years in the future. So, when Lenny would write his resume, he had to imagine where he wanted to be in 5 years. And he also had to imagine, “what are the specific responsibilities I have? What are the tasks that I do every day as part of the job? And most critically, in between now and then, what are the jobs that I have held that has prepared me to get this job?”

By doing this process, Lenny could essentially pinpoint his development plan so that he could really prepare himself for where he wanted to be in five years. He would think through questions like: What skills do I need to build? What certifications or degrees I need to get? Where do I need to grow my experience? Do I need to get more international experience? Do I need to manage people? Do I need to learn a new language or a computer program?

If you're interested, think about the question: How do you pre-write your resume?



### Dorie Clark

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## Follow Your Intuitions

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Follow your intuitions and do the right thing for you. It's kind of magic.

If you do the right thing for you, you will get a positive impact somehow.



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## Treasure Relationships

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Remember that the world turns on human connections. Almost everything else is about timing, where you happen to be at a particular time or who you're sitting next to but the world turns on human connections, so treasure yours.

Treasure relationships. Feed them, water them, and pay attention to them.

Both the power of your language and the language of power are critically important elements of anyone's career success.



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## Develop a FAST Mindset

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A FAST mindset. Once we start acting FAST, we'll have less failure, succeed quicker and achieve better results.

Ask yourself:

- Do I know what I'm supposed to be doing? Do I know what the goal is?
- Am I clear about who's involved? Have I communicated the goal to them in a simple way?
- Do I know what's involved in achieving the goal?
- Do I have a way of tracking performance? And not just checking off that I did A, B and C, but a way to know that I've achieved the results I'm looking for.

For example, if I'm going on a diet, I could say that my plan is to eat salad three times a day, every week. But just counting how many times I ate salad doesn't tell me if I've been successful. What tells me if I've being successful in this case is getting on the scales and seeing my weight come down. It's got to be outcome focused.

If you develop a FAST mindset, it will help you immeasurably.



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## Shift Away from All of the Non-Essential

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Learn to shift away from all of the non-essential trivia that drain and exhaust you.

Realize that we've all been fundamentally conned into believing we have to do all those things. Then, discover that you have a choice.

You can trade those things off. You can eliminate the non-essential stuff. You can build systems to do the things that you think are unreachable. The things you've always wanted to do but have never done can be done.

Learning how to make this shift is essential in career, personal, and life leadership.



### Greg McKeown

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## Have Intrinsic Motivation

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Make sure that on whatever pathway you're going forward on, you have enough intrinsic motivation because fear will always be limited for driving action and effort.

We all want to reach our goals, but as humans we need daily reinforcement to keep us going. We need to feel good every single day. If I'm going to need to invest my time doing deep, creative work that piece of work needs to be inherently and intrinsically exciting. And this could be in whatever domain applies to you. As you master that new skill, it's important that it's something that you enjoy mastering.

For example, for me, writing is not my greatest strength but I'm quite interested in language, the flow, the sound, and words coming together. So, when I'm writing a book, although it's very painful drafting the manuscript, I feel like every day I'm making small progress in the way I communicate my idea and for me that's rewarding intrinsically. As a result, I'm able to dedicate time to do this type of creative work and stay on the pathway.



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## Give Yourself Permission to Dream

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Be honest with yourself about your aspirations. We're often afraid to say what we really want. And there are many reasons why people aren't honest and open about what they really want out of their careers.

I think embracing your aspirations and being honest about who you want to be in the world as it relates to work is okay. It's okay to be ambitious. Give yourself permission to dream and to aspire to whatever it is you'd like to do.



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## Think About the Tone and Direction of Your Conversations

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First, realize that what you think, what you say, and what you do matter. Then, if you accept that what you think, say, and you do matter to yourself and to others, think about the tone and direction of your conversations.

If you want to have more conversations worth having, think about positive framing and asking generative questions.



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## Have More Imagination

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A lot of times we hear about things like technological destruction and people then envision Terminator-type machines and jobs disappearing etc. and that's absolutely one possible way of looking at things that are going on in our environment.

But we have the capacity to create and paint our own stories. It simply requires some imagination and thinking.

Think about your industry. What could you create? What could it look like? In order to do this, you have to use human imagination.



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## Intentional Self-Care

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Many times what happens is that you take care of everybody else, and the last person we take care of is you. But really, the most selfless thing you can do is to be selfish in taking care of yourself.

When I take care of myself mentally, physically, emotionally, relationally, and spiritually, there's more of me to give. There's more of me to give my wife, more of me to give my children, more of me to give my friends, more of me to give to my clients. Now I'm not leading from a deficit, I'm leading from abundance and it's a game changer.

Be intentionally focused on taking care of yourself. Self-care is the number one strategy.



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## Lifelong Learning

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Read, study, and start mastermind groups. The single most important thing that you can do to move your career ahead is to have knowledge, ideas, and information. And there's no excuse anymore.

We have access to more information today than ever in the history of the world, and it's all accessible for free. It's a question of, do you have the discipline to spend 15-20 minutes a day investing in yourself?

People who have the discipline see their career go on a hockey stick, people who don't see theirs flat-line.



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## Build Relationships

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Remember that you can't make up for lost time when it comes to relationships, so dig the well before you're thirsty.

It just takes a few minutes a day, and it will be the highest-leveraged activity of your entire career.



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## Be Likable

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In 2012, Harvard Business Review published an article titled, “Competent Jerks, or Lovable Fools?” In the article, HBS tracked a certain number of people and asked them, “If you have to work with either A, this really competent person that’s kind of a jerk, or B, this likable person that’s maybe not quite as competent, who would you pick?” Every single one of them said that they’d pick the competent person. And then HBS tracked these people and every single one of them picked the person they liked more.

Further research shows that the number one way for you to be liked is to be authentic. From studies, the breakdown of how to be liked is: 49.6% about being authentic, 22% is your sense of humor, the other 22% is a level of competency, and less than 2% is about your looks.

So be authentic and be yourself. We all have pains and problems, so be authentic and don’t try to wear a mask. The more you get rid of the mask, the more likeable you’ll be and the more successful you’ll be.

## Track Your Time

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The best thing to do is to track your time. Tracking your time makes you accountable for it and it makes you come up with better ways to use it.

The second-best thing is the idea of Friday planning your week. On a Friday, proactively think about your priorities for the next week. Think about where your priorities can go. Front-load the week by putting the important stuff Monday morning and then do a calendar triage to get rid of the things that don't deserve to be on your calendar at all.

If you do this Friday planning, time will open up. It's not going to be instantaneous, but you'll find a few more hours and will probably make progress on a personal project in the next week. Then you'll be so excited about this newly found time that next week you'll be even more into this Friday planning practice and you'll do even more and the next week. Little by little, it adds up.



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## Develop Your Network

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Our networks have never been more important than they are today.

The people and the trusted relationships we have, our currency with one another to bring our A-game all the time, our commitment to being a good teammate and being selfless, in many respects, will be the things that will advance us most effectively.



### Leo Bottary

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## Continually Be Open to Learning

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Truly accept that on some level, we're all ignorant and there's much more to know. Then beyond the knowledge, there's how to use that knowledge.

So, be prepared to learn, and not only intellectual learning, be prepared for emotional learning and learning how to do things with your hands, whatever it might be.



### Linda Hill

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## Be More of Who You Are

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Know that there is nothing wrong with you and there's nothing to fix.

There's only adding skills to your tool box and being more of who you are.



### Lisa Gates

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## Take Full Control of Your Career Advancement

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Don't leave your career advancement in the hands of your manager. You need to take full accountability and control of your career advancement.

Even if you have an amazing boss, you can never fully leave it to somebody else because nobody ever wants it more than you do. If you're blessed to have an amazing boss that's taking care of you, that's awesome, but you still need to be able to take accountability for yourself and have conversations with other mentors, other managers, and even competitors.

Do everything the right way and always keep a pulse on your market and on your industry. Always have a lookout for where the next opportunity may lie and don't put all of your faith in one basket.

Take accountability for yourself and don't get too comfortable. Even if you have an amazing boss and an amazing company, you still always need to proactively take care of yourself.



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## Be More Conscious About Cultivating Your Intuition

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Intuition is not just considering your gut feeling, but really taking into account your inner voice or internal guide. Intuition is fundamentally about telling us when we're aligned with our DNA and fulfilling a shared purpose of some kind.

So, listen for that inner voice that tells you, "you know what, I'm on the right track here, and even if people don't recognize it yet, or even if people look like they're resisting it, I know I'm on the right track". Then consider what it is that you need to do in order to express your contribution better.

This inner sense of rightness about things makes all the difference to not only be successful, but also to feel fulfilled in our success.



### Mark Bonchek

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## Just Keep Going. Stick at It.

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I once was talking to a colleague of mine, who'd been pretty successful and had recently gotten himself the Order of Canada, which is the most prestigious social award that you can get in Canada. It's like having an Order of the British Empire in the UK or a Medal of Honor in the US.

So, I asked him, "I'd really like one of those. How do I get one?" And I was being quite serious.

He replied, "Mark, you just stick at it."

And that was great advice.

You don't have to be the most brilliant person at anything to be successful. Of course, brilliance can be a good thing as well but often you can be the person who sticks at it long enough that everybody else falls off and does something else because they weren't succeeding.

Just stick at it, stick at it, stick at it and the moment you're thinking of giving up, just keep on going. I guarantee 100 others just gave up, and you'll be more successful.

Stick at it.



### Mark Bowden

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## How to Build Your Personal Brand Online

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I had the great honor to study under Peter Drucker for three years and there's not a single day that goes by that I don't hear his voice in my head. He's helped me become such a more effective leader and especially a consultant because one of the things he drilled into us was that to be a great leader today, you don't have to have all the right answers but you have to have the right questions.

I think that in this world of unbelievably furious change, we cannot have all the answers. As a leader today, you have to be humble. It's different from the type of leadership I grew up with in the big corporate world.

Today, you have to be humble. You have to have the courage to surround yourself with great people, people who are smarter than you. And you have to think about what the right questions and opportunities are, and trust others to help us get to the right answer.



### Mark Schaefer

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## Breathe

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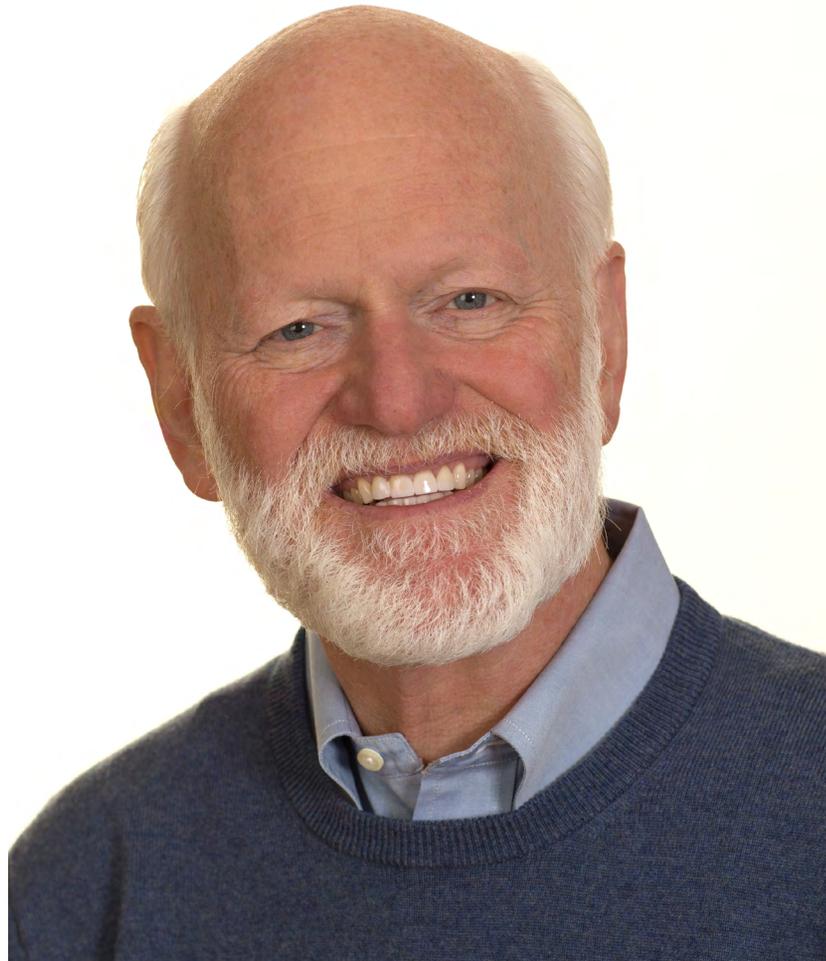
I always have the same final career advice: breathe.

Imagine you're 95 years old and you're just getting ready to die. Right before you take your last breath, you're given a beautiful gift: the ability to go back in time and talk to the person that's listening to me right now, the ability to help that person be a better leader and have a better life. What advice would that wise 95-year old you have for the you listening now?

Whatever you're thinking, do that. In terms of a performance appraisal, that's the only one that matters.

I've asked a lot of old people this same question: what advice would you have? And three themes come up when you ask old people.

1. Be happy now. A lot of us believe, "I'll be happy when..." You get so busy chasing what you don't have, you can't see what you do have.
2. Friends and family. They are so important in life.
3. If you have a dream, go for it. If you don't go for it when you're 35, you may not when you're 45. You probably won't when you're 85.



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## Take Control

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Take control, take responsibility and adapt.



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## Take Ownership of Your Career

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We have to take charge of our career. We can't just wait for somebody else. And we have to be making conscious decisions, and not be so busy, head down working, that we miss golden opportunities on our career journey.

As a part of taking ownership, it's very important to invest in yourself. When you take ownership, it's about understanding “you” as a product, “you” as an asset. You want to be purposeful, deliberate, and you don't want to skimp on your investments in yourself when it comes to your future because you are the person who wants to keep going, so you have to keep learning and growing. An investment in yourself is never wasted. And this investment in yourself could be an investment of time, money, energy, attention, or all of the above. You want to take a little bit of time each week or each month to identify what investments you want make in yourself because you can't always count on others to come knocking on your door to suggest investment opportunities. Then also set aside a budget of time, money, energy, attention. And make sure you spend it every year because you are your biggest asset. Your career is in your hands.

What is the one thing that would really move the needle for you if you were to invest in yourself in that way this year? Then, go and take action and do that thing.



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## Show up Powerfully

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If you're feeling powerful within, if you believe in yourself, and if you are telling yourself the right story, then you will show up powerfully. This is because you already have what it takes to be successful, you just need to let yourself shine.

As a leader, you need to believe in yourself and then empower yourself to step up and show up.



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## Be Willing to Say “No”

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Be willing to tackle the difficult question, which is: “If I’m going to say yes to this, what must I say no to?”

This is a strategy question. It works on a couple of levels. It works if you are trying to be strategic as a leader. Strategy in many ways is figuring out what to say no to. What’s rife in organizations is an unwillingness to say no because it’s hard and it’s difficult and you want to keep your options open.

Actually, you pay a price for that. It’s also not just about your company’s choice, or your business unit’s choice, or your team’s choice, there’s something for you about where do you put your time. What are you going to say no to so that you can say yes to the great work, the work that has more impact and more meaning. It’s a tough one but a really good one to wrestle with.



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## Identify Your Most Valuable Activities

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Ask yourself, “What are the most valuable activities that I can engage in, in my career?”

Once you’ve identified these most valuable activities, then go and devote your job, role, effort, energy, and passions toward them.

Sometimes we don’t ask those fundamental questions, but if we do and we answer them, we will have a successful career.



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## Pay Attention to Your Brand

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Understand that your brand is always on show.

You are always, always, always on, so pay attention to all those little details.



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## Pay Attention to Your Intent

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The vast majority of us spend a lot of time communicating virtually. Stop making the assumption that your face to face communication style carries over into the virtual world.

Start paying attention to how other people are reacting to what you're saying, writing, and sending to them. Pay attention to how their virtual communications affect you.

Start paying attention to your own intent, and to other people's intents in a much more conscious way.



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## Do Whatever Makes You Really Happy

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Do whatever makes you really happy. Do whatever makes you giddy-happy.

Do what you can to make your work joyous and fun because really, you're happier at work when you have a sense of fun and camaraderie.

You're happier with yourself when you see how awesome you are. You're happier when you're nice to yourself and to other people.

And by “nice to other people”, I do not mean to self-sacrifice yourself to make them happy. What I mean is to be nice to yourself, treat yourself nicely, love yourself nicely and to do for yourself what nice people do for others.

People love working for people that love and are happy. The best bosses are happy bosses who have happy employees, creating happy work that's making happiness in this universe by supplying the tools or resources to make the world happy.



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## Lead with Emotional Courage

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The single most important thing is being willing to feel because if you can lead with emotional courage then you are unstoppable.

If you are emotionally courageous and willing to feel everything, then you can do anything. Lead with emotional courage and start everything you do with emotional courage.



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## Be Better Than Your Paycheck

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Firstly, be careful of who you take advice from. There's a huge difference between advice and opinion. Advice comes from somebody's who's been there and done it. Opinions come from everybody. You get to choose what you're going to listen to.

Secondly, in the corporate world there are far too many people with a mindset of, "pay me and I'll do it." Yet the people that thrive in organizations are ones that do it and then get paid.

If you really want to be super successful in life, what you want to be thinking about is that you've got to be better than your paycheck forever. Be worth more money to the organization and the money will follow. Don't demand the money, don't demand the pay rise for you to then step up and be better.

Be better so that your employee organization is fearful of losing you, then they'll reward you on the way there.



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## Great Leadership Starts with Integrity

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Integrity-based leadership, what I refer to as “integrated leadership” (from the root words “integer” + “great”) is a holistic, integrated, and integrity-based approach to leadership where you can lead yourself first.

Then it’s about asking yourself, how can I lead others and really be a leader worth following? How can I build the right kind of team around me? If you lead an organization, how do I create a high-performance organization that is well led all the way around and especially from the top?

It starts with an integrity-based approach. If we’re not integrated, we’re disintegrated. If your heart’s not right, nobody cares about your skills. So, when we get that integrity piece right then we really can add value and then behave your way to high performance.

Integrity leads to high performance. When leaders get better and they lead true to themselves, their organization, and their values, everybody gets better.



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## Serve Others

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If people know that you're someone who has their interests at heart and who is prepared to help them achieve their goals, they're going to pay that back.



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## Take Time out for Self-Reflection

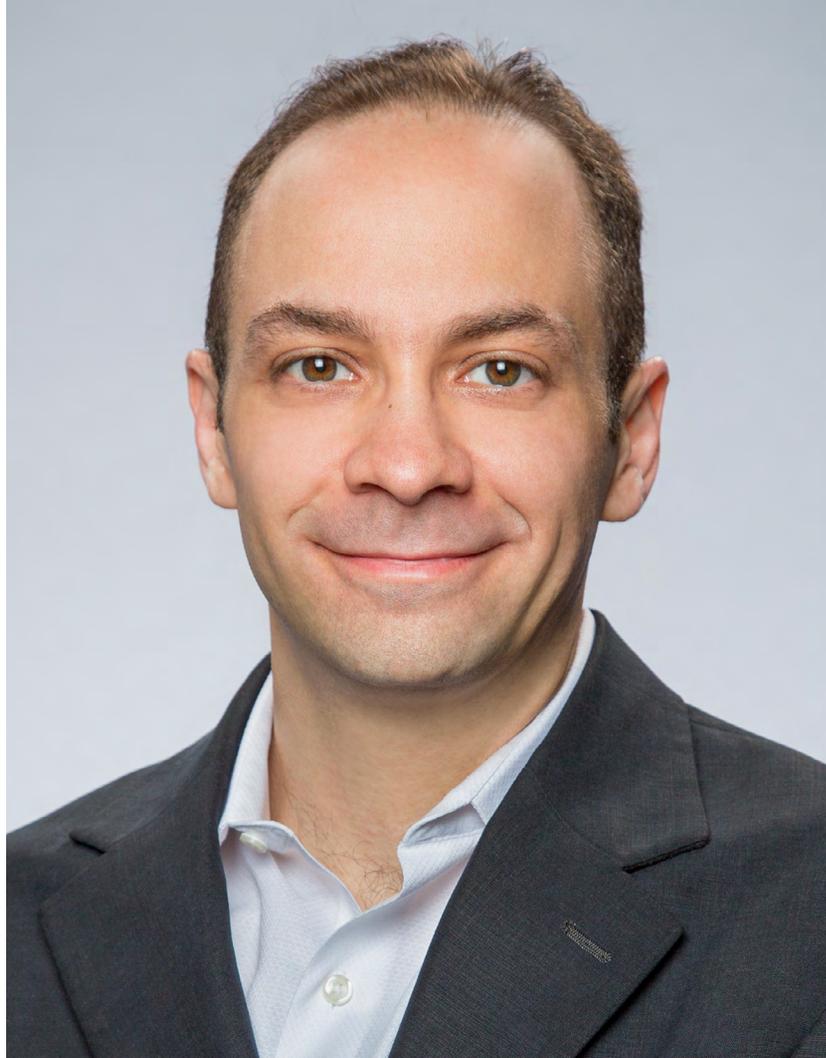
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In psychology there's a term called mortality salience, which refers to being aware of your own death. The research on mortality salience shows that when people think about their own death, it can actually lead them to make better, more generous decisions because they are looking at an expanded timeframe.

Many of us become obsessed with the near future and we don't think nearly enough about our lives from the 10, 20 or 30-year perspective.

I think all of us should do an exercise of thinking about “how would your kids view how you're spending your time?” “How would you view how you're spending your time now after you're retired?”. “Would you be proud of the way you spend your time now?”

This self-reflection is really valuable and frankly it's not something you can always do at the spur of the moment. The best time to start reflecting on “am I going in the right path?” is while on a vacation when you've disconnected for a few days and you've recharged your battery.



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## Focus on the Small Things That Everybody Can Do Every Day

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Successful people aren't doing things that everyone else cannot do. Successful people are doing things that everyone can do, but that not everybody does.

These are things like going to bed early, waking up early, working out, drinking water, building true relationships, or spending an hour every week creating some sort of thought leadership. So, it's not any one particular thing, it's focusing on the small things that everybody can do every day.

Stop looking for shortcuts. Stop looking for a program or an app that will solve the fact that you don't have enough time to write a blog. Sit down in a chair and write. Come home early and visit your kids. These small wins that are not cheats are the ones that will build real long-term success.

What are the small things that you can do, that everybody can do, but not everybody does?



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## Be Impeccable for Your 50%

---

Take back control and fully commit to being effective at what you can control.

My mantra that I encourage you to take on is, “be impeccable for your 50%”. Your 50% consists of the things that you can control.

Before you ever allow yourself to stress or complain in a situation, “well, they didn’t this” or “this didn’t work out the way I thought”, first ask yourself, “am I being effective at what I can control?”



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## Make It Impossible Not to Succeed

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If you want to achieve success in any area of your life, consciously create an environment in which it becomes impossible not to succeed.

This requires thinking and looking forward, understanding where you are and where you want to work towards.

What things can you get in place to create that environment or foundation to launch yourself from that would make it impossible not to succeed?



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## Be More Human

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The six universal principles of influence and persuasion are not principles of economic science, or information, or education, which are the typical pillars we rely on when we want to influence and persuade people.

We tend to think that if we have the right information and incentives in place then people will say “yes”. But that’s not the case at all.

Of course, sometimes people may say “yes” anyway, but there are human aspects that we need to take into account as well, such as, the rules of give and take, the rules of likability, the rules that we follow many others, and the rules that we listen differently to those that have been introduced as trustworthy experts. These are all human characteristics.

When it comes to successful influence and persuasion, don’t just think about the mechanical aspects, think about the human aspects too.



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## Take Life One Conversation at a Time

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You never know which conversation is the one that could absolutely change the trajectory of a career, a company, a relationship, or a life.

When somebody comes up to you and says, “Have you got a minute?”, you don’t know, this could be one of those life-changing conversations and if you’re distracted, you’ll miss it and you’ll never even know it was there.

So, take it one conversation at a time and be fully present and prepared to be nowhere else.

In addition to understanding that you’re navigating your life one conversation at a time, put down your mobile phone. Go and talk with people face to face, if at all possible. If face to face isn’t possible, try to have a video conference meeting. We don’t hear one another when we are staring at our laptops and at our mobile phones because we’re distracted.

One of the greatest gifts we can give another person is the purity of our attention.



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## Focus on Your Own Version of Success

---

Stop worrying about what everybody else is doing in their career and focus on your own version of success. There are many different versions of success at work and at home.

Look at what your priorities are so that you can take care of those and then get clear on who's handling which priorities.

And lastly, have the relevant conversations with the key stakeholders in your life about all of this, and you know who those key people are.



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## Disrupt Yourself

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If you want to be an agent of disruption, you must first become a subject of disruption.

One of the things that you can do to disrupt yourself is, every time you get to a top of a learning curve, to jump to the bottom of a new learning curve. And on a daily basis you can decide to be continually learning and be willing to study every day for even just 15 minutes.

As you continually learn, there will be this cognitive dissonance where you think, “okay, I’m learning this. I’ve got to do something differently.” If you’re willing every day to do something slightly different, then you will become successful in your career. You will not become stagnant. Your value to your organization, to your team, and to your firm will not erode because you will be continually improving.

To disrupt yourself is to be continually in the process of figuring out how to improve.



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