

Who Not How

What's in it for me? Learn to delegate tasks effectively and focus on your unique abilities.

What was the first thing you did last time you had a goal? If you're like most people, you probably started by asking yourself: How can I achieve it? But while that's a totally understandable first step, it isn't always the right one; in fact, it often leads you down a distressing path. Suddenly, all of the responsibility, stress, and pressure lies on your shoulders alone. So what can you do about it? In the following blinks, you'll learn to look for a Who instead of a How. Through anecdotes drawn from the coauthors' collaborators and coaching clients, you'll discover the immense value in making this mindset switch. By finding someone who can take over tasks you don't need to do yourself, you can free up energy to focus on areas you truly excel in, be those business vision or strategy, or personal goals like spending more time with your family. In these blinks, you'll learn

why the Chicago Bulls needed more than Michael Jordan to win an NBA championship; how to translate more time into higher income; and the crucial difference between a transactional and transformational relationship.

"Whos" help you focus on your unique abilities and achieve your goals.

The year is 1984. A promising young basketball star has just been drafted by the Chicago Bulls. His name is Michael Jordan, and it soon becomes clear that he's one of the best players in the NBA – maybe even the best. And yet, despite the emerging star's best efforts, Jordan's first three seasons with the Bulls are frustrated by early eliminations in the playoffs. For the Bulls, Jordan's individual athletic prowess just doesn't translate to championship victories – or even making it past the first round of the playoffs. Rather than figuring out how to win a championship alone, Jordan needs help – someone who can support his amazing abilities in the context of a team sport. Jordan doesn't need a How; he needs a Who. The key message here is: Whos help you focus on your unique abilities and achieve your goals. When you enlist a Who to assist you in a project or goal, you find someone who can take over tasks that don't belong to your core talents. As it turned out, Jordan needed several Whos before the Bulls embarked on their famous run of six championship victories. The first arrived in 1987 – a rookie by the name of Scottie Pippen, who helped Jordan improve his own game while also becoming a better team player. But even then, for the next three seasons, the Bulls still couldn't make it into the finals; they still relied too much on Jordan's solo abilities. Jordan and Pippen needed another Who with the vision to grow the team into a tight-knit powerhouse. When Phil Jackson became the Bulls' head coach in 1989, he soon realized that, while several players were very talented, he needed to develop a strategy using the whole team. He called this the triangle offense. Over the next few years, the Bulls perfected this strategy, and they went on to win six championships between 1991 and 1998. None of this would have happened through Jordan's virtuosity alone. The Chicago Bulls' road to success isn't just a nice story. It also begs the question at the crux of the Who Not How philosophy. If one of the greatest basketball players of all time

needed several Whos to achieve his goals, what about you? What are you trying to accomplish, and who can help you do it?

"Whos" broaden your vision and expand your efficacy.

When author and entrepreneur Richie Norton was 16 years old, all he wanted to do was get a job and make some money of his own. Since typical summer jobs at grocery stores and gas stations involved a lot of work for low pay, Richie's father suggested taking a different route. He told him to call all the watermelon farms in the area and ask if he could buy any misshapen or oddly sized watermelons at a discount, then sell them on to people who didn't require flawless watermelons. Once Richie had around a hundred watermelons, he started calling people he thought might want to buy one ahead of celebrations for the Fourth of July. They sold out in a matter of hours. And thanks to his Who - his dad - Richie had the rest of the summer to do whatever he wanted. The key message here is: Whos broaden your vision and expand your efficacy. It's safe to say that 16-year-old Richie Norton would never have thought of the watermelon idea on his own. When someone provides you with the right kind of support, it can expand your perception of what's possible, and even boost your potential. That's the idea behind the Self-Expansion Model developed by psychologists Dr. Elaine Aron and Dr. Arthur Aron. According to this model, your efficacy - that is, how effective you are at producing results - is based on context, not absolute ability. In other words, your potential isn't fixed; it changes according to who is around you. In Richie's case, his context - having a supportive parent who was willing to share ideas - was far more important than any innate sales ability he might have. Despite what many people believe, whether or not you do everything yourself isn't relevant. In the end, it's results that matter. So if your efficacy can change for better or worse, what's the best way to expand it? Through close relationships, which can help you obtain resources that make achieving your goals possible. These resources can be material, like money or possessions. But they can also take the form of someone's time, help, or perspective. To find Whos to check these boxes, think about your life today and ask a few questions. For example, what goal, business or personal, are you working toward alone? If nobody else is involved, perhaps your vision could benefit from a Who and the added perspective that brings. Involving others to work toward a common goal often takes an investment of time or money. But as an added bonus, including other people - especially Whos - also strengthens your own commitment.

Procrastination can be devastating for your confidence and well-being, but it's also a sign of wisdom.

What comes to mind when you hear the word procrastination? Do you think of the 90 percent of college students who are chronic procrastinators? Or maybe you picture an aspiring entrepreneur who's been itching to make a business idea a reality. Whatever the scenario, most people can relate to some form of procrastination. And all too often, it's the negative effects that give procrastination consistently bad publicity. The psychological effects of procrastination are particularly harmful - it magnifies feelings

of guilt and shame, diminishes self-confidence, and can even worsen symptoms of depression and physical health problems. But there's also a silver lining: When you procrastinate, it's evidence that you have a worthy goal or ambition. You're just missing either the knowledge or skill to achieve it on your own. The key message here is: Procrastination can be devastating for your confidence and well-being, but it's also a sign of wisdom. The habit of putting off tasks or ideas only serves to limit your imagination – and your image of yourself. Eventually, you might even stop believing that you have the ability to achieve big goals. It's a pattern that, when left to its own devices, continues spiraling to your disadvantage. To end it, take direct action. Once you have a goal in mind, recognize that you can't do it alone and ask Who can help you accomplish it. To answer this question accurately, be radically explicit about your goal and your needs. Only then will you be able to find the right Whos for the job. Dan Sullivan, the creator of the Who Not How philosophy, designed a worksheet to do just that. It's called an Impact Filter. Here's how it works. First, write out in detail your motivation, the purpose of the project, and the impact it'll have. Do you want to grow your business, make more money, or gain more free time? Be specific. Next, ask yourself: If I take action right now, what's the best possible result? Also consider what will happen if you don't take action – what's at risk then? Finally, write out the results that need to be achieved for you to consider the project a success. If a potential Who knows exactly what results are expected, she'll be that much better equipped to help you accomplish your goal.

With freedom of time comes freedom of money.

After years as a real estate agent in Toronto, Dean Jackson decided to move to Florida and establish a business to coach other agents. In 1997, he partnered up with a friend, and together they began holding monthly coaching events. He wanted to focus entirely on his new business, so he hired someone to clean his condominium each week in Orlando. Then it dawned on him: the person cleaning his home each week, Mandy, could do a lot more than just cleaning. What if she could make Jackson's condo "one-week ready?" That meant cleaning the house and car, grocery shopping, doing laundry – all tasks that would free up Jackson's time tremendously. So he asked, and Mandy said yes! She'd earn more money, and Jackson would have more time to grow his business. The key message here is: With freedom of time comes freedom of money. By investing in a Who, Jackson also increased his earning capacity. Hiring anyone new costs money. But over the long term, he had more time to focus on higher impact activities, like working on developing his vision for the coaching business and devoting more time to income-growth strategies. When translating freedom of time into freedom of money, there's one key question to ask: Do I really want to give my attention to this task or could it be spent better elsewhere? That's what labor and immigration attorney Jacob Monty has asked repeatedly over the past decade. For example, Monty realized how much time and effort he wasted driving himself to and from client meetings around Houston, Texas, where he lived. Being late to meetings caused extra stress. And gridlocked traffic just added extra decisions to his day, contributing to his decision fatigue. It was tiring and unnecessary. So he hired a Who – a driver to take over all road-safety responsibilities. During these commutes, which were usually around 90 minutes, he could focus on reviewing documents and preparing for hearings. Spending 50 dollars on a private driver or an Uber is, for most people, a significant upfront cost. But, with the extra time and mental clarity he gained, Monty was able to multiply the impact in his client

meetings, often earning thousands in extra revenue as a result. Part of accomplishing goals, no matter how ambitious, involves eliminating nonessential decisions. The best way to do that? Delegate tasks to a Who.

Transformational leaders commit to results, not processes.

Nicole Wipp, an attorney in Michigan, founded her own law firm in the wake of the 2008 financial crash. Early on, she had no employees, so she was responsible for every aspect of her business, from telephone meetings with clients to appearances in court, not to mention emails, research, and legal writing. After a year and a half of grueling 80- to 100-hour workweeks, she knew that something had to change. Wipp was an experienced attorney, but even after working around the clock, she still didn't have either freedom of time or freedom of money. The truth is, she didn't have to do everything herself. In fact, others were better suited to doing many of her tasks. The key message here is: Transformational leaders commit to results, not processes. When a leader insists on doing everything herself, it's a recipe for burnout and poor performance. It's also a sign that she hasn't clarified her vision. In Wipp's case, focusing on the process - the How - over achieving results was holding her back. And when she looked for someone to help run her firm, the first Who wasn't terribly helpful. But that was because Wipp hadn't clarified her vision for her life and business, so she didn't know exactly what impact she wanted the Who to have. Once she realized why she needed help, and how it would improve her personal life and finances, incorporating Whos into her law firm became that much easier. So did delegating tasks. Wipp knew that she needed time away from work to recover. She hired several full-time staff to join her team, and each was tasked with producing results in specific areas. In addition, she became more committed to both sides of the equation - supporting her employees when necessary and prioritizing her own well-being. In psychology, this is known as escalation of commitment. The more you invest yourself in something like a goal or project, the more committed you become to it. When leaders become more committed, it also rubs off on employees. According to transformational leadership theory, leaders like Wipp don't just invest in their Whos; they also challenge and mentor them. By promoting creativity in your team, you give each member more autonomy and encourage independent thinking. Ultimately, transformational leaders inspire those involved to reach the same level of commitment.

Creating value in all relationships ensures they are transformational and not transactional.

You've seen how helpful Whos can be with the right vision and commitment. But what if you're also someone else's Who? More often than not, the world of Who Not How is a two-way street. Someone might be helping you accomplish a goal, but you can also help them realize their own ambitions. A vital element of success is providing others with value, because neither freedom of time nor freedom of money are achievable without freedom of relationship - the ability to connect with anyone you wish to exchange value. Now, the temptation to view others in relation to your own goals is understandable. But

to make relationships last, only asking “What’s in it for me?” isn’t a sustainable method. Instead, approach potential Whos with an idea of how you can help them, asking “What’s in it for them?” The key message here is: Creating value in all relationships ensures they are transformational and not transactional. By focusing on the value you can provide others, you’ll also gain access to more people, who will in turn be more eager to help you. That’s the mindset at the core of Joe Polish’s mastermind groups, Genius Network and GeniusX. Joe’s been called “the most connected man in business,” and it’s largely because of the networking principles he’s developed. When Polish donated to businessman Richard Branson’s charity foundation Virgin Unite, for example, he was invited to a dinner with Branson and a select group of donors. While the other donors were focused on getting as much value out of Branson as they could, Polish did the opposite. He spent the dinner demonstrating how he could provide Branson with value. After hearing Polish’s idea to increase donations through an educational video, Branson asked him to put it in writing. In the process, Polish was the only donor present to receive Branson’s private email address. Years later, Polish and Branson still collaborate, and Polish has become Virgin Unite’s largest fundraiser. He’s remained committed to the “What’s in it for them?” mindset. The result? He’s continued providing consistent value and has nurtured his relationship with one of the most exclusive business leaders in the world. There’s one last essential ingredient to transformational relationships: gratitude. People need to have their efforts seen and appreciated. Whenever you receive a Who’s help, express sincere gratitude. Thank her, and show that you see the impact of her work. A humble, grateful attitude will help maintain good relationships and attract other Whos as well.

Collaboration expands your freedom of purpose.

Think back to your days in elementary school. How frequently were you and your classmates encouraged to collaborate on homework and exams? Most people would probably say this was rare. Because often, children are taught from a young age onward that getting help from others is considered cheating. So it’s no wonder that this view persists into adulthood, where getting help is tangled up with guilty feelings. This mindset also emphasizes isolation over working with others, even if it limits your progress. Here’s the problem: eschewing all assistance limits your freedom of purpose – in other words, the ability to develop relationships with others. But by welcoming collaborative relationships as a necessity rather than a nice-to-have, you can broaden the impact of your project. The key message here is: Collaboration expands your freedom of purpose. Karen Nance, an attorney in San Francisco, wanted to write a biography on her grandmother, Ethel Ray Nance, for over 20 years. Ray had been a prominent civil rights activist, and Nance was eager to share her story with the world. As her granddaughter, Nance had unparalleled access to personal details nobody else would know. But after sitting down to write, she soon found that creating a biography from scratch is hard work. Over the years, progress slowed. It turned into a never-ending project. Nance had written around 200 disjointed pages when she received an email from Dr. Ethelene Whitmire, a history professor at the University of Wisconsin. Whitmire, an expert on Black feminist history, was working on a biography of none other than Nance’s grandmother! As exciting as this was, her first reaction was defensiveness: they were now competing biographers. If she gave away some of her exclusive information, she’d lose the upper hand. After consulting Dan Sullivan, who introduced her to Who Not How, Nance realized what an opportunity she had on her

hands. She proposed to Whitmire that they write the biography together, not as competitors but as coauthors. Nance could provide unique biographical details, while Whitmire had academic experience and had previously written another biography. This collaboration meant that Nance's grandmother would receive the recognition she deserved to a level of detail that neither Nance nor Whitmire could have achieved alone. And Nance could use the time she wasn't spending on the biography to focus on other goals, such as working on her human rights nonprofit. While focusing on How led to stress and isolation, shifting to a Who mentality meant she could accomplish so much more.

Final summary

The key message in these blinks is that: By switching from a How mentality to a Who mentality, you can achieve more than you ever could alone. When working toward a goal, enlist Whos to help tackle time-consuming tasks. With this new freedom of time, you can focus on higher-impact activities to grow your income. Finally, by seeking out relationships by creating value for others and expressing sincere gratitude toward those who assist you, you'll be able to boost your results and expand your vision. And here's some more actionable advice: Develop projects quickly using the 80 percent rule. It's nearly impossible to create perfect work on the first try. Instead of trying to perfect every tiny detail before handing off your ideas for feedback, leave the perfecting for Whos. You can go from zero to 80 percent on a project very rapidly; it's the 80 to 100 percent that takes significantly more time and effort. Focus on doing what you can do best for the first 80 percent, and make use of Whos to take care of the rest.