



Leveraging VUCA and Creating Flow Triggers

Key Takeaways

- 1 The Challenge Skills Balance Mediates the External Triggers
- 2 We're Seeking Optimal Arousal across Our Life
- 3 The External Triggers Influence This Arousal
- 4 The External Triggers Use Arousal to Move Us out of Apathy to Flow
- 5 If We Already Have High Stress, Arousal, This Is a Bad Thing
- 6 VUCA Overwhelms People Because Overall Arousal Isn't Managed
- 7 Compartmentalize Your VUCA to Achieve Optimal Arousal & Flow Long Term
- 8 The Art of Creating Your Own Flow Triggers

Quote:

“Find something you would die for, and live for it.”

-Peter Diamandis

Diagnostic
N/A

Exercise

Conditioning Flow Triggers Step By Step

Unearthing Existing Flow Triggers

See next page for details

Exercise

Conditioning Flow Triggers Step by Step

Identify the current high flow activity (e.g. skiing, family time, singing). If none are present, begin a high flow activity.

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Add the unconditioned trigger (e.g. a song, headphones, sparkling water, coffee)

Continue to pair the unconditioned trigger to the high flow activity to condition it

Once conditioned, add it to a non flow activity to drive flow.
For example, song → work, coffee → writing

Exercise

Conditioning Flow Triggers Step by Step

Identify the three periods in your life (1-3 months) where you had the highest performance

For example, "The first two months of starting my first business"

Identify down every variable that was present, no matter how obscure. For example, Living with friends; Big, meaningful goal with future implications and clear deadline; Highly ordered routine; Novelty with a new house, and new city environment; Lots of intense exercises; Zero alcohol use; GF diet

Reintroduce these variables, assess positive impact, maintain if positive

Notes

Glossary

VUCA:

Volatility - Volatility refers to the speed of change in an industry, market or the world in general. It is associated with fluctuations in demand, turbulence and short time to markets and it is well-documented in the literature on industry dynamism. The more volatile the world is, the more and faster things change.

Uncertainty - Uncertainty refers to the extent to which we can confidently predict the future. Part of the uncertainty is perceived and associated with people's inability to understand what is going on. Uncertainty, though, is also a more objective characteristic of an environment. Truly uncertain environments are those that don't allow any prediction, also not on a statistical basis. The more uncertain the world is, the harder it is to predict.

Complexity - Complexity refers to the number of factors that we need to take into account, their variety and the relationships between them. The more factors, the greater their variety and the more they are interconnected, the more complex an environment is. Under high complexity, it is impossible to fully analyze the environment and come to rational conclusions. The more complex the world is, the harder it is to analyze.

Ambiguity - Ambiguity refers to a lack of clarity about how to interpret something. A situation is ambiguous, for example, when information is incomplete, contradicting or too inaccurate to draw clear conclusions. More generally it refers to fuzziness and vagueness in ideas and terminology. The more ambiguous the world is, the harder it is to interpret.

Lesson Resources

When to Embed the External Triggers

Low Arousal, Under Stressed, Low Challenge:

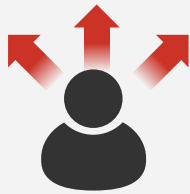
- You are demotivated and underwhelmed with life
- You're facing a high degree of monotony and mundane
- You lack inspiration and creativity
- You're lethargic and lack initiative

When Not to Embed the External Triggers

High Arousal, Over Stressed, High Challenge:

- You are overwhelmed and stressed
- You're facing a high degree of uncertainty, complexity and risk
- You lack space, time and serenity
- You're in overdrive

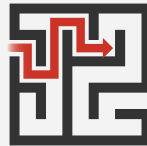
How To Embed the External Triggers



**High
Consequences**



Novelty



Complexity



Unpredictability

All sorts of different ways:

1. Risk/high consequences—physical, risk, social risk, reputational risk
2. Novelty—New inputs; information, people, tasks, hobbies, interests, locations
3. Complexity—environment, intellectual, professional, interpersonal
4. Unpredictability—environmental, professional, relational

Lesson Resources

1. Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience,
By Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi
2. [These habits paved the road to success for Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, more,](#)
By Hailey Eber
3. [The challenge-skill balance and antecedents of flow: A meta-analytic investigation,](#)
Fong, et. al, 2014