

How to be successful, despite yourself

Don't Kill Your Hamster!

Jacky Dakin; Laura Taplin



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Jacky Dakin and Laura Taplin

How to be successful, despite yourself:

Don't Kill Your Hamster!

How to be successful, despite yourself: Don't Kill Your Hamster!

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Don't Kill Your Hamster!

How to be successful, despite yourself

"You're chasing your dreams so hard and you want it so bad, that it's like, you know when a kid gets a pet hamster and he squeezes it too hard and he kills it?"

"You want it so bad you don't trust anyone else with it. I want you to give me your pet hamster. I will take care of it. Trust me I won't kill it."



Joel Madden, professional musician and coach on *The Voice Australia*

This book came about when a friend of one of the authors missed out on a great career opportunity by not selling himself better and by not being in the right place at the right time. We know that there are many people entering a new career, profession or industry who may not have the confidence or self-assurance to put themselves out there and make their dreams happen. Ironically, their desire to succeed, coupled with a fear of failure gets in their way of achieving success.

Around the same time, we observed Joel Madden, professional musician and coach on *The Voice Australia*, having a similar experience with one of his coachees. This singer was trying so hard to achieve his dream that his intensity appeared to get in the way. The quote above is what Joel said at one of the performances and was the inspiration for the title of this book.

About this e-book

This is an **action book** which provides practical and doable ideas and tips to take away and put into place. These will help you overcome many obstacles to achieving what it is that you want in your career and life.

Each chapter stands alone as a “how to” guide to overcoming a particular barrier. Our advice is based on our years of experience in coaching and advising our clients, our research and our own lives. General information and simple strategies are provided along with brief activities to get you on your way. We have called these activities **Fear Busters**.

Several **Case Studies** are also included, taken from interviews with successful people who have not always found it easy to sell themselves or face their fears.

See tips at the end of each section summarized in the **Hamster Round-up**.

At the end of the book you will find an **Action Planner** where you can list your favourite tip or strategy from each section. It is well known that writing your goals down is more likely to make them happen. They’re even more likely to happen if you share them with another person, such as a friend or colleague, which we strongly encourage you to do.

After reading this book we want you to believe:

You are not alone in your efforts to succeed!

You are capable of making any necessary changes!

*Change your approach,
change your life!*

1 Stop Hamster Wheeling

How to see yourself differently

"We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them."

Albert Einstein

Have you ever had those moments, where your mind just can't stop racing. It often happens at night... your mind just runs around in constant circles... it's also known as "hamster wheeling". You feel like you're trapped in one of those little cages running aimlessly... round and round and round... You keep looking for answers. You over analyse situations. You keep asking yourself "Why?"...

"Why didn't I do that better?"... "Why didn't I make that phone call?"... "Why didn't I think of that?"... "Why don't they like me?"

We all occasionally experience this endless cycle of thinking, particularly when we're stressed. But some feel it more often than others. The main problem is that this endless cycle of worry and nervousness gives you something to do but it doesn't actually take you anywhere. It doesn't help you. It's futile.

You need to manage your hamster thoughts and help them get off the wheel.



The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

A former friend of ours truly believed that he would never be successful as a musician. Yet we knew that he was a brilliant keyboard player and composer when one of his songs was featured on an international album. Because of his pessimistic approach to success he never realised his full potential nor did he take on board the positive recognition of others. He now works in a menial job.

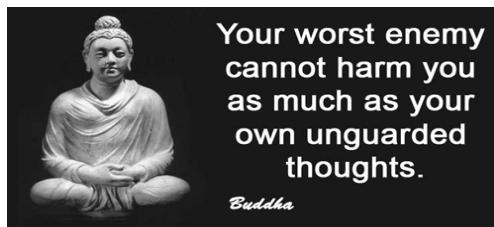
Imagine if he had believed in himself and his talent and trusted that others were right about his capabilities. He could have created a musical group, recorded an album and employed a savvy manager to promote him and handle his bookings, advertising and finances. It is very likely that he would be a name we all know today. He would have made his own success.

Beware the self-fulfilling prophecy. You tend to get what you think of most. If we continually focus on a negative outcome it is likely to happen. If you believe that you will never be successful at something then you most likely never will. Don't let the fear of failure stop you from trying to achieve. **Never say never!**

Willie Nelson, the famous American country and western singer said, "Once you replace negative thoughts with positive ones, you'll start having positive results."

Mastering the Inner Voice

Buddha said, "The mind is everything. What you think you become."



All of us have a little voice in our head that speaks to us. The problem is that sometimes our mind plays tricks on us and doesn't always tell us the truth. Usually we believe it.

Research has shown that we have between 45,000 to 51,000 thoughts each day and around 70% of those are negative. This was helpful to our ancestors, but not so much in the 21st century. Most of us no longer have to continually fear danger or live on the edge, yet our mind still acts as though this is the case.

The key to success is mastering this little voice, frequently known as **self-talk**. We cannot stop these negative thoughts as they are automatic but we can learn to let them go and replace them with more positive and realistic thoughts. To be really successful at this takes practice but it is definitely worth the effort.



The Power of Positivity

The power of positive thinking has been demonstrated by a number of Australian sports people. One is Matt Cowdrey, paralympian swimmer who despite missing part of an arm won 13 gold medals at the London Olympics. Another is Jessica Watson, who at the age of 16 overcame amazing odds to become the youngest person to sail solo around the world. A further example is footballer Julian Burton, who after suffering life threatening injuries in the Bali Bombings, established the Julian Burton Burns Trust to help and support other burns victims.

No doubt these people have experienced feelings of self-doubt, fear, negativity and possibly even depression. What has made them successful is their ability to overcome these thoughts and think positively about their end goal.

Recent research on the science of [neuroplasticity](#) or creating new pathways in the brain by focusing on certain thoughts and actions has supported the belief that positive thinking creates positive outcomes.

Successful strategies to change your thinking include:

- **Positive self statements.** Create some positive statements about how you want to think and feel. Repeat them frequently throughout the day. These statements should be short and positive (for example, about what you can do, not what you can't). They should also be present or future oriented, e.g. I am, I will.
- **Visualise your future self.** At a quiet time and in a quiet place, imagine yourself as successful in the position or career that you desire. What will that look like? What behaviours would you have developed? What steps will you have needed to take to get there? What barriers have you overcome?
- **Take action.** For every positive step you take you will get closer to your goal. You can create a positive self-fulfilling prophecy. Once you have mastered the positive self-statements and visualization strategies you will have more confidence to give things a go.

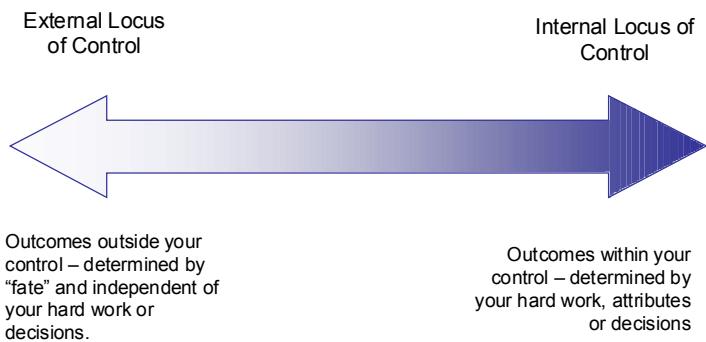


Fear Buster:

What could I have done differently?

How often do you sit there after something has gone wrong, asking yourself “What could I have done differently?” “Why didn’t I know that?” “How did I miss those signs?”

This activity is designed to help you to learn about the concept of internal vs. external control. Internal control is when you take responsibility for making things happen and learn from either success or failure. External control is when you assign responsibility for success or failure to an influence outside of yourself, thus not having personal control.



Where do you sit?

Research has shown that we have a tendency to either link outcomes to ourselves or to external factors. Let's find out about you. For each of the following pairs of statements, select which one is most true of you.

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1.	A. Most of my successes in life have been simply due to good luck. I have always been lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time. B. I work hard to make my own success.	
2.	A. If something is meant to happen or meant to be, it will be. There isn't much you can do to change it. B. Teachers always treated me fairly at school and evaluated my performance objectively.	
3.	A. If something is meant to happen or meant to be, it will be. There isn't much you can do to change it. B. I can create my own success and luck.	
4.	A. There is no point in preparing for an interview, because the questions they ask are unpredictable and often based on their ideas in the moment. B. If you practice and prepare for an interview, you are more likely to do well.	
5.	A. People have so many ulterior motives, it's impossible to tell who actually likes you and who doesn't, and why. B. How you treat people is what determines their opinion of you.	

Self-score: *I scored mostly A's:*

This suggests that you tend to be more externally-focused. Whether something goes wrong, or something goes right, you tend to think that the reason was due to luck, circumstances, other people's help or fate. The only problem here is that sometimes we can believe that everything is so out of our control, that there is no point trying. To achieve success we need to wait for it.

A better way to look at it can be to think about your main goal at the moment or the thing you want most.



Now imagine someone you know who is really determined and driven to succeed. Ask yourself these questions:

1. What steps would they take to make their goal a reality?
2. Who would they contact for help?
3. What obstacles or risks would they try to prevent from happening?
4. Based on that, what could I do to be more likely to achieve success?

Self-score: *I scored mostly B's:*

This suggests that you are likely to be more internally focused. So when you are successful or when something goes wrong, you are more likely to believe that it is linked to your own efforts, abilities and hard work, rather than being as a result of luck or fate.

Being internally-focused means that you have a strong desire to take control of things and take responsibility for your own actions. However, you need to take care that you don't allow a strong internal focus to cause worry, self-criticism or blame and cause you to place pressure on yourself.

A more helpful way to look at it can be to think back on the last time that you sat there worrying about what you could have done better. Go back over the situation in your head and ask yourself the following questions, as objectively as you can (if you need to, ask someone else for their opinion):

1. What really was in my control?
2. What could I have known, given the information I had at the time?
3. Did I do my best with the resources and knowledge that I had in that moment?



Hamster Round-up

1. Turn a negative self-fulfilling prophecy on its head
2. Remember that all thoughts are not true
3. Create some positive self-statements and repeat them frequently
4. Visualise yourself being successful
5. Get off your butt and take action!

What is your favourite tip?

Download the action planner on the last page of this e-book, write it in...**and act on it!**

2 Fake it 'til you make it

How to act confident until you are

"If you can dream it, you can do it" Walt Disney

How many times have you let fear of something new stop you from having a go? How many times have you not felt confident enough to take action? You need to "fake it until you make it" to help you to get over your cold feet. What does that really mean? Why should we fake it?

Here we explore the power of illusion – how to show people that you are professional, confident and talented. We know that with practice you will become that way.

'Fake it 'till you make it'

The Power of Illusion

You only have one opportunity to make a first impression and first impressions are lasting. Even if your self belief is that you do not look, act or feel confident and professional, you can create the illusion of this so that people will not realise that you are actually shaking in your boots.

By frequently stepping outside of your comfort zone and presenting yourself as a confident, competent and successful person, you will become so. The more you take the risk to do it, the more habitual and comfortable this behaviour will become. Remember practice makes perfect.

Case Study 1: David, Former Chief Financial Officer

David used to feel uncomfortable when meeting new business acquaintances or attending networking functions. Due to his shy nature and poor people skills, he much preferred to stand in a corner and observe what was going on. Because of his senior role he soon realised that he had to do things differently.

He says, "to be successful you had to mimic that you are outgoing and that you can speak confidently and well in order to get ahead, and, if you like, impress people." His advice is, "look at a group... take a deep breath and go up to the group and say, 'Hey, I'm so and so and I'm from company X'" He also says, "Because of my quieter nature that was never easy for me... but you force yourself to do it."

David was highly successful in his role over the years and even though he is now retired, he successfully serves on a number of boards and spends his time mentoring young professionals, travelling, playing golf and sailing.

Projecting a Confident Image

There are three main things to project an image of confidence:

1. Look and Act the Part
2. Talk the Talk
3. Think the Best



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A collage of images showing students in lecture halls, a woman working at a desk, and a man in a lab. The Chalmers University of Technology logo is visible in the bottom right corner.



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1. Look and Act the Part

The first key to appear professional and competent is to dress to impress! This doesn't mean that you have to invest a ton of money but that you look neat and well-groomed and are appropriately attired for the occasion.

Men	Women
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Choose the appropriate image that you want and stay consistentEnsure that you have a professional briefcase, bag and pen on handClean your shoesKeep your hair clean and groomed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Present yourself neatly and tastefullyAvoid mini-skirts and revealing tops or overly tight clothingWear tasteful accessoriesEnsure that makeup is not overdoneKeep your handbag clear of clutter
Both	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ensure excellent personal hygieneWear understated jewelleryAvoid overpowering fragrancesWear clean and pressed clothing	

Secondly, watch your body language. This is particularly important because body language and facial expression convey 55% of meaning to others. Eye contact and smiling convey confidence.

Our top tips are:

- Stand tall
- Make eye contact and smile
- Shake hands firmly
- Look interested and focus on the person speaking to you

Behave Like a Pro

Make sure that your behaviour reflects your attitude. You want to appear conscientious, competent and investment worthy (whether that be investment of time or money). So follow these rules:

- Always arrive at appointments 5–10 minutes early. Being late can give the impression that you don't value the other person's time
- If you are running late, call as soon as possible to let people know
- Promise what you can deliver. Think about timelines realistically and do what you say
- Deliver what you promise. If you say you will follow something up, make sure you do it

Adopt a Power Pose

Recent research has shown that one of the easiest ways to increase your confidence before an important meeting, interview or talk, is to adopt a position of power. This means:

- Stand with your feet firmly planted and hands on hips
- Stand tall, head up, eyes front

Chief Operating Officer of Facebook, [Sheryl Sandberg](#) swears by this technique. It has been scientifically proven that regularly adopting a power pose increases testosterone levels and the positive hormone cortisol in the body. This gives a natural burst of “go getter” attitude. Over time, this will make you feel more confident, less risk averse, more assertive and fearless.

If you are seated, another successful pose is the “lean in”. Sit with your legs slightly apart (not crossed), back straight and lean in slightly to listen to the other person. This gives an impression of genuine warmth and openness.

Now say “cheese”

Never underestimate the power of a true smile. It seems simple. You just move your face. But there is far more to it than we think.

Each time we smile, hormones in our brain give us a feeling of joy and reduce stress and anxiety. It is also highly contagious – the more you smile, the more people will want to be around you.

Now find something to smile at before your next event or conversation. Visualize something that makes you happy before you arrive. People can usually tell, even if you are emailing or telephoning, that you have a smile on your face.



2. *Talk the Talk*

Research has shown that if you are quiet and reflective and struggle to push yourself to speak up, you will benefit from careful planning ahead. Writing out your ideas and different options beforehand can help you when you are actually on the spot.

Successful people also practice! Before important events, they map out their key messages and practice saying them out loud, over and over. This helps to refine your message, use the correct volume and emphasise certain points. Learn the art of short, sharp and shiny talk!

What works well is to develop short “personal advertisements” which define who you are, what you do and what you enjoy or are passionate about. Practice saying these out loud. Have a range on hand, to suit different occasions.

For example, “My name is Susan and I am the marketing manager for David Jones. What I most enjoy about my job is being creative and effectively promoting our product to our customers.”

Other key tips include:

- Use strong, positive language when you talk
- Project your voice (don't mumble)
- Use moments when others are talking to plan what you want to say
- Ask questions (most people love talking about themselves)
- Practice in front of a mirror

The advertisement features a snowy, frosty landscape background. In the center, the text "TAKE THE RIGHT TRACK" is displayed in large, bold, orange letters. Above the text, a red speech bubble contains the text "Click here to learn more". Below the main title, there is a promotional message: "Give your career a head start by studying with us. Experience the advantages of our collaboration with major companies like ABB, Volvo and Ericsson!". At the bottom, four colored speech bubbles provide additional information: a green bubble says "Apply by 15 January", a teal bubble says "World class research", a purple bubble says "www.mdh.se", and an orange bubble features the logo and name of "MÄLARDALEN UNIVERSITY SWEDEN".

3. Think the Best

Remember that if you are naturally quiet and low-key, people don't have to know this about you. Most often, your shy nature will actually project an image of being controlled, calm, thoughtful and reassuring. Others don't know what is going on in your head!

To help you to change your thinking, use the following strategies:

Change your self-talk. As we said in Section 1, around 70% of our self-talk is negative, and this can be overwhelming. To project confidence, the key is to change our thinking as this determines how we feel and what we do. Practice altering your self-talk over time. The next time you catch yourself saying something negative, change it to a positive. Practice is the key!

Mentally rehearse a positive outcome. Think about successfully doing a scary or uncomfortable activity. Mentally try out different behaviours and using confident and positive body language despite feeling nervous. Let the scenario unfold in your mind, exactly as you would like it to be, in as rich detail as possible. Visualize what you will wear and say, how you will look to those present and what you hear. This private rehearsal will help you to feel more confident in the actual situation. The real experience, though new, will feel familiar to you.

Set small, achievable goals and celebrate your own successes. Beware of setting unattainable and unrealistic goals because they will simply put you back on the negative thinking bandwagon. With small successes it is easier to think positively. Set small, meaningful and achievable goals with realistic timeframes and celebrate achieving them.

Give yourself time. Remember, it takes at least 3–4 weeks of “pretending”, to master a new habit, so give yourself a break if it takes you a while to get a handle on your new skill. If it feels hard and you find yourself reverting back, remember the time that you have already invested. Remind yourself that it will get easier and become more natural.





Fear Buster:
Look for the Silver Lining in Every Cloud

You can play the **Silver Lining Game** with yourself to train you to think more positively about negative and fear-provoking events. Playing with a friend or colleague who also tends to be a bit pessimistic at times can also be fun.

Think of an example of a negative event, either an imaginary situation or an event that has either happened to you or is currently happening to you. Your task is to reframe that negative event to look for the silver lining. It can be small or simple, or it can be huge.

For example:

"I've just lost my job... what am I going to do?" Becomes

"I've just lost my job, so now I'll have more time to exercise."

OR

"That deal didn't come through... I'm a failure at negotiation." Becomes

"That deal didn't come through but I met some really interesting people in the process."

OR

"I just broke up with my partner... how will I cope on my own?" Becomes

"I just broke up with my partner, so now I'll have more time to reconnect with my old friends."



Hamster Round-up

1. To appear successful, look, act, talk and think confidently
2. Always dress appropriately for the situation
3. Respect people's time and follow through on your promises
4. Watch your body language and smile
5. Prepare and practice, practice, practice
6. Always think the best and good things will happen

What is your favourite tip?

Download the action planner on the last page of this e-book, write this in...**and act on it!**

3 Become your own superhero

How to maximize your strengths

“Respect yourself and others will respect you” Confucius

Play to your Inner Talents

We all have strengths, some of which we know and some of which we are unaware of. Strengths are those things we are good at and that give us energy to keep going.

We also have **learned behaviours** which are often confused with strengths. These are things that we are good at but that drain our energy, so we need to take care we don't burn out over-using these. As you will see in the diagram below taken from “The Strengths Book”, we have both **realised strengths** that we get to use regularly and **unrealized strengths** which we often don't have a chance to use.

If we can identify our unrealized strengths and find opportunities to use them we will feel more motivated and be more likely to achieve success. We also need to avoid our **weaknesses** and use our learned behaviours in moderation.



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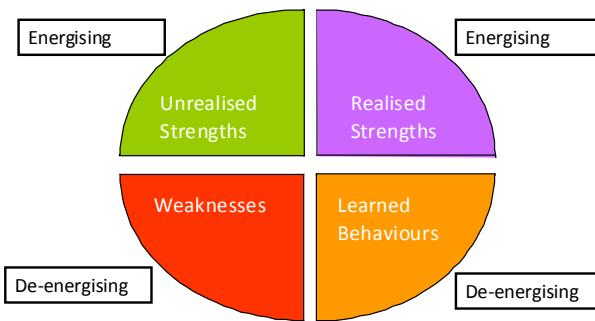
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Strengths Model



Alex Linley, Janet Willars & Robert Biswas Diener

Case Study 2: Judy, Business Manager

An important part of Judy's work is writing reports for the company Board. She is very efficient at these reports but finds them boring and draining. The financial estimates were particularly challenging and she was aware that this was one of her weaknesses. However, she did enjoy presenting the findings to the Board as she was a talented and confident public speaker. After an especially busy month she was caught up in writing endless reports which made her feel exhausted, de-motivated and stressed. She came down with a virus and required time off work.

Later she was talking to her 2IC, Andrew, who said that he would like the opportunity to try his hand at the reports. He asked if he could take on the responsibility under her supervision. Judy had never mentored anyone but found she had a natural talent for it and Andrew flourished under her guidance and became an excellent report writer. Even more so, he actually enjoyed the activity.

Judy soon decided to take on other mentoring responsibilities as she realised that this was one of her strengths of which she had been previously unaware. She felt much happier not having to write Board reports and do the financial estimates, while she still enjoyed reporting back to the Board. She realised the benefit of developing previously unknown skills, working to her strengths and avoiding her areas of weakness.

How to identify your strengths

So, how do you know what your strengths are?

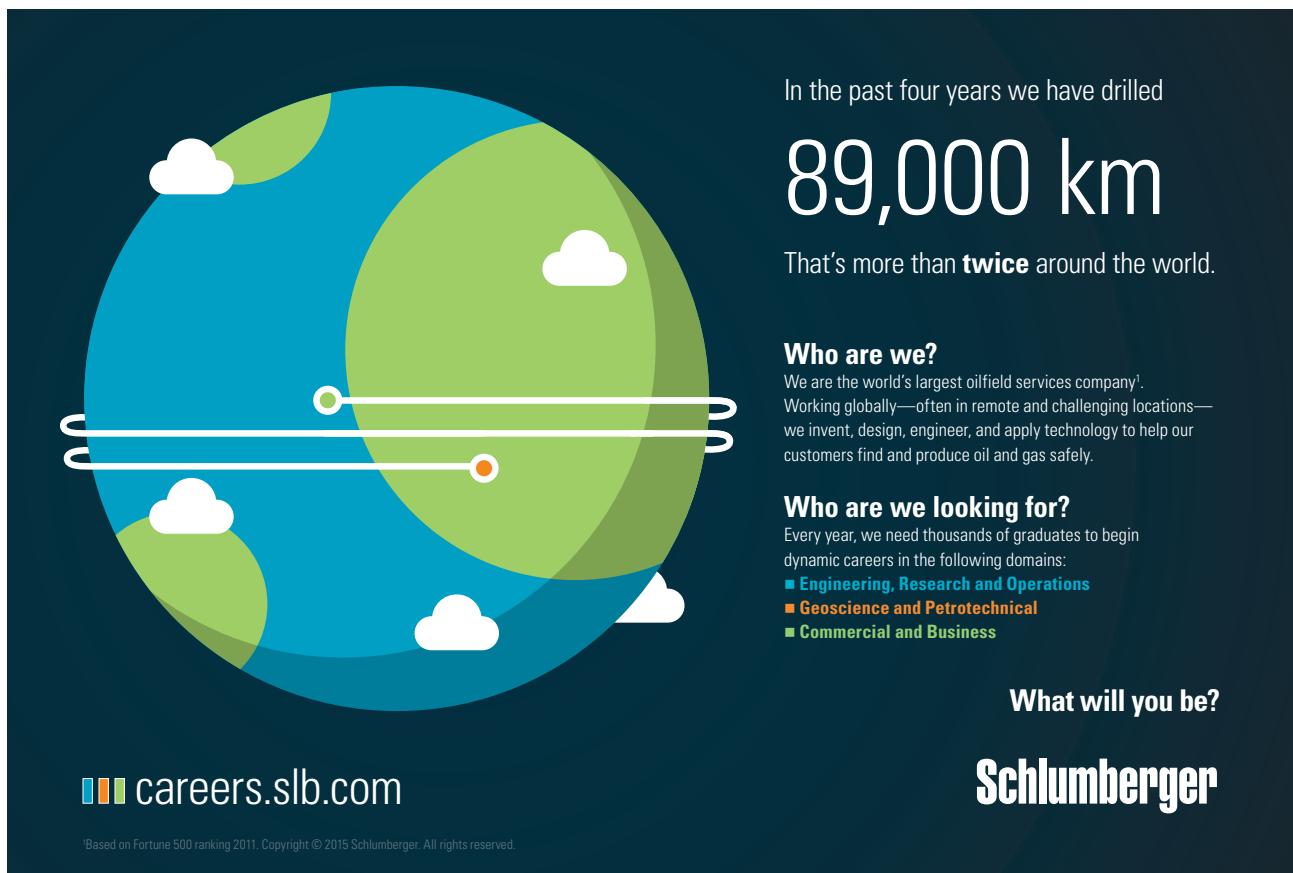
In his book *Now, Discover your Strengths*, Marcus Buckingham suggests that there are four signs of a strength. These are:

- S**uccess. Makes you feel successful
- I**ninstinct. Can't help but be drawn to it
- G**rowth is most in this area
- N**Fills an innate **need**.

A quick way to identify your strengths is to write 3 current strengths statements starting with *I feel strong when...*

For example:

- I feel strong when I am helping people*
- I feel strong when I am playing tennis*
- I feel strong when I am serving customers*
- I feel strong when I am working with spreadsheets*



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■ **Geoscience and Petrotechnical**
■ **Commercial and Business**

What will you be?

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¹Based on Fortune 500 ranking 2011. Copyright © 2015 Schlumberger. All rights reserved.

This will help you work out what you are good at, what you enjoy and what gives you energy.

Now, how do you put them to use? We suggest that you use the **BEST** strategies:

- ***B*e clear**

Identify when each of these strengths helps you in your work or life. When and where are you using them? Do other people notice you for it?

- ***E*xamine**

Examine your role for any missed opportunities. What else could you do in your job to use these strengths? How can you apply them better? Who can help you with this?

- ***S*pecialise**

Focus on your specialty strengths and learn how to increase them. Who can mentor you? Where else can you get information?

- ***T*ransfer**

Work on transferring these strengths to every part of your work. Build your role around them. Share what you're doing. How can you make better use of your strengths in your current job? Are there any areas you're missing? Who are the best people to help you?

Don't Overdo It!

Have you ever met someone whose greatest strength is their perfectionism or attention to detail, but when they are under pressure they become obsessive?

Do you know any extraverts who become 'over the top' when they are stressed or nervous or, have you seen someone whose confidence becomes arrogance when they are trying to impress?

These are known as **overdone strengths** and achieve the very opposite of what they should. These behaviours can put people offside and ruin your credibility.

So what to do about it?

1. **Be aware of how you act when you're stressed or nervous.** Think about how you cope when you're under pressure. Get some feedback from colleagues, friends or family as they know you best. Listen to what they say. Even if they are not in the same industry they know how you are likely to behave and may have some valuable advice.
2. **Learn relaxation techniques.** Use deep breathing or positive visualization and use them to prepare for stressful situations. Practice them so when you are caught off guard you can apply them to moderate your behaviour.
3. **Work out how to use additional strengths in stressful situations.** If you focus on only one action the stress can become extreme. Spreading the load may dilute negative behaviours. It also helps you to demonstrate flexibility. You may need plenty of practice to make this work!



Fear Buster:
What am I good at?

Think of three situations in the past 6 months where you have felt like you're in your "sweet spot" and feeling effective, focused, inspired and fulfilled. This can be when you were with certain people, doing a hobby, or can be related to your work. Answer the following questions:

1. When did I feel at my best?
2. What do these activities have in common?
3. What parts of these activities did I enjoy the most?
4. What strengths am I using when I am doing these things?

If you are interested in taking a questionnaire to help you identify your personal character strengths, try this [assessment](#). Register to complete the survey and you will receive a free, brief-style report.



Hamster Round-up

1. Clarify your known strengths
2. Identify your hidden strengths
3. Work out how to use them more (e.g. BEST)
4. Avoid weaknesses and moderate learned behaviours
5. Beware of overdone strengths

What is your favourite tip?

Download the action planner on the last page of this e-book, write this in...**and act on it!**

4 Feel the power and the passion

How to really go for what you want

"There is no passion to be found playing small – in settling for a life that is less than the one you are capable of living" Nelson Mandela



Harness your Passion

Last section we discussed maximising your strengths. This one is about finding your passion and incorporating it into your life and work. So what do we mean by your passion? Just imagine money was no object and you could do anything you wanted each day. What would it be? What makes your heart sing?

Think Umeå. Get a Master's degree!

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The advertisement features a photograph of two female students sitting at a table in a modern university lounge, both looking at their laptops. The lounge has orange and green chairs. In the bottom left corner, there is a logo for Umeå University, which includes a stylized building icon and the text "UMEÅ UNIVERSITY". Below the logo, the text "Umeå University" and "Sweden" is written, followed by the website "www.teknat.umu.se/english".

It is important to figure out what is the passion inside of you that will motivate you to become the very best you can be. What would get you moving each day feeling ready to take on the world? What would keep you going when things around you are crumbling? What would make you want to give all of yourself, rather than just money?

Many highly successful people have commented on this very subject. For example:

- **Mark Zuckerberg**, creator of **Facebook** says that people should find what they are most passionate about and pursue it.
- **Steve Jobs** the Apple genius said that people should do what they love doing. He stated that it was his passion for work and the belief that “people with passion can change the world for the better” that inspired him.



Their experiences and that of other successful business entrepreneurs suggest that if you are truly passionate about something you are more likely to be successful. Your passion will drive you, motivate you and inspire you to achieve your goals. You will be more creative in coming up with ideas and discovering solutions. Most importantly you will feel happier in what you are doing.

Learn What You Can Control

It can be hard to accept that some things are just not in your control. Below are some strategies recommended by business coaches to help people master negative feelings and regain focus on achieving their desired goals.

The steps are outlined later in **Fear Buster 1**.

1. *Stop believing your negative thoughts to manage your fears*

If you think of negative thoughts as being true, you can become focused on avoiding situations or actions that stir them up. Make sure that you don't focus on feelings of fear or anxiety which stop you from taking action. So the first step is to come to terms with these emotions.

2. Clarify your goals

You may not even be aware of some of your goals if you have negative feelings when thinking about them. This can stop you from even imagining what you can realistically achieve. You need to sit with emotions such as fear and anxiety and contemplate what is really at stake here. Imagine what you would like to do if there weren't any negative feelings or obstacles in the way. What would that success look like?

3. Commit to behaviors that will help you achieve your goals

Decide that you're going to achieve your goals no matter how much fear striving toward them may cause you.

4. Accept that you may always feel some anxiety

You will never, ever feel **only** good. So stop trying. Work on becoming strong enough to feel bad for a while and accept that overcoming the bad times will eventually help you achieve success.

Make your Vision a Reality

To achieve a dream you first need to have one. Remember Martin Luther's famous "I have a dream speech" about equality for black people? American President Barack Obama has said that while he believes there is still some way to go, they are heading in the right direction.

What is *your* vision? You may have specific goals but what are your 'big picture' hopes and dreams? The clearer you become about these and the more often you visualise them, the more likely you are to achieve them.

Creative visualisation is when you focus your mind on imagining what you wish to experience in your life. This programs your thoughts at a subconscious level and allows you more control over what you are thinking. The outcome is that you will be more likely to attract what you want.

While this may sound rather 'new age', recent research on the science of neuroplasticity outlined in a recent book by **Dr. Norman Doidge**, has revealed that people can create new pathways in the brain by focusing on and expanding actions or thoughts. There is definite evidence that visualization is the most effective way of reprogramming the subconscious mind.



Fear Buster 1:
Refocus and repower!

This activity will help you refocus on your goals, assess obstacles and opportunities and encourage you to take action despite apparent barriers. Use the following instructions to get going:

1. **Write down a goal you've either failed to accomplish or have never even attempted due to intense or unpleasant emotions.** Perhaps you want to make contact with a key business professional, attend a busy networking event or speak in public. Choose a goal you've been unable to achieve due to feelings of fear and concern when you consider it.
2. **Write down the steps you need to take to accomplish it.** Do this in any level of detail you want. Pretend that you are in an ideal world and nothing is stopping you. What steps would you need to take to realistically achieve this goal?
3. **Write down the feelings and thoughts which stop you from taking action.** What is it that you have been feeling? What is really stopping you? What are you most afraid of?
4. **Consider the consequences of these thoughts.** What are the consequences of you believing in that thought? How is it making you feel? What impact is it having on your ability to achieve success?
Now, imagine what would happen if you didn't believe that thought or didn't have it at all. How you would feel then? What would be the impact of not believing the thought on your ability to achieve success?
5. **Analyse and let go of your thoughts.** The final step is to objectively analyse the reality of those thoughts. Then, if you see that the thought is not useful... Let it go!



Fear Buster 2:
Visualise your dreams

Step 1. Relax

Find a place free from sudden sounds and interruptions and relax in a comfortable chair or couch. It is harder to relax immediately after a meal or strenuous exercise.

Step 2. Focus your mind

Imagine a relaxing place such as a beach, a rainforest or a garden. Alternatively imagine some relaxing music, or that you are floating. This helps to occupy your mind and keep out unwanted thoughts.

Step 3. Imagine the future you want

Picture it in your mind. Let the scene unfold in your imagination as you create the events, the dialogue and your behaviour to achieve success. Use elements of past experiences in which you were successful to increase your confidence. Keep yourself aware of the good feeling of being in control. Try adding in a positive statement to enhance the effect.

Step 4. Repeat, repeat, repeat

If you do this repeatedly you will find you will better deal with any apprehension you are experiencing about a particular upcoming event or meeting or dealing with a difficult existing situation. You will feel more confident to handle it.



Hamster Round-up

1. Find your passion
2. Learn what you can control
3. Don't believe your negative thoughts
4. Accept that you may always feel some fear
5. Repeatedly visualize your dreams

What is your favourite tip?

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A photograph of two young adults, a Black woman and an Asian man, smiling and laughing together outdoors. The woman has her arm around the man. The Nido logo is in the top right corner. Text overlays on the right side highlight features like luxurious accommodation, central locations, and meeting international students. A large call-to-action at the bottom encourages booking now with a £100 voucher. The website and phone number are also provided.



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5 It's not what you know but who you know

How to navigate your networks

"More business decisions occur over lunch and dinner than at any other time, yet no MBA courses are given on the subject" Peter Drucker (Management Guru)

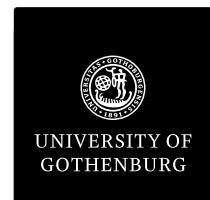


Anyone who has been successful in business knows you need to ask for and accept advice when you need it. Having the right contacts is an essential part of operating a business or working at a high level in your industry. **Networking** is absolutely critical to getting information, advice and a leg up.

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Don't forget that people who have been in business for some time, whether it be a boss, colleague, mentor or even family, often have invaluable information due to their experience. They are also likely to have useful insight into overcoming career barriers and obstacles and maximising opportunities. A further benefit is tapping into their networks which will help you on your way.

Professor Elizabeth Blackburn a 2009 Nobel Prize winner and first Australian woman to be awarded the honour, says "Having people to talk to is very good – you can learn from colleagues". As she has recently been named one of the 100 most influential people in the world it would seem like a good idea to follow her advice!

Who Do You Really Need?

If you find networking intimidating, the good news is that you don't need huge networks. A few well chosen people in relevant areas to your industry and career stage can do the trick. An excellent mentor is invaluable. Research has shown that successful people generally have a combination of the following people in their professional networks:

- **Informers** – People who give you new information or expertise. They can be peers or in different industries or functions. They inspire you to build your knowledge and ideas.
- **Power Players** – People with formal or informal power. They make decisions or connect you with decision-makers. They are influential, coordinate resources and provide insight into organisational politics.
- **Developers** – People who give feedback for areas of improvement and encourage harnessing your strengths. They push you to focus on your strengths as well as seeing existing opportunities.

They also usually have the following people in their personal networks:

- **Supporters** – People who make you feel good when you're having a bad day or friends who let you be yourself.
- **Purpose Givers** – People who encourage you to follow your goals and dreams and give you a sense of purpose or worth. People who remind you what it is all about and what you're striving to achieve.
- **Gurus** – People who encourage you to have work-life balance. They may hold you accountable for health and fitness or encourage you to get involved in interesting activities, hobbies or events.

How to Master Networking

- **Have the right attitude.** If you start networking thinking only that you have to sell yourself or find business leads you may not enjoy it. Instead, think about networking as an opportunity to *help yourself and others*. This creates less pressure and allows you to enjoy being in the moment.
- **Make the approach.** When you're at an event, read the crowd. Look for people who are solo or groups where there is an opening in the conversation. Avoid people in the middle of deep conversations; it is awkward if you break the flow. When you've found a group, take a deep breath, approach, shake hands and introduce yourself.
- **Play to your strengths.** People who are quieter by nature have a hidden strength which is crucial to effective networking: they listen! Remember, most people's favourite thing to do is to talk about themselves. So let them!
- **Ask powerful questions.** Use your ability for quiet, thoughtful reflection to full advantage by thinking of powerful questions to ask people while they are talking. You don't need to have the answers...you just need the right questions. Ask them *why* or invite them to brainstorm some options eg "What impact do you want to have?" People are more likely to contact you in the future if you have helped them solve a problem.
- **Assign yourself homework and do it.** Before you venture out to your next event, set some small goals. For example, offer a piece of advice or recommend a good book to someone, get 3 business cards or to write follow up emails to 3 people after the event saying how much you enjoyed meeting them.



Case Study 3: Richard, Senior Research Scientist

Richard is a reserved and polite individual who works at portraying a confident image. In his role, networking is absolutely essential to establish research collaborations, start new projects and secure grant money. In the early days of his career he did not feel mature or credible enough to approach senior research professionals. However, due to the importance of this, he sought advice from an organisational consultant who recommended that he start small and build up his contacts.

He began attending local networking events with an action plan of meeting at least one new person per evening. Despite his nerves, at conferences he made an active effort to attend the social functions. He attended events which taught specific skills and slowly he learned how to approach people, introduce himself confidently (always stating his full name and workplace). As well he learned how to talk about his work in simple language that people from the media or public could understand.

He has recently been appointed as President of a national Medical Research Association which requires him to meet politicians, lobby the government and communicate science to a broad range of audiences. Over time, he has become more confident and assured in these situations and networking has formed a crucial part of his success.

The Invaluable Mentor

Why even have a mentor?

Good mentors combine the skills of role modelling, coaching, career and life advice.

A good mentor will listen, encourage and support you. Mentors can also provide sound advice when it is needed, as well as being prepared to both protect and challenge you.

Having one or more mentors will allow you access to their networks and provide you with additional skills and knowledge. Not only will you obtain a role model, but having a well regarded mentor gives you certain status and can increase your promotional or influencing opportunities.

Your ideal mentor will be someone who:

- Is experienced and competent in management or your industry
- Knows how to get things done within the system in which you operate
- Is available when you need them
- Has strong interpersonal skills and can 'tune in' to others
- Creates an environment where it feels safe to try new ways and contribute fully
- Takes a keen and active interest in developing you
- Is open to new ideas
- Is a good, creative problem solver

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How to find a mentor

Mentors can come from your workplace, sporting clubs, family friends, social contacts or professional associations. Most people are flattered to be asked to provide mentoring, so our advice is to simply ask. If they are too busy they will say no.

When you first meet, make sure you set the ground rules about how, when and where you will meet and how frequently. Make sure you give something in return for their time, such as a coffee, a meal or a drink.

Some simple tips for each session are to:

- Jointly set goals for what you wish to achieve
- Always be prepared before each meeting
- Be open and honest
- Be willing to accept feedback and learn from their experiences
- Make sure that you contribute fully
- Say thank you for their time



Fear Buster:
Do a Network Analysis

Effective networks don't have to be large. It is the structure that counts. They need to allow you to learn from others, develop skills and connect with the necessary resources for success. You definitely need optimists rather than pessimists in your networks.

Download the chart below. Revisit the categories from the first two pages of this section and fill the chart with people's names who are a **positive influence** in each category. There can be overlap; eg you might have a friend who is both an informer and supporter.

Next answer these questions:

1. Where are there plenty of people?
2. Where are the gaps?
3. Where can you find people to fill in the gaps? Who do you know that you could get to know better?
4. Who do other people know who might be useful?

Informers	Power Players	Developers
Supporters	Purpose Givers	Gurus



Hamster Round-up

1. Networking is critical for success in business
2. Remember, everyone you know could possibly help
3. Overcome fear, take a deep breath and just do it
4. Make sure you have the right people in your network
5. Get yourself a great mentor

What is your favourite tip?

Download the action planner on the last page of this e-book, write this in...**and act on it!**

6 Be in the right place at the right time

How to recognise leads and opportunities

"A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty" Winston Churchill





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Summer Academy courses

The Chinese ideogram for crisis actually says ‘danger/opportunity’. The Chinese believe that without some danger, opportunity will not arise and that when things go wrong there is always a good chance of a positive result. This also means that every situation can become a catastrophe or a challenge; it is simply how you see it.

Notice how ‘crisis’ is portrayed in Chinese characters.



How do *you* usually see difficult situations? As danger or opportunity?

How to create opportunities

Listen to potential clients and past leads

Listen to people's needs, fears, challenges and frustrations. Work out what you can do to help them.

Listen to your current clients

Listen to what clients are saying about the industry and your services. What questions do they keep asking? Collect feedback and complaints about their experiences and frustrations. This can help you identify key business opportunities.

Be mindful of your competitors

What are they doing well? What not so well? What could you do better? Identify what might make a client go to you instead of them or what might make your boss select you over your colleagues for a promotion or a project.

Keep up to date with industry trends and approaches

Read relevant publications, keep up with industry terms and news. Talk to people in the know. Keep yourself informed on what is happening right at the moment.

Attend industry functions

Networking is crucial to find potential leads and see what others are doing. Push yourself to talk to as many people as possible especially if they are decision makers.

Maximising Opportunities

The best thing you can do is to put yourself in as many positions as possible to receive the benefits of good fortune when it occurs.



Do you recognize or intuitively grasp possible leads or opportunities? Are you always there at absolutely the right time to grab an opportunity? Do you prep people in advance about what you can do for them? Do you have something in writing ready to further your case? Do you follow up quickly to maximize your chances?

OR

Do you hold back, feeling it is not the done thing to be too pushy? Do you constantly worry about stepping on someone else's toes? Do you hesitate to sell yourself and what you can do for them in advance? Do you then miss out on the opportunity and then feel resentful because someone who has done the things mentioned above gets it?

What might block you?

Lack of confidence

This can be the underlying problem of all your fears. You think you are just not good enough to make it. Well stop shaking in your boots and go and get help from an expert. Confidence coaching can make all the difference.

Being a perfectionist

Perfectionists often avoid taking chances for fear of getting it wrong. Be aware that your ideas will not always be perfect and may sometimes fail. This is valuable learning for you for next time.

Avoiding risks

Some really 'wacky' ideas actually work. Remember pet rocks? Although the craze died quickly, the guy who started it earned \$15,000,000 within six months.

Fear of self promotion

Get going and sell yourself. Talk up your achievements, be willing to put yourself out there even if it means you may have to be noticed or judged. Women in particular need to learn how to sing their own praises.

Lacking focus

Too many creative ideas and options can overwhelm you and limit success through lack of focus or because you feel too overwhelmed to make a decision and take action.

5 tips to face your fear of failure

1. *Take time out*

Allow yourself time to physically calm down. Distracting yourself will help you to cope.

Try going for a walk, making yourself a cup of tea or coffee, phoning someone, or finishing a task

2. *Think about what is the worst that can happen*

Chances are that you will survive even if things go terribly wrong or you look foolish

3. *Feel the fear until it goes away*

Breathing slowly and deeply helps soothe the body

4. *Visualise*

Close your eyes and imagine a relaxing place like a beautiful beach, a lovely garden or a luxuriant rainforest. Let feelings of peace and calm flow over you and relax you

5. *Talk about it*

A problem shared is a problem halved! This also stops things being so scary. Talk to a partner, friend, family member or health professional.



Case Study 4: Kristy, IT Consultant

Kristy is a successful consultant who finds networking difficult but has found that many opportunities exist if you are at the right place at the right time. She was flying home from interstate with her nose in a book as usual when the man next to her annoyed her by wanting to chat. She reluctantly put her book down and listened to what he was saying. She soon found him telling her about a new business he was setting up.

As he continued with the discussion she realised that her company could offer him services that he needed in the start up of his business. She listened actively to his needs and began asking questions. She soon realised that they were just what he needed so she gave him her business card and requested an appointment the following week.

He was quite happy to meet with her and after providing information on their services he invited her to meet his business partner and provide a proposal. Shortly thereafter Kristy's company was engaged to be the exclusive provider of IT services for his business. She kept congratulating herself on her lucky break but her manager was impressed at her savvy in identifying the opportunity.



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Use the art of persuasion

You don't have to be silver tongued but there are definite strategies you can use to get people on side and persuade them to your way of thinking. These steps will help you to better sell yourself and your ideas.

Step 1: Know your target

Make sure you know where people are coming from so you know which angle to use. If appropriate use feelings to sell your idea or product.

Step 2: Speak positively

You won't scare people away. They are more likely to respond to someone with a positive outlook on life.

Step 3: Sell the benefits

Let people know what they can get out of what you can offer. Make sure your facts are true and correct.

Step 4: Anticipate objections

Prepare for objections. Simplify them by focusing on one at a time. Find out the real reason for the objection...is it a real problem, a prejudice or just an excuse. Give workable solutions to the objections.



Fear Buster: Grabbing Opportunities

Opportunities exist everywhere even if you can't see them. Try doing a Scoping Survey to help you discover opportunities that you may not have been aware of.

Look at the categories below and think carefully of people in each who might be able to help. Who might they know? Do they have contacts in your industry or field? Do they have a broad network? Are they willing to help?

Where else might you meet useful people? Will you be able to strike up conversation? If you spot a lead, follow it up immediately. Get their contact details or arrange to meet them later.

Scoping Survey

Family	Work Contacts	Friends of Friends	Customers
Friends	Sporting Peers	Professional Associates	People in the Street



Hamster Round-up

1. See difficult situations as opportunities
2. Actively listen for leads wherever you are
3. Take risks and actively promote yourself
4. Face the fear and do it anyway
5. Practice techniques for persuasion

What is your favourite tip?

Download the action planner on the last page of this e-book, write this in...**and act on it!**

7 Remember, you're not alone

How to engage others' help when needed

"Because, I figured that, because I was a successful man, I was wealthy, I was, you know, seemingly intelligent – even that I am not intelligent enough to ask for help" Elton John



Why is asking for help so hard?

Some people hesitate to ask for help fearing they will look ignorant or incapable. However seeking advice is not a weak course of action, but actually the smartest one. Most successful people will tell you that they have needed to ask for help along the way. They will also tell you that most advice is worth following as one or more suggestions may actually pay off. Remember 'nothing ventured, nothing gained'.

Trust and responsibility

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Inés Aréizaga Esteva (Spain), 25 years old
Education: Chemical Engineer

– You have to be proactive and open-minded as a newcomer and make it clear to your colleagues what you are able to cope. The pharmaceutical field is new to me. But busy as they are, most of my colleagues find the time to teach me, and they also trust me. Even though it was a bit hard at first, I can feel over time that I am beginning to be taken seriously and that my contribution is appreciated.



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In fact, asking for help can show that you are human. People will see you as more genuine and honest if you admit that you need a hand.

If anyone has ever asked you for advice, have you resented giving it or have you thought that they are stupid or incompetent? Most people are happy to give advice and in fact are flattered by being asked to help.

Don't let your ego get in the way

False pride or wrongly applied ego can hijack your career. It blurs possibilities and blocks ideas.

You are not your ideas, and your ideas will not always be successful. But putting your ego first, holding on to your ideas and not letting them loose is like holding your hamster too tightly. If you are squeezing too hard you might kill it, just like killing your ideas. You need to develop the confidence to let go of your fear and give your ideas a go. Don't sabotage your chance of success through false pride.

If ego is not an issue, beware of the following **blockers**:

Independence

You may be highly independent but remember that everyone needs help at times (even independent people don't have all the answers). It's possible that there may be a better solution than the one you've come up with.

Fear of rejection

If people don't want to help or are simply too busy they will tell you and not judge you for asking.

Vulnerability

People may have let you down in the past but it doesn't mean that this will happen again. Remember what doesn't kill you makes you stronger. Choose your advisors wisely.

Insecurity

Even if you fail, people will not necessarily see you as a failure but someone who has given it a go and had some bad luck or taken the wrong approach.

Denial

If you are in denial you probably you don't know that you have a problem. However, if things are not working out then you do actually have a problem. Have the courage to ask others how they think you are going. You might be surprised at their answers.

Figure out what you need help with

Before you go and approach someone you need to be absolutely clear on what advice you need.

- Clarify exactly what you want to achieve
- What needs to be different?
- What is stopping you?
- What new information do you need?
- Write a list of what you need

How to ask for help

Once you know what you need help with, decide who can help.

Go to them with your list and tell them more about what's going on and why you need help. Make sure that they know the full picture.

Be willing to listen to their advice and be prepared to answer any questions.

Professor Elizabeth Blackburn, the 2009 Nobel Prize winner mentioned previously says "Look around and find people who support you and believe in you. Often you think you have to do it all yourself so finding supportive people is really helpful". We suggest that you don't ignore Nobel prize winning advice!

Just remember, it's not a big deal to ask for help. Everyone needs it from time to time.

Give and Take

Make sure that you don't become known as a taker because you only contact certain people to ask for help. Contact your friends and acquaintances from time to time just to say hello.

If you receive help from someone make sure that there is an exchange. This can be in the form of an offer of return help, a small gift or buy them lunch. Never underestimate the power of a thank you.

Case Study 5: Sally, Human Resources Consultant

Sally has a very quiet nature when first met, but upon speaking with her a proud, determined and independent side comes out strongly. She has firm values and a strong desire to help people. During her interview Sally reflected on her major transition from a leading General Manager for a large Banking corporation to becoming an independent consultant. She spoke about how one of her main challenges was her selling ability, saying: "I have a core reluctance to selling. I am not capable of selling in my own right". While she at first relied on her reputation and repeat business, the opportunities soon started to 'fizzle out' and Sally discovered that she would have to employ or partner with someone else, even though she would have to admit she was not succeeding at running her own business.

She met with a close friend who she had partnered with in the past for other roles. During their discussion, Sally admitted her failings as a salesperson and he responded that he thrived on making sales; in fact he loved meeting people so much he was struggling to follow through on all that he had promised to his clients and was inundated with work. Together they set up a partnership in which they would bid for large government agency work. She had solid product management skills and he had the business development requirements.

Sally emphasised: "I was always good at spotting people's talents, collaborating with them and playing to our strengths. I develop alliances with people". She has now enjoyed this successful business partnership for 17 years.

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Fear Buster 1:
Work out what you need

Identify an area in which you need help and answer the following questions:

- What exactly is your goal?
- What could you do differently?
- What is blocking you?
- Who do you need to talk to for advice?
- What specific areas do you need advice on?



Fear Buster 2:
Take the plunge

Now that you know who to talk to your next task is to take the plunge and actually contact them.

Remember:

- They will probably be happy to help
- Bring a list of points for discussion
- Be ready to answer their questions openly
- Listen to their advice
- Have an exchange
- Say thank you

Good luck!!! Keep in mind what worked for next time.



Hamster Round Up

1. Asking for help is a smart thing to do
2. Don't let your ego get in the way
3. Think about what else is blocking you
4. Be clear on what you need help with
5. Ask!!!
6. Give back

What is your favourite tip?

Download the action planner on the last page of this e-book, write this in...**and act on it!**

8 Resurrect your Hamster

How to put all the pieces together

"Today is a new day. A new opportunity to get better, stronger faster, smarter and closer to your goals and dreams. Take it." Joel Madden

Metro Newspaper, United Kingdom

Wednesday, 10 April 2013

HAMSTER RESURRECTION: PET RISES FROM THE GRAVE AT EASTER AFTER BEING BURIED IN THE GARDEN

A hamster came back from the grave after she was buried in a back garden on Good Friday.

Tink the hamster was found 'cold and lifeless' in the bottom of her cage and laid to rest by a couple who were looking after her for a friend.

But the next day the rodent – who was not dead but hibernating – reappeared as perplexed Les Kilbourne-Smith crushed a pile of old boxes for recycling.

'Suddenly a little face popped out of one of them, which gave me a big startle I can assure you,' the bus company worker told the Gloucester Citizen. 'The energy she had to dig herself out of that hole was remarkable.'

Tink was being cared for by Mr Kilbourne-Smith's daughter Lisa and boyfriend James Davis, 24, as her owner was moving house. They called the friend to break the sad news that her pet had died when they found her comatose.

'We wrapped her up in a load of kitchen towel and buried her about a foot deep so the cat couldn't dig her back up again,' said Lisa, 23.

Mr Kilbourne-Smith, who was visiting his daughter in Painswick, Gloucestershire, when he spotted Tink, added: 'It's amazing that she survived really. 'She had been out in that freezing cold all night – it was a good 24 hours.'

Tink, 2, has now been dubbed 'Jesus' by the family after her Easter resurrection.

To help you resurrect **your** hamster, try these four rebuilding strategies (**4Rs**)

These will help you to put all the pieces of this book together.

1. Reflect

You are not your ideas, and your ideas will not always be successful. But holding on to them and not letting them loose is like holding your hamster too tightly. If you are squeezing too hard you might kill it, just like killing your ideas. You need to develop the confidence to let go of your fear and give your ideas a go. We all need to take some risks in life!

If things are not working for you, why keep doing more of the same. Isn't it worth trying something different? A simple change might be the key to success. Remember the pet rock guy?

2. Re-assess

What is really important to you? Remember to visualize what you want to achieve and who you want to become to help you to achieve your goals. Think beyond what you thought possible and aim even higher.

Also re-assess what has worked for you in the past. What do you need to change? Who do you need to ask for help?

Focus on your priorities and work out what needs the most effort. Don't always focus on the easiest things to change but give the hard things a go as well. Positive change is not always easy but is worth the effort.

3. Revise

Go over the tips and ideas in your Action Planner and re-read the sections of this e-book that are relevant to you.

Our recommendations are proven and many of our coaching clients have found them to be invaluable. They have helped them to bring about changes in their life and work. Even if you just give one a go it might make a small change. You have nothing to lose.

**"I studied English for 16 years but...
...I finally learned to speak it in just six lessons"**

Jane, Chinese architect

ENGLISH OUT THERE

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4. Revamp

Commit to making small changes and build confidence through small wins. Don't take on too much at once or you'll feel overwhelmed. Remember commitment is like a muscle. If you use it too much it will tire and won't carry as much load. Take one step at a time.

Each time you have a win celebrate your success. Buy yourself some new clothes, music or a book. Go out with a friend for dinner or coffee. Spend time doing something that you really enjoy.

Finally, stop getting in your own way.

Give your hamster a break. Stop squeezing it so tight and trust that it will be OK.

Don't kill your hamster!!!



Action Planner

Use this action planner as a way to track your progress in different areas as you implement different tips and activities.

After reading each section, choose your favourite tip to implement. Then choose someone to keep you on track. Tell them about it and ask them to check on your progress. Also, choose a completion date for the activity or successful change to your behaviour.

Sections	Favourite tip	Who will help?	Do it by
Stop hamster-wheeling <i>How will I see myself differently?</i>			
Fake it 'til you make it <i>How will I act more confidently?</i>			
Become your own superhero <i>How will I maximise my strengths?</i>			
Feel the power and the passion <i>How will I refocus on what I want?</i>			
It's not what you know but who you know <i>How will I navigate my networks?</i>			
Be in the right place at the right time <i>How will I recognise leads and opportunities?</i>			
Remember, you're not alone <i>How will I engage others' help when I need it?</i>			
Resurrect your hamster <i>How will I put all of these parts together?</i>			

Don't forget to celebrate or reward yourself as you achieve each goal!

About the Authors



Jacky Dakin



Laura Taplin

Jacky Dakin is an experienced psychologist, organisational development consultant, facilitator and executive coach. She is a regular guest presenter and keynote speaker at seminars and conferences. She runs her own organisational consulting business, coupled with a private practice in clinical and counselling psychology. She is also a principal of a consortium with professional colleagues.

She has a passion for helping people be the best they can whether personally or professionally. One of her greatest thrills is when she sees her clients turn a corner and start overcoming their own particular obstacles. They can then make positive changes which move them closer towards their own definition of success.

Jacky is active on several boards and committees, regularly mentors younger colleagues and volunteers for various organisations. She has co-authored a successful book "Short Poppies Can Grow: Confidence at work" and was formerly a regular columnist in the Advertiser Saturday Review section. She is a past finalist in the Telstra Business Woman of the Year.

Laura Taplin is a registered psychologist with a specialised interest in working with individuals, teams and organisations to help them to reach their full potential. She has gained valuable experience with one of South Australia's premier organisational development and recruitment companies.

She makes full use of her strong understanding of positive psychology, personality, culture, work environment and team dynamics to offer practical strategies to her clients. She is also a skilled presenter and researcher.

Laura currently finds that the most enjoyable part of her work is providing career guidance to people, at whatever age or career stage.