

LEADERSHIP COACHING AND MENTORING –PACK

June 2022

Established in 2006

Welcome to this month's edition.

Damian Piper CBE our Resilience Coach starts this month edition with: **Getting the benefits of Empowerment** “Our leadership don't empower us”. “This was the expression I recently heard when working with a team. Workforce empowerment is a topic that has increasingly made its way into leadership approaches over the last 10 years.” “So, if you want to empower your team there are range of conversations and considerations you will need to work through. Here's a few to get you started.....” another essential read from Damian.

From me **'You don't have to be the one who is always inspiring.'** It is always an honour and a privilege to receive an invitation to attend a leadership workshop, especially if it comes from a company you admire. I received a recent invite from the senior managers of Thera East Anglia, a company who support adults with a learning disability. They had organised a day for their first line supervisors (Senior Support Workers).

Justin Smith **Leadership with volunteers** “I think about leadership a lot, and recently I have been thinking about the leadership of volunteers/ leading in voluntary organisations. Surely it is harder to lead in an organisation or venture where the people who do the work are there because they want to be, and not because they are being paid (even when they still might want to be any way)? How does a leader keep things fresh, inspire, ensure that volunteers do not get bored and slip away?”

Being Bettina's Dad – Bettina's approach to Decision Making. “When interviewing candidates for Dosh www.dosh.org I am always willing them to respond with the perfect answers which will help them achieve maximum points. Sitting across from a candidate during a recent series of interviews, I asked the question “what is your approach to decision making?” - on paper it looks straight forward as we probably make more than 100 decisions a day without analysing our approach on how we make those decisions.... “

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It's not about how good you are

It's how Good You want to be

Getting the benefits of Empowerment

“Our leadership don’t empower us”. This was the expression I recently heard when working with a team. Workforce empowerment is a topic that has increasingly made its way into leadership approaches over the last 10 years. Companies like Amazon, Apple and Netflix talk of the benefits they have seen from empowering their workforces to deliver. Often this means shifting from a less command and control style of leadership. Organisations and the people within them are attracted to the allure of empowerment only to find that its harder than the soundbites to make work in practice. So, if you want to empower your team there are range of conversations and considerations you will need to work through. Here’s a few to get you started:

1. **Empowerment means different things to different people.** One person’s empowerment is another person’s abandonment or straight jacket. It’s important to establish what you mean by empowerment and recognise this isn’t a one-off conversation. It needs an on-going dialogue as you test what’s right for the different work you want to achieve.
2. **Guardrails, values, and purpose.** Whatever your definition of empowerment is you will want to agree what conditions are required for the delivery to take place. Talking through and agreeing with people what outcomes are required and what freedom they have to deliver is key. Many organisations refer to this as the guardrails for people to operate in. I’d go further and ensure that there is collective understanding of how the organisation’s values and purpose relate to what is being done.
3. **It’s one approach of many.** Being aware that empowerment is just one leadership approach is something not to lose sight of. I’ve seen some team’s performance really suffer as they look to use a one size fits all leadership approach. For example, there are times when a more directive style of leadership is appropriate.
4. **Opportunity for development.** One of the great benefits of empowerment is that it encourages people to develop and stretch themselves. As the leader this can be wonderfully satisfying as you watch people grow. There is also the possibility of seeing people struggle which is not good. It can require patience and ultimately judgement to get the balance right. Chances are you won’t get this right all the time so putting in place the right reviews is important.
5. **Don’t forget your experience counts too.** Whilst great innovation and novel solutions can come from empowerment it’s important to recognise that leadership experience counts too. You may find this generates frustration for some people. As they perceive you getting in their way or constraining their approach. However, to ignore or not utilise your experience can be costly and time consuming. Having this conversation with an individual or team can be tricky. Ignoring it is often worse.

6. **Wider environment and culture.** Considering the wider environment and culture is essential. The handling of situations where people might fall short is particularly important. If you overreact you could well be stifling future work as the team become overly cautious. When you get this right, you will create psychological safety which allows people to thrive. If the wider culture, you operate in is hierarchical then having less experienced team members delivering work could undermine their output. Simply because people do not understand empowerment properly. Being mindful of this and explaining what you are doing is one way to address this. Also recognising where it's not appropriate to use empowerment is judgement you will need to develop.

My experience of working in and with empowered teams is very positive. It takes time to bed in and requires trust to be effective. If this is something that interests you then why not start a conversation with your team this week. As always, I'm interested to hear how you get on.

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‘To believe in something , and not live it, is dishonest’ Mahatma Ghandi

You don't have to be the one who is always inspiring.

A day spent with Thera East Anglia's leaders



It is always an honour and a privilege to receive an invitation to attend a leadership workshop, especially if it comes from a company you admire. I received a recent invite from

the senior managers of Thera East Anglia, a company who support adults with a learning disability. They had organised a day for their first line supervisors (Senior Support Workers).

A scenic journey through country lanes took me to a village near Ely in Cambridgeshire. I was uplifted by the countryside and very much looking forward to the day.

Sitting down at a table with Laura, Sandra, and Jo - who are Senior Support Workers, I was quickly engaged with their insights on leadership, enjoying hearing their 'take' on effective leadership and being a role model for their colleagues.

The day focused on getting back to basics, having honest conversations about their role, the competencies required and how it impacts on their colleagues and the people they support (people with a learning disability).

5 things I got from the day & 1 Takeaway

1. Hearing first-hand what challenges and what frustrates people.
2. What inspires people to do more and be more for the people they support. What was clearly evident from the conversations is that they are passionate about people with a learning disability.
3. The importance of role models and role modelling – a key aspect of the role of Senior Support Worker is that they are role models for their colleagues. The conversation focused on leading by example.
4. Empowered to be able to lead (inspiring support workers) but also feeling able to offer supportive words, and to point people in the right direction.
5. Putting aside time in everyone's busy work schedule to invest in colleagues' leadership & development.

And 1 Take Away from Justin Smith Operations Manager for Thera East Anglia:

'Anyone can lead when the plan is working'

[Anyone Can Lead When the Plan is Working... Guest Post by Justin Smith – Leadership in the Raw](#)

5 Enduring Leadership Questions (heard during the day).

With a quick-fire answer from me:

1. What is the difference between a Leader and a Manager?
A. Managers make decisions – Leaders do the right things
2. Are you born to be a leader, or do you learn to become one?
A. You become – and everyone is a leader in some shape or form
3. Does it matter what your social background is to be an effective leader that your followers can relate to?
A. from experience in both careers NO! all that matters to people is that you genuinely care for them.
4. Do you have to have served on the 'shop floor' to understand the issues staff have?

A. It helps to have had a similar experience, especially when it comes to making decisions.

5. Do Leaders need to be extroverts? – during the workshops I had an opportunity to discuss this with Justin Smith and Yvette Ferguson the two senior managers who kindly invited me to their ‘day’.

A. I was reminded of an article by a friend and former colleague: David Sandell wrote: ‘Charisma isn’t always enough’ [Charisma isn’t always enough – Leadership in the Raw](#) David is a successful businessman and an internationally recognised artist.

5 Leadership MythBusters

1. As the leader **you don’t always have to be the person inspiring** – seek out people who will inspire you. They do this with their thoughts, ideas, and actions. You just need to listen.
2. You don’t have to be the one with all the ideas – if you surround yourself with talent, it is highly likely your colleagues’ ideas will soon outnumber yours. I see this as a sign of success in the teams I have managed.

Related: [The 3rd Leadership Lesson I learned – Surround yourself with Talent – Leadership in the Raw](#)

3. Management and Leadership is not the same thing. This was one of the questions during the leadership day and a specific question: what is the difference? The words “leader” and “manager” are used interchangeably, but the two functions are distinct. Managers set and enforce rules and control a group in order to accomplish defined goals. Both roles are necessary. The key is to strike the right balance.
4. Leaders are not infallible. It’s easy to see leaders as infallible. However, not only does everyone make mistakes, but those errors help us learn and grow.
5. Leadership is not about titles! Leaders are often people who influence and inspire their colleagues, not necessarily the ones who hold positions of authority. My youngest daughter Bettina copes with a learning disability and autism is a leader, she has changed so many people’s lives and their outlook on life while not holding a position of authority through a job title:

[Being Bettina’s Dad. Leading when you are not holding a Leadership Position. – Leadership in the Raw](#)



**THE TRUE MEASURE OF
LEADERSHIP IS WHAT THOSE
AROUND YOU ACHIEVE.**

On my long journey home, I had time to reflect on a day surrounded by 20 leaders, feeling fortunate to have had this time to hear what motivates and drives them to do what they do for people with a learning disability and....**once more realising that you don’t always have to be the one inspiring.**



The venue for our leadership day - The Glebe is located next door to St Andrews Church, High Street, Sutton near Ely

Thera East Anglia can be found on the following platforms:

Web: www.thera.co.uk

Twitter: [Thera East Anglia \(@TheraEastAnglia\) / Twitter](https://twitter.com/TheraEastAnglia)

Facebook: [thera east anglia - search results | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/thera-east-anglia)

LinkedIn [THERA EAST ANGLIA: About | LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/thera-east-anglia)

Source: **Steve Raw** www.leadershipintheraw.org

'The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away'

William Shakespeare

Leadership with volunteers

I think about leadership a lot, and recently I have been thinking about the leadership of volunteers/ leading in voluntary organisations. Surely it is harder to lead in an organisation or venture where the people who do the work are there because they want to be, and not because they are being paid (even when they still might want to be any way)? How does a leader keep things fresh, inspire, ensure that volunteers do not get bored and slip away?

A little research suggest that the mains reason people volunteer with to...

To contribute to their community

To use their skills and experiences

They have been personally affected by the cause they are volunteering in

To explore their own strengths

To network or meet new people

Their friends/family also volunteer

Eric Burger, of the online volunteer hub [How to Lead Volunteers | Nonprofit | VolunteerHub Blog](#) gives seven tips on leading volunteers.

1. Form relationships

Getting to know individuals, their quirks and motivations is really important. It is useful to remember a few things about them, their experiences, and skills.

2. Ensure commitment

Sometimes, organisations are a little desperate, so they recruit less committed volunteers. It is essential to judge and ensure commitment, and then to reward that commitment via sound leadership.

3. Restate objectives and roles

The absence of clarity can be damaging to an organisation's objectives. It is always wise to be sure that the overall objective and the objectives of individuals is clarified and kept at the forefront.

4. Recognise achievements

Volunteers and not being paid. It is crucial that their efforts are recognised and their impact on objectives is openly celebrated.

5. Communicate

Listen to volunteers, get to understand what motivates them. Steers goals based on having communicated with everyone.

6. Trust

Volunteers need to know that you trust them and have faith in them. Mistakes might happen, but people need to be trusted all the same.

7. Invest

Research suggest that voluntary organisations invest little financially into their ventures. Sound investment is wise in order to drive the objectives of an organisation/ venture.

The process got me thinking about my own experiences of leading volunteers. In late 2017 I was nominated to oversee the beginners running course, hosted by my local Athletics club – Ely Runners. I still lead it today. The 10-week course had been running for a few years and worked purely due to small number of LiRFs (Leaders in Running Fitness) and a couple of CiRFs (Coaches in Running Fitness). I quickly enrolled on my CiRF qualification, as I felt that to lead such an endeavour, it might be wise to back up my limited experience with some official knowledge!

The 10-week course is for true beginners to running, or people returning to running. It is very inclusive and very popular in my home City.

I decided I would ask a fellow CiRF, Charlotte, to mentor me through the first 10-week course, as I felt it was vital to have someone to consult and offer me tips and reflection. I am

not a naturally organised person, but I soon realised that I would have to cover a lot if I was to lead the course successfully. Marketing; risk assessing; organising the small payment expected from course participants; setting up communications with participants; thinking of the structure of the course and which coach/ leader should lead each session (and much more).

I soon found myself working with and leading a group of runners who were all more experienced than me and certainly more talented. This was scary stuff!

My marketing was via social media almost exclusively and drew upon the benefits of running for the local population, but also celebrating the fact that the course was fun and inclusive: thanks to the people who volunteer on the course.

I developed a few strategies, which I really hope to have helped to motivate each of the coaches/ leaders: each week during the course I mention to participants one of the many pearls of wisdom I have remembered from the coaches. For example, Lauren's tips around breathing; David's advice around nutrition; Jon's superb interval training; Charlottes excellent tips on running form: I ask them to explain to the group. I always thank the coaches in front of the participants at the end of the session (and get a round of applause going). I always email all participants (copying coaches in) during the evening of each session, mentioning what an excellent session the particular coach of the week led. Each week I add a group selfie (all participants and coaches) onto the club Facebook page. I wrote coach profiles and shared these with participants: this covered the many talents and achievements of the course coaches. I do my best to encourage newer coaches to lead sessions with support from a more experienced one. It is my hope that this inspires and motivates I hope so.

Picture: The coaches with Ely Runners beginners



I invested in the course by slightly increasing the number of coaches/ leaders and getting them on courses to become qualified.

I soon discovered that there is a more private aspect to leading a group of volunteers: they and the participants open up to you, and tend to tell you, their anxieties. A trusted ear has

become essential. Each coach's and participant's problems and thoughts are serious to them and should be treated as such. It has become important to listen carefully and help wherever possible.

Turnover is low among the coaches, with the same committed people showing up and helping in their own time, after work, in all kinds of weather.

I still have things to improve upon in my role as a leader on the course: we do not meet enough outside of the weekly sessions; I could push more for the club to invest in kit for the coaches; I should be looking into ongoing training and personal development for those who volunteer; I should do more to seek feedback from participants about each coach. I have work to do!

That being said, I sought the views and feedback of Ann, one of our newest volunteer coaches on the course. Ann offered me some of her observations.

1. The planning and communication have been efficient
2. Time has been made to ensure that all participants know that the coaches are volunteers
3. The shout out to coaches at the end of sessions has been appreciated
4. Mentioning specific coaches on the follow up email to participants has been appreciated
5. Ann feels I have been a driving force in making the whole club acknowledge the coaches
6. Ann felt grateful for support and reassurance when she first ran a beginners' session
7. Ann says I let her go with it and trusted her with a session I was not familiar with
8. Ann appreciates that I have tweaked sessions based on volunteer coach feedback
9. Ann feels that her coaching skills have been supported in a collaborative environment

Coach Lauren offered this feedback...

"I believe that to be a good leader you need to have empathy. Whether you're the Prime Minister of New Zealand, leading a team of fifty employees or leading a coaching session for those new to running, the ability to put yourself in the shoes of those you're working with sets you apart from other leaders and enables you to bring the best out of people. And in his role as a running coach and leader of the Ely Runners' Beginners' course, this is what Justin does so well. He remembers what it feels like when you first decide to make that decision to go running, when you turn up to your first training session with others, and when you first feel like giving up. He has been there, and he uses his own experiences to help others find a way through.

In addition, Justin always knows when to step back and give someone else time to shine. When another coach is leading a running session, Justin mucks in with the masses, listens to the coaching instructions and ensures that he leads by example, taking on feedback and highlighting the good work done by his Fellow coaches, which in turn gives them the confidence they need to grow as a coach.

And the best bit? Justin does all of this with a huge smile on his face, and his energy, enthusiasm and sense of humour all play a huge part in making him the kind of leader that people can relate to and respect in equal measure.”

I share this feedback not to be self-celebratory (although I am not beyond the odd pat on my own back!), but to match it to what I have read about the leadership of volunteers, and to understand what works, so I can keep doing it!

I have wondered where my experience of leading volunteers (and Ann’s and Lauren’s feedback) fits with the tips offered by Ed Burger. I won’t try to analyse that: I will leave that to the reader. What I will say though is that I am definitely under no illusion as to what extent my role has contributed to what the Ely Runners beginners’ course coaches do. I am sure they would do it without me! They are all passionate about running, introducing new people to running, and seeing the progress beginners make. To this end, their motivation comes from their own passion and seeing the outcomes for people new to running.

I will leave this with two thoughts

1. Leading is tough; I think leading people who are volunteering brings additional challenges, but there are still overlaps with leading when the people involved are not volunteers.
2. What can I learn from leading volunteers that can be transferred into my work?

Justin Smith TEA Operations Manager and Coach in Running Fitness with Ely Runners.

[Ely Runners](#)

Being Bettina’s Dad – Bettina’s approach to Decision Making



When interviewing candidates for Dosh www.dosh.org I am always willing them to respond with the perfect answers which will help them achieve maximum points.

Sitting across from a candidate during a recent series of interviews, I asked the question “what is your approach to decision making?” - on paper it looks straight forward as we

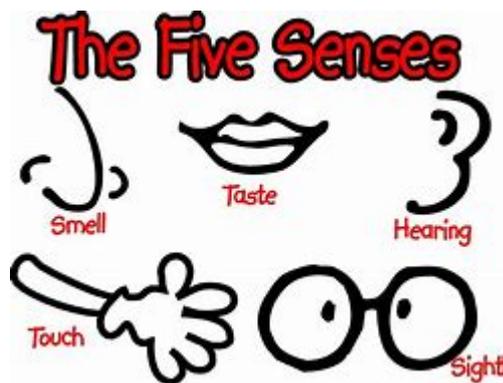
probably make more than 100 decisions a day without analysing our approach on how we make those decisions, so perhaps this is the reason some of our candidates get a stuck on a response.

As I ask the question, I wonder how I would respond if I was the candidate? My next thought is, I know someone who has a number of different strategies for making decisions and if ever I am asked this interview question and want to score the maximum points, I think I will 'borrow' Bettina's approach.

Bettina lives at home with her family and we spend lots of time with her every day, however, during this weekend I have given it extra thought, observing Bettina's approach to decision making. Some of these strategies may not come as a surprise to you; although some may give you pause for thought.

Bettina's '5' Approaches to Decision Making:

1. Bettina uses her senses



I observe how Bettina uses her five senses:

- At the dinner table, especially if Joyce has created something we have not had before (this is not unusual as Joyce is an amazing cook and baker). All 5 senses are in play, including hearing: what are the others saying around the table about our meal?
- To multitask. Sitting on the sofa with Bettina watching YouTube videos together, I can see by the tilt of her head she is listening for movement from the kitchen, she can smell cooking, so Bettina knows soon we are both going to be called into the dining room. Before this happens though we continue watching YouTube videos as well as watching the TV in the background (is there a better option on view for Bettina?). At any moment Bettina will make her decision to stand up, remove her spectacles, and be ready to be first in the dining room. (I would get knocked over in the rush if I tried to compete!)

2. Trust – in the people who are significant in her life to support you with a decision

We often need those people who are significant in our lives to help us make decisions. Bettina is no different; she places great importance in 'Trust' before she will allow you into her decision-making process. Trust is something to be earned:

Reliability. Someone whom you can believe in and rely on

Honesty – By being honest, she becomes confident in you and your support.

Responsibility – You take your obligations to Bettina seriously – she is incredibly vulnerable so you can never let her down

Consistency – As Joyce tells me, stick with the plan! If you say you are going somewhere with Bettina *and you have communicated each stage of the plan with her, you must always stick to it*

Belief – You demonstrate that you believe in Bettina - her hopes, dreams and expectations

<https://leadershipintheraw.org/2015/07/28/being-bettinas-dad-trust-is-a-gift-you-must-earn/>

3. Trusts her instinct

Bettina has always lived by her instincts which are also part of her survival mechanism living in a world that can be confusing, at times distressing, and often frustrating.

Bettina relies on her instinct to make quick, (sometimes) impulsive decision(s), respond to emergencies and perceived dangers based on:

- Experience
- Self-belief
- The right to make a mistake

What is the Secret of SUCCESS?
"RIGHT DECISIONS",
How do you make Right Decisions?
"EXPERIENCE",
How do you get Experience?
"WRONG DECISIONS!"!

SheelaJain.Com

4. Procrastinates on Purpose

There are 'decisions' Bettina knows she needs to make but doesn't feel she needs to make them right now. Bettina refuses to be pressured by others.

Bettina will procrastinate on purpose when:

- She feels she does not have all the information or facts in front of her to make her decision
- She doesn't feel the decision is important and/or urgent
- Bettina has other priorities that she needs to work through first
- It is possible the decision will no longer need to be made and the issue simply goes away
- It is an opportunity to delegate e.g., if I can leave it long enough my dad will do it for me.
- Bettina 'shapes the ground' if the occasion demands it – and only when the ground is shaped to her satisfaction, will Bettina make the decision.

Without prior warning Bettina often makes the decision because the time is right for her.

<p>"When I feel lost & can't make a decision, I just stop & get quiet. I take time out" Kim Cattrall</p>
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5. Commits to the decision

Whether Bettina makes an impulsive decision or whether she has taken her time, once she has made the decision, she commits to it totally and there is no going back.

Bettina brings concentration and relentless focus to her decision:

- Getting her game face on – a look that I recognise that says that mentally she is getting into her positive mind-set.
- I could almost hear her brain ticking as she makes her plan and what her priorities are going to be
- Her body language (and her facial expression) is clear and open. She does not want to be disturbed until she has finished.
- She repeats a mantra to her herself. She does this often and I believe it helps her concentration and keeps her focused on the decision she has made
- Bettina brings all her thoughts to bear on the activity, fixing her attention and efforts on the decision, not allowing anything to distract her until she has fulfilled her objective

<https://leadershipintheraw.org/2016/11/10/being-bettinas-dad-bettinas-lessons-in-concentration-and-focus/>

Always go with the choice that scares you the most, because that's the one that is going to help you grow." Caroline Myss

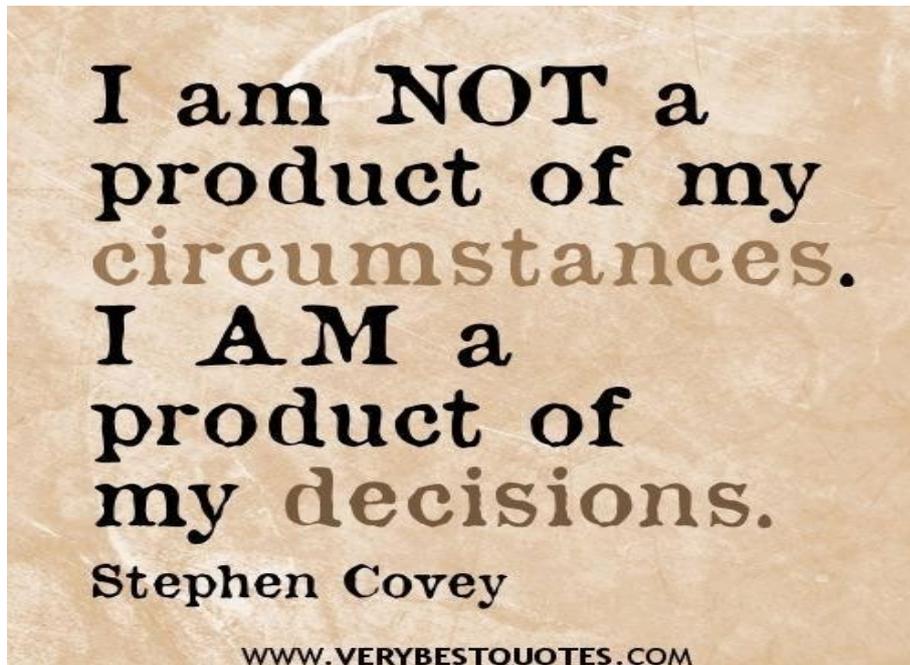
Bettina's Five 'Quick Tips' for an approach to Decision Making

- ✓ Don't be rushed into making a decision until you are ready
- ✓ You can only make the best decision with the information in front of you – so don't second guess
- ✓ Just because it is urgent for someone else, it doesn't necessarily mean it is urgent for you
- ✓ Don't make their problem your problem
- ✓ Have you made this decision before? Did it work out ok? Then do it again. No point in reinventing the wheel
- ✓ Is the decision the best one not just for you but also for the people who are significant in your life?
- ✓ Once you have made the decision, commit to it.

Bettina makes a decision for me.....

Bettina takes a step back in front of me and examines both shirts I am holding up. "That one" Bettina is pointing to the shirt in my left hand. We are both in a 'Crew Clothing' shop in Southwold (Suffolk, UK) and I couldn't make up my mind which shirt to buy. I've always trusted Bettina's judgement!

There are times when it is ok to take a break from decision making, well that was my excuse. Thanks Bettina you made the right decision (for me!)



Source: Steve Raw www.dosh.org

What to Do When You Don't Feel Like Doing Anything

By Chris Widener

In all of my interactions with people, I've never found anyone, regardless of their level of success, who doesn't sometimes find themselves simply not wanting to do the things that they need to. It is a part of human nature for there to be times that, in spite of all that we need to do—and even desire to—we will find ourselves not wanting to do anything. What separates those who will become successful from those who will maintain the status quo is what we do at those very crucial moments in time. When we are making that decision, the successful choose to [find the inner motivation](#) that will enable us to conquer our complacency and move on in action. I find that I confront this issue in my life on a regular basis, so the following success strategies are not merely pie in the sky techniques, but proven ways to get yourself to get up and go even when you don't feel like doing anything.

Honestly evaluate whether or not you need a break.

This is usually the first thing that I do when I find that I don't want to get to a specific action. The fact is that at times we will have been working very hard and the lethargy we are feeling is really our body and emotions telling us that we simply [need a break](#). This is where it takes real intellectual honesty, because sometimes even when we don't need a break our mind is still telling us we do—and sometimes we do actually need a break.

I'll give you a good example—I don't particularly like to exercise, but I do almost every day. Sometimes before going to the club I find myself thinking about how I just don't feel like going. Most of the time I am just feeling lazy. However, sometimes I realize that my body needs a break. So from time to time, I will take a one- or two-day break from working out. The benefits of this are twofold: One, my body gets a break to regenerate itself. Two, after a day or two, I begin to miss my workout and eagerly anticipate returning to the gym.

As another example—perhaps you are a salesman who has been phoning clients for a week straight, day and night. You wake up one morning and just don't feel like doing it anymore. To give yourself time to rest, take a break for the morning. Go to a coffee shop and read the paper. Go to the driving range and hit some golf balls. [Take a break](#) and then get back to it!

Start small.

I'm at a point in my workout schedule where a typical day for me consists of 30 to 45 minutes of aerobic exercise and about 30 minutes of weight lifting. So when I find myself not wanting to get up and go to the gym, I will sometimes make a commitment to go and just do a smaller workout. Instead of deciding not to go, I'll commit to doing 15 to 20 minutes of aerobic exercise and 15 to 30 minutes of weight lifting. This is beneficial for two reasons. One, I actually get some exercise that day. And two, it keeps me from getting into a cycle of giving up when I don't feel like moving toward action.

Maybe you are a writer who simply doesn't want to write today. Instead of the long day of writing you had planned, decide that you will at least outline a couple of new articles. You

will still get some work done, and afterwards you may find that you put yourself into the writing mood after all.

Change your routine.

I have found that [what keeps my mind healthy](#) is what burns the most calories, like doing 30 to 45 minutes on the treadmill every day. Now let me be very blunt: I find running on the treadmill to be extremely boring. Usually, I can get myself to do it, but sometimes I need to vary my routine. So instead of 30 to 45 minutes on a treadmill, I will break down my aerobic exercise routine into a number of different areas. I will do 10 to 15 minutes on treadmills, 10 to 15 minutes on the reclining cycle, 5 to 10 minutes on the rowing machine, 5 to 10 minutes on the stair stepper and then back onto the treadmill for 5 to 10 minutes. I still get my exercise, but I'm a lot less bored.

Alternatively, maybe you are in construction, and you have been working on the plumbing for a week, and it is getting monotonous. Don't do the plumbing today! Go frame-in the office.

Reward yourself.

One way that I [motivate myself to do something](#) when I don't feel like doing it is to tell myself that if I get through the work that I need to, I will give myself a little reward. For instance, I may tell myself if I get up and go to the club I can take 5 to 10 minutes off my treadmill exercise, which will shorten my workout routine, and I'll allow myself to sit in the hot tub for a few extra minutes. Hey, it works!

Maybe you are a mortgage broker who feels like sleeping in. Tell yourself that after the next three mortgages you close you will take your kids to the fair or your spouse to the movies. Maybe you'll give yourself a night on the town with old friends.

Reconnect the action with pleasure rather than pain.

[Psychologists have long told us](#) that we humans tend to connect every action with either pleasure or pain. Tony Robbins has popularized this even further with something he calls "neural associations." When we are finding ourselves lacking motivation, it is probable that we are associating the action that we are thinking about with pain rather than pleasure. For instance, when I'm considering not going to the health club on any given day, I am usually associating going and working out with having no time, the pain of exercising and weightlifting or the boringness of running on a treadmill for an extended period of time. What I can do to re-associate is to remind myself that by going in and doing my exercise I will [feel better about myself](#), I will lose weight and I will live longer. This brings me pleasure. When we begin to run those kinds of tapes through our minds, we find our internal motivating force unleashed and [change our attitude](#) about the action that we are considering.

Maybe you are a counselor who really doesn't want to spend the day listening to people. Your association may be that it will be boring, or that you will be inside while it is sunny outside. Instead, reassociate yourself to the truth of the matter: Someone will be better off

because of your care and concern. Think of your clients, the progression they have been making recently and how you have been a part of that.

This article was published in June 2009 and has been updated. Photo by G-Stock Studio/Shutterstock



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My Top 3 video presentations from www.Ted.com

https://www.ted.com/talks/dan_gilbert_researches_happiness 1. Dan Gilbert presents research and data from his exploration of happiness — sharing some surprising tests and experiments that you can also try on yourself. Watch through to the end for a sparkling Q&A with some familiar TED faces.

https://www.ted.com/talks/matthieu_ricard_on_the_habits_of_happiness

2. What is happiness, and how can we all get some? Biochemist turned Buddhist monk Matthieu Ricard says we can train our minds in habits of well-being, to generate a true sense of serenity and fulfilment.

https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are

3. Body language affects how others see us, but it may also change how we see ourselves. Social psychologist Amy Cuddy shows how “power posing” — standing in a posture of confidence, even when we don’t feel confident — can affect testosterone and cortisol levels in the brain and might even have an impact on our chances for success.

The most important single ingredient in the formula of success is knowing how to get along with people’

Theodore Roosevelt