Habit 6: Synergize

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Business Hypotheticals

• Imagine a business is competing for a bid to be the marketer for a major soft-drink.
  • This business consists of…
    • An accountant – they determine the profits
    • A marketer – they determine how to reach people
    • An advertiser – they determine what the message will be

• How would this business do if each person worked alone by themselves up until the day they presented to the client company?
  • How would it differ if they worked with each other throughout the process?
Synergy

• Synergy: when two parts cooperate, or work cohesively together, to produce a result that is greater than the individual efforts combined.

• Synergy is basically a fancy way of saying "two heads are better than one."
  • This is the habit of creative cooperation.
  • It is teamwork, open-mindedness, and finding new solutions to old problems.

• Synergy is a process, and through that process, people bring all their personal experience and expertise to the table.
  • Together, they can produce far better results that they could individually.
  • When people begin to interact together genuinely, and they're open to each other's influence, they begin to gain new insight.
    • Source: https://www.stephencovey.com/7habits/7habits-habit6.php
Synergy

• Synergy is less about the pieces & parts and more about the big picture.
  • You cannot ‘create’ synergy alone.
  • Synergy is the result the other 6 habits.

• To create positive synergy, we must:
  • Utilize the each 7 habits effectively.
  • Accept our weaknesses and work to improve them.
  • Say "no" to anything that is not true synergy (good is the enemy of great)
  • Commit to the "no deal" of win/win or no deal.
  • Value the product over personal recognition.
  • Value diversity of every kind and appreciate differences of opinion.
# When a Habit Fails, Synergy Fails

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habit</th>
<th>Business failure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Proactivity</td>
<td>Reactivity, hostility, micromanagement, negative business culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 End in Mind</td>
<td>Conflict about goals, wasted work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 First Things First</td>
<td>Bureaucratic slowdowns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Win-Win</td>
<td>Making money but ripping off customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Seek to Understand</td>
<td>Sloppy management fixes leave problems in place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Self-Renewal</td>
<td>Burn out people's talent, also equipment failure and safety problems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A failure in any one of the 7 Habits creates a failure of synergy, vastly reducing the value of a business.

Valuing Differences

• Valuing differences is what really drives synergy.
  • Those that thrive in environments high in diversity are most able to take advantage of the increased productivity that can result from collaboration.
  • Vice versa, those that feel less comfortable when working with those who have different ideas, ideologies, religions, or backgrounds are least able to take advantage of synergy.

• Many people mistake uniformity for unity or sameness for oneness.
  • Unity does not equal uniformity!
    • Source: https://www.stephencovey.com/7habits/7habits-habit6.php
Three Approaches to Diversity

• **There are three ways in which people view diversity.**
  • Diversity can be a positive thing or a negative thing depending on your perspective and background.

• **Level 1: Shun diversity** - People who shun others are afraid of differences.
  • It disturbs them that someone may have a different skin color, worship a different God, or wear a different brand of jeans.
  • They are convinced their way of life is the “best” or “right”, or “only way.”
  • The person who is truly effective has the humility to recognize his/her own personal physical, mental, and cultural limitations.

Three Approaches to Diversity

• **Level 2: Tolerate diversity** – Tolerators believe that everyone has the right to be different.
  • They don’t shun diversity but don’t embrace it either.
  • It’s the “Don’t bother me and I won’t bother you” attitude.

• **Level 3: Celebrate diversity** - Celebrators value differences.
  • We should celebrate differences.
  • To celebrate diversity on every issue is actually hard for most people.

  • Source: http://mrpschneider.wikispaces.com/file/view/Habit+6+Synopsis.pdf
We are all a minority

• We need to realize that diversity isn’t just an external thing, it’s also internal.
  • Although we may be alike in so many ways, we are also so different.

• We should celebrate our own differences.
  • Our differences are what give us the ability to create possibilities that otherwise would not exist.
  • If we were all the same, our abilities would be reduced.

• We need to identify roadblocks to celebrating diversity: ignorance, cliques, & prejudice.
  • Unless we can identify and eliminate prejudice, we cannot achieve our maximum effectiveness.
    • Source: http://mrpschneider.wikispaces.com/file/view/Habit+6+Synopsis.pdf
Ways we differ on the inside.

• We have different learning styles and intelligences – we learn best through our dominant intelligence. The various intelligences identified are:
  • **Linguistic** – learn through reading, writing, telling stories
  • **Logical** – **Mathematical** – learn through logic, patterns, categories, relationships
  • **Bodily-Kinesthetic** – learn through bodily sensations, touching
  • **Spatial** – learn through images and pictures
  • **Musical** – learn through sound and rhythm
  • **Interpersonal** – learn through interaction and communication with others
  • **Intrapersonal** – learn through their own feelings

  • Source: http://mrpschneider.wikispaces.com/file/view/Habit+6+Synopsis.pdf
Why this Matters

• Knowing how we learn is important because it helps us to relate to those who learn differently.
  • How we learn affects how we view the world.
  • Those that are skilled in linguistic or logical learning may not value the contributions of someone who learns differently.
    • They may not see this as something of ‘real’ value.

• Those who cannot understand how others learn may not appreciate what others can contribute.
One View of Leaders

• In addition to learning styles, we have different leadership styles.

• One view of leadership breaks people into four color categories:
  • Blue: These people need to feel unique and authentic. They are enthusiastic, sympathetic, warm, communicative, flexible and imaginative.
  • Orange: These people will act on a moment’s notice. They are witty, charming, spontaneous, impulsive, optimistic, bold and physical.
  • Gold: These people follow the rules and respect authority. They are loyal, dependable, prepared, thorough, sensible, punctual, faithful, organized, caring and concerned.
  • Green: These people seek knowledge and understanding. They are analytical, conceptual, calm, collected, inventive, logical, problem solvers and often perfectionists.

Challenges

• While it may aid people to understand how they view the world, knowing how others view the world can help us to navigate conflicts.
  
• Blue’s tend to find the analytical nature of Green’s to be off-putting and isolating.
• Green’s tend to find the emotional-based views of Gold’s and Blue’s to be flaky.
• Gold’s tend to value tradition and loyalty over spontaneity and creativity which can make it seem like they are dragging their feet when new ideas need to be adopted.
• Orange’s are often seen as dangerously impulsive and quick to jump to conclusions.
Opportunities

• However, while each style of leadership has differences, these differences of leadership lead to more creative and effective outcomes.
  • Blue’s ensure fairness and that everyone is heard and appreciated.
  • Orange’s contribute energy to the group and enable quick, decisive action when needed.
  • Gold’s value tradition and encourage loyalty to the group.
  • Green’s are the thinkers and identify the problems, causes, and solutions.

• All are needed for a group to function.
No one is “right” – we all interpret the world differently.

- We see differently – Everyone sees the world differently and has different views about themselves, others, and life in general.
  - There is no one “right” way to view the world – our own views are shaped by our own experiences and culture.
  - We are all products of our time and place.

- We all have different styles, traits, and characteristics.
  - Different personalities enable different ideas and promote creativity.
  - Without different viewpoints, we would not have new ideas.
  - Those who avoid diversity reduce their own effectiveness as a leader.
  - Those who seek and appreciate different viewpoints are best poised to develop novel ideas and creative solutions to most effectively solve their group’s problem.
How to be Synergistic

• **Step 1:** Accept that all humans are conditioned to viewing the world by their experiences.
  - Rarely is one way the right way.
  - Differences of opinion do not lessen your own position – they strengthen it.
  - A different opinion does not mean the other person is wrong – our view of what is right/wrong is not absolute.
  - There is no “them”, only “us” – by viewing many ideas as “ours” and not “theirs”, we will gain more perspective.

• **If you insist you are right,** be sure you know how you know you are not wrong.
  - If you don’t know, withhold judgment.
How to be Synergistic

• Step 2: Appreciate why you view the world in the way that you do, and recognize that your viewpoint was not the creation of a perfect system.
  • I.e. your view of the world will continue to change and develop as you have more and more experiences.
  • The wealth of your experiences are yet to come – you have only experienced a small amount of what the world has to offer.
  • To resist new ideas would be to resist the more perfect view of the world you will (hopefully) have some day.
  • Views, like habits, can be improved through self-awareness – actively seek and consider new ideas and perspectives.
How to be Synergistic

• **Step 3: Live each moment with purpose.**
  • Know why you are doing what you are doing.
  • Identify your principles and goals, and know why you do what you do.
  • Do not go through life reacting to stimuli – control your life and mold it to fit unselfish principles of service, charity, and justice.
  • Embrace the future and let go of the past – focus on the outcomes of decisions that are happening now and not on those that have happened before.
  • Commit yourself to something greater than yourself.
  • Know that good is the enemy of great.
How to be Synergistic

• **Step 4: Surround yourself with excellence.**
  
  • Incorporate the kinds of people into your life that reflect the 7 Habits.
  
  • You are known by the company you keep – make sure that the people you are surrounded by in your life are positive, proactive people with a commitment to their own unselfish principles.
  
  • Ensure that you actively include the kinds of people in your life that value the good of the group over themselves.
  
  • Your examples mean more than your words – make sure your actions reflect your ideals on a daily basis.
  
  • Identify excellence and seek to emulate it.
How to be Synergistic

• **Step 5: Get over yourself.**
  
  • You can be wrong. You are not always right.
  • “The fool doth think he is wise, but the wise man knows himself to be a fool.” — *William Shakespeare*
  • Accept that multiple views/ideas/perspectives have their merits and that both can be right at the same time.
  • Just because one idea is correct does not mean that another is incorrect.
  • Seek another’s opinion before offering your own.
How to be Synergistic

• Step 6: Raise the praise and minimize the criticize.
  • Criticism should only occur with careful thought and consideration.
  • While criticism can be necessary, it should only be used constructively and in small doses.
  • On the contrary, praise should be constant and continuous when deserved.
  • Be quick to praise and slow to criticize.
How to be Synergistic

• **Step 7: Reflect, Reconsider, Repeat**
  
  • The only way to improvement is through self-awareness. The only way to self-awareness is through reflection.
  
  • Whatever may be your strategy, be sure you are intentionally scheduling time to consider your actions, reflect on their results, and adjust how you live your life.
  
  • Those who fail to reflect also fail to improve.