

Seven Habits of Highly Successful NSDA Leaders

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Ground rules

- Basically none
- Only “stupid question” is the one that you didn’t ask when you should have
- Index cards for Q&A after break
- “New Learnings” sheet



Definitions

- Habit: Acquired behavior pattern regularly followed until it has become almost involuntary
- Successful: Accomplishing an aim or purpose



Disclaimers

- No “cookbook”
- Same desired behaviors may be involved with more than one habit
- Support group leaders determine how to apply the Seven Habits to their work (assign breakout group to each habit)
- Today’s talk based *loosely* on Stephen Covey’s *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*.



Paradigm shift required

- From outside-in to inside-out
- From personality ethos and tactical ethos to character ethos
- From determinism to free will and personal responsibility
- From dependence to independence and then to interdependence



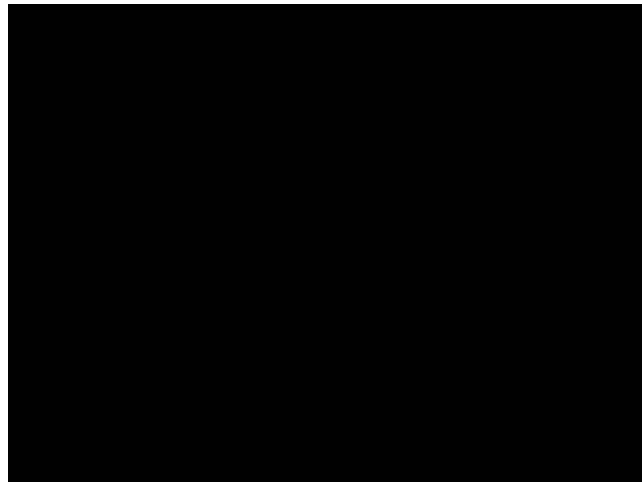
Paradigm shift, continued

- From what we say to what we do
 - Aristotle: “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.”
 - Emerson: “What you are shouts so loudly in my ears I cannot hear what you say.”



Paradigm shift, continued

- From doing things right to making sure first to do the right thing (video)



Categories of the Seven Habits

- Achievement of independence
 - Be proactive
 - Begin with the end in mind
 - First things first



Categories, continued

- Achievement of interdependence
 - Win/win
 - Seek first to understand, then to be understood
 - Synergy



Categories, continued

- Continuous improvement
 - Sharpen the saw



#1 Be proactive

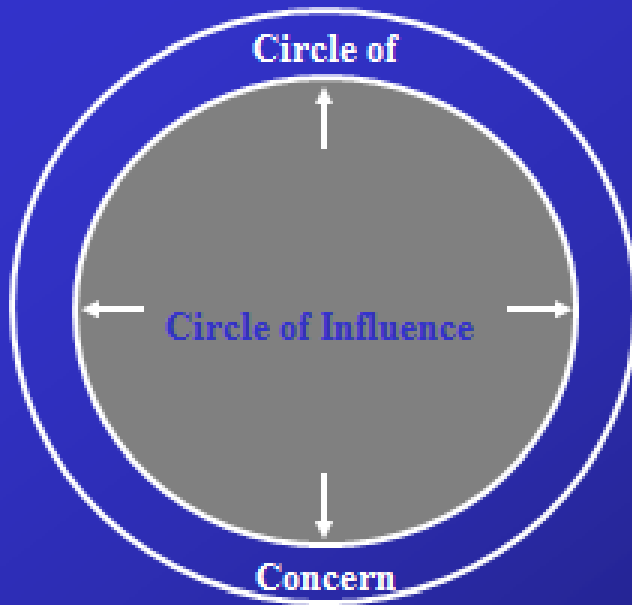
- More than carrying an umbrella.
- Tendencies are only tendencies.



#1 Be proactive, continued

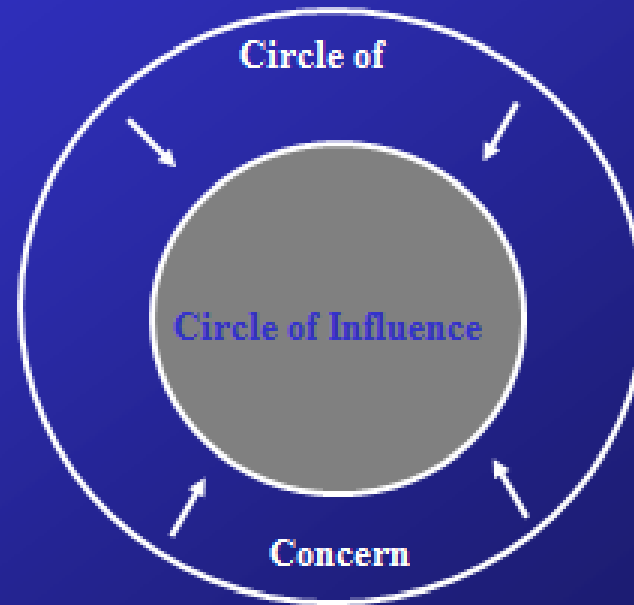
- Control what you can control and forget the rest
- Largely limited to (most) of your own behaviors
- “God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. (Niebuhr’s “Serenity Prayer”)





PROACTIVE FOCUS

*(Positive energy enlarges
the Circles of Influences)*



REACTIVE FOCUS

*(Negative energy reduces
the Circles of Influences)*

#1 Be proactive, continued

- Play well the hand that was dealt vs. complaining about the dealer
- Believe in oneself: “Whether you think that you can or that you can’t, you are usually right.” –Henry Ford
- Commit: "Do, or do not. There is no 'try'."
--Yoda in “The Empire Strikes Back”



#1 Be proactive, continued

- Raise self-esteem by achieving incrementally more challenging goals (climbing out of crevasse)
- Positive feelings/behaviors more often are the *result* of behaviors than the *cause* of them
- But, what one says to oneself and others often also determines what one will feel (and do)
- Choose responses carefully, not reflexively



#1 Be proactive, continued

- Make things happen; don't be a passive victim
- Do not surrender control (“They cannot take away our self-respect unless we give it to them.” –Gandhi)
- Be “how can” not “why can't”; find more opportunities than problems (“Give me one reason why it could be done.” –R. LaSala)



#1 Be proactive, continued

- Avoid making these statements:
 - “That’s just the way I am.”
 - “He makes me so mad.”
 - “I have no choice. I have to do it.”



#2 Begin with the end in mind

- Choose ends that are consistent with high principles
- Possible exercises
 - Write your desired obituary
 - Write a personal mission statement: desired impact on self, family, family, friends, profession, and spiritual life



#2 Begin with the end in mind, continued

- Alice: "Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"
Cat: "That depends a good deal on where you want to get to."
Alice: "I don't much care where –"
Cat: "Then it doesn't matter which way you go." --Lewis Carroll from *Alice in Wonderland*
- Bottom line: one needs direction to succeed



#3 First things first

- There is no *time management*, only *self-management*.
- No way to “do it all.”
- Key tasks: Decide what not to do and learn to say “No.”

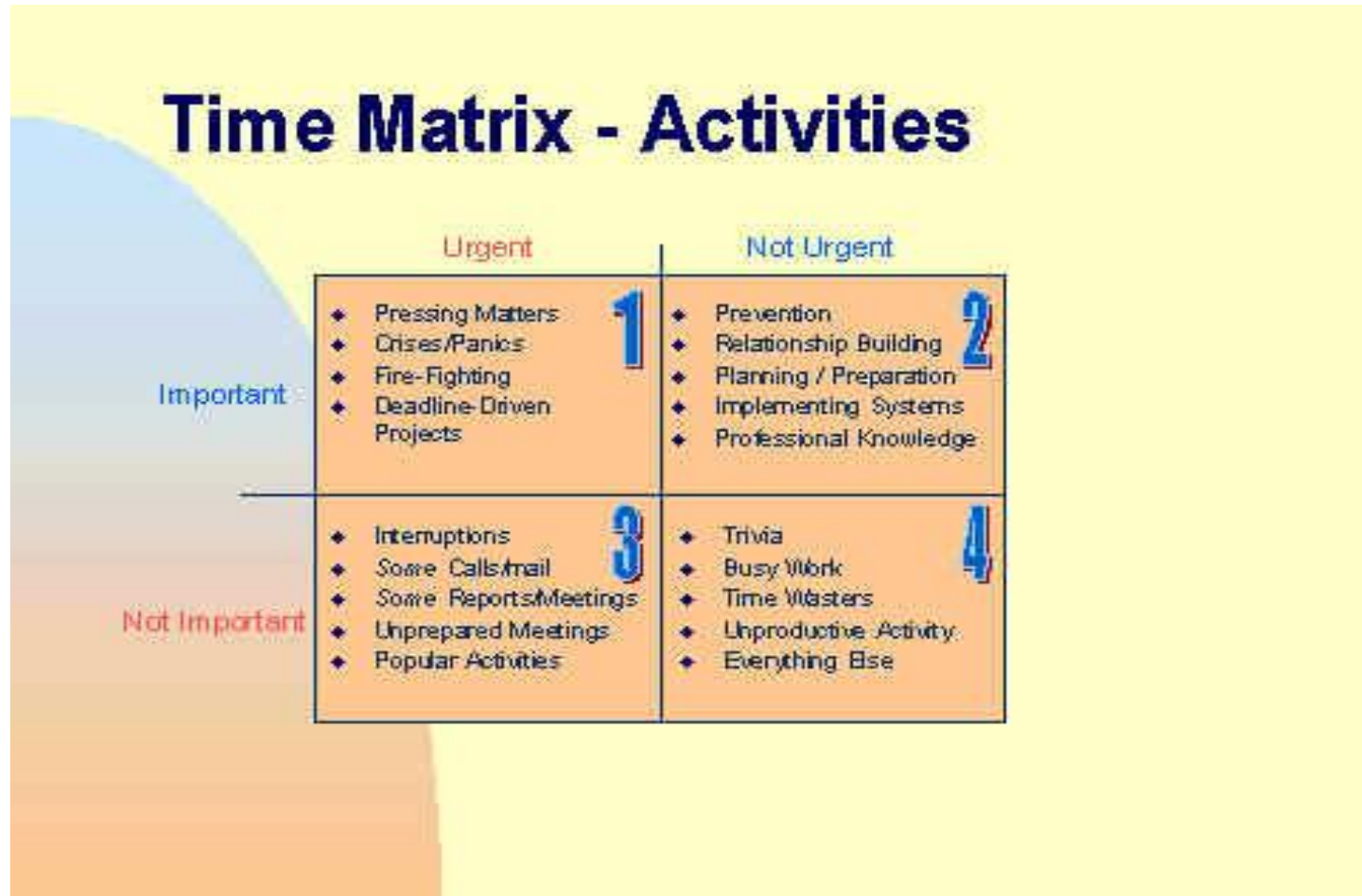


#3 First things first

- Easy to become seduced by the urgent, unimportant “Your poor planning is not my emergency.”
- Do urgent, important things first, then the non-urgent, important (See following matrix)



#3 First things first



#3 First things first, continued

- The most important tasks rarely are the easiest
- Use Premack reinforcers to deal with procrastination
- Do important big tasks (both urgent and non-urgent) before doing the important small tasks (see following image)



#3 First things first



#4 Win/win

- Everyone can win
- Win/win or no deal
- Not zero-sum, not competitive
- Abundance model, not scarcity model
- Abundance model ascribed to by those who have appropriately high self-worth, a personal sense of security, maturity, and integrity



#4 Win/win

- Outcomes that hurt one party hurt all parties
- Hurt parties ensure unstable outcomes (e.g., post WW I Germany)
- Negotiate based on “interest” not on “position.” (Union OT example)
- Requires teamwork (caring as much about the success of others as about one’s own success)



#4 Win/win

- Teamwork requires trust. (“The man who trusts men will make fewer mistakes than he who distrusts them.” –Camillo Benso di Cavour.)
- Trust engenders receiving the benefit of the doubt and forgiveness of mistakes.



#5 Seek first to understand, then to be understood

- Arguably the most important of the seven habits
- Key is *active empathic listening*.



#5 Seek first to understand, then to be understood, continued

- Being active:
 - Hard work
 - Requires effort to observe and listen carefully
 - Not a passive process (totally unlike making an audio recording)
 - Need to make interpretations correctly
 - Correct interpretation requires guarding against making faulty assumptions and inferences.
(Listening exercise)



#5 Seek first to understand, then to be understood, continued

- Suspend judgment
- “If you were born where they were born and you were taught what they were taught, you’d believe what they believe.” –variously attributed to Abraham Lincoln and others
- “There is so much in the lives of all of us that we don’t know that justifies tolerance and forgiveness.” –Herman J. Guckenberger



#5 Seek first to understand, then to be understood, continued

- Paraphrase to confirm understanding of thoughts and feelings
- Focus is 100% on speaker, making appropriate eye contact when possible (no multi-tasking)



#5 Seek first to understand, then to be understood, continued

- Being empathic
 - Tuning-in both to factual and emotional content.
 - Best when using one's eyes and heart, in addition to one's ears
 - Caring and communicating the caring (“No one cares how much you know, until they know how much you care.” –T. R. Roosevelt)



#5 Seek first to understand, then to be understood, continued

- Listening:
 - Much more than waiting for one's turn to talk
 - Requires hearing accurately what is said as well as noticing what is not said
 - Have no agenda other than to understand
 - Allow silences
 - Avoid trying to solve the problem
 - Avoid saying: "I know exactly how you feel."



#5 Seek first to understand, then to be understood, continued.

- Don't underestimate the power of "just" listening
 - Expressing one's feelings diminishes the bad ones and amplifies the good ones
 - Often enables the speaker to solve his/her own problems
 - Critical to building and maintaining relationships ("I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." –Maya Angelou)



#6 Synergize

- Unleash the amazing power of the group
- Value cognitive, experiential, and psychological differences (“If everyone is thinking the same, someone isn’t thinking.” – Gen. George Patton)
- Often works best when entire group is together
- Brainstorm, with the leader holding back



#6 Synergize, continued

- It's possible to disagree with someone and for both individuals to be correct
- See following images (omitted from handout)
 - Half of group looks at first
 - Other half looks at second
 - Both look at third
 - What do you see?
 - Who is correct?









#7 Sharpen the saw

- Lifelong learning because none of us should be a finished product
- Increases mastery of other six habits
- Enhances knowledge, skills, abilities, and motivation
- Entails renewal: physical, mental, social/emotional, and spiritual



#7 Sharpen the saw, continued

- Balance doing and learning, production with ability to produce (“Learn. Commit. Do.” – Stephen Covey.)
- Requires the ability to delay gratification (Goose and golden eggs)
- Combination of preventive maintenance and continuous improvement
- Not having time is an illusion (or maybe a delusion)



Breakout group task

- How can you apply these seven habits to your work as support group leaders?



Just for fun

- Do you *know* who I am? (video)

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