

THE 7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE

BOOK DIGEST

PUBLIC VICTORY

Habit 4 : THINK WIN/WIN - Principles of interpersonal leadership

“We have committed the Golden Rule to memory; let us now commit it to Life—Edwin Markham”

When the Emotional Bank Account (EBA) in a relationship is overdrawn, it creates a culture of low trust, within the partnership, the marriage, the family or the organization. It's crucial to then understand **how the EBA was mismanaged**, and to identify which **flawed paradigms** are responsible for the situation.

As Stephen Covey puts it:

“You can't change the fruit without changing the root.”

It is common for instance to witness managers wondering why their team members do not cooperate, without realizing that they've created a culture of competition which separates them. **The information and rewards systems upheld by leadership must indeed reinforce the value of cooperation, if cooperation is the goal.** And whether we look at this through the filter of work or of our personal experience, we must remember that in order to **shift from independence to interdependence**, we must step into a **leadership role** and embrace the habit of **interpersonal leadership**: we must think Win/Win.

Six paradigms of human interaction

Win/Win is not a technique, but a philosophy that the author invites us to build our relationships around.

It is also **one of the six** paradigms of human interaction.

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Win/Win

“A frame of mind and of heart that constantly seeks mutual benefit in all human interactions”

It drives us to find agreements and solutions that are **mutually beneficial and satisfying**. All parties feel good and committed to the solution that was found, and life can be seen as cooperative and not as a competition.

It lies upon an **abundance mindset** where one recognizes that there is plenty for everybody and that one's success does not depend on the other's failure.

“It's not your way or my way; it's a BETTER way, a higher way.”

Win/Lose

It's the **authoritarian** approach, where we believe that the other must lose for us to win and rely on position, possessions, power, credentials and our public image to get what we want the way we want it. And, sadly, most of us are scripted in this mentality from birth. Children who witness a lot of comparison between them and another child learn early that love is conditional and that they're not intrinsically lovable and valuable.

“And what happens to a young mind and heart, highly vulnerable, highly dependent, in the face of conditional love? The child is molded, shaped, and programmed in the Win/Lose mentality.”

We can also learn this through **peer pressure** to conform with our group's expectations and norms. Academia and our **educational systems** further reinforce these narratives. Our values is evaluated in comparison to others and a grading system. Everyone is defined by extrinsic factors and there's no room for intrinsic value recognition. People are not graded against their full potential or the current use of their capacity. And grades define which opportunity we get and hold immense social values. **We are wired for competition**. The **justice system** is another member of what the author calls “powerful scripting agencies.” Our society is a litigious one, and S.C. reminds us that:

“Defensive minds are neither creative nor cooperative.”

It serves our survival instincts, not our need for synergy.

And if Win/Lose can maybe be justified in some highly competitive fields where trust is not warranted, it should at the very least never enter a marriage. In that setting, the author highlights that:

“If both people aren't winning, both are losing.”

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Lose/Win

A lot of folks label this as peacemaking, but not Stephen Covey. He states that it is **worse than Win/Lose**, because it betrays the fact that the person thinking Lose/Win has **no standards**. They hold no vision, expectations or demands to stand up for. Quick to appease and please, they only seek acceptance or popularity. This leads to **permissiveness or indulgence** among leaders who think this way, and **attracts** people rooted in a **Win/Lose** paradigm, and who want to take advantage of the situation. It's also dangerous because our repressed feelings do not disappear, they turn into uglier ones or even diseases, after **years of cumulative resentment and deep disappointments** that could be avoided.

"Disproportionate rage or anger, overreaction to minor provocation, and cynicism are other embodiments of suppressed emotion."

And there's a reason for that:

"People who are constantly repressing, not transcending feelings toward a higher meaning, find that it affects the quality of their self-esteem and eventually the quality of their relationships with others."

In the end both Win/Lose and Lose/Win are weak positions fueled by personal insecurities.

"Many executives, managers, and parents swing back and forth, as if on a pendulum, from Win/Lose inconsideration to Lose/Win indulgence.

When they can't stand confusion and lack of structure, direction, expectation and discipline any longer, they swing back to Win/Lose—until guilt undermines their resolve and drives them back to Lose/Win—until anger and frustration drive them back to Win/Lose again."

Lose/Lose

This is the result of **two Win/Lose minded folks** getting together. People get quickly vindictive and fall into the trap of wanting to "get even" or "get back". This is **the philosophy of war**. And it can also be the philosophy of someone without inner direction, stuck in a state of dependence to others or to circumstances and who are so miserable that they believe everyone else should be too.

Win

Here the person only thinks about winning and finds **the other's reality irrelevant**. Their responsibility is to secure their own ends, and it is up to others to secure theirs.

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Which option is best?

Reality dictates which is the best option, and our role is to learn how to read the situation accurately.

There are situations where a **Win/Lose** mentality has its place. In a football game for instance! Or in business if it can stimulate the team's members to do their best in order to secure a deal and when there is no foreseeable collaboration involved with the other party—and therefore no need for trust or connection.

At times, the **Lose/Win** philosophy is needed in a relationship to show how much we value the other person and if the Loss does not violate our most important values or priorities.

Win can be all that matters, for instance if a loved one's is at stake !

However, **in most situations**, **Win/Win** will be the only viable alternative, because we live in a deeply **interdependent** reality. Even if we don't realize it in the moment, an immediate win can quickly turn into a loss and ruin the chances at a healthy relationship. And interestingly, rooting in a Win/Win paradigm guides us towards solution that none of the person involved would have found on their own. This is why it is also very **synergistic**.

Win/Win or No Deal

No deal is after all an option and knowing this is **liberating**. It removes the need to push, pull, manipulate. Both parties can try to understand the deeper issues that the other one faces and stay open, because there is no risk of feeling taken advantage of. It will either work for everyone or not involve any further commitment.

*"Anything else that Win/Win in an interdependent reality is a poor second best that will have impact in the long-term relationship.
The cost of that impact needs to be carefully considered.
If you can't reach a true Win/Win, you're very often better off to go for No Deal."*

Everyone can express their thoughts, feelings and ideas because everyone knows that there will no emotional strings if the deal doesn't pull through. It will **beneficiate everyone** or it will not happen. Everyone is safe.

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Five dimensions of Win/Win

It entails each of the **five unique human endowments**: self-awareness, imagination, conscience and independent will and involves **mutual learning, mutual influence and mutual benefits**. It takes **courage!** and calls for **consideration**.

“Effective interpersonal leadership requires the vision, the proactive initiative, and the security, guidance, wisdom, and power that come from principle-centered personal leadership.”

And there are five pillars of Win/Win: the foundation being **one’s character** and **supportive systems and supportive processes**, all rooted in the Win/Win philosophy which allows a move towards **Win/Win relationships** that will foster **Win/Win agreements**.

Character

Three character traits are essential for someone to embody the Win/Win paradigm: integrity, maturity and an abundance mentality.

Integrity: The author defines it as the value we place on ourselves. It is developed and maintained through the first three habits. It requires the **self-awareness** and **independent will** to make and keep **meaningful promises and commitments**. It is the **cornerstone** of our character.

“There’s no way to go for a Win in our own lives if we don’t even know, in a deep sense, what constitutes a Win—that is, in fact, harmonious with our innermost values.”

Maturity: S.C. describes this as the **balance between courage and consideration**. He quotes a Harvard professor he deeply admired called Hrand Saxenian, who defined emotional maturity as: *“[the] “ability to express one’s own feelings and convictions balanced with the consideration for the thoughts and feelings of others.”*

Respect for this balance is **paramount** for fruitful human interactions, management and leadership, and of course also foundational in the **P/PC paradigm**.

“The basic task of leadership is to increase the standard of living and the quality of life for all stakeholders.”

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Many people are afraid that being kind means being weak, but the Win/Win philosophy requires us to realize that we can and must be both, **both kind AND tough**. To go Win/Win we must be empathetic, which can only happen when we're confident. We must be considerate and sensitive, which requires bravery. When we're high on courage and lacking consideration, we fall into a Win/Lose mode. When we're full of consideration and lacking courage, Lose/Win is our only option.

"High courage and consideration are both essential to Win/Win. It is the balance that is the mark of real maturity. If I have it, I can listen. I can emphatically understand, but I can also courageously confront."

Abundance Mentality: Most people are deeply scripted in a **Scarcity mindset**, making it really hard to share recognition, power, credit or profit. This mindset also robs us of the chance to be happy for other people when they succeed. It can make someone feel like they're losing when the other is winning. This mindset warrants competition and comparison. Once stuck in this way of thinking, people focus on possessing things (or other people) as a way to increase their sense of worth. It calls for "yes people" who can confirm everything one thinks and validate everything one does. Differences get perceived as disloyalty and insubordination.

"The Abundance Mindset, on the other hand, flows out of a deep inner sense of personal worth and security. It is the paradigm that there is plenty out there and enough to spare for everybody. It results in sharing of prestige, of recognition, of profits, of decision making. It opens possibilities, options, alternatives and creativity."

It harnesses the **personal satisfaction, joy and fulfillment** brought by the first three habits and projects it **outwardly**, allowing us to recognize unlimited possibilities for **growth and positive interactions** and **synergistic alternatives** aligned with everyone involved.

As usual the author reminds us that for any correct principle, including the Win/Win philosophy, **the real validation is in our own lives**.

"A character rich in integrity, maturity and the Abundance Mentality has a genuineness that goes far beyond technique, or lack of it, in human interaction."

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Relationships

Win/Win relationships spur from the foundation of our Win/Win character. Our character allows us to build trust and fill the EBA which will allow the relationship to thrive. **Trust opens the door to open communication, mutual learning and creativity.** Respect has been prioritized and proven by both parties. Conversations are focused on the shared issues—not personalities or positions.

“Because we trust each other, we’re open. We put our cards on the table. (...)

We’re probably both committed to try to understand each other’s point of view deeply and to work together for the third alternative, the synergistic solution, that will be a better answer for both of us.”

Win/Win relationships are a **springboard for synergy**; they eliminate the negative energy without denying the differences of perspective or trivializing the issues, and embody the spirit of collaboration.

And the **greatest test** of our Win/Win character is when we meet **someone** who only knows about the Win/Lose option. Time to remember that **our responsibility lies in our circle of influence.** Time to make **deposits** through genuine courtesy, respect and acknowledgement of the other person’s humanity and opinion. Time to **lengthen** even more the communication **process.**

“You listen more, you listen in great depth. You express yourself with greater courage. You aren’t reactive.

You go deeper inside yourself for strength of character to be proactive.

You keep hammering it out until the other person begins to realize that you genuinely want the resolution to be a real win for both of you.”

That process alone will be a **formidable deposit.** That’s why this kind of leadership is **transformational**, it transforms not only the relationship but also the people in it.

A word about **compromise**, the **low form of Win/Win.** Especially when the EBA is full, a relationship can withstand a compromise if there is a good reason why a true Win/Win cannot be reached and why No Deal would be detrimental for both parties. However, the risk of a compromise (if the EBA is low) is **disingenuity** when one pretends to be okay with the result in front of their partner and acts resentful in the backward. Even worse, this can create what Stephen Covey calls **“malicious obedience”** where someone does exactly what they’re told and **ONLY** what they’re told, relinquishing any responsibility for the results.

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Agreements

They are the performance or partnerships agreements that will flow from the Win/Win paradigm, shifting interactions from the vertical to the horizontal, supervision from hovering tactics to self-empowerment and setting partners up for success.

Five elements must be made **explicit** to support them:

- Desired results,
- Guidelines,
- Resources,
- Accountability,
- Consequences.

“Traditional authoritarian supervision is a Win/Lose paradigm. It’s also the result of an overdrawn EBA. If you don’t have trust or a common vision of desired results, you tend to hover over, check up on, and direct. Trust isn’t there, so you feel as though you have to control people.”

And here’s a powerful lesson that S.C. wants us to live by:

“It is much more ennobling to the human spirit to let people judge themselves than to judge them. And in a high trust culture, it’s much more accurate. In many cases, people know in their hearts how things are much better than the records show. Discernment is often far more accurate than either observation or measurement.”

Win/Win Performance Agreements

“When a boss becomes the first assistant to each of his subordinates, he can greatly increase his span of control.”

Consequences must be clearly defined and represent **logical results** of performance, **not rewards or punishments**. There are four kinds to consider: **financial**, **psychic** (approval, respect, credibility, or loss of them), **opportunity** (trainings and other benefits) and **responsibility** (enlargement or decrease of scope and authority). Of note, psychic consequences are more powerful than financial ones for someone who is not in survival mode. Consequences must be **specified upfront**, it’s not about playing games. And everyone must also be aware of what the **natural organizational consequences** are, which are the consequences involving collaborations with others, customers, and the workplace rules (schedule...).

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Win/Win agreements are liberating and rely on personal integrity and relationships of trust.

*“A true Win/Win agreement is the product of the paradigm, the character,
and the relationships out of which it grows.
In that context, it defines and directs the interdependent interaction for which it was created.”*

Systems

“You get what you reward”

For Win/Win to survive within an organization, Win/Win systems must be in place. For instance, Win/Lose cannot be rewarded for Win/Win to be implemented.

*“Competition has its place in the marketplace or against last year’s performance—
perhaps even against another office or individual where there is no particular interdependence, no need to cooperate.
But cooperation in the workplace is as important to free enterprise as competition in the marketplace.
The spirit of Win/Win cannot survive in an environment of competition and contests.”*

Everything must be aligned to the goals and values of Win/Win: the training system, the planning system, the communication system, the budgeting system, the information system, the compensation system.

*“So often the problem is in the system, not in the people.
If you put good people in bad systems, you get bad results.
You have to water the flowers you want to grow.”*

Processes

It is paramount to separate the person from the problem, to focus on interests and not positions, to rely on objective criteria and principles that both parties can agree on and to foster creativity around mutually beneficial options, if we want to reach a Win/Win solution.

“You can only achieve Win/Win solutions with Win/Win processes—the end and the means are the same.”

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"Win/Win is not a personality technique.

It's a total paradigm of human interaction.

It comes from a character of integrity, maturity and abundance mentality.

It grows out of high trust relationships.

It is embodied in agreements that effectively clarify and manage expectations as well as accomplishments.

It thrives in supportive systems.

And it is achieved through the process we are now prepared to more fully examine in Habits 5 and 6."

Here are our homeworks:

- To commit to maintain a balance of courage and consideration for an upcoming interaction where an agreement must be reached.
- To list our current obstacles to using the Win/Win paradigm more frequently.
- To select a relationship in which to create a new Win/Win agreement.
- To identify three key relationships in our lives and estimate their EBA, before brainstorming new ways to make deposits!
- To deeply consider our own scripting. Where were we model some Win/Lose tendencies that might have stayed with us? Can we change our perspective on that?
- Find a Win/Win thinking role model and learn from them!

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BOOK CLUB DISCUSSIONS

SAVE THE DATE

You're invited

Tuesday, October 24th

from 7pm-8pm

Virtual Zoom Meeting

OR

Friday, October 27th

from 12pm-1pm

Virtual Zoom Meeting