



It's the Thought That Counts

While quantum mechanics sounds like a heavy topic to start off the New Year, it may be just the ticket to creating a *better* year. Many of us make our

New Year's resolutions and before the commitments have fallen from our tongues we've broken them. So many jokes abound about breaking our resolutions that we no longer make them at all, much less believe we can keep them. But what if this year could be different? What if we had the power to make things different this year? Believe it or not, we do.

One element of quantum mechanics is recognizing the power of thought. This is not the same as the power of positive thinking. Rather, it is the awareness and practice of thinking in ways that bring about what we desire. We simply don't realize how powerful our thoughts are. We keep them to ourselves and believe they have no impact. But they do have an impact, not only on us, but on the world around us. Think about the times you have believed in someone, perhaps a son or daughter, a friend, or even yourself. Just the power of believing may have helped them, or you, accomplish the unthinkable. On the other hand, what about the times you thought someone was incapable. Did they fulfill your expectations? Too often they did and while we believe we played no part in that outcome, our thoughts had more impact than we realize.

I recently heard the old adage, "I won't believe it until I see it" reworded to: "I won't see it until I believe it." *That* is powerful! Until you believe in whatever your dream is, until you believe in yourself, whatever you want for 2006 and beyond will lie outside your grasp. But the moment you *believe*, and I mean truly believe, not just "well maybe", you start to bring whatever your heart desires within your reach.

Where do you begin to make this year different? If you make one and only one resolution, make it be "mastering the beast within". In other words, start with your thoughts about yourself. Are they critical or supportive? What does that voice in your head say to you? How do you feel as a result? If you have negative self-talk going on, you are setting yourself up for unhappiness and a lack of fulfillment. Nothing will ever be good enough. Just like that parent, teacher or coach you could never please, you'll never be able to please that voice. The only way to fight it is to silence it. Once you've had some success silencing it, try replacing the self-criticism with a few encouraging words. See if your days brighten up a bit with more supportive self-talk. Make it a goal to be your own best friend instead of your own worst enemy. Remember the goal isn't to have a "life is beautiful all the time" mentality, but rather, to be fair. Negative self-talk is just as unrealistic as entirely positive self-talk. Honesty—a

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Delegation Doctor's Daily Dose

My heart went out to a new manager I recently met in a *Want It Done Right* training. He had just been promoted and I congratulated him heartily—until I learned that he acquired 49 direct reports. Can you imagine? His first time as a manager and he has 49 direct reports! That must be close to a record! I couldn't imagine his boss or the company was deliberately setting him up to fail. Yet, I couldn't help but feel that failure was the only possible outcome. I was thrilled that he at least would have the benefit of starting out with training on delegation but there is so much more he must know.

If you're new to management, here's what you need to know (not listed in order of importance):

1. How to get work done through others so you don't end up doing everything yourself. This means making the transition from a doer or performer to a leader/manager. It's not an easy shift but is fundamental to your ultimate success. Within this category lie the skills of effective delegation and performance management.
2. How to walk and talk the fine balance between being supportive of your direct reports and being aligned with management. This is another difficult, yet critical, shift when you become a manager. It is especially a challenge if you have been promoted from within and your former peers are now your direct reports. As a manager, you have to take unpopular stands at times. You have to support and enforce company policy even when you don't believe in it. If you disagree, this should be invisible to your team.
3. How to coach and develop your direct reports. Your "production" as a manager is in developing your team into "A" players. If you accomplish this, you won't have to "do it yourself". More importantly, you will have a ready replacement for your position so you can move on to bigger and better challenges.
4. How to translate the strategic into the day-to-day and vice versa. An important responsibility for managers is to roll the strategic plan and goals down

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fair self-assessment—is the best policy.

Think about people who have accomplished amazing feats. Lance Armstrong overcame cancer to win the Tour De France, not once, but three more times. Erik Weihenmayer climbed Mt. Everest—blind. These are just two of many examples. What do you think the self-talk of these individuals sounds like? How critical is their voice within? While they may push themselves to reach audacious goals, their self-talk is probably similar to a coach—tough but fair. After all, they first have to believe they can do what they set out to do, then find the discipline within themselves to do it. Ironically, we find much more inner strength when we treat ourselves with dignity and respect than we do when we beat ourselves up relentlessly. Not surprising, the same holds true in dealing with others. Also not surprising, how we treat others is often a reflection (or projection) of how we treat ourselves.

Conquering negative self-talk will naturally help you see people and situations in your life differently. Thinking differently can make a powerful positive impact on your life. You might just dare to dream, dare to set goals and dare to fulfill them. So go ahead, make 2006 a new year, different from all the others. Make 2006 your best year ever, make it a Happy *New* Year!

Words of Wisdom
The great thing in this world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving.
 — Oliver Wendell Holmes

Corner Crack-Up

The boss called one of his employees into the office.

"Rob," he said, "you've been with the company for a year. You started off in the post room, one week later you were promoted to a sales position, and one month after that you were promoted to district manager of the sales department.

"Just four short months later, you were promoted to vice-president. Now it's time for me to retire, and I want you to take over the company.

"What do you say to that?"

"Thanks," said the employee.

"Thanks?" the boss replied. "Is that all you can say?"

"I suppose not," the employee said.

"Thanks, Dad."

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through the organization so everyone is contributing meaningfully. Conversely, it is important for managers to ensure that the work being done on a daily and weekly basis is connected to the ultimate goals of the organization.

5. How to work and communicate effectively with people at multiple levels of the organization. Some new managers, filled with the satisfaction that they have "arrived", begin treating non-managers with disregard. They see their success in the quality of their relationships with people above them rather than people below them on the corporate ladder. This is a dangerous oversight. After all, it's the people you manage who will make or break your success as a manager. Treating all employees with respect and dignity is the only way to manage effectively.

Other new managers stay "buddies" with their teams rather than aligning with the management team of which they are now a part. This is equally dangerous as mentioned under point #2 above.

The five points above are your management success factors. When I have been called in to coach an executive, he or she is typically struggling in one or more of these areas. Luckily these are mostly "coach-able" skills. Unfortunately however, sometimes the manager has gone too long without help and the damage has been done. Whether you're new to management or a seasoned manager, it might be helpful to do a quick evaluation of your skills in each of these areas. How do you measure up?

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