



# Performance Matters

Vol. II No. V

Newsletter

## How Fast are You Changing?

In this day and age we are confronted daily with events and outcomes that shake us and for which we have no answers. The complexity of modern life cannot be understood with old ways of solving problems or scapegoating individuals. In organizations, the call is for individuals to dig deep and respond to the challenges. The spoken/unspoken conversation from those around us, including ourselves, is to fix weaknesses and use our strengths. Yet for most, this is a daunting task.

Whatever our strengths are and no matter how hard we try to change aspects of our behavior, we are often disappointed to find that not much changes. The problem with this approach is that it focuses on a point of deficiency: Something is wrong with us and we have to try to fix it to be fully engaged in our work. But what if nothing is missing except understanding and acceptance? Could it really be that simple?

### Inside this Issue:

How Fast Are You Changing?  
Favorite Quotes  
Questions to Consider  
Gardner's Seven Intelligences  
Understanding Strengths and Weaknesses

**R**obin Wilson is the founder of Reach and Achieve Associates, a performance and development coaching, training and mentoring firm that specializes in helping companies access, coach and retain key talent. The programs are designed to develop, support and maximize the people resource of an organization.



Robin has facilitated presentations with groups of 150 or more, and has been a guest speaker for several well-known organizations, including the New York State Conference of Mayors, The Governor's Office of Employee Relations, and the New York State Society of Medical Assistants Annual Convention.

She co-authored the book *Maximize Your Mind; Peak Your Potential* available on her web site.

Her article "Ethics in Sales" was published in the HRDQ Press.

## Reach and Achieve Associates

(585) 218-9350 Phone

(585) 248-2117 Fax

[Info@ReachandAchieve.com](mailto:Info@ReachandAchieve.com)

[www.ReachandAchieve.com](http://www.ReachandAchieve.com)

[www.PerformanceLeadershipTools.com](http://www.PerformanceLeadershipTools.com)

## Key to Change lies in Self Knowledge, Wisdom and Compassion

The key to change lies not in the disciplined action plans but in the level of individual awareness. If we have blind spots in our behavior, we can't change what we don't see or understand. This runs contrary to what happens in most organizations today. People are given feedback on aspects of their behavior and expected to make changes. When changes don't occur, others assume it's because the individuals don't want to change or are unmotivated. We all have blind spots that limit our ability to operate, yet since we don't know what they are, we don't compensate for them.

Take driving a car as an example. We all know that there is always an inherent blind spot when viewing other cars a certain distance away, so we compensate for that: We have a special mirror on our cars that will help or we take the time to look carefully, knowing that our vision may be limited. Yet, in life we simply are not aware of what we cannot see which means that we are subject to the effects of the parts of ourselves that are invisible to us. Once we can see and understand an aspect of our personality that might be getting in the way of our effectiveness, it loses its ultimate hold on us and frees up energy.

*"There is wisdom in accepting what you are. It is difficult to be what you are not. Being what you are doesn't require any effort. When you become wise, you accept yourself the way you are, and the complete acceptance of yourself becomes the complete acceptance of everyone else." -- Don Miguel Ruiz*

## Understanding and Acceptance

With understanding and acceptance of our challenges we can then stand back and objectively look at possible compensation strategies for any imbalance. As humans, we will never arrive at our definition of perfection, because that description is flawed. What creates the biggest barrier to our effectiveness is not the weakness itself but our attempt to protect and defend against that which we don't understand. What we don't see controls us and we are captive to that which is beneath our level of consciousness. Liberating ourselves from that by making what was an unseen subject into a visible object, removing our blind spot, we can have choices rather than be run by what is beneath our awareness. This is the most powerful tool for transformation.

The journey to our personal and professional growth is through self-knowledge, acceptance and understanding. Without these three ingredients, we are victims of the endless striving to change while always feeling that we fall short. Self-knowledge increases wisdom, acceptance increases compassion and understanding creates freedom.

## Self-Knowledge, Wisdom and Compassion

### Questions to Consider

1. What are your core strengths and talents?
2. What are the key limits to your effectiveness?
3. What values do you demonstrate in your life?
4. What are your unique attributes?
5. What activities connect you with your best source of creativity and energy?

*“Human beings have a variety of intelligences, such as cognitive intelligence, emotional intelligence, musical intelligence, kinesthetic intelligence, and so on. Most people excel in one or two of those, but do poorly in the others. This is not necessarily or even usually a bad thing; part of integral wisdom is finding where one excels and thus where one can thus offer the world one’s deepest gifts.”*

■ Ken Wilber

*“I think self-awareness is probably the most important thing towards being a champion.”*

■ Billy Jean King

## Gardner's Seven Intelligences

Howard Gardner’s research points to seven distinct intelligence developing differently in different people due to heredity and training.

1. Linguistic Intelligence: involved in reading, writing, listening and talking
2. Logical-Mathematic Intelligence: involved in solving logical puzzles, deriving proofs, performing calculations
3. Spatial Intelligence: involved in moving from one location to another or determining one's orientation in space
4. Musical Intelligence: involved in playing, composing, singing and conducting. Furthermore, Gardner believes that auto mechanics and cardiologists may have this kind of intelligence in abundance as they make diagnoses on the careful listening to patterns of sounds.
5. Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence: involved in using one's body (or parts of it) to perform skilful and purposeful movements (dancers, athletes and surgeons)
6. Intrapersonal Intelligence: involved in understanding oneself and having insight into one's own thoughts, actions and emotions (self-understanding).
7. Interpersonal functioning: involved in understanding of others and one's relations to others. Being high in social skills.

## Understanding Strengths and Weaknesses

Taking the time to reflect on our strengths and weaknesses is one simple way to begin to understand ourselves better. Take a few moments and consider the questions below.

- **Strengths**

- What accomplishments are you most proud of?
- What advantages do you have that others don't have (for example, skills, certifications, education, or connections)?
- What do you do better than most other people?
- What personal resources can you access?
- What do other people see as your strengths?
- What personal values do you demonstrate?

Consider this from your own perspective, and from the point of view of the people around you. Be proud of your strengths and come up with at least 10 attributes.

- **Weaknesses**

- What tasks do you usually avoid because you don't feel confident doing them?
- What will the people around you see as your weaknesses?
- Are you completely confident in your education and skills training? If not, where are you weakest?
- What are your negative work habits (for example, are you disorganized, do you have a short temper, or are you poor at handling stress)?
- Do you have personality traits that hold you back in your field? For instance, if you have to conduct meetings on a regular basis, a fear of speaking in public would be a major weakness.

Again, consider this from a personal/internal as well as external perspective. Do other people see weaknesses that you don't see? Are there areas where co-workers consistently outperform you? Remember, the ability to be honest and objective about our shortcomings and accept them for what they are frees us from the ultimate hold our defenses have on us. Try and come up with at least 10 key challenges.

---

### **Reach and Achieve Associates**

(877) 367-9480

(585) 218-9350

(585) 248-2117 Fax

[Info@ReachandAchieve.com](mailto:Info@ReachandAchieve.com)

[www.ReachandAchieve.com](http://www.ReachandAchieve.com)

[www.PerformanceLeadershipTools.com](http://www.PerformanceLeadershipTools.com)

© Reach and Achieve Associates - 2010