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Foreword

Why do we require action plans? Without one, you won't be acting, and will always be reacting. Can you conceive of the U. S. Army Special Forces streaming arbitrarily into battle without a strategy? Readiness is always a fantastic idea, although plainly it can be a lot of work.

Here you will gain the insight and tools for everything you need to know about, to develop and to put into action

Your Success Action Plan

Chapter 1:

Putting Together An Action Plan

Synopsis

You may consider this a step in the direction of going into battle for your success. Any battle needs a strategy.

Constructing The Strategy

Let's get cracking. First of all, ask yourself a couple of questions about the overall scenario.

1. What is it that I want to accomplish here?
2. What are acceptable damages or losses? It may well be none!

Now, take stock of the individuals in the scenario, beginning with the opponent.

1. What is he or she like?
2. What are their strong points?
3. What are their failings?
4. Do you know anything about their former story?
5. What would they commonly do?
6. How would they respond to stress or hardship?
7. With all that data, what's an effective technique you are able to use?

Then, flip it around and ask those questions of yourself.

There are 2 ways you are able to approach this information. First, ask from your own aspect. The other choice would be positioning yourself in your opponent's shoes and asking those oppugns from there. You'll be shocked at the insights you are able to get from that, particularly if you're honest. It may get uncomfortable, however.

Now, imagine that you have a noisy neighbor, Bob. He blasts Britney Spears at three in the morning, and keeps everybody awake. You want to do something about it, but lack the self-assertiveness. Now,

employing preparation like we just covered to this example may be overkill, but it's "generic" enough an example for you to conform to your own state of affairs.

Let's take stock of Bob. He's loud and dictatorial. He's 6 foot 3, an ex-bodybuilder with a neck like a angus steer. He does not have a failing, but you do recognize he likes to think of himself as a fair man. You also remember that he detests primitiveness, and he responds by using his size to intimidate. Now think about how much you know about his history. Does he follow through with his threats with physical violence, or does he have sufficient good sense not to?

Now, flip it around to you. Your greatest weakness is a deficiency of assertiveness, and stammer when speaking to larger men. But put yourself in his place, and you'll acquire added insight. Does he see you as a friendly neighbor, a skinny chicken, or does he remember the DVD you borrowed and returned all scratched up?

Can you determine how that will bear on your approach? Plainly politeness is the way to go since he probably does still remember the DVD. But if you're too shy, you may decide to write a memo alternatively. Because he's upset over the DVD, it may be a good idea to calm the waters with a peace-offering.

Now, you may be thinking that this is common sense, but till you make it a formal process, there's a lot you're likely to overlook.

Chapter 2:

Preparation For The Meeting

Synopsis

You must ready for the meeting with the opponent.

Step 2

Ask yourself a couple of more questions here. It will assist you in planning for your plan of attack.

1. How do you recognize you have met your goals?
2. How do you mean to approach this encounter?
3. How do you structure it?
4. Do you have a position to fallback?
5. Take stock of the “battlefield”.
6. What can you improve on? What do you have to hold in mind throughout the encounter?

How would you approach the meeting? Are you friendly and modest, or do you make a show of strength first, and advance from a position of might?

How would you set it up? Do you try for friendly small talk to start out with and work your way into the business talk? In a sales meeting, do you attempt to close the sale straight off, or would you be pleased to leave with a telephone number so you are able to follow through later? How about a boxing match? Do you take off offensively, or do you check out the other fighter for the beginning round?

Let's break down the battlefield next. This can apply to the physical state of affairs – if you're on a date, it may be a good idea to go to a regular hangout, so you have bunches of friends to make you appear popular. How about a meeting? A lot of offices are set up with “power” tables and pieces of furniture, configured to make the visitor feel little. If you're in such an office, you may decide to take him out of

his power spot by proposing you do a business lunch, or even proposing a visit around the water cooler.

Occasionally, the battlefield refers to the nonfigurative conditions surrounding your meeting. Will your job depend upon whether you close the sale? Is he more productive, or does he have some kind of pull or advantage over you? Maybe he has sensitive data that he could use to pressure you? Again, these will all determine your game plan.

Next, draw on your former experience. Perhaps you were too fainthearted in previous meetings. This time, you could remember and force yourself to be more self-assertive and push for the sale when it's a good time to.

Remember never to underestimate your opponent. Most of the time he or she will be strategizing likewise!

Chapter 3:

What Is The Game Plan?

Synopsis

Any good plan of attack must have a game plan.

The Game Plan

With all that background information, the game plan will most potentially be one-half formed in your mind. It's time to double check and nail it down. Make its foundation on the 6 common sense details:

1. Sport to your strengths.
2. Play to their failings.
3. Strategize against his strong points – have in mind counters to them.
4. Strategize for your failings – how can you stop them from being overworked?
5. Think of counters to his counters.
6. Be flexible. Be prepared for the unforeseen.

This may be sounding like a lot of effort at this stage, doesn't it? How much effort can you afford to stack away in your preparation – how crucial is it to you?

How about a different level? What are his counters to your counters, and how would you anticipate those?

Let's back up to Bob. You recognize he's the type of guy who likes niceness, and you have resolved to send him a peace-offering ahead of approaching him, founded on former disagreements. Now, what if that doesn't work? What if he for some reason becomes even more outraged at your present – he sees it as some form of bribe? How are you going to brace yourself for that?

So this step is to, write a strategy down. Then contemplate it. Just like authoring an article, it's conceivable to gain new perspectives and options after placing it aside for a couple of days.

How action plans work with visualization

Once you configure your action plan, spend a little time visualizing it. Visualize your successes and your errors. See yourself doing it correctly, and then doing it incorrectly and recovering.

It's also a beneficial idea to incorporate the unforeseen – what if you're hungry, or couldn't sleep the night before, or somebody begins to hassle you? What if it starts to rain, what if it starts to snow?

Olympic athletes are encouraged to include everything in their mental simulation – including pain, fearfulness and fatigue, which are some of the largest obstacles any athlete can fall upon. They include all these sensations, and see themselves pressing past all these. So, incorporate all your failings, and push past those till you see yourself winning.

Chapter 4:

About Visualization

Synopsis

Realism in skills and technique.

Unless You Are Real It Does No Good

How are you utilizing visualization? There are a few likelihoods I can dream up. One, applying a skill or technique. Two, the chase of a goal. Three, rivalry, like particular sports and business meetings.

If you're similar to most individuals, you saw yourself doing it perfectly right away. You succeed big, or you look poised, you get a promotion, the hot guys or girls around you faint and fall madly in love. It feels unspoilt, strokes your ego, and occasionally step-ups motivation. But for the most part – to put it flat out – it's a waste of time.

How come? The most crucial consideration is always realism. Mental grooming is an extension of physical grooming. Can you imagine U. S. Army Special Forces troopers bettering their shooting skills by playing video games? There's no realism, and they'll get nothing out of it. What about paintball? A bit better, but all the same unrealistic. No, they make it as close to fact as they safely can.

And it's the same with mental conditioning. You have to put yourself in the position as it will be in real life. If it's a work skill, for instance, envisage your surroundings, tools and workmates precisely as they will be. If you're taking on sports, envisage the arena or the court as it will be on the day of the game – down to the weather, the viewers, the clothes you're wearing, and the gear you're using. Make certain to incorporate all your senses, and to make certain you're in the scene – not just thinking about it.

Like every novice, reality has hit me hard when I started sparring (“practice” fighting with an opponent). I got crushed by anybody who

had more experience, even the less experienced guys. My strategy fell apart, I had no defense, and I was often paralyzed with fright.

This started to change once I merged realism into my mental grooming. It meant carrying forward my weaknesses and errors. I didn't force that to happen – it came naturally once I made everything as realistic I was able. Even though I was simply sitting on my couch, I felt the canvas under my feet. I smelt the moldy stench of the gym. I felt my shirt holding tight to me, pasty with sweat. I saw the muscles of my sparring mate rippling as his fist came waving at my face. I knew I was getting it correct when my body began stiffening and my heart started beating rapidly – and when my mental opponent beat me up as he did in the real world.

Did that imply I failed? No, it implied I succeeded. From that point on, I could really begin training. Gradually, I began bettering my defense mentally. My fear diminished. I started picturing the correct attacks and countermoves. These advances, because they came in a realistic scenario, started carrying forward to real life.

Now, a decent add-on is to catch the feelings affected. Have you ever felt it before in the real world? Let's suppose you play basketball. In the real world, you can't get the ball through the hoop as frequently as you would like, however there have been times when you have. How did you feel then? Majestic, thrilled?

Try to recall that feeling. Seize it. Expand it if you are able to. Now, hold that feeling while you're rehearsing mentally – it will knock down your learning time. As one Olympic athlete said it, rather than mentally being in the Olympics, he felt it also – he WAS at the Olympics!

Chapter 5:

Using Visualization For Goal Setting

Synopsis

This brings us into visualization in the quest of goals. Getting ready for this might be slightly different from visualizing a skill. While you want to get your body into the action when you are visualizing performing a skill, visualizing some goals requires just the opposite.

Seeing The Goal

Make your body as at ease as possible. Scan your body mentally, decompressing each muscle as you continue. If your muscles are taut (and they frequently are, without us even recognizing it), then they're removing energy (not the metaphysical type, just plain old energy we get from nutrients) that we could be utilizing for mental work.

Much has been authored about visualizing your goals, but here is the info you need.

1. Center on the positive. If you would like to be rich, then center on being rich. If your goal isn't to be poor, then you're in reality centering on lack, and lack is what you'll get. It sounds like common sense now, but while I was trying to slim down, I tried to motivate myself by sticking pictures of my blubbery belly around the house. Not a beneficial idea.

2. Don't "desire", have it at once. Feel and visualize yourself as having already accomplished the goal now. On the other hand, if you "desire" a goal, then you're still centering on the lack, and that's what you'll get also. If you see yourself as getting it in the future, then you'll never latch on either, as the future never arrives. Consider it – when the future makes it, it's no longer the future, it's today.

3. Be uniform. Consider it as much as you are able to throughout the day. Consider it daily. Write it in a card and carry it in your pocket, and touch on to it in your spare time. If you truly desire the goal, though, this will in all likelihood come by nature. On the other hand, it will help enormously if you're filled with doubt.

4. Be accurate and specific. Don't have a dim goal to be rich, or successful. Set a specific sum of money, or a goal like being in the national basketball championships. As well, it may be a beneficial

idea to center on one or two goals only at once. It doesn't help to spread all your energies about.

The only rule that I haven't been able to solidly put to take on a trial run is whether you should leave in the HOW. Let's suppose you want a million dollars. Should you visualize yourself performing the deeds that will bring in your money, like Think and Grow Rich says, or is that unreal restriction? Some say that you should leave room for the unforeseen. You may have a 10 year plan to make your million, but what if you may be able to score a one-year contract? I'll leave the option up to you.

Naturally, the other visualization rules hold also – make the image as truthful and elaborate as possible. Make certain you're in it. Hold the image in your mind as much as you are able to – from there, you'll build up self-confidence, expectation and want.

Now, what about believability? When does realness come into play? Let's return to the millionaire goal. What if you feel it's unrealistic? Do you bring down your sights?

First off, don't be afraid to set your goals high, if you really want it. There's an old saying "Where there's a will, there's a way." As you carry your goal in your mind steadily and consistently over time, you'll start to build strong want, expectation, and self-confidence. From there, plans start to click, and you'll slowly gain the confidence and self-will to follow them. Within reason there's no goal you can't accomplish provided you're willing to put in the work. Naturally, there's always the possibility that it isn't something you really want. It's likely that parents, partners, or society will imbed goals that we don't truly want.

Chapter 6:

Staving Off Resistance

Synopsis

Even the best laid action plan can come up against some resistance.

Charging Ahead

Here's a little mystery that I came upon when writing this book. What if you visualize yourself as having a million dollars, and there develops some resistance inside you? It may be a physical feeling, like tautness in your chest, or it may be a little voice in your psyche saying "Who are you joshing?"

Isn't that simply another emotion that can be recognized, and purged, just like fright and sorrow and anger? Accept and embrace that feeling, and let it glide off you. Love it, and see it decrease.

You're clearing away internal barricades to your success. With adequate desire and self-confidence, as mentioned previously, you're doing the same thing, but why not accelerate it with both at the same time?

Here's a fast summary of the purging process. Conjure up the feeling of resistance. Welcome that feeling. Let yourself to feel it to the fullest. Don't toy with it – or your mind will begin telling fibs like "It will never work", which makes it tougher.

Embrace it and feel it right away – what does it feel like? Where is it? My resistance feels like tautness in my face and chest, for instance. Tell yourself that this is precisely what you would like to feel. And simply sit there with it. Let it take as long as it wants. Don't force it away or refuse it – just let it be there. It will fade away sooner or later.

To deepen this process, attempt a strategy called the stream of consciousness. Take a piece of paper and put down your goal on the top. Then put down whatever springs to mind underneath it. A great

deal of it will be rubbish – “I blanked out doing the laundry”, for instance – but a lot of fundamental fears will come up also. I once had a goal to become stinking rich – and this exercise brought out several hidden obstructions. Will I have to look out for fake friends? Will I fall victim to extra stress? Will I have no time to myself?

Evoke your feelings around those, and purge those as well.

Chapter 7:

Assertiveness With Self Compassion

Synopsis

Everything we do has to begin with us – personal effectiveness, personal might, assertiveness and self-worth all begin with self-compassion, acceptance and love. Even if your goals are external, it still has to begin from the inside out.

Action Plan From The Inside Out

Let's get rolling. The emotional level of assertiveness starts with cultivating self-acceptance, compassion, and love by meditation. I recognize that for a lot of individuals, this is the last thing they would like to hear.

The most potent exercise I've found for this is a Love and Compassion meditation. As a matter of fact, this meditation was at first only saved for advanced pupils in many monasteries. It's changed the lives of a lot of people. As well, you must remember not to degenerate into selfishness.

This ensures the contrary – just like the top champagne glass a top stacked ones for a fountain, after a while, you'll naturally start to overflow and touch other people. It may take weeks, or even months, but there's no other way. It has to happen.

This may seem common sense, but I know of a lot of individuals who are so self-denying that they run themselves to the ground for other people. Mothers, for instance, often wreck their own health and have no time for themselves because of their capital love for their family. But they blank out that they themselves are a part of the family and merit care and tenderness just like the others.

If you're a mother or another selfless giver who feels outraged by this, please remember that by attending to yourself, you'll be able to love your youngsters more effectively. The key is to discover a balance.

Here's a technique called grounding, tho' it's merely common sense that somebody has given a structure. There are 2 ways you can use

this to build assertiveness. The first is to conjure up a hard situation mentally, when you're alone at home, and exercise grounding then. Slowly, given experience, you'll be able to ground yourself as it happens.

1. Pause.
2. Get aware of your body.
3. Which parts of your body are strained?
4. What are your physical senses?
5. What are you feeling emotionally now?
6. What are you considering right now?
7. What precisely is causing the trouble – the other person's conduct, the environment, or something else?

If it helps, breathe deeply, and loosen all areas of stress. It may help to disconnect from and watch your physical sensations to cast off any negativity.

Now you've loosened up and gotten a handle on the state of affairs. It's time to go deeper. This is where you start to develop your first person perspective for assertiveness. Ask yourself these questions:

1. "Which part of me is being challenged? Opinions, values, personal identity, or something else?"
2. "What do I deprivation right now?"
3. "What is crucial to me right now?"
4. "What am I doing now that forbids me from getting it?"
5. "What can I do to help me accomplish that?"

Lastly, make a choice and follow up on it. Take action. Do you want to assert yourself, or do you want to put the other individual ahead of

you? I can't say which is correct or incorrect – it's up to your values and the state of affairs you're in.

I believe that with enough love and compassion for all parties affected, the action you take will be the best you are able to – this is why the meditation comes recommended also.

Chapter 8:

Sometimes You Have To Say No

Synopsis

Sometimes the dreaded no just can't be avoided in a good action plan.

How To Say No Nicely

Occasionally, once you have explored assertiveness as part of an action plan for success sometimes the best thing to do is to say no or walk away. For individuals who have a weak first perspective, though, this may be grueling. I believe that this stems from a deep-rooted need for approval.

How would you say no without hurting the other person's feelings? You'll be surprised how empathizing individuals can be, if you're polite but firm. Letdowns are a part of life, and most individuals won't take it the wrong way. Saying no does not mean you don't love them.

If they don't like you because you're sticking up for your own rights (and not out of selfishness), are they somebody you should even be around? They could be immature, using you, or perhaps they're just not used to your sudden personal power. After all they probably don't know you are working on an action plan and they may need some time to get used to the new you.

Conceive of this. You're busy at work, and your best friend comes in and calls for an hour of your time to help her out. You can love them and still say "No, I sympathize with your predicament, but I would prefer to finish my work."

"But you're so selfish!"

"I comprehend how you may feel that way, but I'd really prefer to complete my work. I have a deadline to meet."

"You ^@\$^\$@\$! If you don't help me, I will get fired!"

“I’m sorry, I truly am. But if I don’t complete this, I’ll lose MY job.”

Can you see how responding in this way can be the most helpful here? She's your best friend, but you're your best friend as well.

This example may not be the way you decide to handle it – that's just how I would have answered it.

How would you handle a disagreement between your two best friends? Compromise, maybe, or prioritize? Occasionally you would need to tell them to back down. But that's up to you to choose.

Once again, if a need for acceptance is at the root of your lack of assertiveness, the meditation will assist you enormously. No-one can give you acceptance but you and acceptance and assertiveness are needed for a good success action plan.

Chapter 9:

Specify Your Vision and Mission

Synopsis

You must know exactly where it is you are trying to go and what you are trying to accomplish.

You Need A Blueprint

Among the best examples of what can happen when you produce a solid action plan is that of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. When he announced, "I have a dream," what followed was a vision that altered a land. Dr. King distinctly outlined his vision. That vision manifested because individuals took action.

A vision statement is produced from the beliefs, values, and principles you have about your success and what you want to achieve. It centers on the path you intend to travel and describes the future you desire to see.

Remember it this way: While your action plan is the blueprint for your success, the vision statement is the blueprint for the accomplishment of that plan.

A vision statement needs to be truthful and believable. It's a description in words that helps everybody connected to it comprehend its purpose including you. It should function as a guide to action and be in alignment with your values and what you want to accomplish. In a nutshell, a vision statement should challenge and inspire an individual to achieve its mission.

A mission statement accounts for the "what" and "why" of your action plan and what you are trying to do. It tells individuals, or just you, why you're moving toward a goal and what you are hoping to achieve.

A mission statement describes your desire to you and anyone else who may be involved. It has one basic function: to serve as guide for

you and anyone else involved in making decisions that effect the direction of achieving your goals.

A typical mission statement contains 3 components:

1. The purpose of your action plan or goal.
2. What your goal will accomplish.
3. The values you hold.

A good action plan will always have the benefit of a good mission statement. Think of just what you are trying to accomplish and why.

Chapter 10:

Review and Modify

Synopsis

After all these steps have been followed and all of the tools used, review and modify your action plan.

Finalizing

Everybody has the ability to become abundantly successful. Some of the most successful individuals in the world attribute their success to writing action plans for success in one form or another.

Success action plans are potential roadmaps to accomplishing that success. As with all roadmaps, sometimes there are detours, turnabouts or unforeseen road construction, but in the end, they lead to the charted destination.

Creating a success action plan is not hard. It takes a little bit of time, thought and planning. Once all of the planning has taken place and all the tools have been learned and used, there are a couple of steps to finalize the whole thing.

Modify

Modify the success action plan as necessary. The wonderful thing about action plans is that they can be altered and added to. An unforeseen detour and/or road construction to your roadmap or plan is cause to modify the success action plan. For instance, an athlete's goal of running 5 miles in the park day-after-day hits a detour upon hearing the forecast of a dangerous snowstorm. Rather than running in the park, the athlete will have to use a less suitable means of exercise, the stationary bike. The athlete is still going in the right direction, but has had to take a temporary side road to accomplish the goal.

Review

Review the success action plan. The best success action plan in the cosmos is worthless if it's not reexamined. Review the success action plan as often as necessary in order to accomplish the sought after goal.

Wrapping Up

Remember, a success action plan is a map to attain a desired goal. It is a life enhancement tool. As with life, detours happen. When the detours and road blocks occur, be flexible, embrace them, gain more knowledge, practice the skills you have learned and move on.

Here's to your success!