




Just W.A.I.T. - If You Want To Be A High Performance Achiever

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EDWARDSVILLE - Nobody wants to put time, money and effort into building a career only to be an underachiever. Instead, we choose the difficult path in hopes to be what is referred to as a high-performance achiever (think of the Bill Gates or Oprah's of the world). Society has ingrained in us that if we put the work in and stick to our goals, we can achieve great success and happiness. But is there a personality flaw that might be holding you back from reaching high-performance achiever status?

It's not an excuse, but a valuable fact to understand that humans are not genetically wired to take advice without apprehension. Mother Nature gifted us an innate ability to be concerned about deception. Back in the day when we roamed the earth hunting for food, we had to have our guard up, otherwise, death by saber tooth tiger was imminent. This biological gift has evolved from cavemen days to not only protect us from being eaten by modern-day animals but to keep us from falling for used car salesmen, telemarketers or emails from Nigeria. Yet, what helps us can harm us too. This same gift of apprehension can cause us to speak without listening due to defensiveness or arrogance to prove a point.

If you would like to achieve your goals, be respected and ultimately survive life, it's highly recommended to fight the natural urge to immediately speak and share by asking yourself - "WHY AM I TALKING?" (W.A.I.T.)

When we hear a comment that we disagree with, our natural urge is to combat it with persuasion. As an important element of human communication, we believe that if we can get the other side to see our perspective then ultimately, we will win them over. But we fail to forget the rule I shared earlier, that human beings naturally resist persuasion. When you are trying to persuade, you become the saber tooth tiger in the other person's eyes. Hence, you will never convince your boss, co-worker, client, significant other, friend, family member...etc., that their way of thinking is incorrect by adding fuel to the fire.

Instead try a more inquisitive, less threatening approach to foster a productive conversation. (P.S. this works on social media too!) Before any words leave your mouth, ask yourself, "Who do I want to be in this situation?" This establishes a foundation for how the rest of the conversation will flow.

When beginning any conversation with a fellow human, you need to listen mindfully with compassion and acceptance. Listening mindfully means that you don't listen to react but instead listen to hear the words and the meanings that come with them. This is

where empathy comes into play: The human emotion that allows us to listen and understand in a respectful way in order to build a foundation of trust and rapport.

Instead of going on the defense, ask open-ended questions. By doing this you can reflect and reply by reframing what was said while interjecting your thoughts in the rebuttal. Beginning with phrases like, “I think” or “I feel” are far less threatening and non-confrontational than starting with “You.” Also, asking better quality questions will translate into receiving better answers.

Will using these strategies keep you from drama free conversations? Yes, if used correctly. Developing your skill of learning how to W.A.I.T. will help you control your reaction by making you proactive. That in itself is a foundation for a happier, healthier, successful life experience which can lead to being a high-performance achiever.

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