

The Visionaries Workbook



In 1937 Napoleon Hill wrote the classic *Think and Grow Rich*. One of the principles set forth was the power of a mastermind group. If you recall, Napoleon Hill put together his own fictional mastermind group including the likes of Napoleon, Lincoln, Emerson, Paine, Darwin, Ford, Carnegie, and others whom he called his “Invisible Counselors.” He asked a very powerful question, “What would these visionaries or luminaries tell me about my career or business?” As Hill evidenced, the insight provided can be profound.

In this entertaining and powerful workbook we ask you to consider what visionaries like Dr. Deming, Peter Drucker, Abraham Maslow, Seth Godin, and others would say about managing your business, career, and employees.

Note: You will notice a natural “tension” with some of the questions. For example, Warren Buffet discusses staying away from “trends” in favor of the mundane. In contrast, Tom Peters encourages us to embrace Chaos and shake things up. The point here is to stimulate your thinking. What you get out of going through this workbook is entirely up to you!

Napoleon Hill

The Formula for Success



In 1937, Napoleon Hill wrote the all-time book on success, *Think and Grow Rich*. For over fifty years, Napoleon Hill had the opportunity to interview thousands of successful people and dug deeply into their mindset. He reminded us that thoughts are things and that the most successful people have a “burning desire for a particular purpose.” To learn more about Napoleon Hill, go to www.naphill.org.

“Whatever the mind of man can conceive and believe, it can achieve.”

Question: Do you or your company have a burning desire for a particular purpose? If so, what is it?

Answer: _____

Question: How are you burning this desire into your subconscious or that of your employees through auto-suggestion?

Answer: _____

Question: How can you create mastermind groups for your executives, managers, and employees?

Answer: _____

Notes: _____

Vilfredo Pareto

The 80/20 Rule

Vilfredo Pareto was an Italian sociologist and economist. He is most famous for introducing the 80/20 rule, in which he explained that 20 percent of all actions produce 80 percent of all outcomes. He explained that this relationship held roughly true for almost any subject matter. He called this “the law of the trivial many and critical few.” For our purposes, it means that 20 percent of a company’s employees and 20 percent of all employment laws will cause 80 percent of the difficulties and lawsuits. It is far more efficient for a personnel management system to master the critical twenty percent that will cause the eighty percent of outcome, than to spend an inefficient amount of time trying to be 100 percent right.



***“Give me the fruitful error any time, full of seeds, bursting with its own corrections.
You can keep the sterile truth for yourself.”***

Question: What are the “critical few” employee challenges faced in your business?

Answer: _____

Question: How are you nurturing the critical 20% of employees, customers, and vendors?

Answer: _____

Question: Are you distracted by the concerns of the non-productive and trivial 80%? Where do you waste time on the “trivial”?

Answer: _____

Notes: _____

Tom Peters

In Search of Chaos



In 1983, Tom Peters wrote his breakthrough book "In Search of Excellence." It introduced the concept of forging powerful relationships with the customer. In a more recent book, "In Search of Chaos", he shows us how to manage in today's ever-changing business environment. Peters stresses the value of "revolutionary" thinking. According to Peters, some of today's best thinking is in defiance of management. Any system that jumps the workplace "S" curve will have to be revolutionary and unsettling to the status quo. A lot of lawyers, employees, managers and bureaucrats will naturally be resistant to change. With Peters in mind, the strategies and the tools we have designed in our program are flexible enough so that they can be used in today's chaotic business environment. How flexible is your vision?

"Test fast, fail fast, adjust fast."

Question: Where are you willing to "shake things up" and be revolutionary?

Answer: _____

Question: How do you encourage and embrace the notion of change?

Answer: _____

Question: Who could you hire or work with that would bring a completely different perspective to your company?

Answer: _____

Notes: _____

Dr. W. Edwards Deming

Fourteen Principles



Dr. W. Edwards Deming is known best as the father of Total Quality Management. Dr. Deming's systems for manufacturing had a profound effect on first the Japanese economy, and later on our own. According to Dr. Deming, you need the right management theory and the right system in order to be at your best. Dr. Deming believed that business failure is a systems problem, not a people problem.

One of Deming's basic tenets is that the most important place to put company resources is in the first 15% of any system. For example, rather than focusing on quality control inspectors, he saw to it that quality was engineered into the manufacturing process. With this in mind, our management and compliance strategies focus on front-end strategies.

"All anyone asks for is a chance to work with pride."

Question: How do you build quality into the front end of your business?

Answer: _____

Question: Do you have a standard operating system (SOP) for how your company does everything?

Answer: _____

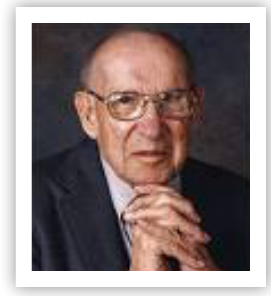
Question: How do you engage in "kaizen" or continuous improvement of the SOP?

Answer: _____

Notes: _____

Peter F. Drucker

Management by Objective (MBO)



Peter Drucker was considered the ultimate management guru. While Drucker, like Deming, hates being labeled, he is known as the creator of Management by Objectives, first popularized in 1954 in his book “The Practice of Management.” While Deming and Drucker may have had their differences, both men agree that in order to best manage a company you need to have a clear sense of direction, purpose and goals, which can be defined and measured. Drucker emphasized that the strength of any company is based on the quality of human relationships.

“Management is about doing things right. Leadership is about doing the right things.”

Question: As a leader, do you spend time “walking among the troops?”

Answer: _____

Question: How would your executives answer this question: “What are the three most important thing you do every day?”

Answer: _____

Question: Is your organization run for the benefit of the insiders, or for the benefit of the outsiders?

Answer: _____

Notes: _____

Abraham H. Maslow

The Hierarchy of Needs



The great psychologist Abraham Maslow is well known for his “needs hierarchy” that first appeared in Psychology Review in 1943 in an article entitled “A Theory of Human Motivation.” The hierarchy of needs was further developed in his 1954 book “Motivation and Personality.” Maslow claimed we have five basic needs in ascending order: survival, security, belonging, ego gratification, and self-actualization. According to Maslow, the ultimate drive of all human beings is to become “self-actualized.” This means we consider ourselves in the right place, doing the right things, for the right reasons.

“What a man can be, he must be. This need we call self-actualization.”

Question: How are you addressing the survival and security needs of your employees?

Answer: _____

Question: What do your employees, customers, or clients “belong” to?

Answer: _____

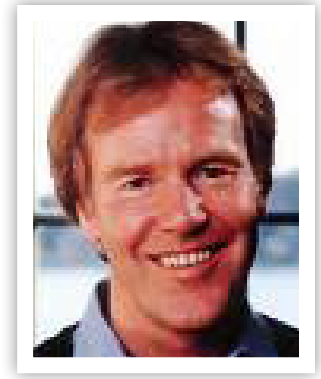
Question: How can you bring greater “meaning” to the work your company does?

Answer: _____

Notes: _____

Peter Senge

The Fifth Discipline



Senge and his cohorts work at an incredible think tank known as the Sloan School of Management at MIT. In his breakthrough book, "The Fifth Discipline", Senge took the teachings of Deming and Drucker one step further. In an economy where knowledge is arguably the most valuable commodity, Senge teaches us how to build "learning organizations" - where there are no barriers to education and improvement. In a learning organization, creativity, innovation and feedback flourish in a never-ending circle of improvement.

"The learning organization exists primarily as a vision in our collective experience and imagination."

Question: How are you creating "a learning organization"?

Answer: _____

Question: How often do you run employee surveys, focus groups, and one-to-ones?

Answer: _____

Question: How do you discover the learning styles of your employees?

Answer: _____

Notes: _____

Jay Abraham

Marketing Genius



Jay is one of this country's foremost marketing experts. He is famous for his \$10,000 "boot camps." We look at Abraham's insights and automatically ask, "How can this principle or strategy, used to market a business, be applied to managing its personnel?" As a result, we have come up with some invaluable insights. One of Jay's most important messages is that you constantly test your marketing strategies. You test, test and test again, until there's no longer any room for improvement. With this in mind, we coach owners and managers how to test different personnel theories and strategies without significant investment. Find out what works first before it is rolled out company wide.

"The fact is, everyone is in sales."

Question: Where can you "test" your human resources practices (i.e. one process approach vs. another)?

Answer: _____

Question: How can you create a powerful referral process for attracting great hires?

Answer: _____

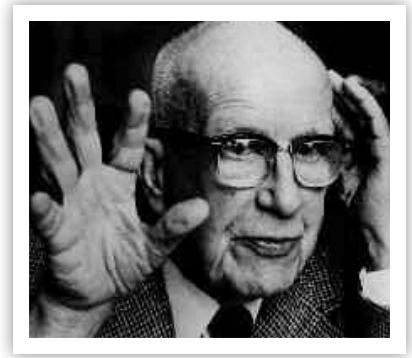
Question: How can you apply other sales and marketing strategies to managing your employees?

Answer: _____

Notes: _____

Buckminster Fuller

Thinking “Win/Win”



“Bucky” as he was known to his friends and admirers, was one of the critical thinkers of the 20th Century. You may know him as the creator of the geodesic dome. In his breakthrough book *The Critical Path*, Bucky laid out just how important it is to think in win/win terms. He stressed the use of concepts such as integrity, responsibility, collaboration, and wholeness. According to Bucky, human beings are essentially problem solvers. The gift they get for solving problems is yet a greater problem. This is how we evolve. He also made it very clear that there is more than enough “abundance” on this planet to support more than eight billion people if we simply start thinking right. In designing our program, we have focused on win/win solutions in a win/lose world.

“You have to decide whether you want to make money or make sense, because the two are mutually exclusive.”

Question: How do your incentive systems generate win/win thinking?

Answer: _____

Question: What is the “precessional” (or lateral) impact that your management style has on employees?

Answer: _____

Question: Integrity begins at the individual level. Is there anywhere you are acting out of integrity?

Answer: _____

Notes: _____

Stephen Covey

The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People



Covey is co-chairman of the Franklin Covey Company in Provo, Utah. Covey's leadership programs are built on the premise that too many quality programs focus on systems and structure, and lose sight of the people from which those systems flow. With his release of *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, in 1989, Covey brought the concept of mission statements to the forefront of management thinking. He expanded on the role of leadership in "Principle Centered Leadership". In building our program we have kept Covey's seven habits and leadership principles firmly in mind. For example, we begin with the end in mind and are constantly renewing ourselves. How do Covey's lessons apply to you and your business?

"The key is not to prioritize what's on your schedule, but to schedule your priorities."

Question: Do your employees know and embrace your mission statement?

Answer: _____

Question: Are your employees clear about long-term goals for the company and then manage their careers with that end in mind?

Answer: _____

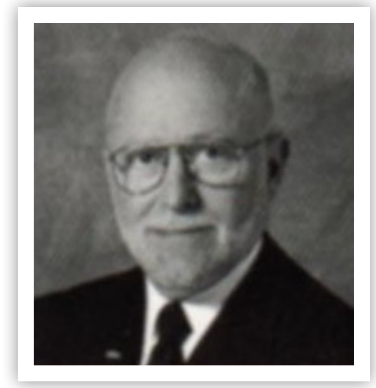
Question: How can you or your company be better listeners? (As Covey states: first seek to understand; then seek to be understood).

Answer: _____

Notes: _____

Michael Gerber

The E-Myth



Michael Gerber's works have been instrumental in designing our program. Gerber's message is simple yet powerful – you must learn how to work "on" your business, not just "in" your business. Gerber contrasts the entrepreneurial perspective with a technician's perspective. For example, the entrepreneur asked the question "How must the business work?" while the technician asks, "What work has to be done?" The entrepreneur looks at the business in its entirety while the technician looks at it in its parts. According to Gerber the entrepreneurial model of business "fulfills the perceived needs of a specific segment of consumers in an innovative way". This is our goal. Is it your goal as well?

"Why is it that with all the information available to be successful in business, so few people really are?"

Question: Are you building your business as if it were going to be franchised? Do you have SOPs for how you do everything?

Answer: _____

Question: How do your executives and employees spend time working *on* the business and not just *in* the business?

Answer: _____

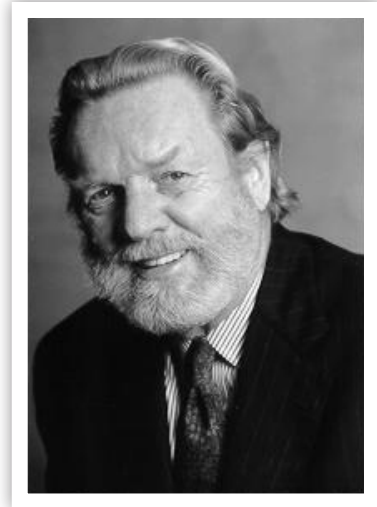
Question: How are you addressing the perceived needs of your customers in an innovative way?

Answer: _____

Notes: _____

John Naisbitt

Megatrends



In 1982 John wrote the breakthrough book Megatrends in which he described the trends shaping the 80s. In 1990 he wrote Megatrends 2000 identifying those trends you could expect to see well into the new millennium. One trend that remains on the top of our mind is that of high tech/low touch. Naisbitt explained that technology creates isolation and that maintaining relationships will be a great challenge. In designing our programs we constantly look to future trends as set forth by Naisbitt, Faith Popcorn, Futurist Magazine, and others. For example, how will the trends towards global economies, the rise of women in leadership, and the triumph of the individual affect the way that you manage your business? These are questions we will constantly ask ourselves in developing new strategies and tools.

“Intuition becomes increasingly valuable in the new information society. Precisely because there is so much data.”

Question: How are you forecasting future trends in your industry?

Answer: _____

Question: What megatrends could fundamentally affect your business?

Answer: _____

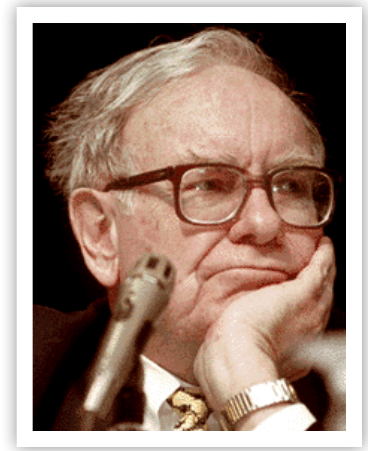
Question: In our era of high tech how are you creating high touch with clients, customers, and employees?

Answer: _____

Notes: _____

Warren Buffett

Berkshire Hathaway



Warren Buffett is widely known as the greatest investor of all time. The original shares of his company, Berkshire Hathaway currently sell for more than \$30,000! Here are some of Buffett's greatest principles:

- Invest in what you know. (Buffett let the entire dot com explosion go right by him and his shareholders are glad as a result.)
- Focus on simple things that millions of people will need to use everyday.
- Look for great leverage. Buffett loves cash-flow companies with great brands. As a corollary, he also stays away from "dramatic investments."
- Work with good people and don't try to control them. Buffett uses an extremely hands-off approach with the CEOs of companies such as Coke, Geico, Sees Candies and Gillette. Is your company being run according to Buffett's standards?

"Chains of habit are too light to be felt until they are too heavy to be broken."

Question: Do you find top executives and then let them take control?

Answer: _____

Question: Have you focused on hot trends at the expense of ignoring your primary client and customer needs?

Answer: _____

Question: Do you focus on building a great cash flow business? Do your employees understand the importance of cash flow?

Answer: _____

Notes: _____

David Bohm

On Dialogue

Bohm was a quantum physicist and a contemporary of Einstein. In his later years he spent much time bringing his insights to the subject of communication. Bohm believed the truth didn't emerge from opinions but rather from dialogue-which created "safe places" for communicating.



Believing that the nature of things is not reducible to fragments or particles, he argued for a holistic view of the universe. He demands that we learn to regard matter and life as a whole, coherent domain, which he calls the "implicate order". How many of us view our companies this way? How many of us truly realize the need for dialogue?

"The truth does not emerge from an opinion."

Question: How does your company encourage vigorous dialogue?

Answer: _____

Question: How do you create "safe places" for your employees to share critical insight?

Answer: _____

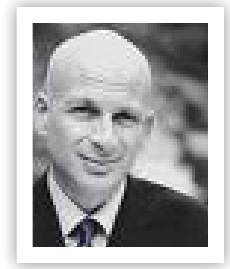
Question: Do your various departments operate in silos or do your leaders appreciate the "implicate order"?

Answer: _____

Notes: _____

Seth Godin

The Purple Cow



Seth Godin is one of the most inspiring marketers of our time. His books, such as *The Purple Cow*, *The Big Moo*, *All Marketers are Liars*, have challenged our ways of thinking about marketing in broad terms such as “viral marketing” into the common vernacular. Seth challenges us not just to be better, but different. To stand out like a purple cow would. To think and rethink. For example, one way the HR That Works program tries to distinguish itself is to not be everything for everybody. We are focused on a very narrow concern—building HR departments and careers at companies with 15-500 employees. We don’t know of another “competitor” in our field that has their client focus that narrowly niched. It allows us to do what we do better than anyone else and stand out from the crowd.

“Stop trying to be perfect and start being remarkable.”

Question: What could you do for your employees, customers and clients that is “purple”?

Answer: _____

Question: How can you promote your company in a “viral” manner?

Answer: _____

Question: How good are you at telling your company’s story?

Answer: _____

Notes: _____

Gordon MacKenzie

Orbiting the Giant Hairball



Gordon MacKenzie was the creative director for Hallmark for thirty years. Afterwards he put on creativity workshops across the country. In his book *Orbiting the Giant Hairball*, MacKenzie points out the challenge between wanting corporate normalcy, policies, rules, procedures, etc. and being able to unleash the creative energy needed to grow an organization. He was a master of stepping out of the box.

“It’s hard for corporations to understand that creativity is not just about succeeding. It’s about experimenting and discovering.”

Question: Gordon defines a hairball as “policy, procedure, conformity, compliance, rigidity and submission to status quo.” Where are the hairballs in your organization?

Answer: _____

Question: Gordon defines orbiting as “originality, rules-breaking, non-conformity, experimentation, and innovation.” How do you allow your employees to “orbit” around the hairball? Where do you give them room for creativity? Edison said that genius is 90% perspiration, 10% inspiration” Do you give up that 10%?

Answer: _____

Question: MacKenzie talked a lot about creative work environments. How would you employees design the ideal work environment? How can it be made even more creative? MacKenzie preached that there are no bad ideas. Any ideas are, in fact, an act of creativity. All should be blessed. Hallmark had signs in the workplace which stated, “Bring us your ideas” “Share your insights.” How are you communicating your desire to orbit to the workforce?

Answer: _____

Notes: _____

