

YOU HAVE THE POWER!

from Excellence to Happiness...

a collection of articles
about
Excellence

by
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Foreword

Dear Readers,

I have known Revathi personally for more than 15 years and always felt she had the POWER to do something different and BIG.

In the VUCA world where the world is becoming volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous, it is so important to EXCEL in whatever one does; be it at work or relationships.

Revathi, in this book “You have the Power”, has not only brought out this concept beautifully but also enhanced it by relating Excellence to Success and Happiness. For total excellence, it is important to focus on all the 3 aspects of being excellent. Therefore logically, the book starts with a focus on ‘Individual Excellence’ and continues towards focusing on ‘Interpersonal Excellence’ and then onto ‘Team Excellence’.

The best part of the compilation is the clarity of thoughts and simple narration by using abbreviations that make it understandable and easy to implement. Her 20+ years of rich experience in various industries is visible as she pens down her thoughts so lucidly.

This collection is a must read for both academia and corporate and can be used as a good reference and reading material. It is an easy read and the compilation reflects her hard work and experience over the years.

Here is wishing her all the best for the beautiful compilation!!

Dr. Renu Khanna

Former Global Head of Leadership & Development, TechMahindra
HUMEX – Founder & CEO

You have the power...

Just by choosing to change the way you think and/or the way you act, **you** have the power to change the way things happen! Yes, there are always situations out of our control, but many a time we give up on the little or big things we can do to make a difference on how these external situations affect us. These articles are dedicated to not allowing that...

Excellence → Success → Happiness

When one excels, one becomes successful

When one is successful, one feels happy

When one is happy, one excels more!

For eons forever, happiness has been the end goal of human beings. No matter how many have tried to capture it, it eludes us always...

While science looks at happiness as a mere end outcome of production of certain hormones in the brain, spiritual masters have worked tirelessly to help mankind learn the path to happiness. From affirming clichéd statements such as “happiness is within” to profound messages such as “happiness is a choice”, human beings have mastered the art of temporary and momentary happiness.

Today, it is very easy to feel happy in the moment – from simple pleasures such as music, sex, food, etc.; to intellectually stimulating conversations with friends, seniors, and counterparts in life; to quick breathing and meditation techniques; triggering feelings of happiness in that moment is getting really easy and effortless!

I am of the opinion that such happiness is overrated!

For human beings to create long lasting and deeper happiness within, they need to feel a sense of accomplishment or a sense of satisfaction and fulfilment of having done something or been some place or said something that is self-actualizing. Mihaly Csicszentmihalyi, the author of the book “Flow – The Psychology of Optimal Experience” cites that a human body or mind is

most happy (or in flow) in that moment wherein it is stretched beyond its capabilities to achieve results.

I believe that choosing to put oneself in flow consistently i.e. striving to excel in everything we do and say helps us in feeling a longer lingering sense of fulfilment and happiness.

I believe in the framework of "**Excellence → Success → Happiness**"

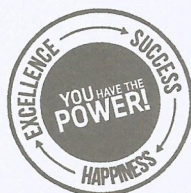
When one excels, one becomes successful; When one is successful, one feels happy; When one is happy, one excels more!

Excellence can be comprised of 3 components:

- individual excellence: to excel in your individual contributions
- interpersonal excellence: to excel in conversations and while working with others
- team excellence: to work together and excel as a team

This book is a collection of articles written by me comprising of techniques that help to develop and enhance one's individual, interpersonal, and team excellence.

A quotation written by me triggers off the thought process for that topic.



Be SILENT to LISTEN

To be a great conversationalist,
master the art of listening

– Revathi Turaga

Sshhh!!! Silence please!!! Keep quiet!!! Stop talking!!!

Words which, I am sure, will take many of us back to our childhood and Kindergarten classes, right??!!! Right back to our teachers shouting and trying their best to get us to listen to their lessons and to their instructions! We have to maintain silence in order to be able to listen is an age old formula that we have always been taught and will continue to teach for generations to come... and rightly so!

In today's corporate scenario, it is neither just technical competency nor just the hardworking ability that take priority whilst employing individuals. Communication is one of the vital aspects taken into consideration too, and a core aspect of communication is the ability to listen. In today's fast moving world, maintaining personal relationships has sometimes become a challenge, especially when both partners are busy with their respective jobs and have lesser and lesser time to give each other and their family. In both the above cases, taking time out and truly listening to the other person can be an effective solution.

It cannot be just a coincidence that the words LISTEN and SILENT are anagrams i.e. are made out of the same letters! It is therefore, but natural that for us to learn how to LISTEN, one must learn to be SILENT first! Let us now understand what being SILENT means:

1. **S: Sincere** – Do you remember the times when the person in front of you was smiling with a sombre look on their face, with all the right signs of listening, and yet you just know that they are not interested at that time, that they are not sincerely listening to you but just so for the heck of it??? Well remember this, so can everyone else make out too!!! Yes, so here is the first step to being SILENT to LISTEN: be sincerely interested in what you are supposedly listening to...

2. **I: Inquisitive** – Be curious. When one is intently listening to something, one's brain automatically keeps working on the same too. This raises questions in the listener's mind which they would want clarified. This also helps the speaker to understand that the other individual is truly listening and attempting to understand what is being said. It is thus a good idea to ask relevant and non-threatening questions to customize the conversations.
3. **L: Like person** – Make sure that you like who are listening to... Their communication ability, their competency in the subject, their handling of the audience and the content, etc... Many a time I have seen listening of an amazing topic go flat just because according to the listener, the speaker's behaviour and value system did not resonate with what was being said. Not just the content of what is being said, but also the person saying it has a lot of impact on how well it is listened to. Ensure that you talk to and are hearing from the right person.
4. **E: Empathize** – Sometimes, listening is not just about hearing what is being said, but it is also about communicating what the other person is feeling. Especially when the other individual is sharing information connected with emotions, be they positive and negative, that of joy or sadness, one ought to be able to relate and express empathy on the same towards the other person. After all they are talking to a human being and not to a wall!
5. **N: Non-verbal communication** – Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Your actions speak so loudly that I can't hear your words!" The impact of the right non-verbal communication whilst listening is vital for the other person to get the feeling and acceptance that listening is happening. So, nod once a while when appropriate, smile at the other person, lean forward, show facial expressions, and let the other individual know that yes, you are listening!
6. **T: Talk** – Listening also involves talking... to a certain extent! One needs to paraphrase (repeat the speaker's words in their own words) once in a while. One also needs to ask the right questions to continue and steer

conversations while also summarizing points once in a while. Also important to talk during listening, is to once in a while also express thoughts about self to the listener as course of self-disclosure in order to continue conversations smoothly. So, talking to the right extent in the right manner is vital to listen effectively!

From Robert Cialdini who said that listening to the other person helps you to convey your point more effectively, to Stephen Covey who emphasized listening as very important under his 5th habit 'Seek first to understand then to be understood' in his popular book '7 Habits of Highly Effectively People', the importance of listening to one another is highlighted in many ways. We ought to learn and practice the above constantly!

Be SILENT so you can LISTEN...

