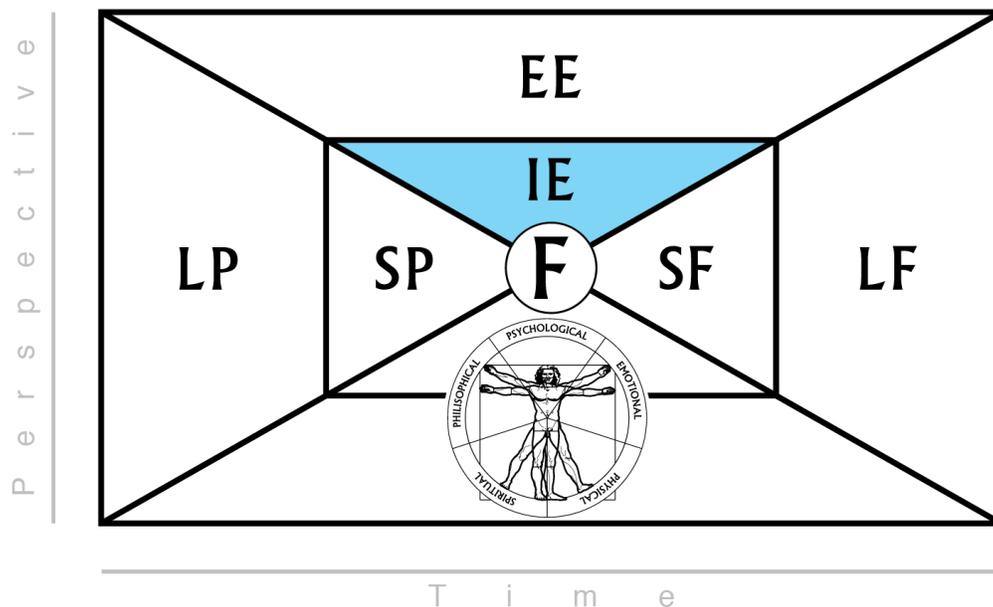




## FINDING YOUR FLOW TOOLKIT VOL. 11 BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND ALLIANCES

**"There is one all-important law of human conduct. If we obey that law, we shall almost never get into trouble. In fact, that law, if obeyed, will bring us countless friends and constant happiness. But the very instant we break the law, we shall get into endless trouble. The law is this: Always make the other person feel important"**

**-- Dale Carnegie**



In speaking with high performers who emphasize the power of

relationships to generate flow, both support for others and supportfrom others (questions 9 and 10 in the 720° Sweep Assessment) remains a key to establishing effective relationships and synergy.

Consider your thoughts and feelings about the people who surround you in your performance arenas. Are these thoughts and feelings positive and supportive or critical and negative? Do you look at your colleagues through the lens of possibility or the lens of tolerance?

Individuals who find flow with others begin with a positive intention about them. These internal beliefs and attitudes are the seeds that spout positive behaviors towards your colleagues, friends, and family.

Whether you know it or not, your internal beliefs and attitudes about others are conveyed through your verbal and non-verbal behavior. That is why building effective relationships, synergy, and ultimately alliances, begin with you and your beliefs, thoughts, and feelings towards others.

This is an inside-out job. It begins by looking for the positive in others and actively marking these observations in your mind. As you look for the positive in others, you are now in a position to overtly support their best stuff.

Think about the people you work with or others whom you perform with in some way. Can you think of a few simple yet small ways that they demonstrate high value? Can you identify positive behaviors—even qualities or virtues? If so, perhaps you could go so far as to point this out to them. Instead of looking for ways to be critical, look for ways to point out the little or big things that make a positive difference. In the world of organizational effectiveness (OE) this is known as “appreciative inquiry”. It is a mindset that seeks for solutions instead of problems, excellence instead of mistakes, and wellness instead of sickness.

Think of the relationships and environments you can influence with an appreciative inquiry mindset. People might see you as understanding, empathetic, caring, trustworthy, a positive influence, and a leader they see as their advocate.

This is not a one-way proposition. Sparking this interpersonal system compels others to treat you with equal care and respect. As your relationships build on a common foundation of mutual understanding and support, natural alliances are forged and each of you becomes mutually committed to the success of the other. This is the beginning of synergy—which creates a successful environment for everyone within the arena.

As you forge this inner mind-set, perhaps being more explicit is in order. You might consider asking your colleagues how specifically you can support them in their good work. I've never heard of anybody who did not want to answer that question. Once answered, you can reciprocate with your own requests.

Towards the end of the Finding Your Flow workshop, after helping individuals discover their "one thing", I often ask the group to complete a final exercise called: My Best/My Worst. Its purpose: to help participants share important information about themselves to their colleagues so that they can be supported in their desire to find flow with and through others. The questions include:

- I am at my very best when my environment includes...
- My performance tends to struggle when these things are absent from my environment...
- I've learned that I perform best when I...
- I've learned that I perform at my worst when I...
- If I've learned anything about Flow and Peak Performance it's that...

These questions help people discuss the elements of their best work, where they struggle most, and what others can do to support a high performance environment.

As you consider building your relationships, perhaps these internal and external support strategies will help you build grow supportive relationships, forge positive alliances and help you find more flow with the people you need to play your best game.

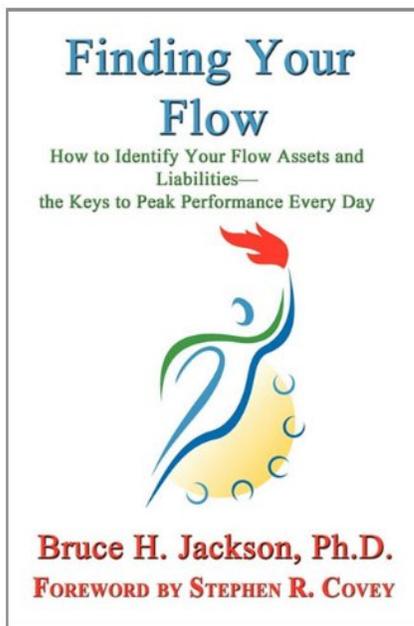
### EXERCISE AND PRACTICE:

- Review the questions in: MyBest/MyWorst exercise sheet (attached).
- **Practice #1:** Consider the players in your field and make a short-list of their positive qualities, traits, or contribution. Practice “marking” these qualities, traits or contributions in your mind first. Begin pointing out their best work and/or qualities as you see it.
- **Practice #2:** Print out two copies of the MyBest/MyWorst exercise sheet and share your answers with one another. Then ask the other person what you can do to support their good work. Then ask them to do the same for you.

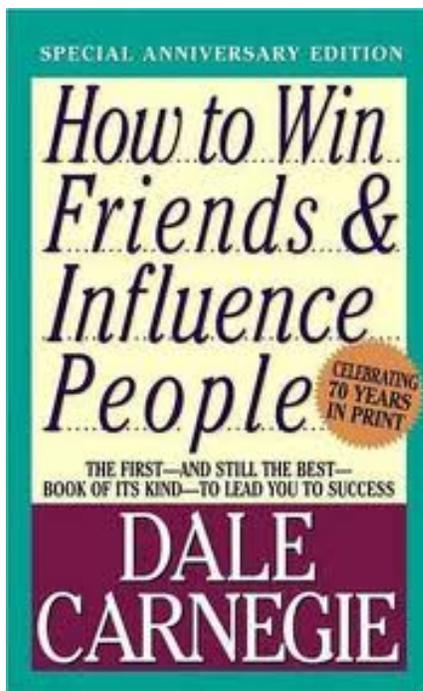
### Finding Your Flow: How to Identify Your Flow Assets and Liabilities—The Keys to Peak Performance Every Day

Do you remember your last peak performance? Do you remember asking: how do I do this? How can I do it again? If you have asked this question, and want to know the answer, then this is the book you have been searching for.

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## RESOURCES:



### BOOKS:

[How to Win Friends and Influence People by Dale Carnegie](#)

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