



The Happiness Advantage: The Seven Principles of Positive Psychology That Fuel Success and Performance at Work

By Shawn Achor

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The Happiness Advantage: The Seven Principles of Positive Psychology That Fuel Success and Performance at Work By Shawn Achor

Our most commonly held formula for success is broken. Conventional wisdom holds that if we work hard we will be more successful, and if we are more successful, then we'll be happy. If we can just find that great job, win that next promotion, lose those five pounds, happiness will follow. But recent discoveries in the field of positive psychology have shown that this formula is actually backward: Happiness fuels success, not the other way around. When we are positive, our brains become more engaged, creative, motivated, energetic, resilient, and productive at work. This isn't just an empty mantra. This discovery has been repeatedly borne out by rigorous research in psychology and neuroscience, management studies, and the bottom lines of organizations around the globe.

In *The Happiness Advantage*, Shawn Achor, who spent over a decade living, researching, and lecturing at Harvard University, draws on his own research—including one of the largest studies of happiness and potential at Harvard and others at companies like UBS and KPMG—to fix this broken formula. Using stories and case studies from his work with thousands of Fortune 500 executives in 42 countries, Achor explains how we can reprogram our brains to become more positive in order to gain a competitive edge at work.

Isolating seven practical, actionable principles that have been tried and tested everywhere from classrooms to boardrooms, stretching from Argentina to Zimbabwe, he shows us how we can capitalize on the Happiness Advantage to improve our performance and maximize our potential. Among the principles he outlines:

- The Tetris Effect: how to retrain our brains to spot patterns of possibility, so we can see—and seize—opportunities wherever we look.
- The Zorro Circle: how to channel our efforts on small, manageable goals, to gain the leverage to gradually conquer bigger and bigger ones.
- Social Investment: how to reap the dividends of investing in one of the

greatest predictors of success and happiness—our social support network

A must-read for everyone trying to excel in a world of increasing workloads, stress, and negativity, *The Happiness Advantage* isn't only about how to become happier at work. It's about how to reap the benefits of a happier and more positive mind-set to achieve the extraordinary in our work and in our lives.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Achor transports us to his virtual classroom, a journey along which we glean the seven secrets of happiness. *The Happiness Advantage* reveals the most important discoveries coming out of modern psychology."

-Rom Brafman, bestselling co-author of *Sway* and *Click*

"Shawn Achor is funny, self-deprecating, and devastating to my notions of what his field is all about.... I'm butter to his knife."

-*The Boston Globe*

" Achor bases his training on a burgeoning body of research on the positive psychology movement, which emphasizes instilling resiliency and positive attitudes...."

-*Wall Street Journal*

About the Author

Shawn Achor, a member of Oprah's SuperSoul 100, is the winner of over a dozen distinguished teaching awards at Harvard University, where he delivered lectures on positive psychology in the most popular class at Harvard. Shawn has become one of the world's leading expert on the connection between happiness and success. His research on happiness made the cover of Harvard Business Review, his TED talk is one of the most popular all time with over 4 million views, and his lecture airing on PBS has been seen by millions. Shawn teaches for the Advanced Management Program at Wharton Business School, and collaborates on research with Yale and Columbia University.

In 2007, Shawn founded Good Think to share his research with the world. Subsequently, Shawn has lectured or researched in 51 countries, speaking to CEOs in China, school children in South Africa, doctors in Dubai, and farmers in Zimbabwe. He has spoken to the Royal Family in Abu Dhabi, doctors at St. Jude Children's Hospital, and worked with the U.S. Department of Health to promote happiness. In 2012, Shawn helped lead the Everyday Matters campaign with the National MS Society and Genzyme to show how happiness remains a choice for those struggling with a chronic illness.

Shawn graduated magna cum laude from Harvard and earned a Masters degree from Harvard Divinity School in Christian and Buddhist ethics. For seven years, Shawn also served as an Officer of Harvard, living in Harvard Yard and counseling students through the stresses of their first year. Though he now travels extensively for his work, Shawn continues to conduct original psychology research on happiness and organizational achievement in collaboration with Yale University and the Institute for Applied Positive Research.

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Jerry Smith:

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