



Live Your Strengths

Welcome to the May 2009 edition of *Live Your Strengths*, the monthly e-newsletter from In Search of Excellence.

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Key Systems for Work and Life (Part 2)

This month's newsletter will continue the discussion from the [last edition](#), which described the importance of creating systems in your work life. This month's edition will focus on systems for your personal life.

Don't roll your eyes... you might actually enjoy this! Systems to help in your personal life will help you get the most out of your precious non-working time – and they don't have to be boring or cumbersome.

Developing effective systems can make dramatic improvements in your level of productivity and even the quality of your life. Similar to the creation of systems in your work life, often the obstacles to creating quality systems in your personal life can be overcome by:

- Creating a usable set of information
- Resolving an issue in the physical environment
- Lessons learned in recurring events

If you are ready to create some effective systems for your personal life, join me in this month's *Live Your Strengths* Challenge (see below).

Now Available: More Resources to Help Your Organization Achieve Better Results

In Search of Excellence is pleased to be teaming up with The Achievement Centre-Excel, providing even more resources to help your organization reach its potential.

Clients will continue to receive the quality one-on-one coaching they always have

through In Search of Excellence. In addition, this association with The Achievement Centre-Excel will dramatically expand the training and development opportunities now available including:

- sales training
- strategic planning
- leadership development
- assessments to help you hire and successfully manage the best people for your organization

As well, as a current subscriber to this newsletter, you will have access to other resources through The Achievement Centre, including their monthly e-zine. If you are interested, you can preview the most recent edition [here](#).

If you would like to learn more about the enhanced results your organization could gain through these expanded learning opportunities, please contact me.

Live Your Strengths Monthly Challenge: Systems for Your Personal Life

Think about an activity that is important to you but one that you often don't make time to do (or you may forget to do). Once you have decided on an important activity you think would benefit from a system, identify what is currently stopping you from regularly following through on this activity.

A very simple example is sending birthday/anniversary cards to loved ones. Many people comment that they are amazed when people remember their special days and would love to have such a great memory.

The truth is, you don't need to have a great memory to do this – you just need a good system that addresses the three key elements:

- Creating a usable set of information
- Resolving an issue in the physical environment
- Lessons learned in recurring events

It could be a low-tech solution, such as having all these important dates written down (usable information) and carrying this list with you in the car or your wallet (physical environment). Once a month you can purchase all the cards you will need for the month, and then write and address them so that they are ready to be mailed at the appropriate time throughout the month. Having a basic spreadsheet with all the mailing addresses will help to quickly find the addresses and will be easy to update (recurring events).

A more high-tech solution would be to set up an online system (many available for free) which will allow you to enter all the important dates into the system and it will send you reminders when it is time to send a card.

Regardless of what you would like to accomplish, success is rarely a result of stunning

skills and more often the result of a *great system that is faithfully followed*. And with most systems, it is important to recognize that there may be additional time required in the beginning to get the systems established. However, once the system is set up, it should be easy to follow and allow you to get more value out of your time.

Be willing to experiment and tailor your system so it fits your life. Just because a system works for your friend, doesn't necessarily mean it will work for you!

Some other examples of systems you may find beneficial:

- An ongoing date to meet with friends you don't see frequently enough
- A system to allow you time each morning for writing and reflection
- A mail-sorting system to deal with all the paper that comes through the door before it piles up
- A system to ensure that each of your children get regular, individual 'dates' with you
- A calendar system to help coordinate all the activities of family members
- A system to ensure you always have the proper equipment with you for regular trips to gym

Again, start by identifying only 1 or 2 systems you would like to implement. These should be related to the biggest priorities in your life right now. If you attempt too many changes at once, the process can become overwhelming. The goal is to help you get more quality out of your personal time by focusing on things that are *most important* to you.

Could you use some guidance to achieve your goals? Call Denise for a free 30-minute coaching session to make 2009 your best year yet!

Cheers,

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"Creating the Path to Your Potential"

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