



Leadership is the Conversation... Triggers: Creating Behavior that Lasts

Change, no matter how urgent and clear the need is HARD! Knowing what to do does not ensure that we will actually do it. “Just do it” is a great slogan but is exceedingly hard to do. In his new book, Triggers Marshall Goldsmith states that we are superior planners but become inferior doers as our environment exerts its influence through the course of our day. We forget our intentions. We become tired, even depleted as we deal with the “daily whirlwind” which distracts us from the behavioral changes that will allow us to be the best professionals (and humans) that we can be.

Behavioral change and leadership development do not occur in a vacuum. If it did, making the changes would be easy. Instead we are bombarded with internal and external influences that keep us from achieving our best. Our inability to achieve our behavioral goals is usually the result of unappreciated triggers in our environment – the people, situations, and beliefs that lure us into behaving in a manner diametrically opposed to the colleague, partner, parent, leader, coach, or friend that we imagine ourselves to be.

Being aware of these triggers is the first step. However, there are many tools and techniques that can assist you in not only getting a clearer picture of your triggers but doing something to manage them. Here are two of the more powerful techniques that Marshall shares with us in his new book.

The Battle for Our Energy

We are constantly trying to decide where to devote our limited energy. This battle for energy can simply be summed up as “what we need vs. what we want”.

Is the trigger Productive or Counter-Productive in meeting a need? Is the trigger Encouraging or Discouraging in getting what we want?

Here are some examples of how this plays out in the battle for our energy:

- Productive/Encouraging – We need it and we want it (Praise, Recognition)
- Productive/Discouraging – We need it, but we don't want it (Rules, Discipline)
- Counter-Productive/Encouraging – We don't need it, but we want it (Distraction, Pleasure)
- Counter-Productive/Discouraging – We don't need it and we don't want it (Isolation, Peer-Pressure)

During your professional development journey, how would you divide out your energies on the above categories? It becomes painfully obvious to us that we need to focus our efforts on the things that we need.

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The first principle of devoting your energies appropriately is learning to “let go”. For the things that require your daily energies, ask yourself this simple question – **Am I Willing at This Time** to make the investment required to make a positive difference on this topic? If the answer is no, then you need to “let it go”. That could be letting it go to someone else, to another day, or letting it go totally.

Equis Consulting was invited to work with Marshall Goldsmith in New York City to further the concepts outlined in his new book – Triggers. As **Marshall Goldsmith Certified Executive Stakeholder-Centered Coaches**, Equis will be developing a new advanced leadership development program based on this book. This one to two-day course will expand on these concepts and work with participants to identify their triggers and develop techniques to positively manage them.