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PURPOSE, POTENTIAL & PERFORMANCE

March 2010

Gather

As the year progresses, we sometimes lose momentum. The topic for March is *Gather*, the third topic to support 2010's theme of *Augmentation*.

GATHER

(According to Dictionary.com)

- * to bring together
- * pick up or amass as if by harvesting
- * to serve as an attraction for: accumulate
- * **4** to effect the collection of : gather contributions
- * **5** to summon up <gathered his courage> **b** : to gain by gradual increase <gather speed> **c** : to prepare (as oneself) by mustering strength **d** : to gain or regain control of <gathered his wits>

Once you have identified what you would like to augment in your life. Taking the third step is to *gather* strategies, resources and actions to ensure that financial, physical, education, career, family, social, life purpose or whatever goals you have set for 2010, are not just met, but are surpassed

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Calls to Action:

I will take one more step to gather those strategies, resources and actions that are important to me in my personal, professional or business life.

Look for April's **Power Choices©** *Manuver*

Power Choices© Comments

Please feel free to share your thoughts and comments with info@positivepowerinc.com

"Ill habits gather unseen degrees, as brooks make rivers, rivers run to seas."

John Dryden
British Poet

"I love the man that can smile in trouble, that can gather strength from distress, and grow brave by reflection. Tis the business of little minds to shrink, but he whose heart is firm, and whose conscience approves his conduct, will pursue his principles unto death."

Thomas Paine
American Revolutionary
Author of **Common Sense**

"They whom truth and wisdom lead, can gather honey from a weed."

William Cowper
English Poet

Consider How You Gather Your Actions



What Resources Do We “Gather” To Augment Our Life?

Laura Novakowski

There are multiple ways to look at resources that can augment our lives. For the sake of this topic, I would like to separate resources into opposites: tangible and external versus intangible and internal.

Tangible resources are “something concrete, can be touched, are a fact.” Now these resources can be found in many places. In books, on the Internet, libraries, etc. Be sure to validate the source of information with documented research. Gathering tangible resources is generally where most of us go to augment our lives, our careers, our projects, our relationships. A great resource for gathering tangible information is Gallup. The website is <http://www.gallup.com/Home.aspx>. This site offers many facts and statistics. Where would do you gather your tangible resources. Are they useful and relevant?

External resources are “outside or independent.” Gathering information or feedback from outside resources is also a common and valuable strategy. Going outside for support, feedback or advice is done in a multitude of ways. Mentors, coaches, teachers, supervisors, friends, family – as you can see this list can be quite extensive. However, we need to be just as discerning when we use these resources to determine a certain level of credibility, validation, genuine interest and concern. Often times, we place the most emphasis on outside resources because we believe that they are the most valuable resources available to us. I am learning to be the most cautious of this resource before I assign the responsibility of “trusted advisor.” I appreciate when people give me feedback. At the same time, I realize that there needs to be some connection, relationship and mutual understanding regarding what I need before I fully engage this resource’s recommendations and ideas.

Intangible resources are “not concrete, can’t be touched, and not based in fact.” They are much more ambiguous and not as readily apparent. One of my favorite intangible resources is my instinct. How many times has your instinct advised you to think twice before entering into a partnership, a relationship or a situation and it has proven to be correct? I, for one, have learned to listen to my instincts. My heart may race with anticipation when a great idea strikes me. I’ve learned to listen to this resource and go for it – it generally leads me in the right direction. On the other hand, when a sinking feeling starts in the pit of my stomach, I know I need to step back - it’s not the right way to go. It’s amazing how learning about this resource has warned me. I’d like to say I always pay attention, but that is not always the case. What intangible resource do you have available to you? Be sure to test for reliability before you totally rely on this resource.

Internal resources are “inside and part of us.” In my opinion, this is the number one most valuable asset to gather for augmenting my life and yet identifying our internal resources is perhaps the most challenging. Socrates is one of Greek philosophers that ascribed to this principle to gather around us, “*know thyself.*” Self discovery and awareness are essential, but these tools, especially in the Western cultures are possibly the least cultivated. Knowing and tapping into our internal reserves are essential to our success in all aspects of life.

A great story:

*A man who was searching outside, under a tree, at night, with a flashlight.
His neighbor sees him and goes out to see if he can help.
“What are you looking for?” the neighbor asks.
“I’m looking for my keys,” responds the man.
The neighbor then asks, “Where do you think you might have dropped them?”
“I dropped them inside my house?” the man responds.
The neighbor looks at the man with incredulity and shakes his head,
wondering why the man is looking outside.*

How do we go about discovering our intangible and internal resources, when we spend most of our time looking at tangible and external? I will reiterate the **ACTS** process. Assess the strengths and talents you already possess and want to take to the next level. Simultaneously, assess those gaps in habits and behaviors that are holding you back. Next, Create a robust, colorful, dynamic visual image of those resources will help you to move forward. Take action today with specific goals that will help you to obtain the change you desire. Finally, Sustain your momentum by benchmarking your progress in a systematic manner. These **ACTS** can help you to gather the best resources to augment your life.

ACTS™
*is a proven process that
Positive Power Strategies, Inc.
engages to help individuals,
companies and communities to
find ways to “Gather those
strategies, resources and
actions to liberate their
potential.*



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Gather Behaviors Are Just the Beginning

Leanne Hoagland-Smith

In life and in business, people are engaged in a variety of "Gather Behaviors." These actions range from gathering birthday dates, friends, business colleagues, paychecks, savings to actual revenue. However gather is the initial behavior and what lies after everything has been gathered will determine how successful you have been as a gatherer.



Social media networking and business face to face networking are two great examples of gather behaviors. From gathering friends to business cards, there is a lot of energy being directed to accomplishing these two gathering goals. Yet what happens afterwards?

Are viable connections maintained or left to wither on the vine? What specific actions are taken after this entire gathering? And the answer, at least in business, is "very few."

Business research suggests that almost 50% of all leads gathered are not acted upon. Given that the US economy has been in the doldrums for the last 18 months, one would think that every lead would be treated as that last grain of precious rice. However during a recent keynote to local business owners and sales professionals, I asked with a show of hands how many in the room had followed up on every lead? There were no hands raised.

Additional research suggests 80% of all sales are earned within the fifth and twelfth contacts by only 10% of all sales people. Again most people are just gathering and doing very little with what they have gathered.

Possibly this disconnect between gather and then take action might reside in a lack of clearly articulated and communicated positive core values. Many businesses lack a strategic action plan and those that have one probably review it maybe monthly and more likely annually. Within that document should be the written core values or what I prefer to describe as non-negotiable behaviors. This written statement from my personal and professional experience is the most critical one within this necessary business instrument.

By committing these behaviors to every day actions, then when one gathers, one will take the appropriate action be it make a phone call, send a handwritten note or even return a phone call. Without behavior guidelines what happens is as a colleague of mine, Doug Brown, has often said: People *confuse motion with progress and activity with results*. Gather is both motion and an activity. However gather in and by itself will not guarantee results.

So when you engage in any Gather Behavior it may make sense to connect that action with a direct result. By making this choice, you will have more power and greater control over your own destiny personal or professional.

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*A Self-Management Tool To
“Gather & Track”
Your Healthy Lifestyle
Judy Rienzi*

Our personal health care today is multifaceted. Primary care physicians, Specialists, Dentists, Ophthalmologists, Complimentary Therapists and other medical specialists play key roles in our health management. They rely on what we tell them to help make a proper diagnosis. Lack of

communication between you and your health care provider can impede self-care and well-being. Using a “*Self-Management Health Communication System*” that gathers and records data as well as manages and plans your health practices is a necessary tool in communicating your needs to all your health providers. Benefits to using such a system are multifaceted as well.

Time Management How often do you waste valuable time looking for test results, reports, phone numbers, and pertinent information about yourself that a health provider may need? Using a recording system will save you time and keep you up to date with appointments, diagnostic tests, and healthy practices.

Increase Awareness By gathering pertinent information, you will identify the current state of your health, healthy lifestyle patterns and the necessary changes needed to improve the overall quality of your health performance.

Increase Communication Often times we forget everything we want to discuss or ask when visiting our physician. Perhaps we are visiting multiple specialists and need to convey much information to all. Using a “*Communication*” system can alleviate this problem and coordinate your care efficiently.

ER Visits / Care Giver / Sudden Illness There may be a time you will be caring for a loved one, or you yourself are injured. During these times, communication may be impaired. Having a written communication system that can be used to access all medical information is necessary for the best possible care.

Plan and Organize When approaching a change in lifestyle, some preparation and planning is needed to make the transition. Having all your information at your fingertips is the best health care management tool for increased health, productivity and overall quality lifestyle.

Team Approach A “*Self-Management, Health Communication System*” is a unique approach to health. It is a system that coordinates your “health care team” and your self-care with you at the controls.

We go for annual medical appointment, and hopefully routine diagnostic tests. Do we just file the results away in a drawer? Or do we gather the information and use it to plan our course of action for better health? Using a “*Self-Management Health Communication System*” will organize, plan and guide your healthy lifestyle.

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Gathering Your Strengths

Laura Canter

The focus of this month's newsletter is on the word ~ *Gather*. I think of building and broadening my resources when I think of the word to Gather. I have specific tools, resources, and skills that can help me on my quest to *Augment & Uphold*. Therefore, *Gathering* is also a chance to "properly" evaluate where you are today.

We can gather information about ourselves to help us achieve our goals and to create success in the future. Gathering information and data can help us be better performers. The best tools we have are our strengths – focusing on what we do well help to foster creativity, resilience, and productivity.

What are your strengths? What do you do well? Most of us can name a laundry list of our faults and things we do poorly, but if we are truly being honest with ourselves, we can admit to doing something right. This is the trick of seeing yourself as you really are - a difficult task in the best of times.

Now a lot of focus in the business world has been on the *Strengths Finder* or other business strength building tools. No matter what model of strength finding you adhere to – the origins of strengths came from Positive Psychology. According to the **International Positive Psychology Association (IPPA)** - Positive psychology is the "scientific study of what enables individuals and communities to thrive." So, it is the study of what goes right with us. And according to Positive Psychology research we have 6 categories of 24 distinguishable Character Strengths and Virtues.

1. Wisdom & Knowledge – creativity, curiosity, open-mindedness, love of learning, perspective
2. Courage – bravery, persistence, integrity, vitality
3. Humanity – love, kindness, social intelligence
4. Justice – citizenship, fairness, leadership
5. Temperance – forgiveness & mercy, humility & modesty, prudence, self-regulation
6. Transcendence – appreciation of beauty & excellence, gratitude, hope, humor, spirituality.

Our strengths are the cornerstones or foundation in the quick sand of our life. However, most of us don't even know we have them (let alone all 24 strengths). And, even if you know you have particular strengths – many of us don't cultivate our strengths to use them when they will be most valued (decreasing stress, overcoming adversity, staying positive, bouncing back from setbacks, and more).



Cultivating and practicing our strengths can have substantial benefits to our daily lives. People who practice gratitude can increase their happiness levels by 25%! They also have shown longer lasting and significant decreases in depression (6-12 months), greater levels of well-being, longer and better quality of sleep time and increased time engaged in exercising and other beneficial healthy behaviors.



There is a difference between the Values in Action Institute's (VIA) Character Strengths Survey and the Gallup's Strengths Finder Survey. VIA Character Strengths study who we are, the foundation of who we are. Gallup's Strengths Finder study what we do. Gallup Strengths are about effectiveness in the workplace (Strengths of talent + Practice = Skill).

No matter which survey you use, the point is to know where your strengths lie, how to cultivate them, and how to use them to help you flourish and succeed. However you define success – using your strengths is a far more effective way of improving performance than trying to change that laundry list of faults.

So, take this time to *gather* knowledge about yourself. Do the research on *You!* If knowledge is power – the more you know about yourself and what you are capable of, you become the one to Accept Change, Expand your options (Augment), Take Action (Uphold) and Strengthen Adaptability when you are facing new challenges.

For more information
about the **Values in Action Character
Strengths Survey (VIA)** and with
discovering your strengths
please contact *Laura Canter*.

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