

# The Whoosh Pattern

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The Subtle Art of the Global Belief Reframe

Why do you, or anyone else, do what you do on a daily basis?

Most people don't have concrete answer and some have no answer at all. Virtually everyone has things in their life that they want to do that they just have not done yet. A nagging goal or desire that you want to achieve but you just cannot ever seem to get any follow-through on, or a bad habit that you just cannot seem to give up. Naturally, these are often sources of frustration and low self-esteem.

I have a private coaching client for who has been having a wonderful year. His manager uses him as an example of what is possible when you set out with specific goals and complete your plan. His production is up about 40% and his recurring income is up over 400%. Yet, he is still frustrated because he is shy of the goals that he set for himself (even though he is exceeding the ones that he gave his manager). We both know that he is completely capable of hitting these goals, but he occasionally hits obstacles that keep him from his goal.

We both knew the problem. To hit his goals, he needs 11 appointments per week, which he achieves most of the time. I noticed that the weeks we talked about appointments or marketing, he would hit his goal, but when we talked about other areas of his practice, he would fall short.

This usually indicates conflicting values. That was the case with this particular advisor. In the context of work, his highest values were professional excellence (which he defines as having a large cadre of raving fans--apostles of the work that he is doing, being a catalyst for positive change in their life and being a million dollar producer) and freedom (which he defines as being able to take off whenever he wants, do whatever he wants and not being locked into too strict of a schedule). His values hierarchy valued freedom and professional excellence equally. You are probably already beginning to sense how easily this pairing might cause a conflict. Here is a quick question though; can you also see how you might be able to bring them into harmony? Or perhaps more importantly, have you already begun to realize how much easier and more effortless life will be once they are in harmony? More on that later.

Why do we struggle to hit our goals?

Everyone has dreams and desires that they hold dear. These are our deep emotional outcomes. They are imprinted on us at a very early age and to a large degree become the driving force in our life. We take the life outcomes that are flowing through us on a cellular level (sometimes nothing more than emotions that we want to experience), and in an effort to better understand them and be able to talk about them, we give them names. These nominalizations (labels or names) are what we call values.

For the most part, our values are static throughout our life. We have different mental representations (ways of defining) of those values and what it takes to achieve them and those are our beliefs. Beliefs are dynamic; they change as we age and our situation changes and we frequently redefine what it means to hit those goals.

I have always valued adventure, freedom, and family very highly. As a college student and young man, that found expression in skydiving and extended cycling trips in the American west and throughout England. When I had kids, those specific activities came into conflict and no longer seemed appropriate.

Although our values have remained unchanged, the way in which we express them is dynamic.

This is the case for almost everyone. As our situation changes, or as we receive new information or we have a change in perspective, it is normal and actually expected, that what we believe of our values and the criteria that we use to determine whether those values have been fulfilled shift as well.

Those that do not study history...

A lesson from recent history illustrates just how ingrained this is in our consciousness. As the 1988 Presidential Campaign headed into October, most of polls had the campaign "too close to call".

Vice President George H.W. Bush was attempting to distance himself from the Iran-Contra scandal while still keeping the conservative base on his side, and appealing to the "Reagan Democrats".

Michael Dukakis was dealing with the "Willie Horton" issue but was able to make compelling arguments due to the "Massachusetts Miracle". A balanced budget and sustained prosperity in his state created momentum for him nationally.

One of the issues that divided the electorate was the death penalty. Unfortunately, for Dukakis, his views were not testing well.

The issue of capital punishment came up in the October 13, 1988 debate between the two presidential nominees. Bernard Shaw, the moderator of the debate, attempted to create an environment that would allow Dukakis to soften his stance without losing face with his liberal base voters. In what some later described as the ultimate homerun pitch, Shaw asked Dukakis, "Governor, if Kitty Dukakis [his wife] was raped and murdered, would you favor an irrevocable death penalty for the killer?"

Trainers and psychologists ask seminar participants and their patients this type of question to help them clearly define their values. Under this type of testing, absolutes rarely, hold up. One might claim that they could never kill anyone, the facilitator might ask, "What if someone was threatening your daughter and you had to choose between killing the hostile or the hostile killing your daughter, what would you do? Most people would be willing to bend the rule, proving the exact purpose of the exercise--to get more in touch with the rules and beliefs.

That was Shaw's purpose in asking the question. Dukakis had been so absolute in vigorously opposing the death penalty that many pundits felt that he had painted himself into a political corner.

So here came the pitch, but Dukakis completely missed the mark, "No, I wouldn't, Bernie, and I think you know that I've opposed the death penalty during my entire life," he said as he explained his stance. Many observers felt Dukakis' answer lacked the passion one would expect of a person discussing a loved one's rape and death.

Many -- including the candidate himself -- believe that this, in part, cost Dukakis the election, as his poll numbers dropped from 49% to 42% nationally that night. It was as if everyone watching said, "Wait a minute, nobody is that cold". They wanted him to adjust his stance. He seemed more machine than human; he seemed to lack compassion and emotion. Obviously, this clearly demonstrates just how natural and normal it is to adjust and re-evaluate a position, when given new information.

Knowing how to elicit and transform these beliefs is not only good politics; it is also the key to unlocking new behaviors in the people you desire to persuade. Think for a moment about child rearing. How easy is it to call to mind a parent screaming, blue in the face, frustrated trying to get their child to adopt a behavior the parent holds dear but the child rejects? How often do you have a brainstorm about adopting a new activity (losing weight, eating better, exercising more) only to find your resolve as brittle as a thin crispy potato chip? When you make commitments to perform an activity long enough to create a new mental and muscular memory, you take the long road to behavioral change. This is the path of will, the "one day at a time" route. It is swimming upstream. It is literally overriding systems that nature integrated into our neurology that is based on the sum total of all experience. There is an easier road--and to paraphrase Robert Frost--it is the road less traveled and it makes all the difference.

### The Master Key System for Developing a New Behavior

Think for a second about a time you have tried to change a behavior. I am sure you can think of people that changed in a instant and never looked back, and you can also easily recall people that started off with the best of intention, were very committed but slipped, struggled, sputtered or otherwise failed.

R & B star Little Richard was a drug addict for 25 years. Then one day he stopped. He never fell back and he said that he never even had an urge. When asked how he accomplished that he said, "One day I just had a meeting with Jesus and for me that made all the other meetings irrelevant".

Talk show host Larry King has a similar story. His entire adult life he was a cigarette smoker. Three to four packs a day. He said, "It was part of my identity, part of who I was." So here, we have an example of a belief that is associated, not with a value, but literally with a part of his core identity. A part of whom he thought he was on the deepest level. One day after suffering his third or fourth heart attack, he is in the recovery room. His

doctor walks in and they begin to talk. The doctor is debriefing Larry on what took place and Larry asks, "Well, what do we need to do?"

The doctor responds, "Nothing" (think how much that would interrupt your train of thought).

Larry says, "Nothing--what do you mean nothing? No surgery, no dietary changes?"

This doctor knew Larry well enough that he clearly understood Larry's modus operandi. He knew what Larry was asking. He was asking, "What can I do to get out of here and back to work (so I can have another cigarette)?"

The doctor reiterated there was nothing he could do.

Larry said, "I don't understand."

The doctor said, (and I paraphrase) "Here is the deal; I have been your doctor for about 15 years. During that entire time, I have told you need to stop smoking. All of my warnings have gone unheeded. This is not your first heart attack and while I am confident in telling you this one will not be fatal, I do know that if you do not change, you will very soon have one that will kill you.

Here is what else I know. Anything that I do for you, while medically viable, is really a waste of time because if you keep smoking, you are going to die soon. It might not be today or this week, but I am certain in saying that it will be this year. So, we're going to keep you overnight, just to make sure that you are stable. You can leave tomorrow and do whatever you want. If I were you, I would make sure that all of my affairs were just as I wanted them."

Larry said he talked with the doctor, thinking that it was a joke or an aggressive technique to get him to stop smoking. Then he realized it was not. He realized that his friend, who he knew cared for him deeply, had given up on him because he thought he was hopeless. In that moment he created a new belief and in the process, changed his life in an instant.

In that moment, he concluded that the next cigarette equaled death. He had things that he still wanted to accomplish and in the beat of an overtaxed heart, he rewired his system, which changed his neurology, which created new thoughts that led to new actions. From that day forward, Larry says that he has never smoked another cigarette, never had a craving, never looked back longingly and wished that he could smoke, never thought of himself as a smoker again. His entire mind-body connection on the smallest level, the quantum level, had been completely rewired and suddenly doing what he should have been doing all along was easy. It was effortless.

I don't know whether the doctor was a master of behavioral modification or if he just threw up his hands and thought, 'I have done all that I can do.' Whichever it was, Larry says that he tossed the straw that broke the camel's back. Whether accidentally or on purpose, he certainly got the outcome that he was looking for and Larry King is still with us today, and he says that he feels better than ever.

Of course, one need look no further than the daily news to find hundreds of examples just like this. I know you have your examples in your own life--through your friends, family, relatives, and clients. Here is what I do want you to know--this is information you need to internalize on a very deep level:

Any change can take place consciously or unconsciously. The changes that are unconscious take place with much less effort.

There are two ways that we can effect change in the lives of the people around us that we hope to influence:

Accidentally

On purpose--if you are like me, you are already thinking this is way too important to leave open to chance.

When we tell someone "a fact", they will sometimes believe it --but the conclusions they come to on their own will never be challenged

As you integrate those bullets to memory and learn the steps behind them, you will find that your powers of persuasion are limitless.

If this is the Holy Grail, just how do we use it?

First, let's take a brief peek at the way the brain works. Scientists tell us that the average human being has roughly 60,000 thoughts every single day. The cynic will suggest that for most people about 59,900 are the same as yesterday and the day before and the day before that. It is these habituated thoughts that drive habituated actions.

There are two ways to change a behavior; one is to build a new one through repetition. You have heard the saying that it takes a certain number of days of consistent repetition of a new behavior (depending on who you are listening to that can be between 28-40 days and depends on the person wanting to do it and follow-through). The second way is the Global Belief Reframe--eliciting someone's deepest beliefs and expanding, adjusting or reassociating them to create new beliefs, which will drive new thoughts and create new actions.

Detailed steps, strategies, and tactics to accomplish this are the subjects of my new book and audio series. This is part of the work that I do with my individual coaching clients and I have long desired to create a tool to get it more widely available. A recent business trip provided an opportunity to do just that; and perhaps nothing is as effective in getting your brain to wrap around these concepts as seeing them in action.