About the Author

Premise

“It’s not that these people don’t know who they are or where they’re going or what they want to achieve….What’s wrong is that they have no idea how their behavior is coming across to the people who matter” (p. 7)

The 20 Habits That Won’t Get You There  (pp. 40-41)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habit</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Winning too much</td>
<td>The need to win at all costs and in all situations – when it matters, when it doesn’t, and when it’s totally beside the point.</td>
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<td>Adding too much value</td>
<td>The overwhelming desire to add our two cents to every decision.</td>
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<td>Passing judgment</td>
<td>The need to rate others and impose our standards on them.</td>
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<td>Making destructive comments</td>
<td>The needless sarcessms and cutting remarks that we think make us sound sharp and witty.</td>
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<td>Starting with “No,” “But,” and “However”</td>
<td>The overuse of these negative qualifiers which secretly say to everyone, “I’m right, You’re wrong.”</td>
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<td>Telling the world how smart we are</td>
<td>The need to show people we’re smarter than they are.</td>
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<td>Speaking when angry</td>
<td>Using emotional volatility as a management tool.</td>
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<td>Negativity, or “Let me explain why that won’t work”</td>
<td>The need to share our negative thoughts even when we weren’t asked.</td>
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<td>Withholding information</td>
<td>The refusal to share information in order to maintain an advantage over others.</td>
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<td>Failing to give proper recognition</td>
<td>The inability to praise and reward.</td>
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<td>Claiming credit that we don’t deserve</td>
<td>The most annoying way to overestimate our contribution to any success.</td>
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<td>Making excuses</td>
<td>The need to reposition our annoying behavior as a permanent fixture so people excuse us for it.</td>
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<td>Clinging to the past</td>
<td>The need to deflect blame away from ourselves and onto events and people from our past; a subset of blaming everyone else.</td>
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<td>Playing favorites</td>
<td>Failing to see that we are treating someone unfairly.</td>
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<td>Refusing to express regret</td>
<td>The inability to take responsibility for our actions, admit we’re wrong, or recognize how our actions affect others.</td>
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<td>Not listening</td>
<td>The most passive-aggressive form of disrespect for colleagues.</td>
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<td>Failing to express gratitude</td>
<td>The most basic form of bad manners.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Punishing the message</td>
<td>The misguided need to attack the innocent who are usually only trying to help us.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Passing the buck</td>
<td>The need to blame everyone but ourselves.</td>
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<tr>
<td>An excessive need to be “me”</td>
<td>Exalting our faults as virtues simply because they’re who we are.</td>
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The 4 Key Beliefs (Chapter 3)

1. I have succeeded.
2. I can succeed.
3. I will succeed.
4. I choose to succeed.

We have delusions about our achievements, status, and contributions that are a direct result of success, not failure. We:

- “overestimate our contribution to a project
- Take credit, partial or complete, for successes that truly belong to others
- Have an elevated opinion of our professional skills and our standing among our peers
- Conveniently ignore the costly failures and time-consuming dead-ends we have created
- Exaggerate our projects’ impact on net profits because we discount the real and hidden costs built into them (the costs are someone else’s problems; the success is ours)” (p. 16)

What makes us come back to work every day? “money, power, status, popularity – or is it something deeper and more subtle that has developed over time? If you know what matters to you, it’s easier to commit to change…people only change their ways when what they truly value is threatened” (p. 32).

What Goldsmith Helps Clients Do with 360º Feedback

Confront them with what people really think about them

Help them apologize to everyone affected by their flawed behavior

Help them advertise their efforts to get better

Help them follow-up religiously every month with their colleagues – “because it’s the only honest way to find out how you’re doing and it also reminds people that you’re still trying” (p. 13).

Teach them how to listen without prejudice to what others say

Teach them that the only proper response is gratitude

Teach them the miracle of feedforward – “my special sauce methodology for eliciting advice from people on what they can do to get better in the future” (p. 14)
Practicing Feedforward (Chapter 12)

The four steps:

1. Pick the one behavior that you would like to change which would make a significant, positive difference in your life.
2. Describe this objective in a one-on-one dialogue with anyone you know.
3. Ask that person for two suggestions for the future that might help you achieve a positive change in your selected behavior.
4. Listen attentively to the suggestions without judging, rating, or critiquing the suggestions in any way, even if it is positive.

How feedforward overcomes obstacles we face with negative feedback:

1. successful people don’t want to hear it
2. their subordinates don’t want to give it

“Feedforward shrinks the discussion down to the intimate parameters of two human beings… I don’t establish what you need to do to change for the better. You don’t establish it either. They do… everyone who knows you, cares about you, thinks about you, has you pegged” (p. 173).

Why it works:

- Successful people love getting ideas for the future
- We can change the future, but not the past
- Helping people be “right” is more productive than proving them “wrong”
- People do not take feedforward as personally as feedback
- We can focus on hearing without having to worry about responding
- It forces us to ask for helpful suggestions, giving the other person a license to answer
- Creates two-way traffic

Feedback (Chapter 6)

Four commitments:

1. Let go of the past.
2. Tell the truth.
3. Be supportive and helpful – not cynical or negative
4. Pick something to improve yourself – so everyone is focused more on “improving” than “judging”

Stop asking for feedback and then expressing your opinion

Feedback moments: How to get good feedback on your own
Seeing Your World Anew (pp. 128-134)

1. Make a list of people’s casual remarks about you.
2. Turn the sound off.
3. Complete the sentence.
4. Listening to your self-aggrandizing remarks.
5. Look homeward

“Your flaws at work don’t vanish when you walk through the front door at home” (p. 134).

Special Challenges for People in Charge (Chapter 14)

Memo to staff: How to handle me

Stop letting your staff overwhelm you

Stop acting as if you are managing you

Stop “checking the box”

Stop being prejudiced about your employees

1. I know what they want.
2. I know what they know.
3. I hate their selfishness.
4. I can always get someone else.

Stop trying to coach people who shouldn’t be coached

Some Findings

“We asked each of these young stars a simple question: ‘If you stay in this company, why are you going to stay?’….The answers were never about money. They were always about happiness, relationships, following dreams, and meaning. When my friend asked people on their deathbeds what was important to them, they gave exactly the same answers as the high-potential leaders I interviewed. Use that wisdom now. Don’t look ahead. Look behind. Look back from your old age at the life you hope to live. Know that you need to be happy now, to enjoy your friends and family, to follow your dreams. You are here. You can get there! Let the journey begin” (p. 223).
“When it comes to the thoughts we hold inside our heads, we are not self-deprecating. We are self-aggrandizing. And that’s a good thing. Without it, we might not get up in the morning” (p. 18).

“Successful people consistently compare themselves favorably to their peers” (p. 19).

“One of the greatest mistakes of successful people is the assumption, ‘I am successful. I behave this way. Therefore, I must be successful because I behave this way.’ The challenge is to make them see that sometimes they are successful in spite of this behavior” (p. 21).

“Overcommitment can be as serious an obstacle to change as believing that you don’t need fixing or that your flaws are part of the reason you’re successful” (p. 23).

“Most people’s resistance to change can be overcome by invoking natural law. Everyone, even the biggest ego in the room, has a hot button that can be pushed – and that button is self-interest. All we have to do is find it. It’s not the same thing in all people” (p. 31).

“Get out your notepad. Instead of your usual ‘To Do’ list, start your ‘To Stop’ list” (p. 37).

“Think about how we perceive other successful people. We rarely associate their success with technical skill or even brainpower” (p. 43).

“ Winning too much is easily the most common behavioral problem that I observe in successful people” (p. 45).

“There’s nothing wrong with offering an opinion in the normal give and take of business discussions. You want people to agree or disagree freely. But it’s not appropriate to pass judgment when we specifically ask people to voice their opinions about us” (p. 51).

“Whenever I hear managers justify anger as a management tool, I wonder about all those other leaders who do not need anger to make their subordinates toe the line. Without anger to strike fear in the troops, how do those steady composed leaders ever get anything accomplished?” (p. 62).

“The next time you start to speak out of anger, look in the mirror. In every case, you’ll find that the root of your rage is not ‘out there’ but ‘in here.’” (p. 65).

“In the age of knowledge workers, the cliché that information is power is truer than ever – which makes withholding information even more extreme and irritating” (p. 68).

“How do you stop withholding information? Simple answer. Start sharing it” (p. 71).
“Recognition is all about closure. It’s the beautiful ribbon wrapped around the jewel box that contains the precious gift of success you and your team have created. When you fail to provide that recognition you are cheapening the gift. You have the success but none of the afterglow” (p. 72).

“If you came up with a good idea in a meeting, did it spring unbidden from your fertile imagination? Or was it inspired by an insightful comment from someone else in the room? (p. 75).

“It’s amazing how often I hear otherwise brilliant, successful people make willfully self-deprecating comments about themselves. It’s a subtle art because, in effect, they are stereotyping themselves – as impatient, or hot-tempered, or disorganized – and using that stereotype to excuse otherwise inexcusable behavior” (p. 77).

“Most of us are easily irritated, if not disgusted, by derriere kissers. Which raises a question: If leaders say they discourage sucking up, why does it dominate the workplace? (p. 81).

“Apologizing is one of the most powerful and resonant gestures in the human arsenal – almost as powerful as a declaration of love….The best thing about apologizing, I tell my clients, is that it forces everyone to let go of the past” (p. 85).

“The only time people actually see that you’re not listening to them is when you’re displaying extreme impatience. You want them to hurry up and get to the point. People notice that. And they rarely think better of you for it. You may as well be shouting, ‘Next!’ at them” (p. 87).

“Gratitude is a skill that we can never display too often. And yet for some reason, we are cheap and chary with gratitude – as if it were rare Bourdeaux wine that we can serve only on special occasions. Gratitude is not a limited resource, nor is it costly. It is as abundant as air. We breathe it in but forget to exhale” (p. 91).

“It’s one thing to pursue your dreams – but not if that pursuit turns a dream into a nightmare” (p. 101).

“Appropriate information is anything that unequivocally helps the other person. But it veers into inappropriate when we go too far or risk hurting someone” (p. 108).

“Stop asking for feedback and then expressing your opinion” (p. 117).

“Treat every day as if it were a press conference during which your colleagues are judging you, waiting to see you trip up. That mindset, where you know people are watching you closely, will boost your self-awareness just enough to remind you to stay on high alert” (p. 146).

“Follow-up is how we remind people that we’re making an effort to change, and that they are helping us” (p. 162).
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