



Producing Results #1 An Introduction

Introduction

Elsewhere¹ we have asserted that a fundamental motivator for people is to make a difference with their lives. That is, people are driven to make the world better in some way. Specifically they want to make a measurable impact on the future by producing results that are substantially different than what is likely to happen, i.e., what is predictable.

It is understandable that in order to produce *results* that are substantially different, we need to take *actions* (or influence others to take actions) that are substantially different. However, the question remains: How? Most of us have good reasons for acting the way we do. And we know from experience that it's not often an easy task to influence others or ourselves to do something that is different than what we would normally do. For example, one common method people use to try to alter the actions of others is simply telling them what they want them to do. Yet more often than not, experience demonstrates that people do not do what they are asked to do, even if they have agreed to do what was requested.

So we are left with a problem: A critical element to making a difference with our lives is acting and causing others to act in ways other than those that are predictable, yet our effectiveness at doing this is typically less than 50%. What can we do to raise this effectiveness? How can we more reliably produce "unpredictable" actions, and thus be more likely to fulfill our life's intention of making a difference?

Important Questions

This series of articles is devoted to developing methods for reliably producing desired and intended results. By reliably we mean that they work more than 90% of the time.

Questions addressed by the articles of this section include:

- What are results?
- What is the difference between desired results and intended results, and why is that distinction important?

¹ See *Strategic Planning #2: The Purpose of Organizations*



- What are the relationships between promises, goals and commitments, and why is it valuable to differentiate between them?
- One group views its goals as something to do and compromises the goal when obstacles occur. Another group regards their goal as a mission and is unstoppable. What causes these differences and how is it possible to create the second situation?
- What is a breakthrough and how can breakthroughs be reliably produced? How is it possible to overcome the thorny problems that have resisted all attempts to solve them and have persisted for a long time?
- What is a reliable process for accomplishing results?
- What is power, why is it important, and how can you get (and give) it?
- What are responsibility and accountability, and what is their relationship?
- What are reliable approaches to get things moving again when the accomplishment process bogs down?
- How can you reliably generate action? How is it possible to have people reliably do what they say they are going to do? What can you do to minimize the number of “fires” that seem to crop up regularly?
- How can you minimize the amount of time you spend following up with people who have made promises to you to make sure they are doing what they promised?

Summary

This series of articles addresses one of the fundamental issues of organizations and human endeavor – how to reliably produce desired and intended results that are significantly different than those which are predictable from past experience and current circumstances, thus enabling us to fulfill our life’s intention of making a difference.