

Willingness

The Secret to Getting an Awful Lot More Done

© Copyright Stan Dubin 2012

Regarding the distribution of this report:

You may distribute this document freely, as long as it is left intact, unaltered and delivered via this PDF file.



Hello and thank you for reading this report.

My name is Stan Dubin and I'm the Executive Director of The Employee Testing Center.

In this report, I will be examining a factor that all of us are familiar with, but is rarely given the **correct importance**:

Willingness

We're going to look at how this one word, this one concept can make a significant difference in the workplace and in our lives.

I do want to caution you before we get started.

The amount of information we have to wade through today seems endless.

Correct that, it is endless.

I say, take a stand!

Find one idea that you can get behind and drill it mercilessly into application.

I believe this report will provide with you that idea.

Any positive changes to your personal life will be considered a bonus.

Read on and enjoy!

Willingness

The word of course comes from “willing” which is defined as:

- * done, given or accepted, etc, freely or voluntarily
- * describing someone who does their work energetically and enthusiastically

Let’s look at an interesting quote:

“Where the **willingness** is great the difficulties cannot be great.”

— Niccolo Machiavelli

It’s really not that simple, right?

It doesn’t matter if you have a very high willingness to do something, the difficulties **are** what they are, right?

Sounds reasonable.

But let’s take a look at this.

Recall a time you had considerable willingness to get something done. I'll wait a few seconds for you to get a good recall on this.

I'm not trying to patronize you here, but I do want you to recall an instance of great willingness you had for something.

With that in mind, recall some of the challenges or difficulties that you had to deal with at that time.

Were they insurmountable?

You know where I'm going with this.

If you have little to no willingness to do something, the difficulties can seem quite daunting...perhaps even overwhelming. The smallest difficulties can be a major challenge **if the willingness is small.**

But if your willingness is sky-high, then something very, very interesting happens.

The difficulties are...

...not so difficult.

The person with all of this willingness is just “bigger” and the stuff that gets in the way is, well, “smaller.”

This next quote comes from Helen Gurley Brown who was editor-in-chief of Cosmopolitan magazine for 32 years.

“The only thing that separates successful people from the ones who aren't is the willingness to work very, very hard.”

That's a pretty bold quote. In her opinion, the only thing separating the successful from the unsuccessful is:

“**the willingness** to work very, very hard.”

We could get into a discussion on what “success” is, but I think it's fair to say that a good number of people that we consider successful were willing to work very hard to get there.

There are two concepts running here:

working very, very hard

and

the **willingness** to work very, very hard

These two concepts are not one and the same.

Some of us are not thrilled about “working very hard.” We’re comfortable working at a particular intensity level and that’s that.

Okay, fair enough.

Let me make an almost magical suggestion to you:

Decide to **increase your willingness** to work harder.

I didn’t say “decide to work harder.”

I said, “Decide to **increase your willingness** to work harder.”

The magical result is this:

**If you increase your willingness to do something,
that thing becomes easier to do.**

Give it a try.

Think about something you’ve had some difficulty with. Now decide to increase your willingness to deal with it.

Before you consider this a lame exercise, just go ahead and try it out:

What area or subject or person or activity in your life has presented a challenge?

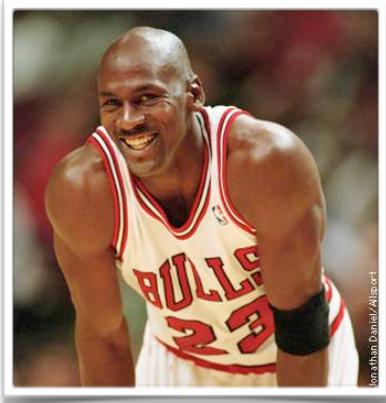
Now, take a few seconds and decide to increase your willingness to deal with that area, subject, person, etc.

If you truly decided to increase your willingness, I am here to tell you the size of the challenge has decreased.

I realize this may be a bit touchy-feely for some of you, and honestly that's not where I'm heading with this.

I want you to understand how changing your mind about your level of willingness can make a **big** difference in every area of life and most definitely in the workplace.

Let's move on.



You may not be a basketball fan, but most likely you've heard of Michael Jordan.

What was it that made Michael Jordan a tremendous super star?

His talent?

Absolutely.

His tenacity?

Most definitely.

His hard work?

Without a doubt.

But there was another factor, perhaps not so obvious. And I'd say this factor was just as important as the others.

He was **willing** to take over a game.

Michael Jordan was **willing** to shoot the game's last shot. Whether he made it or not, he was **willing** to take full responsibility for the outcome.

And he was **willing** for his teammates to excel and be in the limelight.

"But I'm not Michael Jordan," you say, "and what applies to a super star like Michael Jordan doesn't work for me."

That's understandable. So, let's look at a different example.

A handful of your co-workers are huddled around the Xerox machine. It's not working. Someone checks if there's a paper jam; another looks to see if there's sufficient toner. No problems with either.

Your co-workers conclude it's time to call the IT guy to come and fix it. So everyone makes their way back to their desks.

Except one person.



Brad.

Brad is not an IT guy.

Brad has no real expertise in office equipment.

But Brad figures he should at least be willing to check it out more thoroughly. He finds the manual on the side of the machine, checks out the “Troubleshooting” section, and then tinkers a bit with the copier.

A few minutes later, out comes a nice, clean copy!

You could say, “well, Brad’s a tinkerer. That’s what Brad likes to do.”

And that may be true.

But one thing we do know for sure:

Brad was **willing** to look this thing over; he was **willing** to read a few pages in a manual; he was **willing** to do something to get the copier working again.

Another example:

The boss is expecting a package to be delivered after closing and asks if someone could hang around to make sure it gets signed for.

Nobody offers...except Sarah. She stays an extra 45 minutes, signs for the package and then heads home.

(Yes, the picture to the right is seriously dated, maybe even from the 50s, but I thought it was kind of cool.)

Now, a few of you may be thinking:

"Oh, Sarah's just sucking up to the boss. That's why she was willing to stay after hours for him."

That's certainly possible.

We tend to assign a variety of motives to people who display high levels of willingness. In addition to "sucking up to the boss," there's:

"He's just trying to get a raise."



“She just wants others to look bad.”

“He probably brought apples to his elementary school teacher!”

When we observe others demonstrating a higher level of willingness, all kinds of thoughts could go through our heads. Sometimes this simple thought does not occur to us:

The person was just more willing to perform

Willingness shows up on every level of human activity. From the superstar willing to take the last shot to the office dude who rolled up his sleeves to get the copier fixed.

Here’s an interesting quote:

“The success of every thing we do is in direct proportion to our willingness to succeed.”

That quote came from yours truly.

One could say, “well, willingness is important, yes, but isn’t knowledge and experience even more important?”

Perhaps.

It's a little like the chicken and the egg.

If your willingness is present **first and foremost**, it's likely you'll push through the difficulties you encounter SO THAT you do acquire the knowledge and experience you need to succeed.

Here's another quote from yours truly:

"The success of every relationship we enter into is in direct proportion to how much willingness we bring to each of these relationships."

Whatever relationship that may be: friends, business associates, even our most intimate relationships.

Willingness.

How do you feel about your level of willingness?

How about the people in your workplace?

Are they demonstrating a high level of willingness?

Or are they there “on automatic”?

Are they going through the motions of work?

Are you?

I was not able to locate the author of this next quote, but I sure do like it:

“Everyone has the ability to make a difference. The main factor is the willingness to use this ability.”

The first part of that quote seems pretty believable, right? We all have the ability to make a difference.

The last part of the quote, though, is a bit in our face. We all have the ability to make a difference, but perhaps we’re not all willing to use the ability.

It’s one thing for me to tell you, “Hey, just be more willing to do something” — that can come across as condescending.

Here's a suggestion:

1. Just be a little more willing to do something.
2. When you're comfortable with that increased willingness, be a little more willing.
3. And then a little more.
4. Each time you gradually increase your willingness, you will find it easier to perform. Eventually you find your willingness MUCH higher in various areas, with your performance significantly improved.

By the way, that suggestion was **not** a casual suggestion.

Simple solutions can be very powerful.

The above four steps appear incredibly simple.

They are.

But they are also very powerful.

If you take away only one thing from this report and it's the above four steps, your life and work will be greatly improved.

Let's move on to the last quote...

"People are willing to do their best and will until hammered about it. ... The only capital an executive has is the *willingness TO WORK*. Preserve it. No person can be driven to labor—as every slave society has found out. They always lose. When a man is whipped, that work he then does still stems from his willingness alone. Anger made it smaller."
— L. Ron Hubbard

I think this quote can be applied to every area of life.

If we hammer our kids too much and too often, their willingness decreases and may even disappear. This is often replaced by defiance and misbehavior. The willingness was there at one point, we just didn't notice it or sufficiently acknowledge it.



Little Fred at the grocery store wants to put something in the grocery cart but mom says, "Don't touch that!" If we simply let Fred contribute, his willingness to make positive contributions will grow. He will not feel compelled to "contribute" in other (less

desirable) ways.

In the workplace, we make various demands on our staff. If we do so without regard to their willingness, we'll likely see their production drop off.

They'll continue to do the bare minimum and maybe a bit more, but that's not even close to ideal, is it?

What if we approach this from a different viewpoint?

What if we factored in their willingness?

How would we go about that?

Before we considered the willingness of our staff, you should do a little self-examination.

Do you have a high level of willingness to lead your company to the promised land?

Or has it eroded over the months and years?

Are you willing to work very, very hard to bring real success?

Or has that dropped off?

Are you willing to sit down with your key staff and find ways to increase their willingness?

You know, it doesn't really matter how you answered the above questions. Your level of willingness may have dropped completely off the chart—it doesn't matter.

Why?

Because you can restore it.

Even if it wasn't very high to begin with, you are in complete control of how much willingness you bring to every area of your life.

So, first things first, if your willingness needs a bit of help, then here are those four steps again:

1. Just be a little more willing to do something.
2. When you're comfortable with that increased willingness, be a little more willing.

3. And then a little more.
4. Each time you gradually increase your willingness, you will find it easier to perform. Eventually you find your willingness MUCH higher in various areas, with your performance significantly improved.

Apply those four steps.

Then give a copy of this report to your key staff...or to all of them. Ask them very directly how they feel about their willingness to perform.

Listen carefully.

Ask them for their ideas on what would help them increase their willingness.

An incentive program? If you already have one, a better incentive program?

Regular briefings on how the company is doing?

A Saturday get-together (Bar-B-Q, movie, retreat, etc.) every once in awhile...or more often?

There are a number of things you could put in place that could improve the willingness of your staff.

But realize this: Your staff, just like you, are completely in control of how much willingness they apply to their jobs.

Pride will motivate some of them to increase their willingness. These are very special people. Cultivate them.

You may have a person or two who overtly (or covertly) object to your efforts to increase their willingness. If you encounter real opposition, your business may be better off without those individuals. I've seen staff cooperation and productivity go out the roof when a real "bad apple" is removed from the workplace.

If you approach your staff on the subject of **willingness**, a good percentage of them will respond very favorably.

In the hustle and bustle of today's workplace, there are many times we just need to get things done and plow forward. I'm not saying you should always be conscious of this willingness factor.

I am saying that it **IS** a factor that can improve your scene.

Sometimes dramatically.

Apply the steps above and your workplace will get an awful lot more done by people more and more willing to do so.

About Stan Dubin

I am the Executive Director of The Employee Testing Center.

**We help companies hire people who stick around
and get the job done.**

We do this with employee testing that is **very** accurate, easy-to-understand and delightfully affordable.

Please don't take my word for it. Watch our short video at GetGreatStaff.com and take a free test to see how accurate it is. It's **your** test—we won't be able to fool you.

Regarding distribution of this report:

You may distribute this document freely, as long as it is left intact, unaltered and delivered via this PDF file.

Thank you for reading this and thank you for any effort you make in passing it along.

Yours,
Stan Dubin

[Share on Facebook](#) | [Retweet](#)

[Post on LinkedIn](#) | [Free Hiring Tips Newsletter](#)