

Chapter 1 - You might now be replaced if your work consists only of following instructions.

Hector has a difficult life. He and several other day laborers wait on a Queens street corner every morning for contractors to drive by and pick a handful of them to complete a day's work for minimum pay. From the contractors' perspective, all of these workers are the same - they don't have any distinguishing abilities – therefore there's no reason to choose Hector above any of the other laborers on the job. As a result, Hector will be fortunate to be picked.

The realization that highly competent individuals are not required to make complex things ignited the industrial revolution. Instead, practically every industrial process can be broken down into phases that even low-skilled individuals can complete. Ten poorly educated – and so underpaid – factory employees might manufacture a thousand times more pins than one highly competent pin maker, according to Adam Smith.

That's why many factory occupations are straightforward, requiring people to just show up and execute orders to the letter — much like cogs in a machine. If you're one of these employees, the problem is that you're readily replaceable and in no position to bargain for a raise. Consider how manufacturing jobs in the West are being sent to China and India, where individuals are just as capable of following instructions but at a fraction of the cost.

White-collar jobs, which were formerly thought to be immune to outsourcing, are now under jeopardy. Stockbrokers, travel agents, secretaries, and other professionals who were accustomed to just turning up at work and performing what was asked of them are becoming replaceable and outsourced. Anyone anywhere may accomplish jobs that need only following instructions.

Chapter 2 - Because linchpins are so important, they always receive the greatest positions.

Working for a large, grey mass of individuals involves turning up for X hours a day in exchange for a monthly wage. They consider their jobs to be a vexing and time-consuming burden, a necessary evil in their life. What's more, guess what? Their lack of desire is noted by management, and they are the first to be dismissed when circumstances become difficult.

This army of drones presents a chance for people who refuse to be unremarkable: the so-called linchpins, who are critical to their company's success.

You don't have to be the CEO to be a linchpin. Take the extra-friendly barista for example. Even if the coffee shop isn't the nearest or cheapest, you become a frequent client because of the excellent service. Because the coffee business can't readily find someone with a similar enthusiasm for service to replace him, that barista is a cornerstone.

Linchpins are similar to painters in that they put their whole heart and soul into their craft. They don't require explicit directions from management, preferring to solve difficulties and complete tasks on their own. They execute it so well and with such zeal that they earn a reputation. While others watch from the sidelines, linchpins are the ones who bring the performance to a close.

Because of these qualities, linchpins are worth a hundred times more than the ordinary thoughtless worker.

As a result, linchpins will always be needed. Only a stupid organization would lose a linchpin since they would always find a job and be treated decently. When a linchpin does hunt for a new position, her reputation typically precedes her, and she can rely on companies to promptly hire her.

Chapter 3 - Fear is generated by the lizard brain in order to prevent you from becoming a linchpin.

Being a linchpin requires the courage to stand out from the herd. But why is this so challenging? Why do most of us avoid being in the spotlight?

The lizard brain was one of the first sections of the human brain to form, and it was one of the first components to mature. It elicits basic feelings such as fear, hunger, and rage, and it formerly played a critical role in human survival, such as warning us to flee from saber-toothed tigers. The lizard brain still has a strong impact on our higher thinking since it played such a crucial part in our ancestors' survival.

However, the lizard brain's impact now can be harmful. When we have to stand up and deliver a speech, for example, the lizard brain goes insane and terrorizes us. "No, don't put yourself on stage where people may mock you, shout at you, or assault you!" it cries.

Similarly, the lizard brain will flood you with worry and uncertainty if you're attempting to become an elevated, extraordinary key employee. It wants you to stay ordinary because that's how it's gotten by so far: hiding from predators. It will almost certainly spawn a slew of arguments for why you can't be a linchpin, such as:

"You haven't come up with any good ideas!"

"You have no idea what to do!"

"You'd never get away with that with your boss!"

Even more subtly:

"I'm going to put work on hold for a while."

"Take a break from work for a while and simply procrastinate a little."

Essentially, it will do everything it can to keep the status quo from shifting into something new and frightening.

Chapter 4 - Don't allow your fear to hold you back; choose to be a linchpin instead.

We are raised in numerous ways to fit in. Consider what we learn in school: we're instructed to study for tests, keep our heads down, and follow directions like "Use #2 pencils." You'll get a D if you color beyond the lines, and you'll receive detention if you don't follow the rules. Is it any surprise that by the time we reach working age, we are terrified of doing anything that would make us stand out?

This is why the majority of individuals are pleased to simply show up at work and perform their jobs. They're terrified of standing out and upsetting the comfortable and secure status quo.

There are a variety of approaches you can take to alleviate your fear. The first step is to stop doing it. If you're worried about your boss criticizing your work, for example, you might check your emails frequently to see if he's sent you any bad responses. Stop rubbing this itch by forcing yourself to sit still and concentrate on something other than your emails. The terror will fade away in time.

If you're afraid of failing, try taking a few divergent routes and establishing multiple goals. If you schedule three major presentations, failing one won't matter as much, and you'll be less afraid of it.

It takes no special aptitude or an Ivy League education to become a linchpin. It requires that you face your anxieties and make a deliberate decision to do so. Linchpins share everyone's worry, but they accept it and go on because there's work to be done.

Chapter 5 - Make your profession a platform for your creativity by putting emotional labor into it.

Not all painters, sculptors, and composers are really artists. An artist is someone who has the ability to improve other people's lives by giving them an emotional gift.

A customer service representative who utilizes his smile and charm to turn an irate consumer into a devoted customer is just as talented as Picasso. Similarly, Tony Hsieh, the

founder of online shoe retailer Zappos, is a master of customer care. You may be an artist at work, too, but not if you just come up and unwillingly accomplish the bare minimum till the end of the day.

Making art necessitates what is known as emotional labor: pouring your heart and soul into your work in order to promote creativity and generosity. It also implies that you must make independent decisions in the absence of explicit directions. This is difficult, which is why many people avoid it.

Have you ever seen a flight attendant give out the safety announcements as if it's the last thing on his mind and he believes no one is paying attention? This occurs because the individual in issue does not regard his job as a creative outlet. It would be far more challenging and engaging for him to put his heart and soul into this dull chore and come up with a fun and original manner to read the notifications. If he succeeds in this, his employment becomes a platform for him to produce art, which he may joyfully share with others.

He would likely find his job more rewarding as an artist, and his employer would respect him more highly as well.

Chapter 6 - True artists finish what they start – they ship.

How many of Picasso's works do you recognize? Two? Three?

He created about 1000 works of art in total. Artists, by their very nature, produce.

Artists are unconcerned with having terrible ideas that fail because they know that as long as they keep making art, excellent ideas will emerge. The production of some failures is an unavoidable cost of success.

Most individuals begin to doubt themselves at the last minute before completing something: Is this truly ready? Is it worthy of being shown to the rest of the world? This is when great artists — true linchpins — come into their own.

If products do not ship, they will not be purchased. Unless stories are printed, they will not be read. Even the finest ideas are meaningless if no one hears them. Saturday Night Live, for example, airs live every Saturday, whether or not the routines have been thoroughly prepared.

Because the ability to ship on time is so rare, linchpins are indispensable: they have the discipline to ensure that the projects they take on are specified, completed, and delivered on time. They get rid of anything that isn't actually used and concentrate on the items that will help them ship.

Shipping is challenging because our basic lizard brains don't want us to exhibit our creation to the public for fear of being judged or ridiculed. Resistance is a psychological condition that causes delay and self-doubt.

Recognize resistance as the greatest method to cope with it. Sure, you'll fail frequently and be criticized at some point, but you have the option of listening exclusively to helpful feedback and ignoring the detrimental type.

Don't stop creating and distributing, no matter what you do.

Chapter 7 - To prosper in today's world, you must provide genuine gifts to others.

For a long time, the economy has been founded on fair exchanges, preferably reinforced by a contract: "If you give me twenty bucks, you can listen to my music."

Genuine presents, such as giving someone something without expecting anything in return, were almost unheard of. In fact, if you offered a real present to a stranger, such as a shared cab trip to someone traveling in the same direction as you, they would most likely decline because they were unsure how they should repay the courtesy.

Unreturned presents, on the other hand, are becoming a popular strategy, particularly on the Internet. Consider Thomas Hawk, a digital photographer. He freely distributes all of his photographs on the internet. "All that labor for no pay," cynics would argue, but in reality, giving free his images has made him famous: people speak about him, follow him, and eventually hire him.

Gifts that are offered with noble intentions rather than as a form of manipulation are discussed and the donors are rewarded. Employees who put their hearts and souls into their jobs to provide such gifts become well-known, celebrated, and sought.

True artists give their work away without expecting or demanding anything in return; it is simply in their nature to do so. In fact, because their creativity is so unique, monetary compensation would be unattainable. How could anybody fairly pay a waiter who commits himself to excellent customer service, bringing in a steady stream of patrons and improving everyone's day?

Despite the fact that artists may not demand payment, genuine artists are so scarce that people will typically spend whatever it takes to maintain them. Someone else will if you don't.

Linchpin: Are You Indispensable? by Seth Godin Book Review

You can't go ahead in today's world by being inconspicuous and simply following orders. Instead, you must choose to be a great, vital cornerstone, no matter how frightening that may appear. Linchpins are similar to artists in that they view their work as a platform for their art and invest emotional energy into it on a daily basis. Their work is a one-of-a-kind, immeasurable gift they give to others.

The following are the questions that this book addressed:

Why is it so important for you to become a linchpin?

- You might now be replaced if your work consists only of following instructions.
- Because linchpins are so important, they always receive the greatest positions.

What prevents the majority of people from becoming linchpins?

- Fear is generated by the lizard brain in order to prevent you from becoming a linchpin.
- Don't let your fear hold you back — choose to overcome it.

What makes linchpins so valuable?

- Make your profession a platform for your creativity by putting emotional labor into it
- True artists finish what they start – they ship.
- To prosper in today's world, you must provide genuine gifts to others.

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