

The Flip Side

Break Free of the Behaviors That Hold You Back

About Author:

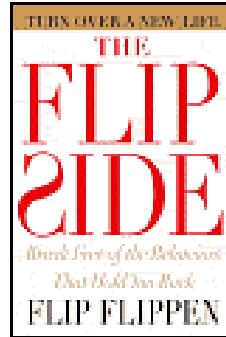


Flip Flippen is a man with an uncompromising mission: "To build relationships and processes that bring out the best in people." He has applied this lofty goal to his work with hundreds of thousands of individuals, including educators, K-12 students, executives, and athletes. With an emphasis on changing behaviors and attitudes that stand in the way of success, he has helped organizations – from small rural school districts to Fortune 500 companies – achieve dramatic improvement in performance, leadership, trust, and productivity.

Flip is an internationally renowned speaker and psychotherapist. He was the founder of Still Creek Ranch, a residential treatment center for young people that flourishes today.

He founded The Flippen Group in 1990. Today, it is the largest educator training company and one of the fastest-growing leadership development organizations in North America. The company's breakthrough educational processes and curricula are in use at 5000 school districts and campuses in 42 states. His *Flippen Leadership Series*, a dynamic training that helps leaders establish goals, uncover constraints, and develop action plans that improve performance and profit, has transformed organizations around the world.

To know more about the author, please visit:
<http://www.flipsidebook.com/bio.html>



Author: Flip Flippen
Publisher: Springboard Press
Date of Publication: 2007
ISBN: 978 0 446 58078 6
Number of Pages: 248 pages

■ The Big Idea

So many people are only a fraction of what they can be. In most instances, they are only able to accomplish so little of their potential. Surprisingly, despite having plenty of talent and skill many are still unable to achieve real success. So, what makes some people rise to the top of their personal and professional sphere?

The answer lies in this book. Authored by Flip Flippen – life coach, business trainer, and personal growth-guru – *The Flip Side* will teach you how to attain real success in life. It is designed to help people find freedom from their most debilitating and self-sabotaging behaviors that have been holding them back all these years.

It will teach you about the concept of "personal constraints," and then help you conquer them using a few simple strategies. The ideas presented in this book are simple enough to incorporate in your busy life, and the prescriptions here are effective enough to help you break free from the hold of these constraints in your life for good. This book will prove most valuable to those seeking to accomplish more, both personally and professionally.

Understanding Personal Constraints

Personal constraints come in many different forms. Most are behavioral; nonetheless, there are physical or intellectual constraints that are so distracting that it comes in conflict with everything else you may be doing to get ahead in life.

Personal constraints are the things that hold you back. They set limits on where and how far you can ultimately go. They are the ones that constrain you from moving forward, from rising higher, and from seeing the world in a whole new perspective. No matter how talented, skillful, or gifted you are, you will not be able to rise above the limits that define who you are.

However, personal constraints can define you only if you let them. If you ignore them, you'll only be giving them the power to limit you; but if you choose to confront them, identify them, and work at conquering them, you will be able to dramatically increase your chances of achieving real success. If you can address your limiting behaviors, then you can effect significant changes in your life. And this is the crux of the matter.

The Five Laws of Personal Constraints

To appreciate the concept of personal constraints more, it would be helpful to understand the five simple principles that describe the impact of personal constraints in your life. Used together, these laws provide a solid foundation for one's personal growth program.

Law One: We All Have Personal Constraints

Having constraints is part of being human. Everyone has them. Some however are more damaging than others. The key here is to identify those constraints that are potentially hurtful and that have the biggest impact on your life.

Law Two: You Can't Rise Above Constraints That You Don't Or Won't Address

Most people are held captive by constraints that they don't or wouldn't want to address. The good news is that people can overcome their constraints if they so desire to live life to its fullest. You only need to embrace this simple fact.

Law Three: Our Personal Constraints Play Themselves Out In Every Area of Our Lives

Your personal constraints go where you go. Issues that show up at work are likely to follow you at home. When you accept this fact, you will come to fully understand their impact on your life.

Law Four: Personal Constraints are Role-Specific

The impact of your constraints varies according to the role or context you are in. What this means is that behaviors that may restrict you in one area may work to your advantage in another area. Hence, to understand more fully the impact of constraints in your life, you must evaluate each constraint in context and in terms of the various roles that you play in life.

Law Five: Those with the least constraints...WIN

People who actively choose to identify, minimize, and remove the significant constraints in their life will fare better than those who do not. To put it in simple terms, the lighter the load that you carry, the farther you can go.

Top 10 Killer Constraints

To break free from the things that are holding you back and limiting your performance, you need to first identify what they are before you can even attempt to overcome them. It is only through identifying these constraints can you expect any worthwhile change to happen in your life.

It is crucial that these constraints are “diagnosed” or identified correctly and accurately. Remember, identifying the root of a problem is everything when it comes to assessing and resolving it. Similar to treating a disease, a wrong diagnosis will only result in the wrong treatment.

To make it easier for you to understand and appreciate the nature of these constraints, Mr. Flippen has seen it fit and helpful to personify each of these killer constraints for you.

Killer Constraint # 1: Bulletproof (Overconfidence)

Self-confidence is generally a good thing, but overconfidence is not. Overconfidence can blind you to reality, and keep you from seeing what is truly happening to you and to those around you. Such are bulletproof people.

Bulletproof people are extremely self-confident and charming individuals. They display a forceful, take charge type of personality and they always seem to have

an answer to everything. Moreover, they are highly-opinionated, and typically have difficulty seeing past their egos.

Nevertheless, these people are not really good at owning up to their mistakes because they can't accept that they could ever be wrong about anything in their lives. This failure to accept fault stems from their inability to assess a situation accurately. Sadly, this often results in more harm than good. Just think of Napoleon Bonaparte and his disastrous campaign in Russia, and you'll get the picture.

Indeed, one of the surest indicators of whether or not overconfidence is a constraint is to see how well and openly a person listens to other people's inputs. When someone stops listening to others, he or she will come to hear his or her voice only. As a result, this person's perspective on things becomes skewed. This constraint is more felt by people in leadership positions who always weigh the gains against the losses.

Killer Constraint # 2: The Ostrich (Low Self-confidence)

As with overconfidence, having low self-confidence is not a good thing either. People who have this constraint are called ostriches.

Ostriches go through life without ever having fully lived it. They don't know what it's like to live out their dreams and to put their talents and abilities to work. This is because they are afraid to take chances, and they seem incapable of capitalizing on opportunities.

The losses that come from this constraint are tremendous. No one takes ostriches seriously. They are constantly being passed over even if they have the best idea or even if they are the most suited to the job. They keep struggling with conflicts, unmet expectations, insecurities, abuses, difficult relationships, and a host of personal baggage that weigh them down day by day.

Killer Constraint # 3: Marshmallows (Overly Nurturing)

Marshmallows, or overly nurturing people, are always struggling with boundary issues. Their overly nurturing and care-giving behavior make it hard for them to draw the line on what is and is not good for them and others. More often than not, this inability to draw healthy boundaries cause them to give too much of themselves to others, or worse give themselves up completely, not realizing that such a relationship will eventually run them dry.

This happens because marshmallows shun confrontation of any kind. They find it hard to say "no" and would rather make excuses for imbalances in their lives or

for the inappropriate behavior of other people, than deal with the problematic situation or person head-on. When they give too much of themselves to “balance out” the unwillingness of others to give, marshmallows are not really helping these people grow as a person. Being gracious is one thing; being overly nurturing is another.

The same is true in business. Over nurturers are always the ones who does everything because they just can't seem to say "No." Even if it means making great sacrifices on their part and over committing to projects just so that they can “help out” other people, they would do so despite knowing it won't be good for them. Also, over nurturers do not make good managers, for they are not really good at evaluating the strengths and especially the weaknesses of their staff. They believe that encouragement is enough to get people where they should be; nevertheless, this does not always work.

Killer Constraint # 4: Critics (Too Demanding, Nitpicking, or Harsh)

Nothing is ever good enough for a critic. Pleasing these people is just plain impossible. They would rant about problems that have been going on for quite some time now at work or at home, or they would go on about how others are not working as hard, or as committed, or as considerate as them.

Oddly enough, in their minds, they are being insightful and helpful by pointing out what is not working or what is wrong. In truth, they are just being overly critical and abusive. As a consequence, people would rather avoid having relations with critics than suffer their daily tirades about what's wrong with the world or the people around them. In the end, critics generally end up being lonely.

Killer Constraint # 5: Icebergs (Low Nurturing)

Icebergs are people who feel little connectivity or warmth toward other people. They generally don't feel the need to concern themselves with the feelings or well-being of others. They can be distant, demanding parents, or tough, detached bosses.

In contrast to marshmallows, icebergs score low in the nurturing, affection, and concern aspects of a relationship. Nonetheless, some of them did not intend to be this way. They just don't want to be taken advantaged of; thus, they create “igloos” to protect themselves.

Killer Constraint # 6: Flatliners (Low Passion, Vision, or Drive)

Passion and drive are perhaps the two greatest determinants of success in life. Sadly enough, flatliners have so little of these two. These people have done so

little with the gifts that have been given to them. They have little motivation and procrastinate a lot. They don't engage in life or make things happen – in fact, they get tired by just by watching things happen.

Killer Constraint # 7: Bulldozers (Overly Dominant)

It's tough to be around overly dominant people. They argue with people, and run over those who don't bend to their will. They usually think that they are the answer and final word on anything. They may be right about their points, but they are definitely wrong in the way they deal with people.

Simply put, bulldozers are bullies. They don't care about what they do to other people; hence, they tend to lose relationships and employees easily.

Killer Constraint # 8: Turtles (Resistant to Change)

Turtles don't like change. Turtles don't like to rethink and overhaul familiar and comfortable routines. They'd rather withdraw than face up to changes. However, change is the only thing certain in life and people should learn to adapt to it. If people can't change, they will find it hard to survive in today's world. It's that simple.

Killer Constraint # 9: Volcanoes (Aggressive, Angry)

Aggression itself is not a constraint. In fact, a certain level of aggression is necessary in some sports and careers. Aggression becomes a constraint when it is coupled with a glaring lack of self-control.

People who are characterized as volcanoes are just like that – they have lots of pent up aggression and they have a short fuse to boot. And just like their namesake, they explode without much warning. Even minor daily frustrations that have been left to simmer without a healthy way of releasing them can tick them off.

Killer Constraint # 10: Quick Draw (Low Self Control, Impulsive)

Quick draws have low self control, are impulsive, and have a high need for change. In addition, their strong inclination toward spontaneity makes them lose interest on projects or activities easily, or makes them decide on a course of action without really weighing the pros and cons of their choice. Their inability to stay focused is what holds these people back and messes up their chance to do something that might have changed their lives as well as those of others.

Overcoming Personal Constraints (OPC)

At the heart of OPC is the powerful notion that one's strengths alone do not determine success. No matter how talented or gifted a person is, it's his behavior that will largely define his level of performance or reasons for failure. More than anything, OPC focuses on changing behaviors that limit people.

Likewise, OPC is built on the notion that change is more than possible; it is imperative. To live fully, people must learn to curtail their behavioral weaknesses and maximize their strengths. Indeed, if you only focus on your strengths, you will fail to deal with those behaviors that need changing.

In OPC, you first work on identifying your personal constraints, and then afterwards make a plan to overcome them. Planning at this stage is very important. You should not rush through this process or you'll end up dealing with only a few surface issues without making those essential changes in your life. This is where building a TrAction Plan comes in.

Building Your TrAction Plan

A TrAction Plan provides you with a systematic and steady path for growth. This entails writing down:

- your ultimate goal for this process;
- a list of your strengths;
- your top two personal constraints;
- specific TrAction steps; and,
- an accountability process.

Step 1: Establish a Goal

You need to have a goal, a desired end result for this process. It will give you something to aim for in your efforts. Keep in mind that understanding your goal is the most powerful part of the process of change.

Step 2: Identify Strengths

Your growth will be driven by your strengths. Knowing your strengths will enable you to discern the strengths that you need to build on further.

Step 3: Target Top Two Constraints

This section is a summary of the two top killer constraints that you are going to work on (or if you have only one, then just work on that one). You do not need to work on all your constraints at the same time. Remember, you can't fix it all at once. Just choose the two that you believe impact you the most and start from there.

Step 4: Specific TrAction Steps

Upon developing your plan, you need to come up with some simple action steps that will allow you to gain control over what is happening, and help you break through your most demanding personal constraints. It's important that each step be behavioral and specific about the things or areas that you are going to change.

Step 5: Accountability

You need to have someone to remind you of your commitments and help you stick to your plan. It's very unlikely that you will be able to make any lasting change without this trusted person to help you along the way.

OPC starts at home

The best place to start laying the foundation of OPC is at home because it is at your home where your constraints are more open and impacting. You can bet that whatever constraints you may have, say at work or outside, will be multiplied ten folds over at home. Moreover, these constraints are most devastating when they surface in situations involving your family or those people you hold dear.

OPC in the workplace: Changing the Corporate Culture

The impact of personal constraints is especially interesting in the business world. This is because no organization can ever hope to rise above its constraints if the individual constraints of its leader are not addressed first.

To build a great team entails leading a great team, and the only way to lead a great team is to do everything necessary to achieve greatness. When a leader becomes his very best, people around him will be attracted to it. This is because people who see others at their best tend to want to become also the best at what they do. When people strive to become the best at what they do, this promotes a corporate/organizational culture that is both healthy and thriving.