



# MANAGEMENT OUTLOOK



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## BEYOND TALENT IN DETERMINING SUCCESS: THE STRENGTH OF CHARACTER



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### INTRODUCTION

Talent frequently takes center stage in the quest for success. Superb skills, be they in sports, academia, or the arts, can easily captivate us. Though talent certainly plays a big part, in the end, one's success trajectory is determined by their character. Resilience, integrity, persistence, and empathy are just a few of the qualities that make up character and are necessary for overcoming life's obstacles and complexities. This article explores the significant role that character plays in determining success instead of talent.

### WHAT IS TALENT

According to Dictionary.com, "Talent is an exceptional natural ability, especially in a particular activity", like in a leadership role—If you're a talented leader, you can motivate people, and you can identify other people's talents and help them to achieve their own goals. You might also need to delegate tasks and ensure a group is managed fairly and justly. Talent is often thought of as the kind of ability that comes without training—something that you're born with, like being a keen listener. It is often contrasted with skill, which is an ability acquired and developed through practice, like being an extraordinary Quran reciter, and also like a Strategic Thinker – A person who can think strategically and is good at planning and understanding the best ways to proceed after weighing up the risks and contextual factors. It can also be used to refer to talented people (which is the adjective form of talent).

### SIGNIFICANCE OF TALENT

Without a doubt, talent is a valuable asset. It's the innate aptitude or skill that people have in particular fields, such as math prowess or musical ability. Giftedness gives people an advantage, making it easier for them to succeed in their chosen fields. A talented athlete may display extraordinary physical prowess on the field

like Sarena Williams on the tennis court, she worked tremendously to build her physical strength along with her extraordinary dexterity in tennis, and a gifted musician may master difficult compositions with ease like the Beatles who were regarded as the most influential band of all time and were integral to the development of 1960s counterculture and the recognition of popular music as an art form. Talent frequently attracts notice and appreciation, which acts as a spur for early success.

But long-term success cannot be sustained by talent alone. There are countless examples of people with exceptional talent who, for lack of character, were unable to realize their full potential. Talent can become unproductive or even harmful in the absence of the proper character attributes. For example, a brilliant scientist may falter in collaborations due to arrogance, or a gifted writer may struggle to meet deadlines due to a lack of discipline.

### WHAT IS CHARACTER:

According to Dictionary.com, "Character, individuality, personality refer to the sum of the characteristics possessed by a person. Character refers especially to moral qualities, ethical standards, principles, and the like: a man of sterling character. Individuality refers to the distinctive qualities that make one recognizable as a person differentiated from others: a woman of strong individuality. Personality refers particularly to the combination of outer and inner characteristics that determine the impression that a person makes upon others: a child of vivid or pleasing personality".

### CHARACTER TRAITS AND SUCCESS:

Character is made up of many different qualities that help people succeed. Resilience, or the capacity to overcome hardship and setbacks, is one of the most important characteristics. Resilient people persevere, learn from their mistakes, and come out stronger

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than they were when faced with difficulties. Think about J.K. Rowling's experience, who had multiple rejections before the Harry Potter series became successful. She overcame years of hardship thanks to her tenacity and unshakable faith in her work, which eventually brought her extraordinary success.

Another essential quality that molds success is integrity. Honesty, adherence to moral standards, and consistency in behavior are all parts of integrity. Honest people gain respect and trust, which paves the way for long-term success. One of the wealthiest investors in the world, Warren Buffett, credits his constant devotion to morality and integrity for a large portion of his success. Because of his reputation for integrity and fairness, he has been able to forge enduring bonds with others and accomplish amazing success in the financial industry.

Achieving long-term objectives and overcoming challenges requires perseverance as well. Success rarely happens quickly; perseverance and persistent effort are needed. "Genius is one percent inspiration, ninety-nine percent perspiration," as Thomas Edison once famously said. His innumerable trials and errors before creating the light bulb serve as an example of the strength of tenacity in the face of difficulty. Similar to Musk, many obstacles have stood in the way of successful entrepreneurs like him, but they have persevered because of their unwavering resolve and fortitude.

Interpersonal skills and empathy are critical for success in teamwork settings. Effective leadership, teamwork, and communication are all facilitated by the capacity to comprehend and relate to others. An empathetic leader has a genuine interest in his/her team members' lives, the challenges they face, and their overall feelings. An empathetic leader interacts with others in a way that leaves them feeling safe and cared for, and as though they have a connection based on trust. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), is the prime example of how empathy can be a transformative force for positive change. He was able to bring communities together and spur action toward a common goal because of his capacity to empathize with individuals from a variety of backgrounds and create deep connections.

### **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHARACTER IN SURMOUNTING OBSTACLES:**

Achieving success is not an easy road; it is paved with roadblocks, mistakes, and disappointments. Character steps in as the deciding factor in these trying times, deciding whether people give up or overcome obstacles. Take Malala Yousafzai's story, for example, who stood up to the Taliban's attempts to silence her and went on to become a global advocate for girls' education. Malala overcame adversity and made a lasting impact on the world despite facing assassination attempts and unfathomable hardships thanks to her courage, resiliency, and unshakable commitment to her cause.

The character also affects how people react to achievement. It takes humility, thankfulness, and accountability to keep things in perspective and stay away from the dangers of ego and arrogance. Successful people are more likely to keep developing, learning, and making valuable contributions to society if they maintain their humility and sense of realism. A very good example

is Abdul Sattar Edhi, who was successful in establishing the world's largest welfare NGO with his hard work but remained very humble and down to earth till his death. On the other hand, people who give in to conceit and self-importance run the risk of alienating others and jeopardizing their long-term prosperity.

### **SUMMARY**

Although talent can lead to opportunities, an individual's character ultimately dictates their level of success and longevity. Resilience, integrity, perseverance, and empathy are just a few of the qualities that are necessary for overcoming challenges in life and changing the world for the better. People who aspire to succeed must develop and maintain their character because they understand how much it will affect their path to happiness and success. Ultimately, true success is not only determined by talent but also by character strength. When talent is combined with character, success is guaranteed. An example of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who had a great talent for influencing people with his ability to reason and logic. This was coupled with his high moral values and qualities, ethical standards, and principles. He had a personality of great character. With this combination, the extraordinary personality he possessed was unmatched during his time and even after by any political leader.

## **10 Ways to Build Your Character Each and Every Day**

*Source: Internet*

### **1. Be known as a promise-keeper**

Do what you say you will do. No matter how small the promise is, no matter to whom the promise is made, strive to keep your word. If events prevent you from honoring the commitment you made, get back to people to let them know why you cannot fulfill your promise. Resolve to handle your word as precious currency and watch how your value rises in everyone's eyes.

### **2. Be consistent in your dealings with others**

Do you treat some people better than you treat others? For example, do you unwittingly complain about a member of your team to other team members? While we can easily slip into such behavior, especially when we are tired and frustrated by the day's events, consider that this chips away at your integrity and character.

### **3. Audit your decisions**

At the end of every week, get in the habit of going over the decisions you made. Are you proud? Do your actions reflect positively on you as a person of character? What could you have done better? Every action we take, no matter how small, has our character stamp on it.

### **4. Engage in tough conversations with empathy**

The easy thing is to sidestep the tough conversation. Take a deep breath and determine how to engage in meaningful conversation that makes a difference in what we say and what happens next. Our character will be stronger if we interact with empathy.

### **5. Nurture meaningful relationships through good and challenging times**

They almost become disposable. Relationships that are damaging physically or psychologically are different. In those, safely leaving is the first step, and these times take strong character as well. Absent the damaging relationships, we need to try hard to make them work. Whether in our homes, neighborhoods, or workplaces, we need to nurture our relationships and find better paths forward.

*To be continued in the next issue ...*

# HOW TO TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR LIFE: UNDERSTANDING THREE CIRCLES OF INFLUENCE



by **Muhammad Aleem Habib**  
Deputy General Manager

Ever felt overwhelmed by things you can't control? This is a common issue many of us face, often leading to stress and frustration. Our post offers guidance on how to focus on what truly lies within your power using the concept of the Circle of Control.

The theory of the Circles of Influence, Concern, and Control, introduced by Stephen Covey in his book "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People," provides a framework for understanding how to take charge of one's life. It consists of three circles: the Circle of Concern, the Circle of Influence, and the Circle of Control.

The concept of the "Three Circles of Influence" offers a framework for understanding where we have control, where we have influence, and where we have no control at all. This framework helps us focus our efforts on areas where we can make a real difference and reduce stress associated with issues beyond our control.

## EXPLANATION OF THE MODEL

The Three Circle theory uses a simple picture. It shows three circles inside each other, like a target. The smallest circle in the middle is the Circle of Control. Around it, there's a bigger circle called the Circle of Influence. Finally, the biggest circle around all others is the Circle of Concern.

**Circle of Concern:** This is the outermost circle and encompasses everything that concerns us, both big and small. It includes world events, the economy, the weather, other people's actions, our health, and our future.

While these things might be important to us, we have no direct control over them.

**Circle of Influence:** This circle lies within the Circle of Concern and represents the areas where we can exert indirect influence. We can influence things like our relationships, our workplace environment, our health choices, and the way we communicate. Stephen Covey calls it the "smaller circle". You may learn new skills or get more knowledge to grow this circle. Each thing you do here goes out and impacts other areas too. With time, taking charge of yourself makes your own circles bigger.

**Circle of Control:** This is the innermost circle and represents the things we have complete control over. The circle of control helps you see what parts of your life you can change. It includes our thoughts, emotions, actions, behaviors, and choices. When bad events happen, such as a pandemic, these are not in our circle. But we still have the power to make good changes within this circle every day. This is the smallest circle, but it's also the one where we have the most power.

## LEVERAGING THREE CIRCLES FOR GROWTH AND CHANGE

Understanding these circles encourages us to invest our time and energy wisely. It teaches us to:

1. **Focus on our Circle of Control**, enhancing our effectiveness and satisfaction.
2. **Expand our Circle of Influence** through relationship-building, effective communication, and leadership.
3. **Acknowledge our Circle of Concern**, accepting what we cannot change and maintaining emotional balance.

## WHY FOCUSING ON THE CIRCLE OF CONTROL IS IMPORTANT

Focusing on the Circle of Control is crucial for taking charge of your life. It promotes a proactive mindset, improves mental health, and increases flexibility. Focusing on the Circle of Control allows individuals to set clear goals and take action to achieve them, rather than getting caught up in things outside of their control.

## HOW TO APPLY THE CIRCLE OF CONTROL IN YOUR LIFE

To effectively prioritize and act within the Circle of Control, follow these steps:

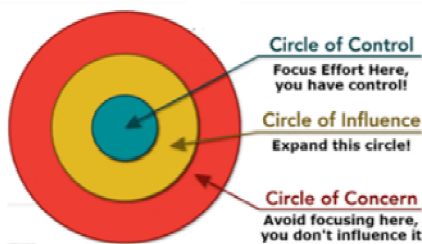
1. Identify your concerns within the Circle of Concern.
2. Evaluate which concerns can be influenced or have an impact and move them to the Circle of Influence.
3. Prioritize the concerns within your Circle of Control based on their importance and urgency.
4. Take decisive action on the concerns you have identified as being within your control.
5. Focus on making positive changes in areas where you have direct control, such as your thoughts, behaviors, and reactions.
6. Regularly assess your progress and adjust your actions accordingly.

## TECHNIQUES FOR EXPANDING THE CIRCLE OF CONTROL

To expand your Circle of Control and feel more in control of your life, you can try these techniques:

1. **Identify what is within your control:** Look at the things that are directly under your control, such as your actions, choices, and attitudes.
2. **Focus on the present moment:** Instead of worrying about the future or dwelling on the past, focus on what you can do right now to make a positive change.
3. **Set achievable goals:** Break down larger goals into smaller, manageable steps that you can act on.
4. **Cultivate a growth mindset:** Embrace challenges as opportunities for growth and learning, rather than obstacles.
5. **Practice self-care:** Take care of yourself physically, emotionally, and mentally to enhance your overall well-being and resilience.
6. **Surround yourself with positive influences:** Spend time with people who support and uplift you, and limit exposure to negativity or toxic relationships.
7. **Manage your time effectively:** Prioritize tasks that are within your control and eliminate or delegate those that aren't necessary or don't align with your goals.
8. **Communicate assertively:** Express your thoughts, needs, and boundaries clearly and respectfully to avoid unnecessary conflicts or frustrations.

Whether you're leading a team, managing a project, or steering your personal growth, remember where you focus your energy can transform your impact. By consciously navigating these circles, we can drive meaningful change in our lives and organizations, foster resilience, and enhance our leadership. Remember, the only circle you can truly control is your own. Focus on making the most of it, and the ripples of your positive actions might just have a larger impact than you think.



## INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES

Weakness of attitude becomes weakness of character.  
– **Albert Einstein**

“Top 15 Things Money Can’t Buy Time. Happiness. Inner Peace. Integrity. Love. Character. Manners. Health. Respect. Morals. Trust. Patience. Class. Common sense. Dignity.  
– **Roy T. Bennett, *The Light in the Heart***

Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are.  
– **John Wooden**

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