

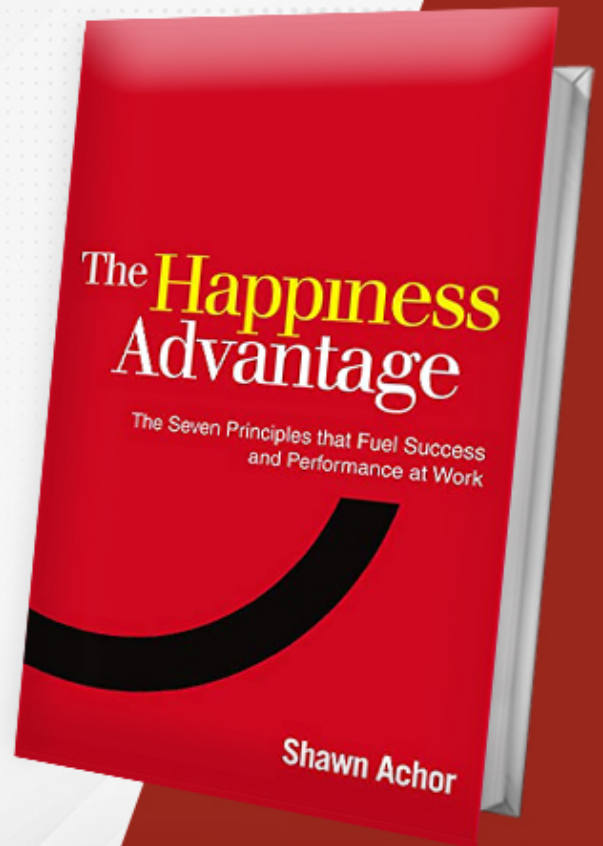
THE HAPPINESS ADVANTAGE: THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES THAT FUEL SUCCESS AND PERFORMANCE AT WORK

by Glenn Williams

Book Review

The Happiness Advantage: The seven principles that fuel success and performance at work

A REVIEW BY:
Glenn Williams, CEO, LCP Global



“We think: If I just get that raise, or hit that next sales target, I’ll be happy. If I can just get that next good grade, I’ll be happy. If I lose that five pounds, I’ll be happy. And so on. Success first, happiness second. The only problem is that this formula is broken.”¹

“It is about learning how to cultivate the mindset and behaviors that have been empirically proven to fuel greater success and fulfillment.”²

From a young age we have it drilled into us that if we work hard we’ll achieve success, and we’ll be happy or fulfilled. Of course, there’s nothing wrong with working hard; in fact, there is a strong link between achievement and effort. However, as declared by Achor, empirical evidence reveals that happiness and optimism significantly fuel performance and achievement, not the other way around.

When I read this book, I found myself intuitively nodding my head, agreeing with the findings expanded by Achor. I have always been fairly driven in my work, sometimes to the detriment of myself, my family, and those that I have had the responsibility of leading; where great sacrifices have had to be made in order to achieve the goals that have been important to me. As if on cue, I found myself once again agreeing with Achor’s insight, that many of us have sacrificed happiness for success, only to see it result in greater levels of stress, pressure, and ultimately, a decline in performance.³

Don’t mistake this for a ‘feel-good’ book that aims to make leadership and performance effortless. Achor presents seven principles that fuel success and performance at work. He identifies the importance of

capitalizing on positivity, adjusting our mindset, overcoming negative patterns of thinking, and how to replace old habits with good ones.

One of the challenges leaders often face is that the greater their responsibilities, the poorer their social connections can become. In contrast to this, Achor presents evidence that shows that the most successful people invest in their friends, peers, and family to propel them forward.⁴ Food for thought.

References

¹ Shawn Achor, *The Happiness Advantage: The Seven Principles That Fuel Success and Performance at Work* (London, United Kingdom: Virgin Books, 2011), 3.

² *Ibid.*, 24.

³ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 171.

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