



Positive Intelligence

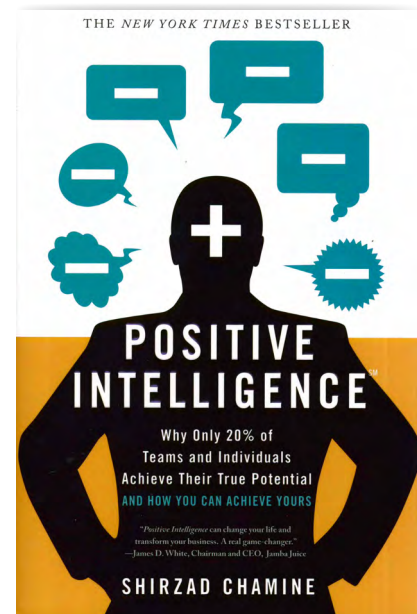
Why Only 20% of Teams and Individuals Achieve Their True Potential and How You Can Achieve Yours

Shirzad Chamine

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KEY CONCEPTS

- Positive Intelligence measures the relative strength of the negative Saboteurs and positive Sage parts of the mind. A high Positive Intelligence means that the mind has friendly, helpful thoughts. A low Positive Intelligence indicates that the mind's own enemies are at work against it.
- The Positive Intelligence Quotient (PQ) is a useful way to represent the relative strength of the Sage and Saboteurs in the mind. It indicates the percentage of thoughts that are of the Sage, or positive, type. A PQ of 75, for example, shows that 75 percent of the time the mind of the subject is engaging in positive and productive thinking.
- The Survival Brain is the portion of the brain that is most reflexive and oriented by evolution toward survival in a hostile environment. Because the Saboteurs emerge from the Survival Brain, they can be counterproductive but nevertheless serve a fundamental purpose. They will never be eliminated completely.
- The PQ Brain is the portion of the brain focused on thriving, going beyond mere survival to achieve happiness and fulfillment. Using the PQ Brain will improve happiness and help fulfill and empower others.
- The Tipping Point is a PQ of 75. Below this number, an individual or group will be caught in a downward whirlpool of negativity. Above it, a positive feedback loop ensues.
- The Vortex is a metaphor for the way an individual's PQ affects a group. The more status an individual has within the group, the larger their vortex will be. In this way, a leader with a high PQ can create success from a group that might otherwise be caught in a downward spiral.
- The concepts, tools, and techniques of Positive Intelligence can be applied to both professional and personal situations.

INTRODUCTION

We spend much of our lives like Sisyphus, the king who was doomed forever to push a huge boulder up a hill only to have it roll back down. Unlike Sisyphus, however, our punishment is self-inflicted. In **Positive Intelligence**, Shirzad Chamine reveals the undetected “Saboteurs” that cause all of our setbacks. Because of these Saboteurs, only 20 percent of individuals and teams achieve their true potential. Chamine provides a set of tools and techniques to shift the balance of power between these Saboteurs and the “Sage” inside our minds. It is based on the best practices in neuroscience, organizational science, positive psychology, and life-coaching.

POSITIVE INTELLIGENCE AND POSITIVE INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENT

Our minds can be our best friends, but also our worst enemies. The Positive Intelligence Quotient (PQ) measures the balance between the friend mind and the enemy mind on a scale from 0 to 100. A PQ score of 75—when the positive Sage mind operates three times as often as the Saboteurs—is the critical tipping point. When a team or individual reaches this point, Positive Intelligence becomes self-reinforcing. Below this number, the Saboteurs are in a negative feedback loop.

These concepts of Positive Intelligence, Saboteurs, and the Sage are based on breakthrough research in neuroscience, organizational science, and positive psychology. The author came to them through his own experience and has used them successfully to coach CEOs and senior executives who wanted to reach more of their potential.

THREE WAYS TO BOOST A PQ

Corporate retreats and team-building exercises typically fizzle because the Saboteurs are still there, undermining everyone when they return to work. The key to lasting improvement is first to recognize these Saboteurs so that they can be dealt with. Saboteurs evolved as part of the survival brain, the flight or fight mechanisms that was once so useful but is now counterproductive. The worst of these Saboteurs actually pretend that they are friends, making it even harder to root them out. Chamine offers a list of the ten most common Saboteurs:

1. *Judge*. The master Saboteur alive in everyone. It generates anxiety, finds faults in the self and others. Its self-serving lie is that without it we become lazy and unmotivated.
2. *Stickler*. The Stickler takes its need for perfection and order to an extreme. Its sabotage causes perpetual frustration when perfection is never achieved.
3. *Pleaser*. It causes an individual to lose sight of their own needs and resent others. It pretends that pleasing others is altruistic, but the Pleaser’s real motive is to gain affection and acceptance.
4. *Hyper-Achiever*. It focuses on external success rather than internal happiness and turns people into workaholics.
5. *Victim*. It plays the martyr, pretending that this is the best route to attracting care and attention.
6. *Hyper-Rational*. It focuses on rational processing to the exclusion of emotions. Its lie is that emotional intelligence is unimportant.
7. *Hyper-Vigilant*. It causes intense anxiety by pretending that the dangers around a person are much larger than they actually are.
8. *Restless*. It prevents peace and contentment with any activity because it is always looking to the next big thing. Its lie is that busyness means living life fully when in fact it obscures the present.

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9. *Controller*. The Controller needs to take charge and control situations because of anxiety about being out of control. It may achieve short-term results but creates resentment.

10. *Avoider*. It allows conflicts and problems to fester by avoiding them. Its lie is that a positive attitude is more important than recognizing problems.

Against these ten Saboteurs stands the Sage, equipped with five great powers:

1. To Explore with an open mind
2. To Empathize and bring compassion
3. To Innovate
4. To Navigate toward underlying values
5. To Activate or take action without the Saboteurs interfering

Additionally, there are three strategies to improve one's PQ: weaken the Saboteurs, strengthen the Sage, and strengthen the PQ Brain muscles. Identifying the Saboteurs and recognizing when they are at work will diminish their overall power.

MEASURING THE SABOTAGE

Saboteurs have an evolutionary basis as well as a foundation in early childhood. They are part of the

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Shirzad Chamine is Chairman of CTI, the largest coach training organization in world. CTI has trained coaches and leaders in most of the Fortune 500 companies, and faculty at Stanford and Yale business schools. A preeminent C-suite advisor, Shirzad has personally coached hundreds of CEOs and their executive teams. Prior to running CTI, Shirzad was the CEO of an enterprise software company. His background includes Ph.D. studies in neuroscience in addition to a BA in Psychology, an MS in electrical engineering, and an MBA from Stanford, where he lectures.

instinct that every child has for emotional survival. But these voices, though helpful in early childhood, become counterproductive as adults. The first step in attenuating Saboteurs is to measure their impact, beginning with the master of all Saboteurs, the Judge. To begin the journey toward Positive Intelligence, an individual rates their Judge's strength on a scale of one to ten.

It took me years of observing myself and others to realize that in many aspects of our lives we don't fare much better than Sisyphus. Many of our efforts at improving our success or happiness unravel just as surely as the giant boulder rolling back to the bottom of the hill.

The Judge is served by the nine accomplice Saboteurs, driven by one of three motivations:

1. *Independence*: A need for boundaries with others.
2. *Acceptance*: A need to maintain a positive image in the eyes of others.
3. *Security*: A need to control life's anxieties.

These three motivations adopt one or more of three styles:

1. *Assert*: Taking action to demand fulfillment of primary needs.
2. *Earn*: Rather than demanding, working hard to earn fulfillment.
3. *Avoid*: Withdrawing from activities and other people.

The nine accomplice Saboteurs can now be mapped onto a matrix with rows for the three styles and columns for the three motivations. For example, the Pleaser is at the intersection of the Earn style and the Acceptance motivation. The Victim is also in the Acceptance column but in the Avoid style row.

Armed with the understanding of how the Saboteurs, styles, and motivations relate the subject rates each of the nine Saboteurs on the same one to ten scale used for the Judge. Throughout this process, a person must be alert to each Saboteur's lie. One way or another, the Saboteurs tell us that they are out to help, not to harm us. Once the Saboteurs are named and their lies are uncovered, they shrink and lose strength.

THE JUDGE COMMANDS ALL

The Judge is the most persistent and torturing of Saboteurs and offers the most damaging of all lies: that we are not worthy of love and respect simply because of who we are. Of course whenever we try to assert that we are indeed worthy of unconditional love, the Judge warns, "You will become lazy and irresponsible without my constant assessment of you." This is a dangerous lie.

Just as we judge ourselves, we judge others in a way that creates professional and personal conflicts. Many relationships start well but over time the Judge takes control and, in turn, activates the Judge on the other side of the relationship. The result is perpetual complaint and conflict between co-workers, bosses, and personal friendships.

Unless you tackle and weaken your own internal enemies – we'll call them the Saboteurs – they will do their best to rob you of any improvements you make.

Finally, the Judge will lie to us, saying, "You will be happy when... ". This terrible lie says one cannot be happy with present circumstances while also moving the goalposts of "when" just as they are reached. In other words, "when" never comes and we are never happy with any circumstances.

As with all of the other Saboteurs, the Judge will weaken when its voice is recognized as a separate entity, and its lies are recognized daily.

AWAKENING THE SAGE

Of course the Saboteurs have an evolutionary and biological function. Just as the pain inflicted by putting one's hand on a hot stove is part of a survival mechanism, feeling emotional pain and grief are necessary to overall growth and learning. But unless the Saboteurs are the quieted, it is as if we are keeping our hand on that hot stove and continuing to suffer the pain. Weakening the Saboteurs is one strategy toward positive intelligence, but empowering the Sage perspective is another.

The "Three Gifts" technique can awaken the Sage within. Chamine suggests imagining three ways in which a present problem or setback will later be

remembered as a great gift. This can be done by teams or individuals alike. A team should imagine looking back from the end of a business cycle, and an individual should imagine looking back over a long career, in order to visualize how a crisis shifted events to a new and better path.

THE SAGE'S FIVE POWERS

Just as the "Three Gifts" can awaken the Sage perspective, thought experiments and games can invoke the Sage powers.

The Sage's power to Empathize is called forth with the "Visualize the Child" game. Although we readily accept the Judge's chastisement when we do something wrong, it is hard to imagine a child being subjected to the same harsh criticism. So, by visualizing oneself or someone else in childhood, we see past the Saboteurs and develop empathy for ourselves.

Similarly, we empower the Sage to Explore through the wide-eyed curiosity of childhood. Faced with a complex problem, we often try brainstorming, presuming we can be open-minded. But the Judge and the Controller always limit the answers we can see. The solution is to play at being a "Fascinated Anthropologist." The Anthropologist considers facts unfiltered and does not draw conclusions until the research is entirely complete.

Exploration discovers what is truly there; inventing something new requires the Sage's power to Innovate. Simply put, innovation is "outside the box" thinking unfettered by the Judge and its accomplices. This calls for the "Yes... and..." game. Each member of the team must meet the ideas of colleagues with the phrase, "Yes... and...." For example, "Yes, we could boost our market share and we could use franchisees to do it."

The fourth power of the Sage is to Navigate. Navigating means always moving toward one's deepest values, also called "true North." Here the "Flash Forward" thought experiments helps. As in the "Three Gifts" game, a team or individual should imagine looking back at a fork in the road from the end of life and ask which path we wish we had chosen.

Finally, the Sage has the power to Activate, to move into pure action without the Saboteurs causing distraction or avoidance. Because each and every Saboteur can prevent action, the “Preempt the Saboteurs” game is needed. All it requires is envisioning what each Saboteur might say in response to the chosen course of action. This way when the Saboteurs raise their objections, they have already been heard and answered.

THE SAGE BRAIN WORKOUT

The Saboteurs inhabit the Survivor Brain, the part of the brain that evolved to survive the physical dangers of a savage world and the emotional dangers of childhood. In contrast, the Sage is in what might be called the PQ Brain. According to Chamine, recent studies show that these are two very real and physically separate areas of the brain. Happiness is at root a neurochemical phenomenon.

Exercises that shift focus to the five senses strengthen the PQ Brain muscles. Becoming attentive to sounds, smells, and sensations builds the PQ Brain. The workout requires 100 repetitions of 10 second intervals each day. For example, a person might feel their fingertips together for 10 seconds at one moment, or wiggle their toes at another. Then, they might pause and listen intently to all of the background noise in the office for 60 seconds.

One of the best ways to remember these daily exercises is to use the Saboteurs themselves as reminders. Every time a Saboteur voice beckons, the mind shifts to a sensual experience. After 21 days of 100 repetitions a day, the Sage will have conquered, though not vanquished, the Saboteurs.

MEASURING PQ IMPROVEMENT

The PQ score relates Sage activity to Saboteur activity. For example, a PQ of 75 indicates that the Sage works 75 percent of the time compared to the Saboteurs at work 25 percent. It turns out that a PQ of 75 is the tipping point: below 75 the Saboteurs create a negative vortex that spirals downward; above 75 the Sage vortex, or positive feedback loop, takes hold.

Within a team, the PQ Channel describes the paths by

which non-verbal communications happen amongst members. The PQ Channel activates mirror neurons so that members reflect emotions back to one another.

The PQ Vortex is a metaphor for the relative strength of an individual's PQ in a group setting. The size of the vortex follows that person's power or status in the group. A team leader has a large vortex capable of pulling up a team's overall PQ even if several members have low individual PQ scores.

Not surprisingly, no one can—or should—have a PQ score of 100. The Saboteurs actually serve a purpose in small doses, so the highest possible PQ score is 92.

A Saboteur does its greatest damage if it convinces you that it's your friend and you accept it into your trusted inner circle. Each Saboteur has some very reasonable-sounding justifications for its actions, but these justifications are nothing but well-masked lies.

POSITIVE INTELLIGENCE APPLICATIONS

Increasing Positive Intelligence Quotients supports many areas of life. In business, rather than a fleeting team-building retreat, helping each member increase their PQ score and training them to pay attention to the PQ channel will improve the team's overall PQ score and achievements. Meetings that begin with brief PQ reports from members and PQ activation exercises sustain PQ improvements.

A well-exercised PQ Brain is better able to achieve a healthy work-life balance. Parenting is easier and more effective if there are a few PQ representatives in a family, who guide others to learn to ignore the Saboteurs that drive us to worry about children's achievements. Teaching children about their own Sages and Saboteurs will serve them well through life. The PQ Brain even helps us improve at sports because it quiets the many distracting Saboteur voices that ruin a good golf swing or tennis stroke. Eating more attentively is one of the exercises that strengthen PQ Brain muscles, and is an excellent path to a healthier diet. Positive Intelligence can help us deal with difficult colleagues and even find meaning and purpose in life.

A CASE STUDY IN LEADERSHIP WITH POSITIVE INTELLIGENCE

The story of Frank, the CEO of a publicly traded company, illustrates the effectiveness of Positive Intelligence. During the economic downturn of 2008, the share price for Frank's company plummeted and he called in Chamine as a personal coach.

They began the coaching with measurements of his PQ and those of his senior management team, individually and collectively. Not surprisingly, given the crisis and the lack of appropriate coping tools, Frank's PQ came in at 43 while his team scored a PQ of 54.

A leader, parent, teacher, or spouse who wants to shift another person into higher-PQ behavior must first go there him- or herself. The Sage in one is more likely to activate the Sage in the other, just as the Saboteurs in one are more likely to activate the Saboteurs in the other.

Training in the PQ exercises for Frank and his team, with a commitment of 100 reps each day and weekly reporting, began the improvement process. Next, Frank tried the "Visualize the Child" game, relying on an actual photograph of himself as a child when his imagination failed him. This game helped him Empathize with himself and others.

The team's Sage brains set about Exploring what had gone wrong by each calling one lost customer to conduct a "blameless autopsy" of what had caused them to part ways. Using the Innovate power of the Sage guiding a series of "Yes... and..." conversations, the team came up with some 200 ideas in an hour to improve their situation. Individually and as a team they then played the "Flash Forward" game to help them Navigate. Finally, they were ready to take action. New PQ tests showed scores significantly increased with a team score safely above the 75 threshold. The team decided to streamline operations, focus on their core competencies, and double down on innovations that had led them to market leadership in a narrower space.

The company emerged with a strong leadership position in this redefined market space. For Frank, the Positive Intelligence techniques led to a level of

fulfillment that went well beyond the company's resurrected fortunes.

USING POSITIVE INTELLIGENCE TO RESOLVE CONFLICTS

The Sage considers conflict not as something to be avoided or won but as a gift that can be harnessed to improve a relationship. Saboteurs at work undermining individuals and teams are also at work in relationships, such as those between spouses. The Saboteurs focus entirely on their own position in a conflict and counter their opponent's position.

But each party's position is only the tip of the iceberg. Below it, and generally unseen, are the assumptions that undergird that position and beneath these sit each party's aspirations. Positive Intelligence looks deeply into one's own and any opponent's aspirations.

The Sage uses the five powers to Explore the conflict, develop Empathy, gain bearings through Navigation, Innovate, and then Activate solutions. Rather than avoid conflict as something unpleasant and counterproductive, the Sage brain uses conflict to mutual advantage.

USING POSITIVE INTELLIGENCE TO SELL AND PERSUADE

The first PQ principle of selling arises from the well-established fact that most people buy based on emotion and intuition. To speak to this emotion, the PQ Channel is far more important than the rational "Data Channel." The second principle is that the PQ Brain should be activated because virtually all purchases help us thrive, rather than merely survive. Recall that the Saboteurs are alive in the survival brain and are programmed to say "no." To get to yes, the seller needs the buyer's PQ Brain in control.

The greatest challenge to selling is rejection, something that triggers the Saboteurs in the survival brain. Salespeople need to be attentive to the time it takes them to recover from each rejection and to use the tools of Positive Intelligence to overcome its pain.

HAPPINESS IS A STATE OF MIND

It is easy to underestimate the strength of the Sabo-

teurs. They cling to life and will never fully disappear. Positive Intelligence can minimize their impact and help individuals achieve a sustained level of happiness as well as insight into themselves and others.



FEATURES OF THE BOOK

Estimated Reading Time: 5 hours, 227 pages

Positive Intelligence transforms the latest research on happiness into a tool kit for increased satisfaction in all areas of life. The book includes assessments and exercises as well as links to a website with online tools and supporting audio and video files. An appendix presents the research behind the author's theories. The first five sections should be read in sequence. The reader can then pick and choose from the final "applications" section.

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