

# THE HAPPINESS ADVANTAGE WITH SHAWN ACHOR

AN ENTERPRISE MEDIA PRODUCTION

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Program Overview .....	4
About the host, Shawn Achor and Enterprise Media .....	6
<b>PART 1: USING <i>THE HAPPINESS ADVANTAGE</i></b>	
Using this program in a training session .....	7
Suggested training agendas .....	8
Create your own agenda .....	10
Checklist for facilitator .....	11
Message to the facilitator .....	12
<b>TRAINING ELEMENTS</b>	
Introducing the training session .....	14
Showing the DVD .....	15
Discussion questions & action steps .....	16
Transcript of the program .....	24
<b>PART 2: IMPLEMENTATION MODULES .....</b>	<b>38</b>
Your guide to the modules .....	39
Sample module training session .....	41

**THE ZORRO CIRCLE**

Overview ..... 42  
Questions for discussion ..... 43  
Transcript ..... 45

**SOCIAL INVESTMENT**

Overview ..... 48  
Questions for discussion ..... 50  
Transcript ..... 54

**FALLING UP**

Overview ..... 57  
Falling Up: advance exercise ..... 58  
Questions for discussion ..... 59  
Transcript ..... 61

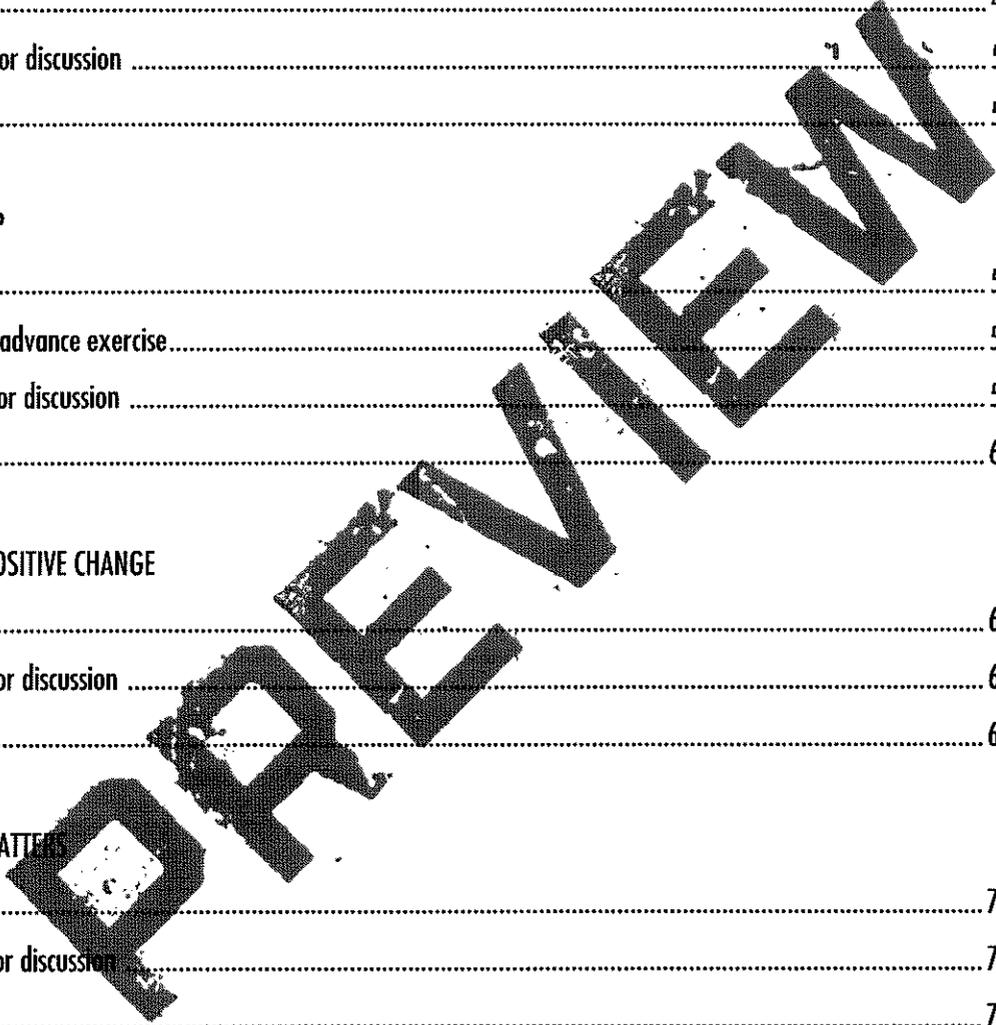
**LEADING POSITIVE CHANGE**

Overview ..... 64  
Questions for discussion ..... 65  
Transcript ..... 68

**MINDSET MATTERS**

Overview ..... 72  
Questions for discussion ..... 73  
Transcript ..... 75

**YOUR NOTES** ..... 78



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## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Happiness is something we all desire and yet it often seems elusive, always waiting for us somewhere just over the horizon. Part of the problem is that we have been taught that hard work and success must come first, happiness second. If we work hard, we'll be successful, and once we're successful, *then* we'll be happy. But decades of scientific research have proven that this formula is backward. Happiness makes us smarter and more efficient — it actually fuels our success. This video package is designed to help people understand how the Happiness Advantage works — and how everyone can benefit from these principles.

In *The Happiness Advantage* training program, Shawn Achor reveals the latest research into the science of happiness. In the process, he makes some amazing revelations:

- Happiness is the cause, not just the result, of a whole host of positive outcomes in the workplace. Happy employees receive better work evaluations and higher pay, take fewer sick days, and bounce back from setbacks faster.
- If you can shift your brain into a positive mindset, you can improve your productivity, your level of intelligence, and your ability to interact with coworkers, family, and friends.
- Happiness is something we can all learn. Through a few simple activities we can permanently raise our happiness baseline and capitalize on all the advantages listed above.

Using humor and straightforward explanations, Shawn Achor brings this cutting-edge research to life and provides every viewer with the tools to capitalize on the Happiness Advantage.

*The Happiness Advantage* focuses on three elements: First, we explain the science of happiness. After two decades and thousands of studies, the research is clear: we perform at our best when we are in a positive state of mind. In the second part of the video, Shawn Achor describes a number of simple exercises that will help you adopt a positive mindset and put the Happiness Advantage to work. Finally, you'll learn how you can spread the Happiness Advantage to your co-workers, friends, and family.

The expanded training edition of *The Happiness Advantage* provides you with five Implementation Modules, which are designed as tools to help you work on implementing the Happiness Advantage at work and in your life. The modules will help improve your ability to lead others using the Happiness Advantage (Leading Positive Change), overcome stress and set attainable goals (The Zorro Circle), and permanently improve your happiness and performance (Social Investment, Mindset Matters, and Felling Up).

**PREVIEW**

## ABOUT SHAWN ACHOR AND ENTERPRISE MEDIA

### Shawn Achor

Shawn Achor, author of *The Happiness Advantage*, spent over a decade at Harvard University where he won numerous distinguished teaching awards for his work. He graduated magna cum laude from Harvard and earned a Masters from Harvard Divinity School in Christian and Buddhist ethics. In 2006, he was Head Teaching Fellow for "Positive Psychology," the most popular course at Harvard at the time. In 2007, Shawn founded Good Think Inc. to share his research with a wider population. When the global economy collapsed in 2008, Shawn was immediately called in as an expert by the world's largest banks to help restart forward progress. Subsequently, Shawn has spoken in 45 countries to a wide variety of audiences: bankers on Wall Street, students in Dubai, CEOs in Zimbabwe. Shawn's research on happiness and human potential have received attention from the Harvard Business Review, New York Times, Forbes, CNN, and NPR.

### Enterprise Media

*"It isn't often that art, effective instruction, and crucially important topics come together in a business film. It's even rarer when it's a treat to watch. All of these things are true of *The Excellence Files*." --*

*Training Media Review, 1998*

Enterprise Media is a leading producer and distributor of entertaining and informative training programs, documentaries, and TV programming to the global broadcast, corporate, and educational markets.

Enterprise Media has more than 80 business titles to their credit including: **In Search of Excellence with Tom Peters & Bob Waterman**, **Who Says We Can't Do It: Lance Armstrong's Journey**, **Succeeding in a Changing World with John Kotter**, and **Re-Imagine! Business Excellence in a Disruptive Age with Tom Peters**. Over the years, our videos and television programs have earned respect from viewers, awards for content, and ratings that are among PBS' highest for public affairs programming.

## PART 1: USING *THE HAPPINESS ADVANTAGE* Using this program in a training session

Shawn Achor brings the topic of positive psychology to life by providing practical lessons that anyone can use to improve their happiness and performance. The accessibility and range of the messages in *The Happiness Advantage* makes the program useful in many different organizational settings and situations. Everyone can benefit from improving his or her mindset, and even when these positive changes are made with the workplace in mind, they quickly expand to life at home with family and friends. Audiences who will find the video particularly useful include:

**MANAGEMENT AT ALL LEVELS:** Managers at all levels need to have a solid understanding of the key concepts presented in this video. It provides a framework for improving communication, productivity, employee satisfaction, employee retention and overall business performance. In the Implementation Module, "Leading Positive Change," Shawn Achor targets managers specifically to help them optimize the benefits of *The Happiness Advantage* within their organization.

**ORGANIZATION-WIDE TRAINING:** The message of *The Happiness Advantage* is a universal one, beneficial to CEOs and first year associates alike. We all want to operate at the highest level possible. We all want to be more productive, happy and successful, to get more out of ourselves and the people around us.

**STUDENTS:** This video is based on the lessons Shawn Achor first started teaching at Harvard University, where his course on happiness was the most popular on campus. His message clearly resonates with students, especially those who are striving to find both meaning and success—those who want to perform at the highest level without sacrificing happiness in the process.

## Understanding *The Happiness Advantage*

Train your brain with the Tetris Effect: Your brain can be trained to use a specific pattern for evaluating the environment (the Tetris Effect). For instance, people who write down three things they are grateful for every day trigger their brains to cognitively rewire. The result is that they become more skilled at capitalizing on positive situations and avoiding hassles and stresses.

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Have you ever gotten stuck in a negative Tetris Effect? How did that affect your work? The next time this happens, what are some ways you might get out of it? Are there things you and your colleagues could do to help each other avoid this trap?

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**Raise your ratio: 2.9013.** This may seem like a random number, but performance studies have proven just how important it is. To be successful, a workplace needs at least 2.9 positive interactions to counteract every one negative interaction. Think of it as a 3 to 1 ratio of positive to negative. Does your office pass the test? Are there at least three positive comments for every one negative? Unfortunately, many people discover themselves below this tipping point, and their performance suffers accordingly. So when you feel your ratio slipping, do your part to raise the positive discourse. Every small interaction counts. And if you can get the ratio all the way up to 6 to 1, you'll be a high performing—and happier—worker.

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**Follow The 20 Second Rule:** Make positive habits easier to adopt by managing activation energy—the amount of energy necessary to start a task. Lower it for things you want to accomplish, and increase it for things you want to avoid. Just adding 20 seconds to an action that you are trying to avoid will make you far less likely to do it. For instance, putting your exercise clothes 20 seconds closer to your bed will make you more likely to head to the gym when you wake up in the morning. Or, if you want to start keeping track of three things you're grateful for every day, set an Outlook alarm on your computer or phone that goes off at the same time every day, and have a document on your desktop ready for you to write in.

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## TRANSCRIPT OF THE PROGRAM

Turning a staircase into a piano . . .

It seems like a crazy idea, but it certainly had a positive impact on the people who were on a boring commute that day . . . and it's an interesting lesson about happiness and the brain . . .

Hello I'm Shawn Achor.

I study how happiness affects the way we live in the world just like we saw in the Piano Staircase video . . . Over the past decade, I've been at Harvard University - teaching, researching, and learning about the field of positive psychology. Positive psychology is a branch in social science, which is attempting to study how we can change the way that we look at work, success, and happiness. I actually began this research, long before I was at Harvard . . .

*I got into that research when I was just seven years old, my sister was five years old, she was two years younger at the time and she's actually still two years younger now . . . but at that time that meant that she had to do everything that I wanted to do and I wanted to play War (I'm from Texas).*

*So I had all of my GI Joe Soldiers on the top bunk of my side of the bed all lined up – GI Joe Soldiers and weaponry – and on her side she had all of her My Little Ponies and unicorns. There are differing accounts of what happened and since my sister is in Texas and I'm here in New York, let me tell you the true story.*

*Which is, my sister is a little bit on the clumsy side and somehow without any help or push from her older brother at all, suddenly Amy disappeared off of the top of the bunk bed and landed with this crash on the floor and I nervously peered over the side of the bed to see what had befallen my fallen sister and saw that she landed painfully on her hands and knees on the floor – on all fours – which wasn't the smartest way to land but also not the best time to mention it to her.*

*And I saw on my sister's face a wail and pain and suffering and injustice threatening to erupt from her mouth and threatening to awake my parents from their long winter's nap for which they had settled.*

# The Happiness Advantage

## PART 2: IMPLEMENTATION MODULES

**PREVIEW**

## YOUR GUIDE TO THE IMPLEMENTATION MODULES

Part of the challenge of *The Happiness Advantage* is that it presents a series of revolutionary new ideas. Based on the latest research, we know that happiness improves your performance and satisfaction at work. We also know that it can be difficult to adopt the happiness habits that are necessary to achieve success. To help in this process, Shawn Achor has created five “Implementation Modules.” Each of these modules elaborates on aspects of Shawn’s research and provides specific ideas for implementing *The Happiness Advantage* in your work and in your life. In addition, these Implementation Modules can help in the following ways:

**Reinforce Happiness Habits:** The modules reinforce Shawn Achor’s message as well as provide new, practical suggestions for putting *The Happiness Advantage* to work in a real organizational setting. They place Shawn’s advice in context and expand the number of tools in your arsenal, so you can better address common workplace problems, like dealing with toxic coworkers, as well as learn the best ways to handle stress, set goals, and form meaningful bonds with coworkers.

**Extending the Message Over Time:** Training programs often provide ideas and inspiration, but then fail to deliver over the long haul. As Shawn states in *The Happiness Advantage*, “Information is not transformation.” After the session ends, how do you get people to really implement these ideas? Part of the solution comes from creating a 21-day life habit (and overcoming “Activation Energy”). Another part comes from reinforcing the message over time. That is where these modules come into play. You can use them over time to reinforce Shawn’s message, but even better, each of the modules builds on the core elements of the one before it, so that the effect is cumulative, the whole greater than the sum of its parts.

**Leading with *The Happiness Advantage*.** One of the modules, "Leading Positive Change," provides instructions specific to people in leadership positions. The most successful organizations have leaders who know how important employee mindset and well-being are to the company's bottom line. This module reveals how a manager can inspire his or her team to greater success by making just a few changes to the way he or she delivers instructions, assigns projects, and praises performance.

The Implementation Modules are designed to build upon the key lessons found in *The Happiness Advantage* training program. They can be viewed individually so that participants can supplement their learning, or be used in group sessions, where discussion and shared goal-setting can increase the likelihood of real transformation.

**PREVIEW**

# IMPLEMENTATION MODULE: THE ZORRO CIRCLE

## OVERVIEW

Kick starting positive change can be difficult — we don't know where to start, or how. We try to tackle too much at once, and then feel out of control and overwhelmed by the challenge. *The Zorro Circle* Implementation Module provides a framework and guidelines for regaining control and setting attainable goals that will spark real positive change.

The facts are simple: research has shown that when we feel like we are in control of a situation, we're happier and able to perform at a higher level. But when our work piles up and we lose that feeling of control and influence over our environment, our brains become hijacked by stress and fear, and our abilities plummet. The key to regaining control is to start with small, manageable steps, and then slowly expand this mastery outward, so we can start conquering larger and larger goals. What does this have to do with Zorro? That's a story Shawn has to explain.

# IMPLEMENTATION MODULE: SOCIAL INVESTMENT

## OVERVIEW

When it comes to handling stress, some of the smartest people actually make the biggest mistake. When work piles up, they retreat from social connections and focus only on the tasks at hand to the exclusion of all outside “distractions.” Yet research shows that when the going gets tough, this is the exact opposite of how we should react. Our social connections are actually the most important part of the Happiness Advantage. This section teaches us how to invest more in the very greatest predictor of happiness and performance—our social support network.

To form new social connections, as well as strengthen existing ones, remember to do the following:

**Make Eye Contact:** When you pass someone in the hallway, stop for a second to say hello, and remember to smile and make eye contact. It may seem trivial, but eye contact is crucial to social connection—it fires the mirror neurons in our brain and cement the bond between two people.

**Ask Interested Questions:** The quickest way to employee engagement is letting your coworkers know that you’re interested not just in what they’re doing, but in who they are. Greet them in the hallway, start a dialogue, ask specific questions, and refer back to past conversations. The more you connect with your colleagues, the more the Happiness Advantage will ripple out to everyone around you.

**Be Present:** Given our devotion to technology and the multi-tasking it enables, we often forget how important it is to give someone our undivided attention. When you meet with a colleague, be fully present. Maintain eye contact, and don’t glance down at your iPhone or Blackberry. Don’t type an e-mail while

you're on the phone with someone — they'll feel undervalued the minute they realize your full attention is not with them.

**Get Moving:** With employees just an email or phone call away, it's easy to stay confined to your office all day. Unfortunately, this means we miss out on the full power of social investment. So get out from behind your desk and interact with your colleagues in person. Think MBWA: Manage By Walking Around. This strategy improves employee satisfaction and productivity, as well as your own well-being, which is why it's a leadership tool practiced by some of the world's most successful CEOs.

**PREVIEW**

# IMPLEMENTATION MODULE: FALLING UP

## OVERVIEW

What do you do when bad things happen? Are you resilient? Do you have the same philosophy that you can find in the lyrics from the old Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers movie “Swing Time:”

*Nothing's impossible, I have found.  
For when my chin is on the ground,  
I pick myself up, dust myself off,  
Start all over again.*

It turns out that those lyrics actually reflect the latest scientific research—studies show that when we are able to view failure as an opportunity for growth, we are more likely to actually experience growth. Mindset is a powerful indicator of future success, and simply knowing that we can get back up again actually helps us get back up again.

The fact is that we all face obstacles and setbacks in our daily lives. If you're in sales, for example, failure and rejection can be common. But as Shawn states in this Module, all it takes is a subtle shift in mindset to rise above those rejections and achieve greater success. In a famous study conducted at the insurance company Met Life, optimistic salespeople outperformed their more pessimistic counterparts by a huge margin. It turned out that an employee's intelligence mattered far less to their sales success than the way they viewed failure.

So the key to “picking yourself up” after falling down is the mindset you use to evaluate what happened. As Shawn explains, when we choose a “positive counterfactual” to assess a past adversity, we get over the adversity faster and increase the likelihood of future success.

# IMPLEMENTATION MODULE: LEADING POSITIVE CHANGE

## OVERVIEW: MODULE FOR LEADERS AND MANAGERS

As a leader, you can have a huge impact on the happiness and performance of every member of your team. When you lead using the principles of *The Happiness Advantage*, not only will you and your team benefit, but the positive effects will ripple out to the rest of your organization. In this segment, Shawn reveals how managers who use frequent recognition and encouragement get more out of their employees, and he explains exactly how this type of feedback should be delivered for maximum effect.

### THE KEY LEARNING POINTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- 1) **Use Positive Recognition.** When delivered correctly, praise can be a powerful leadership strategy. Managers who openly recognize employee performance build individual productivity, team cohesion, and even enjoy a boost to their own happiness.
- 2) **Your Delivery Matters.** When a leader uses positive language and tone to deliver task instructions, employees absorb the message more completely and then perform the task more accurately and efficiently.
- 3) **Create Realistic Goals.** Encourage group goal setting so that each employee feels connected to the team's larger purpose, and make sure the goals are challenging but attainable, specific, and operationalized, so that the attainment of each subgoal can be recognized and rewarded.
- 4) **Recognize Individual Effort: Praise The Process.** Your recognition should not be focused merely on the outcome. When managers praise the process, team dynamics, and positive behavioral changes along the way, employees learn that their effort and actions matter, and their results improve accordingly.

# IMPLEMENTATION MODULE: MINDSET MATTERS

## OVERVIEW

With unrelenting doom and gloom still a constant feature in people's lives, maintaining a positive mindset can often prove challenging. Yet the people who do remain optimistic are at a significant advantage, able to see opportunities for success that their more negatively minded peers simply pass over.

If you have heard about the Placebo Effect, you already know how powerful mere thoughts can be. Many studies have shown that when people receive a sugar pill that they believe is real medicine, their health will actually improve. As Shawn explains in this Implementation Module, the same is true in the workplace. Research shows that when we believe good things will happen to us, and when we express faith in our own abilities, we're actually more likely to succeed.

PREVIEW

# For more information...

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