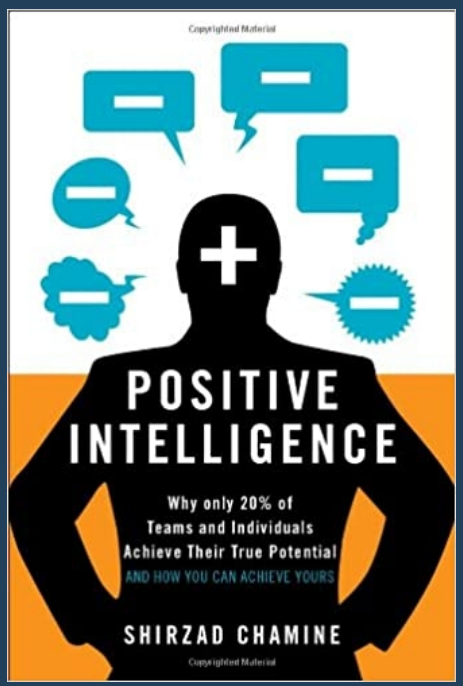

Positive Intelligence

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Author: Shirzad Chamine
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Do you know the myth of Sisyphus? In Ancient Greece, there was a king condemned by the gods to forever push a huge boulder up a steep hill over and over again, without ever reaching the top. It is from this myth that the expression "Sisyphean tasks" originated. They are those kinds of fruitless tasks, always repetitive and tiring types of work.
Just as Sisyphus' efforts are not rewarded and roll downhill, literally, many times our efforts are not rewarded either.
Bearing this in mind, Shirzad Chamine wrote the book "Positive Intelligence" as a guidance for the journey to reach our true potential.
But before we begin, you need to ask yourself, "if I could significantly improve something important in my life, what would it be?"

Main ideas of the book

- Our own mind sabotages us;
- There are ten types of mental saboteurs;
- There is a part of our brain, the Sage, that can help us focus on useful thoughts;
- There are three types of thoughts: useful, neutral, and harmful;
- Only 20% of people and teams reach their true potential;
- Potential is determined by many factors, including IQ, EQ, skills, knowledge, experience, and social network;
- The Positive Intelligence determines your percentage of potential achievement;
- Positive Intelligence (PQ) consists of actions and results;
- People with higher PQ are happier than people with lower PQ;
- Happiness does not depend on success.

To whom is this book indicated?

Reading the book "Positive Intelligence" is indispensable for those who want to learn how to use their efforts efficiently and reach their true potential.

But, mainly, it is indicated for businessmen, entrepreneurs and leaders who want to learn how to improve the performance and happiness of their teams and themselves.

Overview of the book

What is Positive Intelligence and PQ?

According to author Shirzad Chamine, Positive Intelligence indicates how much control you are able to exert over your own mind, and measures how much your mind acts to your own benefit.
PQ stands for Positive Intelligence Quotient, which scores your Positive Intelligence from 0 to 100. In practical terms, it is the percentage of time your mind acts as your friend rather than your saboteur.
But, you may be asking yourself, "how do I calculate this percentage?"
The answer to that question is simple, and you check it out below.

How to increase the PQ?

Most people resist changes, even when they convince themselves that they are open to them. This rejection is a typical problem caused by Saboteurs.
The author himself warns that ignoring our Saboteurs is analogous to planting a beautiful new garden while leaving voracious snails free to roam it.
But don't worry, Chamine has created three strategies to increase Positive Intelligence and help us face the fear of change.

First Strategy: Weaken your Saboteurs

Shirzad Chamine claims that, despite their name, Saboteurs are not evil 100% of the time. Their development starts to make sense after you realize that they exist to ensure our survival.
Probably at some point in our childhoods we made an unconscious promise to protect ourselves from the threats of the world. The Saboteurs were the friends who helped you to keep that promise.
However, it is necessary to understand that even if the Saboteurs were the protection of childhood, not removing them in adulthood limits our mental and emotional freedom.
As explained in the book "Positive Intelligence", there are 10 types of saboteurs:

1. **Judge:** The one everyone suffers from, the master saboteur. It compels you to constantly find faults with yourself, others, and your conditions and circumstances;
2. **Stickler:** It is responsible for the need for perfection, order, and organization taken too far. It makes you and others around you anxious and uptight;
3. **Pleaser:** It compels you to try to gain acceptance and affection by helping, pleasing, rescuing, or flattering others constantly;
4. **Hyper-Achiever:** It makes you dependent on constant performance and achievement for self-respect and self-validation;
5. **Victim:** It wants you to feel emotional and temperamental as a way of gaining attention and affection;
6. **Hyper-Rational:** It involves an intense and exclusive focus on the rational processing of everything, including relationships;
7. **Hyper-Vigilant:** It makes you feel intense and continuous anxiety about all the dangers surrounding you and what could go wrong;
8. **Restless:** It is constantly in search of greater excitement in the next activity or through perpetual busyness;
9. **Controller:** It runs on an anxiety-based need to take charge, control situations, and bend people's actions to one's own will;
10. **Avoider:** It focuses on the positive and the pleasant in an extreme way. It avoids difficult and unpleasant tasks and conflicts.

Self-Assessment of the Accomplice Saboteurs

Although the Judge is everyone's main Saboteur, there are individual accomplice Saboteurs teaming up with it.
To discover yours, you need to take into account your motivation and your style.
There are three primary motivations that serve as the basis for our emotional survival needs:

1. Independence;
2. Acceptance;
3. Security.

There is also the style in which you manifest one of the three different motivations to satisfy your primary need for independence, acceptance, or security, which can be to:

1. Assert;
2. Earn;
3. Avoid.

Second Strategy: Strengthen your Sage

"Who knows what is good and what is bad?"

As explained earlier, the Sage is the deepest and most intelligent part of you. And it is responsible for providing the perspective of acceptance of the facts of life that differs completely from the perspective of the Judge.
While the Judge sees life from a skeptical perspective, the Sage sees all outcomes and circumstances as gifts and opportunities.
But is the Sage the passive part of our minds? On the contrary, this is the part that actively accepts the gifts and opportunities by knowing how to transform them into concrete actions and results.
According to author Shirzad Chamine in his book "Positive Intelligence", it can achieve this transformation through its five great powers:

1. Explore with great curiosity and open-mindness;
2. Have empathy with yourself and others and bring compassion and understanding to any situation;
3. Innovate and create perspectives and solutions outside the conventional parameters;
4. Navigate and choose a path that best fits your deepest and most basic values and mission;
5. Activate your mind and make decisions without the torment, interference, and distractions of Saboteurs.

The Three-Gifts Technique

The three gifts technique is an exercise to train the Sage.
Think of at least three situations where this supposed bad situation could be transformed into a gift and opportunity.
Constantly practicing this exercise will strengthen the Sage's power of choice.
It is difficult to control or choose much of what happens at work and in life. However, we can determine the impact that these events have on us by choosing how to react.
Let your Sage make the choice.

Third Strategy: Build your PQ brain muscles

Shirzad Chamine claims that we have two types of brains: the PQ and the Survivor.
Activating your PQ Brain is what will increase the power of the Sage in your head and decrease that of the Saboteurs.
Therefore, strengthening the muscles of the PQ Brain is the third important strategy to increase the PQ.

The Survivor Brain versus the PQ Brain

The Survivor Brain consists of the most primitive parts of the brain, and is involved in the part of triggering our response to danger, our survival instinct. The Judge rules the Survivor Brain.
The PQ Brain, on the other hand, is part of the brain that gives the Sage its perspective and its five powers.
During childhood, there is a better balance between them than when we grow up. In adulthood, our Survivor Brain is continuously exercised, rewarded, and strengthened, while the PQ Brain atrophies.

PQ Academy

It takes us 21 days, on average, to create a habit. Therefore, author Shirzad Chamine proposes in his book, "Positive Intelligence", that over the course of 21 days we do 100 repetitions of the exercises to strengthen our PQ muscles.
But, what are the exercises?

- Daily routines;
- Physical exercises;
- Eating;
- Listening to music;
- Playing sports;
- Being with loved ones.

In addition, there are two easy structures that you can use to help you remember:

Do one of these every time you go to the bathroom;
Do one of these every time you observe and label your Saboteurs.

How to measure your PQ progress?

Measurement is an important part of creating and maintaining positive change.
And, the quickest way to detect whether your mind is acting as friend (Sage) or as an enemy (Saboteur) is by noticing the feelings you are experiencing.
The percentage calculation should be done by the feelings generated by the Sage versus feelings generated by the Saboteur over the course of a typical day.
The lowest value to generate the positive PQ vortex is 75% and the maximum 92, because it is impossible to live without at least one negative moment. Furthermore, only 20% of people score above 75% on the PQ , which is why only 20% of individuals and teams reach their true potential.

What do other authors say about it?

In the book "**Emotional Intelligence**", Daniel Goleman clarifies that IQ is responsible for only 20% of success in life. The remaining 80% are the fruit of emotional intelligence.

Richard Koch, in his book "**The 80/20 Principle**", explains that not all work produces the same reward. This is a result of the 80/20 principle, which is based on the fact that 80% of the results are produced by only 20% of the efforts.

Finally, Geraldo Rufino, in "**The Power of Positive Thinking**", explores the influence of childhood and social relationships on the way we see ourselves and others, always trying to focus on the positive side.

Okay, but how can I apply this in my life?

- Keep in mind what change you want for your life;
- The saboteurs will never go away, but you can learn more about yours and know how to decrease their influence;
- Practice increases your PQ, you don't need free time to exercise it;
- Your PC reflects how magnificent you can be, so strengthen your Sage;
- Be open to live your feelings without fear;
- See all events as gifts and opportunities.

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