
----- WHAT'S UP, DOC? -----
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"Creating Leadership Solutions for Profit and Growth"

THIS MONTH'S THEME: 5 QUICK NEW YEAR'S QUESTIONS

In this issue, I've jotted down five quick questions to ask yourself as the new year begins. These are quick self-check questions to help you be sure you are using your time and your talents appropriately. There are certainly other questions you can ask yourself that might be helpful to you, but these are five quick ones designed to help you continue to grow in self knowledge, productivity and success as the year progresses. Happy new year!

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THIS MONTH'S QUOTES:

"Do what you can, with what you have, where you are."
- Theodore Roosevelt

"Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity."
- Seneca

"This time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it."
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

1. 5 QUICK NEW YEAR'S QUESTIONS

1. WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE DO I LIKE THE MOST?

We all have people who get the benefits of our “halo” biases. They may be people who remind us of those we knew best in our youth, or those who look a certain way or who express themselves in a certain way. Some of my clients have been biased toward “go getters,” who sometimes turn out instead to be impulsive actors or merely big talkers. The point is, we all have our biases. What are yours? What kinds of errors in judgment do you sometimes make because of them? If you don’t think you make errors, then you’re really just not seeing them. Know about yourself the types of people you like the most.

2. WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE REALLY GET ON MY NERVES?

This is the flip side of the previous question. Who are the kinds of people who grate on your nerves the most? Maybe they speak, dress or act a certain way. Maybe they are people who take extra time before answering a question. Maybe they laugh a lot when you think seriousness is warranted. Maybe they speak loudly. Maybe they come from a certain social class. It could be anything. We all have certain types of people who, when we encounter them, they just rub us the wrong way, right away. This is another thing to know about yourself, because it will affect your judgment in dealing with such people, if deal with them you must. Moreover, some of these biases we all possess are mixed with subtle prejudices we possess, some of which may be racist or sexist or whatever. Even with the best of intentions, we all grow up on planet earth, and are all subject to all sorts of biases and presumptions that are less than admirable. None of us are immune. Those who are most self aware can catch themselves quickly when latent stands of bigoted thinking crop up.

3. HOW DO I DEAL WITH CONFRONTATION?

Do you like confrontation or do you avoid it? If you avoid it, what situations have you been allowing to linger that you really should resolve, one way or another? Do you really want them to linger throughout the new year, again? If you are more aggressive, what situations should you handle differently this year, with a more relaxed, patient touch? Who will you enlist as your ally this year to help you tone yourself down when you get yourself riled up again? If you don’t bring in an ally to keep yourself in check, you won’t change a bit. That also holds true for the conflict avoidant: having someone give you a shove through the door when you need to deal with a lingering situation is a fine idea.

4. WHAT AM I LIKE AT MY WORST?

You should know this about yourself, because the people around you already know it, even if they don’t tell you. You may in fact be completely blind to your worst side, especially if you are “the boss.”

What are you like at your worst? Who can tell you; whom do you trust that much? If no one, then why not? We all have a bad side, and if you don't gain an understanding of yours, it will have more power over you to sabotage you as you seek to achieve your goals, leaving you either with a vague sense of futility year after year, or with an unshakable sense that everything that goes wrong for you is someone else's fault. If you don't know what you are like at your worst, then ask someone. And if you are old enough that you think you already know, you are probably right, but with age, your "worst" gets even worse. With age, we sometimes tend to become even more comfortable with our extremes, and stop caring about them. You may not know the degree to which your worst has a real impact on those around you. Another way of asking this question is, what about me most frustrates those who rely on me? In the end, you won't change yourself, but you can at least learn how to manage your interactions so that your bad side does not sabotage your other best efforts.

5. WHAT IS MY MOST PRODUCTIVE TIME OF DAY?

Now that the new year is upon us, you should take a fresh look at the way you spend the most productive portion of your day. It's not uncommon for an individual to have a part of the day – perhaps morning, perhaps not – that is twice as productive as other times of the day. How do you spend that time? Do you use this prime time to accomplish the things most important to you? Do you need to change the way you allocate this time, now that the new year has come and your priorities may have changed since the last time you set up your routine?

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2. FRANK KAHN CREATES THE REIT INDUSTRY

Check out this recent [profile interview I published](#) about a real innovator in American business history.

3. RECOMMENDED BOOKS AND ENTERTAINMENT

MUSIC: "Close Enough for Love" by Shirley Horn, 1988

The late Shirley Horn was a fantastic, moody, atmospheric jazz vocalist and pianist. Here's what [one review](#) has to say about this album:

Shirley Horn's second Verve recording consolidated the success that she had had with her previous release, *I Thought About You*, and resulted in her gaining a large audience for her ballad vocals and solid jazz piano playing. Performing with her usual trio (which includes bassist [Charles Ables](#) and drummer [Steve Williams](#)) and guest tenor [Buck Hill](#) on five of the 13 tracks, Horn is heard in definitive form throughout these studio sessions. Highlights include "Beautiful Friendship," "Baby, Baby All the Time," "This Can't Be Love," "I Wanna Be Loved," "But Beautiful," "Get out of Town," and "It Could Happen to You."

Book: "Making Strategy Work: Leading Effective Execution and Change," by Lawrence G. Hrebiniak

I've just begun to work my way through this offering from Wharton School Publishing. The first chapter makes some interesting points, and I look forward to reading more. I may condense some of what strikes me for future newsletter editions. But in the meantime, I've read enough to recommend this book to subscribers here. [Check it out.](#)

4. CHUCKLES

"I'm not saying that the customer service in my bank is bad, but when I went in the other day and asked the clerk to check my balance ... she leaned over and pushed me."

5. PROMOTE YOUR OWN GROWTH

You don't have to live near the Schuler Solutions main office in Alexandria, Virginia to benefit from my coaching services. Great work can be done for your own growth and development over the phone and through document review via email. To find out more about your coaching options and available coaching plans, just click [here](#) now.

6. ABOUT DR. SCHULER

A. J. Schuler, Psy. D., an expert on leadership, negotiation and organizational change, provides consulting services, keynote presentations and seminars for client companies. His trademark is highly personalized service that leads to measurable increases in productivity, profit and growth. He also provides personalized leadership education and coaching for highly motivated clients.

Dr. Schuler, President of Schuler Solutions, Inc., has served diverse organizations in the private and public sectors, including The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company, Sony Development, Nomura Securities and the Executive Office for Immigration Review.

A graduate of the Wharton School of Business, Dr. Schuler has successfully led the profitable growth of a dynamic, international consulting firm while serving as Operations Director, and has successfully coached over five hundred CEO's and corporate executives.

7. HOW TO SUBSCRIBE OR UNSUBSCRIBE

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8. NEWSLETTER STATEMENT OF ETHICS

NEWSLETTER ETHICS: This e-Newsletter will be sent to subscribers only upon REQUEST, though subscribers may forward this letter to anyone they wish. Subscriber identities or contact information will NOT BE DISCLOSED to any other persons or entities under any circumstances. (An attorney friend recently pointed out that, technically, I'd have to give up my list if compelled to do so by a court of law. He's technically right, of course, but let's face it: that won't happen!)

Have a great month. . .

A. J. Schuler, Psy. D.

Schuler Solutions, Inc.

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"Make each day your masterpiece." -- John Wooden

P.S. - Remember to send in your comments and successes, and to forward this newsletter to at least one friend! Thanks . . . AJS