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The E-Bank

Complete



The E-bank skill can help us to become more aware of where we are currently using our most important resource – our energy. This is achieved by tracking the events, situation and people that drain and boost our energy and it can reveal areas of our life where we can make a significant difference, feel younger and preserve energy for only a small investment of time.

Take a moment to write down all the things, situations, events and people that increase your energy (deposits) and everything that robs you of energy (withdrawals). Don't worry about the timeframe or when these energy transactions occurred; just make a note of everything that positively or negatively impacts your energy account. Make sure you:

- Relive the deposits as you write them down
- Leave the withdrawals behind as you write them down

The key benefit of this exercise is that it will give you awareness of your current energy levels and what affects those levels – either for better or for worse. Maybe you realize that the only energy boost or credit you've received in the last few days was the cuddle from your four-year-old daughter. Perhaps you realize just how debilitating your office manager, Marjorie, is to your energy levels.

Once you've created the lists, take a moment to really consider the insights that they present to you. Are there any conclusions that you can draw from these lists that will help you to better manage your energy levels?

Can you spot any patterns in the timings, the people or the type of work that rob you of energy and vitality?

Is there a common denominator between the experiences or events that add to your energy levels? If there are plenty of deposits and only a few withdrawals, perhaps the withdrawals are so significant that they cancel out the deposits. For example, a pending divorce can be a significant and consistent energy drain and will not be easily alleviated by a good meeting with colleagues from work, even if you are not dealing with the divorce on a daily basis.

Go through the list and highlight the top three energy accumulators and the top three energy drains. Write down what action you can take to increase the accumulators and minimize the drains on your energy reserves.

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Say you realize that Marjorie, is really wearing you down. Has she always been like that or is the drain that flows from your interaction with her more intense over the last couple of months? Maybe she's upset about the new database installation? If her negativity is related to a specific situation, do what you can to change the situation. If she just rubs you up the wrong way but is good at her job, change her reporting lines so she no longer reports to you. Find a way to either resolve her negativity or reduce your exposure to her so she does not rob you of energy. If you are struggling to come up with a solution, the SHIFT skill explored in Chapter 4 will also help. Perhaps creating your E-bank allowed you to see a pattern? A director of a credit card company we worked with discovered a very toxic pattern when she documented her energy account in this way. What she discovered was that she was always thinking about the past. She wasted huge amounts of time and energy worrying about whether or not she made the correct decision and what she could or should have done differently. So much so that she didn't have any energy left for thinking about the present or the future. Reflection is an important quality for all senior executives and business leaders, but she needed to extract the lesson and move on quickly. Almost all ancient spiritual wisdom and some new (Tolle, 2005) reminds us that there is only one moment that really matters – right now. When we spend time in the past or the future, we rob ourselves of life. When we interviewed Mike Iddon, the CFO of Pets at Home, about working with us he specifically mentioned the energy bank and how it helped him through a significant period of change:

There are things in your life that make deposits and other things that make withdrawals. Over time, you need to ensure there are more deposits than withdrawals. It's a very helpful technique for thinking about your whole life, including work and home. Alan encouraged me to keep an energy bank account of my deposits and withdrawals. It drives me to do more things that lead to deposits. You beat yourself up over things that go wrong, but you rarely give yourself or your team credit when things go right. The E-bank helps to redress that, and it certainly helped me think differently. When protecting your energy levels watch out for self-criticism and self-judgement as they are particularly powerful energy drains on your system. They act like direct debits going straight out of your account on a daily basis. Also be aware that you can put deposits in other people's E-banks just with a simple act of kindness or an encouraging word. When you review your list of deposits, relive the positives as you write them down, this can have the same effect as compound interest. Not only did you get a boost when that event happened but reflecting on it gives you a further boost when you write it in your E-bank.



References

- ¹ Tolle, E (2005) *The Power of Now* Hodder & Stroughton, London

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