

## “Stuff Happens”: What’s Your Choice?

It’s easy to be successful when things are going well. However, life at work is filled with challenges. This is the real test when things do go wrong AND they will at some point. This is the critical moment when each of us makes a choice which impacts our future.

STUFF HAPPENS! It’s a cold, hard fact of life. It leaves us frustrated, maybe scared, but definitely feeling out of control. In the perfect world, everyone does what they are supposed to do and nothing goes wrong. OK, so life isn’t perfect. So then what can we do?

Let’s face it! Stuff does happen AND we can make a difference in the result if we choose to become a problem solver vs. a person who compounds the existing “stuff”. When “stuff” happens I sadly hear people say things like:

*They won’t let me.*

*They won’t listen to me.*

*They are horrible communicators.*

*They don’t get it.*

*It’s not my job.*

*I can’t change them.*

*I don’t like them.*

*I’m too busy.*

These people choose to compound the existing “stuff” by failing to enter a problem solving role. So how do I become a problem-solver?

- GIVE UP EXCUSES, excuses don’t get us any closer to meeting our initial need. Excuses simply divert our time and energy from moving forward. Excuses hold us back and make us less powerful, less influential and more victim-like.
- TAKE RESPONSIBILITY, especially when things go wrong; don’t pass the buck.
- BE ACCOUNTABLE for problem solving; avoid becoming part of the problem.
- CONTROL YOUR ACTION, Think about (Event + Action = Result) while you can’t control the event, you can control your action when the event “stuff” occurs.
- MAKE A CONSCIOUS CHOICE between Reaction and Pro-action; Reactions are excuses; Pro-action move you forward toward a better result.

Influential people want to be known as someone who can be depended upon and responsible for taking ownership to deal with problems, so be known as someone who chooses to be proactive in those tough situations.

Unfortunately, people who choose to make excuses actually throw away their ability to influence outcomes because they’re so busy making up excuses or telling others what they’re unhappy about, they are unable to channel their thoughts/ideas to making a difference, solving the problems at hand. Their actions create vicious cycles.

So what’s your choice, Victim or Leader. Think about it. It’s all within your control.

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