

SHAWN ACHOR

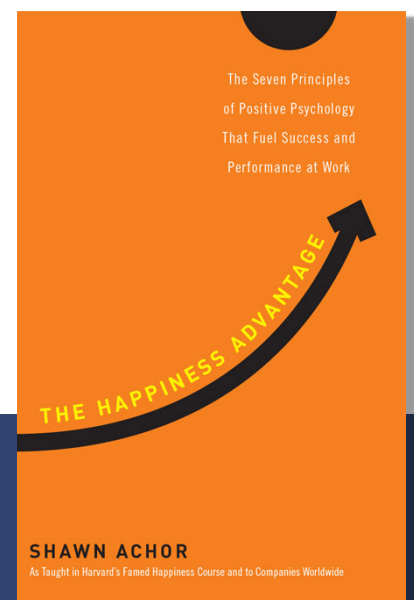


Shawn Achor, author of [The Happiness Advantage](#), spent over a decade at Harvard University where he won numerous distinguished teaching awards for his work. He graduated magna cum laude from Harvard and earned a Masters from Harvard Divinity School in Christian and Buddhist ethics. In 2006, he was 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.

"Harvard lecturer Shawn Achor is funny, self-deprecating, and devastating to my notions of what his field is all about. He's got research that makes the "genes + environment + potential for success" model look like an idea only Flat Earthers could harbour. Even better, he's got tips for how we can improve our brains. By the time he starts talking about "activation energy" and tells us we can prime our brains for enhanced achievement by doing one simple activity every day, I'm butter to his knife."
- **Boston Globe, July 27, 2009**

"Shawn's presentation on happiness was absolutely amazing! Funny, engaging, smart, optimistic, and practical, Shawn inspired us to shift the way that we look at the world, and to make simple yet powerful changes in our own lives. His uplifting message had a positive impact on those who attended – the feedback we've received has been extraordinary, and people are still talking about his presentation!"
- **Kris MacAuslan, Goodwin Procter LLP**

"A short note of appreciation for the outstanding, insightful and inspirational presentation at our Senior Leadership meeting. You have an uncanny ability to modify the content to the audience, and the result is impactful." - **Donna Morris, Adobe**



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Current Topics

Leadership, Business Growth/Strategy/Trends, Peak Performance, Retaining Top Talent, Managing/Leading Change, Corporate Culture, Overcoming Obstacle and Challenges, Motivation

The Happiness Advantage: Linking Positive Brains to Performance

Most companies and schools follow this formula: if you work harder, you will be more successful, and then you will be happy. This formula is scientifically backward. A decade of research shows that training your brain to be positive at work first actually fuels greater success second. In fact, 75% of our job success is predicted not by intelligence, but by your optimism, social support network and the ability to manage energy and stress in a positive way. By researching top performers at Harvard, the world's largest banks, and Fortune 500 companies, Shawn discovered patterns which create a happiness advantage for positive outliers—the highest performers at the company. Based on his new book, *The Happiness Advantage* (September 2010 from Random House), Shawn explains what positive psychology is, how much we can change, and practical applications for reaping the Happiness Advantage in the midst of change and challenge.



Positive Leadership: Restoring a Culture of Confidence

Confidence, trust and job satisfaction are at historic lows. When the economic collapse began, the world's largest banks called in Shawn Achor to research how to restore confidence and forward progress. While many managers succumb to helplessness, with their teams and clients quickly following suit, Shawn researched those who maintained high levels of success and leadership during the challenge. He found that our brains create confidence based on the belief that our behavior matters to the outcome we desire. To develop this trust, we must create "wins" for our brain necessary to overcome learned helplessness and must train our brains for rational optimism. Based on the science of positive psychology and case studies of working with companies in the midst of an economic collapse, Shawn provides practical applications for raising the belief that individual behavior matters and helping leaders to keep teams motivated and engaged.

The Ripple Effect: How to Make Positive Change Easier

Common sense is not common action. This is because information does not necessarily cause transformation because we require a certain level of "activation energy" to start a change. Shawn's research in the field of positive psychology has revealed how changes in our own brain due to mindset and behavior can have a ripple effect to a team and an entire organization. This positive ripple effect can create a more productive, positive work culture making positive change easier. Audiences will learn about the latest scientific research on mirror neurons and mental priming to explain how positivity and negativity spread, case studies on how to become a lightning rod for change, and findings on how a positive ripple effect profoundly affects an organization's ability to transition and change.

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