



Dr. *Sam* Graber

the EXECUpreneur Change Agent

the
EXECUpreneur's
EDGE

Master The
5 Steps
To **Uncover**
Your **E.D.G.E.**
In Life &
Business

Uncovering your **EDGE** is one of the most pressing of **priorities** for any **EXECUpreneur**.

The **E.D.G.E.** is your ability to tap into boundless **Energy**, to uncover your inner **Drive** and to cultivate the **Grit** of an **Evolved EXECUpreneur**. One way we move the needle on this **priority** is to . . .

Master The 5 Steps To Uncover Your E.D.G.E. In Life & Business



STEP 1: DECIDE TO CHANGE

Most people don't realize the **profound effects** of making decisions. Often we go through life **completely oblivious** to the **thoughts** that we are thinking and the **actions** that we take. We're essentially on **autopilot**.

Every single decision we make in a day **shapes our current reality**. They shape who we are as people as we **habitually follow through** with the decisions we make without even realizing it.

If we're **unhappy with the results** we're getting in life right **now**, making the effort to **change how we make decisions** (starting today) will be the key to creating the person we want to be, and the life we want to have, in the **future**.

Here are **6 ways** you can go about making **life-changing decisions**:

1) Realize the Power of Decision Making

Before you start making a decision, you need to **understand** what a decision does.

Any decision that you make **causes a consequential chain of events** to unfold. It's important to understand that making a decision means **agreeing with and accepting** the consequences that follow. In realizing the **power** of decision making, you'll gain more **clarity** and become more **confident** in your decision making skillset. Like anything, the more you do it, the better you get at it.

This will also help you **'predict' the future**. If you're aware of the consequences that might arise, you are more likely to **make** decisions that **support** your goals.

"A real decision is **measured** by the fact that you've **taken** a new action. If there's no action, you **haven't** truly decided."

— **Tony Robbins**



2) Follow Your 'Gut' Instinct

We often **take too long** to make a decision because we're **afraid** of the outcome. We can spend a long time carefully **planning, analyzing and considering** the pros and cons before **reaching** a decision.

This can be a **very time-consuming** process. Instead, learn to **trust your gut**. Our gut instinct is usually the **right** decision or the one that we truly **wanted** to go with.

Even if we make a poor decision, going with our gut makes us more confident decision makers **compared to** those who take all day to decide, if they ever do.

3) Follow Through With Your Decisions

When you **make** a decision - **act** on it! **Commit** to making a real decision.

What is a real decision? It's when we **decide** on something, and then follow through with **action**. It's **pointless** if we make a decision and play out the scenario in our mind but **fail to act** and actually do anything about it.

That is just the **same** as **not making a decision** at all. If we want to make **real changes** in life, we have to **make it a habit to apply action to every decision** until it is completed. As we practice this, we'll feel more **confident** with following through on the next decision that arises.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

Whatever decisions we make, we must **prepare** for all possible **outcomes**. We have to **weigh** the **consequences** of our choices against our **goals**.

Otherwise, we can feel as though we're constantly **blindsided** by life.

However the **truth** is we just continue making **poor choices**.

4) Maintain a Flexible Approach

This may **sound counter-intuitive**, but making a decision doesn't mean we can't **be open to other options**. For example, let's say you **decided** to prepare all your lunches on the weekend to prevent impulsive choices and free up time at lunch to work toward your **goal of reading** one business book a week. (This is what I call a **two-fer!**)

In week 3, something happens that **competes for your attention**. For example, **work** gets hectic so you have to bring a project home for the weekend. Or maybe it is **family** related, your son has a debate competition over the weekend. Does that mean you **quit**? Of course not. Just because your best intentions have some **competition for your attention** does not mean you have to "throw the baby out with the bathwater". You have to have a strategy that includes **a back-up**. In this particular scenario, you could prep the rest of the week's lunches on Monday evening, and order something desk-side for Monday.

Another critical aspect of cultivating a flexible approach is to learn to be like water...you know, **go with the flow**. Rather than being rigid in your approach, **embrace** any new knowledge that brings you closer to accomplishing your initial decision. **Apply** the new knowledge if it helps. Table it if not.

5) Learn From Your Past Decisions

Learning from the decisions we've made in the past can be an **excellent platform** to base our **future decision making** upon. If we consider our past successes and failures, we can ask ourselves questions like: 'What can I do differently, this time, to make it work?'

The **truth** is we **will mess up** at times when it comes to making decisions and instead of beating ourselves up about it, we can **choose to learn** something from it. Ask yourself the following 3 questions to turn it into a learning scenario: 1) **What was positive** about the decision I made? 2) What was **negative** about it? 3) What can I **learn** from it so I can make a better decision next time?

FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

If you want to see your **past**, look at your present life **conditions**.
If you want to see your **future**, look at the **actions** you're taking today.

6) Get Excited About Making New Decisions!

Enjoy the decision-making process. Far too many people overlook this opportunity to stretch themselves well beyond their comfort zone... **AND find joy in the process**. Although decision-making might not be the most enjoyable thing in the world, when we begin to practice it often, life becomes a **game of opportunity**.

We'll learn a lot about ourselves on the way and become much more **confident** within ourselves and around others. Making decisions will become a lot **easier through practice** to the point where we won't even have to think about it.

Any decision we make from this point onward has the **potential** to affect our lives profoundly. Opportunities abound.

STEP 2: TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION

Desiring a **rewarding and fulfilling life** is common to us all. We all **want essentially the same things**: good health, positive relationships, a profitable business, a fulfilling career, and enough money to live comfortably.

We often get caught in a **mental trap** of seeing wildly successful people and thinking they are where they are in life because of some **special gift** they possess. Now we further **extrapolate** that WE are NOT where they are because we don't have that X-factor. It's easier to accept where we are in life by positioning the "successful" on a **pedestal of special, exceptional even**. By hoisting them to such heights, we let ourselves **off the hook**. In other words, this pedestal placing behavior undermines the actions the successful person took to move their life forward and, this is **the kicker**, gives us what we need (or think we need) to **justify why** we don't put in the work they did to manifest the fruits of their labor. This is what happens when we **settle**.

Anyone with eyes to see will be able to recognize that **a wildly rewarding life doesn't come effortlessly**. The only gift that highly effective people have over those that watch the world go by is their ability to **take the appropriate level of action**. There are those that want **a life of unlimited prosperity**. These are the ones who have dreams of achieving great things, building successful businesses, travelling to interesting places, having the ability to be as generous as they choose to be and meeting extraordinary people.

If you want to enjoy a life like this, it will **require taking action**. Making a decision is a great start, but **taking action** is always the **next practical step**. This sounds obvious, however, sometimes the **obvious** is regularly **overlooked**.

You didn't get to where you are today without taking some kind of action. So it makes sense that if you've got a vision in your mind of where you would like to **be in the future**, action will be **required!** The problem with most people is that even though they **have the knowledge** to do a particular thing, they **lack** putting the required **action** behind that knowledge.

We often hear that "knowledge is power". However, **knowledge is really just power in reserve**. It remains **useless** if it is **not tapped into by applying action**. Knowledge that is not put to action will remain just knowledge in your head and provides **no benefit**. It's completely wasted. To accomplish results, we **must partner up** our **knowledge with** the necessary and **appropriate action** to **achieve the results** that we want.

"Our **real problem**, then, is not our strength today; it is rather the **vital necessity of action** today to ensure our strength tomorrow." — **Dwight D. Eisenhower**

If we **applied massive action** to our knowledge, it would have a faster, and even **greater impact** on our lives.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

The **formula** for achieving **results** is:
Ability + Strategy + Desire to Get a Result = Result

Why do most people find it so **difficult** to put the required action behind their knowledge?

I believe it is nothing more than **lack of belief**.

Our **belief system** is the **driving force** behind our **behaviors** and the **results** we get in life. If we change our beliefs, we will change our behaviors. When we change our behaviors, we will change our results.

Then, when we change our results...our lives change!

It all **starts** with our **belief system**. A wise man once said, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes". This has always been and always **will be true**.

There are many things that can keep someone from believing. However, it seems the **biggest factor that keeps people from believing is fear**. It's a fact that it takes **courage** to succeed. But, let's not forget, that **courage** isn't the absence of fear, it's the capacity to **press on despite** the presence of fear.

Usually, the **solution** to any fear is simply just to **do the thing we fear**. It's amazing how the fear then lessens or altogether disappears!

However, a modest **idea** and an incomplete **plan** will often produce success when accompanied by appropriate **action**.

We just need to **get moving**. Sir Isaac Newton's principle that states a "body at rest tends to remain at rest and a body in motion tends to remain in motion," certainly applies to **the action principle**. After we've taken the first step, the next one seems easier to take.

It's a natural law that if we do **nothing, nothing** will happen. If we take **minimal** action, results will be **minimal**. However, if we take **massive** action, then we will be rewarded with **massive** results.

Wildly successful people (those who go **from mediocre to millions** almost overnight) know that the key to their success was **taking massive action**. If we want to become wildly successful, we must **start at the beginning**. Most beginnings are small, and appear insignificant and trivial, but in reality, they are hugely important.

STEP 3: COMMIT TO SOMETHING

'Do or **die!**'

'Don't **give up** the ship!'

'Damn the torpedoes and **full speed** ahead!'

Military expressions are essential during war when the **price of failure** is death. But they lose their effect in our private or business life...failure is (thankfully) not quite so final. However, these sayings stem from a principle that applies to every single aspect of our lives: **commitment**.

The commitment to one's goals is the most important raw ingredient of success.

Without it, we can **get side-tracked** through procrastination, tolerating, laziness, rationalization and a host of other goal-defeating habits we allow into our lives. Commitments usually require some level of **sacrifice** in order to achieve a particular goal.

To illustrate, I'll further unpack our previous topic of health, for that is something that **applies to us all**. We'll focus more specifically on our **body composition** (lean mass to fat mass ratio). It's wild, but it seems that just as we make losing bodyfat a priority, the outside world makes it an equal priority to plot against our success.

Now obviously, the world is not plotting our plumpness. This is just how things appear when we haven't **drilled down deep enough** to find what truly motivates us. We will find it difficult to stick to a plan and hold our own feet to the fire to follow through when our **motivation anchor** is not heavy enough. After all, our physical body should be our top priority since **our health IS the foundation for our business**; without our most important asset, we can flail along only so long. If we short our health, it will manifest in many forms, one BIG one of which is our business success, or lack thereof.

It is unreasonable to think anyone else can do this for you.

YOU are in charge of your level of commitment. For example, if your goal is to be fit and strong, you will probably have to **swap out** some free-time for exercise and food prep. **Planning** your weekly menu, and **prepping** ahead of time is the **strategy**. Seeing it through is **up to you**.

When we **fully commit** to our goals, attaining them is easier, and our choices become **clearer**. Let's say your goal is to be in the 22-25% **bodyfat** range, **sleep** a full 8 hours (drug free), be able to **lift** a 25 pound bag of dog food from the floor, have sustained **energy** throughout the day, and have an excellent ability for **recalling** names and dates while networking. Which is the more supportive **choice: A)** rolling up to the

drive-thru, ordering a **#7 meal** and scarfing it down in our car on the way to the next event, or **B)** spending a few hours on Sunday **prepping** our week's **meals**? Can we **agree** on "B"? Now it **may not be the easy choice**, but it must be done to set up the week for success. When your commitment is **strong enough**, this is a **no-brainer**.

When we are **not fully committed** to our goals, our choices become **hazy**. Being fully committed means doing whatever it takes. **Foresee** the impending **challenges** and set yourself up to successfully navigate them. Rarely does something happen that we could not have **foreseen** and thus **planned** for. You can't control all the outcomes, but you can **anticipate** a majority of them. Being committed to our goals **isn't easy**, and it takes considerable effort as well as time. That's **why** most people make so few commitments and often have **serious trouble** keeping what commitments they actually make. Commitment demands **strong self-discipline, and a persistent inner voice** urging us on.

This voice tries to **fight commitments** and wants to get out of them. It may say, 'Oh, it's okay, you've been soooo good! You can eat one cookie. It won't matter.' Like a soldier who's facing his enemy, **we face our own inner enemies...**'I'll be extra committed tomorrow,' and 'I have been soooo good...one piece of cake won't hurt.'

When those goals are related to our health and body composition (lean mass to fat mass ratio), we set all sorts of **booby-traps for ourselves** without realizing it. When we accept a commitment, it should be with 'do or die' determination. Otherwise, it's only a **weak agreement**.

Real commitment takes courage, sacrifice, and relentless perseverance.

Commit yourself to the achievement of your goals, and develop the self-discipline to do whatever it takes. As an added benefit, you'll achieve the **satisfaction and confidence** that comes with your success. **There is no feeling like it.** And no "cookie" on Earth is worth chipping away at your **self-esteem**.

Don't let this be **said of your life**:

**'And nothing to look backwards to with pride,
And nothing to look forward to with hope,
So now and never any different.'**

In **war**, in **sports**, in **life**...those **without a commitment** to success and victory often **create their own defeat**. If we could see the **meaning of 'do or die'** through the eyes of a soldier in battle, we would be **victorious** more often. When you are committed in life, everything is **possible**!

STEP 4: TAKE STOCK

If we are **in control** of our thoughts, we **can achieve** just about anything. Sounds simple enough.

Despite the implied simplicity, there is **more to it** than just a simplistic belief that 'you can achieve anything you want in life'... am I right?

The **challenge** is, the majority of the time, most of us are not in control of our thoughts.

Real progress starts with a commitment to taking control of our thoughts.

Everything we think, every attitude we adopt, every position we assume, every angle we see things from, it all makes a **huge impact** on our current reality.

So, you **might be thinking** something along the lines of, 'Here we go again, think happy thoughts and everything will turn out shiny and perfect, **yeah right**, is that all you have to do?

"What a load of bullst!"**

Well, no. That's not all. **Not quite.** And I tend to agree with you on this one...I did the whole positive affirmation thing for decades, it was a **50:50 coin toss** as to whether the thing at hand would go my way.

When the (proverbial) **rubber hits the road**, positive thinking without an accompanying positive action (an action that supports or moves you closer to your desired result) more often than not amounts to a **waste of time.**

As I've been known to say, "**Hope & Pray Weight Loss**" is NOT a thing. Nor is "**Hope & Pray Success**". Simply wishing you had the result you desire is futile. You may occasionally get a small win. But is that what you're into? **Small wins?**

Don't get discouraged, **there's a positive way to spin this.** When we have an **attitude of positivity** it gets us in the mood to **take decisive action**, and that's what makes the ultimate difference.

The take away here is "**decisive action**". This is the type of action based upon making a decision that **moves the needle** toward goal instead of sitting **idle**, or **down-shifting.**

"The way to develop **decisiveness** is to start right where you are, with the very next question you face."

— **Napoleon Hill**

STEP 5: DITCH THE JUNK

This is a practical tool you can use to help you start ferreting out the mental "junk" you're clinging to. It's **not** so much a **conscious-thing**, but an **automatic pattern-thing**. This step of the **5 Steps to Uncover your EDGE in Life & Business** will help you see what you need to 'ditch' if you want to **move the needle** on your goals.

So, why do we think this way?

Well, first off...it is **not by choice**. That's for darn sure! It doesn't take a trained psychologist to know that **nobody wants to think** destructive, miserable and unproductive thoughts day after day.

Nobody **chooses** to do that. But (and it's a BIG 'but') ... we do repeatedly think this way **by not choosing** to think in a different way. It's **all about choice** in the end. The choices we make, make all the difference.

So back to the question, **why do we think this way?** Most likely because our culture encourages us to think this way. We are subjected to negative ideas and negative ways of thinking **since childhood**. We're surrounded by them from a tender and impressionable age. We absorbed this mental junk in the same way a sponge absorbs water.

Without thinking about it, we adopt these depressing, negative attitudes and negative thinking styles. We wake up with them, then hit the ground running. We end up **thinking negatively** all day long. To top it off, we tuck them back in at night, complete with a glass of **warm milk**. And we do it without giving one thought to the whole production.

Remember, it is an automatic pattern-thing. **Not a conscious choice-thing**. We don't even realize we're doing it! Until we catch ourselves in the act.

When you come **face-to-face** with your negative thought patterns, it is time to decide if the thoughts you're thinking are helping you move toward your goals, or moving you further away from them.

What do you REALLY, REALLY, REALLY want in life?

The only way to successfully decide whether your thoughts are **serving you or not**, is to clearly decide what it is that you want. This is where things **get sticky**...chances are you have no idea what it is you REALLY, REALLY, REALLY want in life. **Don't feel like you're failing some arbitrary test**. The vast majority of us face the same dilemma. Sure we can rattle off the **stand-by answers**, but are those what we really, really, really want? Or are they the answers we have been **conditioned** our whole life to **regurgitate upon inquiry?**

We are **taught** that thinking about our desires is an act of **selfishness**. We are taught that in order for us to get what we really, really, really want, **others must sacrifice** what they really, really, really want. We are conditioned from the get-go to think of others first, and to **put ourselves on the back burner of life**.

If you are like me and 100% of the people I've ever met, this is a **very challenging exercise**, at first. I struggled like crazy when it came to answering this simple, yet deeply profound **9-word question**.

“What do I REALLY, REALLY, REALLY want in life?”

Ugh...this question made me crazier than ever, at first. Until I realized I needed to clear the mental junk before I could **uncover** what was at the **core of my desires**.

If there's something you're constantly thinking about (for example, if you are continually **reliving a negative experience** in your mind), then ask yourself, "Is this helping me, or is it just **slowing me down** in some way?"

If your thinking patterns aren't helping you, then it's time to **ditch the junk** and extinguish those destructive thought patterns. It won't necessarily be the easiest thing to do, nor is it the hardest. Reframing destructive thought patterns is achievable with a generous amount of **self-awareness** and a bountiful bundle of **self-control**. Along with a heaping helping of **self-forgiveness**. Be generous with that stuff..

Decide on your next course of action (or course of thinking). If you have things that are going on in your life, and they are **dragging you down**, then you know it's time to stop doing them, or thinking them.

1) Declutter Your Mind...Often.

Remove the junk from your mind and take out the **emotional trash**. If you're thinking about something and wonder if it is negative or not...toss it in the 'yep, it's negative' pile and get rid of it. This is a figurative 'tossing'...but a **very powerful visual**.

Feel the relief as you 'see' it crumpled up in a tight little ball that you then toss in the trash. Isn't it good to be free from that emotional garbage that's been **dragging you down** and pulling you further and further away from what you actually want? As you uncover what it is you really, really, really want, this exercise gets easier and easier.

As you become more free, and lighter, you'll be able to **put into action** all the things you want to do. You'll find that you can complete them much more easily, and way more productively now.

It's easier to do the correct thing, and the **productive** thing, if you are not weighed down by the **pull of negativity**. Once you are thinking more freely, you'll

realize just how much the pull of negativity was **weighing you down**. It was like trying to swim with giant bags of sand hanging from your belt.

You can move with **greater ease towards** the things you want in your future. Your actions will be more efficient because you're no longer being bogged down by the negative baggage you were dragging with you...everywhere you went!

2) Start Moving the Needle!

Upon doing this, you'll begin to see real progress in your life. That "needle" will start moving and **find a higher set-point**.

You will make **appreciable progress**. Progress in improving your physique, or making more money, or improving your relationships, or building a business. Now, whatever it is you want, you **must be sure of what it is** before you start to move towards it.

This is more easily achieved if you've **ditched** all the **stinkin' thinking** that's been holding you back all this time. The way to do that is to recognize it for what it is, and then just let it go.

More often than not, we want so much less than we want more. In other words, we don't usually long for more in our lives, we desire a **simplifying across the board**. We want a few good relationships versus a vast array of acquaintances. We want to master a few skills instead of being a "Jack (or Jill) of All Trades".

And as you **relinquish the negativity**, you more easily adopt an attitude of positivity. This helps you move in the right direction, and much more rapidly. And what will it cost you to achieve this new found **mental freedom**? A few minutes each day, and a little space for thinking!

Commit to your future and **devote some quality time** each day towards clear and **forward-focused thinking**. In return for a few minutes of your time, the future rewards can be incredible!

You don't need to be a psychologist, or have a psychotherapist on speed-dial to succeed. You don't need an expensive hour on a therapy couch once a week for six months, or even a life coach. You don't even need a patient friend to listen to your troubles, or a comforting shoulder to cry on. All of these things are nice to have, but **not required in the least**.

In just a **few minutes each day**, all the benefits of thorough self-reflection are yours! You'll feel **more at peace** within yourself as well. You'll find you are thinking much clearer. You'll begin making better decisions. Your goals will become much better defined, and you'll be moving towards them steadily, and with far less effort. **In fact, you'll be closing in on your goals so fast it'll make your world spin!**



STEPS 1-5

the printable version



Putting Step 1: **DECIDE TO CHANGE** to Work for You



Challenge=C1) Flex your **decision making muscles** any chance you get. Stop wavering. Decide. Give it a shot every chance you get. When you're asked where you want to go for dinner, decide on a spot YOU want to go. **No more**, "whatever you like Honey" moments...mmmmkay? When asked whether you want bacon or sausage, **choose!** (Bacon is the obvious choice, of course...but that may just be me. I must be hungry, all my scenarios are food focused! Have you noticed?)

I **highly recommend** you write your answers to the following (and the questions that follow) in a **journal**.

Question=Q1) Let's focus on the topic of your **health**. If you're like most everyone I've ever met, you more than likely want something better than what you have now when it comes to your health status (better energy, a leaner body, a stronger body, more mental clarity, etc). **How** have your thinking, emotions, habits and beliefs have **influenced the results you're currently getting** when it comes to your health and body composition?

Q2) What **decision(s)** can you make today to start **achieving better results** in these areas of your health tomorrow?

Putting Step 2: **TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION** to Work for You



Answer the **seven questions** below to **boost your motivation** and take the first few steps towards **fulfilling the decision** you've just made:

Q1) What action can I take **immediately**?

Q2) What **specific goal** is it that I want to accomplish?

Q3) For what **purpose** do I want to accomplish this goal?

Q4) If I **don't take action** now, what might happen in the long term?

Q5) If I do take action now, what will be **likely to happen** in the long term?

Q6) What steps have I **already taken**?

Q7) If you were **Richard Branson or Oprah Winfrey**, what would you do? (We're taking the resource excuse out of the equation...**think BIG!**)

Putting Step 3: COMMIT TO SOMETHING to Work for You



C1) Practice keeping your commitments **on the daily**. No longer are you the one to say "yes" to lunch, only to last-minute cancel on your friend. You are the one who truly **considers** the commitment, **makes** it, **views** it as sacred, and therefore **keeps** it! Be "the reliable friend," not the one known as the "**Last-Minute Cancellation Queen**". (Every friend circle has one of those...I stopped asking ours to lunch long ago.) Choose a couple easy wins and commit like the "**Reliable Queen**" that you are!

Journal about the following. Since I firmly believe your health is the **foundation** for your business, let's give your health an opportunity to take the **main stage**.

Q1) What one thing will **move the needle** on your health when you fully commit to doing it?

Q2) What is **stopping you from** fully committing to getting control of your health?

Putting Step 4: TAKE STOCK to Work for You



C1) Take stock of your current **reality**. Set your awareness to hone in on your **actions**. When you dial into these two frequencies, you will see that you are just **defining** your current situation, **over and over again**.

By continually **thinking the same way**, and **doing the same things** we have always done, we tend to **get more of the same** and not as much of what we truly want.

Whether Einstein or NA, the **take home** is the same. If you continue to do the **same** things you've always done, you'll wind up with the **same** results. So stop. **Take a breather** and become aware of your overriding thoughts. Maybe you're thinking that you **don't deserve** certain things. Maybe you're thinking you're **too weak to change**. Or maybe you've decided that **you'll never** lose any real weight, no matter what you do or how many new diets you try out.

Q1) What **thoughts** do you have '**on repeat**' that are **derailing you** from your health and **ideal** body composition goals?

Consider the aspects of the **Wheel of Life** as you **journal** your repetitive thoughts:

Career Family Friends Fun Health Love Money Spirituality

Putting Step 5: **DITCH THE JUNK** to Work for You



These negative thought patterns have been comfortable for **long enough**. So...go on, **start ditching your junk** today!

C1) Give thought to what it is you **really, really, really want in life**. Take your time; attempt to define the precise details. Journal about it. Get personal with it. (**NOTE:** This is not a "once & done" kind of thing. This is a "get the vision on paper, then dive into the details" kind of exercise.

C2) Start the **mental decluttering** process...and do it on the regular.

C3) Spend some time **reflecting** on the value of certain trains of thought...and the boldness to **change direction**, when necessary.



