

FOREWORD

For too many, hopelessness is defined very early in life. Too frequently, what might have been never gets a chance. What determines our ambition over time? What is the unique factor in each of our lives that will determine where we set our sights? And what forces will cause us to move closer or further from their realization? What can we do to alter the outcome? Dr. Stoltz's work helps us to seize control of our destinies, to understand and permanently improve our own ambition and motivation, and to lead a meaningful life.

Now more than ever there is an urgent need to identify, grow, and become full contributors in work and in life. This book provides the long awaited answer to the question, "What does it take to make an extraordinary contribution over a lifetime?" It pinpoints and teaches the behaviors and characteristics that differentiate extraordinary people from those who settle for less, or do not participate at all. No message could be more timely.

Paradox rules the day. On the one hand is the promise of technology to improve our lives. On the other hand is the disheartening societal discord, a growing economic gap between the classes, relentless competition, and largely unmet human needs.

For some of us, technological advances offer improvements. But for many of us, it just doesn't work out that way. Despite the gains in information technology, the burden of striving in modern society and assimilating increasing levels of information has become overwhelming to a large portion of our population. A pervasive sense of hopelessness is too often the result. Old cures fall short.

Adversity Quotient, or AQ, is at once a powerful theory, a meaningful measure, and a honed set of tools for persevering through challenging times. It will provoke you to rethink your current



formula of success. Yet, current challenges require more than new thoughts. Graspable, useable, and effective methods are a must.

What determines your drive to live and contribute purposefully? Consider ambition and volition to be plotted on a bell curve. The implications of where you are on the curve are profound. On the low end are those who show little if any effort. In the middle bulge ride the majority who do enough to get by, but fall short of their full potential. On the high end are the 10 percent of people who pioneer change and advancement for the remaining 90 percent. For the first time, AQ unravels this mystery of human motivation and empowerment, infusing us with the fundamental hope, principles, and methods for a rarefied life and career on the front of the curve.

The thoughtful, systematic improvement process contained in these pages pertains as essentially to organizations as it does to teams, families, communities, and individuals. Each will benefit from the three-point process of discovering, measuring, and improving their individual and collective AQs.

Organizational leaders are given a new way of defining, pinpointing, and developing top performers. They are provided with a sustainable path, map, and compass for pursuing a culture of perseverance and achievement, and with it a new notion of managing change.

Teams are given a refreshing and essential understanding of participation, contribution, and interpersonal dynamics. AQ quickly becomes an integral part of any high-performance team's vocabulary and norms. Through the AQ model and methods, families and communities learn practical approaches for turning hopelessness around while fortifying their members with enduring strategies for greater purpose and fulfillment.

Ultimately, this book is about hope for human (one) and humanity (all). With that hope comes the doing and the ability to *aspire*. I believe this work represents the clearest and most succinctly expressed hope any of us has, individually and collectively, to live more fully, starting today.

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