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**STRATEGY FOR YOU:
Building a Bridge to the Life You Want**

By Rich Horwath

The business community is infatuated with success. Whether it's a CEO sharing war stories, consultants offering turnaround services, or books on paradigm-shifting new practices, we devour them all in the name of one thing: a successful business. But does this passion for success extend beyond the boardroom? Are those working in business equally concerned with creating a successful life?

According to strategic thinking guru Rich Horwath, executives do want more fulfilling lives, and they already have the most important tool for success: strategy. But even though they know a solid strategy is necessary for achieving their business goals, few business executives use these principles when it comes to achieving success outside the boardroom. Why not? No one has ever shown them how.

In **STRATEGY FOR YOU: Building a Bridge to the Life You Want (Greenleaf Book Group; hardcover; January 24, 2012)**, Horwath shows readers how to use the principles of business strategy to create a fulfilling life. Drawing on his experience as a strategy consultant, academic, former Chief Strategy Officer and bestselling business author (*Deep Dive*), Horwath uses the familiar language of business strategy to help readers decide what they want in life, and build a plan for achieving it.

"In the corporate world, if you don't have a strategic plan today, you may not have a business tomorrow," says Horwath. "The same principle applies to our personal lives. If you don't have a strategy for your life, you may not have a future – at least not the one you want."

As CEO of the Strategic Thinking Institute, Horwath has spent the past 20 years helping world class companies identify their business goals and develop strategies for achieving them. From Country Financial and Pfizer, to Kraft and Motorola, Horwath has been delighted to see his clients gain competitive advantage, increase revenue, and hone their employees' abilities to think strategically on a daily basis. Yet throughout his work, he noticed a recurring pattern: while his clients put enormous amounts of energy into ensuring the success of their business, they paid little mind to their own personal fulfillment.

Then, in 2010, an article by Clay Christensen confirmed that the problem was widespread. Based on a commencement speech given at the Harvard Business School, Christensen published an article in the

Harvard Business Review called “How Will You Measure Your Life?” It became the most popular article of the year, and remains one of HBR’s most-read articles to this day. For Horwath, the article’s resonance indicated a gap – that while executives doggedly pursued business success, many were struggling to find fulfillment in their lives. He asked himself – could strategy bridge this gap? If executives used strategy to create successful businesses, could they use it to create successful lives?

Horwath conducted research in conjunction with Harris Interactive, and found that the practice doesn’t cross over. Based on a study of more than 300 Fortune 1000 executives, he found that while 82 percent had a written strategy for their business, only 22 percent had a strategy for themselves. It became clear that while the majority of people working in business understand the inherent need for strategy in achieving goals, the majority of them are not applying these same principles in their own lives.

In **STRATEGY FOR YOU**, Horwath seeks to address this disconnect by applying the language of business strategy to achieving personal goals. He challenges the reader to ask themselves two questions: *What would be the greatest day of my life? And how would I get there?* Using the metaphor of a bridge, Horwath shows how we can use strategy to get us from where we are to where we want to be – to the greatest day of our lives.

Whether you want more purposeful work, better financial security, fulfilling relationships or a healthier lifestyle, Horwath stresses one truth: without a strategy, you are powerless to create the life you want. In **STRATEGY FOR YOU**, Horwath shows individuals how to take control of their lives and find fulfillment in four categories: mind, body, relationships and finances. Using the principles of business strategy, Horwath offers a five-step plan:

- **DISCOVER** the purpose in your life—what you want and why.
- **DIFFERENTIATE** your unique strengths—the abilities that set you apart from others.
- **DECIDE** how best to allocate your time and talent—decide what to do and what *not* to do.
- **DESIGN** an effective action plan—your StrategyPrint for life.
- **DRIVE** your plan to ultimate success—without being pulled or distracted into other activities.

Using language and frameworks familiar to business executives—including GOST (goals, objectives, strategies, tactics), SWOT analysis, mission statements, and resource allocation—Horwath shows readers how they can use the very things that have made them successful in business to achieve overall happiness. Through personal stories and case studies from the business world—from restaurants and auto makers to individuals like Warren Buffett, Lady Gaga, Amazon’s Jeff Bezos, and the late Steve Jobs—Horwath offers a plan for life-changing success, both personal and professional.

**STRATEGY FOR YOU:
Building a Bridge to the Life You Want**
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ABOUT RICH HORWATH

Rich Horwath is a national thought-leader on strategy, having appeared on NBC, WGN, and FOX TV to discuss the strategic aspect of current issues. He is the founder and president of the Strategic Thinking Institute, a former chief strategy officer, and professor of strategy at the Lake Forest Graduate School of Management. Rich is the author of four books and more than 75 articles on strategic thinking and his work has been profiled in business media around the world, including *Investor's Business Daily* and *Forbes.com*. He is a highly sought after keynote speaker, having been ranked the #1 speaker out of 162 on strategy by the Society for Healthcare Strategy. His book, *Deep Dive: The Proven Method for Building Strategy* has been described by the Director of Worldwide Operations for McDonalds as "...the most valuable book ever written on strategic thinking."

Rich works with world-class organizations located in North America, Europe and Asia-Pacific. He helps companies increase their organizational competency in strategic thinking and guides executive management teams through the strategy development process. As a pioneer in the field of strategic thinking, Rich created the *Deep Dive Learning System* to help managers become truly strategic leaders through assessments, books, workbooks, software, group workshops, instructional videos, templates and one-to-one strategic counsel. His monthly e-publication entitled *Strategic Thinker* is read by thousands of business leaders and academicians around the world.

Rich earned an MBA with Distinction from the Kellstadt Graduate School of Business at DePaul University and has completed post-graduate studies in strategy at the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business and the Amos Tuck School of Business Administration at Dartmouth College. He resides in Barrington Hills, Illinois.

The Core Concept of STRATEGY FOR YOU

Rich Horwath has created a five-step plan for creating a bridge to the life you want. This framework takes the foundational principles of business strategy and helps readers apply them to their lives. The result is a five-step plan you can follow to become effective, successful, and happy at work and at home.

Step 1: Discover—Selecting Your Bridge’s Location

Just as you can’t build a bridge without first determining the starting and finishing points, you can’t build a strategy for your life without understanding where you’re starting from and where you want to go. The Discover step is the process of uncovering your purpose—what you want and why. Purpose takes the form of a mission, a vision, goals, and objectives.

Step 2: Differentiate—Imagining Your Bridge’s Style

Bridges come in all shapes and sizes, from small, wooden covered structures to shiny, sweeping waves of metal. Their differences begin in the mind of the designer. The Differentiate step requires you to identify the unique characteristics of your personal bridge. These elements include your individual combination of strengths, weaknesses, background, and abilities that set you apart from the pack. To *differentiate* means to deviate from the norm in ways that people value.

Step 3: Decide—Choosing Your Bridge’s Materials

Before a bridge can be built, the designer must decide which materials to use, based on functional needs, the size of the span to be crossed, and desired aesthetics. All these choices require trade-offs. The Decide step involves the process of allocating your resources—time, talent, and money—to achieve your goals. The act of deciding requires you to make trade-offs, choosing what to do and what *not* to do.

Step 4: Design—Building Your Bridge

It’s one thing to think about a bridge. It’s another to actually build that bridge. While natural bridges like logs over streams exist, the majority of functional bridges are man-made. The Design step asks you to develop an action plan that will help you reach the goals you’ve set, using the appropriate resources. Just as a designer creates a blueprint for a bridge, we can design a StrategyPrint for life.

Step 5: Drive—Crossing Your Bridge

Once the bridge has been designed and built, the true test begins. Can you move across this bridge, from one side to the other? A bridge that looks good but crumbles when used is of little value. The Drive step guides your actions and moves you forward on a daily basis according to the strategy you have designed. It includes the ability to execute your plan without becoming distracted and taken off task by “urgent” but unimportant things that eat away at your time.

An interview with Rich Horwath, author of STRATEGY FOR YOU

Q: What inspired you to write this book?

A: Strategy shapes the world. For thousands of years, strategy has been the driving force of success in politics, war and business. But, it hasn't been used by the majority of people. Strategy is the power to get from where you are today to where you want to go in life. I want to give people that power--the power to live strategically.

Q: How do you define strategy?

A: Strategy is a plan for achieving your goals. That plan requires insights and decisions. There's a simple but often overlooked premise: New growth comes from new thinking. Expecting new growth in your business, relationships, finances or health without new thinking is like a farmer expecting new crops to grow without first planting the seeds. You know the adage: if you always do what you've always done, you'll always have what you've always had. It's true. But, most folks use their resources—their time, talent and finances—the same way year after year and wonder why they aren't millionaires living on an island. It's because they haven't thought in new ways about their goals, and how they're going to get there.

Q: Why did you decide to use the analogy of a bridge for the concept of strategy?

A: I've always found analogies that link the abstract to the concrete to be an effective means of learning. In business, strategy is how you get from where you are today to your goals. Strategy is an abstract concept, like leadership or love. You can't reach out and touch strategy. Because of its intangible nature, it is interpreted in many different ways. I wanted to tie the concept of strategy to something tangible, something you can see and touch. Just as strategy transports a company from its current state to its desired goals, a bridge can take people from where they are to where they want to go. A bridge takes thought and work to build and so does a great life.

Q: In the book, you compare people to bumper cars, bouncing from one thing to the next, always being reactive instead of proactive. Why is this?

A: We live in an action-oriented society where the motto "greed is good" has been replaced by "speed is good." People equate busyness with excitement, when in reality, activity doesn't necessarily equal effectiveness. Many people have become addicted to the adrenaline rush of mindless reactivity, racing to respond to emails, texts and tweets. But, they don't take time to think about their lives. The average Facebook user spends 23 hours of every month browsing the site. Imagine if even 25 percent of that time was spent creating and fine-tuning their plan for life—what a difference it could make.

Q: In the book, you write about the “bridge to nowhere” – a life path we allow ourselves to be dragged down, rather than one we proactively plan. What is the most common example you've seen?

A: The most common example is people working in a job they don't like. Research shows only 2 out of every 10 people have a job that allows them to use their strengths every day. What a waste. When you consider the average career spans more than 100,000 hours, think about how much time is thrown away working in a job that's not the right fit. Very few people have taken the time to assess their strengths, talents and passions and then mapped a strategy to use them in a career.

Q: One study revealed that over 80% of New Year's resolutions fail. What do you think the culprit is? And can strategy help us bridge that gap?

A: New Year's resolutions fail for three reasons. First, people start with the resolution itself. Before you list your resolutions or goals for the year, you have to determine where you're starting. You need to assess your situation, THEN set your resolution. Second, people set a resolution but don't develop a strategy to get them there. Resolving to lose weight is pointless if you don't map out a strategy for exactly HOW you're going to do it. Finally, resolutions fail because people don't have a trigger for changing their behavior. Concepts change thinking and tools change behavior. To successfully achieve your resolution, you must have the resolution, strategy and tactics written down. I'd recommend using a tool like the StrategyPrint, which is a two-page blueprint for your life.

Q: One of the perennial challenges for people today – from CEOs to stay-at-home moms – is to do more with less. How can strategy help us decide where to spend our time and energy in a way that brings maximum fulfillment?

A: The biggest mistake I see people make is spreading themselves too thin. We need to say "no" more often. Apple founder Steve Jobs said, "People think focus means saying yes to the thing you've got to focus on. But that's not what it means at all. It means saying no to the 100 other good ideas that there are." It's easy to waste a few hours here watching meaningless TV, or a few hours at the office attending meetings that have no relevance to your specific work. It's much harder to develop the discipline to say "no." In today's world, most people are clamoring for more time, more money – more resources. But, what people really need is the discipline to say "no" and use the resources they already have more effectively.

Q: Was there a turning point, if not an epiphany, in your life that set you on the career course that you continue to follow now?

A: When I was working as a chief strategy officer prior to founding the Strategic Thinking Institute, I was facilitating the strategy development process for a client team. I was chatting at a break with a mid-level manager, who looked me in the eye and very honestly said, "I need your help. My boss said I need to be less tactical and more strategic. But I don't know how to do that." It was at that moment I realized that no one had really created a roadmap to help people go from being tactical to strategic. Over the next few years, I found that this manager wasn't alone, and in fact there were many people facing the same dilemma. It was then I decided to dedicate my life to helping people live strategically. My mission can be captured in the proverb, "As iron sharpens iron, so man sharpens his fellow man."

Q: How have you used the principles of business strategy in your own life?

A: About 15 years ago, I wasn't really sure what I wanted to do with my life. I developed a process called Purpose Channeling that identified competition as the intersection of my passion and talent. I've channeled competition into a career helping managers think strategically to outperform their competition. In doing so, I've used the principle of differentiation to separate myself from others by merging strategy with creativity. This fusion of strategy and creativity has produced dozens of proprietary strategic thinking tools, the first-ever business strategy comic books, educational yet entertaining keynote speeches and a library of videos and MP3s. I value the principle of focus to the extent that I don't allow my time with family to be interrupted by checking my email every twenty minutes. I think and plan strategically from an individual perspective just as I do from a business perspective. For me, this continual thinking and planning has made the concept of work/life balance irrelevant. I've designed a life without compartments.

Q: Did you encounter any head-snapping revelations while writing it?

A: I wasn't surprised that only 15 percent of adults had a plan for their life, outlining goals and objectives. What was a shock is the fact that only 22 percent of Fortune 1000 executives used the principles of business strategy in their personal lives. Bad strategy is the number one cause of bankruptcy. Business leaders know how a lack of strategy can cause their business to fail, so I assumed they would have taken their knowledge of strategy and used it for their life. But, that's not what the numbers show.

Q: What are the major differences between *Strategy for You* and other books on success?

A: There are three main differences. *Strategy for You* is the first book that takes the proven principles of business strategy and applies them to your overall life. Research has shown that strong strategy is a key to a company's success, but until now, no one has effectively translated strategy from a business level to the individual level. The second difference is that I'm an expert on strategy, having worked as a chief strategy officer and professor of strategy. I have both the practical, real-world experience and the academic understanding of strategy. The combination of experience and expertise enables me to show others how the concept of strategy can be realistically used to better their lives. The third difference is that this book doesn't recommend a one-size fits all formula for success. You know, be like Steve Jobs and you'll rule the world. Ridiculous. *Strategy for You* forces people to look at their specific situations and then gives them practical tools and exercises to tailor a strategy that fits them. It takes time and effort, two things seemingly in short supply these days.

Q: What are the five steps you outline in the book for developing a strategy for life?

A: The five steps all start with the letter D. Step 1 is Discover. This is the process of uncovering your purpose—what you want and why. Purpose takes the form of a mission, a vision, goals, and objectives.

Step 2 is Differentiate. The Differentiate step requires you to identify your unique characteristics, including your strengths, weaknesses, background, and abilities that set you apart from the pack. To *differentiate* means to deviate from the norm in ways that people value.

Step 3 is Decide. The Decide step involves the process of allocating your resources—time, talent, and money—to achieve your goals. The act of deciding requires you to make trade-offs, choosing what to do and what *not* to do.

Step 4 is Design. The Design step asks you to develop an action plan that will help you reach the goals you've set, using the appropriate resources. Just as a designer creates a blueprint for a bridge, we can design a StrategyPrint for life.

Finally, Step 5 is Drive. The Drive step guides your actions and moves you forward on a daily basis according to the strategy you have designed. It includes the ability to execute your plan without becoming distracted and taken off task by “urgent” but unimportant things that eat away at your time.

Q: Once a strategy is developed, how best to measure its progress or lack thereof?

A: Remember, strategy is HOW you'll get to your goals and objectives. So you must first identify the goals and objectives. Since the objectives are specific and measurable, you have built in milestones along your bridge of strategy, to help determine your rate of progress. If you're not hitting the milestones in your objectives, then it may be time to set a new strategy.