

Part One

Success Moves

The moves we make

In the rare moments of stillness and silence that we manage to secure in our busy lives, a hard fact about life dawns upon us. That fact is this: *life compels us to move*. None of us are exempt from this fate.

Life demands that we act and react to events as they unfold around us. We must “do or die”. We must play the game of life or watch as it slips through our hands. This is true as much for those who seek to do the bare minimum to get by, as it is for those driven individuals leading the vanguard of progress.

Whether you desire security or the highest levels of self-expression in your life and work, success depends upon your ability to find the optimal courses of action or the *right moves*. As this book endeavours to show you, successful individuals in any sphere possess a defining quality: *they know what moves to make and crucially when and how to make them*.

The moves we make through life very much define us. As many books and seminars that have explored success point out, *success is not*

Part One

a destination it is a journey; one in which we must keep moving towards an ideal. It is a journey that involves many progressive steps. On occasions it demands that we stride forward courageously and at speed. At other times it requires us to stop where we are, and reflect, and decide if there is a better direction in which to head, a better way in which to move or if there is a better course of action to take. At critical junctures in this journey we may have to take a leap of faith and find the self-belief that is needed to jump across the dark chasm that separates the known from the unknown, if we want to achieve something of significance and note.

The relentless requirement to keep moving, however, can and has made many of us wary. The psychiatrist Edward Hallowell, in his article *Overloaded Circuits*, for example, described the problem facing frenzied business executives working in ‘hyperkinetic environments’. Hallowell wrote:

They’re suffering from a newly recognized neurological phenomenon called Attention Deficit Trait (ADT). Marked by distractibility, inner frenzy, and impatience, ADT prevents managers from clarifying priorities, making smart decisions, and managing their time. This insidious condition turns otherwise talented performers into harried underachievers. And it’s reaching epidemic proportions.¹

The regular walk, train, or car journey into work which brings us face-to-face with a sea of stressed and anxious faces gives credence to Hallowell’s claims. Driven by more advanced and efficient technology, life seems to be getting faster – and it appears as though we are struggling to keep pace.

Back in 1937, in his book *Great Contemporaries*, Winston Churchill wrote: “...the world is moving on; and moving so fast that few have time to ask – whither?” Over 75 years further on, we can say with absolute certainty that life is moving quicker still and many of us really do not have the time to ask in which direction our lives are inexorably moving.

*Life demands that we move.
Success demands that we make the right move.*

Information, ideas, conversations are exchanged so quickly through mobile phones, emails and social media that the “state of play” is always rapidly changing. Events compel us to stick with the pace and cope with the pressure, or else, fall by the wayside.

Staying the course

With our physical capacities seemingly being stretched to their limit, how can we survive with the demands life imposes on us? I believe the fast paced and highly pressurised world of professional sport provides a compelling answer to this question, particularly if we examine the ‘unlikely’ success of three individuals who were considered by many to be the greatest sportsmen of their generation in their respective sports - Muhammad Ali, Wayne Gretzky and Zinedine Zidane.

Ali was renowned for his speed but he wasn’t considered by many boxing experts to be a natural fighter or one that had the physique, strength or the correct style of a classic heavy-weight boxer; and yet as one boxing expert explained:

He was a paradox. His physical performances in the ring were absolutely wrong... Yet his brain was always in perfect working condition... He showed us all that all victories come from here, [hitting his forehead with his index finger, then raising a pair of fists]: Not from here.²

Gretzky, like Ali, didn’t have a physique that appeared to be able to withstand the cut and thrust of professional ice-hockey. When in the 1981-82 season, he broke the National Hockey League record by scoring 92 goals, his build was slight compared to the average NHL player. In fact, as he described himself, “I look more like the guy who bags your groceries at the local supermarket.”³ However, as one

Part One

journalist wrote, Gretzky could do something a little quicker than nearly all other players:

*Gretzky doesn't look like a hockey player... his shot is only average – or, nowadays, below average... Gretzky's gift, his genius even, is for seeing... To most fans, and sometimes even to the players on the ice, hockey frequently looks like chaos... But amid the mayhem, Gretzky can discern the game's underlying pattern and flow, and anticipate what's going to happen faster and in more detail than anyone else in the building.*⁴

Zidane, was another great sportsman, who was able to overcome a physical limitation; as the author Jonathan Wilson revealed in *Inverting the Pyramid* (his insightful take on football philosophy), the French coach Aimé Jacquet had to find a way of accommodating Zidane in his 1998 World Cup winning side on account of Zidane being “a player of limited pace and almost no defensive instinct”.⁵ However, in an interview with a journalist, Jacquet explained what made Zidane so special:

*Zidane has an internal vision. His control is precise and discreet. He can make the ball do whatever he wants. But it is his drive which takes him forward. He is 100 per cent football.*⁶

The Latin motto of the Olympic Games, *altius, citius, fortius*, – higher, faster, stronger – suggests that success in sport weighs heavily in the favour of supreme athletes. Yet despite their purported physical disadvantages, Ali, Gretzky and Zidane were not only able to survive in the fast moving and demanding arenas of their respective sports, *they were able to flourish*. They found a way of out-competing physically superior opposition.

The ability to compete and succeed in a fast-moving world flows, first and foremost, from what we possess within us.

The qualities shown by these three men are not the sole preserve of sports stars or athletes. Exceptional individuals in other walks of life

are also able to compete with bigger and stronger opponents, with qualities that run deeper than physical attributes.

Alexander the Great, for example, lacked an imposing physical presence due to his lack of height; a quality that was revered in ancient times. However, despite the inches he gave away in height, he became one of history's greatest military leaders due to his ability to make decisive moves amidst the chaos of a battlefield.⁷ History notes that Napoleon, another leader of modest physical stature, also possessed similar qualities to Alexander the Great; qualities that secured victory after victory. As Malcolm Gladwell wrote in his book *Blink*:

In the military, brilliant generals are said to possess "coup d'oeil" – which translated from the French, means "power of the glance": the ability to immediately see and make sense of the battlefield. Napoleon had coup d'oeil.

Another celebrated leader - Mahatma Gandhi - also found the right moves to see off more powerful opposition; Gandhi was able to defeat the might of the British Empire through his strategy of *satyagraha*, or passive resistance, through the moral integrity of his character. As Albert Einstein, speaking at the time of Gandhi's death, pointed out:

*Gandhi had demonstrated that a powerful human following can be assembled not only through the cunning game of usual political manoeuvres and trickeries but through the cogent example of a morally superior conduct of life.*⁸

So, what lay behind the respective successes of Ali, Gretzky, Zidane, Alexander, Napoleon and Gandhi? They all had an ability to *outmanoeuvre* more powerful opponents. They knew what moves to make and when and how to make them with maximum effect. It is an ability that the ancient Greeks of Alexander's time, referred to as *phronesis*, or practical wisdom.⁹ Gladwell explained it is the kind of knowledge that helps you read situations correctly and get what you want.¹⁰

All these exceptional individuals had a practical intelligence that allowed them to read the game or situations before them and make the right moves that created the success or outcomes they desired. I call this ability *Inspired Movement*. Exceptional individuals who possess it – as Ali, Gretzky, Zidane, Alexander, Napoleon and Gandhi did – are what I refer to, in this book, as Inspired Movers.

*An Inspired Mover is someone who can perceive
and perform the moves that create the desired
success in any situation.*

The brief insights into these Inspired Movers immediately point to one thing. They could *out-think* their opponents. Ali's victories came from "his brain and not his fists". Gretzky's came from an "anticipation of what was going to happen faster than anyone else". Zidane's came from an "internal vision". Alexander and Napoleon built their victories on the power of perception or "coup d'oeil". Gandhi ultimately defeated the British Empire with a subtly conceived strategy of passive resistance.

All these cases of Inspired Movement show that the abilities to think well and move well are intimately linked. However, if we were to look for a practical and workable definition of Inspired Movement, the ability 'to think' only represents half the equation. For the other vital element, let's turn to another of history's Inspired Movers.

The art and science of Inspired Movement

He became one of the cultural icons of the 20th century. A man whose ability to move and express himself mesmerised film audiences in the East and the West. Many considered him to be one of the most influential and talented martial artists of all time. Sadly, Bruce Lee's life was prematurely cut short when he died in 1973, aged only 32, from a cerebral oedema brought on by an allergic reaction to pain medication he had taken.

In 1994, an interview that he gave on the Pierre Berton Show (two years before his death) was found and aired on television for the very first time. In the interview Bruce Lee spoke of his martial arts philosophy. "Empty your mind. Be formless, shapeless like water," he said leaning forward towards a captivated Pierre Berton. "Put

water into a cup and it becomes the cup. Put water into the bottle and it becomes the bottle. Put it into a teapot, it becomes the teapot. Water can flow or it can crash. Be water my friend.”

The words may sound quixotic but Lee’s philosophy helped him to move with exceptional power and poise. As he further elaborated, “Here is natural instinct and here is control. You are to combine the two in harmony,” he said making fists with both hands before bringing them together before him, “...If you have one to the extreme you’ll be *very unscientific*. If you have another to the extreme you become all of a sudden a *mechanical man*, no longer a human being.”

Lee’s style of moving and expressing himself was both practical and philosophical. A style that was balanced between nature and nurture. It represents the sine qua non of Inspired Movement; making the right moves is the convergence of science *and art*, of thought *and emotion*. Too much thought (control) and we run the danger of becoming the contrived “mechanical man” that makes moves without any joy or feeling. Too much emotion, however, and we run the danger of losing our head and moving capriciously without care. As Konstantin Stanislavski, the famous Russian actor and theatre director said:

*...we need science but we must be intelligent and forehanded about acquiring it. There is no point in filling our heads with a lot of new ideas and rushing on the stage to exploit them before we have learned the elementary rules. That kind of a student will lose his head, he will either forget his science or think about it to the exclusion of everything else. Science can help art only when they support and complement each other.*¹¹

The power of emotion, alongside thought, is especially required when the right moves in any situation require *passionate and expansive* action. As Nelson Mandela once said, “There is no passion to be found playing small – in settling for a life that is less than the one you are capable of living.” To play a bigger game in life requires us to move with greater passion and feeling as well as thought and perception.

To find our best form, we must find a balance between science and art - of what we know and how we feel - for thought and feeling are instrumental in how we express ourselves. They are the two forces

Part One

that *literally* move us. For example, the word emotion, is derived from a Latin verb *movere* which means *to move*. The word motivation, is also linked to the concept of moving; motivation implies we have a *motive* or a *sponsoring thought* behind doing something.

Thought is the power that directs and shapes the moves we make. Emotion is the power that energises and empowers them. Inspired Movement therefore is very much a *high thinking and high feeling state* in which sublime thoughts blend perfectly with sublime feelings to create exceptional performance.

Mastering Inspired Movement – the ability to make the right move in any situation – therefore, requires an approach which is as much ‘heart’ as it is ‘head’.

*Inspired Movement is unleashed when thought
and feeling combine. When the head and the
heart work with equal power.*

In my experience, putting aside any specific technical or physical ability, people too frequently attribute success solely to a strong ‘mindset’. This can make the pursuit of exceptional performance feel like a dry or mechanical exercise in thinking better. It is this bias of ‘thinking *over* feeling’ instead of ‘thinking *with* feeling’ that I believe causes so many individuals to fall out of love with their profession and experience poor performance in their work.

To correct the balance we perhaps need to add the term ‘heart-set’ to that of mindset, in the vocabulary of success - and provide a more holistic view on personal performance. A strong heart-set would include essential qualities such as courage, love and belief that are required to *ignite* the potential of a strong mindset.

The role the heart and emotions plays in success is, in fact, receiving greater attention by both academics and those more practically engaged in the pursuit of success. As the highly influential ex-CEO of Apple, the late Steve Jobs, pointed out: “...most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow

already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary.”

As we’ll come to, later in the book, the heart has a tangible role to play in human performance and decision making. For now, however, let’s consider how we can combine the power of thought and emotion into a *practical definition of Inspired Movement*.

Defining Inspired Movement

The personal excellence demonstrated by Inspired Movers makes them stand-out from the crowd. There is even a defining difference between them and individuals working within the same field who are considered to be ‘merely’ good as opposed to great. The current so called ‘Big Four’ players in men’s tennis are a great example of this. Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal, Novak Djokovic and Andy Murray have (between them) won 34 of the last 35 Grand Slam men’s singles titles. But what exactly is the defining difference between them and the rest? Djokovic puts the gap in success between the Big Four and the chasing pack down to *greater mental strength and emotional stability* in crucial moments in matches.¹²

Knowing exactly how Inspired Movers create and combine mental and emotional strength, however, can be a challenging and elusive task. Peak human performance is not the sole preserve of any one discipline. It touches many areas such as psychology, neuroscience, physiology, leadership, as well as religion, philosophy and spirituality. Given the fact that the potential causes of Inspired Movement are so wide-ranging, can we nonetheless devise a useful definition for it?

I believe we can but it requires us to adopt what Howard Gardner, the Harvard Professor and one of the world’s foremost thinkers in education, calls a *Synthesizing Mind*.¹³ Gardner states that the amount of accumulated knowledge is reportedly doubling every two to three years. Sources of information have become so widespread and disparate that we desperately need to combine and connect complex ideas. We need to *synthesize* all relevant information into a wider coherent pattern. Put simply we need to make sure we can see the bigger picture without losing sight of the useful knowledge that is surfacing all the time, from all directions.

High Performance is a synthesis of many disciplines and ideas. Success flows when all our attributes come together and combine harmoniously.

Within this book, the definition for Inspired Movement that I share with you, is a product of the years of high performance coaching I have provided to my clients and the parallel research I have undertaken into the vast field of human potential. Through ‘synthesizing’ the experiences gained and the knowledge gathered, I devised the definition – which contains the potential to dynamically shift your personal performance – by repeatedly asking myself the following two questions:

- What defines human excellence?
- What factors bring it about?

Following Einstein’s wisdom that “everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler” I have defined Inspired Movement in the simplest possible terms:

Inspired Movement is the ability to make the optimal moves at the right time and the right place, in any situation, by moving in complete alignment with the Ideal Way Forward.

The first component of the Inspired Movement definition is the success trait that all top performers possess - that we have alluded to in this opening chapter of this book. It is the enhanced decision making and execution capability of making the optimal moves in any situation. Inspired Movers consistently know what moves to make and when and how to make them. Top sports stars like Roger Federer know when to defend and when to attack; perceptive investors such as Warren Buffet know when it is time to “be fearful when others are greedy and be greedy when others are fearful”; exceptional entrepreneurs like Richard Branson know when to say “screw it let’s do it” and when to hold back a product; and great

authors like J.K. Rowling know what to say and what to leave to the imagination.

Possessing the right moves is the key to all success.

That is not to say Inspired Movers do not make wrong, ill-timed or sub-optimal moves. Like all of us they can find themselves ‘off-track’ in situations that challenge their values, purpose and aspirations. When Inspired Movers do err, however, they find a move that quickly gets them back on track. Typically they find the optimal moves when they are most required. This task of finding the right moves in any situation is the opportunity and challenge that very much confronts us all.

However, none of us make the same moves in the same way. Despite the fact that biologists claim that only 0.1% of our DNA separates us from each other,¹⁴ we each think, feel and act in remarkably different ways. This uniqueness in the way each of us moves is reflected in the second component of the Inspired Movement definition; it’s not just what we do (or the moves we make), it’s the *way we do it* that gives each of us our own natural form of self-expression.

Inspired Movers have discovered what I call their own *Ideal Way Forward* in life. They move in a way that *feels* right to them. As I describe later, the Ideal Way Forward represents the moves that best serve their purpose and are most true to their values. In essence, *Inspired Movers express who they choose to be through what they choose to do*. To use sporting greats as an analogy – in football where Pelé skilfully combined with his teammates, Maradona terrorised opponents with individual flair; in tennis, where Roger Federer’s game is built on graceful elegance and precision, Rafael Nadal’s is built on muscular power and determination; in athletics where the US sprinter Allyson Felix glides gracefully on the track, her great rival Veronica Campbell-Brown sprints with explosive power. As Ralph Waldo Emerson eloquently pointed out in his essay, *Self-Reliance*, each of us must find our unique expression:

Insist on yourself, never imitate. Your own gift you can present every moment with the cumulative force of a whole life’s cultivation; but of the adopted talent of another, you have only an extemporaneous half possession.

We must fashion an Ideal Way Forward that is unique and authentic to each of us. Our moves must flow naturally from within.

The Seven Master Moves of Success

The Inspired Movement definition can be stated simply enough, but how can we practically use it to create the success we desire? The answer lies in the *Seven Master Moves* that are embedded into the definition of Inspired Movement that spark it into life. As shown in Figure 1.1 they are the ability to move with:

1. Progression
2. Purpose
3. Passion
4. Presence
5. Precision
6. Perception
7. Poise

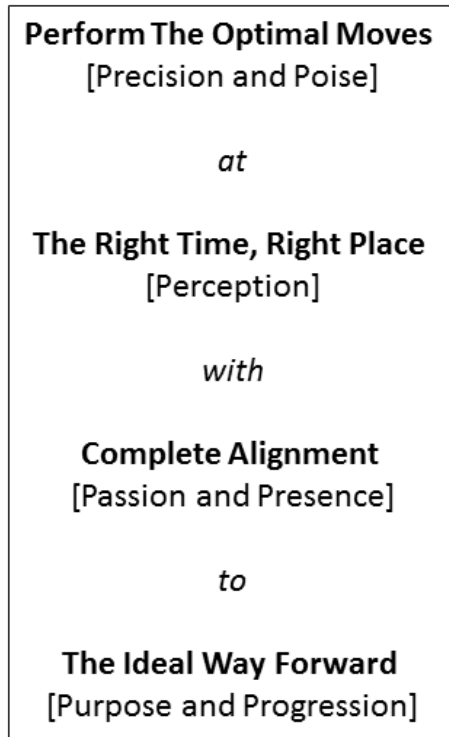


Figure 1.1, The 7 Master Moves of Inspired Movement

These Seven Master Moves are powerful forces that channel you in the direction of success. As this book will explore, your Ideal Way Forward will compel you to move with *purpose and progression*. It will stir your heart into action. You will *passionately* desire to follow its direction. It will challenge and test you, and bring out a commanding *presence* within you that will give you the courage that is needed to find your own way and the self-belief that is needed to persevere on this path; for the path of self-mastery is necessarily long. It is the price that must be paid for success.

Moving with greater freedom and *precision* requires many thousands of hours of painstaking practice. The effortless unleashing of your repertoire of moves can only be acquired, ironically, through *great effort*. Knowing when, and where, to make your move will require a refined sense of *perception*. Being able to make your move, and make it count in the critical moments upon which your future rests, will

Part One

require the kind of unshakable *poise* that can only be developed when the very limits of your ability and character are repeatedly tested.

Each chapter that follows explores each of the Seven Master Moves in turn. However, reading the chapters is not enough. You must, in your own way, embody any knowledge that resonates within you. The performance principles shared within these pages, have to be applied to gain any value from them. Inspiration must be turned into application if you are to create the success you deeply desire in your life.

To help this process, I have included a section entitled '*Applying the Master Move*' at the end of each chapter. These sections contain practical information and exercises that can help you create a dynamic shift in your personal performance. They are not 'how to' lists though; even if someone with great foresight could spell out the precise steps for you to follow (in your personal pursuit of the Ideal Way Forward) I do not believe that following this path would ultimately be beneficial for you. Books, friends and 'experts' can, and do, play important roles in guiding, prompting and inspiring us. We should not, however, overlook the deep instinct within us, or the joy to be had for that matter, *of working things out for ourselves.*

Our inspiration must inform and drive our application. Knowledge brings success when it is intelligently and passionately applied.

Most importantly, do not be tempted to rush through any exercises shared in this book or to be put off by their simplicity. As with all things, reliable and repeated practice will yield great results *in time.*

This book is not about changing your life miraculously in seven days. A lifetime's worth of habits and conditioning cannot be overturned so easily. As I explain to my clients, changing how you think, how you feel, and how you move *is possible* but it requires real sustained effort. If you earnestly read and act upon the words written within this book, the Seven Master Moves will help you to:

- Manifest the success you desire.
- Perform with greater courage, belief and confidence.
- Move with greater motivation, skill and clarity.

Before you begin turning the pages of the second part of this book, however, know that creating success and mastering your own fate is exceptionally rewarding but it is hard work and no-one else can do the work for you. As Orison Swett Marden writes in *Pushing to the Front*, a classic book on personal success, “There is no open door to the temple of success. Everyone who enters makes his own door, which closes behind him to all others, not even permitting his own children to pass.”

Great effort enables Inspired Movers to move with greater power and influence than the rest. If you would like to move as they do, this book will help show you the way; but if you haven’t already done so, make the firm commitment to yourself that your journey towards success starts *here and now*.

There is only one way to know what is really possible in your life:

Discover your Ideal Way Forward and stride intelligently and courageously towards it until the success you desire is yours to enjoy.

Let’s begin.

¹ Hallowell, E.M., *Overloaded Circuits in HBR 10 Must Reads: On Managing Yourself*, Boston, Harvard Business Review Press, 2010, p69.

² Dennis, F., & Atyeo, D., *Muhammad Ali: The Glory Years*, New York, Hyperion, 2003, p14.

³ Ranadive, V & Maney, K., *The Two-Second Advantage*, London, Hodder, 2011, p3.

⁴ McGrath, C., New York Times Magazine, March 13, 1997.

⁵ Wilson, J., *Inverting the Pyramid – A History of Football Tactics*, London, Orion Books, 2008, p.345.

⁶ Hussey, A., *ZZ Top*, The Observer, April 4 2004

⁷ See Adair, J., *Effective Leadership Masterclass*, London, Pan Books, 2010 edition, p44-45

⁸ Fisher, L., *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi*, London, HarperCollins 1997.

Part One

⁹ See Adair, J., *Effective Leadership Masterclass*, London, Pan Books, 2010 edition, p44-45

¹⁰ Gladwell, M., *Outliers*, London, Penguin, p101.

¹¹ Stanislavski, K., *Building a Character*, London, Methuen Drama, 2008 (first published in Great Britain in 1950), p110.

¹² On article featured on the official ATP World Tour website, *Djokovic: "There's definitely a gap"*, May 5th 2013:

<http://www.atpworldtour.com/News/Tennis/2013/05/19/Madrid-Djokovic-Preview.aspx>

¹³ Gardner, H., *5 Minds for the Future*, Boston, Harvard Business Press, 2008.

¹⁴ Statistic on DNA quoted in *Harvard Business Review 10 Must Reads: On Strategy*, Boston, Harvard Business Review Press, 2011, p205