

Riding The Wheel Of Life

As I come back from an E0 Insignia and Quantum Leap conference in Park City, Utah, I carry with me some great experiences. This conference brings all the segregated forums together to have time to interact with each other and gain a personalized approach to the E0 experience. Insignia is for people with 7 years or more in E0, and Quantum Leap is for those with \$15-million or more in revenue. We get time with the large group as well as with our own forum, which includes a coach to take us through exercises.

Our coach, Phil Kristianson, incorporated some adjustments and tools worth sharing. One, the [Wheel of Life](#), allows you to look at the key areas of your life and rate them by how satisfied you are with that area. These include family, significant other, health, career, finances, relationships, spirituality, and adventure or fun. See the form here and print it out and try it for yourself.

When you fill this out, you see the areas where you are lacking fulfillment in life and where you are fulfilled. With that awareness and some introspection, you can create goals based around the areas you should be focusing on in order to better your life. If you go around the circle and find it to be up and down like a roller coaster, your life may not be as balanced as you may optimally like. Thus, an effort can be made to balance it out.

These types of exercises help us to understand one another in the forum. We get to know each other and our areas of strength or weakness, so we can share experiences and changes to help one another in those areas. This is a key aspect of forum: to get help and see if you are being real with where you are and how you are getting where you are going.

How balanced are the areas of your life? Do you have a peer or peer group helping you strive to improve?

Discovering Your X-Factor

I have been working on putting together some content for a breakout session I'll be doing at the [E0 Nerve Conference](#) in Atlanta next week. This content was created for Insignia and Quantum leap E0 programs to help Forums engage in more stimulating discussions around your businesses with the other business owners. I really enjoy these events, catching up, and sharing with my existing E0 friends and meeting new ones.



The topic has to do with discovering your X-Factor, which is not an easy task. Your X-Factor is a decision or strategy that solves an industry bottleneck and gives you 10 to 30 times the competitive advantage. This is something that is not visible to your customers. In fact, you don't want to share it with anyone outside your organization. Treat your X-Factor like your company's top secret magic ingredient, which will greatly increase your profitability compared to your competitors.

What are some of the industry bottlenecks? Bottlenecks can come from delivery, largest cost, innovation, process flow, customer retention, employee retention, selection, or people reduction. There are so many options, the ones listed and some

that may not be thought of right now. That's the beauty of it! Seize the opportunity to seek out and develop your X-Factor.

Now, what are a few examples of X-Factors? Outback Steakhouse created a compensation plan to retain restaurant managers (an industry bottleneck), keeping them for 5 years or longer when the average was around 6 months. AutoNation offered all the brands of the various cars to break the bottleneck of customers not returning four out of five times. Starbucks focused on higher prices, giving them unbelievable margins.

So, what process can you follow to help discover your X-Factor? This takes some analysis and digging. Sometimes, you discover it at the industry trade shows. Looking at all the breakouts, you will see the problems they are trying to solve, and that may be just the clue you need. You can brainstorm around these questions: What is the biggest cost in my industry? What are the people problems? Where is innovation not happening? And how do I keep my customers and employees happy? Once you think you have a handle on it, then ask yourself, "Why?" five times and watch the onion open up and reveal itself.

When you latch onto your X-Factor, you will be ready to jump on and ride the rocket, so be prepared to hang on. What are you doing to discover your X-Factor?

[Anti Herpes](#)

[The Power of Forum](#)

I just got back from a conference for E0 Injected Forums in

Sonoma, CA where I had a great time with my Forum mates sharing and learning together. It struck me that I talk about Forum a lot in my blog, but not everyone has had the opportunity to be in a forum or even understand what a Forum is, so let me tell you about the Forum experience.



My E0 Injected Forum biking through wineries in Sonoma, CA

I am in two Forums. One is a local [E0](#) Forum that I have been in since 99, which meets monthly. The other is a regional Forum made up of [E0](#) members from the South East who have been in [E0](#) for more than 7 years, and meets quarterly.

A Forum consists of anywhere between 6 and 12 people, usually staying in the 8-10 range. The purpose of Forum is to create an environment that is trusting and confidential, allowing a high level of sharing to take place. Members usually discuss issues they're experiencing, both personal and professional. The issues are presented and discussed in a very organized fashion. Time is allotted for an issue to be presented, followed by a period for questions, then ending with experience sharing by other members. The experience sharing is the most important part of Forum, as the key to helping someone comes from sharing what you have experienced, and letting them know what worked and what didn't work.



My East TN Forum Retreat in Atlanta, GA

Experience sharing should not be confused with giving advice. There are 2 important reasons why this time is called experience sharing: (1) people don't like to be told what to do, and by sharing your experience they are more likely to take that information and figure out how to apply it to their own situation, (2) if you take someone's advice on something and it doesn't work out, it's too easy to blame that person who advised you, thereby breaking the trust and respect between the members. I have found that this practice is better for all relationships, and wish I could do it all the time.

Confidentiality and trust are key in Forum, because without them, the level of sharing is not at its highest. Having the right Forum can be life changing and can allow for growth beyond comprehension in all areas of your life. It has done that for me, and sharing with all my [EO](#) friends around the world has given me perspective that has helped, changed and allowed me to grow in both small and large ways.

If you have been in a Fraternity or Sorority, you probably have experienced the closeness of a group of people similar to Forum. We take a yearly retreat to bond, get to know each other and to build trust. It has been said that you will talk about 95% of your life to most people. Forum is where you talk about the other 5%.

If you want to know how to set up a forum, how they're run, and all the details, read [Forum: The Secret Advantage of Successful Leaders](#) by long time forum trainer [Mo Fathelbab](#).

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SWOT your Way to Focus and Flow!

When you run a business, various opportunities often present themselves and persuade you to run off in different directions, pulling you away from your focus. This happens to me frequently, and I find it difficult to avoid being sucked down a path that sounds like the next great avenue for huge success.

Thankfully, my partners, [E0 Forum](#), or my team usually slap me back into reality. Taking a closer look at what you are doing can also help you discover if these opportunities are worthy or if the current focus is best.

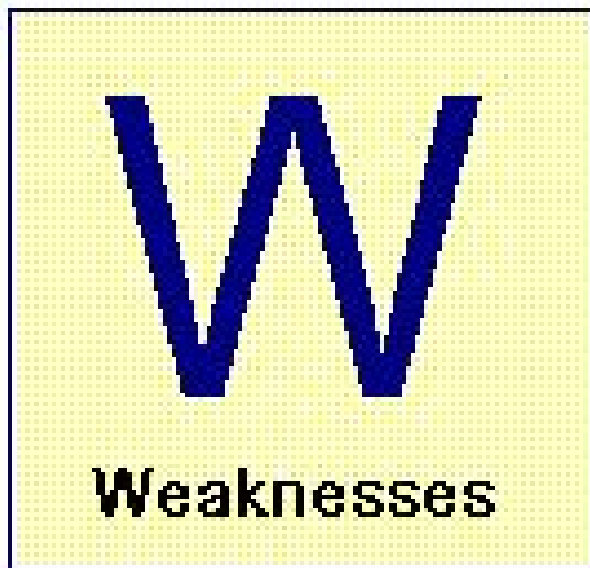
As my success coach [Steve D'Annunzio](#) asks: Where have the most profitable clients come from over the past 3 months? What is the common theme across those clients and what is it you are providing that makes the clients happy to pay you? What is the common size of these clients? What category are they generally from? What are their locations?

If the answers point towards the companies paying me the most profit, why would I not want to go get more of the same? Why would I not want to build on this synergy and find a way to get the most scalability possible by giving the clients what

they love while also getting paid at the most profitable level?

Steve tells me that when those things happen, you are in "FLOW." When it's right, you notice it in the areas of time, energy and currency because they will all be jamming together like a great jazz band or orchestra.

As we close in on the end of the year, many businesses are looking deeper at what they are doing and may be considering these same types of questions. Another beneficial exercise that can help to open your awareness to all the options is the basic Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats or [SWOT](#) analysis. We utilize this every quarter to challenge our business and ensure we are considering all possibilities and are not about to get eaten by something sitting around the corner waiting to pounce. Remember the [Software Monster](#).



We found that we spent too much time gathering data from all the participants for SWOT, leaving us little time to really dig into the data we had pulled out. To fix this, we built a tool that has helped us ramp this up before we start our planning meeting and has given us much more time to go deeper. This tool, called [MeetingHabits](#), can now be utilized for free, and it may stay that way as we study how it benefits us. We would also like hearing how it helps you if you would like to share your experiences.

As you work to focus more on bringing the most value to a core group of clients that will put you in the best FLOW, what are you doing to make sure your business is harmonizing the best tune?

Creativity... how do we get more?

Many people say they are happiest when they are creating. Maybe it's because we are made in the likeness of our creator and are doing what comes naturally. Just like an artist or musician, entrepreneurs are creating and bringing things to life, out into the world and the marketplace to solve problems.

I've spent the last few days in Asheville, NC on an [EO](#) Forum retreat with my long time Knoxville Forum. Asheville is known for its community of artistic people, and like artists and musicians, we like to be in places that stimulate us to create. Many of us know that being in environments like the islands or the mountains stimulate us to create, but do we know why?

One of the reasons is negative ions. These are invisible molecules that are generated in abundance around beaches, waterfalls, and mountain environments. What they do is stimulate the brain with higher oxygen and blood flow, which in turn can provide that boost that we may be looking to generate.



Our Forum went on a zip line tour called [Navitat](#) high up in the mountains. Over a 3 hour period we climbed, harnessed, zipped and repelled through the most picturesque mountain environment. Why do we do this? One reason is to get us out and experiencing new things that allow us to connect and bond, which opens us up to sharing at a deeper

level. Another reason is that new experiences create new awareness. New awareness can open the way for more synapse connections in the brain, once more stimulating new ideas and new ways of thinking.

E0 events and gatherings are about exposing people to places and thought processes that they have not experienced before. What we like to call once in a lifetime experiences. These past few days have been a creative stimulant for me.

I am constantly trying to open myself up to new things, experiences and environments that will encourage my own creativity. What are you doing that will open you up to discovering that next brak through solution or idea?