



THE THIRTEEN STEPS

The Thirteen Steps

- Step One:** Articulate Your Aims for Each Condition of Life™
- Step Two:** Evidence the State of Mind of an Ambitious Adult and Prove Fitness
- Step Three:** Demonstrate Accurate Thinking in General Knowledge
- Step Four:** Demonstrate Accurate Thinking in Specialized Knowledge
- Step Five:** Identify Personality and Behaving Transactionally™
- Step Six:** Articulate Solutions to a Substantial Breakdown in a Specific Ecology
- Step Seven:** Specify Your Customer
- Step Eight:** Invent the Transaction
- Step Nine:** Apply Levers of Influence
- Step Ten:** Apply Concentration and Focus
- Step Eleven:** Build and Expand Influence Ecologies and Cooperation
- Step Twelve:** Study the Environment and The Current™
- Step Thirteen:** Plan for Inquiry and Reinvention

Why Thirteen Steps?

If you can't say it—you can't do it.

In order to reach your goals and aims in life, you must first articulate a pathway to achieving them.

At Influential U, we offer The Thirteen Steps as a framework for considering all of the unique transactions that face you each day. These steps are constitutive elements needed to effectively think through the action required to build a business or life plan that can help you reach your chief aims.

Begin with what you know. Because transactions ultimately succumb to obsolescence, they must evolve to stay relevant in the current marketplace. They must address the concerns and breakdowns that evolve as the marketplace changes.

While these steps are defined in great detail in our Fundamentals of Transaction Program, here is a preliminary definition of what is addressed in each.

Step One: Articulate Your Aims for Each Condition of Life

There are 15 unavoidable Conditions of Life™ that every human being must satisfy. These are unavoidable because we are social, linguistic critters and require meaning and one another for our very survival. The main ones that most people focus on are Health, Career, and Money. If you'd like to know what the rest of the Conditions of Life are, visit the resource area of our website.

For example with the Condition of Life Money, let's say you aim to produce \$5M by the age of 65.

Step Two: Evidence the State of Mind of an Ambitious Adult and Prove Fitness

Keeping with the aim to produce \$5M by the age of 65. Perhaps you've got some ideas about how to build this resource (or maybe you don't just yet). Are you fit to produce this income? How do you know? Do you have the ambition to accomplish this? If you do, will other conditions suffer? These are not simple questions to answer.

You'll need to think accurately about each of the Conditions of Life; otherwise, you are likely to produce struggle and imbalance.

Step Three: Demonstrate Accurate Thinking in General Knowledge

You are an offer of help that you exchange with the market to produce a living. So, to increase the value of your offer of help, first think about the general knowledge you must demonstrate to those you need to say "yes" to your offers to build the capital you require.

Consider the jargon and unique acronyms that are commonly used in certain fields. An outsider may have no idea what they mean, but someone who has the general knowledge of the field would be able to communicate. Think of general knowledge as the baseline of knowledge required to gain entry into a field or profession.

Step Four: Demonstrate Accurate Thinking in Specialized Knowledge

Next, think about the specialized knowledge you must demonstrate to those you need to say "yes" to your offers to build the capital you require. Specialization is smart transacting. Specialized knowledge is more valued than general knowledge. As you'll want to increase the value of your offer, focus and concentrate (see Step Ten) your specialization wherever you can. For example, there's going to be a dramatic difference in the cost of guitar lessons coming from a local music teacher (general knowledge) vs an influential and well-known guitarists like Eric Clapton (specialized knowledge).

Step Five: Identify Personality and Behaving Transactionally

We all know people who are naturally extroverted and others who are introverted. We are aware of people who are creative by nature and others who are more analytical. So how do these varied “types” apply to these steps?

Throughout most of human history, it has been posited that human beings generally fall into one of four basic personality or behavioral types or temperaments. The earliest record of this was written in 400 BC by Hippocrates, who noted four basic temperaments of human behavior.

The four personalities that we teach at Influential U are Inventor (future), Performer (relationship), Producer (doer), and Judge (protector). Each personality has a different job to do, and each role is necessary for the collective group to thrive. For some general examples, Performers, who are good at relationships, typically thrive in sales roles, and Judges, who are oriented to protect and secure, do well in finance and legal. Visit our website to take our personality quiz and learn your transactional superpower.

Step Six: Articulate Solutions to a Substantial Breakdown in a Specific Ecology

Your offer of help is a solution to a problem, but for whom? If your answer is everybody, you have a problem. This step is about clarifying your value proposition. If you miss any of these three elements, you'll be working harder than you need to.

Solution = your specialized offer of help

Substantial Breakdown = pain-points in multiple Conditions of Life

Specific Ecology = a demographic of people who share similar breakdowns you can access at a low cost

Step Seven: Specify Your Customer

Specifically, who should you target for your offers? What are their names? What can you find out about them?

Creating a valuable offer in the marketplace requires that you know who ARE and ARE NOT your customers. Stop wasting your precious time talking to customers, colleagues, and markets that aren't a fit for your specific offer of help.

Consider an example like Lululemon. Its main target market is young woman, between 15 and 34 years old, in the middle to upper classes. They're not trying to be yoga pants for everyone.

Step Eight: Invent the Transaction

Can you draw a transaction? If you're like most people, you'll think of a point-of-sale moment where one person is exchanging money for goods or services. However, all transactions begin well before this. How do we get people sympathetic to our offer before they even experience it? Where does the transaction really begin?

There are eight exchanges in a continuous cycle and it is likely you are only attending to half of them (or less). Transactional Competence™ is knowing these eight exchanges like the back of your hand. This competence is critical for those with lofty aims who know they influence every exchange. Visit our website to view all eight exchanges of the Transaction Cycle.

Step Nine: Apply Levers of Influence

Knowing each of the eight exchanges isn't enough. You now need to apply one or more of the 7 levers of influence at each exchange. Levers of Influence is a term coined by Robert B Cialdini Ph.D. in the book *Influence, New and Expanded: The Psychology of Persuasion*, the foundational and wildly popular go-to resource for influence and persuasion.

The levers of influence are:

- Reciprocity
- Commitment and Consistency
- Social Proof
- Authority
- Liking
- Scarcity
- Unity

One might use the Principle of Social Proof by including testimonials and case studies of clients in their offer. If you see a limited time offer or only a few spots left, then that'd be an example of the Principle Scarcity.

Step Ten: Apply Concentration and Focus

Once your transaction(s) is fully built, you must now do the work to focus and clarify. Validate and modify your assumptions through action. Concentrate your attention and activity by removing all the diluting elements. Make your offer of help specific, specialized, and unmistakable for your customer.

For example, a digital marketing agency may start out offering a wide range of services, but then realize over time that they get the best return and can offer the most value by focussing just on web design projects. Based on that feedback, the agency may only offer web design services because the others services were diluting their offer and diminishing how they're seen in the marketplace.

Step Eleven: Build and Expand Influence Ecologies and Cooperation

Influence Ecology is an abstract concept for our reciprocal, co-constitutive organism/environment relationship: We are organisms within the environments we influence and are, in turn, influenced by the environments we cannot escape. This is the very meaning of ecology.

Our ability to survive (and thrive) has always depended—and will continue to depend—on our competence to transact within the environments we occupy, build, or maintain. Social ecologies have an enormous impact on individuals and influence the results they can achieve. Some forward our aims and others are limiting.

Our members often compare the study we provide to the discourse and discipline of competitive athletics, whereby an Olympic hopeful purposely immerses him-or herself in a group of highly skilled and ambitious peers. They know the influence, ideas, and practices of the Olympic ecology will help nurture them to elite performance.

Human beings are social animals, and we WILL succeed or fail depending on the social ecologies we occupy, build, or maintain.

For you and your offers to thrive, place yourself in the ecologies and environments that will help you succeed.

Step Twelve: Study the Environment and The Current

The Global Financial Crisis of 2008 or the 2020 Covid-19 Pandemic was an environment no one saw coming ... well, almost no one. If you study the environment around you, you'll find clues to what might be headed your way. Imagine building your \$5M nest egg only to find it swept away by unforeseen circumstances. While no one has a crystal ball, you can observe the clues.

Go stand in front of a large shelf of magazines at a newsstand. Read all the headlines and ask yourself, what are the predominant narratives being sold here? If you do this often enough, you find these narratives are like waves on the shore; the tide comes in and the tide goes out. The Current can sweep you away if you don't see it as a narrative being sold.

Step Thirteen: Plan for Inquiry and Reinvention

If you don't plan for your own obsolescence, someone else will. The final and most important step is to plan for continuous inquiry and reinvention of your offer of help.

Consider the taxi service vs. Uber. The same service, yet each aspect of the transaction has been reinvented to remove the friction for all parties at each exchange.

Where value is concerned, unless you're working to increase the value of your help, be certain the value is decreasing.

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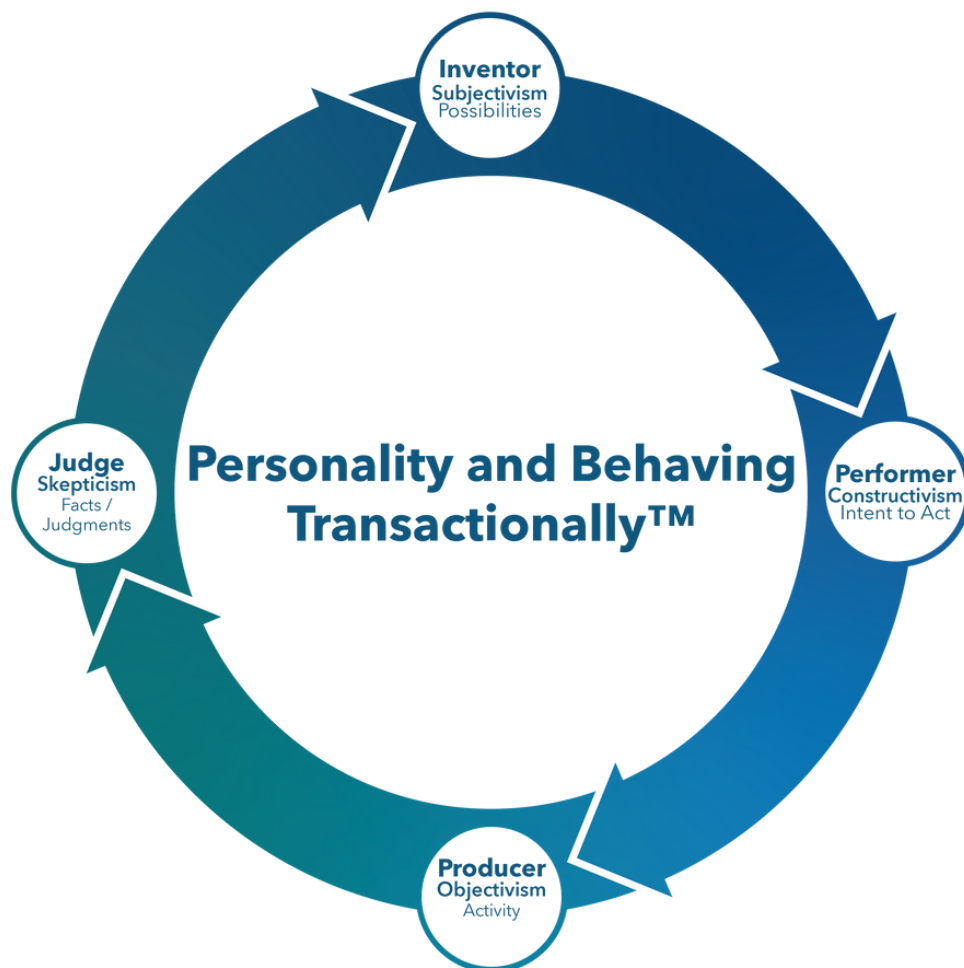
Exercise

Which exchange is your superpower?

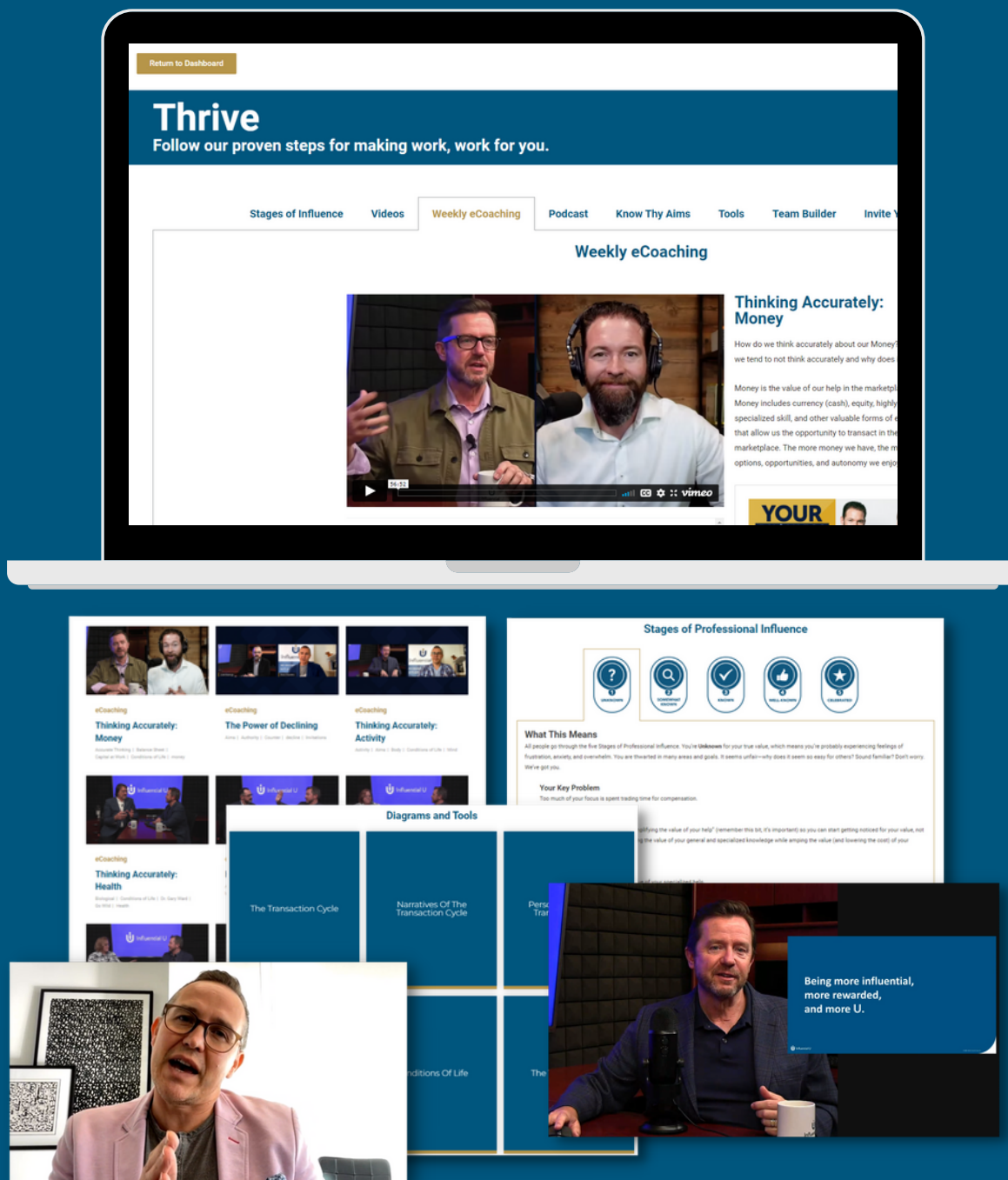
(and which are your kryptonite?)



What is your superpower?



Thrive: Self-Guided Training



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