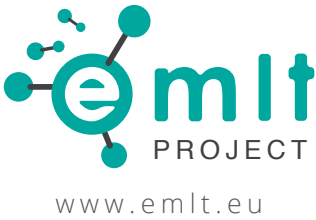


# DEVELOPING SELF-AWARENESS IN BUSINESS



MAY, 2016



# DEVELOPING SELF-AWARENESS IN BUSINESS

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## PREFACE

Dear Reader,

Socrates said: 'Know thyself', and Shakespeare said: 'To thine own self be true'. We propose in this module a rather broad and diversified approach, but also an in-depth view of the concept of self-awareness. Self-awareness presents an individual with an avenue to have an understanding not only of other objects, but also of their emotional position, and to conceptualize their thought process so that they can easily determine how to effectively handle events that arise in their lives. In this section, we are all about the discernment, registering and thinking of self. We present you with a mirror through which you can evaluate the extent of your own knowledge and abilities. In the words of Tristan Wilds, "Sometimes I wish that I could go into a time machine right now and just look at myself and say, 'Calm down. Things are gonna be fine. Things are gonna be all great. Just relax'." This is what we offer. The Machine. 'To what end' or 'Why do I need the machine?' you may ask. Well, being in charge of your thoughts and emotions and having somewhat a rough measure of your abilities gives you the self-confidence you need to sail through your days which in turn rewards you with improved output.

Through this module, learners will be able to familiarize themselves with the different themes of self-awareness. We take you through the self-awareness improvement steps and then proffer you with ICT options as resources in personal development. In conclusion, we present the relevance of self-awareness in business life with the amazing story of Gary Vaynerchuk, and that is just where the realization begins...

As you read this module, we would like you to make your own self-evaluation, taking into consideration your strengths and weaknesses and focus on your aspirations and career goals. Learn from Gary Vaynerchuk!

AYMAR BERENGER ISMAEL NANA

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# TABLE OF CONTENT

*Click to the titles for navigate to related page.*

1

## **Self Awareness: Understanding the Concept**

pages 5 - 8

by MERAL GUVEN

2

## **The Impact of Self-awareness on Your Career Map**

pages 9 - 13

by BUKET KIP KAYABAS

3

## **The Usage of Information and Communication Technologies**

pages 14 - 19

by UMIT KAPTI

4

## **Importance of self-awareness in Business life**

pages 20 - 23

by SELIME GOC, AYMAR BERENGER ISMAEL NANA

○

## **References**

pages 24 - 25



# Self Awareness: Understanding the Concept

## 1

### WRITER



**MERAL GUVEN**



### CHAPTERS

*Click to the titles for navigate to related content.*

- 01. Self-Awareness
- 02. The Importance of Self-Awareness in Personal Development Process

# SELF-AWARENESS

Self awareness simply refers to one's recognition of their own thoughts and beliefs, planning ahead for anticipated activities, organizing thoughts about this planning and evaluating the coherence of the results and the thought process. Self-awareness is individual's knowledge of his or her own cognitive system, structure and working style. In other words, it is the knowledge of the cognitive style and learning characteristics of self. According to Louca (2003), if the cognitive awareness is to comprise knowledge, perception, understanding and memory, then self awareness should include perceiving, understanding, remembering and thinking of self. And Flavell (1978) uses the concept of self-awareness as the uppermost concept (Louca, 2003).

Flavell (1979) defines self-awareness as one's monitoring of all their own conscious affective and cognitive experiences that accompany intellectual growth. Flavell (1979) also explains it as the knowledge of oneself, their work, and strategy. Paris and Winograd (1990) describe self-awareness concept as encompassing two basic traits; first being the cognition managing itself and second being cognition appraising itself. Self-appraisal is one's monitoring and reviewing himself or herself and their personal reflection on their own knowledge level and abilities (Louca, 2003). These are effective as they are about knowledge, abilities, motivation and characteristics of learners. In brief, Self-awareness is the process of one's serious reviewing of his or her own characteristics and answering the questions like "Who am I?" and "Why do I do things the way I do now?"



## QUESTION #1

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Does reading the above definitions of self awareness bring you to your own understanding of self awareness? What definition would you give for self awareness? What are the benefits of self-awareness for the individual?

 Check Yourself

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Self-awareness is about understanding the self. It can occur by understanding who you really are and why you are doing things the way you do. One's appraisal of his or her qualities, emotions, proficiencies and human interaction and work related abilities helps raise awareness of their personal abilities and help them make right choices to meet needs and interests. Self-appraisal and self-awareness raise individuals' sense of responsibility and self-confidence and helps them to succeed in the learning and personal development processes. Self-awareness is a common trait among successful people who triumphed at their professions. Efforts to become self-aware guide individuals to develop right skills for their works and studies throughout their professional life.

(<http://uzem.kutuphaneturkiye.org.tr/course/view.php?id=41>)

The tale of the lion and the gazelle derived from an African proverb is a fitting example of individuals'



self-awareness skills as shown in the following link:  
([https://tr.wikiquote.org/wiki/Afrika\\_atas%C3%B6zleri](https://tr.wikiquote.org/wiki/Afrika_atas%C3%B6zleri))

“Every morning in Africa, a gazelle wakes up, only one thing in its mind. It knows it must outrun the fastest lion or it will be killed. Every morning in Africa, a lion wakes up. It knows it must run faster than the slowest gazelle, or it will starve. It doesn't matter whether you're the lion or a gazelle-when the sun comes up, you'd better be running, running faster than the day before. ”

Just like in the tale, it is of utmost importance that individuals be aware of their characteristics and qualities and take action for continuous development.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-AWARENESS IN PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

One of the keys to success in personal development is self-awareness. The more individuals strive to understand themselves, the faster and stronger their rate of progress will be. In life, like in sports, being able to know where and how to act like a professional, controlling all your emotions when needed and determining your strengths and weaknesses, thereby taking appropriate measures are among the required skills in this process. The individuals who have self awareness skills differ from others in:

- » Awareness of personal skills
- » Ability to make fitting choices to personal needs and interests
- » Sense of responsibility and self confidence levels
- » Support to individual growth and learning
- » Guidance to develop the right skills
- » Increase in the quality of work

If we can use the abilities and skills we have in their full sense and make them better than the previous day, our probability to become successful in life goes up. Similarly, when we are able to identify our weaknesses, manage them so that they do not have unfavorable effects on us and take measures, they can only cause tiny problems. These processes will improve the quality of not only the service of our workplace but also our own lives.

Via the web address below, you can access the information about how to raise self-awareness

Further reading: <https://hbr.org/2015/02/5-ways-to-become-more-self-aware>



## QUESTION #2

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What kind of tools can be used to evaluate self-awareness?

Check Yourself

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In strategic planning process, an individual analyzes his or her strengths first, then weaknesses, opportunities and lastly threats. This analysis is commonly called SWOT analysis as the acronym bears.

Johari Window is composed of four window sashes representing our personality. These four sashes are also called 'areas', 'rooms' or 'quarters'. As shown in the figure, each one of these sashes indicates things you know and do not know about yourself and things that other people know and do not know about you.

## CHECK YOURSELF



### ANSWER #1

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Self-awareness contributes greatly to individuals. Realization and utilization of abilities increases the chance of success. Awareness of weaknesses and taking precautions decreases the number of probable problems. The quality of individual and collective life improves.

Go Back



### ANSWER #2

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SWOT analysis and Johari Window are two techniques that may be utilized to help become better than the day before and they are used to provide self-awareness and support personal development.

(<http://uzem.kutuphaneturkiye.org.tr/course/view.php?id=41>).

Go Back





# The Impact of Self-awareness on Your Career Map

## 2

### WRITER



**BUKET KIP KAYABAS**



### CHAPTERS

*Click to the titles for navigate to related content.*

[01. Introduction](#)

[02. Increasing Self-awareness](#)

# INTRODUCTION

What is self-awareness? We don't talk about it commonly but it is very important for our daily life. Actually, self-awareness is about understanding our needs, habits, faults, wishes, bugs, ..., in short, understanding everything about ourselves. The more we know about ourselves, the better we can adapt to changes in our life according to our needs and desires.

The first step is that we should have a knowledge about our emotions and habits. After knowing ourselves, we should try to improve our capabilities. So, how can we cultivate and develop our self-awareness. In this unit, we will give you some tips for developing your self-awareness attitude.

## INCREASING SELF-AWARENESS

If you know yourself and your capabilities well enough, you will be able to do what you want and fix all your problems. It is very easy, logically, but not very simple to do. How can we know ourselves? Knowing yourself completely is very difficult and it is also impossible to solve every problem in your life. As we said before, the more you have knowledge about yourself, the more you can improve yourself.

How does it work? In this point, we will give you some suggestions about how to have a knowledge about yourself.

*The main purpose of increasing self-awareness is to increase self-improvement.*



### QUESTION #1

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Which of the following is the main purpose of self-awareness?

- A. To increase self-improvement
- B. To have a leisure activity
- C. To have a good cv
- D. To impress other people
- E. To get more friends

 Check Yourself

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# Tips for improving Self-awareness

## Write your own diary

The first step of increasing self-awareness is talking with yourself. You should spare some time daily to think and write your opinions, desires, failings, whatever you live. You should track your progress. A diary is a good option to track yourself. Diary contents are historical records that help you assess whether or not future outcomes can be attributable. Writing your own diary also mirror the mood of the moment. When you return and review it at a later date, the collection of writing can help you to understand the range of emotions you have experienced.

If you write your life daily, you can see your own strengths and weaknesses.



### QUESTION #2

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"..... is a good option to track yourself and historical records that help you assess whether or not future outcomes can be attributable."

Which of the following is appropriate for the blank?

- A. Job
- B. Diary
- C. Exam
- D. School
- E. Book

 [Check Yourself](#)

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## Assess yourself objectively

You should try to perform self review. The self review is one of the useful activity to get self-awareness. Instead of spending your time thinking about what to do to improve yourself, consider to think about what your boss and your colleagues might think. By this way, you can see yourself from someone else's perspective and gain a little extra insight into yourself.

Saying "asses yourself" is very simple but doing it is nearly impossible. But if you want to improve your self-awareness, you must criticise your decisions. And also the other useful way is talking with a confidential friend and ask your friend to criticise you.

## Track your senses

Before taking an important decision always ask yourself why do I choose this way? Why do I avoid doing

certain things? What do I want and not want? Am I happy, tired, sad or under stress? Always be aware about your feelings and selection.

On the other hand you should be aware of your potential. If you limit yourself about what you are doing and say "I can't do that", you never will be able to do it. Trust yourself and try to do it. Everybody is capable of a lot more than they realise. Be sure of yourself and go ahead.

With high levels of self-awareness, we can build better relationships with other people and we can find a right direction in our life. In this unit, we try to give you some suggestions about how to get and improve your self-awareness. Remember that having a happy and successful career the first step is improving self-awareness.

*When we have high levels of self-awareness, we will be able to find right direction of our route and we can get better relationship in the society.*



### QUESTION #3

---

Which of the following(s) can be suggestion(s) to raise your self-awareness?

- I. Write your diary
- II. Assess yourself objectively
- III. Track your senses

- A. Only I
- B. Only II
- C. I-II
- D. I-III
- E. I-II-III

 Check Yourself

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# CHECK YOURSELF



## ANSWER #1

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The correct answer is A. The main purpose of to increase self-awareness is to increase self-improvement.

[Go Back](#)



## ANSWER #2

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The correct answer is B. A diary is a good option to track yourself. Diary contents are historical records that help you assess whether or not future outcomes can be attributable.

[Go Back](#)



## ANSWER #3

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The correct answer is E. Writing your diary, Assessing yourself objectively and Tracking your senses can raise your self-awareness.

[Go Back](#)

# The Usage of Information and Communication Technologies

## 3

### WRITER



UMIT KAPTI



### CHAPTERS

*Click to the titles for navigate to related content.*

- 01. The Usage of Information and Communication Technologies
- 02. Internet and Smart Phone Number in the World
- 03. Does ICT facilitates Increased Self-Awareness?
- 04. Benefits of Effective Social Media Recruiting



# THE USAGE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

Education in the 21st century is a very important factor for the personal and economic success. Without education it is no longer possible to achieve something. It is very important to make good use of Information and Communication Technologies for access to information. Mobile media is very important here. We reach a lot of information thanks to mobile communication devices now. Information is shared very fast and simultaneously via this technology. In this century any kind of information is conveyed via mobile communication devices. And all related social and business communication are carried out through these technologies.

We can immediately reach a lot of information through smartphones and social accounts. See people who do not have a smartphone around you in the recent times.

The most striking finding according to a survey conducted in 2016 is that mobile users in Turkey check their screens an average of 70 times a day. This corresponds to about 1 in every 15 minutes awake during the time that overlooks the thick screen of a mobile phone in every 15 minutes. This shows what people are dependent on them (<http://bilallevent.com/turkiyede-mobil-cihaz-kullanimi.html>).

Although the main purpose of internet provides information, nevertheless people prefer using the internet due to different reasons in the recent times. Foremost among them, there are social networks, allowing people to communicate with their friends and their loved ones. Even if the social media generally covers many info, photos and videos which are available on the internet, it includes mostly social networks which people are in communication.

According to a survey 80% of young people visit social networks every day or several times a week. These social networks are WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Google+, Twitter, Tumblr, Pinterest, etc. They belong to web 2.0 generation. Internet user not only obtain available information, but they also develop the content of web pages, by using text, images or videos.

## **The benefits of social media that can be obtained by the use of this technology:**

- » Dozens of new job descriptions such as social media specialist, content manager, community manager have been created and provided employment to thousands of people by means of social media.
- » A new dimension has been introduced into the instantaneous flow of information, we can be aware of any new development much faster. Now, even people who are closely interested in the stock market, follow Twitter contrary to televisions.
- » Social media removes the boundaries between layers. When a power outage becomes, now an individual can hear the voice, by tweeting relevant ministers. Maybe you can be friends with people you cannot meet all your life. Here, let's not forget that young people have an average of 300 friends. In real life, most people probably are not friends with 300 people.
- » People are now more free thanks to social media. The phenomenon called social engineering can-



not enter into social media. In the past we could get the information of limited resources but now information is unlimited.

- » People are now more free thanks to social media. Now everyone can express their ideas without fear from others. This engrains in respecting each other's ideas, even if people in our society disagree.
- » Social media facilitates communication and has increased. The event is now much more than just meeting your school friends again after years. The companies of which partners are in different cities and countries, began to be established and these companies can operate much more intense than the companies governed by conventional system.
- » Now social media is essential for every Human Resources Specialist beyond sharing just funny photos. While job seekers are trying to get a job in social media channels such as LinkedIn, HR Professionals are trying to find staffs for vacancies via social media.
- » The structure called Customer Relationship Management changes gradually into Social Customer Relationship Management. By means of a single tweet, now you can easily solve a problem which you try to solve for weeks.
- » With the intensive use of social media, social movements were carried out more easily. Social responsibility and social media have become like two peas in a pod. Tens of thousands of people donated blood only with the announcement made on social media. The civil society organizations established and organized on social media have emerged.

## INTERNET AND SMART PHONE NUMBER IN THE WORLD

To see the effect of the increase of our daily usage by region worldwide, we can benefit from a table of the number of people with internet access.

References: Internet: <http://www.statista.com/>

We see the distribution of Internet users in the world by region from the table. Accordingly, 823 million in East Asia, 341 million in Western Europe, 324 million in South Asia, 313 million in North America, 298 million in Africa, 244 million in Eastern Europe, 231 million in South America, 208 million in East Asia and 90 million in Central America and other regions use internet.

Let's look at a number of smartphones to find out which vehicle is provided with internet access at a later these figures.

It seems large increases in the number of smartphone consumers in recent years. Because of accessing easily to social media by using mobile communication devices, there is an opportunity to enter continuously social media.

With regard to this matter, please refer to the following table.

References: The table was prepared according to data in the page [statistica.com](http://www.statista.com)

We see the rise of smartphone numbers in this table and the number of users joining the Internet with mobile phones as a means of communication is rapidly increasing due to this data.

Our electronic logging habits by using social media and accessing internet show continuous increase. If

we think of how often sharing is made in social media, this situation is easily understood. Now let's use our other issues.

## DOES ICT FACILITATES INCREASED SELF-AWARENESS?

Keeping up on current events might be sometimes hard. If you think you don't have any time to read all the news nor to hear them, there is a simple solution. RSS readers may be your favorite. It is great for people who don't have a lot of time to read all the news. You have other options for keeping on the news without spending a lot of time. The most important thing is to find a daily summary you like. You can follow a few bulletin services that offer always up-to-date news summaries such as NPR's, BBC's or ABC's hourly bulletins. These are not the only options but they offer simple, news summaries to keep you up to date without spending time digging into it.

Other way to learn what's going on around the world is curating your social media feeds. Today, almost everybody is on social media. You can follow or be friends with anyone. This includes your role models, successful people in your field. Taking statistics into account, Twitter and Facebook may help you the best. Both of them are great sources for popular news, articles and trending topics. On Twitter you can create a list to make it easier. You can also follow people who are always current and give useful information. Facebook doesn't have the same filtering ability as Facebook lists, but you can like news station, add people that share information.

### Blogs

You can follow blogs and you can write your own blog. Of course, you don't need a reason to use these technologies and write some content. But almost everyone has his or her own motivations. Why should you blog? One of your motivations would be passion. A blog is your digital content that belongs only to you. You can create some content in every field; share your current passion online. It is an entrepreneur's platform allowing you to write professionally, working with brands and advertisers to receive compensation for your creativity. A blog is a place where you distill the experiences, thoughts and ideas that you have learned during your education, career and life journey.

A successful career and life is basically about being on purpose. You need to discover and find your inspirations. As Stephen King states ' If you don't have time to read, you don't have the time (or tools) to write. Simple as that'. So here are 9 reasons why you should start blogging:

1. Blogs refine your thoughts
2. Blogs reward the creator
3. Blogs amplify your humanity

4. Blogs connect us to our tribes
5. Blogs give introverts a voice
6. Blogs reward the new age publishers
7. Blogs embrace the experimenters
8. Blogs accelerate discovery
9. Blogs open up a world without borders

Blogs are useful when you are still student or graduate. You can always blog or follow bloggers.

## LinkedIn

Social media is another key to open many doors. Some people think that social media is only a waste of time. Instead of wasting your time on social media, you can use as a tool when you look for a job, try to boost your skills. The most obvious way for social media to help you is creating a visible resume on LinkedIn. This is not the only social network that can help you get a job, but it is pretty popular and simple. You can create a resume and develop it in years. You can follow the leaders in your field. On social media, curating content is also important and Pinterest and Twitter are ideal for this. Social networking is a two-way street. Same as LinkedIn, you can follow the experts in your field and even get their attention with your contents. You can use social networks to search for a job. Building networks are easy on social media, and remember these networks share some job announcements more than the others.

Some say the first and the last thing Generation Y sees is their mobile. You have a huge possibility in your palm, so why not to use it as a key to your career? With this purpose in mind, you can make some research about career boosting tools and blogs. Find your favorites and make Twitter and Facebook lists

## Twitter

Twitter is used by entrepreneurs and small business persons to brand themselves and sell products and services. Individuals for job searchers/career development also use it. Firstly, you should start to follow well known in your or other related industries to get some useful information on your timeline. You can use Twitter as a lead generation tool by searching some key words. It is not surprising to learn that some even use Twitter as a search engine. Remember executive recruiters or hiring managers may put out a tweet using the hashtag to indicate specific job openings. You can also tweet with a hashtag to brand yourself. You can also check Trending Topics (TT) to be up to date. Tweet about industry trends, events, news items or link to your own articles, presentations, blogs, podcasts or YouTube videos to become known as an industry thought leader.

Social media is not just for fun or not just social anymore. It is important to not underestimate the power of social media. Emphasize your strengths and abilities using branding techniques and social media.

# BENEFITS OF EFFECTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA RECRUITING

Social media is really effective recruitment tool if you are sure about your intention and profiles on social media platforms. What kind of benefits it provides? Let's see 12 of them to have a better perspective:

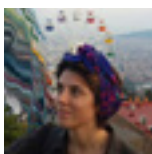
1. Better candidate quality: candidates who frequently use social networks are not only tech-savvy, but they can keep up with the trend toward social media.
2. Better ROI: The money value of the program's benefits may far exceed its cost, and the resulting ROI may be significantly higher than other recruiting programs.
3. Shorter time-to-hire: social media allows for immediate response across multiple channels, so you can fill positions faster, lowering time-to-hire.
4. A wider, more diverse pool of talent: social networking could help you get in front of candidates whom you may never find – or who may never find you – using other methods.
5. Stronger employer brand: Using social networks increases your visibility among job seekers and enables you multiple platforms on which to communicate information about your company culture and the benefits of working for your organization.
6. Stronger college impact: because of the high social network users among college students, it may directly impact the number and the quality of college hire and entry-level candidates.
7. Higher response rates: because there is less spam and in most cases you must be invited before you can send a message, using social networks to communicate can result in better response rates when you send messages to prospects and candidates.
8. More impactful messaging: messages sent over social media channels are often perceived as more authentic or credible than traditional corporate mechanisms. The low cost of sending messages over social networks also enables you to increase the number of messages you send.
9. Lower dropout rates: the relationships you've established with your friends in order to maintain them as part of your social network may lower the candidate dropout rate.
10. Competitive advantage: using social networks gives your organization a competitive advantage over other talent competitors who aren't using the space.
11. Better candidate screening: recent studies show that 45 percent of hiring managers have used social networking sites to research job candidates' background.
12. Increased employee productivity: social technologies can build closer links among employees, and potential customers, boosting productivity, innovation and creating a more democratic working environment.



# Importance of self-awareness in Business life

## 4

### WRITER



**SELIME GOC**



**AYMAR BERENGER**  
**ISMAEL NANA**

### CHAPTERS

*Click to the titles for navigate to related content.*

01. Self-awareness: Essential Tool for Successful Leadership
02. Example of self-awareness from business life: Gary Vaynerchuk



# SELF-AWARENESS: ESSENTIAL TOOL FOR SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP

Self-awareness is crucial to leadership in the sense that it will allow you to understand how you come across in professional settings and how other people perceive you and the impact this may have on your ability to achieve your goals. Learn how to direct your mind, emotions, body posturing and expressions to gain greater credibility and esteem within the professional arena.

Self-aware leaders make great efforts to learn from their mistakes. They manage to understand their strengths, weaknesses and the impact they have on others; and above all they learn to optimize their strengths and work on their weaknesses.

It is also known that self-awareness is a big part of both therapy and philosophy. Self-awareness is considered as the basis of the quantified self movement, as meaning that if you are collecting data about yourself, you can make improvements based on that data.

Goleman states: "Emotional intelligence- the ability to manage ourselves and our relationships effectively- consists of four fundamental capabilities: **self-awareness**, self-management, social awareness, and social skills."

Research carried out by the Korn Ferry Institute in 2013 found that, "companies with higher rates of return on stock also have employees with few personal blind spots," in other words they evidenced a correlation between self-awareness in leaders and overall financial performance.

It is more easy for people who developed self-awareness to set meaningful goals and focus on the steps required to achieve that goal. And those people who developed that, are deeply mindful of the repercussions of their interrelationships with co-workers and systems in the organisation.

As a business leader, it is really important to cultivate self-awareness and become a more effective leader. Here are 5 Steps for cultivating Self-Awareness.

- 1. Seek feedback.** It's crucial for leaders to gain insight into how they are perceived. Ask your colleagues to participate in 360-degree feedback – subordinates, peers, and supervisors provide anonymous opinions on your strengths and areas in need of improvement. You can also use less formal channels to solicit feedback: ask the people you work with for feedback after you've completed specific projects. Remember to ask direct questions, listen attentively, and don't justify or defend your actions. Asking for feedback creates an overall sense of accountability in the organization and encourages a practice of honest communication.
- 2. Utilize tools for understanding yourself.** Leaders can use the Myers-Briggs and Big Five personality tests as instruments for assessing their strengths and weaknesses. While the tests won't provide an exhaustive description of an individual's personality, they can be effective tools for recognizing

how you interact with other people, what motivates your decision-making, and how you approach problems. For example, if a leader recognizes that they place a high value on thoroughness and have just been tasked with managing a group of 500+ people, they can anticipate their inclination to interact with individuals on a one-on-one basis, even when it won't be feasible in the given situation.

- 3. Create tangible tools for self-reflection.** Many successful CEO's, including Warren Buffett, record important investment decisions and reflect upon them later. Create a habit of writing down key decisions and the motivations that influenced those decisions. After six months to a year, re-examine those decisions and the ways in which your assumptions were accurate or misguided (this can be undertaken privately or formally with a CEO or the board of directors). This process avoids the trap of revising history after the fact, and helps the entire organization hone its decision-making process.
- 4. Admit mistakes.** It might sound like a cliché, but effective leaders know that admitting to a mistake is a sign of strength, not weakness. It damages your credibility most when you ignore mistakes or allow blame to fall on someone else's shoulders. Taking responsibility for your actions and apologizing when you've made a mistake demonstrates the value you place on openness and accountability – attributes that are also essential for effective employees.
- 5. Be aware of others.** Great leaders use the same tools of self-awareness to cultivate an understanding of the people they work with. Through understanding different personality attributes, you can better manage communication styles and the different ways people approach projects and deadlines. In addition, strong teams are composed of different personality types with different skill sets. By creating a team of people with diverse and complementary skills all working to achieve the same project goals, you encourage employees to better understand themselves and others. In doing so, you help create an organization that is flexible, open to change, innovated, and self-aware.

## EXAMPLE OF SELF-AWARENESS FROM BUSINESS LIFE: GARY VAYNERCHUK

In the mid 1990s, Gary began working with his father Sasha who runs a liquor store, called Shopper's Discount Liquor, in the city of Springfield, New Jersey. When taking the direction of the store, he renamed the store Wine Library, launched in 1997 and the associated e-commerce website to sell online its stock. The company passes a turnover of \$ 4 million per year in 1997 to \$ 60 million per year in 2008.

Gary Vaynerchuk is a four-time New York Times bestselling author, keynote speaker, angel investor, runs [Vaynermedia](#), and is looking to own the New York Jets one day. He believes self-awareness is a critical component to success.

"It's insane how much humility has been instilled into me by the market and has balanced my ego and self-esteem," Vaynerchuk writes in his book.

Below is an excerpt from his chapter on self-awareness:



## **What was the biggest decision in your life that made you successful today?**

It was the day I made the choice to suck at school.

Fourth grade. Mr. Mulnar's science class. I got an F on a science test. To make shit worse, I had to get it signed by my mom. To avoid being punished, I hid it under my bed, where it sat for two days until my conscience got the better of me and I showed it to my mother.

Until that moment, though, I was in hell. I distinctly remember sitting in my small bedroom, crying and trying to make sense of why I was having such an intense reaction to this test. And then it hit me, the thought that changed everything:

"Screw school. I'm a businessman."

I made the conscious decision to eat the pain four times a year when report cards came, to eat the pain of failing pretty much daily. Who cared if everyone thought I was a "loser," a kid without a shot? I knew better. I saw something different. Even at that young age, I was self-aware enough to realize what I was born to do.

It is not that I did not care. I went to every class. I was respectful to my teachers. I just decided that I would be better off honing my skills and concentrating on what made me happy and what fulfilled me. I learned about selling baseball cards, which then became wine, which became [WineLibrary.com](http://WineLibrary.com) and VaynerMedia and everything that makes me so immensely proud.

That moment marked the first time that I decided to fight what society expected of me and deliver on what made me happy.

And you should, too. Bottom line: Stop doing things that make you unhappy. I have been preaching this since my first book came out, and long before that. Sure, it sucked to get those report cards every quarter, but sometimes you have to take a thousand punches before anything good happens. Not everyone will understand what you are doing, and the more you work, the more chances you have to be disappointed. Or even to be the disappointment. But don't let those moments fool you. An instance of failure could be a huge opportunity.

Pay attention. Learn to be self-aware. One F on a test got me started. Countless bad report cards got me going. And if I could go back, I would fail every single test all over again.

To follow Gary : <http://www.garyvaynerchuk.com/>

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