

## See—Do—Get—Reflect

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Would you like your life to be better? Stronger relationships? Greater success at work?

Let's examine a simple model borrowed from Roger and Rebecca Merrill and Stephen Covey in their 1994 book *First Things First* (pages 28-30).

Can you agree that the results you obtain are usually related to what you do?

Can you agree that what you do is usually based on how you see and understand your situation?

We can put those words in order to make a flow diagram showing simple cause and effect:

**See ⇒ Do ⇒ Get**

Suppose we analyze the results we're producing. Imagine that we're not pleased with the outcomes in one particular area. The obvious action step would be to change what we do, right?

Despite the clarity of the picture, sometimes people won't change. They just keep doing the same thing, hoping they'll somehow obtain a better result! When we see others stubbornly repeating unsuccessful behaviors, we easily recognize how foolish it is!

Oh, but if we're honest with ourselves, we have to admit that sometimes we do the same thing! It's just so much easier to see the folly in others!

Why do we humans repeat the same actions, hoping that the effects might be different next time? A big reason is that we haven't really changed the way we perceive the situation or process. **Seeing differently is often the key to obtaining better results!**

You know how three different people can observe the same accident, and give three different descriptions? We each "see" a given situation through many filters, such as our history, our habits and tendencies, our motives, and our preconceived beliefs about what is and what should be.

We don't recognize the effect of the filters, and we usually don't even realize the filters are there. It's like wearing dark glasses out in the sun. We forget the glasses are on our face until we walk inside, when the dark room reminds us that our vision is being filtered.

In the interest of obtaining better results, let's put one more step in our model. We make the model a loop, completing the circle by putting the word "reflect" in between "get" and "see." That is, we describe the repetitive sequence this way: **see—do—get—reflect—see—do—get—reflect**

What do I mean by "reflect"? How do we do that? We humans have the capacity to stand apart from ourselves and examine our results (what we get), our behaviors (what we do), and our perspectives (how we see the situation and our understanding of it). Yet doing so requires some deep thinking.

*First Things First* asserts, "If we want to create significant change in the results, we can't just change attitudes and behaviors, methods or techniques; we have to change the basic paradigms out of which they grow." Even with no problems, we can look for improvement possibilities.

By seeking other ways to understand our situations--perhaps considering different meaning--we can make alternative choices about our outlook, approaches, and techniques to improve our results.

This is where collaboration with a trusted colleague is very beneficial. You may be so locked into your current perspective that you are oblivious to what others clearly see. A peer or your boss may come to you with feedback, but don't count on it. If you don't initiate the challenge to your current practices, the opportunity for improvement may never manifest.