The Luck Factor

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Overview
‘I was just very lucky’ is a common response from many successful people. How much of this is true? Wiseman has spent 10 years conducting interviews and research on luck and lucky people and suggests an alternative way of looking at luck. He believes that a luck ‘factor’ exists and that you can use simple techniques to increase your luck confidence and success.

Part I : Initial Research

Chapter 1 – The power of luck
Wiseman suggests that luck has significant impact our lives. After years of hard work and effort, a simple incident can derail a plan and all that effort can be wasted. Something as simple as missing a train connection could lead to you missing a plane and so avoid being hijacked and flown into the twin towers in New York.

Luck also influences at a less dramatic level such as a lottery win or a simple unplanned event that leads to significant impact on a career or life. Additionally, accidents and chance events had guided explorers and scientists to amazing discoveries.

Wiseman therefore suggests that his investigations have revealed that outcomes may not be the chance events they seem to be and he set out to find the answers to the questions that his research into ‘luck’ has posed.

Chapter 2 – Lucky and unlucky lives
Having reviewed hundreds of lives Wiseman came up with 4 key differences between lucky and unlucky people:

- Luck people constantly encounter opportunities. They frequently meet people with a beneficial effect on their lives and careers. Unlucky people however, rarely have such meetings.

- Lucky people make good decisions without knowing why. They seem to have an instinct for trusting someone that is consistently beneficial. Unlucky people tend to make decisions that end I failure.

- Lucky people’s dreams have an uncanny knack of coming true. Unlucky people have dreams that largely do not come to fruition.
Lucky people have the ability to turn bad luck into good luck but for unlucky people bad luck seems to remain bad. These factors can be broken down into 12 sub principles that can help identify the factors that improve luck.

**Part II : The Four Principles of Luck**

**Chapter 3 – Principle 1: Maximize your chance Opportunities**

- **Lucky people build and maintain a strong ‘network of luck’.** By increasing the number of interactions that you make, you increase the chances of something lucky occurring. Additionally, luck is self-reinforcing. If you feel lucky then you look and behave in a fashion that makes you more open to lucky interactions.
- **Lucky people have a relaxed attitude to life.** Being relaxed will open you to the opportunities that you may otherwise miss.
- **Lucky people are open to new experience.** As well as being open to new experience, it helps if you go out and expose yourself to the opportunities that can give you a new experience.

**Chapter 4 – Principle 2: Listen to Your Lucky Hunches**

- **Lucky people listen to their gut feelings and hunches.** Your intuition plays an important role in providing guidance in many situations. Trusting it will help you identify people who will help you.
- **Lucky people boost their intuition.** You can build you intuition by assessing how well it has paid off and by learning the lessons from those events. Being calm and open to its messages is also helpful.

**Chapter 5 - Principle 3: Expect Good fortune**

- **Lucky people expect their luck to continue.** The power of expectation means that you are focusing on being lucking and what we focus on we tend to achieve.
- **Lucky people aim for their goals and persevere in the hard times.** Luck is a matter of preparation meeting opportunity.
- **Lucky people expect their interactions with others to be lucky and successful.** Having high expectations of a situation or interaction can often mean you are more open to achieving a beneficial or lucky outcome.

**Chapter 6 – Principle 4: Turn Your Bad Luck into Good**

- **Lucky people see the positive of their bad luck.** Having a positive contrast to set the bad luck against makes it easier to accept and to see where it may be an advantageous outcome.
Lucky people are convinced that any ill fortune will be for the best in the long run. Having a positive view on bad luck lets you see fate as lending a helping hand and giving you opportunities to achieve much more.

Lucky people do not dwell on their bad fortune. Letting go of the past and focusing on the future will let you remain open to the possibilities of that future rather than closing down your chance to see better alternatives.

Lucky people take steps to reduce the chances of bad luck in the future. By treating bad luck as purely feedback, lucky people learn from their bad luck and move on.

Part III: Creating Luckier Lives

Chapter 7 – Luck school

Wiseman believes that it is possible to train yourself to be lucky by following a set of simple exercises. These are presented in throughout the book and summarised in chapter 8.

Chapter 8 – Learning to be Lucky

Principle 1:
- Build and maintain a strong network of luck
- Develop a more relaxed attitude towards life
- Be open to new experiences

Principle 2:
- Listen to our gut feelings and hunches
- Take steps to boost your intuition

Principle 3:
- Expect good luck in the future
- Attempt to achieve your goals even in your chances of success are slim and persevere.
- Expect your interactions with others to be lucky and successful.

Principle 4:
- Look on the positive side of your bad luck.
- Remember that the ill fortune in your life may work out for the best.
- Do not dwell on your ill fortune.
- Take constructive steps to prevent more bad luck in the future.
Chapter 9 – Graduation Day

In this chapter Wiseman presents some case studies of people who have applied the techniques presented in this book and outlined their results.

Overall, Wiseman’s results seem to indicate that there are significant positive effects of using these techniques and mental attitudes. Each case study has differing results, but Wiseman’s assessment criteria all show significant improvements in the individual’s quality of life.

I believe that even if you don’t become luckier using these techniques, they are at least a better set of values and behaviours than those adopted by unlucky people so you would be at an advantage simply by adopting them.

Chapter 10 – Beyond The Luck Factor

Wiseman’s research continues and this chapter sets up some of his thoughts. More information can be seen at his website. www.luckfactor.co.uk

Overall

I found elements of this book interesting and in many ways similar to power of positive thinking by Norman Vincent. The ideas are simple and the prose easy to read, but overall there where no bi insights for me. People it seems make their own luck. As Samuel Goldwyn said, ‘The harder I work, the luckier I get’. Being open and observant can give you the opportunities. All you have to do is grasp them and act.

Rating 3/5