

STRATEGY  
— *for* —  
YOU

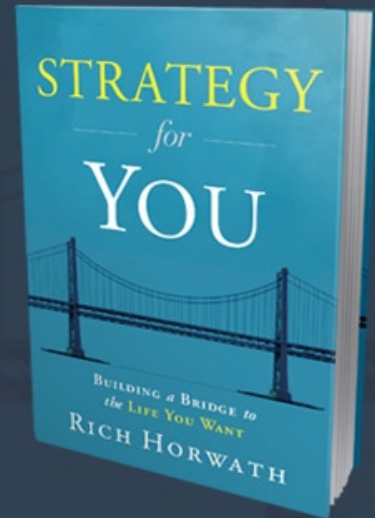
BUILDING *a* BRIDGE *to*  
*the* LIFE YOU WANT

RICH HORWATH

# Discussion Guide

# STRATEGY *for* YOU

BUILDING *a BRIDGE to the* LIFE YOU WANT



**Q1:** While it's common for businesses to create strategies, the idea of applying business strategy principles to an individual's life is new. Do you have any examples of how you have used strategy in your life?

**Q2:** Rich uses the analogy of strategy as a bridge throughout the book. How is strategy like a bridge?

**Q3:** What has been your experience using strategy at work? At home?

**Q4:** What are the three biggest challenges you face as it relates to strategy at work? At home?

**Q5:** Rich compares Alaska's infamous Gravina Island Bridge, known as the \$398 million "bridge to nowhere" with a person's inability to chart their course. He then gives an example of how people wind up in their jobs. Over the course of a career, we spend more than 100,000 hours working. How did you come to be in your current job? Was it through planning or did it just happen?

**Q6:** We all have resources consisting of time, talent and money. Do you feel like you're using your resources effectively? Why or why not? What are the top challenges preventing you from effectively using your resources?

**Q7:** Were you surprised by Rich's research showing that only 15 percent of adults have a written plan for their life? Were you surprised by Rich's research showing that only 22 percent of Fortune 1000 executives have a written plan for their life? What are the main reasons so few people have used strategy to guide their life?

**Q8:** Strategy is compared to leadership and love as an abstract concept. How do you define strategy?

**Q9:** Have you identified your professional and personal goals? Why is it important to have these in written form?

**Q10:** Step 1 is Discover. What have you done to discover your purpose in life? Have you identified where your strengths and passions intersect and found channels to use them? Examples?

**Q11:** Research shows that bad strategy is the #1 cause of bankruptcy in business. Do you think bad strategy or a lack of strategy can also be a cause of an individual's failures? At work? At home?

**Q12:** A vision is your future purpose described as an aspiration. What is your vision?

**Q13:** In Step 2: Differentiate, there are a number of examples of people that have used differentiation to create successful lives. What are some of your favorite examples of differentiation as a key success factor?

**Q14:** Excellence is described as "deviation from the norm." What does excellence mean to you? How do you go about achieving excellence at work? In your personal life?

**Q15:** Rich describes the importance of making decisions, which require trade-offs. Not making trade-offs means we try to be all things to all people and spread ourselves too thin. How would you assess your company's ability to make trade-offs? How would you assess your ability to make trade-offs?

**Q16:** We all have "to-do" lists. Do you have a "not-to-do" list? What are some of the items on it? If you don't currently have a "not-to-do" list, what do you think should be on it? What are the biggest time wasters at work? At home? How can you eliminate these time wasters?

**Q17:** A number of highly successful individuals such as Warren Buffett, Steve Jobs and Howard Schultz are shown as examples of the importance of focus. What inhibits you from having a high degree of focus?

**Q18:** Research from several heart studies shows that people, even when faced with death, refuse to make changes in their lives that could benefit them. Why is it so hard to change? How have you successfully made changes?

**Q19:** Does the strategic plan at work use the same strategies and tactics year after year? What prevents changes at work? What ideas do you have to solve these issues?

**Q20:** A SWOT Analysis is a tool for identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Have you used SWOT Analysis at work? Has it been helpful? Why or why not? What are the most common reasons SWOT Analysis fails? Have you used SWOT Analysis for your personal life? What were your key learning's?

**Q21:** How do you currently prioritize your opportunities? The Opportunity Matrix suggests prioritizing opportunities by probability of achievement and impact. Do you think this makes sense? How else do you prioritize things to do at work and at home?

**Q22:** A bridge designer uses a blueprint to create their structure. Rich suggests using a StrategyPrint, a two-page blueprint for a business or individual. Do you currently use a tool to guide your daily activities at work? At home? What are the key elements you would include in your StrategyPrint?

**Q23:** Tom Brady, Super Bowl quarterback for the New England Patriots, is listed as a good example of preparation. What type of preparation do you do for your work? For your personal development?

**Q24:** Communicating your goals and strategies with others can be an important factor in success. How is your company's strategy communicated? Is this effective? How could it be improved? Do you communicate your personal goals and strategies with people in your life? Why or why not?

**Q25:** Music producer RedOne, who works with Lady Gaga and other top performers, is cited as an example of perseverance. He said, "Nobody knew I was sleeping on the floor of a kitchen in a restaurant. I was crying a lot, but quitting was not an option." Can you think of any times when you persevered to achieve a goal? Are there times when you have given up on a goal or dream? Why?

**Q26:** Time is often mentioned as the biggest hurdle to setting strategy at work and home. People feel like they just don't have the time to stop and think. Do you make time just to think about your work? About your personal life? How could you create time to set strategy for your work? For your life?