



STORYDHARMA
WORKBOOKS

HACK#2

अधृष्ट

ADRṢṬA

UNFORESEEN



For Individual
Contributors



Black hat
Hack



Deals with how
you handle yourself

HOW TO CONSUME THIS WORKBOOK?

If you have downloaded the ppt version, we have provided boxes to fill in your answers. Our workbooks are simple but they are not easy. They require deep reflection. Find some 'Me time' and answer these workbooks. We have also provided tips for filling this up within the workbook.

This particular workbook is for [Hack #2: adrṣṭa](#). It covers the basic premise that not everything is under your control in this world. There are deceit, luck, unforeseen forces at play. The world is not a fairy tale where good alone triumphs. Your ability to expect, accept and prepare for them is key.

The book, the workbooks and curated Slokas were done after 1000s of hours of reading from Indian and Western sources to arrive at just the essence to get the impact. If you are into reading, we have also provided some books and articles which go into the concepts we discuss here.



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2.1 LUCK

To what extent do I believe luck has influenced my career progression? Can I recall specific instances?

How often do I see successful projects attributed to 'being in the right place at the right time'?

Have I ever seen someone benefit from circumstances that had nothing to do with their skills or efforts? How was it perceived by others?



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2.2 DECEIT Tips to do this

Have I ever experienced a situation where someone manipulated information to their advantage in your workplace?

Do I believe that 'office politics' often leads to unethical behaviors like deceit? Can you give examples of where this happened?

Is there an unspoken tolerance for deceit when it benefits the organization or certain individuals? How is it justified?



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2.3 POLITICS Tips to do this

Have I ever felt that relationships and alliances in the workplace have more influence on promotions than actual performance? Can you share examples?

How much do I think 'playing the game' in office politics is necessary to succeed in my company?

How often do I see people advancing in their careers based on political maneuvering rather than merit?



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2.4 UNFORESEEN Tips to do this

How often do unexpected events or crises, like market shifts or technology failures, disrupt projects in my organization?

Can I recall a time when an unforeseen event (e.g., loss of key personnel, natural disaster, or policy change) significantly altered my work life?

How does my team or organization prepare for or respond to events that are completely outside of its control



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CONTROL

What are the
Areas of Concern

What are the
Areas of Influence

What are the
Areas of control

Congrats! You just got a Medal



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HOW TO IDENTIFY THE ROLE OF LUCK?

- **Unplanned Successes:** Look for instances where a project or product succeeded despite incomplete planning or lack of alignment with initial goals. If things worked out despite inadequate preparation, luck may have played a role.
- **Sudden Market Shifts:** When external market forces unexpectedly favor the company, such as a sudden trend, regulatory change, or competitor misstep that benefits your organization without direct effort, luck might be a significant contributor.
- **Right Timing:** When new ventures or product launches coincide with broader economic trends, consumer behaviors, or unforeseen events (like a sudden increase in demand), it's likely that timing—a key aspect of luck—played a major role.
- **Unexpected Promotions or Opportunities:** Examine promotions or career advancements that occurred due to the departure or unexpected failure of others, rather than performance alone. These shifts often hinge on factors outside of an individual's control.
- **Serendipitous Partnerships:** If an important business relationship or deal came about through chance meetings, networking events, or random introductions, this could signal the impact of luck.
- **Crisis Aversion by Chance:** If your organization narrowly avoided a significant setback, such as an economic downturn or policy change, purely because of timing or fortunate decisions, luck was likely involved.
- **New Customer Acquisition Without Active Effort:** If the organization gains significant clients or business growth without deliberate marketing or sales strategies, luck might be a factor.
- **Non-Repeatable Success:** Review situations where success is difficult to replicate. If a process or outcome succeeded once but can't be reliably reproduced despite best efforts, luck may have contributed.
- **Uneven Distribution of Success:** If certain individuals or teams repeatedly succeed while others with equal skills or resources struggle, luck could be playing a role in some people getting access to more favorable opportunities.
- **External Forces in Favor:** Check for external forces such as favorable government policies, subsidies, or industry regulations that disproportionately benefit your organization without specific action on your part.
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HOW TO IDENTIFY DECEIT?

- **Inconsistent Communication:** Look for discrepancies between what someone says at different times or to different people. If their story changes frequently or contradicts itself, it could indicate dishonesty.
- **Lack of Transparency:** Deceptive colleagues often withhold important information or are vague when providing details. If someone avoids answering direct questions or evades discussions, it may be a sign of deceit.
- **Over-Explanation:** If someone is providing more information than necessary or giving overly detailed justifications for simple questions, they might be trying to cover up dishonest actions.
- **Body Language Cues:** Non-verbal cues such as avoiding eye contact, fidgeting, or appearing overly anxious during critical conversations may indicate that someone is not being truthful.
- **Contradictory Documentation:** Pay attention to discrepancies between verbal agreements and written records. If someone says one thing but the official documentation reflects something different, it could signal deceit.
- **Gossip and Rumors:** Deceit can often be accompanied by an increase in office gossip or rumors. If colleagues suddenly seem to know more about a sensitive topic than they should, someone may be manipulating information.
- **Defensiveness and Evasion:** If someone becomes overly defensive or changes the subject when questioned, they may be trying to avoid scrutiny and hide their dishonesty.
- **Frequent "Misunderstandings":** If a colleague consistently claims they "misunderstood" directives or made errors in ways that conveniently benefit them, this pattern could be a sign of intentional deceit.
- **Sudden Friendliness or Favors:** Watch for colleagues who suddenly become overly friendly or offer favors without clear reasons. This can be a tactic to manipulate trust before engaging in deceptive behavior.
- **Backtracking or Denials:** If someone frequently retracts or denies statements they previously made, especially when their initial statements were proven incorrect, it could be an attempt to cover up deceit.



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HOW TO IDENTIFY POLITICS?

Information Hoarding: Colleagues may withhold critical information to maintain control or leverage over others. This tactic allows them to influence decisions or outcomes while keeping others in the dark.

Forming Cliques: Groups that consistently support each other's ideas, promote each other, and share information selectively often engage in political behavior. These cliques may influence decision-making and create barriers for those outside the group.

Favoritism and Nepotism: When certain individuals receive preferential treatment, rewards, or opportunities regardless of their performance, it can indicate that workplace politics are at play. This might involve managers favoring personal friends or colleagues over more deserving candidates.

Backchanneling and Gossip: Conversations and negotiations that happen behind the scenes or outside of official meetings are a common political tactic. People involved in office politics may spread rumors or gossip to manipulate opinions and undermine colleagues.

Undermining Colleagues: In politically charged environments, people may intentionally undermine or sabotage colleagues to protect their own status or gain an advantage. This might include discrediting someone's work, questioning their competence, or stealing credit for ideas.

Excessive Flattery or Manipulation: People involved in politics often use flattery or manipulate superiors to gain favor. They may go out of their way to please those in power, not out of respect, but to gain strategic advantages.

Frequent "Siloing": When departments or teams isolate themselves and refuse to collaborate openly, it can be a sign of internal politics. These silos create competition between groups rather than fostering collaboration and transparency.

Self-Promotion at the Expense of Others: Individuals who frequently take credit for team successes while avoiding blame for failures are likely engaging in political behavior. They may seek recognition while undermining the efforts of others.

Inconsistent Decision-Making: If decisions are made based on relationships or personal alliances rather than merit, it's a strong sign of political influence. Decisions may change unpredictably, depending on who is in favor with the decision-makers.

Protecting Territory: In political workplaces, people often try to "protect their turf" by not sharing responsibilities or credit. This behavior manifests when someone refuses to collaborate or share knowledge, fearing it will diminish their power.



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HOW TO PREPARE FOR UNFORESEEN?

Scenario Planning helps you envision potential risks and create contingency plans for various future scenarios, enabling quicker responses when challenges arise.

Build a Flexible Mindset by embracing change and uncertainty, which prepares you mentally to handle unforeseen circumstances with agility.

Develop Backup Plans so that you have alternative strategies ready in case your primary plan encounters unexpected obstacles.

Create a Risk Management Strategy by regularly assessing vulnerabilities and preparing mitigation tactics to minimize the impact of unforeseen events.

Build a Strong Network to leverage relationships that provide support, advice, or resources when unexpected events occur.

Foster Team Resilience by encouraging collaboration and problem-solving so that teams can better handle crises together.

Invest in Learning and Development to continuously acquire new skills and knowledge, equipping yourself and your team to adapt to emerging challenges.

Establish Clear Communication Channels to ensure effective, timely communication during crises, preventing confusion and speeding up decision-making.

Leverage Technology to monitor risks and react swiftly, using tools like data analytics and project management software to stay informed.

Maintain Emotional Resilience by developing coping mechanisms for stress, helping you remain calm and make informed decisions during crises.



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IDENTIFYING AREAS OF CONTROL , INFLUENCE AND CONCERN

Areas of Control for Individual Contributors:

1. **Time Management:** You can control how you prioritize tasks, manage deadlines, and structure your workday for maximum productivity.
2. **Work Quality:** Ensuring the quality of your work is within your control, from thoroughness to accuracy.
3. **Skill Development:** You have control over how much time and effort you invest in learning new skills or improving existing ones.
4. **Attitude and Behavior:** Your mindset and how you interact with colleagues is something you can always control, regardless of external factors.
5. **Meeting Personal Deadlines:** You can control how well you manage your time to meet your own work deadlines.

Areas of Influence for Individual Contributors:

1. **Team Dynamics:** While you may not control the team, you can influence collaboration, communication, and team morale through your contributions and attitude.
2. **Process Efficiency:** You can suggest and implement small process improvements that streamline workflows within your team.
3. **Cross-Departmental Collaboration:** By fostering good relationships with other departments, you can influence the efficiency and success of interdepartmental projects.
4. **Mentoring and Knowledge Sharing:** You can influence your peers by offering guidance, sharing your expertise, or training new team members.
5. **Feedback Loops:** By providing constructive feedback, you can influence decisions made by managers or processes that affect the team.

Areas of Concern for Individual Contributors:

1. **Job Stability:** Concerns about layoffs, restructuring, or changes in leadership can create anxiety, but are typically outside your direct control.
2. **Company Strategy Changes:** Shifts in business strategy, such as entering new markets or discontinuing projects, can affect your role but are not under your control.
3. **Promotion Opportunities:** While you can influence your performance, the availability of promotion opportunities often depends on organizational decisions.
4. **Economic Downturns:** External economic conditions affecting your industry may lead to budget cuts or reduced business opportunities.
5. **Office Politics:** Navigating complex interpersonal dynamics in the workplace can be a concern, especially when decisions are influenced by relationships rather than merit.



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OTHER SOURCES TO CONSUME

<https://hbr.org/2021/06/dont-underestimate-the-power-of-luck-when-it-comes-to-success-in-business>

<https://hbr.org/2020/08/how-to-create-your-own-career-luck>

[https://www.amazon.in/Success-Luck-Good-Fortune-](https://www.amazon.in/Success-Luck-Good-Fortune-Meritocracy/dp/0691167400/ref=srd_d_psims_d_sccl_1_2/261-9321438-4580900)

[Meritocracy/dp/0691167400/ref=srd_d_psims_d_sccl_1_2/261-9321438-4580900](https://www.amazon.in/Success-Luck-Good-Fortune-Meritocracy/dp/0691167400/ref=srd_d_psims_d_sccl_1_2/261-9321438-4580900)

<https://www.natcom.org/communication-currents/making-sense-workplace-deception>

<https://hbr.org/2021/06/why-people-lie-at-work-and-what-to-do-about-it>

https://www.amazon.in/Organizational-Politics-Playbook-Strategies-Navigate/dp/1627878505/ref=sr_1_2_ssps

https://www.amazon.in/Laws-Human-Nature-Export-TPB/dp/1781259194/ref=sr_1_3

<https://hbr.org/2021/07/you-cant-sit-out-office-politics>

<https://hbr.org/2024/01/leaders-must-react>

https://www.amazon.in/SEEING-WHAT-OTHERS-DONT-REISSUE/dp/185788678X/ref=sr_1_1

<https://www.leadingsapiens.com/circle-of-control-influence-concerns/>

Why use Western sources?

As much as we admire ancient Indian wisdom, we also see that the West is also catching up on few of these aspects. We cannot ignore that fact. Some readers would be more willing to apply these lessons if backed up by 'Evidence based research' from Western sources. Honestly, there is the large amount of content which is out there on the web from Western sources making it easy to share.

We have picked those articles and books which say the same things which ancient wisdom (based on human behavior) also advocates.