



You better not...

By Vern Swedin ■ *Pace*

Most of us, since the time when we were young children, were told of certain things we had 'better not do or else.' Sometimes we would test those boundaries without much thought of the outcome, good or bad.

It's not just the "better nots" that become the limiters in our lives but the boundaries we create because of them. Imagine a fish aquarium, the number of fish and the size of the fish may be limited to the room between the walls of that aquarium. Much like an aquarium, each of us defines the space between the 'walls of our aquarium' that we choose to live in. It just so happens that our 'personal aquarium' is the result of our personalities, our childhood, our experiences up to that moment and the resources we choose to use.

At this moment you may live in a fish bowl, a tank, a lake or the ocean. Wherever your walls are formed, it is likely that you have boundaries that are both real and imagined, leaving a huge opportunity for growth in your world. You may have outgrown your own personal fishbowl, or became complacent in the one you are in, or maybe—just maybe—you are swimming around with the sharks. Yikes!

The first step to wildly increasing the size of the pool of water that you work and play in is for you to see the personal boundaries and understand how they

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strangle productivity and creativity. Recognizing those personal boundaries is not a simple task. There are a number of factors in play. Some of those might include:

- Fear of failure
- Previous failure
- Fear of success
- Fear of the Unknown
- Misperceptions based on nonfactual or 'assumed' data
- Need for "perceived" security
- The team we are on
- Current direction or lack of direction
- Personal motivation and agenda
- Or hundreds of other factors!

Why go outside your boundaries? Would you want to miss the opportunity of a lifetime, simply because you chose to swim in a limited pool of water? Are you happy being a Goldfish or does being a Great White Shark turn you on?

If you desire to bring out the most in your life, your work, your world, then it's time to look at your environment to

understand what limiting boundaries you have today. The question is 'how far will you go out of your comfort zone?' Or better stated, the question is, 'How much do you choose to grow?'

How do you start?

First: Make a list of your top 3 positive attributes:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

These attributes should define who you are and the objectives you have.

Second: For an eye opener, let's get the top 3 negative attributes (You may need help on this from a trusted friend).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

All of the attributes you listed here create boundaries in your life. How you grow beyond them will define the rest of your life. It isn't a simple answer, but look at a few examples here to explore some potential boundary breakers.

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Attribute: You have a need to micro manage the tasks of others (i.e., if you want something done you better do it yourself).

Boundary Breaker: A positive direction for you is to work on projects as a team member and not always the team leader, set goals for the project with your team and make them accountable via email as a group on a daily basis. While it seems you are still micro managing upfront, this will allow you to gain confidence in the team as a whole. Once you are confident in the team you're more likely to give them more room to maneuver and grow on future projects without your daily assessment. You'll also find that certain people on the team will thrive on doing a great job and receiving praise for jobs well done. You may discover that your team is more talented and able than you gave them credit for in the past.

Attribute: When you become impatient...

Boundary Breaker: It's really a gift to be patient with those you are working with, especially for those who work directly for you. Being impatient is more counter-productive than you may think. A team can only go in a single direction, together and that direction takes time. Being patient is not my strong suit and my impatience has often stopped any momentum. This fault has even changed the direction of the shared effort in an instance. I ask you to examine your patience as a team member and also as a team leader.


Take the time you need to seek out your limitations and create personal expectations to expand your limiting boundaries. Only you can make the difference to grow personally, remember the personal choices we make not only effect you, but every single person you touch. If you make an impact deep enough, that will change lives around you exponentially for generations to come.


Besides, who wants to go through life as a Goldfish when you can be a Great White Shark? ■

About the Author

Vern Swedin is Director of Business Development at Pace. His experience as the Co-founder and Chief Visionary Officer of the revolutionary UR-ON organization and development/creation of other technology businesses has shaped his ability to help organizations find new and creative ways to win. With an extensive business and entrepreneurial background, Mr. Swedin focuses on helping businesses find ways to grow by improving their organizational effectiveness by providing consulting, training, mentoring, and coaching assistance to Pace Business Partners serious about growing personally and professionally. The proprietary information in his workshops and training sessions is based on real-life experience in the world of technology. The author welcomes questions or comments via email at vern@uron.cc.

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