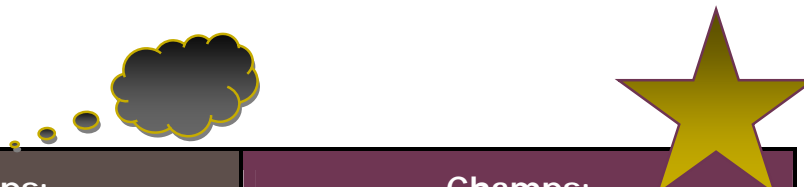


Are you a chump or champ?

10 differences in how chumps and champs lead initiatives

Do you act like a **chump** or **champ** when implementing strategy or leading a strategic initiative with employees?

Here are 10 key differences in how **chumps** and **champs** act:



Chumps:	Champs:
1. Vision	
Stay silent about the vision. They either assume it's not that important or that others can read their minds or figure it out from their actions.	Articulate their vision using specific, succinct and compelling language, including stories, metaphors and analogies.
2. Leadership style	
Lead and expect others to follow because of their position. They practice "do as I say, not as I do."	Lead by example. They model the behavior they expect—and need—from everyone else.
3. Focus	
Are afflicted with "SOS" (Shiny Object Syndrome). They aren't content to focus on the vital few ideas and actions; they get caught up in chasing the trivial many.	Identify and focus on the 20% actions that will produce 80% of the results. Furthermore, champs continue to reinforce key actions and priorities, which help everyone keep their eye on the ball.

Chumps:	Champs:
4. Listen	
<p>Engage in “tell and sell” to convince employees and other stakeholders to get on the bandwagon.</p> <p>Chumps believe they can sway anyone with enough charts, graphs and data.</p>	<p>Listen carefully to employees and other stakeholders, noting the words individuals are using as they express concerns, ask questions and suggest ideas. For example, are they referring to “we” and “us,” which shows an ownership culture versus “them”?</p> <p>Champs also make sure surveys and focus groups take place, as well as monitoring of social media. Champs recognize that not everyone feels comfortable speaking truth to power.</p>
5. Involve	
<p>View employees as an audience, a group of spectators who are passively observing.</p> <p>Chumps prefer to surround themselves with trusted team members, preferably those with whom they’ve worked before. They’ll partner to get the work done and then roll out the strategy and initiatives to the rest of the organization.</p>	<p>Ask for employee volunteers to get involved in the implementation, which is a win/win/win for the individuals, the Champ and the organization.</p> <p>The employees contribute good ideas in addition to their elbow grease. Their experiences add to their on-the-job development. They become more committed to the strategy and the initiative. And they start to influence their peers both informally and formally, which is especially valuable since individuals tend to trust “people like me” more than authority figures.</p>
6. Personalize	
<p>Lump everyone together, not taking into consideration individual</p>	<p>Connect with employees as individuals. Champs work to engage</p>

Chumps:	Champs:
<p>situations (winners versus losers), degree of involvement, or different communication preferences.</p> <p>Chumps walk in their shoes only, rather than trying to think about issues from others' perspectives.</p>	<p>people in conversations and other ways that are meaningful to them.</p> <p>Champs also try to make as many individual appeals as possible, recognizing that employees are more likely to comply with a personal request rather than a faceless order.</p>
7. Physical space	
<p>Bunker down in the "war room" that's reserved for their inner circle and project team. Together, they rehash what they're doing, review project schedules and ponder the roadblocks they've begun to encounter.</p>	<p>Go to where employees are working. Champs are flexible. They meet formally and informally, ask how things are going, answer questions, reinforce what everyone needs to do differently, act as coaches and clear the path of obstacles. Champs also reach out to employees in all locations and shifts.</p>
8. Resistance	
<p>Either ignore resistance, assuming that employees will have to turn around at some point, or try to muscle through.</p> <p>Chumps are more comfortable concentrating on technological and process fixes than people.</p>	<p>Realize that change comes with three flavors of resistance: rational, emotional and political. Champs deal with all three. And in doing so, champs come across as relaxed, optimistic, and supportive. They don't sugar coat bad news, but they don't go to the dark side either.</p>
9. Measurement	
<p>Know progress when they see it so they don't need metrics.</p>	<p>Make commitments and set metrics that measure their progress as well as tightly link to the organization's overall goals. For example, Champs track how well they're reaching milestones, engaging employees and</p>

Chumps:	Champs:
	achieving performance goals. They share the data (the good, bad and ugly) they collect and adjust their actions based on the results.
10. Continuous learning and improvement	
<p>Want to create a “new normal”—a new status quo—for the organization.</p> <p>Once Chumps meet their goals, they declare victory and put down roots.</p>	<p>Realize we’re living and working in a VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous) world, which requires a new mindset and actions.</p> <p>Champs encourage themselves and employees to be agile—continually learning, adapting and looking for improvements they can make.</p> <p>Champs know that it may be tough for some to adopt a new mindset and actions, so they provide help, are supportive and tolerant. However, they won’t accept complacency.</p>

Just one letter—the all-important vowel—differentiates the *chump* from the *champ*. Yet, the actions that **chumps** and **champs** take are a world apart. It’s like coming across a rut in the road versus a grave—the difference is the depth of the hole.

So, which are you: *champ* or *chump*? It’s not easy to be a *champ* 100% of the time. However, when you act more like a *champ*, you improve your chances of avoiding any ruts much less anything worse and being a successful, credible and trusted leader.



What Now?

Want to accelerate the adoption of your strategies and become a more capable, credible and confident leader? An authentic **champ**?

If so, contact me, **Liz Guthridge** of **Connect** for a complimentary check-in session. We'll explore your current situation, challenges and opportunities.

We also can review **Connect's Ideas-to-Action Cycle**. It's designed to help leaders and their team members move faster to develop their will and skill and get over the hill with their new strategy. Along the way, you'll also be adopting new habits that will help you be more agile.

Connect's Ideas-to-Action Cycle can provide you with personalized support, expert guidance and tools and guidelines. We can discuss if they're the right fit for you and your organization.

Be aware: **Connect's Ideas-to-Action Cycle** isn't for everyone. It's best suited for individuals who want to take an active role in their implementation and are looking for targeted coaching and consulting, not outsourcing, as well as developing habits. In other words, they and their team members prefer getting their hands dirty working with Tom Sawyer to paint the fence and enjoy it, rather than listen to his creator Mark Twain read.



Liz Guthridge has a solid track record working with leaders on strategy implementation, especially in the areas of clarification, stakeholder involvement and execution.

To find out more and set up your session, call or email me:

- 510.527.1213
- liz.guthridge@connectconsultinggroup.com



Connect is an independent boutique that supports organizations in moving their blue-sky ideas to greener pasture actions. We work with leaders and their teams to clarify, involve and execute through coaching, consulting and training so they can adopt their strategies and initiatives more quickly and improve their performance.

Visit www.connectconsultinggroup.com for more, including clients and case studies.