

REACTIONS: THE SUPERPOWER YOU DIDN'T KNOW YOU HAD

By Jennifer Powers



You are not in control of everything. That's right. As much as you'd like to try, you cannot control all that goes on around you. Unlikeable policies will be made, people will say and do things that upset you, clients will come and go, your business will ebb and flow. And there's not much you can do about it. Or is there?

One way to gain back a bit of control of your career is to understand that things don't happen to you, or against you. Things just happen. You are not here to control what happens. Your job is to control how you react to what happens. And the way you *react* determines how your work life unfolds from that point on. Hence, utilizing the power over what is actually within your control.

So, people and circumstances can show up (or throw up) in your life however they may, but you get to choose how you react to those things. And what you may not realize is that *REACTIONS = REALITY*. Think about it. How you react in one moment will have a direct impact on your reality the very next moment.

It works like this:

$$\mathbf{R = R}$$

(Reactions = Reality)

so

$$\mathbf{CR = CR}$$

(Crappy Reactions = Crappy Reality)

and

$$\mathbf{PR = PR}$$

(Positive Reactions = Positive Reality)

A simple illustration. The stock market takes a dive. Mark, Kelly and Jim all lose their shorts. Mark panics, feels vulnerable and sells all his shares. Kelly, experiencing the same loss, chooses to see this as an opportunity and buys more while the price is low. Jim is a scaredy cat and is afraid to do anything, so he doesn't.

Later, when the market shifts, Kelly makes out the best, Jim does okay, and Mark is too busy kicking himself to do the math.

The reality was the same for all three people: the stock market took a tumble and they all lost money. There was nothing any of them could do to control or prevent that from happening. But each of them had control over how they reacted to it. They each reacted in a different way, so they each ended up with a different reality.

So it stands to reason then that if you want to take more control of your REALITY you need to take more control of your REACTIONS. But how do you do that when reactions are like wild horses? They often run amuck and sometimes you feel like you have no control of them at all.

Start with this simple three step formula:

1. OBSERVE AND RESIST YOUR KNEE-“JERK” REACTION

Observe how you would tend to react when things don't go your way and resist going there. You've got better plans for your career. Give yourself time and space to allow any negative reactions to flow through you. By pausing, you are allowing your "fight or flight" mechanism time to calm down and giving yourself a second to regain your composure. Consider taking deep belly breaths, counting to ten or humming a tune. This will occupy the space that a crappy reaction would normally take up.

2. ASK YOURSELF A QUESTION

To redirect your focus, ask yourself a question. Not just any question, but one that will help you shift into a more positive mindset from which you can react. Here are a few examples to get you started:

What about this situation can I be grateful for? What belief or opinion would serve me better? How do I deserve to feel? Who would love to switch places with me?

Feel free to come up with your own powerful questions that will shift you into a positive mindset.

3. ANSWER THE QUESTION

You can't skip this step. If you only ask yourself the question you are only half way there. The shift in perspective and your ability to react from a more positive outlook occurs when you *answer* the question. This part may be challenging at first but push through it because the payoff is big.

Imagine the scene. Some unrealistically tight deadlines are handed down to you at work.

YOU OBSERVE AND RESIST the knee-JERK reaction to complain, moan and gossip.

YOU ASK YOURSELF: "What can I turn this into?"

YOU ANSWER: "A chance to highlight my ability to perform well under pressure."

YOUR REALITY: You calmly and coolly respond with an "I'll handle that!" and your boss sees you as a shining star.

Remember, seemingly bad things happen to everyone. You're not alone in that. But you have way more power over your day, your week and your life than you may recognize. The moment you begin to take control of your reactions you begin to take control of your reality.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Jennifer Powers, MCC is an international speaker, executive coach, author of the best-selling book "*Oh, shift!*," and host of the fun and binge-worthy "*Oh, shift!*" podcast. Since founding her speaking practice, Jennifer has worked with hundreds of professionals and delivered powerful keynote addresses to over 250,000 people around the globe. For more information on bringing Jennifer Powers to your next event, please visit www.ohshift.com