

Circles of Possibility Cheat Sheet



The four Circles of Possibility are:

1. Doing – what you’re doing right now
2. Growth – where you can easily go
3. Stretch – where you can push yourself
4. Impossible – beyond your imagination

The size of your Circle of Possibility depends on your personal growth journey.

You relate differently within these 3 levels:

1. Connection happens within Doing
2. Encouragement happens within Growth
3. Empowerment happens within Stretch

Usually, you establish credibility and authority by having a bigger Circle of Possibility. However, too much distance creates a disconnect whenever your Doing, Growth, or Stretch circles move into someone else’s circle of Impossible.

This often shows up in higher-power/lower-power relationships:

- As a leader or follower
- As a seller or buyer
- As a mentor or mentee

These tensions often show up as:

- Mistrust of motives
- Fear of manipulation
- Intimidation
- Distance from helpful relationships
- Limiting beliefs and behaviors

This is why relational dynamics can dramatically shift when one person grows, but another person doesn’t.

Exponential vs. Linear Shifts

The distance between Stretch and Impossible is usually an exponential shift, not an incremental shift.

Most people grow incrementally, which is why they cannot bridge the gap from Stretch to Impossible.

These two growth patterns have fundamentally different questions:

- Incremental growth is the question of EFFICIENCY and EFFORT (i.e. working faster and harder).
- Exponential growth is the question of fundamental assumption and approach (i.e. working smarter).

You can break limiting mindsets and behaviors by multiplying your outcome by 10, because it forces you to change the fundamental rules and approach.

Keys to Managing Differences

As a leader or mentor, the key is to relate to other people from their Circle of Possibility rather than your own. Then, use that connection to shift their fundamental approach, allowing them to experience exponential growth. This is the basis for high-impact mentoring.

When you’re working with a leader or mentor, seek to understand their fundamental assumptions and approach, because it’s likely very different from your own and is a significant key to breakthrough.