

Lift vs. Drag: A Leader's Perspective

Wingmen are the relationships in your life who lift you to new heights. "Wingnuts" are parasites that drag you down.

So, how do you get a 35,000-pound F-16 jet fighter to fly? It's no easy feat. To overcome the force of gravity, you have to create a force that is greater than gravity's grasp. That force is lift.

As the F-16 blasts through the sky, there is an "enemy" of lift that must be overcome. It's an aerodynamic force, known as drag, that resists the forward motion of the jet. There are two kinds of drag: induced and parasite. Induced drag is a "good drag," in that it is a byproduct of lift and is necessary for flight. Parasite drag is not helpful, as it battles against the "good" drag, working to slow the aircraft down. It's caused by the non-lifting portions of the aircraft, such as the landing gear, missiles, and external fuel tanks.

Here's the big picture: In order to fly, a jet's lift must exceed drag. The less drag, the easier it flies. Let's look at this on a practical level in fighter combat. When evading missiles or engaging another fighter in close combat, one of the first things you must do is what pilots call "jettisoning your stores." You have to get rid of all the parasite drag hanging from the jet that's not critical to immediate, fast flight. Fuel tanks and bombs go, for example. This reduces your weight while simultaneously reducing drag, allowing the fighter to be much more maneuverable to avoid getting shot down. Simply put, if you don't need it, you drop it.

Losing Our Personal Parasites

What "parasites" are dragging you down and stopping you from reaching new heights in your life? Do you find yourself unable to avoid the missiles in your life because you have too much weighing you down?

Parasites are the negative relationships that sap you of your energy and time while giving nothing in return. Parasites are also the fears, doubts, mental baggage, dramas, and self-limiting beliefs that strangle your ability to take action. They suck the life out of you. They can drag you down emotionally and hold you back from being a successful leader.

Do you have any of that hanging around? All of us have "parasite drag" in our lives, and we know it. Often, we put off doing anything about it until our own personal "missiles" begin to fly. If we're dragged down too much, the missiles will hit us.

What are you holding on to that you really need to release? Here's my advice: Jettison your parasite now!

Wingmen are the opposite of parasites. They are the relation-

ships in your life who lift you to new heights. "Wingnuts," though, are parasites that drag you down. Are you willing to jettison what's dragging you down so you can become more fulfilled and successful? Perhaps it's an unhealthy relationship, laziness, or a private addiction such as TV, gambling, or even that sugar fix you always seem to crave. Or maybe it's an unfulfilling job that is bringing you down or a fear of failure that is stopping you from taking on a new job promotion.

Want to find what gives lift in your life? Look at what drives your passion. Look at the relationships and activities that get you excited and energized and ready to "push it up" in life, and then pursue them relentlessly. Seek what gives you life.

When flight planning for success, winners have an ability to get rid of distractions and focus on action that leads to positive results. They also surround themselves with people who challenge them. Jim Rohn, one of my favorite philosophers, has a saying that I love: "Don't spend major time with minor people." If you want to be a success, spend time with people at work and in your private life who lift you up, folks who have the courage and compassion to tell it like it is. These people won't settle for your excuses, but they will also inspire you and give you hope.

The question remains: How do you attract this type of person into your life? You do it by giving your time, advice, and hope to those in need. In essence, you become a wingman to others and help them to fly to greater heights. You do the hard work to build your own character before expecting it of others. This is the core of leadership. When you do this, wingmen will naturally be attracted to you.

You will find yourself surrounded by people you trust. As I always say, never fly solo.

Leadership Wingtip: Leaders *push* themselves up while *pulling* others up.

Discipline, hard work, and productive relationships are the lifts in life that overcome the parasite drags of unhealthy relationships, addictions, and complacency. They are your tools to conquer mediocrity and live with courage. They will help you to win. Don't leave them out of your flight plan. **OHS**



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