

*Develop*  
**RED PILL  
OPERATIVES**

**THE RED PILL EXECUTIVE  
WORKBOOK**

CHAPTER 7



# WORKBOOK INTRODUCTION

Now you know our secret... You know that there is a Red Pill way and a blue pill way. You might have had a feeling all along that something like this was true. Maybe you've butted up against blue pill thinking and wondered why it was so hard to drive projects that succeed by the "Iron Triangle" measures. Perhaps knowing that a Red Pill approach exists was novel and inspiring to you. Either way, after reading the book, the next question becomes, How do I navigate my own Red Pill journey? This workbook can serve as a guide, prompt valuable reflection, support your own and your team's Red Pill development, and drive Red Pill conversations and practices.

You'll find exercises and tools to help you think through Red Pill operations in relation to:

- Yourself
- Your Team
- Your Organization

## Leverage the Workbook

**Roll up your sleeves** and dive into this work. This exercise will do very little if you skim over it. Think deeply, write down your thoughts, be brutally honest in your assessments, make Red Pill choices and learn from the results.

**Make the workbook work for you.** This chapter is part of a larger series, you can download the full workbook here: <https://www.thinkconsulting.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Red-Pill-Full-Workbook.pdf>. The work is not meant to be completed sequentially. Use the tools in the order that makes sense for you, your starting point, and your journey.

**Re-use the tools and exercises.** This exercise can and should be used more than once. Assess and reassess over time. Use the completed exercise as a reference point to measure growth and adoption or as justification for making new choices.

**Enlist others.** Gain valuable insights by having colleagues, peers or subordinates complete part or all of a tool/exercise. Use the workbook to develop Red Pill thinking in others.

# DEVELOP RED PILL OPERATIVES

To learn more about these concepts, review Chapter 7: Spreading the Red Pill Mindset.

*Strong roots grow only when effectiveness proves this stuff works*  
-The Red Pill Executive

## Introduction

You've read about creating a Red Pill Mindset, now let's look around your organization to see where and how you might cultivate it. One of the keys to developing your strategy is to recognize what is valued in your organization. There's no better way to determine this than to look at your organization's culture and how it operates.

# 1

Start by thinking about the different groups within your organization and how they recognize good work. What does your company reward?

Think about the projects you've used in other exercises. Who was rewarded and why? Think about different groups in your company. Do they reward differently? Does your executive team reward one group more than another?

### Examples:

- **Speed** – completing work quickly or ahead of schedule
- **Organization** – clear, detailed and methodical work
- **Workload** – amount of work completed at the end of a day/week/work cycle
- **Safety** – perfect safety record with no injuries.
- **Agility** – ability to think quickly and make changes as needed
- **Commitment** – doing what you say you will do, when you say you will do it
- **Sales** – selling more products or services

# 2

Next, consider how your company prioritizes spending. What does your company spend its budget on?

Money talks. If your company budget has a balloon item, that's a sure indication of what the culture values.

1. Which departments get ample funding each year?
2. Which departments are underfunded?
3. Which projects have the biggest budgets?
4. Do you give bonuses or other incentives for good work?

### Examples:

- Sales
- Marketing
- Innovation
- Product Development
- Top Talent

# 3

Now change your focus to identifying the most effective performers in your organization. What are your most effective people or teams?

You've determined how your company rewards good work and where it spends money. If you can identify people or teams that work in the well-funded and rewarded areas of your organization, that's great, but sometimes you'll find highly effective people or teams outside of those areas too.

## Examples:

- Development team given bonuses for completion of a highly visible project ahead of schedule
- Marketing Director promoted after a successful ad campaign generated 15% increase in sales
- Product Owner given an award at the Annual Company meeting for increased customer satisfaction
- Warehouse Manager recognized for a perfect safety record in Q4.

# 4

Now assess that person or team against your overall company culture. Are they effective because they work within the culture or outside the culture?

This is a telling question. If your pockets of effectiveness are not in line with the overall culture of your company, you will have a different plan for creating the Red Pill Mindset than if they are in line.

Go back to item 3 – can you find a pocket of effectiveness that is in line with your overall culture? If not, that's ok.

## Examples:

- **Outside:** The development team has self-organized and created their own working style within IT
- **Within:** We are a sales-driven organization and the Marketing Director executed the sales campaign flawlessly
- **Outside:** The Product Owner is outspoken and doesn't always follow the strict processes in place
- **Within:** We value safety as number 1 and this Warehouse Manager embodies our culture

# 5

Finally, let's determine where to plant your Red Pill seeds. Where could a Red Pill alliance root?

Your answer to item 4 will now allow you to choose your path forward. If you are up against a blue pill culture and your pockets of effectiveness are seen as outsiders, patience is key.

If your pocket of effectiveness is in line with your overall culture, give them the room to share their knowledge. Red Pill thinking spreads best by example, by demonstrating effectiveness and showing success.

## Examples:

- Effectiveness is well rewarded in my area of operations and I know who would make terrific Red Pill candidates. There should be little resistance in directing further reward and recognition toward higher levels of effectiveness and a Red Pill Mindset, so I can begin planting the seeds to build my Red Pill cadre with little risk of causing disruption to the organization.
- Effectiveness in my area of operations is not directly rewarded. In fact, I see that the Blue Pill machine is fully engaged and working to protect itself from any new perspectives. Working within this construct to get higher levels of effectiveness valued is going to be key, so I'm going to need to be subtle and change the value equation over time. I have identified a small team that I trust to become Red Pill operators, but we are going to need to take steps not to directly challenge the Blue Pill culture for now.

## Key Takeaway

The temptation to become a Red Pill evangelist can be strong. Spreading the Red Pill message becomes a hypothetical exercise that won't produce results if it is targeted at the wrong culture. Strong roots grow only when effectiveness proves this stuff works.

Remember, spreading the Red Pill perspective cannot happen by coercion or mandate. It has to happen organically. The Red Pill perspective is not mental assent. It is a change in core beliefs that hold true under pressure.

## EXERCISE CREATED BY:



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