

Jonathan Littman and Marc Hershon

## Become a Soloist – Right within your Company

Everyone wants to introduce breakthrough innovations, head cool projects, and work with other bright individuals. There's just one problem: every company, big or small has a mix of talented people and what we call, **The Ten Least Wanted**. Those nettlesome folks who can slow you down, waste your time or, God forbid, actually do serious damage to your career.

But you aren't going anywhere. You like your job and respect your company. That's why the smart thing to do is to learn to recognize the **Ten Least Wanted** and how to work around the human deadwood. That way you can get to that state of mind and working where you can become a master **Soloist**.

Jonathan Littman and Marc Hershon, authors of the forthcoming book, *I Hate People, Kick Loose from the Overbearing and Underhanded Jerks at Work and Get What you Want Out of your Job*, will share their strategies for:

- How to form **Ensembles** with other **Soloists** -- the best kind of teamwork.
- How to **Solocraft**, a way of working that increases your effectiveness and productivity, both alone and in a group.
- How to skip or cut short unnecessary meetings, conference calls, and other forms of corporate drudgery to increase your solo time.
- How to minimize and even eliminate progress-stifling interruptions throughout your day.
- How to push things **Off Your Plate** to help you stay on track while juggling multiple projects.
- How to **Dig Your Cave**, creating the ideal space in which to get away and get your work done.
- How to **Island Hop**, creating the little refreshing breaks in your workday that give you a chance to relax while leading you to creative breakthroughs.

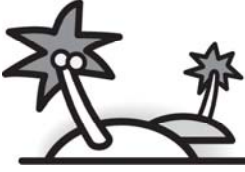


### The Path of the Soloist

Littman and Hershon will show audiences how to develop the critical techniques that make **Soloists** the most valuable individuals in corporations.

The tools of the **Soloist** give you a leg up in the critical battle against the Ten Least Wanted, whether it's the **Bulldozer** boss, the snarky **Switchblade** down the hall, or the StopSigning **Spreadsheet** in marketing. The **Soloist** learns how to see them coming or has honed his skills to the point where he can overcome any challenge.

There's pride and a new sense of self in becoming a Soloist. Instead of thinking of yourself as a staffer in a large corporation, the manager of a division or a top executive, the Soloist begins to define himself in concrete individualistic terms. Brainstormer extraordinaire. Marketing whiz. Project Lead.



Audiences will learn the keys to skilled Island Hopping. How executives and managers at P&G, IBM, and other major corporations create mental and physical breaks during the day to find inspiration and change the pace.

They'll hear the story of men like Carl Haney of P&G who became a member of a wine club that has given him an extra level of confidence during the countless business lunches and dinners he attends. The authors will discuss the science of breaks. How researchers at MIT have discovered that the equivalent of coffee breaks for rats help them learn new tasks. Meet men like Kyle Johnston, the Web and digital creative director at Garmin International, who has discovered that when the corporate deadline heats up on a new product, one of the keys is "spending a lot of time taking little breaks." See how Tom Zimmerman comes up with new ideas for IBM. He literally goes deep, swimming for an hour underwater with a snorkel to devise new computer designs.



### Hurdling the Ten Least Wanted

The first step to becoming a **Soloist** and **Island Hopping** is to learn how to untangle yourself from the **Ten Least Wanted**. The presentation will include practical strategies for recognizing and dealing with these common human threats to your daily productivity.

### Overcoming The Stumbling Blocks



#### 1. Stop Sign

**Stereotype:** Former Kodak executive: "Digital cameras will never catch on."

#### The Threat:

Count on a **Stop Sign** to pour cold water on your every ambition.

**Stop Signs** can come from the top of your organization, like say the otherwise brilliant founder of Digital Equipment Corporation, Kenneth Olson, who had the misfortune to announce in 1977 - just a year after the birth of Apple Computer - "There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home."

#### Strategies:

- Remind **Stop Sign** that you're "facing different circumstances and different competitors."
- Open the meeting by saying, "Hey, I realized that's going to be a restriction. Let's be free of that for the morning."
- Boomerang the opposition: "Good point Bob. How would you brainstorm three ways we could pay for the project?"

## Avoiding Wrong Turns



### 5. Liar Liar

**Stereotype:** Tommy Flanagan, Jon Lovitz's pathological liar character from Saturday Night Live: "Yeah, that's the ticket!"

#### The Threat:

In a large corporation, it can be tricky to catch **Liar Liar** at his game. Adept at squirming out of commitments, deadlines and performance reviews Liar Liar justifies his lies by the lies others tell in his business or other industries. When he finally does get cornered, **Liar Liar** will often skillfully blame someone else.

#### Strategies

- Watch for the tells: the sideways glance, excessive blinking and sweating.
- Truth Encouragement: "Bob, help me understand these numbers?"
- Bring a back-up: When disarming a liar liar it helps to have a witness.



### 6. Switchblade

**Stereotype:** Judas

#### The Threat:

**Switchblades** are tricky. You might think of them as friends only to find out something has turned them against you. And not just in a way that makes them hate you, but to the extent that they mean to do you harm.

#### Strategies:

- Pierce the veil: "You've got to get them to say no when they've been saying yes."
- Blowback: Out the **Switchblade** with a reply-all e-mail when they've been trashing you behind your back.
- Switch the **Switchblade**. Turn their opposition into an asset. Recruit them to do the tasks they think they can do better than you.

## Disarming the Time Wasters



### 7. Minute Man

**Stereotype:** Lieutenant Columbo (Peter Falk): "I don't mean to bother you, but I just have one more question..."

**The Threat:** Expert at slicing off increasingly larger hunks of your time. What's worse is that these people run the gamut from co-workers and customers to complete strangers. All they want is a minute of your time. And another minute... And then just one more minute...

**Strategies:**

**Generosity:** Tell Minute Man you've got a full two minutes, but then you've got to run. You'll burn less time and make fewer enemies.

**The Hard Stop:** "We've got five minutes, Bob. That's the best I can do. I've got a hard stop at three thirty!"

**The Pressing Engagement:** You've got a phone call, a meeting, a report to write. In other words - work to do.



### 10. Sheeple

**Stereotypes:** Zombies (Night Of The Living Dead).  
Loves meetings.

**The Threat:**

**Sheeple** can be the most maddening, contentious and difficult to out maneuver. Why? Because these are the folks with advanced degrees from the School of Common Thought.

They think alike. Move alike. Resist alike. They're comfortable with their herd mentality. As a **Soloist**, you think differently and, what's more, you're often your own leader. But you can't just ignore **Sheeple**. Fail to figure out how to deal with the masses, and they may trample you in their effort to stay in their ruts.

**Strategies:**

- Never bark at **Sheeple**: the last thing you need is a **Sheeple** stampede.
- Separate them from the Herd: Approach them outside of group settings that reinforce aimless nodding and vacuous grazing
- Knight the Lord of the **Sheeple**: Make that man or woman with fluffier wool and shinier hooves feel special and you can move the herd.

**The Speakers**

Jonathan Littman is the coauthor of the bestselling *Art of Innovation* (120,000 copies in print) and the *Ten Faces of Innovation*. He is a Contributing Editor for *Playboy*, Columnist for *Yahoo Sports*, and partner in *Simmer Branding*. Jonathan has given numerous presentations on Innovation to corporate audiences.

Marc Hershon is a branding expert who has dreamed up names for countless hit products, including *Blackberry*, *Swiffer*, *Pentium* and *Dasani*. Marc is the naming expert in *Simmer Branding*. He is a comedy veteran who has worked closely with *Jerry Seinfeld* and *Dana Carvey*.

*I Hate People* will be published June 10, simultaneously by *Little Brown & Company* and as an audio book by *Gildan Media*. The Italian edition will be published in September.

What the experts are saying about *I Hate People*.

*I Hate People* is the definitive guide for creating a job you love – even though you are trapped with jerks and creeps of every stripe. Hershon and Littman tell great stories, give inspired advice, and wrap it all in the most fun management book since *Orbiting the Giant Hairball*.

Robert I. Sutton, Stanford Professor and author *The No Asshole Rule*.

“Ironically, I hate the people who wrote this book.” Dana Carvey.

There are many clever but shallow business books. *I Hate People* is clever, wise, and deep. Its shrewd examination of professional interpersonal dilemmas is in itself worth the price of admission. The creative, easy-to-apply solutions it offers for these problems are an absolute bonus. I kept saying, “True, true, true!”

Arthur H. Bell Executive Director of MBA Programs  
School of Business and Management, University of San Francisco

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***Jonathan Littman***

