

DAVE ANDERSON

TRANSFORMING YOUR MINDSET

TO CREATE CHANGE,

ACCELERATE RESULTS,

AND BE THE BEST AT WHAT YOU DO

WILEY



UNSTOPPABLE



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# Other Books by Dave Anderson

*It's Not Rocket Science: 4 Simple Strategies for Mastering the Art of Execution*

*Up Your Business! 7 Steps to Fix, Build, or Stretch Your Organization*

*How to Run Your Business by THE BOOK: A Biblical Blueprint to Bless Your Business*

*How to Lead by THE BOOK: Proverbs, Parables, and Principles to Tackle Your Toughest Business Challenges*

*If You Don't Make Waves You'll Drown: 10 Hard-Charging Strategies for Leading in Politically Correct Times*

*How to Deal with Difficult Customers: 10 Simple Strategies for Selling to the Stubborn, Obnoxious, and Belligerent*

*No-Nonsense Leadership: Real World Strategies to Maximize Personal & Corporate Effectiveness*

*TKO HIRING! Ten Knockout Strategies for Recruiting, Interviewing, and Hiring Great People*

*TKO SALES! Ten Knockout Strategies for Selling More of Anything*

*TKO MANAGEMENT! Ten Knockout Strategies for Becoming the Manager Your People Deserve*

*Selling Above the Crowd: 365 Strategies for Sales Excellence*

*Unstoppable is dedicated to the late Alan Ram,  
who lived a game changer life, and  
contributed to this work shortly before his death.  
Alan, your legend lives on.*

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# Let Us Hear from You

**T**hroughout your reading of this book, let us hear from you! Send your photo with this book, your favorite quote, page number, and more on Twitter to [@DaveAnderson100](https://twitter.com/DaveAnderson100)! Use the hashtag #Unstoppable.





# Introduction

No birth certificate has ever proclaimed someone as “unstoppable.” Nor has one ever declared someone “a sluggard,” “mediocre,” or “a pessimist.” We become these not by declaration or genetics, but by our own decisions and grit (or lack thereof).

On an organization’s roster, there are normally four types of team members: undertakers, caretakers, playmakers, and game changers. The behaviors associated with each category go beyond skills, knowledge, talent, or experience; they are primarily motivated by one’s mindset. This in turn determines how well and consistently the skills, knowledge, talent, and experience of an individual are activated, thereby highly influencing his or her level of success. The following chapters will dig more deeply into each of the four categories, but for now, here is a brief introduction into each of the groups we will be discussing at length.

## ***Undertakers***

Undertakers bring a negative value to an organization. Two primary types of undertakers will be discussed in the first chapter; but know that the longer people perform at this level, the more damage they do to their own self-esteem, future, the culture, team morale, and results overall.

## ***Caretakers***

Caretakers are baseliners. More often than not, they do what is required of them and nothing more. They pledge allegiance to the status quo and to their job description. They do not initiate, bring new

ideas, or offer solutions. If teammates are in trouble, you cannot depend on the caretaker to lift them up or carry their load. Caretakers often have the skills, knowledge, talent, and experience that would allow them to perform far above what they deliver; but, since they are not motivated to work that hard and are not interested in doing so, they drop anchor at the caretaker level.

### ***Playmakers***

Playmakers normally have more energy or drive than caretakers. They may also have more talent, but are primarily differentiated from caretakers in how their mindset enables them to apply their talent. They will occasionally do great things, but are not consistent enough to elevate their performance or results to reach game changer status. They are prone to letting the pat on the back become a massage, and their work ethic and urgency will fall as prosperity rises.

### ***Game Changers***

Game changers are unstoppable. They are relentless, which is defined as being “oppressively constant; incessant . . . unyielding” (Google 2017). These are the team members who consistently bring effort, energy, attitude, excellence, and passion to the job. It does not mean they always create the ideal outcome, but failure to do so is not due to lack of effort, energy, attitude, or work ethic.

It is important to understand two things up front about the four performance groups:

1. Everyone is normally a blend and spends some time in each group depending on his or her circumstances. However, one of the four mindsets will primarily dominate a person’s time, which is then reflected in performance.
2. The groups are not permanent verdicts. As you will see, it is just as possible to think and perform as an undertaker and then become a game changer as it is to be on top, change your thinking and performance, and demote yourself to undertaker status.

In addition to discussing the four performance groups, *Unstoppable* will also outline steps to transform one's mindset from the lower groups upward, so that the game changer traits dominate your daily routine, your month, your year, and your life.

Perhaps the most exciting and helpful aspect of *Unstoppable* will be the insights from dozens of coaches, managers, CEOs, journalists, entrepreneurs, and elite performers into what separates the team member who occasionally makes things happen—the playmaker—from the person who far more consistently brings energy, focus, drive, passion, and excellence to a role—the unstoppable game changer.

For example, as the president and CEO of Sony/ATV Music publishing in Nashville, Troy Tomlinson works with some of the world's best-known playmaker and game changer status songwriters and artists. Tomlinson observes that the truly elite—the game changers—in his industry “possess a deep, focused passion for their art virtually every waking moment, and are willing to work harder than the hardest-working individual on their team” (Troy Tomlinson, pers. comm.). The same can be said for game changers in any field, anywhere.

Let me emphasize that you won't hear from passive, couch-potato performance theorists, but rather from in-the-trenches, been-there-and-done-that achievers and builders of people and organizations. Even better, the principles are so widely applicable that you should be able to relate to and apply them regardless of your field or experience level.

While talent is an essential contributor to optimal and consistently solid performance, it is often overhyped. And, while talent is a great head start to becoming unstoppable, at the end of the day it is only potential. Frankly, without a mindset that consistently and ferociously activates talent, performance disappointments reign.

As president of LearnToLead, I have averaged speaking 120 times annually across 17 countries for the past two decades, and one of my favorite questions to ask attendees in my game changer seminars is: “How many of you agree that the right mindset influences the ability to win, more than skills, knowledge, talent, or experience?” Doves of hands shoot up. I follow that question with this: “I agree. Now, since

mindset is so important, how much time do you spend intentionally building yours each day?”

*\*Crickets chirping\**

Time after time—blank stares, and total silence. A key objective of this book is to remedy this.

As the opening chapters outline common traits of each of the four performance groups, a common temptation is to begin thinking about other people and which group they most often fall into. While there is value in classifying others on your team in this manner, and then following up with subsequent coaching, the intent is for you to first assess *yourself* and upgrade *your own* mindset and performance; after all, you are more effective and credible when growing others after you have first prioritized growing yourself.

While reading a book or attending a course may create adrenaline and momentum, process and consistency bring change. To aid you in your personal development, I will also recommend various apps, websites, podcasts, online resources, and seminars to help you and those you care most about build a more robust game changer career and life. If your open mind, pen, and highlighter are ready to go, it's time to introduce you to the “undertaker.”

# C H A P T E R 1

## The Undertaker

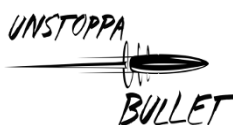
*One who daily does less than he can gradually becomes less than he is.*

I won't devote much space to the undertaker performer. Frankly, who they are and what they do is as obvious as it is devastating. Here is a quick summary.

### **Undertakers Do Sub-Baseline Work**

In the next chapter we will discuss the caretaker; and, while the caretaker at least does baseline work (not heroic by any means), the undertaker does not. Undertakers might be nice enough as people, but someone else continually has to carry their load, clean up their mess, or be frantically rushing around performing damage control in their wake. True to his or her classification, the undertaker undertakes and achieves nothing meaningful, and takes under or lowers morale, momentum, your brand, performance outcomes, cultural integrity, and your personal credibility. To exacerbate matters, the costs they inflict are not a one-time lump-sum payment. If only it were that simple! If only you could hold your nose one time, write a single check, and be done with the costs they inflict. But it is not that painless. For

as long as you keep them, undertakers will create a torturous form of misery on the installment plan. The cost of keeping undertakers is staggering, and it can eventually put your organization on the endangered species list.



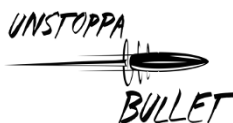
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**In essence, an undertaker is essentially unemployed, but still on your payroll. It is not the undertakers you remove from your organization that make you miserable; it's the ones you keep.**

---

## **Toxic Achievers Are Undertakers**

Despite a cliché to the contrary, the fact is that you *can* argue with success, if someone is getting it at the cost of violating your values. While the first characterization of undertakers addressed the below-average performer, a toxic achiever is one who may perform well—he or she could even be a top performer—but who also violates your values, can be selfish and divisive, and creates ongoing drama that debilitates culture. Weak leaders tolerate toxic achievers because they produce, but in the process they relegate themselves to heartless, selfish, sellouts. The damage that undertaker toxic achievers do to your culture, credibility, and brand is incalculable. Undoubtedly, well-known undertakers may have come to mind as you read these words—high-profile athletes or hired guns in business who sojourn from team to team performing well and meanwhile poisoning the locker room. But if identifying others who may fit either of these two descriptions was your primary focus, then you have missed the point. While there is a recommended resource in the Appendix of this book to help you identify and develop game changers in your organization, the four performance groups in this book are not first and foremost about anyone else when you consider them; they are about you.

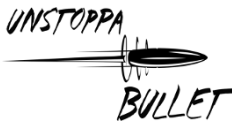


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**If you are lazy, selfish, or corrupt, you either won't use or will misuse your talent and make yourself completely expendable in the process.**

---

How often do you demonstrate the traits in either of the prior two points? How often do you become divisive, bitter, selfish, or territorial; do less than you can; or create messes that others must clean up? To reiterate what I mentioned earlier, we are normally all a blend of the four mindsets from time to time. But, to become unstoppable, it is essential we develop the mindset and focus to think and act as a game changer more consistently, so that it dominates our work and personal life.

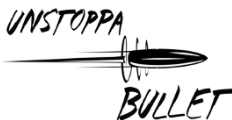


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**"Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself."—Leo Tolstoy (AZ Quotes 2017)**

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In my work consulting with retail clients like automotive dealers, I frequently observe sales representatives in both undertaker categories. On one hand there is "five-car Fred"—the underachiever—whom no one can count on to lift the team to a new level, and who predictably performs at substandard levels. But there's also "25-car Ted," who consistently leads the sales board, but thinks his high performance is a permission slip to live above the rules and values that the lesser performers are held accountable for. He comes in late, shortcuts processes, does not attend training, is not overly concerned about the rest of the team, and frequently conducts the "meeting after the meeting" at the watercooler to talk about how what was discussed by management is stupid, is irrelevant, or will never work.



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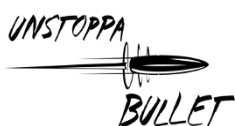
**If toxic achievers threaten to leave because they do not want to live your values, let them go. It's kind of like the trash taking itself out.**

---

## It's the Mindset

Incidentally, undertakers in both categories may be knowledgeable and highly skilled, possess impressive credentials, and be blessed with

copious talent. But their mindset is seriously flawed, and all those aforementioned assets and advantages are never fully activated as a result. There are those who spend an inordinate amount of their personal and professional lives demonstrating undertaker characteristics who may be considered largely successful, but still miss their potential by miles.



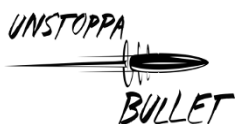
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**No one individual can make another person an undertaker. Rather, undertakers cannot get out of their own way. They are products of their own poor decisions and excel in the art of self-destruction.**

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In summary, it is time to acknowledge where your self-destructive mindsets and actions have sabotaged your personal and professional life, and renounce those things immediately. You can change them. No one else but *you* can. It is not acceptable to do less than you are able. There is no way that is okay.

Nor is it tolerable to do great work but think you are above the values and behaviors that others must adhere to. In fact, that demonstrates an arrogance and selfishness that is disgusting. The great news is that you can change all of this—not by waiting for someone else to change or for something to change, but by changing your thinking. Life is short. Wake up. You cannot afford to spend one more minute living or working like an undertaker. You can and must do better.



---

**There are three stages of accountability in organizations. Stage one is top-down, which is the most common and weakest. Stage two is peer-to-peer accountability, which is a step up and creates a stronger culture. Stage three is self-accountability, which is where game changers reside (“I do it because I said I would”). Undertakers make stage one their homestead.**

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