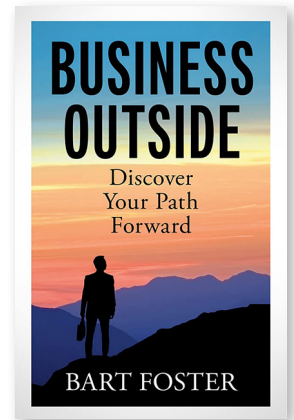


# BusinessOutside

Discover Your Path Forward

by **Bart Foster**



## Contents

Introduction

Page 2

Challenging Conventional Wisdom

Page 2

Energy Management

Page 3

Anchors And Rockets

Page 3

Accelerate The Inevitable

Page 4

Conclusion

Page 4

## THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

As a business executive, how do you ensure you're showing up your very best every day? How do you present the real, genuine you at work? And how do you create a culture where your employees can authentically flourish? Bart Foster wrote his book, *BusinessOutside: Discover Your Path Forward*, to answer all these questions and more.

In *BusinessOutside*, Bart Foster reveals a science-inspired philosophy that reimagines corporate culture by bringing business outdoors, allowing for increased creativity, meaningful connections, and psychological restoration. Through a self-assessment of your personal values and discovery of your Zones of Genius, Bart shows how to rise above societal and outdated corporate norms that hinder growth. You'll learn the benefits of a natural setting, why feeling personally fulfilled matters in your career, and proven practices that will put you on the path toward an authentic, intentional life.

## IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- How to increase creativity, connections, and psychological restoration.
- How to assess your personal values and discover your Zones of Genius.
- How to rise above societal and outdated corporate norms that hinder growth.
- The benefits of working in a natural setting and why feeling personally fulfilled matters in your career.
- Proven practices to put you on the path toward an authentic, intentional life.

## Introduction

Following a science-inspired philosophy, BusinessOutside principles are taught to help people feel psychologically restored. In BusinessOutside retreats, participants are invited to tap into their true, authentic selves in a natural setting. People leave healthier, more creative, inspired, and renewed by experiencing genuine connections. By using BusinessOutside methods, business leaders can create organizational cultures that nurture and empower their people, helping them discover their path forward.

If more companies were made aware of the ways that working outside can bolster productivity and promote happiness, more workers would feel empowered to get outdoors. But the culture needs to change first, and that starts with the leaders. As a leader in your business, you have an opportunity to lead the way outside and establish a tighter team with more authentic connections and relationships as you do.

## Challenging Conventional Wisdom

Challenging conventional wisdom starts with reassessing and asking two key questions:

1. What Problem Are You Trying to Solve?
2. Are You Willing to be Accountable for Your Actions?

A great way to motivate a team is to move fast and be more innovative through a technique called the Five Whys, which taps into the cause-and-effect relationships underlying a particular problem. To use this strategy, start with your problem and ask the question “why” approximately five times to drill into each answer and ultimately identify the root cause of the original problem.

It can cost nothing to be innovative, and it doesn't have to take a lot of time, either. Yes, you can move fast and break things at the same time. How will you challenge the status quo and think outside the box? How might moving beyond conventional wisdom change your business and your life?

## Establishing Deeper Level Connections

The art of building relationships before you need them is only step one; it's the most superficial aspect of relationship building. After this step, you must continue investing in each relationship to deepen the connection and build trust.

There are some simple strategies you can implement to go the extra mile and show people you are interested in getting to know them. These simple steps apply to building relationships in business and the rest of life as well:

- Learn names
- Ask the right questions
- Give handwritten notes
- Add a personal touch

Make a list of five people who inspire you and give you energy. Now determine what meaningful steps you can take to spend more time with these people. Write them down and take that first step. Start small, then build.

## Personal Values Statement

I'm willing to bet that at least one area of your life doesn't reflect your personal values at all. Maybe you value health, but you're not scheduling time to exercise. Maybe you value friendship or personal connection but rarely see the friends who mean the most to you. Perhaps you really value fun and laughter, yet your whole day feels like a grind, from the minute you get up to the minute you go to bed and you can't remember the last time you had a good belly laugh.

Of course, you want to feel personal fulfillment in your career, but if a core value is fun and you don't have that, look at how you can start incorporating more fun, play, and laughter into your life. You don't have to make a dramatic change. Simply determine what fun looks like for you and take a step toward alignment.

## Zone Of Genius

You might be talented in many ways, but there's certainly no reason to spend all your time doing things that don't bring you joy. To find your Zone of Genius, start by answering the following “genius questions:”

- What do I most love to do? (I love it so much I can do it for long stretches of time without getting tired or bored.)
- What work do I do that doesn't seem like work? (I can do it all day long without ever feeling tired or bored.)
- In my work, what produces the highest ratio of abundance and satisfaction to the amount of time spent? (Even if I do only ten seconds or a few minutes of it,

an idea or a deeper connection may spring forth that leads to huge value.)

- What is my unique ability? (There's a special skill I'm gifted with. This unique ability, fully realized and put to work, can provide enormous benefits to me and any organization I serve.)

Some of these questions are professionally oriented, but you can think about how they relate to all areas of your life, including volunteer work, hobbies, and parenting.

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## Energy Management

The most critical resource we have as human beings is our energy. There are four types of energy:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Mental
- Spiritual

It's normal to experience ebbs and flows in energy throughout life, but in order to live an intentional life and be our best selves more of the time, we need to align our energy investments with our purpose.

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## Expand Your Circle Of Comfort

How can you reframe possibilities before you? How can you see the next step as a way to move outside your circle of comfort rather than as risk-taking? Yes, risk might be involved, but at a deeper level you are being called to expand, to grow.

Create a Plan to Fail. It works like this: Write down everything that would happen if you were to fail, on one page. This is your worst-case scenario. It will help you gain the perspective you need. You might realize that what you're about to take on is not going to be fun, but you won't die. Everything will be okay. In a worst-case scenario, you can rebuild. Catastrophizing a situation without truly thinking through a worst-case scenario prevents us from taking action. It keeps us in our circle of comfort.

Nature, in all her wisdom, has a lot to teach us about moving outside our circle of comfort. Take, for example, the mother eagle that pushes her babies out of the nest to learn to fly. It seems cruel, but in reality, that push, as scary and risky as it seems, is exactly what baby eagles need to learn to

soar. And as scary as pushing yourself out of your comfort zone may seem, it's exactly what you need to soar, too.

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## Identifying Your Ideal Environment

When you encounter an opportunity, challenge, or difficult decision, think of a person in your life whom you admire and respect. Imagine if they were faced with the same issue. What would they do?

A variation of this for corporations is called "Brand Take-over." Imagine your company is faced with an opportunity or a threat. Now imagine your company was taken over by another larger company (e.g., Amazon, Apple, Facebook, Nordstrom, etc.). Your company now has all the resources and people of the bigger company. What would you do differently? How would you react? Seeing from this new vantage point can be the key to getting unstuck.

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## Regret Minimization

Let's look at how to prioritize with intentionality by using frameworks like Regret Minimization and Hell Yes or No. Start by considering how long you have left for any given event. Next, you can begin to look at all of the individual experiences you have left based on the time you have. Every time you are faced with a big decision, you can ask yourself which course of action you will regret more: doing the thing or not doing it? If you are honest with your answer, you will know exactly what to do.

To live your best life, you want to minimize the times when you are the one who has to shift because of decisions rather than being the one who decides. However, when we can get to more "Hell Yes" moments in our lives, we will be happier and most productive. The point is to be sure you are performing tasks in your Zone of Genius as often as possible.

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## Anchors And Rockets

In the previous chapters, you assessed your personal values and Zone of Genius on a scale of one to five, with how often you are living that particular value or are in your Zone of Genius, in the previous six months. One was "Never," and five was "Always." Review anything you ranked a three or lower, and then take some time to consider the anchors that might be keeping you at that number. What is holding you back?

## Accelerate The Inevitable

BusinessOutside is all about leaning into the inevitable, and you're invited to come along for the ride. It's incredibly empowering to help drive the future.

1. Think deeply about what is inevitable in your business and your industry
2. Think deeply about what is inevitable in your personal life
3. Write these down clearly and concisely
4. What would happen if you helped accelerate this change?

## Make It Happen

I ask clients the following questions to guide them through the process of reframing their own mindset:

- What are the consequences of your current way of thinking, feeling, and acting?
- What are the facts?
- What assumptions are you making that might not be true?
- What can you control?
- What do you really want, consistent with your deepest values and beliefs?
- What will inspire you to act in new ways?

You can use these same questions to begin telling your new story. Once you realize you have agency over your

mindset and the power to shift limiting beliefs into empowering ones, you have the rocket fuel to arrive at a fulfilled life. You now have the tools to create a future reality that is different from the current life you are living. You have the power to grow, shift, and propel yourself to any destination you have ever imagined.

## Conclusion

While BusinessOutside principles and methods are applicable to all at any time, they are critical in our post-pandemic world. The future of work will be hybrid, and remote workforces will crave flexibility, but still need the connection that can only come through in-person interactions. The return of the corporate retreat is coming, but it won't be like the boondoggles of the past. It will be a place to reenergize and return to alignment in every way.

Now is the time to challenge the status quo, push boundaries, find creative ways to conduct business, and get yourself and your team outside. Now is the time to create a life you love. It's time to do BusinessOutside. It's time to rethink how we do business. And that starts by tapping into your unique skills, passions, and creativity, so that you can then empower your team to do the same. It starts by recognizing there's no "professional" you and "personal" you. There's just you.



Bart Foster is the founder and CEO of BusinessOutside®, a facilitation and training company focused on engaging, inspiring, and empowering individuals and teams to get outside in nature and outside their comfort zones. Bart is an entrepreneur and seasoned global executive who began his career at Kellogg's and Novartis. After climbing the corporate ladder and building a successful healthcare startup, Bart found his true calling as an advisor, speaker, and coach to executives throughout the world.

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