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# Steven Feinberg's sagacity\*

Helping smart leaders  
become smarter

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*Advantage*

*Points allow*

*you to see*

*what others*

*can't*

## How to profit by seeing better than your competitors

**Insights begin by avoiding the 7 Surprising Mistakes of otherwise smart leaders**

*Would you like to gain an Advantage Point others don't even know exists?*

I've helped leaders from start-ups to businesses like Visa, Wells Fargo, Plantronics, and Sun Microsystems.

An Advantage Point is a superior *position, condition, situation or opportunity* that provides a *comprehensive view or commanding perspective*.

Imagine being on the 8th floor of an office building overlooking the free-way traffic and side streets. From here you see a driver trying to get around traffic, but he just made a wrong turn heading him into a major back-up. *You can see what the driver can't see!*

### Benefits

Advantage Points allows you to see what others can't see. Advantage Points provide *penetrating insights in*

*the midst of uncertainty*, improving the quality of your judgment and helping leaders to:

- *Seize opportunities*, create advantages, and influence outcomes.
- *Build consensus* based of your ability to understand behavior.
- *Avoid* being fooled or misguided.

### But, not every leader is so lucky!

*What keeps otherwise smart leaders from advancing to the 8th floor?*

Many leaders fail to achieve an Advantage Point because they make one, or more, of the 7 Surprising Mistakes of Otherwise Smart Leaders. *Are you making any of the following mistakes?*

### Mistake 1: Opportunity Knocking, do not disturb!

When opportunity knocks, do you wear a 'Do Not Disturb' sign? Home Depot was created by several executives whose ideas weren't listened to at their former company. Avoid myopia, success depends on quickly and accurately getting the strategic lay of the land.



**Sagacity:**

*penetrating*

*insights and*

*sound judgments*

*which enable you*

*to guard against*

*the designs of*

*others and to*

*turn everything to*

*your best possible*

*advantage.*

*Advantage  
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**Mistake 2: Blinded by Blind Spots,  
we don't see what we don't see**

People have different talents; they can't, and don't, do everything equally well. An Advantage Point is to play to our strengths, recognize that we have blind spots, and listen to the person with the know-how in each situation.

**Mistake 3: Perceptual Biases,  
we think we're thinking...but are we?**

We selectively perceive solutions based upon what we already know. Our 'anchoring' bias is a tendency to focus on existing or initial information. Test the anchor with a strong counter-weight argument.

**Mistake 4: Unchecked Consistency,  
too much of a good thing**

Consistency in the face of changing conditions may cause us to constantly play catch up. Check your over commitment to consistency—it's like throwing good money after bad.

**Mistake 5: Reactivity, playing to  
avoid losing**

Even competent leaders can get defensive by "playing to avoid losing." To move forward, choose an *outcome orientation*, instead of a reactive mindset.

**Mistake 6: Unproductive Persistence,  
sticky problems get stickier**

Persistence is a virtue, but persisting in doing things that don't work is counterproductive. Recurrent people problems mean you need to *listen differ-*

*ently, avoid repetitious behavior, and do something unexpected* for a change.

**Mistake 7: Competing Against Yourself,  
invisible structural forces**

Effectiveness is undermined by trying to attain competing goals, i.e., *rewarding individual initiative while emphasizing teamwork*; or *mandating improved product quality with unrealistic shipping dates*. These conflicts will continue to waste your best efforts unless you fix the lack of alignment.

**Conclusion**

An Advantage Point helps smart leaders become smarter, enabling them to see what others don't even know *exists*. The Seven Surprising Mistakes smart leaders make produce disadvantages instead of opportunities, reinforcing their myopia and preventing the attainment of an Advantage Point.

In upcoming issues of Sagacity, I will address each mistake in greater detail, and outline positive ways you can avoid each Hidden Mistake.

**Get help now!**

But, if you can't wait for upcoming issues of this newsletter, contact me and I can help you immediately create your own Leadership Advantage Point.

Call me 650-852-0574, or e-mail me at [Steven@stevenfeinberginc.com](mailto:Steven@stevenfeinberginc.com) to sign up for my free *Sagacity* newsletter and advance notice of upcoming events.



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