

THE EXPERT TRAP **ESCAPE PLAN** **BRIEFING**



UNDERSTANDING THE EXPERT TRAP

The Expert Trap test is designed to help experienced and high performing subject matter experts understand whether they have fallen into the Expert Trap.

In our work over the past nine years, we've worked with thousands of superb subject matter experts in IT, Data, Policy, Science, Finance, Engineering, Health, HR, Marketing and so on, who have fallen into the Expert Trap.

We use our Expertship publications, learning initiatives, programs and coaches to help these experts escape.

In our Expert Trap Test, you were asked to rate how yourself against 10 typical "trapped" behaviours.

In this document, we describe why these behaviours are problematic for subject matter experts, and some simple ideas on how to fix the problem.

We encourage you to choose the two or three questions where you scored yourself "Like Me" or "Completely like me" and work on those first.

If you want further ideas, you can visit [Alix](#), our virtual AI Expertship mentor. From Alix you'll get generic advice informed by the Expertship Institute's world leading learning materials and datasets.

We highly recommend **human coaching** to assist you getting to grips with some of these challenges. The advice below is by its nature generic and not customised to your particular needs and role, and the specific challenges you face. A human coach can help you really sharpen your focus and deliver a real payoff from the effort you put in. You can explore some career changing options on the www.expertship.com website under the "Investing in your growth" tab.

TRAP 1

MY NETWORK COMPRISES OF MOSTLY THE COLLEAGUES WITH WHOM I WORK CLOSELY.

Why is this a problem?

Having a network primarily consisting of close colleagues can limit your perspective and opportunities. While it's great to have strong relationships within your immediate circle, relying solely on them can lead to a narrow, somewhat institutionalised view of the world. This can hinder your ability to anticipate emerging customer/citizen needs, industry trends and innovations, all of which often originate outside your organisation. If you don't address this problem, you'll end up stuck working in your own technical bubble, far removed from the bigger picture happenings in your organisation. You won't be able to have the impact and influence you ought to and desire to have.

How do I fix it?

Expanding your network beyond close colleagues allows you to engage with a more diverse stakeholder group. Internal stakeholders might be peers in other parts of the organisation, or managers of peers you work closely with. External stakeholders might include such as former colleagues, industry peers, and thought leaders. This broader internal and external network can provide valuable insights, referrals, and opportunities for growth. It also helps improve your personal brand and organisational knowledge, making you more adaptable and influential.

Shaping an “escape plan”. Here are some practical actions to consider:

- Create a stakeholder map (read an article on how to do this [here](#)) which includes stakeholders you'd like to get to know and understand better. Be deliberate in reaching out to targeted stakeholders.
- Re-energise lapsed relationships. Reconnect with 1–2 former colleagues each month.
- Join or re-engage with a professional association. Use attending events as an opportunity to validate or challenge your views and approaches.
- Attend one high-value industry event each quarter. Make time for it, no excuses. Set a calendar reminder to follow up with new contacts within 48 hours.

How to do all of these things, and most escape plan actions listed below, are described in detail in our text book for Subject Matter Experts, [Master Expert](#). And you can ask [Alix](#).

How would a human coach help?

We'd help you analyse your stakeholder map, explore information sources likely to be most valuable, and prepare you to reset and re-energise key stakeholder relationships.

TRAP 2

I AM THE GO-TO PERSON TO FIX PROBLEMS, WHICH MEANS I AM CONSTANTLY INTERRUPTED.

Why is this a problem?

Being the go-to person for fixing problems can lead to constant interruptions, which is detrimental for several reasons. It can drain your time and energy, leaving you with little room for strategic, high-value work. Indeed, constant interruptions tend to mean you never get to work on that high value work where you can uniquely make a difference. This pattern of interruptions can also lead to burnout and reduce your overall productivity, effectiveness, and job fulfilment. You end up constantly fixing problems rather than doing meaningful work.

How do I fix it?

To address this issue, it's important to conduct a pattern analysis to identify common problems and their root causes. What is generating the most common interruptions? What is driving people to come to you rather than self-fixing the issue? By understanding these patterns, you can develop proactive solutions, such as re-engineering processes or implementing training programs to reduce the frequency of these interruptions.

Additionally, learning to say 'no' effectively is *crucial*. Most experts we work with really struggle with this, because it is in their nature to want to help. But helping one or two people who are needy all the time gets in the ways of developing solutions that help many people. Most experts' job is to help the many not the few. This means you need to set firm boundaries and manage priorities to protect your focus. Techniques like 'Yes, but...' and time framing ("I can do this but not for x days ...") can help you diplomatically decline tasks that don't align with your strategic goals. There is a great chapter in [Master Expert](#) describing "The Art of Saying No".

Shaping an "escape plan"

Here are some practical actions to consider:

- Keep a log of common issues and analyse them for patterns. You could also keep a log of those colleagues who interrupt you most, and work to discover how to help them help themselves.
- Practice saying 'no' using diplomatic techniques.
- Provision and prioritise time for high-value tasks and delegate routine ones. Consider where you can uniquely add value (and do that work) and where you add little value (and de-prioritise that work).
- Build a story about why you need to focus on high value work and therefore can't help individual colleagues. Validate this with your manager. Then be prepared to engage in courageous conversations with stakeholders to manage expectations.
- Reflect on your current workload and identify tasks that can be delayed or declined, or tasks which you should never have said yes to in the first place.

These actions lead you to focus more on strategic impact rather than just continuing to do, day-in and day-out basic work. It means you'll enjoy your work because you can see the difference it is making far more easily and often. And you can ask [Alix](#).

How would a human coach help?

We'd help you analyse your current work patterns and help you explore why you are the go-to person. We'd help you establish work priorities, prepare you to negotiate these with key decision-makers, and then help you shape narratives to be able to say no diplomatically, building relationships rather than breaking them. We'll help you explore why you might be falling into the trap of helping when you shouldn't be.

TRAP 3

I HAVE MORE WORK ALLOCATED TO ME THAN IS POSSIBLE TO DO WITHIN REASONABLE WORKING HOURS.

Why is this a problem?

Having more work allocated than can be completed within reasonable working hours is problematic because it can lead to stress, burnout, and decreased productivity. When you're constantly overwhelmed, it becomes difficult to focus on the high-value tasks where you make the most difference, and consequently your overall effectiveness can suffer. This situation can also impact your work-life balance, leading to dissatisfaction and disengagement.

If you are a super-efficient and masterful expert, then you'll automatically attract more work, because your stakeholders know you can be trusted to do a great job. In many ways, the best experts are their own worst enemies in this respect. Worse, you'll have multiple stakeholders, and they will pile work on to you without any awareness that other stakeholders are doing the same.

In our experience, no one can fix this challenge except the expert themselves. We all like to believe it is everyone else's fault, and life is unfair, but if we are being objectively analytical, deep down we know it's our fault and we must address the problem ourselves. If you are waiting for someone else to fix this problem, we believe you'll be waiting a very long time.

Most successful subject matter experts take time to deliberately focus on spending the right amount of time on the right tasks for the right reasons (maximum strategic impact). This is course is not as easy to do as it is to write.

How do I fix it?

To address this issue, it's important to start at what we call "70,000 feet" – at a very high level. Experts must contemplate where they can add the most value to the organisation and be able to articulate the what and the why really clearly to all stakeholders. Once you've a clear view of what you should be doing, you can analyse patterns in work requests that you should not be doing. You'll need a clear plan on how to either stop or delegate work that is low value and prioritise work that is high value. This means you might need to start training and mentoring other staff initially (even more work!), to build their capability to do work only you previously could. Trust us, it is worth the effort.

Learning to say 'no' effectively is crucial, as we discussed earlier. Becoming a master prioritiser allows you to focus on tasks that deliver the most value and avoid being overworked. Use your calendar to manage tasks and meetings effectively and engage in courageous conversations to negotiate realistic timelines. And you can ask [Alix](#).

Shaping an "escape plan"

Here are some practical actions to consider:

- Work out what work allows you to add unique value.
- Work out what work you should not be doing. Then figure out who could do it.
- Consider which more junior experts would be open to mentoring and training, building their capability. Work with them to delegate tasks. These colleagues are unlikely to work directly for you, so you'll need to persuade their manager that the work you are delegating is valuable for their growth and engagement.

- Get good at mentoring. This is really you developing your “Expert as Coach” skills. There is a great chapter in [Master Expert](#) on this.
- Gather your major stakeholders together and ask them to agree what percentage of your time they should be allocated. This is a highly challenging conversation, but one which will literally change your day-to-day world. Getting the help of a Expertship coach to plan this might be a very good investment. (Get your stakeholders to pay for it!)

How would a human coach help?

Working with a coach will provide you with a direct experience of how coaching and mentoring works. We would help you assess your current mentoring and knowledge transfer skills and explore way in which you can build the capability for junior colleagues faster and more effectively. We could also help you prepare for key courageous conversations with specific stakeholders, considering their seniority and personalities.

TRAP 4

I FEEL I COULD CONTRIBUTE POSITIVELY TO LARGER IMPACT, WHOLE-OF-ORGANISATION PROJECTS, BUT DON'T VOLUNTEER BECAUSE OF MY CURRENT WORKLOAD.

Why is this a problem?

Not volunteering for larger impact projects due to your current workload can limit your professional growth and the strategic value you bring to your organization. It can prevent you from developing skills that are crucial for long-term success and from contributing to initiatives that align with organisational goals. This situation can also affect your visibility and influence within the organization, as larger projects often provide opportunities to showcase your expertise and technical leadership abilities. Most importantly, it means you miss out on the fun stuff.

The more you miss out on contributing to these larger scale projects, the more invisible you become, because others who have been involved are first in the pecking order for the *next* big project.

Experts we work with often tell us that the bigger projects would be “nice to have” but aren’t critical right now. Or that “another one will come along”. We’d encourage you to suspend this mindset – working on bigger projects helps you do an even better job on your smaller ones, and most importantly, they extend your experience, capabilities, and fulfilment. These projects are not “nice to do”; they are “must do” if you are to fulfil your potential.

How do I fix it?

To address this issue, you’ll need to be proactive. These project opportunities won’t necessarily magically come to you – you’ll have to go and find out about them. And the ones that do come to you might not be the best ones for you to be involved with.

Start by proactively engaging with stakeholders outside your immediate domain to understand the broader organisational strategy. What big projects are going on out there, or are coming up? What skillsets will they want represented on those project teams? Which projects would be the best fit for you, where you can make the most telling contribution?

Here are some practical actions to consider:

- Create a plan to gather intelligence about what key projects are coming up that you would like to work on. Leverage your expanded network of colleagues (see solutions Trap 1).
- Become a student of your organisation and understand what the strategic priorities are. Contemplate what projects would enable you to contribute to the execution of this strategy the best. There is a great chapter in [Master Expert](#) on this.
- Build a sales pitch about where and how you add the most value. Getting on to some of these projects will be competitive, and you will need to have a coherent, well considered argument as to how you can add value and contribute. Don’t assume that stakeholders will have a good understanding of the work you have and could do. A coach can help you shape this – or perhaps seek advice from colleagues.
- Understanding how you add the most value is a difficult task. You might want to consider undertaking a 360-degree survey, which gathers anonymous feedback from a whole range of stakeholders. Our Expertship360 survey, designed specifically for subject matter experts, has been completed by thousands of experts and the feedback from the participants has always been the same – they tell us it was one of the most

valuable exercises they have ever completed. Check out this [article](#) to understand why. It is very effective and far more comfortable to be able to quote your stakeholders rather than yourself when describing how you add value.

- Most important of all: be proactive! And you can ask [Alix](#).

How would a human coach help?

We'd help you analyse the projects where you could add most value and help you refine your pitch. We'd help you finesse your intelligence gathering plan. We'd help you understand, leverage and contribute to your organisation's strategy. If you wished to pursue a 360-degree survey, we'd help you shape your respondent list and provide expert feedback.

TRAP 5

I HAVE ADVANCED UNDERSTANDING OF MY IMMEDIATE FUNCTION AND DEPARTMENT, BUT I KNOW FAR LESS ABOUT THE REST OF MY ORGANISATION.

Why is this a problem?

Having an advanced understanding of your immediate function but limited knowledge about the rest of your organization can be problematic because it may lead to a siloed perspective. This can hinder your ability to contribute to broader organizational goals and limit your professional growth. Without a comprehensive view, you might miss opportunities for collaboration and innovation that could benefit both you and the organisation.

How do I fix it?

To address this issue, it's important to proactively network outside your domain. Engaging with stakeholders across different departments can provide valuable insights into the organization's strategy and market context. This helps in aligning your work with strategic priorities and understanding how your role fits into the larger picture.

Consider asking yourself these questions: Am I taking the time to talk about the organisation and its market position with my stakeholders? Do I regularly take the initiative to call or visit them to clarify the context of tasks and inquire about organisational challenges and initiatives?

Shaping an "escape plan"

Here are some practical actions to consider:

- Schedule regular meetings with colleagues from other departments to discuss organisational strategy, challenges and business/citizen imperatives.
- Conduct regular stakeholder catch-ups to understand their needs and priorities.
- Investigate information sources that tell you how the organisation is performing, particularly against competitors or alternatives. Get proficient at understanding how the organisation benchmarks itself against others, and how you might be able to contribute. Marketing and sales might be ideal sources of lots of information, even if these are departments with which you rarely connect. Build your network in these areas.
- Change your reading habits and include more general newsletter about your industry or sector, not just the specialism within which you work.

Finding time for these activities can be hard, but most experts we work with over-estimate the amount of time it might take. Just adding one or two broader questions at the beginning or end of a typically work in progress meeting can gather a lot of useful intelligence.

And swapping out one technical newsletter for a more business orientated one takes 10 minutes a week but can add real value and position you as more than an expert with only technical knowledge. Don't forget, you can also ask [Alix](#).

How would a human coach help?

We'd help you find the information sources and key relationships you need to become an outstanding student of your organisations, and of relevant competitors or alternatives.

TRAP 6

MY FOCUS ON ADDRESSING TACTICAL SHORT-TERM ISSUES COMES AT THE EXPENSE OF THINKING AND ACTING STRATEGICALLY.

Why is this a problem?

Focusing on tactical short-term issues at the expense of strategic thinking can be problematic because it limits your ability to contribute to long-term organisational success. When you prioritize immediate tasks over strategic planning, you may miss opportunities for innovation and improvement. This can lead to inefficient decision-making and a disconnection from broader organisational goals.

Subject matter experts often face challenges in developing strategic thinking due to perceived irrelevance, or disdain for management speak. High workloads and tunnel vision don't help either. These factors can prevent experts from engaging in strategic discussions and understanding the external business or community environment, which is crucial for aligning their work with organisational strategy.

How do I fix it?

To address this imbalance, it's important to proactively engage in strategic thinking and analysis of the market or space your organisation is operating in, and its wider goals. Many of the earlier traps have escape plan suggestions that would be relevant here (we encourage you to read the whole document not just individual items).

Shaping an "escape plan"

Here are some additional practical actions to consider:

- Explore the Eisenhower priority matrix (you'll find lots of information online about this). Many experts are stuck in the "Urgent and Important" quadrant of this four-box grid. Yet the projects we could undertake that add the most value are in Quadrant 2 – "Important but not Urgent". One insight many experts we work with have is that the projects in Quadrant 2 would fix many of the fires that break out in Quadrant 1. There is a great chapter in [Master Expert](#) on this, called "The Expert Energy Engine".
- Consider *time sinks*. By this we mean activities that you are constantly involved in that are a waste of your time. Meetings are usually top of this list with most experts we work with. They spend a lot of time in poorly run meetings when they could be doing meaningful work. There are many tactics you can use to get rid of unwanted meetings, and these are worth exploring. They may save you as much as a day a week, enabling you to create time and space to work on longer term projects that add long term value. There is a great chapter in [Master Expert](#) on this, called "The Madness of Meetings".
- Consider finding an internal mentor to help you with this challenge. Who around you are effective at managing their time, and not getting drawn into short term work all the time? How can you learn from them tactics that might work for you?

How would a human coach help?

We'd help you run a detailed analysis of how you currently spend your time and energy, and where you desire to. We'd help you identify time sinks, and how to eradicate them. We could help identify the traits and experiences you specifically need in a mentor.

TRAP 7

A LOT OF MY WORK IS OFTEN INVISIBLE TO THOSE OUTSIDE OF A SMALL GROUP OF PEOPLE.

Why is this a problem?

This is a very common problem for highly technical subject matter experts. Your work is very complicated, difficult to explain to generalists, and often goes unnoticed because the work you do keeps everything running smoothly.

However, having your work invisible to a broader audience can be problematic because it limits your ability to showcase your existing contributions and impact, and how you might be able to contribute in the future. It limits the recognition you receive for your work, which can be irritating. When your work isn't visible, it may also lead to missed opportunities for collaboration and innovation, as others may not be aware of your expertise and achievements.

How do I fix it?

This is a very challenging trap to fix because the experts we work with are cautious – as they should be – about telling everyone how great their work is. And many experts we work with are not particularly proficient at explaining in simple terms what it is they actually do (they tend to use over-complicated explanations, which means colleagues lose interest). So, the key actions to resolve this problem involve doing some preparation work on your one-minute explanation of what you do, and how you add value. Once this is done, you'll need to develop versions of these explanations – some more technical for those around you who are also technical, and some non-technical explanations for when you are connecting with generalists or senior management.

Shaping an "escape plan"

Here are some practical actions to consider:

- Develop a value pitch – how does the work I do benefit the organisation, what are the day-to-day challenges, and what would happen if I didn't do this work. Keep it short. Test this description on some friendly stakeholders and finesse the messaging.
- Develop a one-minute interrogation and ask your colleagues what it is that they do in more detail. Really listen to the way they describe their work and perhaps deploy some of the tactics they use to improve your own value pitch.
- In stakeholder meetings ask for feedback on how valuable the work you do is to those stakeholders, and how might you improve it? You'll find very often they see benefits of the work you do that you haven't thought about, and again, this helps you perfect for value pitch. There is a helpful chapter in [Master Expert](#) on this, called "Intelligent networking".
- Focus on explaining the "why" of your work not just the "what". For many experts we work with, the "why" of their work is obviously, so they assume everyone understands the why. But this is rarely true – we are close to what we do we can see the "why" clearly, but many of our colleagues cannot.

How would a human coach help?

We'd help you develop a meaningful and effective value pitch that isn't self-promoting. This isn't easy to do by yourself. We'd help you do a deep dive into the "why" of your work, and its impact, and how to articulate that value in different versions to different groups. We'd help you explore your networking mindset and assist you in embracing networking as intelligence gathering.

TRAP 8

THE GAP BETWEEN MY SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE AND THOSE OF JUNIOR COLLEAGUES IS VAST, BUT I DON'T HAVE THE CAPACITY TO ADDRESS IT.

Why is this a problem?

The gap between your skills and experience and those of junior colleagues can be problematic because it may limit your ability to effectively delegate more basic tasks to junior colleagues, leaving you having to do routine work rather than having more impact with high value work. This leaves you very stuck in the Expert Trap.

We hear all the time from experts that they don't have the time to train more junior colleagues. The reason is they are doing work that the junior colleagues should be doing. Another explanation we often hear is that the junior colleagues are too junior, and whenever the senior expert has conducted training, the junior colleagues "didn't get it". In our experience this is because the experts over-complicate the learning early on, and junior colleagues disengage because they simply don't understand what the expert is talking about.

This is really an issue of how effective you are as an expert at building knowledge transfer programs that resonate with colleagues and which are engaging and effective. It is also a measure of how advanced and effectively you mentoring and coach.

If you can't build the capability of the junior colleagues around you, you will be forever stuck in the Expert Trap. This will affect your performance, impact team performance and the overall success of your department and organisation. Addressing this gap is crucial for fostering a collaborative, learning, efficient and innovative work environment.

How do I fix it?

While you are already an expert in your technical specialism, the most successful experts who have escaped the Expert Trap have become experts at knowledge transfer. They design effective learning programs, mentor and coach junior colleagues effectively, and this allows them to delegate a great deal of more basic work to their junior colleagues.

One challenge many experts we work with face is they have rarely been exposed to good role models in knowledge transfer. Often, they have been left to learn their skills on their own. This has two negative impacts: experts assume this is what everyone needs to do, and they don't actually know how to design effective learning initiatives.

Shaping an "escape plan".

Here are some practical actions to consider:

- Undertake an objective analysis of how you learned what you now know. Experts who do this quickly realise they learnt by doing (not being talked at), but they also learned things in a particular sequence. As professional educators we call this scaffolding – where you need to learn and master skill A, before you can go on to learn and master skill B, and so on. Sometimes this means you need to think back to many years previously, the days when you knew hardly anything at all. Structure your learning initiatives for junior colleagues around these insights.
- Use scenarios to illuminate learning. In our programs we use scenarios all the time. This involves thinking of a problem you as an expert solved and then asking a more junior group to consider how they would go about solving the problem. This is in effect helping junior colleagues learn from doing, but in a safe environment (they won't be able to break anything).

- Identify more foundational tasks that require less skill and experience to master, and delegate and coach junior colleagues on these first. Understand that the junior colleague will gradually get up to speed with what you do, not all at once.
- Identify colleagues worth coaching. Not everyone is ready for your mentoring and coaching. Look around to see who will be immediately worth investing time in. Start with the quick learners. Later, they can help the slower learners rather than you.

All of these tactics require experts to think strategically, and plan a process for learning that is properly timed, sensibly sequenced, and followed up by mentoring and coaching support. This is an ideal topic for a coaching session with an Expertship coach. Don't forget, you can also ask [Alix](#).

How would a human coach help?

We'd help you do an audit of your knowledge transfer skills and build your mentoring and coaching skills. We'd provide feedback on training program designs.

TRAP 9

WHEN ASKED BY COLLEAGUES, I ALWAYS HELP – I RARELY SAY NO.

Why is this a problem?

Saying 'no' more often is considered good behaviour for experts because it helps in setting boundaries and managing priorities effectively. When experts say 'no,' they protect their focus and avoid overload, which is crucial for maintaining high performance and credibility. By prioritizing tasks that align with strategic goals, experts can ensure that their efforts contribute to the most important outcomes, rather than being diluted by less critical demands. If you are always saying yes to every demand, you are, in effect, prioritising on the basis of request from colleagues rather than what is actually important work for you to complete.

How do I fix it?

Many of the tactics described to solve Trap 2 are applicable here. To feel justified in saying no to stakeholders, we need to be able to clearly articulate what we have said yes to and why these tasks are more important.

The ability to say 'no' is a professional skill that involves assessing current workload objectively and communicating decisions clearly. It helps experts avoid burnout and maintain long-term trust with stakeholders. Saying 'no' is not about refusal – it's about prioritisation, professionalism, and influence. It allows experts to take ownership of their time and energy, ensuring they can deliver high-value work without compromising quality.

Shaping an "escape plan"

Here are some practical actions to consider:

- Remind yourself of what your major responsibilities are, and the work flows that are involved in delivering that value. Make sure this work is planned and prioritised in your diary. Only fit in other requests around these priorities, not the other way around. Use your diary to plan your whole time not just meetings.
- Look back and reflect. What work did you spend time on over the last quarter, and what was a good use of your time, and what was not? How can you avoid low value work during the next quarter?
- Reframe your mindset to view saying 'no' as a responsible professional decision.

Don't accept timelines that are imposed upon you without any reference to you are consideration of other work priorities you have. Engage in courageous conversations to manage expectations and negotiate realistic timelines. You can ask [Alix](#) about this.

How would a human coach help?

We'd help you explore how your generous personality leads you to saying yes far too often and explore ways for you to begin to change this behaviour. Getting the balance right between saying no and doing so in a way which maintains relationships and builds rather than destroys your personal brand is a delicate balancing act. We can help you navigate that path.

TRAP 10

I GET FRUSTRATED WHEN STAKEHOLDERS CAN'T SEE THE OBVIOUS BENEFITS OF MY IDEAS.

Why is this a problem?

When stakeholders can't see the obvious benefits of your ideas, it can be frustrating because it limits the potential impact and value your contributions can bring to the organization. This lack of recognition can hinder collaboration and innovation, as stakeholders may not fully understand the strategic importance of your proposals.

When we are working with experts who share this frustration, we ask them to consider why their stakeholders don't understand the benefits of their ideas. We explore a long list of possible reasons, and these tend to vary stakeholder by stakeholder. Stakeholders may lack knowledge, or technical understanding. They may lack context. They may simply be more interested in ideas of others rather than ours. Effectively making a case for change, for an investment in time and resources or money, or making a case for doing something differently is a highly advanced skill and most experts need to really think hard about the best way to do this. A simple technical argument rarely gets cut through.

How do I fix it?

It's crucial to engage stakeholders by linking your ideas to their felt needs and demonstrating how your proposals address their priorities. This involves gathering evidence to show the impact of your ideas and using emotional intelligence to communicate effectively. By understanding their perspectives and aligning your proposals with their goals, you can increase buy-in and support. You have to see the benefits of your idea through their eyes not yours.

Shaping an "escape plan"

Here are some practical actions to consider:

- Spend time seeking to engage others and elicit their buy-in to your projects. Explore what it would take to get their buy-in and why. Note that reasons for buy-in will vary between stakeholders.
- Position your proposals to demonstrate how they address stakeholders' needs, align with strategy, and benefits the customers and citizens affected. What problem are you trying to solve and why? When you are presenting new ideas or approaches, the why comes first, then the what.
- Proactively seek feedback to understand how your ideas are perceived and adjust accordingly. Because an idea is rejected the first time doesn't mean, if presented more effectively, it won't succeed the second time around.
- Reflect on your self-awareness and the impact of your actions on others. How are you being experienced when you put your ideas forward? How could you connect with the key decision-makers more effectively?

There is a helpful chapter in [Master Expert](#) on this, called "The Desire to Influence".

How would a human coach help?

We'd help you explore your currently influencing style and tactics, and consider how effective they are, stakeholder by stakeholder. We'd help you identity which influencing tactics are currently under-used, but which might be effective with particular stakeholders. Typically, in these sessions we would help you shape a particular argument for a particular stakeholder.

GOOD LUCK WITH SUCCESSFULLY EXECUTING YOUR ESCAPE PLAN

This page describes additional support mechanisms provided from the Institute to help you, should you need it.

Feedback: please send your feedback on the test and this Escape Plan Briefing to info@theexpertshipinstitute.org. We are constantly trying to improve the experience of all subject matter experts worldwide.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

COACHING FOR SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS

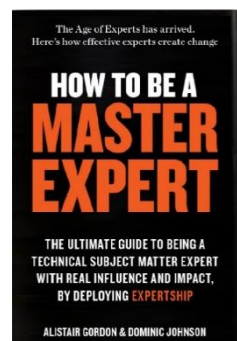
Coaching is surprising inexpensive and extremely effective. It is available virtually worldwide from the Institute's delivery partners. Visit www.expertship.com/ for more information.

ALIX – YOUR VIRTUAL AI MENTOR

You can ask Alix anything about Expertship – Alix is the expert on Expertship. [Click here for free access.](#)

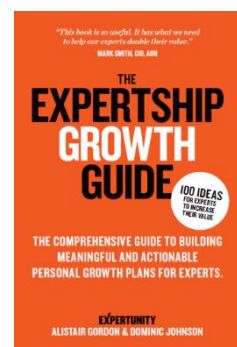
MASTER EXPERT

This book is the ultimate guide to escaping the Expert Trap and becoming a Master Expert. [Click here for access.](#)



EXPERTSHIP GROWTH GUIDE

102 ideas on how to build your expertise, influence and impact. [Click here for access.](#)



MASTERING EXPERTSHIP

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