

Member's Quarterly

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Feature

High Performance Jewels

Manage your energy instead of your time

Research shows how our bodies teach us. An Executive Coaching client looking to elevate his already high performance had enjoyed a prior career as a world-class athlete. He was accustomed to what it took to perform consistently at the highest levels and under intense competitive pressures.

In an assessment testing his behaviours and attitudes, he scored high on perfectionistic and competitive capabilities, but couldn't understand how he seemed to struggle getting to that next level in his business career. Through Executive Coaching, we noticed that his success was directly linked to feelings of pressure. In his former life as a world-class athlete, his adrenalin got pumping around intense training sessions and competition time. During these periods of inward focus, competition drove him to repeatedly perfect himself and his performance.

In the business world, his success was centered in managing chaos that often led to missed deadlines and a feeling of extreme fatigue after projects. Faced with relentless demands on his career and disappointment in his perceptions of his performance, he became short-tempered and easily distracted. His business relationships and team participation became less than desirable — people were beginning to avoid him. Though a fondness for perfection in competition is healthy, the competitive craving for perfection that had served him so well as a world-class athlete was sabotaging his business world success.

Some of us unconsciously recreate crises or take on new ones. If our success has been shaped out of pressure-filled situations, then the sense of being overwhelmed can feel familiar and even comfortable; so we recreate it over and over. We unconsciously desire the pressure that drives us to perform. Being starved for sufficient time, we put in more and more hours.

Research shows that our bodies can function well in short periods of crisis mode — but there isn't a great deal of energy left to push harder. Everything we do from interacting with clients and colleagues, to making important decisions, to being with friends and families, requires energy. Many believe that if you find talented people and equip them with the right skills for the challenge at hand, they will perform at their best. Our experience has proven that energy also needs to be induced positively to fully ignite that talent and skill in a sustainable way. Energy in the form of physical activity and the emotion generated from it positively influences our perceptions, interactions, moods and thoughts.

In a recent article, Harvard Business Review explained research that supports how "We "catch" energy through our interactions with people — something called "relational energy"— and it affects our performance at work. It affects our families at home with the same relational energy. High performance is grounded in the skillful management of energy rather than time. If you could wake up tomorrow with substantially more positive, focused energy (enough to invest both in the workplace and at home), how significantly would that change your life for the better?



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