

Promoting Performance

Performance Matters
Inc

Volume 3 No. 1
January-February 2008

Enhancing Expertise in Business, Sport & Life

On the cutting edge: Experts' Pressured Decisions

Effective decision making has thought to be dependent on two processes: slow processes for information search and analysis, and fast processes for pattern recognition and response. Two studies recently tested this theory. First, the performance of players of varying expertise were tested with online chess games using different time controls. Second, the effect of time control on performance in world



championship matches was examined. Both studies show skill differences diminish between players as the time controls were tightened.

These results indicate that slow processes are important for expert players. An increase in time pressure hinders the ability to engage in the information search and analysis necessary for expert decision making.

Source: Van Harreveld, et al., (2007). The effects of time pressure on chess. *Psychological Research*, 71, 591-597.

Inside this issue:

The 12 Executive Skills 2

Collaborative Teams 2

Executive Coaching 2

Disabilities & Expertise 3

How to Find Opportunity 3

Mentoring Skills 3

Sonnet 29 4

Overconfident?



Experts may be susceptible to being overconfident according to the latest research. One study found that expert chess masters significantly overestimated

the number of chess piece positions they could recall. In music and science, the same phenomenon appeared: the experts far overestimated the amount of written information they could remember. Perhaps it is the many successes they have grown accustomed to, but the research is clear: experts can be overly confident in judgments related to their field of expertise. There is hope, however. In a study of

weather forecasters, experts demonstrated greater caution and more conservative estimates than experts in other fields. Perhaps we should all take a cue from weather forecasters and be a bit more cautious and conservative estimating our skill, knowledge and future success.

Source: Ericsson, A. et al. (2006). *Expertise and Expert Performance*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge Univ. Press.

The Four Principles of Enduring Success

In a study of Europe's oldest and best companies, 4 principles underscored their success:

1. Exploitation before exploration. Great companies explore all opportunities, but put a priority on exploiting cur-

rent assets.

2. Diversify portfolio. Great companies are adaptive and diversify their supply bases, products, customers, and markets.

3. Remember mistakes. Great companies do not repeat mistakes, but rather

learn from them.

4. Conservative about change.

Great companies undergo radical change only at very select moments and with caution.

Source: Stadler, C. (2007). The 4 principles of enduring success. *Harvard Business Review*, July, p. 62-72.

There are three categories of people in industry—the few who make things happen, the many who watch things happen, and the overwhelming majority who have no idea what happened.

--Battista

www.PerformanceMattersInc.com

© Copyright Performance Matters, Inc. All rights reserved.

The 12 Executive Skills

Improving any performance means improving the skills required for that performance. Chuck Martin, author of *SMARTS: Are we hardwired for Success*, offers 12 skills for improving executive's performance.

1. Self-Restraint: think then act.
2. Working Memory: retain information while performing tasks.
3. Emotion Control: manage emotions during performance.
4. Focus: don't get distracted.
5. Task Initiation: don't procrastinate.
6. Planning and Prioritizing: map a route using important signposts.
7. Organization: arrange things systematically.
8. Time Management: effective allocation of time to meet deadlines.
9. Defining and Achieving Goals: set and reach objectives.
10. Flexibility: not everything goes as planned.



11. Observation: take a look at yourself in a situation.
12. Stress Tolerance. Thrive under pressure.

Source: Martin, C. (2007) How to play to your strengths. *Performance Magazine*, 15(4), 26

Collaborative Teams

Research out of the London Business School identified 8 factors that lead to building successful collaborative teams.

1. Invest in signature relationship practices. Encourage collaborative behavior by making highly visible investments that demonstrate a commitment to collaboration. An open floor plan, for example, might encourage communication.
2. Model collaborative behavior. When executives demonstrate collaborative behavior, so do those working with them.
3. Create a 'coaching' culture. Mentoring and coaching help establish functional corporate networks.
4. Ensure required skills. Provide opportunities for team members to learn and develop the skills necessary for success.
5. Support a strong sense of community. A community encourages people to reach out to share and help.
6. Team leaders are both task and relationship oriented. Typically, begin a project more in task mode and shift toward relationship

mode once work is in full swing.

7. Build on heritage relationships. Best to put at least a few people who know each other on the team.
8. Understand role clarity and task ambiguity. Collaboration increases with sharply defined roles, yet flexibility in accomplishing the task.

Source: Gratton & Erickson (2007). 8 ways to build collaborative teams. *Harvard Business Review*, November, 100-109

Executive Coaching

Steve Gladis makes the case that executive coaches need to follow a rigorous, systematic method of inquiry to find success for the individual executive or team. Gladis recommends five steps.

Step 1. Pre-Coaching. Interview the executive to establish the purpose and objectives of coaching. Understand who is being coached and why.

Step 2. Self-Discovery and Awareness. The coach and executive work together to discover what motivates the client, their strengths, limitations, likes and dislikes.



Step 3. Goal Setting and Accountability. With assistance from the coach, the executive first verbalizes and then writes the goals for which they will both be accountable.

Step 4. Action Learning and Execution. Executive conducts personal research to solve challenges and build new skills with the coach's guidance.

Step 5. Evaluate and Revise. Based on feedback from key stakeholders, coach and executive revise or establish new goals, thereby resetting the cycle.

Source: Gladis, S. (2007). Executive coaching. *Training + Development*, 61(12), 59-61.

Disabilities & Expertise

Imagine leaving high school having failed mathematics repeatedly and stigmatized since childhood with dyslexia. This was precisely the situation dealt to young Richard Branson. We often hear people speak of high performers as “talented” in some physical or intellectual way. Branson was neither. Given his disabilities, he could never become skilled at reading a contract, but he could become skilled at reading people, situations and opportunities. He could never calculate



Sir Richard Branson

the size of a profit margin, but he could learn to calculate the depth of an individual’s character. Sir Richard Branson used skills he developed to found multi-

ple corporations, including Virgin Atlantic airlines. In the process, he became a billionaire several times over. In short, he developed the skills necessary to make him an outstanding business performer.

Source: Trompenaars, F., & Hampden-Turner, C. (2002). *21 leaders for the 21st century: How innovative leaders manage in the digital age*. New York: McGraw-Hill.



When things are working in a normal pattern, experts tend not to reflect on what is occurring, but rather simply monitor the situation until something seems out of the ordinary. This con-

How to Find Opportunity

verses energy, frees thought for other matters and prevents the expert from getting overly involved in the ordinary. The bigger picture, which is framed by their goals and intentions, remains visible because the expert is not lost in distracting details of the day.

It is in the anomalies of the everyday that offer the early signals of both crisis and opportunity—and sometimes they are one in the same. It is by attending to the atypical that experts are able to seize opportunity or avoid disasters long

before others and thus gain a decided advantage. When attending to the atypical, experts draw upon their extensive and highly organized knowledge to efficiently and economically sift the information to determine their next set of actions. To find opportunity, attend to the atypical.

Source: Schempp, P. (forthcoming). *The 5 Steps to Expert: From Business Beginner to Elite Performer*. Washington, DC: Davies-Black Publishers.

Mentoring Skills

A mentor is perhaps one of the most significant sources of learning for aspiring professionals. Harvard Business School faculty, T. DeLong and J. Gabarro, along with R. Lees formerly of Morgan Stanley recently offered some poignant mentoring points. A good mentor

- .is someone absolutely credible whose integrity transcends the message



- .tells you things you may not want to hear but leaves you feeling that you have been heard
- .interacts with you in a way that inspires you to want to become better.

- .makes you feel secure enough to take risks
- .gives you the confidence to rise above your inner doubts and fears
- .supports your attempts to set stretch goals for yourself
- .presents opportunities and highlights challenges you may not have seen on your own.

Source: DeLong, et. al. (2008). Why mentoring matters in a hypercompetitive world. *Harvard Business Review*, 86(1), 115-121.

PerformanceMatters

Performance Matters, Inc.
809 Commons Park
Statham, GA 30666
USA

Phone: 770 725-9199
FAX: 706 542-3417
E-mail: info@PerformanceMattersInc.com

**Enhancing Expertise
in Business, Sport and Life**

We're on the Web!

To subscribe to our free newsletter
Promoting Performance
log on to:

www.PerformanceMattersInc.com

Do Your People Know?

- **The Actions of Experts**
- **The Five Steps to Becoming Expert**
- **Identify and Develop Top Performers**
- **The 3 Keys to Expertise**
- **Making Decisions That Make a Difference**

Have Dr. Paul Schempp speak at your next meeting.

Contact us at info@PerformanceMattersInc.com

or call (770) 725-9199

Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great.

-Mark Twain, author

You must be the change you wish to see in the world.

-Mahatma Gandhi, activist

That we may fail in the struggle ought not to deter us from the support of a cause we believe to be just.

-Abraham Lincoln, U.S. President

Sonnet 29



William Shakespeare

*When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,
Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts my self almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.*

www.PerformanceMattersInc.com

© Copyright Performance Matters, Inc. All rights reserved.