

Do You Have World-Class Potential

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Are you one of those people who believes you have the talent to do and or to be anything you want?

Could you set a world record or become number one in your favorite sport if you put your mind to it? Could you climb the corporate ladder to become the CEO of a multi-million or multi-billion dollar corporation? The research I've conducted over the past twenty years, and my work with world class performers in both business and sport indicate that people who believe they can be successful at one, but not the other are usually right and often achieve their goal. Those who think they can do both are often their own worst enemy. Their unrealistic self appraisal causes them to spread themselves too thin, and they fail to deliver. Individual's who doubt their ability in both areas don't ever try.

What do Successful CEO's and World Record Holders have in common?

Both CEO's and world record holders are more self-confident, more competitive, and have a greater need to be in control than 85 percent of the general population. Their competitiveness and their high level of self- confidence is what gives them the motivation and the ability to stay focused on the critical issues when it really counts.

Even more important than self-confidence, competitiveness, and desire for control, however, is the fact that successful CEO's and world record holders are honest with themselves. They know their concentration strengths and they know their weaknesses. It's their honesty and self-awareness that allows them to choose the right arenas to compete in. CEO's and world record holders are successful because they play to their strengths and either avoid their weaknesses, or use others to compensate.

World Record Holders and CEO's have different concentration strengths.

Research has taught us there are several different types of concentration. There's the kind of concentration used to be aware of things going on in the world around you. It's this kind of concentration politicians and sales persons use to read the non-verbal behavior of the people they're trying to sell. It's also the type of concentration basketball players like Michael Jordan and Larry Bird use to see the open man.

A second kind of concentration is the one CEO's rely on most heavily. It's the kind of concentration used to "see the big picture", to pull together a lot of information in order to analyze, plan, and predict future business trends. This style of concentration is the one most scientists and academics rely on.

A third style of concentration is the one used to organize information and to stay focused on a particular target. This is the concentration skill world record holders rely on most heavily. It's the ability to narrowly focus concentration which minimizes distractions and

allows people to perfect skills or products.

Knowing and playing to your concentration strengths is critical to success.

You can't do it all. The better you are at "seeing the big picture", the less time you have to focus and follow through on one or two projects. Conversely, the more focused and dedicated you are to a project or idea, the less time you have to consider other issues. Successful CEO's rely on individuals with the concentration skills of world record holders to provide the follow through their organizations need. World record holders, rely on coaches with the ability to see the big picture to help them analyze and plan, to keep them from being so narrowly focused they fail to consider all of the options.

CEO's and world record holders weren't born with greater self-confidence and more awareness than others, they developed it and so can you.

Over the past twenty years I've traveled all over the world helping Olympic and professional athletes and corporate executives and managers perform up to their full potential. I can tell you, that on the way up, most of these individuals suffered from the same anxiety, self-doubt, inability to control frustration and anger, and lack of insight that interferes with the happiness and success of the vast majority of people. Just like everyone else, these individuals had to learn to control thoughts and feelings, they had to develop world class self-confidence and concentration skills, and they had to learn to set realistic goals and play to their strengths.

What are your concentration strengths?

To perform up to your full potential, you need to be aware of your concentration strengths, and relative weaknesses. You can begin that assessment process by answering the following questions as honestly as you can.

When it comes to being aware of things going on in the world around, to quickly reading and instinctively reacting to the moves and feelings of others, I am more capable than ____% of the people I know.

When it comes to analyzing and problem solving, to developing new and creative ideas, and/or ways of doing things, I am more capable than ____% of the people I know.

When it comes to narrowing my attention on a single task, to sticking with a project in order to polish and/or perfect it, I am more capable than ____% of the people I know.

Few people are equally skilled in all areas. World record holders score highest on the item measuring narrowing and focusing concentration (85th percentile). In contrast, CEO's score themselves at the 50th percentile when it comes to narrowing, and at the 85th percentile on the analyzing and planning item. The greater the discrepancy between your scores in these three areas the more important it will be for you to find a performance arena that plays to your highest score.

If you happen to be one of those rare people who sees him or herself as equally skilled in all areas, you may need to examine how you spend most of your time in order to identify your concentration strengths and weaknesses. You can do this in the following way:

Take a moment to think about a typical day and try and estimate the amount of time you spend concentrating in the three different ways that I've described. The total for your three answers should add up to 100 percent.

On a typical day I spend ____% of my time reacting to the world around me.

On a typical day I spend ____% of my time analyzing and planning.

On a typical day I spend ____% of my time polishing things and attending to details.

To see the implications that your scores have for you, let's consider a researcher and a basketball player. A researcher might say he spends 40% of his time analyzing, 50% narrowing his focus to attend to details, and only 10% of his time attending to the world around him. A basketball player on the other hand may spend 60% of his time attending to the world around him, 30% focusing and narrowing his attention, and 10% analyzing.

The more time spent using a particular concentration style, or the more dominant one style is over the others, the more you rely on that type of concentration under pressure. The researcher, when pressed to react on instincts or emotions will fail to do so. Instead, he or she will try to analyze the situation to figure out what the other person wants. In contrast, the basketball player trying to perform in a setting that requires him to think before acting won't analyze, he'll rely too heavily on his instincts.

Do your concentration strengths fit the demands of your job?

Once you've identified your concentration strengths, you need to see how closely they match the demands of your performance arena. That comparison will help you play to your strengths and it will show you where you need to either find others to compensate for a relative weakness, or find some ways to improve in your weaker areas.

The potential of interactive, multi-media training.

Compton's new media has developed an interactive, multi-media, CD-ROM, Focus for Success, that is based on my work. The program not only lets you and the other members of your family to measure your concentration and communication skills, it also lets you see how you measure up to the competition. You can compare your abilities to those of top performers in business or sport, to navy seals, police, NBA players, priests, computer programmers, home makers, musicians, or any of forty other groups.

Once you've identified your strengths and weaknesses, the program teaches you the mental skills top performers rely on for their success, and helps you apply those skills to

real life situations that are of importance to you (e.g, taking tests, giving speeches, performing in front of a critical audience). Finally, there are eight different computer games you can use to develop your concentration skills in the different areas.