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# Moving Mountains by Moving Minds

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New Insights into Employee Peak  
Performance Enhancement by  
Change Enablers

**A Review of Papers Delivered at Conferences of  
The World Confederation of Productivity Science (WCPS)  
By Tor Dahl, Chairman Emeritus of the WCPS**

Assembled and edited by

James A. Rice, Ph.D. for



Octants<sup>3</sup>

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**“If you touch their spirit, they will move their minds. If you move their minds, their hands and feet will follow.”**

Insight into leadership shared with Jim Rice by Elder woman leader of Woman's Coop in rural region of Zimbabwe, Africa

**“A great deal of the value of a company lies in the minds of its employees. The key to success is growing that value by listening to and understanding what lies in their hearts.”** Marilyn Carlson Nelson  
President and CEO, Carlson Companies

For leaders to achieve great organizational performance improvement, most of the best selling authors now cite the importance of: (1) leaders earning followers; (2) leaders becoming “**Change Enablers**”; and (3) leaders relying more on self directed teams. By re-examining the work of Tor Dahl in US and European enterprises, it is now clear why large gains in performance can occur when leaders adopt the new age principles of “mind movers”. Exponential gains in organizational performance can occur if leaders embrace new strategies and tools to connect with “the affective domain”, i.e., the emotions, of their employees and key stakeholders.

This paper introduces some of the key concepts of performance improvement described in a series of papers delivered by Tor Dahl at international conferences of The World Confederation of Productivity Science (WCPS). For additional information on this work, and how to purchase additional resources on performance improvement, please refer to the Tor Dahl website at [www.tordahl.com](http://www.tordahl.com) or to the WCPS website at [www.affaires.com/wcps](http://www.affaires.com/wcps) The papers previously published by Tor Dahl Associates hold US and International copyrights. Nothing from this paper should be reproduced in any medium without the prior written consent of Tor Dahl Associates and Octants<sup>3</sup>

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## Acknowledgements

This monograph seeks to distill several of the important insights into performance improvement learned by the researchers, consultants and clients associated with Tor Dahl Associates during the past 25 years. Working with employers in Europe and North America, Tor Dahl Associates has developed practical lessons about how individuals and organizations can implement sustainable quantum change for high performance and peak productivity.

While these lessons have been shared previously in papers presented by Tor Dahl to The World Confederation of Productivity Science (WCPS), they have not received much recognition in mainline business nor leadership development circles. We hope this review, seasoned with a series of contemporary insights from international thought leaders about performance enhancement, will stimulate discussion about how individuals and enterprises can become more successful and satisfied with their performance.

Tor Dahl can be contacted at  
Tor Dahl Associates  
White Bear Lake, Minnesota  
651-429-3112  
Email: [tor@tordahl.com](mailto:tor@tordahl.com)

James A. Rice, Ph.D. can be reached at  
La Jolla, California  
888-818-0112  
Email: [jamesarice@worldnet.att.net](mailto:jamesarice@worldnet.att.net)



***“We have to engage both the hearts and minds of the performers if we are ever going to get transferable and lasting improvement.”***

Richard F. Gerson PHD

“The Psychological Side of Performance Improvement, “ ISPI,  
May/June 2001

***“Engaged employees drive customer loyalty:  
Jack Welch, the CEO of General Electric, once said, “Any company trying to compete...must figure out a way to engage the mind of every employee.” This is especially true in service industries, where nearly all of the company’s value is delivered to customers by individual employees. But even in pure manufacturing environments, quality products are unlikely to be produced without engaged and committed employees.***

Buckingham and Coffman in

First, Break All The Rules, 1999, 1.247



## Leadership Effectiveness and Employee Engagement

As organizations, industries, and countries slide into economic recession and slow growth, leaders must have new insights to identify obstacles to productivity and innovation (the mountains); and then implement new strategies to overcome these performance mountains to achieve bold economic and customer service gains. Moving mountains in the new economy and among knowledge workers requires new leadership styles and systems. The leader of the future must connect with, and ignite, the emotions and minds of followers. To move mountains, therefore, new leaders must move minds.

The shared theme in this paper is the only constant in our lives: Change. Organizational and individual change. To move minds, leaders must become “Change Enablers.”

High performance leaders have a hunger to better understand how change can be mastered and how we can make it into a positive force in our lives.

What are the limits for our contributions during our brief stay on this earth? What conditions would make these contributions flourish? How can leaders best enable these conditions for peak performance?

This paper reviews how productivity can be improved by more than 200 percent over a short period of time. Using data from the U.S. and Europe, the paper demonstrates how much of this change can be done by an individual (usually about 50% in service industries and 25% in manufacturing industries), and how much can be done by the organization where the individual works (about 50% in most services organizations, and 75% in manufacturing enterprises). We show how much of this change will be easy to do, and how much will be difficult to implement. And in the end, we look at the process of how to create lasting change, and how to develop “Change Enablers”.

### What Is Great Leadership?

***“A leader is a person who has the ability to get other people to do what they don’t want to do, and like it.”***

***Harry S. Truman***

In the powerful text, “Leading Beyond the Walls” by the Drucker Foundation (1999), Peter Senge offers this alternative definition of leadership: Leadership is the capacity of individuals to spark the capacity of a human community – people living and working together—to bring forth new realities” (p. 78). Leadership is about tapping the energy to create. Leadership energizes. It breathes life into an enterprise so the entity or group can achieve an outpouring of new ideas, theories, and methods that yield desired results. Leadership spawns higher levels of performance.

A leader is an individual who significantly affects the thoughts, feelings, and/or behaviors of a significant number of individuals. (Howard Gardner in *Leading Minds*, 1995).



Real leaders not only put energy and enthusiasm into their work and visions and talk... they put people into them. They tell us about theories and new ideas, but each one is painted with color and real life characters. (Maury Cotter in *Real People. Real Work*, SPC Press, 1991).

Leadership is a verb, not a noun. It is defined by what you do, not who you are.

Strong leadership moves people from the present to the future, from zones of where they feel comfortable to uncharted territory. It urges rather than coerces, inspires rather than conspires, fuels rather than controls. The strong leader abandons the hammer of force to the lever of influence. (John Cotter in *The 20% Solution*, Wiley, 1995).

## **What Are the Competencies of a Great Leader for the Challenges of the 21<sup>St</sup> Century?**

Thousands of books exist to describe the attributes of great leaders. A recent study of 44 multinational companies, however, helps clarify the essential competencies that we should be aspiring to and developing toward (*Best Practices in Leadership Development Handbook*, Giber, Carter and Goldsmith, 2000). They concluded that world class leadership development programs should be focused on encouraging 8 competencies during an era of growing globalization, unforgiving markets, ever more sophisticated and demanding consumers and rapidly changing technologies.

### **An excellent leader:**

- 1. Builds teamwork and engagement;**
- 2. Intimately understands the enterprise's business;**
- 3. Harnesses conceptual and systems thinking;**
- 4. Is customer-driven, and values-based;**
- 5. Has a focused drive for important and measurable results;**
- 6. Drives for the short- and long-term economic vitality of the enterprise;**
- 7. Embraces global and cultural sensitivity; and**
- 8. Nurtures emotional intelligence.**



## **Kouzes and Posner distill leadership success factors into five key leadership practices:**

Practice One: Leaders challenge the process and status quo;

Practice Two: Leaders inspire a shared vision;

Practice Three: Leaders enable others to act;

Practice Four: Leaders model the way to peak performance; and

Practice Five: Leaders encourage the heart by keeping hope alive, recognizing the contributions of others and by celebrating the accomplishments of all.

In short, Kouzes and Posner after 15 years of research with over 3000 projects and 100,000 participants, acknowledge the power of people's emotions in effective leadership and in the execution of great plans.

- How do you measure up against these several important competencies?
- What are you doing to continuously develop and enhance these competencies?
- Where can you find role models, mentors and executive coaches to strengthen your mastery of these competencies?
- Where can you find and manage knowledge to enrich your use of these competencies?

### ***The Answers to these questions are...***

- ◆ Not alone.
- ◆ Not in a vacuum.
- ◆ Not without work.
- ◆ Not without asking questions.
- ◆ Not without listening to the answers you get from an eclectic network of friends, family, colleagues, and "competitors."
- ◆ Not without the thoughts and tools outlined in this paper.



## The Octants Secret:

This paper offers new insight into how to overcome obstacles to individual and organizational peak performance in the New Economy. Following the principles in this paper, executives can better create peak performance, anytime, anyplace. Within themselves, their teams, and their organizations.

New peak performance concepts and technologies are key to organizational success in these turbulent times. Unforgiving markets. Fast speed of change. Preoccupation with eCommerce and new IT investments. Total Quality Management. Reengineering process improvements. New angles, Old concepts.

**What does it really take to achieve sustainable change?**

**What do the “Change Enablers” know that helps them guide their clients or their organizations to success?**

**How can a leader best navigate her organization through the shoals of competition, capital generation, and enhanced customer delight?**

A small company operating in Minnesota and Norway, with big data, has found the answers. Octants<sup>3</sup> working in cooperation with Tor Dahl Associates, has found the secret to organizational and individual peak performance enhancement. The secret is not in better plans, but better planning, and most importantly, better implementation. The secret lies buried in the “affective domain” of the minds of an organization’s workers, customers and suppliers; that part of the mind in which emotional connections get made to drive and sustain implementation. The secret is not new technology, but new tutoring of leaders and followers to move from low to high performance domains. The secret is to guide employees, teams, departments and whole organizations from low performance “octants” to high performance “octants.”

What then are these “octants” of the mind’s affective domain, and how can people be coached and supported to move from one to another?

The answers to these questions have recently been mined from a research quarry of data that has been accumulated from European and U.S. organizations over the past 25 years by Tor Dahl Associates. The paper moves through a description of advances in Human Performance Technologies (HPT) championed by the International Society of Performance Improvement (ISPI); and the lessons learned about peak performance by traveling through research into “the eight octants of effective leadership”.

**What are the characteristics of leaders who find themselves in either the low or high performance domains?**

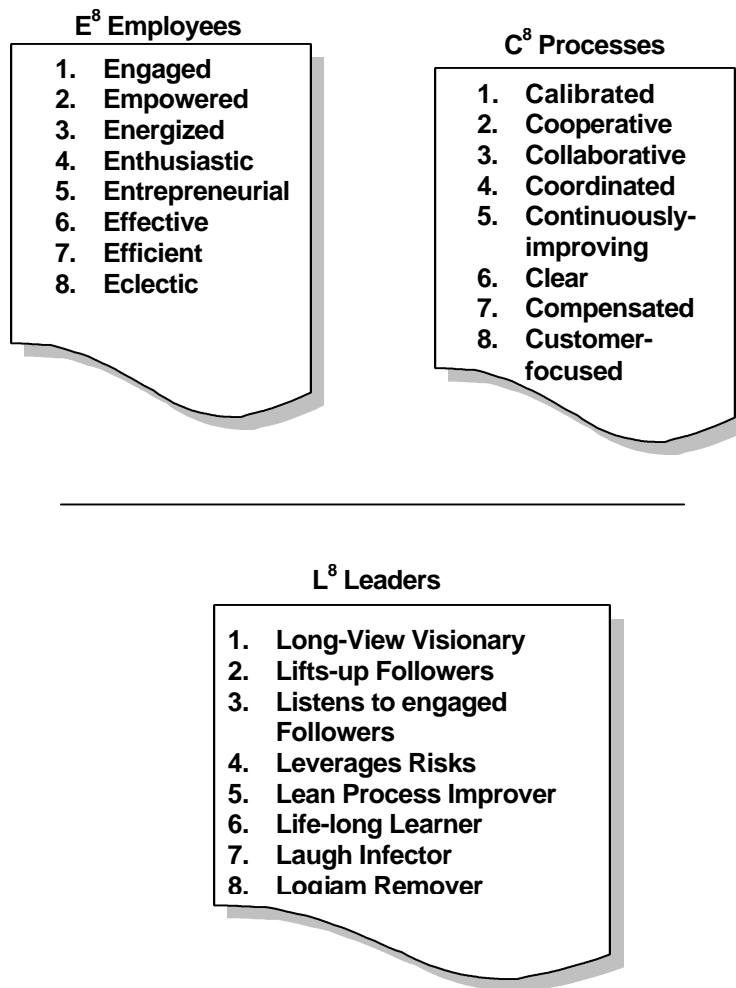
**What are the most frequently cited obstacles to make the move into the high performance domain?**

**What is the high performance domain?**



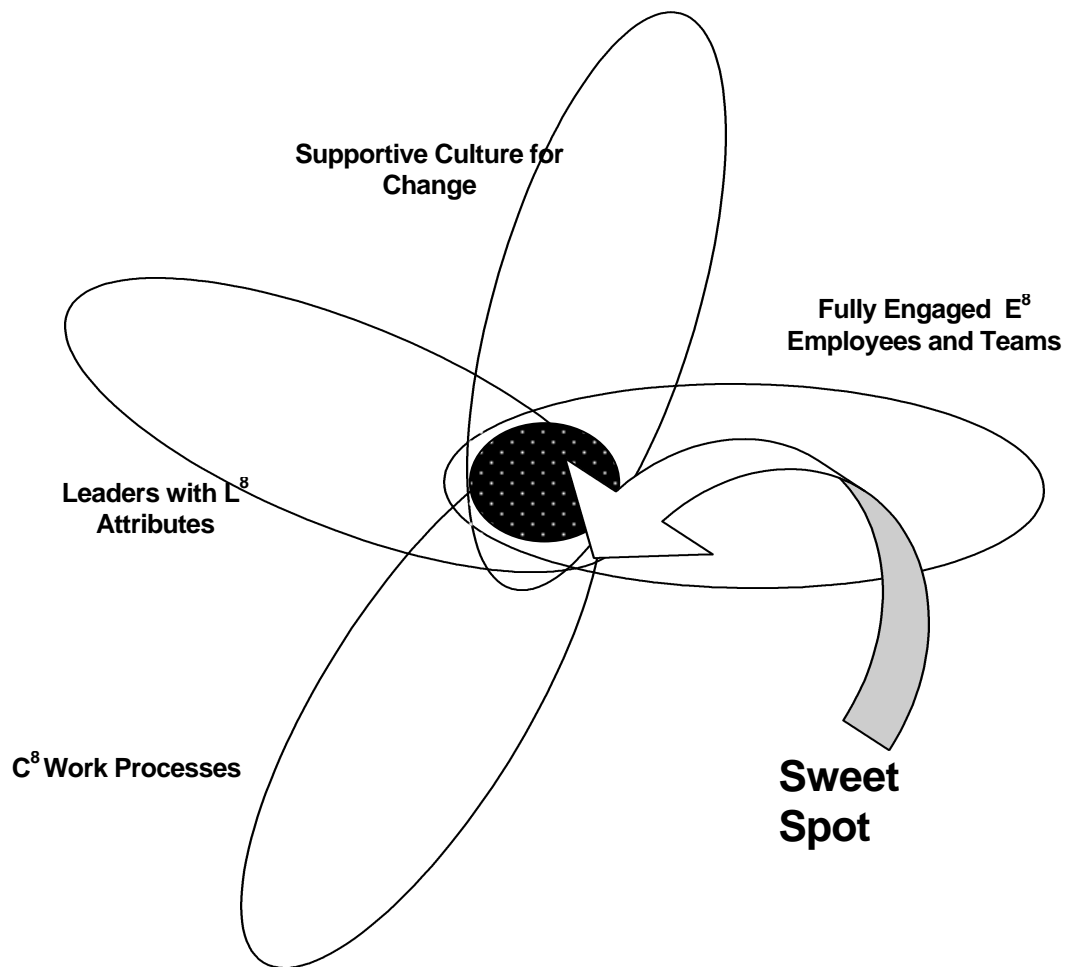
High performance is the situation in which leaders and followers are perfectly balanced to achieve optimal performance results as measured along classic dimensions of peak performance, such as: more profits, more product innovations, delighted customers, satisfied employees or even expanded political influence. Exhibit 1 indicates that leaders and followers must talk to each other to define how best to establish a culture that unleashes and nurtures a balance of E<sup>8</sup> followers and C<sup>8</sup> work processes. New knowledge management tools are needed to help establish and then sustain this balance. Leaders with the L<sup>8</sup> attributes are the most likely to find and wield these needed knowledge management tools.

**Exhibit 1: Leaders with L<sup>8</sup> Attributes Must Balance E<sup>8</sup> Employees and C<sup>8</sup> Work Processes**



As organizations and individuals seek the E<sup>8</sup> and C<sup>8</sup> balance, our research shows that a “peak performance sweet spot” must be established that serves as the intersection of certain key spheres. (See Exhibit 2). Successful leaders need to take actions and make investments to create and sustain an organization’s operating environment with a maximum “Performance Sweet Spot”.

**Exhibit 2: Performance Sweet Spot**



Activities in this “Peak Performance Sweet Spot” must be designed to guide people in a journey from low to high performance. The journey is not so much a journey in an organization’s space, as it is a journey in the minds of the organization’s key stakeholders: its leaders, followers, customers and suppliers. The mind’s space most directly linked to peak performance is the domain of affect or emotion. This “Affective Domain” is defined by the intersection of three planes:

**Satisfaction with the activity or function;  
Control over much of what you do or need to do your work; and  
Stress or positive energy to accomplish the activity**

The space of the “Affective Domain”, when divided by the high and low aspects of these three planes, yields eight octants. The following pages describe how each octant creates an environment in which varying degrees of performance can flourish or flounder.

Each octant is an environment in which certain leadership styles are more effective than others. If you are not the right leader for your octant, you are not going to be effective. You must change your style or change your octant – or both, to maximize personal and organizational performance. There are also certain activities associated with these octants that waste time and resources. These represent obstacles to peak performance potential; these obstacles must be removed if the individual and organization are to thrive.

The activities that increase employees’ sense of control; increase their sense of satisfaction; and achieve positive stress will increase the prospects for Peak Performance Enhancement (PPE).

Activities that decrease the perception of control; decrease the sense of satisfaction with the work; and reduce positive stress will frustrate achieving Peak Performance Enhancement (PPE).

Certain activities waste time and get in the way of PPE. We need to understand these activities so we can avoid them; because if we remove these obstacles to PPE, we increase the probability of achieving PPE. It is not enough, however, to remove obstacles to PPE. You must also take positive actions to enhance the prospects for achieving PPE. These actions must: (a) enhance the organizational climate for self-directed teams, that is actions not just for cost-cutting, but actions that are levers for innovation and quality improvement; and (b) encourage and support leaders to develop and nurture leadership styles known to move teams toward high performance.

If we find and execute these activities, what percentage improvement of PPE can we expect? 5%, 10%, 50%? Our research consistently shows opportunities for 30-60% improvement in productivity.



Which actions are expected to contribute the most to performance improvement?

It's not enough to identify these activities; you must also get employees ready, willing and able to change in order to implement the activities. We need to produce "Change Enablers" who can encourage and guide people to accomplish such positive change. These Change Enablers must also observe the contribution of a political-economic context within which the work and the performance is to be achieved.

## The Context of Performance Enhancement

When pursuing performance improvement, the context matters.

Why do ethnic Chinese do so well all over the world, but not so well in China? Or why do Russians seem to do better outside of Russia and Cubans outside of Cuba?

The answer is mostly to be found in their economic and leadership systems. The talent and creativity of the Chinese and all ethnic groups flourish in cultures where there are economic freedom, property rights, freedom of expression, free choice, competition, political freedom, freedom of movement, freedom of assembly, responsive and accountable institutions, a culture of service, and a tradition of justice and quality before the law. That does not mean that economic growth and prosperity cannot be attained in systems that forsake some of the characteristics enumerated in the above.

But there will always be a cost that accompanies such an omission. The benevolent dictator may not be succeeded by an equally benevolent ruler; a monolithic educational system may stifle creativity; confiscatory tax laws may discourage private efforts; removal of private property rights may lead to indifference in caring for land and buildings; restrictions on the free flow of goods, labor and capital may lead to incompetent labor, outmoded machinery, and inferior and shoddy goods that could never be sold outside of a restricted home market.

A free economic system is self-correcting: It does not depend upon any one individual being omniscient, or a system of detailed regulations for all economic behavior, or stringent national planning. In a free economy, we can count on one thing: that each individual will act in his or her own best interest. When this self-interest is respectful of the rights of other individuals, and obeys the social contract between free individuals and their freely chosen political representatives, an economy will develop that will optimally meet human needs. Competition and prices will allocate scarce resources among competing needs better than any central planner, and fair taxes will produce the wherewithal to meet social and societal needs.

We are aware both of the limitations and opportunities that accompany freedom as described above. We desire an economic system that accommodates cultures as diverse as the U.S. and Russia, India and China, Norway and France. We would like the economic system to do as little damage as possible to the cultural heritages and national characteristics of a rich and diversified world, and the very presence of such aspects creates unique and precious comparative advantages for all that enjoy them. But we do recognize that the full performance potential of people and organizations is dependent upon a free political economy.





## A Standard For Performance Improvement

We seek to define peak performance—as if Michelangelo's Pieta can be measured against a standard—when, in fact, the Pieta **is** a standard.

We seek the intangible in a symphony by Beethoven, in a painting by Raphael, in a performance by Ray Charles. Yet we always **know** when performance rises beyond the ordinary. We see it when a Churchill rallies his country against an implacable foe. We know it when poetry stirs our soul. So who are we to study the mystery of peak performance when artists and philosophers and generals and kings have wrestled with this through the ages, and rarely glimpsed it, yet always had known it when they saw it?

There is nothing that can be said by the industrial engineer about performance that cannot also be said by the poet, the philosopher, and the artist.

Performance at its peak is more than a sum of measurements, more than absence of error, more than zero defects.

Performance at its peak is all of this—but in approaching its most fundamental aspects, we are entering a mystery. It is perhaps similar to the stage when physics departs from the safe, Newtonian universe and traverses through Einstein's stunning insights, the quantum mechanics of Planck, and the baffling, metaphysical nature of Stephen Hawking's universe, in quest of the secrets of a unified field theory. Physics then enters a realm beyond our current understanding.

Tor Dahl concludes:

*“Peak Performance is often beautifully simple. There is no waste of motion or energy. There is knowledge and focus. There is continuity—hence no waiting or downtime. There is an elegance that transcends and transforms. All of us seek it in all that we do, and when we succeed, there is a satisfaction so deep and abiding that our spirits are lifted and our minds are at peace.”*

What constitutes important aspects of peak performance and the promise that it holds for individuals, corporations and countries? What are the simple and elegant rules that govern its occurrence? How can it be approached from the vantage point of science, and from the vantage point of poetry

In business sectors, performance is often measured in a “balanced scorecard” that seeks maximum results in the realms of: market share, profits, customer delight, employee satisfaction, and product quality. These enterprise level measures can only be maximized if the performance of individuals and their teams are maximized.

It is not enough to explore high performance, however, we must also better understand what contributes to low performance, and avoid it.



We have discovered that consistently low performance is found when we:

**Are forced to wait**  
**Are doing things that no one on earth should be doing**  
**Are doing things that should be done, but not by us**  
**Are not planning our work**  
**Are doing it in a manner that wasted resources**

If you were given a list of dimensions that we know affect human performance, you could do a study on yourself and improve productivity by some 15 to 30 percent. The reason this improvement is not greater is because in day-to-day activities, we find it hard to think about more than one dimension at a time. We experience surprise when we see these data on ourselves in multiple dimensions and if this understanding is reinforced with 360° insights from our colleagues, we always find ways of doing things better, and our performance improves exponentially. This will hold true whether you are an average performer or a superior performer. **But it is much more interesting to find out what explains the performance gap between the superior performer and the average performer.**

**A good salesman may sell 400 percent more than a poor salesman, and it is this gap that a sales manager wants to close. Most of the knowledge and insights that define this gap are in the minds of superior performers, and they are hard earned. They exist in the form of anecdotes, stories, lessons learned, and rules formulated. To access these, we must enter the minds and hearts of high performance employees and leaders with questions that probe all or most of the dimensions that explain human performance.**

Among a group of 100 bright, reflective and experienced employees in an organization, in performance histories we can easily collect some 2000-3000 years of performance experience. When this experience is shared, performance for the total group can increase dramatically. These performance histories capture the essence of what can make or break the organization's success. *In the minds, the experience and the emotions of the workforce we can identify the critical obstacles to success, and we can find most of the actions needed to achieve exponentially higher levels of success.*

**It is not enough, however, to ask an individual what needs to be done for success. You must ask scores of employees, and then after hearing the experiences and insights of others, ask them to reconsider what are the key obstacles and solutions.**

This analysis of human performance then becomes an analysis of "performance histories." We have relatively clumsy tools for this kind of analysis, it nevertheless is what peak performance is made of, and we must pursue it. ***The key that unlocks peak performance is all about the "soft variables" of emotional readiness and willingness to implement change and to change behaviors.***

**"I learned that openly celebrating successes is essential to building and sustaining a unified team. Never again will I underrate the importance of encouraging the heart, of visibility appreciating others and their efforts in my future leadership experiences."**

**Joan Nicolo, in Encouraging The Heart, by Kouzes and Pozner, p.7.**



As the author of the Kepner – Tregoe study put in, “Unless this issue (of recognition and reward) is addressed, the goal of a high – performance work place will remain unattainable”  
Kouzes and Pozner, 1999 p.5

## The New Performance Revolution: Change Enablers Use New Principles to Build Upon Lessons from the Quality Revolution

***Successful companies require a workplace culture that fosters engaged and committed employees. The largest single factor that makes or breaks employee engagement and top performance is to have excellent front line managers who walk the talk of listening and supporting workers to achieve stretch goals of productivity and customer service.***

First Break All The Rules, p40

***“The performance challenge facing every organization is to develop management systems that make employees the organization’s greatest asset.”***

Gilly, Boughton and Maycunich in  
The Performance Challenge, 1995 p.4



We are witnessing the transition from the quality and process improvement revolutions of the 1980's and 90's to an exciting "performance revolution" in the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century that is focused on unleashing the performance potential of individuals, self-directed teams, and hence total organizations. This journey will spawn excitement and anxiety. A road map will help leaders and followers navigate along this journey. This section explores intervention strategies to enhance this navigation.

## Two Revolutions—One Is Over, The Other Is Beginning

Change Enablers understand that if a company produces a product of less quality than that of a competitor, it must sell it at a lower price, or go out of business.

If the competitor is the most efficient producer (i.e. very productive), it is almost impossible for you to produce a lesser quality product and stay in business.

Thus, quality and productivity are no longer options. If you do not have them, you will not stay in business, let alone thrive in your business. With globalization, organizations and leaders throughout the world must master this truth: success is driven by a marriage of total quality management and productivity shaped by innovations spawned by engaged and enthusiastic employees.

When quality and basic productivity are given, performance takes center stage. In that sense, the **quality** revolution is over. The **performance** revolution is just beginning.

If a company improves productivity by 3.5 percent per year for a quality product, a competitor must match that improvement in order to stay in business.

If a company improves productivity by 100 percent, it will take a competitor 20 years to catch up at 3.5 percent per year. By then, it is likely to be out of business.

Thus, if a company produces a quantum change in performance improvement, it will force its competitors to do the same.

We now believe that in the next few years of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, we will see quantum changes in performance enter the service and manufacturing sectors, and with luck, even the governmental and state owned enterprise sectors.

## Productivity And Quality—How Are They Linked?

This will not be easy in many enterprises. Productivity improvement of the quantum kind is essentially a disruptive event—it is, in a sense, a re-engineering of the economic activity of the enterprise. It challenges the status quo of leader-follower relationships.

Quality improvement, on the other hand, is a stabilizing event. It is fundamentally reducing variation in products and processes around high standards of best practices.

Thus, productivity improvement disrupts; quality improvement stabilizes.



Productivity unfreezes a company; quality improvement freezes it.

If quality improvement is used to stabilize existing processes, a competitor with new and better processes will leave the first company behind.

Hence a process should not be frozen until it is decided whether the process should be employed at all, or whether a better process exists.

Thus, productivity should precede quality—first you disrupt, then you stabilize. If you freeze first, you will be at the mercy of a competitor who decides to disrupt, particularly if the disruption produces a quantum change in performance.

Our research indicates real success, sustainable success, can only be achieved when these two revolutions are enabled and guided to occur in partnership with each other.

## Principles Of Quality

Deming and Juran sparked an explosion of interest in process improvement to enhance quality by avoiding variation from agreed upon standards and best practices. It has become evident over the past 20 years that quality has **supply** and **demand** components. The **demand** component is meeting or acceptably exceeding the expectations and wants of the client.

The **supply** component is conformance to specifications. Obviously, it is desirable that conformance to specification is not just internal—it should exactly meet the clients' expectations as well.

The principles of quality are then put to work to reduce variations in the production process so the client has his/her expectations consistently met every time.

## Dimensions Of Productivity

Performance improvement is far more complex. In the most elemental sense, think of an onion. The outer-most layer refers to the potential-economic context in which the organization strives for its peak performance. Peeling off successive layers unveils the activities of employees as they interact with each other and their processes to delight customers and suppliers. The work of these employees, however, also consists of layers of activities, some more important to accomplish than others. The outermost layer of the employee's work are activities routinely performed by the employees in the course of the job. You peel off this layer. The next layer represents whether it could have been better planned and executed. You peel that off. You may continue to peel off layers until you arrive at the core, which is the input important and productive and satisfying work of each person.

Not only might there be dozens, or even hundreds, of layers, the layers might also interact with each other, and create new layers that may make the onion bigger or smaller.

Worse still, we know that most of these layers are very different from the old production factors of land, labor, capital, and technology. There are layers that represent such hard to measure variables as attitudes, commitment, feelings, and determination—as every athletic coach knows. These are factors best explored in the affective domain of individuals.



We have researched these layers. We are beginning to understand them. So far, Tor Dahl Associates has uncovered more than 60. It is the selection and application of these layers or dimensions that constitute the peak performance strategy of an organization. In the cross-national research of Tor Dahl Associates, there were five variables that were **perfectly** correlated with people's sense of peak performance.

**EXHIBIT 3:**

|            | <b>Positive</b>  | <b>Negative</b>   |
|------------|--|---|
| Variable 1 | Occupancy: People's time is being fully occupied on tasks, and they are not waiting for resources from someone else to get their activity accomplished | The opposite, waiting time, was felt to be unproductive                               |
| Variable 2 | Screening: a person's activity is meaningful and is work that should be done.  | They are not productive if their activity should not be done by anyone                |
| Variable 3 | Delegation: the person is doing only what should be done by the subject of the study, and other work passed to those most appropriate                  | The person is not productive, if the activity should have been done by another party. |
| Variable 4 | Planning: the person is doing the right task, and it is being well accomplished because it has been well planned.                                      | The person is doing the right thing, but it is not well planned.                      |
| Variable 5 | Efficiency: The person is doing the right thing in the right way, i.e.: consuming the least amount of resources to perform the task.                   | The work is done, but wastes resources.   |

High performance is doing the right thing (high effectiveness), in the right way (high efficiency), without waiting time (high occupancy), all of the time.

Doing the right thing was achieved through getting rid of what nobody should be doing (screening), and getting rid of those that should be done by others (delegation). You are now left with what you should do. That should be done, not only for now, but also for the future, hence planning entered as the insurer of effectiveness for today and tomorrow. It is now possible to link this definition to the classical definition of productivity:

$$\text{Productivity} = \text{Output/Input}$$

**Effectiveness** consists of picking the right outputs, **efficiency** consists of turning inputs into outputs in the best possible manner, and **occupancy** means doing it all the time and not waiting unnecessarily for resources to get the job done.



## Five Key Principles to Free Resources:

The definition of productivity and peak performance contains five resource-freeing principles.

### EXHIBIT 4: Five Principles to Free Resources

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Principle 1 | Stakeholders' time should be continuously directed to activities with minimal waiting time for resources from others to accomplish the task. Change Enablers employ strategies and process improvements to maximize the probability of low waiting or down time, either for customers, employees or suppliers;                                   |
| Principle 2 | Stakeholders should be engaged in activities that maximize their belief that it is meaningful, that it meets or exceeds their expectations that it is the right thing to do. Change Enablers manage both the substance and the perception that the activity or interaction between the stakeholder and the organization is judged the right one; |
| Principle 3 | Stakeholders delegate or transfer activities that are meaningful, but they should not be doing, to other parties, either other customers, employees or suppliers who are better suited to do the work;   |
| Principle 4 | Stakeholder activities must be well planned so that the connection between the organization and the stakeholder occurs in the most effective manner; and   |
| Principle 5 | Stakeholder activities that are meaningful and well planned should be accomplished with the least consumption of resources possible.   |

Application of these principles generates a greater probability for **cost effectiveness**. To achieve high cost effectiveness, peak performance improvement comes from a three-step process:

The **freeing** of resources (employees throughout the organization are fully engaged to define where effort and resources are being wasted)

The **reallocation of freed resources** into the "right" outputs (all employees are encouraged to re-define where their effort and resources should best be used for maximum advantage)

**Implementing the freeing and reallocation** of resources in the most efficient processes (an engine of change drives execution of the plans because enthused employees are ready, willing and able for the change)

The question of where resources should be allocated is guided by only one principle: They should be allocated to where they yield the highest returns, as defined and desired by those with the power to control the organization; i.e. owners, the community or the officers. The highest returns exist where an organization can set its own price or value for its goods or services. That is only possible when the organization has a monopoly advantage. In all



other situations, the price is set by the market, or by competitors. When the price is set by the company/organization, high returns can be achieved in excess of what will have been possible otherwise.

## The Peak Performance Enhancement Model:

We now see that the “disruptive” process of productivity improvement is created by five resource-freeing principles, and by one resource allocation principle.

Once freed, resources should be invested in what yields the highest returns, namely in products and/or services that will produce a monopoly advantage. This advantage will not last for long, but as long as it lasts, it could produce higher than normal returns that should be invested in new monopoly advantages, and so on.

Change Enablers need to implement strategies to assure that change occurs so that resources are actually freed and reallocated. There are at least three principles that should guide this change. First, change is rooted in dissatisfaction with the status quo. If a proposed performance change reduces dissatisfaction and improves satisfaction, it is more likely to be implemented, and to last.

Second, we have also found that when a situation improves a person’s or team’s sense of autonomy or control over their work, the accompanying change is more likely to last.

Hence, a change from an autocratic organization to self-governing teams is more likely to last than the opposite. Thirdly, change is facilitated by a reduction in negative stress, or an increase in positive stress

## Quantum Change—Will It Become Commonplace?

At the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, it is clear that the computer industry shows that peak performance and success requires absorbing a rate of change that dwarfs that of most, if not all, other industries.

To produce and absorb such a high rate of change requires both a disproportionate amount of innovation, and the Change Enabler’s will and capacity to apply and sustain it throughout the work force and among suppliers. In a sense, the computer industry is a laboratory for studying quantum change. While the changes are driven by technology, the capacity to absorb and disseminate the results of change depends upon the human factor.

If we study the way productivity is increased in the computer industry, we note that most of it is built into the hardware and software. In other words, performance is increased by increasing the speed of functioning, the storage capacity for information, and the ability to manipulate information. Change Enablers recognize that such knowledge management becomes a critical asset for peak performance in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century



## Change And The Human Equation

The limiting factor in organizational change is most often found in the capacity for change within the human beings who make up the organization, the executives and other employees. Change in these people enables positive change in the interaction with customers and suppliers.

There is no question that people vary widely in the amount of change that they are willing or able to catalyze and absorb. This is an area that draws upon the insights of many fields, from psychology to anthropology, from sociology to theology.

Countless researchers, consultants and executives have demonstrated that the most important element in successful change is **outstanding leadership and willing followership**. By example, and by plan, the CEO or team/project leader can drive the change process in a manner that no one else can. **The availability of rewards and sanctions, a clear and inspirational vision, and a detailed follow-up process all contribute to a successful change process.**

But more importantly, there is a need to look upon change in somewhat the same manner as a **fast-track building program** is executed. There is a logical sequence to what change needs to be initiated first, what comes second, and what comes third. In addition, massive parallel processing can take place. The “Change Enablers” are somewhat comparable to the building coordinator for a skyscraper project—they have a thousand deadlines to meet, and dozens of crews are working all the time to complete the structure. However, the foundation must go in first, then the framework, and finally all the construction, finishing work, and installations. The architects and engineers may work on drawings up to the final minute, but as long as their tasks are done on time, it does not matter.

However, what is most challenging in the change process is the way a group of people deals with individual, as compared with structural or organizational systems change. People matter. Processes matter. Successful leadership requires E<sup>8</sup> followers and C<sup>8</sup> processes. These should be treated as separate but related issues.

## Individual vs. Process Performance Issues

In the early phases of our peak performance investigations in Europe and the U.S., individuals, using electronic instrumentation that documented the activities of leaders throughout their work week, studied their resource utilization, and then implemented changes which resulted in from 15 to 20 percent productivity improvement.

In a sense, each individual learned from the experience of having their own “Activity Map.” Their Activity Map included an accurate, multidimensional work sampling record, covering 5-6 weeks, to evaluate what enhanced or impeded their performance, and how they felt about these factors.

But an individual experience represents a sample of one. Over a lifetime, the amount of insight that will emanate from the life of one person is limited to that person’s experience, insights, and reflective capacity.



If, somehow, several lifetimes of relevant experience and insight could be collected, compressed and absorbed, the quality of judgment and actions of an individual could be exponentially improved. To make such experience relevant, it must be related to performance and the timeliness of performance for a specific individual working in a specific team, department, organization, market or national context.

Thus, to extract relevant performance experience, it must be accessed through questions that follow the entry points of dimensions that add to performance. Other questions may be of interest for other reasons, but are not relevant to the performance improvement process. Additional insights from 360° assessments are also valuable to the development of a person's "Personal Enhanced Performance Plan" (PEPP).

These shared performance insights and best practices must be collected and managed in a comprehensive peak performance knowledge library. To illustrate such a knowledge base, imagine that a person is asked about what it is that the person does that no one on earth should be doing. The average person can only think of 1.2 such tasks. However, 100 people will think of 120 tasks that cluster into about 20 categories. The first individual may look at the 20 categories and may recognize 3 to 5 more that apply to her. Over time, her personal experience may have revealed all of these to her. Now she accelerates that understanding, and acts on their implications.

It should be emphasized that performance histories consist of impressions, stories, anecdotes, statements—text, and must be textually analyzed. This analysis must break down the textual insights into categories that may be used as indicators of changes that will be needed to free resources; optimally use resources; or bring about positive change that sustain the resource re-allocations over a longer period of time. Tor Dahl Associates has conducted such studies on a database with over one million years of executive experience accumulated from a variety of service and manufacturing sectors over the past 25 years.

When the experience base is shared among employees, managers, customers and suppliers, participants have access to literally thousands of years of performance experience. Through the application of productivity principles, performance improvement plans are defined for each participant.

For each item in the improvement plan, the participant indicates whether the change can be made by him/her, or whether help is needed. When help is indicated, the item relates to a process, structural or system problem. Depending on the type of industry and political economy of the market, from 50-80 percent of all performance improvement potential is process or structural in nature, i.e. generally outside the control of the individual. By careful discussions with participants, a company employing thousands of people, may uncover most, if not all, of its structural problems by interviewing a relatively small number of people. This group of people, while mostly comprised of employees, also includes a sample of customers and suppliers. But since the resolution of structural problems may affect all workers, the identification and recognition of structural problems may have an extraordinary impact on productivity. This is quite comparable to what takes place during quantum changes in the computer industry.

We have found that at any given point in time, *organizations* seem to have anywhere from 4 to 12 key structural problems or obstacles to peak performance. One may think of these as forming a "logjam," where a key log is holding the jam together. The key log is the one that must be identified and removed first. When that happens, quantum change can occur.



When quantum change occurs, the organization turns into an upward performance spiral that changes its effectiveness and functioning in many ways. It also creates some turbulence in the marketplace, and countermoves from competitors, suppliers and the business environment in general that can cause another logjam to form. This jam can be approached in exactly the same fashion, and another quantum change may be engendered. At this time, the organization may be so different from the way it was originally that it may be difficult to recognize it by old criteria of functioning.

Organizations in quantum change may best be recognized by the contrast with their past configurations: from the quill pen and standing desk to the electronic office, from the Wright brothers to the space shuttle. Another way of examining quantum change is to look at the lack of change that characterizes the way some organizations, schools and governmental agencies operate who find themselves locked into unchallenged bureaucratic structures.

## The Logjam Theory

Logjams are everywhere—at the national level, at the organization level, and at the individual level. Any country national could become more productive if his/her national logjams were removed.

At the individual level, we may define the individual's logjam as that which keeps a person from maximally contributing to their organization or their society.

The process whereby individual, organizational and national change is brought about follows the same principles. We all know individuals who are phenomenally more productive than the average—they have somehow uncovered these principles, or absorbed relatively greater experience than others.

To unlock any logjam there must be a set of actions taken by Change Enablers that address the problems in a special way. We call these sets of actions a **strategic lever**. This lever is the **obverse of the logjam**—it undoes, rather than forms the logjam. This lever will vary from individual to individual, company to company, and country to country. Only by accident will two individuals, or two companies, have the same logjams, or need the same strategic change lever. We then note how unlikely that copying a competitor will lead to the desired results—in any case, copying cannot make one better than a competitor, and most likely will make one worse. The trick is to identify the logjam; undo it in the most efficient manner possible; freeze this new configuration to lock in its level of performance; and then pursue ever-higher levels of performance. The performance improvement process must, therefore, unfreeze, then freeze to achieve peak results.

Corporations that select a “vital few indicators” to monitor for improvement will not succeed unless these “vital few” just happen to reflect the key logs in their logjam. A better approach is to start by initiating “seismic readings”; to find out where one may best unlock the performance potential; and then to install the metrics for peak performance at those specific sites. These metrics are often referred to as “performance balanced score cards.” These readings can also be done at the individual level. Building on the experiences of the Extensor Corporation, Octants<sup>3</sup> can help unleash quantum change for individuals, who then become the levers for quantum change of work teams, organizations, and even government agencies.



## Conclusions

The quality revolution has been won. It is no longer a revolution, but woven into the fundamental fabric of an organization's pursuit of PPE. The performance revolution has scarcely begun, and it has the potential to transform societies. It needs to begin, but not stop, at the level of the individual executive or project team leaders.

The quality revolution provided us with a set of techniques and methods that helped stabilize and regularize processes around acceptable standards of quality.

Change Enablers will see that the impending performance revolution provides us with a set of principles that can destabilize the way a corporation operates, but move it to higher levels of peak performance; higher levels of quality, market share, customer and employee delight, profits and stock value. In many ways, this process is similar to what Joseph Schumpeter refers to as the "creative destruction" brought about by innovative entrepreneurs. When combined with the quality principles, quantum performance and quality change will both occur, and exponential levels of performance will be evident.

When a corporation initiates quantum change, its competitors must follow suit, or risk going out of business. Just as quality is no longer an option, so will be the case with quantum performance improvement.

Our work in Europe and the U.S. demonstrates that the results are extraordinary. There is a sharp reduction in waste, a significant increase in wealth, and improvements in all facets of societal and individual functioning. It will also positively affect macroeconomic variables such as per capita income, inflation, job satisfaction, job stress, and unemployment. No other strategy could affect so many variables positively, and at the same time. It is high time for it to take place. For every month we do not implement this process, we forfeit potential performance gains that could address most of our organizational and societal problems. We have to do it now. There is no time to waste.



## Execution Demands Emotion: Managing Intervention Strategies in The Eight Octants of the Affective Domain of Stakeholder Minds

In an interview in *Howard Business Review*, Paul Cook, then CEO of Raychem Corporation, was asked how he keeps his people motivated over the long haul:

***“...most people, whether they’re engineers, business managers, or machine operators, want to be creative. They want to identify with the success of their profession and their organization. They want to contribute to giving society more comfort, better health, more excitement. And their greatest reward is receiving acknowledgment that they did contribute to making something meaningful happen. So the most important thing we do is build an organization—a culture, if you’ll pardon the word—that encourages teamwork, that encourages fun and excitement, that encourages everyone to do things differently and better—and that acknowledges and rewards people who excel.”***

Judith M. Bardwick, Ph.D.,  
*Danger in the Comfort Zone*, 1995, p.63



# Execution Demands Emotion: Managing Intervention Strategies in the Eight Octants of the Affective Domain of Stakeholder Minds

## Introduction

For companies and leaders to thrive in a market economy, they must know how high performance comes about; how to catalyze progress to higher performance; and how it is sustained. They must become "Change Enablers" who harness the analytical facets of the cognitive domain of stakeholders' minds, and also the emotional facets of their affective domains. It is not enough to "plan," you must "do." Execution is everything.

Execution requires leaders with the right plans but, at least as importantly, leaders must have willing followers to implement the plans. These followers must be willing to find sensible ways to free up and redeploy resources from unimportant activities and processes, to mission critical activities and processes. They must be encouraged to move from low to high performance domains.

What is the potential for this shift from low to high performance?

What are the most common activities and emotions associated with the low and high performance domains?

What can Change Enablers do to assure the emotional states most associated with high performance are actually established and sustained?

We understand that competition requires that an organization either survives by being more cost-effective than its competitors, or that it develops a temporary monopoly advantage that allows it to set price, rather than being bound by the market price. Both of these strategies may produce a surplus, or a profit, that may be further invested in cost-effectiveness improvement, or temporary monopoly advantage, or both, and the organization may then be on a continuous upward spiral of positive change for growth and development.

In a free market economy, an organization is in business to achieve a vision or an idea. Between the organization and the vision is a set of obstacles we refer to as a logjam. This logjam typically has four to twelve "logs" in them. One of them is the key log. Unless the key log is addressed first, the logjam cannot be undone quickly. If the key log is removed, the remaining logs can usually be removed all at once through a procedure that we call parallel processing. This is how quantum change can be achieved in a very short period of time.

We have performed various productivity improvement projects in both the U.S. and Europe over the past two decades, in both manufacturing and service enterprise environments. Participants examined their work environments for resource freeing opportunities, and then provided estimates of the percentage of time that could be saved by applying resource-freeing principles (cost effectiveness).



Change only comes about if implemented successfully. Why people and organizations do not remove the obstacles to top performance has often been a mystery to many leaders. It is less a mystery now.

## The Secret to Change Implementation? Mastering Your “Engagement Quotient” and “The Q Factor”

In the old days, organizations changed in a sequential fashion. That is only possible if all their competitors also do it. If one of them breaks out and does parallel processing, the survival of all the others may be threatened.

Obviously, change only comes about if it is implemented. This section is about the implementation of change. The key is to more fully engage employees who are close to your operations. This engagement must drive to shared problem definitions, and then a shared commitment to the implementation of problem solutions.

### The Engagement Quotient™

**Engagement Quotient: “EQ” : Your measure of performance potential.**

“Engagement” the amount and quality of participation that people (stakeholders) have in the strategic business planning and operational affairs of your enterprise, project or organization. The higher the EQ, the higher the sense of stakeholder ownership in the plans, and their willingness to help implement them.

What’s Your Engagement Quotient?

The Big 8 Results of Peak Performance Improvement

If high EQ: Congratulations! You are dramatically more likely to achieve:

1. more ideas for performance improvement
2. better ideas
3. more ideas implemented
4. implemented ideas are sustained for longer periods
5. closer scrutiny of performance progress
6. faster adoption of contingency plans
7. smarter contingency plans
8. greater commitment to continuously enhance results

If low EQ: You have a challenge before you! Without moving to raise your EQ, you're more likely to experience the flip side of The Big 8: life in the slow lane, a life less fun and results less robust.



High EQ is also directly associated with the most positive leadership styles and the most positive followership styles. We will discuss these lessons in an upcoming text: *Mind Movers*.

**How ready are you for quantum change and peak performance through high EQ?**

On a scale of 1-8, with 8 being a very high degree of engagement, and 1 being a very low degree of engagement, how would you assess the degree of “engagement” among employees of your organization?

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8

|\_\_\_\_\_||\_\_\_\_\_||\_\_\_\_\_||\_\_\_\_\_||\_\_\_\_\_||\_\_\_\_\_||\_\_\_\_\_||

What are the key factors that can contribute to high EQ? There are 8 critical success factors (CSFs) to manage for high EQ as you launch your use of the 8 tool sets for greater performance improvement. (see the Power of 8 Website found at [www.powerof8.net](http://www.powerof8.net))

- CSF 1. Commitment for change from the top of your organization and from you;**
- CSF 2. Investment into developing your players’ knowledge, skills, and attitudes for EQ;**
- CSF 3. Making the right EQ tools available for your players (this Tool Kit is a great start);**
- CSF 4. Focus players on substantive challenges or opportunities to spark pride;**
- CSF 5. Constancy of focus from the top and from you;**
- CSF 6. Focus on early wins to build momentum and encourage fresh thinking;**
- CSF 7. Use of cross-fertilized, and self-directed teams from several departments SBUs (Strategic Business Units);**
- CSF 8. Recognition and rewards are fast, fun and frequent.**

**Employ The Q Factor™**

Success in moving your mountains will be built on two important premises: First, stakeholder engagement is essential to better plans that actually get implemented, and the key to effective stakeholder engagement (ESE) is connecting with the emotional side of your stockholder’s minds. Engagement needs emotional connections. Second, engagement is a hollow promise of performance improvement unless it is coupled with processes that ask penetrating questions. The art and science of asking questions is “The Q Factor™.”



The more the questions you ask and the smarter the questions you ask, the greater your potential to exponentially improve your performance. Great questions increase your prospects for great results.

The best managers and leaders are not so much great “problem solvers”, as they are great “problem probers”. They are not so much great question answerers as they are question askers.

Ask 8 key questions, such as:

- ❑ Why do we do it this way?
- ❑ What would happen if we did it that way?
- ❑ What are we really trying to do or achieve?
- ❑ What is most likely going to block or frustrate our ability to achieve our goal, or do our project?
- ❑ What are the best and fastest ways for us to remove, reduce or work around those things that will block or frustrate our performance improvement?
- ❑ Which of our competitors offer better product or service features than us, and how have they generated these features?
- ❑ How could we best develop website portals for our best customers to improve their use of and loyalty to our products?
- ❑ How should we harness the knowledge of our employees and supply chain partners to enhance the quality and economic vitality of our goods and services?

It is hard to ask too many questions. Most questions posed by inter-disciplinary teams of frontline workers are rarely foolish and usually represent essential building blocks for your ultimate performance improvement success.

The Q Factor™ encourages stakeholders to ask the classic questions: who, what, where, why, how, and how much before most meetings, planning sessions and even your report writing initiatives. The human genome seems to be stimulated to higher levels of thought and performance potential by the rigorous and creative use of questions. Inquiring minds really do want to know!

## The Affective Domain

We now understand that the reason most performance improvement work has failed in so many companies; why quality and productivity improvement efforts more often than not do not last; and why beautiful plans evaporate in their encounter with reality is this: **change takes place in the “affective domain,”** the emotional parts of the minds of employees, leaders, customers and suppliers.

This is the domain of feeling, of engagement, of participation, of commitment, of enthusiasm, and every great leader understands this domain. But most of us fear to tread in this domain — we are more comfortable in the cognitive domain: The domain of reason, of thinking, of judging, of abstraction. In this domain, we *think, judge, and will* our way into the future. But whether we succeed or not depends on our understanding of how this will affect people and ourselves, and what it is inside us that fuels our desires and those of others.

Below are some examples of statements in the two domains:



|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Cognitive Statement: | <i>We shall develop the capacity for space travel.</i>   |
| Affective Statement: | <i>Before this decade is over, we shall put a man on the moon, and return him safely to earth. [John F. Kennedy]</i>                               |
| Cognitive Statement: | <i>We should not waste time.</i>   |
| Affective Statement: | <i>All these days that came and went — I did not know it was life itself. [Stig Johanson]</i>  |
| Cognitive Statement: | <i>Sweden is an old, free, and mountainous northern country.</i>   |
| Affective Statement: | <i>Du gamla, du fria, du fjellhöga nord. [This is the first line of the Swedish National Anthem, which beautifully expresses the same thought]</i> |
| Cognitive Statement: | <i>It would have a favorable morale effect on the country if Norway could field a better athletic team in soccer.</i>                              |
| Affective Statement: | <i>Let's figure out how we can beat Sweden in soccer next time!</i>  |

Like the cognitive domain, the affective domain has its own set of laws, principles and applications. These are explored in greater depth in a series of papers published by Tor Dahl Associates.

Through the pioneering work of researchers such as Albert Mehrabian and James A. Russell, we know the dimensions of this domain. We also now know how to locate and plot human emotions in this largely unexplored space, and we know something that will be shown here for the very first time: We know the location of high performance space. We know what characterizes high performance space. And we are continuously enhancing our understanding of how we move from low to high performance space.

We think that applying knowledge of this kind could usher in a revolution in performance improvement, rivaling that which was ascribed to technology during the Industrial Revolution.

In a sense the two revolutions are similar — understanding and applying human technology as a liberating strategy is quite similar to the liberation experienced from human drudgery when the steam engine and the spinning machine were invented.

On many occasions we have had the opportunity to assess what changes were likely to last, and what changes could not be sustained.

Of all the dimensions we used to measure and study change in performance, three axes stood out as especially predictive. They were:

**1. The Satisfaction – Dissatisfaction Axis**

If a change made an individual more satisfied than before, the chance for the change to last was larger than when the opposite was the case.

**2. The Stress - No Stress Axis**



Stress seemed to accentuate feelings of either dissatisfaction or satisfaction. The combination of stress and satisfaction increased the probability for lasting change, while stress and dissatisfaction decreased it.

### 3. The Control Axis- Our Responsibility - Other's Responsibility

Changes in areas of one's own responsibility were more likely to last than changes in areas where others were responsible.

These three dimensions turned out to be excellent predictors of change. We called changes that combined satisfaction, positive stress, and a sense of control over our responsibility as "self-reinforcing change," since people seemed to be literally better off for making them. The element of control is a more complex issue<sup>1</sup>. Hence we have come to identify pull control variables (participative management, downward delegation, consensus management) as distinct from push control variables (autocratic management, bureaucratic management, management through intimidation). People being controlled by pull variables seem to be more satisfied than people being controlled by push variables.

We have described the affective domain as it has been discussed by Russell and Mehrabian, but using terms that may be closer to what is being used in the field of management. What is surprising about this domain is that apparently all feelings can be located in a space with only three dimensions. Knowing the complexity of human emotion, this, at first, seems to lack credibility. But work by Schlosberg (1954), Russell (1978), and Russell and Steiger (1982) elaborates on this theme and provides persuasive data.

It is tempting to postulate that since the brain itself is physically three-dimensional, it may be organized in a way that makes it possible to locate all affective brain activity in three dimensions. Work by Hannah Arendt<sup>2</sup> indicated that all cognitive functions could be reduced to three dimensions as well: *thinking, judging, and willing*. Conceivably such functions may also need to be ordered three-dimensionally by the brain. Our interest is spurred by the relationship between the affective domain and performance. Could it be that certain spaces in the mind's affective domain are linked to high performance and/or low performance? If so, where are they? And, finally, can people's minds and emotions be motivated so that the person moves from low performance to high performance space, and if so, how?

## Performance and the Affective Domain

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<sup>1</sup> *First, people who have control over their work are likely to be more productive than people who do not have control over their work. Second, people who do not have control over their work seem to be more or less productive, depending upon how the control is executed.*

<sup>2</sup> *"The Life of the Mind", Arendt, Hannah, Vol. I-II, New York and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York, 1978*



Some work has been done on the linkage between performance and the affective domain.<sup>3</sup>

Over the last several years, we conducted many productivity improvement projects in the U.S. and Europe. Four in the U.S. can help illustrate our findings; two in manufacturing settings, and two in service settings. For example, a total of 531 participants coded their productivity improvement potentials (a total of 2,621 items, or 4.94 per participant) in the three Affective Domain dimensions (stress, satisfaction and control), thereby making it possible to identify in what octant the potential for improved performance was identified. Since the potentials indicated non-productive functioning as defined by workers in self-reported use of their time, it was possible to rank the octants for productive functioning — the smaller the amount of wasted effort or resources, the higher the degree of peak performance. The higher the estimate of wasted effort, the greater the potential for future performance improvement.

All participants developed individual performance improvement plans (PIP) for freeing resources from unproductive pursuits, and reallocating them to higher value-added activities.

A total of some 1,197 high value-added activities were identified by the participants (2.25 per participant), and their projected affective octants were also identified by the participants. These data were necessarily more speculative, since they referred to a judgment about a future state of emotion and performance.

The following Exhibit summarizes the relative significance of work-place stress, satisfaction, and control to achieve peak performance enhancement (PPE). A low percentage indicates a low potential to reallocate resources to better performance. There is a close association of high performance with high satisfaction, control and positive stress.

**Exhibit 5: RESOURCE FREEING POTENTIAL BY OCTANT AND ASSOCIATED STAKEHOLDER EMOTIONAL PROFILE**

**High Performance**

|  |       |  |       |
|--|-------|--|-------|
| Octant 1.<br>(Satisfied, Stressed, Control)            | 2.0%  | Octant 2.<br>(Satisfied, Non-Stress, Non-Control)  | 2.5%  |
| Octant 3.<br>(Satisfied, Non-Stressed, Control)        | 2.6%  | Octant 4.<br>(Satisfied, Stressed, Non-Control)    | 4.1%  |
| Octant 5.<br>(Dissatisfied, Non-Stressed, Control)     | 7.1%  | Octant 6.<br>(Dissatisfied, Stressed, Control)     | 10.8% |
| Octant 7.<br>(Dissatisfied, Non-Stressed, Non-Control) | 11.1% | Octant 8.<br>(Dissatisfied, Stressed, Non-Control) | 59.8% |

**Low Performance**

Of the total performance improvement potential for all participants, only 2.0% of the observations were allotted to the highest performance octant (Octant 1.). In other words,

<sup>3</sup> See e.g., Russell and Mehrabian (1975), Mehrabian and West (1977), Russell and Mehrabian (1978), and Mehrabian (1989-90)




the highest performance octant represented that combination of satisfaction, stress, and control having the *least* obstacles to productive functioning. Octant 2 and Octant 3 were nearly equal, with 2.5% and 2.6% of the total resource freeing potential, respectively. The remaining high performance octant (Octant 4.) made up 4.1% of participants' total resource freeing potential.

Conversely, the low performance octants constitute significantly higher percentages of resource freeing potential, and range from 7.1% to 59.8% of total potential. That is, the low performance octants had the *most* obstacles to productive functioning.



**Exhibit 6: Opportunities for Performance Improvement**



| <b>Hemisphere Perspectives</b>         |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>(Summation of Enclosed Octants)</b> |             |
| If work creates...                     | Performance |
|  | Improvement |
|  | Opportunity |
| Satisfaction                           | 11.2%       |
| Dissatisfaction                        | 88.8%       |
| Control                                | 22.5%       |
| Non-control                            | 77.5%       |
| Low stress                             | 23.3%       |
| High stress                            | 76.7%       |

Source: Tor Dahl Associates

The greatest linkage to high performance potential is satisfaction, followed by control. Low stress is a close third. In Octant 8, stress is predominantly associated with low performance, as is dissatisfaction and lack of control. A total of 59.9% of the productivity potential is located in this negative performance octant.

This research suggests the importance for Change Enablers, and great leaders to use work and change interventions that help move individuals into the change ready-receptive emotional states of the affective domain that yield a high sense of satisfaction; a high sense of control over one's work and resources; and a high degree of positive stress. Activities and performance improve strategies that have a high probability to connect with these emotions of the stakeholders (employees, suppliers and customers) are much more likely to have change implemented, and then sustained.



The reallocation of resources to high yield activities also shows an interesting pattern:

**Exhibit 7: Patterns of Freeing and Reallocation of Resources Among the Octants**

|                                  | <b>Performance<br/>Potential</b> | <b>Reallocated<br/>Resources</b> |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>High Performance Octants:</b> |                                  |                                  |
| Octant 1                         | 2.0                              | 4.7                              |
| Octant 2                         | 2.5                              | 18.3                             |
| Octant 3                         | 2.6                              | 15.8                             |
| Octant 4                         | <u>4.1</u>                       | <u>36.9</u>                      |
|                                  | 75.7                             | 11.2                             |
| <b>Low Performance Octants:</b>  |                                  |                                  |
| Octant 5                         | 7.1                              | 1.8                              |
| Octant 6                         | 10.8                             | 2.5                              |
| Octant 7                         | 11.1                             | 3.3                              |
| Octant 8                         | <u>59.9</u>                      | <u>16.7</u>                      |
|                                  | 88.9                             | 24.3                             |

Source: Tor Dahl Associates

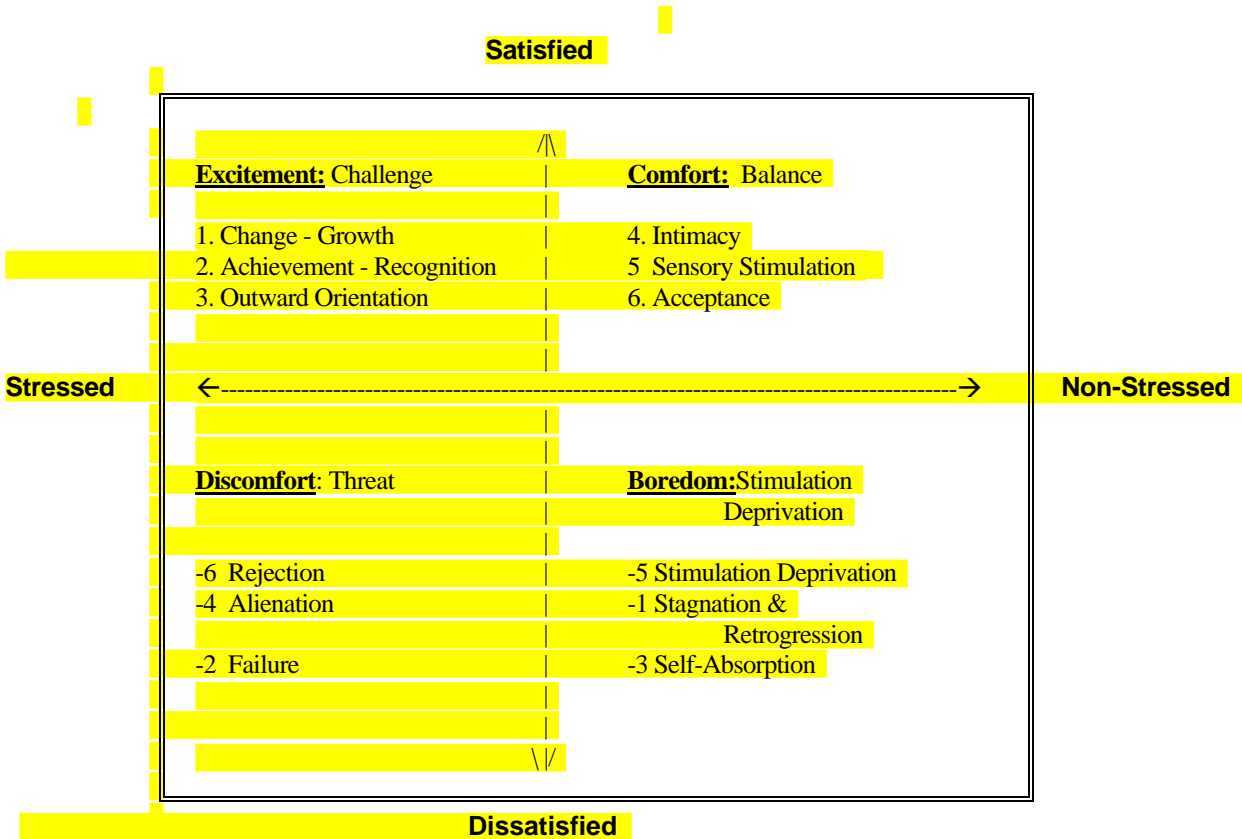


Worker experience and judgments about where best to reallocate resources strongly favors the high performance domains with a total of 75.7 percent (Exhibit 7). Peak performance intervention strategies should therefore strive to allocate freed resources from less productive work to work that is associated with greater stakeholder satisfaction and sense of control or choice.

**The Dynamics of Performance Improvement — Movement Between Octants**

In the two-dimensional space of stress and satisfaction we have uncovered and applied the principles that affect stress and satisfaction.<sup>4</sup> Stress and Satisfaction are related in the following manner.

**Exhibit 8: Interventions to Create Stakeholders Satisfaction**



<sup>4</sup> "Creating Lasting Change", Dahl, Tor, presented as a Presidential Address at the 7th World Productivity Congress, November 19, 1990, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

"A Model for Successful Change", Rausch, Candy Johnson and Dahl, Tor, presented at the 7th World Productivity Congress, November 19, 1990, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.



By using the principles listed above, excitement (stress + satisfaction), comfort (no stress + satisfaction), discomfort (stress + dissatisfaction) and boredom (no stress + dissatisfaction) can be generated at will. On numerous occasions, the greatest sources of discomfort in a company can be addressed in such a way as to make it possible for people to be at least comfortable with the way these stressors are handled. Change Enablers take actions to help stakeholders move from boredom and discomfort to excitement and comfort.

Other papers are available from Tor Dahl Associates that provide additional insights into our findings regarding the 8 performance octants of the affective domain. Our companion text *Mind Movers* also explores the application of affective domain research to leadership development.

## The Power of 8 Success Factors:

Field studies now offer eight important insights into success factors for peak performance improvement:

- 1. *The greatest potential for monopoly advantage is found in establishing “a process improvement orientation”:*** the consistency of your efforts to improve work processes is key. This commitment is reinforced by: the adequacy of equipment, tools, and systems to perform jobs; the successful planning and execution of projects and programs; having work processes that enable an efficient and streamlined production process; developing alliances and partnerships with key supply chain partners and suppliers — these all represent strategies to improve work processes that can provide monopoly advantage for an organization.
- 2. *The second greatest potential for unique advantage lies in “maximizing the relationship to the customer”.*** Companies that understand the needs and business of their customers; that meet or exceed customer expectations; that build alliances and relationships with their customers; that have accurate and easily accessible customer data, that make it easy for customers to do business with them; that have a customer orientation among their employees, that are proactive to meeting customer needs — truly understand the importance of customer orientation. All of these are opportunities for creative monopoly advantages that take companies out of the “tyranny of the market” and into a pursuit of strategies to nurture continuously improved customer delight.
- 3. *The third greatest potential for unique advantage lies in the “relationship to and between employees”.*** Companies that foster a culture of teamwork and cooperation; that ensure that their employees have the knowledge and skills to do their jobs; that offer opportunities for training and education; that are concerned about the job satisfaction of their employees; and that find ways to empower, engage and celebrate their people will maximize ways to create new monopoly advantages.
- 4. *The fourth greatest potential for monopoly advantage is found in “a product orientation”:*** the quality of products and services produced; the continuous development of new and better products and services; the reliability and dependability of products and services; the timeliness of product and service delivery; the customization of products and services to meet customer needs. These are opportunities that produce an excellent product or service



that will earn not only market share and customer loyalty, but also more cost effective products for enduring competitive advantage.

5. Surrounding and leading these efforts are an “**excellent leadership and management style**”. Monopoly advantage can be found in leadership that “breaks all the rules”<sup>\*</sup> provides clear and consistent direction and focus; aligns various organizational goals; balances short- and long-term goals; provides leadership support and guidance; utilizes resources wisely; leads financial management and cost control efforts; manages projects successfully; makes good decisions; and communicates clear roles and responsibilities.

<sup>\*</sup>See Buckingham and Coffman, *First Break All the Rules*

6. **Efforts to “foster marketing innovation” that helps an organization survive and grow** were also cited as opportunities for monopoly advantage. Here we find issues such as: the planning and execution of unique sales and marketing activities; the ability to maintain steady sales growth; the ongoing search for new markets for existing products and services; improving return on net asset ratios; encouraging risk taking; developing effective promotion materials and having a reputable image in the community. It is not enough to have a great service or product if no one knows about it!

7. Unique opportunities are found in efforts to enhance “**internal communication and information**” — by improving communication flow and idea exchange between people, shifts, and departments; by having more accurate and timely balanced score card information; by sharing critical cost and quality information; by enhancing people’s communication and interpersonal skills; by people having the information they need to perform their jobs; by being honest and open in all your communications you will enhance the efficiency of and effectiveness of “Engagement Quotient” and your capacity to master the “Q Factor”.

8. Finally, “**organizational structure**” provides unique opportunities, through an organizational structure that is fast and flexible; and is aligned and passionately focused on customer needs. Speed of response is key to your sustained success in the new economy. Speed in delivering needed new service features, and speed of fixing the inevitable service laps or product defects.

These findings cover a vast spectrum of results. Each company is different in their obstacles and opportunities to gain competitive advantage, and each individual is different in terms of the contribution that he and she can make to the organization.

It is the realization of these individual and enterprise strategies that become the real challenge for successful Change Enablers. High performance leaders focus on a strategic development process that is not only dependent upon cognitive excellence, but on the unusual and rare ability to engage, enthuse and involve people in such a way that obstacles to performance are removed, and opportunities for growth and development are realized. Real success, therefore, comes when leaders do more than connect with the cognitive portion of their team members’ minds; they must also connect with the affective portions of their minds. Moving to monopoly advantage requires understanding and moving stakeholder minds. Moving minds, however, must occur in concert with the removal of the entangled set of personal and process obstacles to peak performance that exist in every organization. The organizational “logjam” must have moved as minds are moved.

The two most evident logs that are *exclusively* obstacles to free resources and to achieve cost effectiveness are: 1. *Interruptions* and 2. *People not available* to complete the process. There are also two logs that represent opportunities for gaining monopoly advantage. We call these opportunity logs: *organizational profitability*, and *community involvement*.

Most logs require a composite of strategies for cost effectiveness and monopoly advantage. For example, *meetings* and *leadership and management* are logs heavily focused on freeing resources. *Customer satisfaction*



efforts reflect a greater portion of use of resources. *Personal job performance* and *teamwork and cooperation* are fairly equal in their ability to gain cost effectiveness or monopoly advantage.

In every logjam to date, there has been a key log that had to be removed before the rest of the logjam could be resolved. Most organizations can improve the speed and accuracy of identifying this central obstacle to success if they reach out to and listen to their workers experiences and insights. Especially if frontline managers reach out and reach in to their employees and colleagues.

When the key log is removed, the remaining logs can often be removed in parallel, and that is the main reason why quantum change can be achieved in an organization. When an organization removes obstacles to individual peak performance and also obstacles to organizational peak performance, then you find exponential performance improvement. It is in these exciting situations in which you can embrace sustainable, quantum performance improvement.

Gerson has found seven (7) Rs that guarantee performance improvement: rapport, respect, response, reinforcement, repetition, rhythm, and ritual. The probability of embracing and leveraging these critical success factors is directly related to the degree to which you are mastering "The Q Factor" and your enterprise's "Engagement Quotient".



## Leadership and Followership: Initiatives for Peak Performance

***“Men and women want to do a good job, a creative job and if they are provided the proper environment, they will do so”.***

Bill Hewlett, Co-Founder Hewlett-Packard

***“You get the best effort from others not by lighting a fire beneath them, but by building a fire within them”.***

Bob Nelson in Motivating Your Employees,  
Successories Library, 1996



## A Model for Leadership and Followership

High performance organizations understand that their people will continuously move among varying leadership and followership styles. Peak performance occurs when each person is encouraged and supported to play the most appropriate role as either a leader or follower, given the unique realities of the situation. Situational leadership is real, as is situational followership. High performing organizations strive to achieve the proper balance of leadership and followership roles by mastering a balance between cognitive and affective aspects of the minds of its stakeholders.

We will be exploring factors about leadership and followership styles that contribute to peak performance in an upcoming text, *Mind Movers*.

## Summary and Conclusions

Productivity is the key to progress and wealth creation. Each nation, organization, and individual can benefit from the knowledge about how resource use can be minimized and competitive advantage maximized. This knowledge is locked in the minds of thinking and reflective people. Once known, acting on this knowledge can transform individuals and organizations, and create not only wealth, but profound satisfaction and peace of mind as well.

The findings of Tor Dahl Associates are reinforced by the many, recent studies of the Gallup Organization. The Gallup Organization concludes that:

“Today more than ever before, if a company is bleeding people, it is bleeding value”. (p.23) Winning work environments are places where performance levels are consistently high, where turnover is low, and where a growing number of loyal customers join the trend every day”. (p. 26)

After studying over 150,000 employees, Gallup concludes that the single most important variable contributing to organizational peak performance is a worker's immediate supervisor or manager. To move mountains, one must particularly concentrate on moving the minds of these front line managers and supervisors. Influencing their minds will move their behavior.

The techniques and process for productivity and quality improvement are now well known. But, any improvement process will require change, and large improvement will require quantum change.



Change needed to implement and sustain peak performance enhancement takes place in the Affective Domain. Thus, to achieve successful change, it is necessary to know the principles that facilitate change. These principles can be understood within the eight octants formed by the intersection of the three planes defined by control, satisfaction and stress.

To achieve quantum change in performance, it is necessary to know the domains that are compatible with high performance. We now know what they are, and we know how to create movement within them. The creation involves knowledge about performance and quality improvement processes, and how to move along the axes of stress, satisfaction and control in the affective domain.

Peak Performance Enhancement (PPE) spans all known sciences, and all human behavior. In each organization, or country, we must work within a certain cultural envelope of what is acceptable and what is not, what has worked and what has not. Some countries and some organizations work within wide and generous areas of discretion; they conform to what Ronald Nomme calls "Third Order Productivity Improvement" entities. Others are burdened by outside imposed or self-imposed rules and regulations that hamper performance and create stress and dissatisfaction.

There is an American proverb that says, "You can get buffalo to go anywhere, just so long as they want to go there."

The extraordinary thing about performance improvement is that people "want to go there!" **About 70 percent of all stress and dissatisfaction at work is linked to non-productive behavior.** Learning to put up with this kind of misery is learning to tolerate unproductive behavior, and there is no reason on earth for doing so.

The drive toward quality has had phenomenal impact on the way corporations now plan their activities. In fact, quality is no longer an option, it is a given. When something is a given, a corporation can no longer count on quality providing them with a competitive advantage. It is only a disadvantage if you do not meet current quality demands.

**This means that the issue of peak performance must take center stage. World-class performance can be achieved through incremental change and through quantum change. The corporations that master quantum change with quality products or services are most likely to emerge as the dominant players in the years to come.**

**The executives who carefully assess, and then develop their own performance potential will lead more successful teams, organizations and countries. They will be more productive and be more satisfied.** These leaders will also be more likely to unleash higher levels of performance among their colleagues and workers. They will catalyze and nurture quantum and sustained change. These leaders will be Change Enablers.

Our collaboration in the recent, "The World-Class Performer Study" reinforces the message: to move mountains you must move minds. Mariss Jansons, the famous conductor of the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, as told to Jan Jonassen observes:

*"My father said that if you must make decisions, and not make mistakes, you must listen with your heart and soul. I asked him how this is practiced, and he answered me by saying that you must get your first influence or answer from inside yourself."*



*After three or four seconds, you start to let other things influence your decision. Your heart and soul answer must be first. If you do not manage this you can make mistakes. I think (that) very difficult decisions first should come from your heart. Every difficulty you pass is your life's study. You pause as you go forward, because you cannot go back."*

Interestingly, four thousand miles away, an American Indian poet quoted an old saying at a recent reading at the Loft, a Minneapolis writer's society:

*"You do what your heart tells you,  
And you act on faith.  
You do what your mind tells you,  
And you act on fact.  
You do what your heart and mind tell you,  
And you act in wisdom."*

Author Unknown

**Performance improvement, therefore, involves both the heart and the mind.** The affective domain is the heart of the matter. When we understand its mysterious workings, we can bring energy, commitment, and dedication to the most challenging and demanding task of quantum change. Change Enablers are continuously engaged in a journey of discovery about how to achieve peak performance enhancement by connecting with, engaging and leveraging the emotional engine of the minds of stakeholders.

You can, in fact move mountains by moving minds!

***For additional information on the research upon which this paper has been based, turn to Tor Dahl Associates at [www.tordahl.com](http://www.tordahl.com)***



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