



Getting to Peak Performance

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Prologue

Companies are squeaking the productivity out of every dollar and every resource. Technology has given companies the ability to leverage capital in improving productivity.

Like Seth Godin says, his first internet company had up to sixty people and now he could do the same with six people.

How do you create an atmosphere for peak performance in your organization? How do you create a President's mentality in top personnel that keeps innovation and creativity flowing?

How are individuals encouraged to maximize their personal contributions?

How do you get individuals to Peak Performance?

Chapter One Why Do We Need People?

Corporations in America are sitting on a trillion dollars in cash that is cautiously waiting for a business turn around.

One great use is increasing productivity by adding tools that enhance revenue streams, support expense reduction, and create efficiencies.

These tools for the most part are technology based with increases in computer capability, machinery for production, and equipment for efficiencies.

Every business must prioritize revenue streams and customer satisfaction at the same time. Everyone wants to avoid the lower ROI from adding two customers and losing one.

Why is increasing people not a larger part of this current investment window?

What is the key ingredient necessary for hiring people who are above the minimum wage levels; people you put on weekly salaries?

They have to create a margin of productivity over their alternative.

When are hires marginally superior to technology alternatives?

Humans have the ability to be creative, innovative, develop relationships, develop concepts, perceive trends, understand competition, identify with customer needs, and execute strategies.

These are the responsibilities of leadership.

How much time and energy do executives possess for creative activities after fulfilling their job descriptions and maybe those of three others who they haven't hired or previously fired?

Who is measuring and creating the environment for higher levels of human performance?

People are important, but they need to bring new capabilities to the table. To out produce purchased technology, they have to access their innovative, creative, and problem solving capabilities.

They have to almost get out of their minds to visualize today's needs and tomorrows answers. Real leaders are looking for what's next.

Chapter Two How Does an Organization Create Leadership?

A multi-national organization may have many divisions or subsidiaries responsible for specific markets, products/services, production, distribution, or sales.

Each has a leader or maybe a President. They each make a contribution to the whole but are expected to understand the company's mission and work in conformity with the plan.

How are these leaders included in decisions and policies and made effective by the highest level of management?

They are informed, they are queried, they have input, and they have accountability.

How an organization structures growth through its human resources is a comment on its culture, its confidence in staff, and its long term perspective on personnel and personal growth.

The humans in an organization read very easily how important to the organic organization they are considered. They often make a decision about what the level of their contribution will be based on that analysis.

They will first decide whether humans are used and discarded or whether they are cherished and nourished for long term growth.

If they decide humans are used and discarded, they will take an "I'm in it for me" attitude and will only be interested in effort for money.

If they decide that humans are cherished and grown based upon their contribution, they will become inspired to contribute and grow personally.

Chapter 3 What is Important to an Organization's People?

I see two different types of stimulus for people's productivity.

Some people produce because they are motivated.

Some people produce because they are inspired.

It is possible that these two stimuli overlap and it is often true that these characteristics are better suited for different positions. Not everyone can be *the* leader, even though everyone can lead.

Motivation is certainly good for the sales department.

Why? Because you could ask most of the participants if they had a choice, what would they do with their time?

They might say fishing, lying on the beach, playing basketball, cooking and so forth.

The reasons their answers are rarely "working at this job" is because the job rarely expresses who they are. It is a job of hard work, facing rejection, meeting someone else's objectives, and payment for overcoming the obstacles.

Their performance can have short term career consequences and is therefore pressure packed.

On the other hand, people who want to be inspired work for different reasons. They may choose not to work with your company if they don't see an opportunity to express who they are.

They want to have the latitude to implement their ideas and see them through to some conclusion. They want to do work that is important and important to them. Pay is

not always as big a motivator as an opportunity to create and then reap the rewards of something widely accepted.

They are willing to be part of the team but sort of picture themselves as a team. Pay will not motivate them to do work they find unfulfilling. Give them the opportunity and they may be willing to run the whole organization for a song.

They thrive on responsibility and creation. They have high self esteem and generally want to see others do well. They want entities to become better because of their contribution.

They may not work with an organization that is perceived as taking advantage of either the staff or the public. Too many emotions come into conflict for them in this environment and paralyze their productivity.

They are not great manipulators.

An organization has to know the type of people that would support its health and decide whether it has room for people who need to personally flourish.

Chapter Four How Environment Supports High Performance

In classifying personnel, I would differentiate between competing generic work for generic wages and creating new opportunities for the organization to perform at a high level.

I have always had a creative imagination and enjoyed being creative. I get bored instantly with routine. That is one reason I have been a superb entity builder and a poor

maintainer. In high maintenance situations, I soon get ground down in day to day trivialities.

When I was in the real estate business and a regional and office manager, I always felt it was my duty, but even more my pleasure to help create the direction of the organization.

I was great at firing up the spirits of my sales staff and teaching them how to excel. I was actually a better teacher than salesperson even though I had dominated my own markets.

We operated in the Brentwood, Beverly Hills, Bel Air, and Malibu market places and had some of the highest priced properties and most famous clients in the country.

I could see the whole picture of our competitive market and the weaknesses and strengths of our organization and our competitors. I was made a regional manager of 11 offices to teach other managers how to fire up their staffs but also to give me a larger role.

I wanted to be President but the owner/ President also wanted to be President. Handling my aggressive ambition was a challenge for the President and he handled it well.

The competition was hard charging and one leading organization was led by a super sports hero who used his learned lessons to instill discipline, pride, and high aspirations.

Every worthwhile competitor has a strategy and tactics. This particular competitor liked to say all his people were equal in importance and no one would be singled out for meritorious service; An unusual tactic for a sports competitor.

The organization I belonged to was led by a very unathletic person and yet each person's productivity was listed on a widely circulated sheet every month and there were rewards for the leaders. Everyone was competing against everyone else.

Each company had their core philosophy about what motivates people. The public was interested in finding the highest producers to assist them and so our strategy could feed into that. It was good for the sales leaders in our organization and not as good for the underlings.

The other company was challenged to say who their leaders were and yet in their company no one was embarrassed by being at the bottom of the pecking order.

The competition between the companies was fierce and the pride was great. There was a clear differentiation in how recognition was handled. But people in both organizations were treated well.

There was not much migration from one company to the other, because the sales people of each preferred how their company treated producers.

The culture that didn't differentiate producers, stressed to each of them how everyone in the organization was the best trained, best looking, best dressed, and best performers in the industry. They bought into that.

The culture that did differentiate producers stressed that everyone should improve and strive for the recognition they could earn by being a leader. These people bought into that.

Each philosophy worked.

In one organization, you were loved because you were a member. In the other organization you were loved more for your production. In one organization you were proud because you were a member, and in the other organization you were more proud for how you could express and showcase your talents both within the organization and publicly.

Producers for both organizations obviously claimed their organizations were number one in the city for sales and each company had statistics that supported that conclusion.

Leaders and individuals have to decide which type of environment makes them the most productive and self fulfilled. Do you like to work hard but feel equal like in a country club? Do you want to work for recognition and have a need to be at the top of the food chain?

The spirit of creating competition and self fulfillment begins with the leadership. What type of organization do they want to build? What type of personalities fit best into their mission and their industry?

Even though we expect everyone to produce, it is important that people are not belittled. I treated people in recognition of what I sensed were their motivation and capabilities. Not everyone could be a top performer, but everyone could improve and have pride in them selves.

If a person feels they are treasured or at least respected and if they know there are fair expectations of them, they will perform to their best ability.

Some people stand out as top performers and want to be recognized. They have the highest levels of ambition and the greatest capabilities. These people also want to know

they are playing on a level playing field and that others vying for the number one spots do not have unfair advantages.

The politics in organizations can undermine the productive and generous nature of people to contribute if they know there is a level playing field.

At one point, I was managing a 90 person residential real estate office in Beverly Hills. There were six or seven top offices in the city and each had a few top performers and lots of agents who wanted to be.

These top agents were not competing with the people in their office as much as with the top agents from the other leading offices. Their company loyalty existed only to the extent that they were given extra advantages to maintain their city wide leadership.

The top performers in Beverly Hills were considered to be the top performers in Los Angeles, so there was tremendous pressure and tremendous reward.

They wanted to be recognized as the best in the market place because the margin of income to the person recognized as the best in the business was huge. This was twenty years ago, but the top few people could be earning two million dollars a year.

In recruiting ambitious agents from other offices, our tactic was to say we will make you as good as our top performer. We helped our performer get to the top and we will put the same resources to work for you.

When you get to the crème de la crème it's all about them; after all they were the most important people in the business. They were much more important to the public than even the company owners. They were almost

national figures because their sales volume was highest in the country.

Like being number one in tennis, with the notoriety comes crazy pressure. Supporting this person's ambition and stress requires very empathetic ego less management.

Chapter Five

How Does An Individual Find Their Inspiration?

I was a lazy adolescent. I only wanted to play although I was a good student. Even through high school and college I was a good student, but not positively sure why good grades would benefit me. I accepted the general rhetoric that it would get me ahead in life.

I ran a family business for awhile that was of no great interest other than staying alive. Finally at 25, I was newly married and entered the residential real estate field.

I felt I had found something where I could express all my personal talents and there was no limit on how much money could be made without owning your own business.

I was inspired to express myself and motivated by the money that could be made for exerting enough effort. As time progressed, I was made an office manager and then a regional manager.

I soon found that even with more responsibility, I no longer felt the enjoyment and I was no longer expressing who I was. I had become a cog in the machine. I had become a widget. If it wasn't me doing it, it would be someone else.

Now I was only motivated by the money. I became more self centered and started weighing whether the boss had the right to work me so many hours for my job description and for what I was getting paid. The gripes among fellow managers were the same.

And we had no room to complain. We were getting paid well. We were just putting in tons of over time on jobs that could have been outsourced. We were feeling like mules being whipped.

I became a selfish player and not an inspired team player who had a stake in the outcome of the entire enterprise.

And that is how I discern between motivation and inspiration. It often takes money to inspire someone to do work they might not do if they had more choices.

Inspiration is an activity you want regardless of the pay because it expresses who you are. People are inspired to do things that have no pay because it expresses who they are.

Inspiration is important for peak performance because it entails no limits on the efforts you are willing to exert to achieve a purpose. There is no time clock and there is no required reward.

Would Peyton Manning ever say you are not paying me enough to watch more game films? No. He is leading the charge. Money is only a part of his inspiration to be the best.

The activity is the pay off. The opportunity is the willingly accepted reward.

How do we get to the point of wanting to express who we are?

In my blog postings I track which words and topics are most popular. I find words like “passion”, “creativity”, “inspiration” and “cure boredom” have a high response rate.

Why do people get stuck in boredom?

It takes courage to change. Our Reptilian brains try to protect us against danger and in this society perhaps against rejection or failure. Our personalities filter information and try to reinforce our world view.

Failure is a bad stigma. The fact that the human brain prefers to bifurcate all issues, it leaves us with the simplistic choices of success or failure. There is a lot of grey area in between that we fail to shoot for because it is the murky deeps.

The word failure should be outlawed from our vocabulary. I say if you never quit you never fail. I also say that if I had a hammer and chisel, I could cut any boulder in half given enough time.

Therefore, I say real goals should have life long aims and anything shorter is an objective. Many gurus will say that you need a goal and a strategy. If you don't reach the goal, change the strategy.

That is my feeling. If you don't reach an objective, change the strategy and try again. I am constantly changing strategies but I never feel I have failed. If I want financial independence and I get fired from a job, I haven't failed.

I need a better line of work or a new job to continue the pursuit.

But fear keeps us trapped.

I have experienced and now preach that one path to courage is improving eating habits and fitness.

My Free E Book "[Healthy, Lean, and Happy Forever](#)" goes into diet and fitness more than I will here.

But in any case, creating healthy eating habits by eliminating harmful foods and adding healthy natural foods starts having an affect on how we see our bodies.

I have moved to 90% raw and in the process there is a real spiritual awakening. Some people fear the word "spiritual" envisioning monk robes, incense candles and repetition of the word ohmmmm.

But I am almost as normal as the next guy.

I then continued my fitness program which earlier in my life was running 60 miles a week and is now toned down to what I can endure. I keep pushing the envelope.

I like to exercise beyond what my mind says is my capacity, because I learn to ignore its attempts to limit my potential.

The combination of healthy eating and continued fitness did cause me to gradually lose 40 pounds. In the process I developed appreciation for my ability to control my mind, the human potential to feel great, a sharper mind, a leaner body and more over all appreciation for being alive on this planet.

The discipline leads to courage that you can accomplish anything on which you set your sites. The greater connection to my body and then to appreciation of being here led me to pursue things that were really important to me.

I engaged in activities that inspired me. I wanted to pursue the activities because I enjoyed them and they were important to me. They had nothing to do with getting paid for them.

There is nothing wrong with getting paid for your interests but one thing that differentiates motivation from inspiration is the importance of financial reward for the activity.

In the inspirational pursuit of your personal potential, you find greater appreciation for being here and more inspiration to share your self.

You find more interest in the welfare of others and wanting to make life more beneficial for them.

The teachings and books of Dr. Margaret Paul found at <http://www.innerbonding.com/> say that at anytime you can choose to protect yourself whereby you shut down or learn more about yourself whereby you open up.

Anyone can move from a state of boredom to pure inspiration. They can move from a life they dread to a life they cherish. The courage to make the leap can begin with an initial step of healthy eating and fitness.

It will open the door to how great you are and what a gift your mind/brain and body has been. If its not great now, it can be.

Chapter Six Creating Peak Performance

Supreme athletes have a passion for training. No one could work as hard as the world's elites without a passion for their exercise and their craft.

I recently witnessed a mini tri-athlon in Oceanside. It was the first such contest staged in the United States and it attracted the best Iron Man competitors from around the globe. There were several Olympic and World Champions.

They condensed nine hours of capability into a one hour sprint. Bikes rides were at 35 miles per hour. The running was at a 4:20 minute mile pace. They were electric. They were arguably the most fit humans on the planet.

Do they exercise to prove to the world they are the best? I think they have a passion for the exercise and the world stage is where they prove the capability of the human mind, body, and spirit.

No reward could make you or I put in the hours and follow the discipline of these individuals. But we could have our own passion for which time is no obstacle in our pursuit of this expression.

Peak Performance comes from using all our personnel resources pointed like a laser with the commitment that we will succeed in becoming the best that we can be.

We may not achieve being the best there is. Only time will tell. But we can take up the challenge to become the best that we can be and let the chips fall where they may.

I love to surf. I have only recently taken it up again. I will never be as good as the champions, but it is not important. I will become the best that I can be.

I love to write. I may never become as great as some of my favorite authors, but I will become the best that I can be.

I do not have short term goals for either pursuit. My long term goal is to be the best I can be and participate in each activity as often as possible. Since I live at the beach and made writing my occupation, I have the time everyday.

Since I am willing to learn and take advice or even criticism, I am open to improve. At any time, I can already say I am the best I can be at the moment.

My healthy pursuits of eating and fitness keep me tapped into my connection with my body and the capacity to feel good, be alert, and develop greater ability.

If I had an organization, I would include getting everyone on a path for personal improvement and devote time and resources to educating and supporting these efforts.

Humans are still the greatest resource of any organization and deserve to be maximized. You are your greatest resource and deserve the same attention.