

A WEEK IN *Learning*

Taking Care of Your Inner Athlete

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As a society, we seem to put a lot of pressure on ourselves at this time of year – at least in the area of personal change and development. Millions of us have made bold statements, proclaiming our personal goals for 2019 and telling ourselves that, this time, we'll achieve the results we long for. By now, I'm sure you've seen dozens of advertisements, articles, and news reports discussing the great "New Year's Resolution" phenomenon. The same pattern exists within the workplace. Our new GCNA Strategic Plan is set, and we are in the midst of finalizing our many "resolutions" in the form of operational goals for 2019.

Over the last week or so, I've been thinking about how much the goals we set for ourselves, and our organization, are dependent upon our ability to remain healthy and strong. Last week, I re-read a great article by Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz, who encouraged us all to think of ourselves as "Athletes" at work. It's a concept that can be valuable to all of us here at GCNA as we prepare to take on the challenges of the new year.



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- Lane Schonour

Multitudes

The idea of the corporate athlete arose from extensive research into human performance. What Loehr and Schwartz discovered is that any level of human performance involves a **combination of important basic capacities, present in all of us**. As Walt Whitman famously wrote, "I am large, I contain multitudes". Loehr and Schwartz agree. Relating this notion to the ability to set and achieve goals, they share, "The problem with most approaches is that they deal with people only from the neck up, connecting high performance primarily with cognitive capacity." In addition, they write, "Our integrated theory of performance management addresses the body, the emotions, the mind, and the spirit."

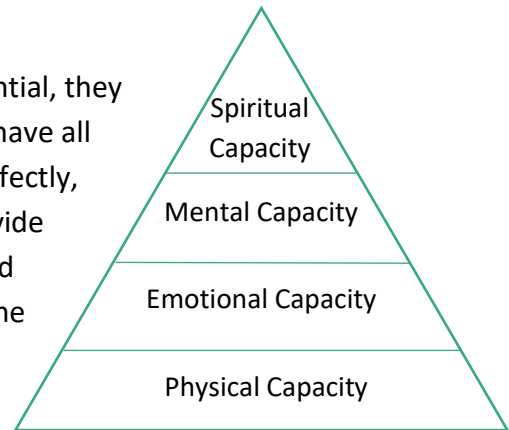
The Pyramid

Loehr and Schwartz go on to present a model called the "High Performance Pyramid." The Pyramid consists of four distinct performance levels, as seen below:

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In The Groove

When all of these pyramid levels function at their highest potential, they yield something called an “Ideal Performance State” (IPS). We have all experienced a time when things just seemed to be working perfectly, when we are “in the zone” or “in a groove”. These periods provide maximum results in almost any situation, including business and leadership endeavors. Loehr and Schwartz state, “Put simply, the best long- term performers tap into positive energy at all levels of the performance pyramid.”



Sequence Matters

An interesting and important aspect of the High Performance Pyramid is that it must be considered sequentially, from its base (physical capacity) through its top (spiritual capacity).

At the core, Loehr and Schwartz have found that the strength of our physical base has a direct correlation to our ability to do anything, including performing professionally. Once this foundation is established, our emotional capacity helps us create an internal state of calmness that supports high performance. The third tier of the pyramid, our mental capacity, involves focus, time management, and positive and critical-thinking skills. It operates best on a solid physical and emotional state.

Finally, with these three capacities addressed, we are able to concentrate on developing our spiritual capacity. When it shows up in the world of work, many professionals are wary of the word “spiritual.” Loehr and Schwartz address this directly, noting, “By spiritual capacity, we simply mean the energy that is unleashed by tapping into one’s deepest values and defining a strong sense of purpose.” When all the capacities of the High Performance Pyramid are being properly attended, great personal development and increased business results can be achieved.

So, as you set out to conquer your 2019 goals, both personal and professional, make sure to take the full scope of your own High Performance Pyramid into account. Also, remember that you are not alone in this work - your GCNA team is behind you and is invested in your success. Here’s to a fulfilling and rewarding 2019!

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