

Pulling it all together: How to harness all you've learned in order to play to the edge

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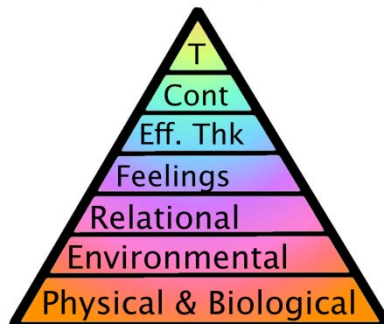
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Through the years we all have attended multiple trainings, have multiple coaching tools in our toolkit. But when you're trying to achieve peak performance for yourself or a client – how do you harness everything you know to be of service to your client?

Medical and psychological science now appreciate that we are bio-social-psycho-spiritual beings who are continually managing actions, cognitions and emotions. How can we heighten our awareness and skills to integrate what we know in order to be in alignment with current theory and research.

Overview and Introduction to:

1. The 7 levels of the P.E.R.F.E.C.T. Pyramid
2. How each level connects to different theoretical orientations and coaching skills
3. How to connect the tools we have to these different levels
4. How to use these for coaching and for our own peak performance.



P.E.R.F.E.C.T. SCANNING

Imagine *you* have to suddenly rise to the challenge and succeed at a difficult task – pitching to a huge potential client, or the steady task of promoting and building your practice. How do you keep yourself capable of attaining and maintaining long-term peak performance? Now, imagine sitting with a client in a high-stakes coaching encounter and they suddenly need something powerful, or a new way to understand their situation and you want to draw on everything you have ever learned to find the most effective way to respond? Here is one framework

The PERFECT Scan: What can you pull from theories, research and your own experience from each of these seven levels. Each area is a resource and a source of potential obstacles.

- P Are there interventions based on a biological and physical level?
- E Looking at the systems level, are there resources you are overlooking?
- R What relationships could be sustaining you more effectively?
- F What's an emotional profile? Can you tap into your emotional intelligence?
- E Are you thinking effectively, do you know your cognitive profile or distortions?
- C Can you pull from the past? Tap into the present, manage expectations?
- T When facing major obstacles, do you have multiple pathways to transcendent resources?

PERFECT is the mnemonic device I use to remind myself of the wide array of possibilities I have at my disposal. These are not just for specific interventions – but for multiple theoretical orientations that can inform our understanding of any specific client in any specific context. It is an integrative framework that can help you pull from diverse approaches. While on the level of abstraction different orientations may feel antithetical – in practice they may all have their uses.

This approach is one of:

Technical Eclecticism

Technical eclecticism is designed to improve our ability to select the best intervention, encourages the use of diverse strategies without being hindered by over reliance on theoretical purity. The disadvantage is there may not be a clear conceptual framework describing how techniques drawn from divergent theories might fit together. Eventually we may achieve theoretical integration.

What are we trying to fit together?

Theoretical orientations, as we know from the Coaching Psychology Courses include:

1. Biological, genetic, medical, physiological, nutritional, other factors related to what is often overlooked in coaching what is -- **Physical**.
2. Systems, environment -individual interactive effects, cultural practices, organizational development, issues of context and diversity. To capture interventions at this level we think of what are the forces at play in ones surroundings – The impersonal **Environment**.
3. Interpersonal environment factors – what issues exist in the realm of personal connection preferences, interpersonal effectiveness, optimal team performance, conflict management and of course, the coaching relationship and how we can use it to effect change – our **Relationships**.

4. We all have training in different aspects of emotions – emotional intelligence, knowing one’s emotional profile, the power and impact of emotional triggers, contagion as well as interventions based on emotion focused and dialectical behaviour coaching as well as positive psychology of positive emotions --
Feelings
5. Cognitive perspectives, how we think and process information, ways we potentially distort information, cognitive styles and preferences and ways we lead to most –
Effective Thinking.
6. What is our client’s relationship to the past, present and future, and how can we pull on psychodynamic understanding, appreciation of transferences, optimizing present experience through mindfulness and managing expectations of the future and optimizing – **Continuity** of past, present and future.
7. Spirituality, deep values, meaning, purpose and humor are often utilized in coaching as these are pathways to – **Transcendence.**

All of us have skills, techniques and tools in all these areas – but we forget to use them! We can hold back from venturing into ways of helping our clients connect to their deepest resources because we lack the framework to fully access what we have to offer.

PRACTICE ON YOURSELF - REFLECTION

We will have coaching practice after the overview of the seven layers:

To prepare, take a moment for reflection, and as we continue, think of the material in light of a challenge you, or are a client are facing.

Pick an area of your own life, or from a client, that is a challenge, one where you need sustained peak performance and energy.

Describe the challenge in a nutshell.

Jot down notes for yourself as we go through the seven layers.

PHYSICAL

Introduction: The price of overlooking this level. The Story of Tom – who’s doctor thought he was anxious, but he had a brain tumor.

Physical resources are a foundation of energy, yet are often overlooked as physical and psychological issues are often intertwined.

For example:

Energy level and Vitality: sleep, nutrition, exercise -

Drs. Tal Ben Shahir, John Ratey – Research shows that NOT exercising = a depressant.

How can we all develop basic internal matrix of key physical issues to increase awareness of physical resources or obstacles to client performance?

Medical issues

Medication

Pain

Power Stress

“Military breathing” aka diaphragmatic breathing

Brain functioning

ADHD

Parasympathetic nervous system

Sympathetic nervous system

How to boost your brain -- positive emotion and neurological functioning

Simple coaching questions:

Given what you know about yourself, what do you need to address on a physical level to optimise your performance and energy level?

Or, what would you need to have in place to regain your sense of physical vitality?

Or - what activities tend to energize you?

Translate these into self-care interventions or question.

Ask questions to help clients develop troubleshooting abilities in this area

Notice if issues such as: laziness, confusion, boredom or anxiety have physical root causes.

Appreciate the interconnectedness of biology, performance and wellbeing.

Reflection: What is your understanding of how including this material into your coaching practice on a regular basis might make you more effective?

ENVIRONMENTAL

Some people are masters of the environment, they “naturally” know how to use systems to access crucial information and get things done. When faced with challenges in the corporate culture, or working with diversity they easily match the individual, organizational and systemic factors.

Areas to explore:

Ways to assess corporate/community culture.

Cultural Orientation Instrument: including: power/responsibility, time, identity, organizational style (hierarchy/equality, territory) communication (high/low context, direct/indirect, affective/neutral;

How do you assess organizational dynamics, power dynamics?

Governance, systems

How do you sense if an environment is optimal, neutral or toxic – what do you look for?

On a more narrow scope:

What qualities comprise an ideal environment for you?

If you envision the perfect environment that pulls out the best in you – what does it look like?

e.g. do you prefer: congruence, predictability, excitement, calm, challenge, respect, community, individualism?

What variables do you and your clients find important?

What is a client's relationship to responsibility and blame wrt the environment?

What "matching" issues surface between client and his/her environment/culture?

What impact can a client have on his or her environment? –

Explore how using micro changes can sculpt the environment.

What resources on this level do your clients tend to emphasize or underestimate?

What kinds of insights, tools or assessment instruments have you used that could assist developing coaching skills in this level?

Consider what assessments, tools and interventions might fall into these categories.

Reflection: What is your understanding of how awareness of environmental and systems issues can make your coaching effective?

RELATIONAL

Relationships are a key resource for energy, positive emotion, well-being. Did you know one good relationship can add as many years to one's longevity than smoking takes away.

NB: We excel at describing what is dysfunctional what about optimal relationships?
Five signs are: zest, empowerment, both in and beyond the relationship, (response-able) increased knowledge of self and others, greater sense of worth and increased belief in connections with others.

Relational Styles and Flexibility:

How flexibly can your client adjust relational style when managing up, colleagues or subordinates?

MBTI language very helpful in this.

(Kevin the ENFP and his ISTJ boss & stress polarizing)

What can you adjust? Warmth, calm/excitement, affirmation/challenge and rhythm.
(downshift or intensify)

Conflict management: what is the ideal internal decision tree to engage in conflict – the "new" rule of thumb. De-couple conflict and anger. Sasha's No!

Predicting divorce – and it's applications to coaching and satisfying relationships, Active Constructive Responding. The key is: Will you be there when things go right?

What exactly is empathy? Moving from the golden rule to the platinum rule.

How does the relationship shift according to the task of coaching: the developmental pipeline or the ARC or the context.

Coaching questions

What is social intelligence – do you know it when you see it?

With executives you know who have been coached and had success in shifting their relationships – what did it?

What assessments and tools do you use in this area?

What questions have you found to truly unlock growth in this area?

How do you assess and manage conflict – what do you think works?

Reflection: What interventions on a relational level would you like to use more often?

FEELINGS

Story: Driving through Martha's Vineyard in the fog. The price of overlooking feelings: Tonya and her dog.

Emotional Intelligence: RUUM, Recognize, Understand, Utilize and Manage

Recognize: A skill akin to wine tasting

Understand: How are your emotions affecting how you think

Utilize: How can you use your emotions to be more effective

Manage: What is your relationship with your emotions?

How do you manage them when they are strong or oddly absent or the right size?

Are emotions fact or fiction and how can you know? (what is your default)

Primary and secondary emotions – Emotion focused coaching

Do people have emotional set points? How much is genetic?

What is your emotional profile?

What is your baseline, rhythm, metabolization, relationship to emotions, avoidant or embracing.

Are you aware of what emotions you manage easily and what one's are difficult.

What emotions are most contagious for you?

Positive Emotional Intelligence:

What is the impact of what you pay attention to – and what does it buy you?

Why are we negative? The Zeigarnik Effect, VELCRO, vs. TEFLON,

Beethoven and the Columbia Journalism professor's comment on writing...

Negative narrows focus, survival Positive affect, leads to big picture thinking, and creativity.

Learning to Reverse -- 3 good things, scanning the day differently – story of Michael

Enhance positive emotional intelligence: Find what pathway works for you.

Broaden and build theory of positive emotions

3:1 ratio of optimal team performance

Nuns and Famous dead psychologists.

Affect priming studies and the Positive Pygmalion Effect

Rosenthal Studies, power of expectations on students

Affect priming studies – one grad point

What you “emanate” is powerful – even for dolphins!

100 years of leadership development – Pygmalion was most powerful.

Reflection: How closely does my coaching align to the 3:1?

EFFECTIVE THINKING

Story: Sitting in the waiting room – you are loser no matter what (or a winner?)

How often do we think about how we think? How aware are you of your thought process?

The “voices” in your head?

Cognitive Behavioural Coaching focuses on increasing awareness of automatic thoughts and the unique ways we process information. These are often like the wallpaper of our minds – don’t see them.

Focus on the content of thinking: automatic thoughts

Core beliefs: (usually revolve around our efficacy and loveability)

Distortions: (catastrophizing, personalization, black/white and HOT thoughts.

Process (not the what, but the how of our thinking)

The MBTI provides a great language for this

What is optimal cognitive style?

Lean, clear, flexible and agile thinking,

Synthetic, integrative and creative

Analytic, logical, deductive, or intuitive, inductive?

Do you need to be a hawk or a hummingbird: Is there an ideal match of cognitive style and the challenge (

How do you use Myers Briggs Preferences and managing cognitive style?

What else do you use to think about how your client thinks.

Also: Many ways of knowing and learning –

Authoritative, Subjective, Experiential -

Reflection:

How aware are you of differences in cognitive style in your day-to-day work with people?

CONTINUITY OF PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE (ideal self – 1 year forward)

How much are we driven by the past or pulled by the future?

Those of us who understand our history are not doomed to repeat it

Those of us who live fully in the present, truly live

Those of us who have embrace the future can create better bridges toward it.

We each have a different ideal balance of past present and future, (reflection) TAKE A PIECE OF PAPER – DRAW 3 CIRCLES THAT REPRESENT the role of the past, present and future in your life?

PAST: The theoretical offering of psychoanalytic theory to coaching is often overlooked and misunderstood. Psychodynamics refers to psychological patterns – internal or interpersonal that we create from our life experience.

The Story of Lori and positive repetition compulsion. – Pos PsA derivations of courage, leadership and healthy relationships, building up positive emotion about the past.

Crucibles and Authentic Leadership approach – what is the leadership lesson from the painful experience. Can also take an appreciative inquiry approach.

PRESENT: Growth occurs in the present. How well do we seize the day and fully engage with the opportunities that stream by us every moment?

It is only in the now that we can practice small-scale and fractal interventions that can build upon themselves. (What is a fractal intervention? A small behaviour or pattern that mirrors larger ones.)

Being in the now is the avenue to be “with yourself”.

Mindfulness – how can you see the moment as different from any other moment?

How do you use mindfulness to enhance perceptions in the present and to help your clients ground themselves.

FUTURE: (Is it the past flipped forward, or can it be truly different)

What is the optimal connection with the future? Do you fill in the blanks with your wishes and hopes or your fears? Is it clear? A blur? (hard to be pulled forward by a blur)

Optimism, Personal Vision, Best possible self exercise – (five years from now you have achieved all of your goals and have a full and satisfying life, what does that look like?).

Reflection: do you have tools in all three areas? Those that pull lessons from the past, help clients fully access choices in the present and also create an ideal relationship with the future?

TRANSCENDENCE

Example of pulling on Transcendence in a coaching session (Bill) If you aligned with your highest purpose...

Transcending – our limits and our egos. This is the place finding deep purpose and aligning one's life with core values and moving beyond our individual accomplishments.

Rising above and beyond the self, a deeper well of resources. This is a well of resources people often sprint to in time of dire need, but otherwise ignore. Some individuals naturally tap easily into the deeper or wider level of experience.

Transcendent thinking

Intuition & synthesis, sudden knowing (Captain Linda Baker)

The intuition of the expert is all together different than the novice.

Appreciation of beauty and excellence, can be an energizing resource

Gratitude, humor and hope.

Values & Purpose.

Intrinsic Motivation correlated with successfulness.

Authentic Leadership: My purpose statement.

Being the best conduit you can be for what can be accomplished through you

Spirituality: Meditation, mindfulness and moving beyond the ego/self

Overview effect

How does rising above “regular” life help your client keep perspective?

What are avenues to transcendence?

What are ways we can help clients tap into this level of resource without going beyond our boundaries? How do we balance the tension between the pragmatic and transcendent?

Reflection: How do we stay grounded in science and also open to seeing beyond the horizon of rational, linear based thinking?

PRACTICE ON YOURSELF - SELF REFLECTION

Take the area of life you have picked.

FIRST: JOT DOWN for yourself , DO THE SCAN

Scan through the seven levels to achieve an overview on what resources or tools might be at your disposal to rise to the occasion even more effectively than you have.

Work with your partner:

Coaches: Pull from your own toolboxes to help the coachee through the scan.

DEBRIEF: How much do you practice from all 7 levels?
Do you tend to over or under emphasize any areas?
Which are the most fascinating to you?

PERSONAL REFLECTION:

How do you already orient yourself and systematically organize your perspectives and coaching tools?

Do you have a standard order? Do you intuitively respond in the moment?

There are many pathways to excellence in coaching, many organizational systems to help facilitate your coaching choices.

P.E.R.F.E.C.T. INTEGRATION

How can working through these different levels help you access your resources and organize your many levels of knowing?

The next time you want to rise to a challenge, or in a tight spot with a client and are not sure of the next step, try scanning with PERFECT

See if you get a new idea, or discover you have overlooked something very useful.

Thank you!

Carol