



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HIGH PERFORMANCE MINDSETS DRIVE HIGH PERFORMING ORGANISATIONS

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Organisations need to germinate the right capacities in the form of people who can develop a company's products, competitive edge, strategic plan. . . . It is no longer so much a matter of getting employees to do their work, but rather how to get them to do good work, or their best work. Today, companies need all of their employees to be creative, which requires employees to be motivated, and to put their all into their work.¹

In the highly competitive business milieu, companies are on the search for strategies that can help take their people and organisation from good to great performing workplaces. There is now research that identifies characteristics of high (and low) performing workplaces: high performing organisations consistently reveal (a) exemplary **innovation** in creating new products and services meeting customer need and expectations; (b) consistent **productivity** and financial performance, (c) high levels of employee **engagement** and (d) a good **quality of life** (job satisfaction, well-being).²

Here's what we have learned. High performing workplaces are a by-product of two distinct forces that mutually influence one another: **positive organisations** (leadership, management, culture) and the **positive mindsets** of leaders, managers and employees.



Factors Contributing to High Performance Organisational Outcomes

Positive Organisations Matter

The organisational development literature indicates that the following characteristics contribute to high performance workplaces.³ (1) organisational culture that embraces change with people who value transformation and innovation and who are sensitive to shifts in customer need, competition, and new business opportunities, (2) managers and employees who excel at cooperation and collaboration internally and with customers, (3) employees extensively involved in development of strategies and decision making, (4) ongoing learning and development of staff knowledge and problem solving ability, (5) expertise in information and communication technologies, and (6) utilisation of unique intellectual and personal strengths of employees.

People's Mindset

Matters Most

Within the past decade, researchers studying positive organisational behaviour in the workplace have discovered that it is the highly developed psychological capital or 'mindset' of high performers that determines their high levels of productivity-profitability, engagement, innovation and quality of life.^{4,5,6,7,8}

What has been learned is that top performers have an 'enhanced' work performance cycle. Because of their strong commitments and behavioural strengths, they respond more quickly and positively to tough situations avoiding a negative downward spiral of work performance, bottoming out or burnout. They are more aware of any performance blockers they experience (e.g., extreme anger, worry, procrastination) and through self-management, they remain in control. They are very adept in managing tough situations and solving problems.

Behavioural Strengths

As part of their mindset, high performers possess a well-developed set of behavioural strengths that they call on in tough work situations. They understand the importance of and have the ability to be self-managing in tough situations in order to stay calm, to think clearly and behave effectively. Additionally, depending on the tough situation, they can call on high degrees of confidence, persistence, organisation and getting along – especially when interacting with difficult people.

Commitments

Mindset also consists of people's firmly established **commitments** that determine how they see their world. Commitments influence the way people think about and interpret events in their lives including the way they feel and behave. People's commitment to success, commitment to others and commitment to self are supported by a variety of beliefs they action regularly; for example, optimism, creativity, empathy, support, self-acceptance, and positive focus. Possessing all three commitments is largely responsible for the success of top performers.



Architecture of the High Performance Mindset

The High Performance Mindset at Work Training Initiative

In order for employees to work at the very highest levels of productivity and to contribute to the deliver of business strategies that achieve corporate objectives, companies need to invest in their development as people. **Michael E. Bernard**

The High Performance Mindset at Work (HPMW) is a blended and customised training program based on positive psychology and mindset development, created by Professor Michael E. Bernard, an international expert on the subject.

The High Performance Mindset at Work training initiative is designed to directly improve targeted performance and achieve high performing organisational goals such as productivity-profitability, work engagement, innovation and quality of life.

Michael E. Bernard, Ph.D., is a psychologist and Professor in the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne and an Emeritus Professor at the California State University, Long Beach. He is also:

- Author of over 50 books, 15 book chapters and 30 journal articles in areas associated with mindset development, resilience, parenting, mental health and school improvement;
- International consultant to universities, business organisations, educational authorities, institutions and governments;
- Founder of a program that is being used in over 6,000 schools in Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, England, Romania and North America for promoting student social-emotional well-being and achievement - You Can Do It! Education (www.youcandoiteducation.com; www.youcandoitparents.com);
- The inaugural sport psychologist of one of Australia's premier football teams providing mental training for developing great sport stars.

The HPMW initiative is aimed at employees at all levels of an organisation, from senior leadership and junior level managers through to beginning employees.

Central to the HPMW training initiative is a blended, learning and development program ideal for group training and also available as a self-paced, interactive course, designed by a leading company in the e-learning space, Cubic Consulting.

The training course incorporates advanced principles of adult learning that participants engage in and enjoy, at the same time learning what it takes to become more self-aware of their own mindset, including those areas that need further development. (Details and course sample available at www.workmindset.com).

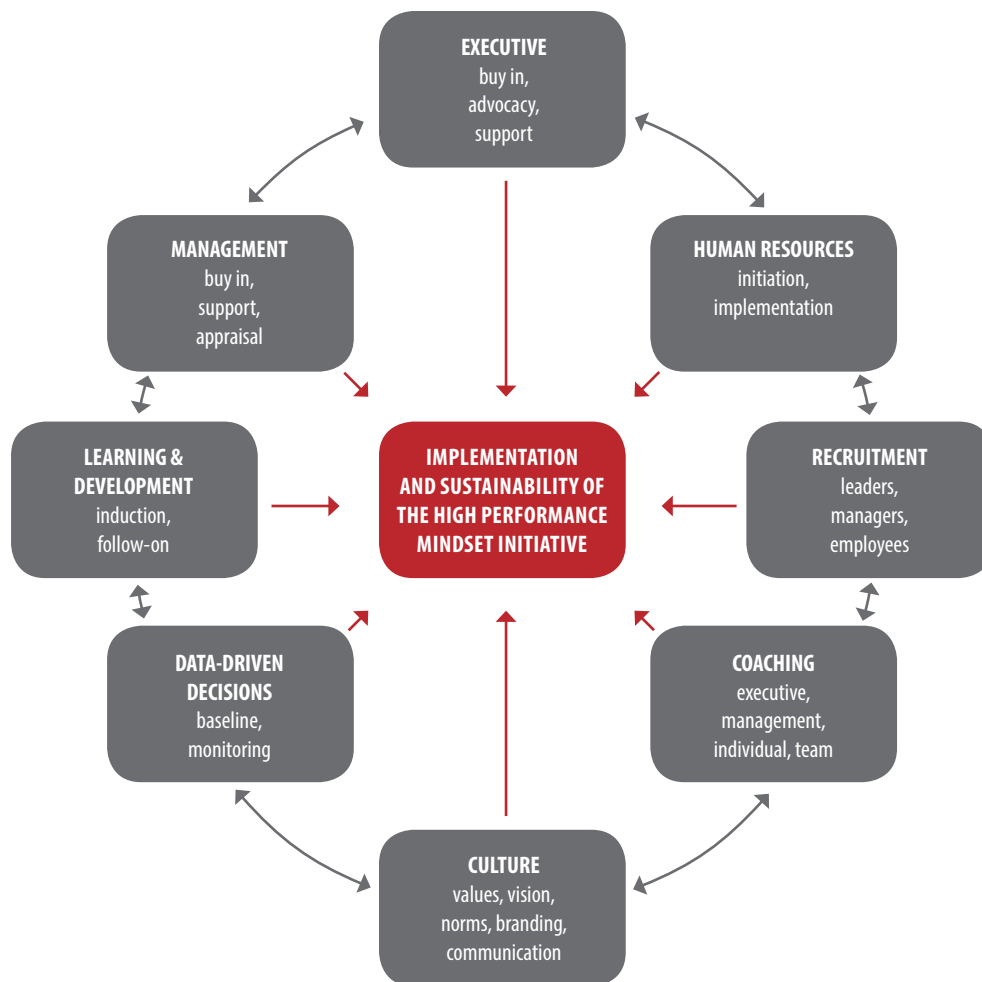
During initial training, participants reflect on elements of the high performance mindset, contextualize and apply elements to individual and organisational business objectives and targets, as well as to their distinctive role and job responsibilities. They do this in a combination of online study, small group work and face-to-face coaching discussions. HPMW coaches are available to work with leaders and managers during and after the course has been completed.

There are a variety of training programs available to organisations including:

1. **HPMW E-learning:** e-learning course
2. **HPMW Blended Learning:** e-learning course combined with interactive weekly group coaching
3. **HPMW Intensive Learning** (comprehensive Leadership and Management training): blended learning, including introductory/ concluding group presentations in-house and/or on-line; e-learning course combined with interactive weekly group coaching; 1:1 coaching post e-learning; pre-post quantitative survey data on HPMW and tough work situations
4. **HPMW Learning and Development Workshops** (leadership, management, employees) offered in-house/on-site by a HPMW trainer to groups in a half- or full-day customised program.
5. **HPMW Coaching** (leadership, management): six to eight sessions of 1:1 coaching with the goal of coaches learning the basics of a high performance mindset, gaining self-awareness of strengths and areas for further development, and how to apply the HPMW mindset to tackle tough work situations
6. **HPMW Consultation:** HPMW consultant meets on a regular basis with leadership, management, and human resource personnel to discuss ways in which the high performance mindset can be implemented throughout organisational culture and leadership/management practice

Customisation in HPMW training occurs in a number of ways including:

- The linking of elements of the HPMW initiative to a organisation's business strategy, targets, strategic objectives and performance capability framework.
- Before commencement of training, data from The Inventory of Tough Situations (manager, employee) is provided by the organisation that identifies specific problems and issues related to the jobs of participants that enable customisation in training sessions.
- During induction in HPMW, interactive group coaching including on-line discussions and face-to-face meetings can focus on specific issues and challenges of an organisation.
- Individual coaching helps support people in deploying elements of the high performance mindset to tackle work demands including tough work situations.



Process Model for Implementing the High Performance Mindset at Work Initiative

For those organisations wishing to integrate the high performance mindset throughout their 'business', a general process has been identified.⁹

Executive. A pre-requisite to effective organisational-wide implementation of the high performance mindset initiative is the buy-in of senior executives frequently beginning with the Managing Director. Buy-in is achieved from a variety of inputs and motivations including executives seeing the benefits of the initiative on raising performance levels of the organisation including higher productivity, innovation, engagement and quality of life.

Management. The extent to which employees transfer to the workplace the knowledge and skill acquired through any learning and development initiative including the high performance mindset has a lot to do with the attitude and behaviour of management. From communication of high expectations to employees about the benefits of the initiative through their ongoing discussion at team and individual elements of the HPMW, buy-in of management is key.

Human Resource. Human resource personnel can play a number of very important roles in all phases and stages of the HPMW initiative including helping establish executive and management buy-in, supervision of e-learning in the high performance mindset course, using data anonymously obtained from employees who have completed the e-learning HPMW course to design learning and development follow-up and conducting individual/team coaching sessions.

Recruitment. From writing job descriptions for executives, management and employees to the conduct of interviews, those making decisions can target the high performance mindset as one of the criteria for hiring new personnel.

Learning and Development. High Performance Mindset training packages (see page 3) have been developed for people at all levels in an organisation (executive, manager, employee) across all types of organisations (e.g., financial, law, pharmaceutical, engineering, mining, advertising-marketing-public relations, customer service, retail, public service-government, not-for-profits). These packages are designed to make people aware of the strengths of their mindset, areas that need further development and strategies for applying the high performance mindset to tackle tough situations at work in order to achieve individual and organisational objectives.

Coaching. Individual and team coaching can be utilised as part of the ongoing learning and support of the high performance mindset initiative. Trained human resource personnel, managers or consultants can provide coaching in the high performance mindset¹⁰.

Data-driven Decisions. A strength of the high performance mindset initiative is that organisations can obtain quantitative data on the elements of the high performance mindset of managers and employees as well as on specific tough work situations that obstruct positive, work performance.

Culture. The high performance mindset initiative is not a one-size fits all learning and development initiative. Those organisations adopting the initiative will want to develop ownership in many different ways including branding and the ways in which the HPMW initiative complements and integrates with values, norms and vision of the organisation.

Benefits of the High Performing Mindset Training Program

The **High Performance Mindset at Work initiative** is designed to directly improve high performing organisational goals including: (1) productivity-profitability, (2) work engagement, (3) innovation and (4) quality of life.

- Accelerated business/organisational strategy execution.
- Greater ROI on learning and development initiatives (more people applying what they learn to produce concrete and worthwhile results).
- Development of strengths of leaders, managers and employees in organisation's competency framework.
- Increased employee positivity and capacity to cope with change.

Bottom Line: Mindset Drives High Performance

For organisations to achieve the ambitious goal of high performance, mindsets and beliefs need to change, awareness has to be raised, and the learning and development curricula has to be broadened.¹ Along with ensuring that organisational practices (leadership, management) and culture are accountable, it is vital that senior business leaders and human resource departments provide support to ensure that the high performance mindset is embedded in organisational culture and that all employees appreciate the energising force of mindset in maximising work performance, job satisfaction and wellbeing.

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