



Fuelling Peak Performance Workbook

Module 1 Getting Ready

Get Ready - Performance

Factors affecting our daily performance and achieving competence

Performance

Performance is a funny thing. It means different things to different people. However, it is useful to define what performance means to you so that you can measure it. In my work with elite athletes preparing for the Olympic games, I have found that you don't have to be a world-class athlete to experience the peaks and troughs of performance. Most people are under physical and mental stress on a daily basis and subject to many tests of endurance. I have no doubt that each and every one of you can identify with this.

What is performance?

Wikipedia defines performance as the ability to perform useful work within a specified amount of time and number of resources. 'Betterer' performance means performing the same task with less time and resources.

I then turned to *Juliepedia* for a more accurate and friendly definition of performance and it could be described as:

"The ability to manage energy levels across work and recreational time while maintaining concentration and skill levels for whatever task is required" ... and not falling in a heap at the end of the day.

How would you define performance?

It is one thing to perform but quite another to achieve success.

Elite athletes possess attributes that you need to perform at your best. Some of these may include:

- Endurance
- Agility
- Flexibility
- Core and inner strength
- Mental resilience
- Finely tuned skills
- Intuition
- Organisational skills
- Focus and determination
- Strategy
- Persistence

There are FIVE crucial aspects affecting your peak daily performance

1. Nutrition
2. Exercise
3. Sleep
4. Mental and emotional state
5. Stress

In the beginning when changing habits, we often need to multi-skill on a daily basis to manage our physical and mental performance but this becomes easier as time goes on.

Try brushing your teeth with your non-dominant hand and you will see what I mean!

What are the challenges that directly affect your ability to perform?

Current challenges that you may face on a daily basis are:

- High expectations (and sometimes unrealistic) of others
- Resources available (manpower and time)
- Family commitments (husband or partner, young children, parents)
- Fitting in exercise (essential from a physical and mental perspective)
- Fatigue
- Frequent travel
- Social commitments
- Competing priorities

The 'McDonalds' path vs. 'Live a Long Time route'

This can be applied to all aspects of your health.

The McDonalds path is cheap, easy, accessible, fast and requires no thought. However, the Live a Long Time route is digestible, longer lasting, requires effort and thought leadership but it gives you an edge over others.

Imagine having your own personal edge. An edge that could be gained by changing only one habit. One habit that you can change or add to your life, which would enhance your performance immediately.

AVOID Paralysis by Analysis. We are very susceptible to this phenomenon as there is SO much information and options around now. The end result is usually no action.

The next 6 weeks may require a great deal of change, which can be very uncomfortable and confronting. There will be barriers; seen and unseen that will challenge your success.

Strategies for removing barriers to change

1. **Too much information makes it too hard to do anything.** Choose one thing you are going to change and conquer it before moving on to the next target.
2. **Know where you are at.** Assess your current position, what are your goals, blood tests, fitness levels, dietary assessment and use technology to track your progress.
3. **Be a Certified Practising Health Accountant.** Be accountable to someone (professional or personal).
4. **Get support from those around you.** Don't use 'busyness' as an excuse. Recognise that when you are busy and under the pump and it is difficult to control everything, things that you can control like nutrition and exercise fly out of the window.

Achieving Competence

I am trying my best to learn Italian. It's not easy and I can literally feel my brain cells straining at the effort, despite apparently being one of the easiest languages to learn in the world. Unless you count first year high school French (and I don't) I have never delved into the world of foreign language. I knew that I couldn't speak any language other than English but I was blissfully unaware of the depth of that ignorance until I started lessons.

This is a classic example of "You don't know that you don't know" or "Unconscious Incompetence" in the Conscious Competence Ladder. This ladder (attributed to many possible originators) is a popular approach to managing your feelings and behaviour during any type of learning process, sometimes dispiriting like mine right now.

When you are attempting to acquire any new skill it is important to be aware of what you don't know. Discovering this can be incredibly depressing if you are not very good at what you are trying to do. Of course this is understandable when you first start to learn something.

If you look at acquiring new skills in managing your health like losing weight, improving energy levels, beginning an exercise program, reducing stress levels or managing a disease, you may discover that you have been lolling about in the "You don't know that you don't know" pool for a while. Unfortunately it often takes a negative health epiphany or 'event' like a heart attack, fatigue, collapse, continued low immunity or even having no clothes that will fit, to rocket us into this stage with a bang.

Once you determine what you do and don't know, you move into Level 2 on the ladder - "You know that you don't know" or Conscious Incompetence. Thankfully I have moved into this level with Italian, although it can be a shock to discover how much better or competent other people are. When you realise that your skills are limited, like I did in approximately 1 nanosecond, confidence levels can drop to an all time low and this is where you may have to don the Superman suit and sail forth. If you are trying to lower your cholesterol levels or body fat and you don't know where excess fat and saturated fats are lurking, it makes it pretty tough to reduce them in your diet. This is one of the toughest stages to wrangle and many warriors are lost in the battle. Hang in there, the rewards are worth it.

I strive each day for Level 3 - "You know that you know" or Conscious Competence. For me that would mean having a real life conversation in Italian with the verbs and nouns conjugated correctly. Although I could get myself a coffee or find out the day of the week (in the event I had amnesia), my conversation skills suitable for rapid fire pace are not developed enough. For you this stage might mean nailing four exercise sessions in a week without rolling over when the alarm goes off.

The nirvana, Level 4 - "You don't know that you know" or Unconscious Competence is the lovely place where this new skill of your is just plain easy. Your new skill has become a habit and stealthed onto you so much that you don't need to think about it anymore and you perform it without conscious effort. If you are an ex-smoker and your main trigger is alcohol, this last stage would mean that you could go to a bar and have a drink without the slightest thought about how you are going to stop yourself from having a cigarette. This is the Mt Everest of skill development and behaviour change.

**Be like a postage stamp.
Stick to one thing until you get there**
- Beverley Sills

Your tasks for this week are:

- Get a blood test (if you haven't done so already) that includes full blood lipids, blood sugar, full iron study, cortisol, Vitamin D and thyroid
- Measure your current height and weight
- Get skin folds measured by an accredited professional (if you need help in finding one please ask Julie)
- Record your sleep habits for the next week (either manually or by using a technology tool such as [Fitbit](#) or the like)
- Outline your weekly exercise schedule (type and amount)

Resources

Marie Forleo interviews Todd Herman about making change in our lives and the interesting changes that occur within our cells.

Take a look at <http://www.marieforleo.com/2014/04/change-your-life-todd-herman/>