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**Performance Psychology and
the Project Manager**

Creating the awareness of how the techniques that assist elite athletes,
business executives to achieve their best performance, might be applied
to project managers

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Performance Psychology

Getting the concept about what Performance Psychology is about making the 'high performer' the best that they can be

The Athlete

- Always in top 4 – trainers say he has the ability to do better
- His performance 'off the blocks' was not consistent – his weak point
- Performance Psychologist discovered he needed to control his level of excitement -

The Project Manager

- Had trouble presenting himself with senior executives / customer meetings. His body language was nervous and indecisive when asked questions – the customer did not feel confident about his role as project manager.
- Performance Psychologist developed a significant performance psychological 'makeover'

Performance Psychology

- The term 'performance psychology' is stereotypically applied to high-end performers who want to be the best in their field, be that sport, business, performing arts, military settings, or any other domain with a high performance component [... project management]
- Current Project Management preparations focus on the attainment of "core competencies" that give a minimum demonstrated in the technical tools and techniques and project management processes. To complete the Project Manager's abilities, they need to have mind skills to prepare them for the demanding and diverse leadership roles and many operational challenges that they will face over the life cycle of the project.

Performance Psychology

Name	Situation	P-P
<p>James James is an exceptionally talented engineer has his managers looking to him as a high achiever and ready for a Project Manager role. He completes certification as a Project Manager. He is given a Project Manager position developing a new advanced technology product.</p>	<p>As the project gets under way he finds that he is afraid to make an incorrect decision and his attitude to risk has changed from being 'adventurous' to being very conservative and this is affecting the outcome of project timelines.</p>	<p>James undergoes counseling and then training designed around concepts of fear of failure, motivation and strategic thinking.</p>
<p>Margaret Margaret is a public servant working in social reform policy development and programs delivery. She completes certification as a Project Manager at her own expense Her initiative in planning her own career growth path, and her strong personality has her as a potential high achiever.</p>	<p>In her new role she finds hostility to her selection – in her new section it was expected that one of the older staff would be selected, and this is compounded by the need to acquaint herself with her new project. Her project team are making it very difficult to make any progress.</p>	<p>The Performance Psychologist counsels her on team development techniques, including the coaching of team members. For herself she undertakes training in stress management and assertive targeting.</p>

Performance Psychology

Name	Situation	P-P
<p>Charles Charles is a competent project manager with three difficult projects successfully completed. He is given a project that has "serious problems". It has been previously managed by a person that has been made redundant.</p>	<p>This is the first time that Charles has been in this type of situation, and is finding it difficult to mix comfortably with either the company's senior corporate executives, or the Customer's managers.</p>	<p>Charles learns from the Performance Psychologist that sometimes you have to walk away from the 'fight'. If he doesn't receive the support he needs in the 'war zone', he will kill himself trying. Advanced self coaching skills are utilized.</p>
<p>Claudia Claudia is a professional advertising executive for an international company. Her project is to launch the advertising for a new product in four main centres – USA, France, UK and Russia. A Virtual Project Office has been set up so that contact can be maintained with and between all centres, with video links to cover face-to-face working.</p>	<p>Because of the different time zones in the four centres Claudia is finding that the stress of meeting the launch date and the almost casual attitude of the international groups is seriously affecting her family life.</p>	<p>Claudia learns how to lead management to empower them to release more resources for this important project. Next she trains project teams in short term 'Project Passion' so that they can perform like Olympic Sprinters.</p>

Performance Psychology

- Project sponsors assume that their project managers are 'emotionally neutral' . It is assumed that they are capable of handling stress, pressure, emotional situations , ethical dilemmas, combative attitudes and risk without any negative
- Project Managers feel that asking for counselling help is an admission that they are in some way inadequate for the task

Performance Psychology is differentiated from Coaching

- **Coaches** look after the physical **Coaching** relates more to the technical and process areas of the project manager's activities. The coach is usually an experienced project manager
- **Performance Psychologists** look after the mind, emotions The **Performance Psychologist** is usually a qualified counsellor –providing one-on-one confidential advice to help with personal problems related to
- Performance psychology provides the mental skills that can assist the 'high achiever' to effectively manage nerves, become more confident, focus better, stay composed under pressure or lead more effectively.

Performance Psychology

Ability to Work/Move Between Domains

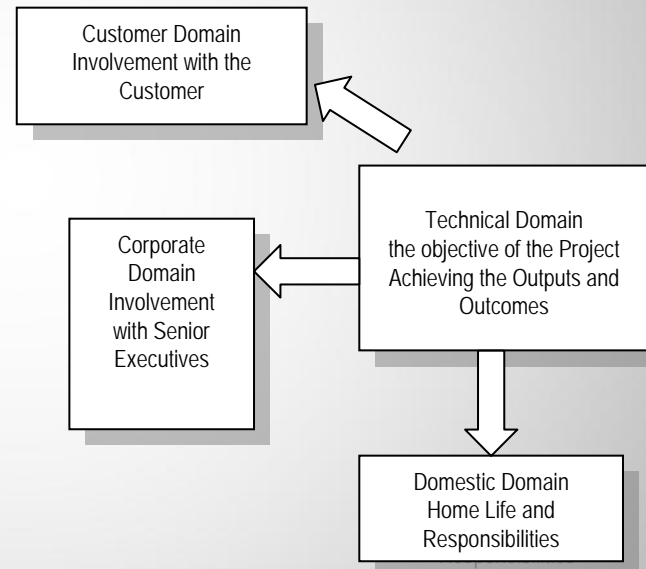
Project Managers are increasingly required/expected to move confidently between four domains:

Technical domain : Most project managers come from a background where they have excelled in their technical field. Most projects are now multi-disciplinary with more than one specialist technical area – usually including an IT hardware and software component ;

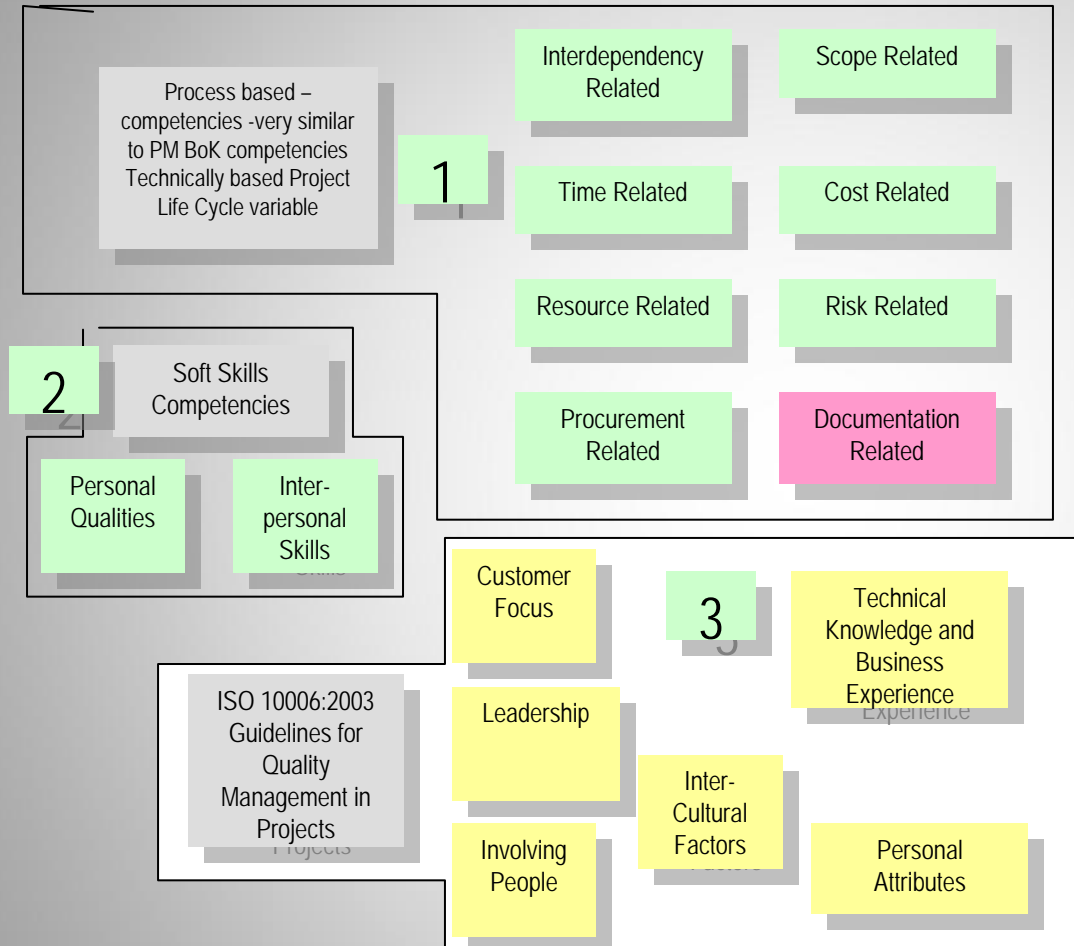
Corporate domain : the reporting and responding to senior executives about the current state and future , Progress of the project and championing of the project with the senior executives of the organization and stakeholders ;

Customer or Client domain : contact with the Customer and their key representatives, project manager and experts – ensuring that the performance needs and outcomes are being met, and maintaining a cordial social relationship ;

Domestic domain : balancing the family and working responsibilities.

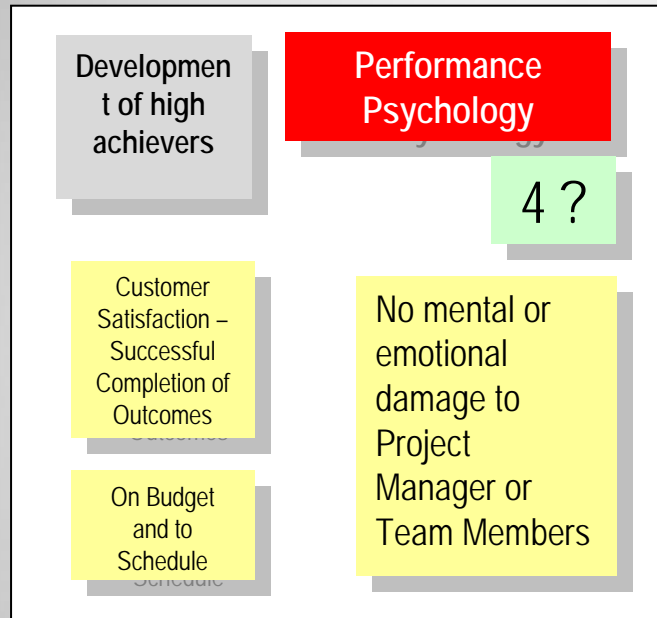


Performance Psychology



Evolution/ Growth of the Project Manager Competencies and Associated Recognised Skill areas

Performance Psychology



Project Management can be a very demanding and often traumatic environment and can be the making or breaking of promising careers.

Could Performance Psychology be the next growth step – should project success include the criteria that the Project Manager and Team Members survived the project without mental and emotional 'damage'.