

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR MINDSET AND INCREASE SALES

By Gerhard Gschwandtner



Executive Summary

Over the past few decades research findings on how the human brain functions have exploded. Using the best tools from neuroscience and cognitive psychology the Peak Performance Mindset training will help your team grow sales, transform core beliefs and behaviors, improve individual and team performance and lead a more fulfilled life.

The Peak Performance Mindset Workshop offers a cohesive framework that pulls together all elements for growing a peak performance mindset. Participants will learn the actions they can take to reach their quota, achieve their personal goals, enhance relationships, improve their focus, stretch resilience, and enhance productivity and well-being. The training is based on the latest research in positive psychology, cognitive-behavioral and brain science as it relates to the development of a peak performance mindset and how it can be improved and maintained.

Over the past few decades research on how the human brain functions have exploded. The resulting knowledge about how our brains work – and how to get them to work better – has led to breakthroughs in human performance across the spectrum of human activity. Today when we talk about peak performance, you can learn a scientifically-based series of actionable efforts and achieve amazing outcomes.

What is the Mindset?

It is a set of beliefs and attitudes that your salespeople and their managers bring to the job, that permeates your culture and impacts your bottom line.

For example, a sales manager with a growth mindset believes that salespeople can learn, stretch and grow while a manager with a fixed mindset believes that basic intelligence is a given and that people can't change. Another example: a salesperson with a no-limit mindset will not mistake the sales quota as a ceiling, but as a starting point for growth. That salesperson will always make President's Club and rank in the top 10%.

A third example: A salesperson with a mindset that's based on self-limiting beliefs will always display lower levels of confidence which will translate into below average performance.

What we learned from teaching the Mindset workshop

We've found that workshop participants have many unrealized dreams and goals and they are unaware of the many (self-created) roadblocks that stand in the way of their own success. They want to succeed and eclipse their past performance but are unable to clear up their internal confusion. In the workshop, they can achieve clarity about their situation and find the path to move away from, or beyond what has frustrated their efforts.

In our workshop, salespeople will be able to take a closer look at their unique talents, examine their core beliefs that drive success and identify the self-defeating beliefs that are holding them back from reaching their full potential. They will also learn a cohesive framework that pulls together all elements for growing and sustaining a peak performance mindset.

It is not uncommon for graduates to double or triple their sales within six months after the workshop.

How sales organizations benefit from a Peak Performance Mindset

- You will create a culture of peak performance through the enhanced attitudes and behaviors of sales managers and sales teams. This will result in **dramatic increases in sales.**
- Increase the capacity of sales managers to excel in performing high-impact leadership and management behavior. This will result in **lower turnover and greater loyalty.**
- Strengthen the commitment to peak performance, including commitments to reach more aggressive goals, increase confidence and the behavioral strengths needed to excel in challenging work situations. **This will result in a growing sales pipeline and greater market penetration.**
- Create the ability to identify and overcome internal roadblocks and the ability to handle tough situations at work. This will **stimulate innovation and prepare people to adapt faster to change.**
- Expand self-awareness, positivity, mindfulness, no-limit thinking and perseverance. This will lead to **a healthier and more productive workplace.**

Following a recent Peak Performance Mindset workshop I learned that even average performers can achieve extraordinary results. One of our participants wanted to apply what she learned in the workshop on the golf course. As she walked on the green with her boyfriend she

surprised him by stating, “I am going to shoot a hole in one today.” He countered with logic saying, “Your handicap is 25 and your chances of shooting a hole in one is one in 70,000.” She ignored the comment and on the first hole she went through her mindset routine, prepared herself for the shot. She trusted her body to deliver everything she intended and visualized. She started her swing, connected with the ball, watched it land on the green and disappear into the cup. Her first hole in one.

What we have learned from Peak Performers:

Over the past four decades, I’ve studied how hundreds of high achievers created a peak performance mindset. I personally interviewed these extraordinary people for cover stories published in *Selling Power* magazine. You can find a partial list at the end of this article.

To get a deeper insight into the difference between average achievers and top performers *Selling Power* conducted a study together with the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and found a significant difference in the thinking styles of high achievers when compared with average achievers leading to the conclusion that the mindsets of peak performers are wired for positive, realistic and optimistic thoughts. Their belief systems are solid, and if they meet with adversity or disappointment they do everything in their power to recover and continue their path to greater success.

Research shows that if people neglect their mindset, their prefrontal cortex will atrophy which often leads to self-neglect, loss of ambition and to a reduced lifespan. Dr. Becca Levy at Yale University found that when people over 50 years of age created a positive mindset about ageing, they would actually live 7.6 years longer than people with a negative mindset. So, if you hold the belief in your mind that age is a matter of progressive deterioration, chances are that your body will shut down 7.6 years earlier.

Creating a peak performance mindset and achieving the highest levels of performance isn’t something you can learn from listening to motivational speakers. Motivational speeches are like butterflies. They have high energy and they are colorful, but they don’t organize themselves into a solid structure that can shape your beliefs and impact your behaviors.

What blocks your performance?



Research by the National Institutes of Health found that our minds create over 60,000 thoughts per day. When compared to the average length of a movie script of 15,000 words, you could say that your mind creates enough material for four movies each day.

When the researchers examined the quality of these thoughts they found that 80% are negative and repetitive. Imagine for a moment your brain projecting four negative movies on the screen of your mind. How could a motivational speech or brilliant insight have a chance of surviving the negative and repetitive impact of your daily self-talk?

Injecting new ideas into your mind doesn't always change how it operates. The creation of a new and improved mindset is not about importing new ideas, it's not about importing the "right" ideas. It's about constructing a new model of thinking, believing and engaging with yourself. Your mindset needs a structural change so you can strengthen the foundation that supports your growth.

Learn how your mindset operates

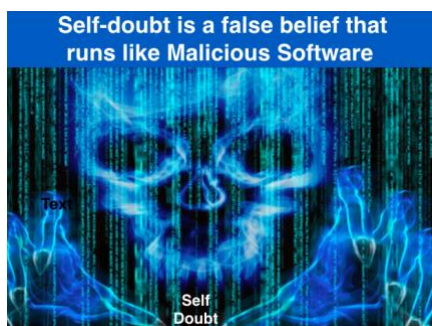
To understand how your Mindset operates, I'd like to share three analogies from the world of computing.

First, think of your Mindset as a computer operating system. It runs in the background and it executes commands automatically. It's been programmed over a long period of time. It doesn't always get updated. Some people's Mindsets still run on the equivalent of DOS.



Second, to perform special tasks, computers use apps like Word, PPT, or Keynote. Your Mindset runs many different apps that have been coded into your belief system. Think of your beliefs as apps. For example, your beliefs about health and fitness will impact your diet and your decisions on how often you exercise.

Third, computers are networked and they are vulnerable to malware. Your mind can easily be persuaded to interpret a negative comment about you as a true statement of your self-worth which can quickly translate into self-doubt or self-sabotaging behaviors.



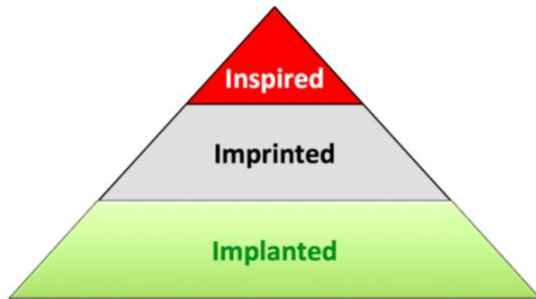
Self-doubt is a false belief that operates like malware. You were not born with self-doubt. Chances are that at some point in the past you allowed other people's doubts take residence in your mind. And, with your unconscious consent you let them sabotage your success and diminish your potential.

How can you get your Mindset to operate at peak performance levels?

Here are four parts to constructing and shaping your peak performance mindset.

1. Reconstruct your Mindset Foundation

Your inner CEO is in charge of building the solid foundation of your mindset so it can support the growth that you want and transform you into the best version of yourself. There are three levels to your Mindset foundation.



The first level is **your implanted mindset**. Our parents or caretakers implanted ideas in us that explained how the world works. They laid down the rules for how to get along. They imparted wisdom at best, and they also may have withheld their love and support, intentionally or unintentionally.

Here is a story told by Bill McDermott, CEO of SAP. When he was 12 years old, his house caught fire. As the family stood outside his mother said, "We'll fix it. There is nothing in that house more important than what is standing outside of it." His mother implanted a resilient mindset that served him later in life. In 2015, he lost his left eye after falling down the stairs at his brother's house while carrying a glass. McDermott was in surgery for over nine hours and had to endure ten more operations. After he recovered he said, "I am living proof that vision is not just what you see. My accident has given me so much strength, so much resolve, so much passion." He has gone on to grow SAP into one of the world's most successful technology companies.

The second level is **the imprinted mindset** - what you learned from people who impressed you in the past, like teachers, coaches, mentors, heroes from the screen or books.

In my research, I found a story told by a sports psychologist who worked with Justin Rose the British golfer who almost won the British Open at the age of 17. After a spectacular finish that earned him 4th place he decided to turn pro. Like many peak performers that step up to a higher level playing field he hit a slump and missed the next 21 consecutive cuts. He wasn't able to enter a single tournament and consulted with the psychologist who confronted him with the basic question: "why do you play golf?" Justin offered answers like, "to win the British Open, to become famous, to make a lot of money, to win the U.S. Open." The psychologist said that that wasn't enough of a reason why, because these are all external things. Justin realized that when you make a commitment in your mind, you'll lose it the moment you encounter resistance, but

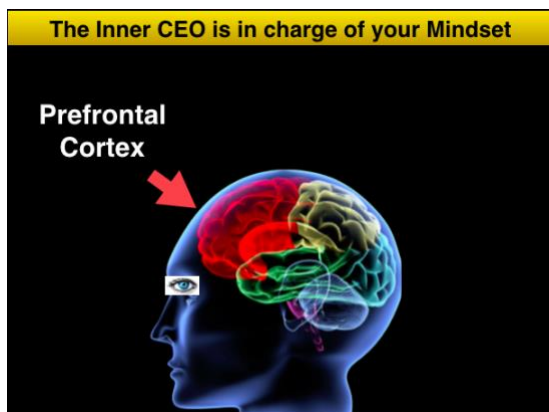
when you make a commitment in your heart, nothing will hold you back. He was told to find the biggest reason why he wanted to be a pro golfer and Justin thought long and hard and made a commitment to become the best version of himself with every shot. He dedicated himself to becoming the best version of Justin Rose and decided to dedicate all his mental energies to build success from within. He created intensity of focus, dismissed all distractions on the course, tuning out the scoreboard, ignoring other people on the green, erasing the lingering negative emotions from previous poor shots and not worrying about the next shot. He began living in the present moment with every shot and soon thereafter he made the cut and started winning tournaments. In 2013, he won the U.S. Open. In 2016, he won the Gold Medal in Rio de Janeiro at the men's individual tournament.

Rose's story illustrates that ***success is an inside job***. It also illustrates that we all can benefit from coaches and mentors. Winning is often the result of focused developmental conversations that help eliminate the unconscious roadblocks to success.

The third level is **the inspired mindset**. That's your inner voice that whispers quietly. That inner voice knows what's best for you, what talents and abilities you have and it knows your mission in life. Mary Kay Ash shared an insight with me by saying, "Everybody is born with an instrument. We need to find out what it is and then learn how to play it. So many people die with their music still unplayed."

Your mind is designed to create "inner magic"; a talent that wants to come out, or a dream that invites you to explore a new direction in your life. Once you become self-aware and listen to the voice of your inspired mindset, it will start the engine of self-transformation and you'll develop a greater chance at a more meaningful life where you become a role model for self-actualization.

2. Awaken and empower your Inner CEO



There is a region in your brain called the prefrontal cortex that governs how your mindset responds to different situations. We call it the "inner CEO." The big idea is that you are in charge of your thoughts, you make all decisions, you decide when to get up in the morning, you set goals for your personal and professional life, you make the choice to hold yourself accountable for your actions, and you decide how to adapt your behavior to different situations.

Peak performers have high self-awareness and their inner CEO continually optimizes all resources to insure optimal performance in all areas of their lives.

Self-awareness is the ability to take an honest look at yourself without any attachment to it being right or wrong, good or bad. Most people are unaware that they are stuck in “driver mode,” which is different from the self-awareness mode. A driver of a car is in control of the car, and forward looking. People want to be in control and pursue their goals with passion. When your mindset operates in “driver” mode, you are not aware of your mindset, you are merely the servant of your mindset operating in automatic mode. You think of yourself as the driver, you believe that you are in charge, but in reality, your true performance potential is limited because you replay your four negative movies each day.

The main duties of the inner CEO are: expanding self-awareness. That requires inner vision. Inner vision is what emerges when you sit still, when you let your mind roam, when you evoke and analyze memories from the past and discard self-limiting beliefs, when you analyze a dream or when you observe automatic thoughts emerge without engaging with them. Carl G. Jung once said, “Your vision will become clear only when you can look into your own heart. Who looks outside, dreams. Who looks inside, awakens.”

3. Develop and Grow your Mindset

Once your mindset foundation is solid and stable, your inner CEO can tackle the challenges related to growing your mindset. Dr. Carol Dweck, author of the book *Mindset* found that people who hold a growth mindset believe that intelligence can be developed, that the brain is alike a muscle that can be trained.

Sometimes the starting point for growth is putting your goals in writing. Be clear about the why. Remember, the bigger the why, the bigger the try. Many of our workshop graduates discover that their previous goals were not connected to a reason why? We also encourage participants to set up a meeting once a week with an accountability partner to review their progress and openly discuss their inner challenges with moving forward.

Here are some of the key growth areas you want to consider when constructing your peak performance mindset:

Learn to manage your self-talk.

Learn how to improve your self-compassion, your ability to regulate difficult emotions.

Engage in exercises that lead to self-activation.

Practice mindfulness, learn to express gratitude, keep a daily journal, engage in no-limit thinking and create a healthy balance between doing and being. Don't turn into a mindless human doing, remind yourself that you are an autonomous self-compassionate human being.

4. Search and destroy your Mindset Malware

Computers can get infected by a virus that leads the software to malfunction; your mind may contain similar malware that forces you into operating below your potential.



A good place to start is to examine the core beliefs about yourself, work, success, relationships and money. It isn't always easy to take an honest look at yourself and spot the self-limiting beliefs.

Developing a strong mindset is like constructing a new model of thinking, believing and engaging with yourself.

For example, one workshop participant didn't realize that his negative world view prevented him from performing at peak levels. During an exercise, he wrote out his beliefs about success saying, "I believe that the world is filled with problems and success is not the norm. I doubt that I am strong enough to beat the odds against me." After challenging his belief system, he realized he was the co-creator of a self-defeating belief and that he could edit and transform his beliefs. Here is what he came up with. "I was born to win. I have talents that have been recognized by the world. I believe in my talents and in my capacity for unlimited growth and success." It appeared like a small change, but it made a huge difference in his feelings about himself. Soon thereafter his sales increased by 400%.

Here is a more dramatic example. When Sarah Blakely was 16 years old her best friend died in a car crash. That same year her parents got divorced. She got depressed and had difficulties functioning in school. Her dad gave her a CD set of Dr. Wayne Dyer's "How to be a No-Limit Person." I interviewed Dr. Dyer several times and he firmly believed that we all think too small and we don't realize the tremendous underutilized power we all have inside us. Sara Blakely listened to his recording over 400 times until she could recite the content word for word. Soon her mood lifted and she sailed through college and then came up with the idea of Spanx. She was told that she couldn't get a patent, get financing, find a manufacturer and get distribution for her invention. Since she was able to construct an unbeatable mindset, she defied all odds and created a hugely successful business. According to Forbes, her net worth today is over \$1.2 billion.

Construct your own Peak Performance Mindset

In our workshop, to get used to collaborating as a team we often use Lego Serious Play exercises where the trainer asks a group of five people to "build something tall." The next exercise is to build a model of a Peak Performance Mindset in seven minutes. In essence, what they create reflects the structure of their mindset. What's interesting is that each member of the group will come up with a different interpretation of what they co-created. In a sense, this is a 3D print of their collective mindset. When the different groups compare their creations, they discover the importance of a solid foundation, the need for a higher perch from which the inner CEO can survey the landscape, a platform that can pivot – a symbol of flexibility and

adaptability. This activity also drives home the idea that the mindset is yours to construct, modify and refine so you can create the best and most successful version of you.

Want to bring this workshop in-house?

In the past two years, we've certified 60 Peak Performance Mindset trainers who've helped over 7,000 people reach peak performance. The impact of this workshop can lead to significant personal and professional changes as people embark on an exciting journey of continued self-discovery and self-actualization. The program includes a 12-week Peak Performance Mindset journal that participants use to track their progress in all 12 developmental areas taught in the course. We also offer an online assessment tool for all 12 areas and all graduates get access to over 50 curated videos that allow them to take a deeper dive into the subject. We've also curated a list of 40 recommended books.

Want to become a Peak Performance Mindset trainer?

Our next train the trainer certification workshop will be in Orlando on Feb. 26th at the Ritz-Carlton. You can download more details from www.MindsetScience.com

To get on a waiting list for a Mindset Weekend Retreat in the summer of 2018 in Napa Valley email me: gg@sellingpower.com We will have a Mindset training in Naples, IT early September.

Peak Performance Mindset Resources:

Learn about the Peak Performers I interviewed for Selling Power cover stories.

I was privileged to interview great motivators like Tony Robbins, Zig Ziglar and Earl Nightingale.

I studied and interviewed some of the most insightful psychiatrists and psychologists like Dr. David Burns, Dr. Martin Seligman and Dr. Kerry Sulkowicz. I was able to capture the stories of sports legends like Terry Bradshaw, Maria Sharapova and Danica Patrick. I spoke with legendary coaches about peak performance like Dr. Bob Rotella at UVA, or Pat Riley.

I had the good fortune to interview Mary Kay Ash, Michael Dell, Marc Benioff and Bill McDermott (CEO of SAP). I felt honored to spend quality time with three U.S. Presidents (a private dinner, a round of golf and a cover story interview).

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