

Using High Performance Teaming to drive successful organisations



A paradigm-changing approach is having impact on the business performance of leading organisations.

The past few decades have delivered a veritable torrent of management theories and leadership programs – many of them based on little more than the charisma of their spruikers.

But a new methodology is promising to turn the tables on traditional thinking with an approach that integrates the study of human behaviour with the latest research into the anatomy and physiology of the brain itself and how it operates.

Called High Performance Teaming (HPT), the methodology is the culmination of 20 years of study and observation by the author and strategist Peter Burow. According to Burow, few of the management philosophies that have been developed to date match up with the way the brain actually functions. Hence many people are ultimately left feeling inadequate when they are unable to adapt such theory into real life situation.

“We’re looking at how you are going about work and whether or not the approaches that you are taking make sense at a neuro-scientific level,” Burow says.

He describes HPT as having been designed to provide organisations and their leaders with an in-depth understanding of how teams shape human behaviour, thereby reducing unconstructive conflict while increasing awareness of strengths and weaknesses, by providing a more in-depth understanding of why people behave in the ways they do.

“High Performance Teaming is having its greatest impact on the business performance of some of Australia’s leading organisations,” explains Burow.

Six Drivers of Team Performance form the building blocks of the methodology.

The framework identifies six networks within the brain that Burow describes as the fundamental building blocks of human behaviour and teamwork. They include an empathy and authenticity network, a feeling and adaptability network, and a pattern recognition network as just three of the six. Burow says that throughout life people tend to develop a preference for some functions over others, giving rise to different personality profiles.

The goal of HPT is to assist people to identify these profiles through analysis of their own behaviour and those of people in their team and then to be able to observe these behaviours objectively.

“To understand your own patterns is very important, but then to understand the patterns of the people you are working with is also very important – how you can

trigger them or settle them down,” Burow says.

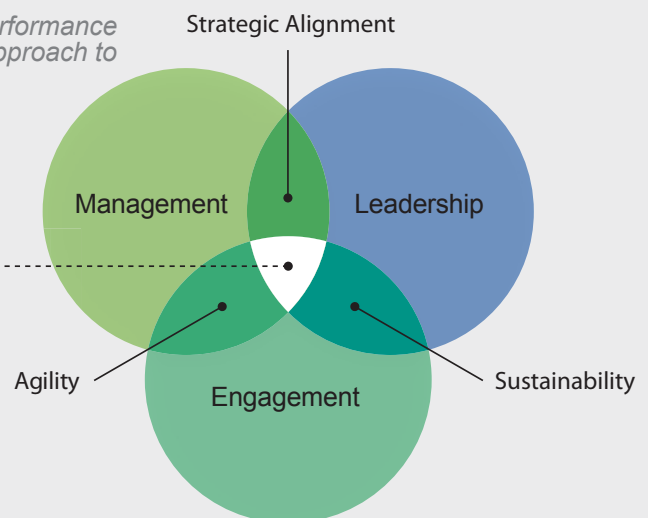
The framework is delivered via a series of interactive, simulation-based Strategy Maps, which aim to translate the theory into action. In the same way that a beginner pianist effectively reprograms their brain as they learn to play their instrument, so the framework seeks to reinforce and ultimately change the behaviour of participants.

According to AMP’s Manager of Growth and Research in Group Strategy, Matthew Ayres, who has been familiar with Burow’s work for more than five years, this approach has the potential to assist in the renewing of corporate Australia.

“We’ve gone through process efficiency until its come out people’s ears,” Ayres says. “This (High Performance Teaming) is part of helping organisations see things differently and lead in a different way, by understanding people at a deeper level. It’s part of helping organisations grow and change in a way that is going to be a lot more sustainable than has been available in the past.”

HPT drives business performance through an integrated approach to team development which breaks down the resistance to behaviour change

BUSINESS PERFORMANCE



HPT gaining a foothold in Australian organisations

The HPT methodology has already found numerous supporters within Australian industry.

At PricewaterhouseCoopers, the Director of Performance, Sophie Crawford-Jones, describes how HPT has provided “an extraordinary leap forward” for the work she’s done with her national team. “The teams that worked together every day shifted gear in terms of the way they worked. The framework has created a language for the family that is the team and it’s used in a really consistent way.”

Crawford-Jones is now investigating how it may be used in the broader business with the six needs as the base platform with people trained in a consistent fashion.

HPT has also been used with the Equity Derivatives Group within Westpac. According to the Head of Equity Derivatives, Stephen Richards, when he joined the group three years earlier it was characterised by poor leadership, which had resulted in a fractious environment that was impacting customers. Richards described the outcome of applying the HPT

process as fantastic, as it took satisfaction of participants involved in the program from 54% to 94% in just 12 months and had tangible business performance results.

“Given that we were more aware of different people’s personalities and styles of thinking, it gave people some concepts they could use to better their communication,” Richards says.

The Manager of Customer Experience at Queensland Rail, Darren Ramia-Topp, says he has been working with Burow for the past seven years as the framework has developed and is utilising it in his current role in human resources to assist with a transformational leadership program and the creation of a customer-focused culture.

“It’s creating a level of self-disclosure and trust which is rarely achieved by senior leadership teams, because they are too focused on day-to-day managing,” Raima-Topp says.

Although only eight months into a 12 month program, Ramia-Topp says the leaders that have been trained are now asking to have their own managers trained. He says Queensland Rail is also investigating ways of further embedding HPT into the

organisation to become part of the executive development program and success planning.

Ramia-Topp says he has also been impressed by how the HPT process delivers actual business outcomes.

“It really allows you to focus on the outcome you need and provides a pathway to get there,” Ramia-Topp says. “The team can really form around a common language that the HPT frameworks provide.”

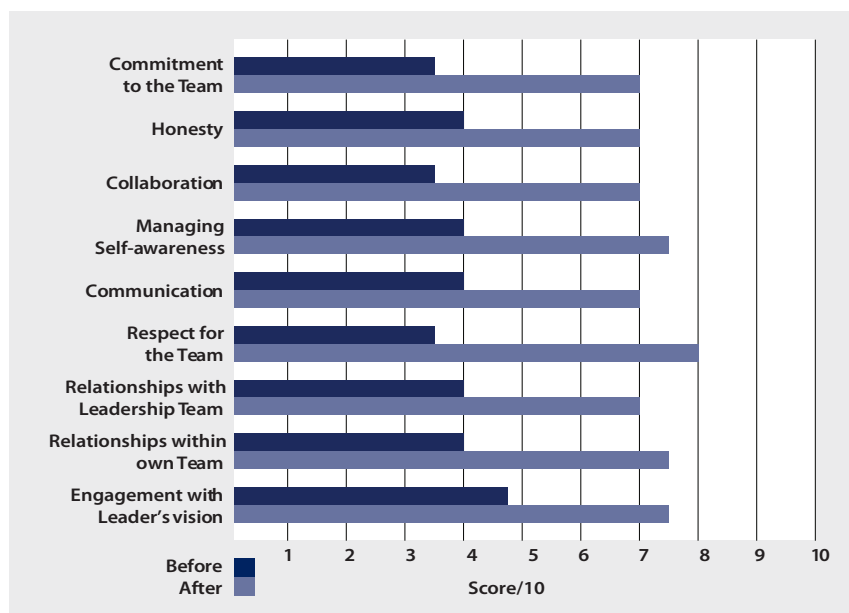
The process can also be adopted on an individual basis. The Head of Business Development at Sensis, Marcus Von Der Luehe, says he has been using the methodology day-to-day in his management of a team, as well as in his personal life. In working with his team, Von Der Luehe says he has been able to use the profiling system to better understand where people fit in.

Stephen Richards, Head of Equity Derivatives Westpac, described the outcome of applying the HPT process as fantastic, as it took satisfaction of participants involved in the program from 54% to 94% in just 12 months and had tangible business performance results.

“It helps me a lot, especially as I am doing a lot of partner negotiations,” Von Der Luehe says. “By being focused on my own objectives, I understand where people are coming from and feed that into the discussion.”

Toni Scoble of Core Insight and Tim Rossi of Symphony Leadership are Licensees who use HPT with their clients.

“HPT is one program we offer which is a high-impact, action-oriented leadership and teaming intervention which has spectacular results,” comments Scoble. “In this current business environment, organisations want to fast-track and energise their people to be adaptive and competitive, but with heart. HPT gives enormous scope to deliver on that.” ■



The results of one HPT intervention that was used to fast-track a new financial team to high performance