

Overview Hardwiring R³ and the 3D Learning and Change Model

Learning new skills and being able to integrate them to improve the way you work is a difficult process. Successful integration of any behavior change is highly dependent on a number of factors:

- An organizational climate that is supportive of learning and change
- A personal, professional and organizational readiness for learning and change
- Support and encouragement from peers, coaches, mentors, family, and leaders
- Practice, Practice, and more Practice.

Observing an elite athlete, such as professional golfer Tiger Woods, one can marvel at his performance and accomplishments. What we don't fully comprehend is the commitment and effort, over many years, which have gone into practicing these skills before they can be applied with acumen, particularly in times of stress and change. Tiger Woods has been learning to play golf since the age of two! During those many years of training and practice he has learned to integrate the mental, physical and emotional skills of his profession.

Throughout Tiger Woods' development, he benefited from the guidance of family, coaches, and mentors. His skills were honed through hours of practice and competition. And as a result of his practice and commitment, the guidance of his parents and coaches, he achieved the number one ranking in professional golf. Tiger Woods' story demonstrates a reproducible model for hardwiring new skills, mastering change, and achieving results. Becoming a high performing professional in any endeavor is a continuous learning process that evolves over time through practice and experience. And as research has proven, small and large scale change and improved performance, are directly correlated with consistent support and mentoring.

Most organizations understand the need for developing high performing employees and leaders and provide training to achieve this end. Fortune Magazine's 2007 Leadership issue states, "*Your competition can copy every advantage you've got – except one. That's why the world's best companies are realizing that no matter what business they're in, their real business is building leaders.*" While this quote highlights the significance of training leaders, the bottom line of any training program is, does it achieve and sustain its intended results?

Recently we provided a successful series of leadership programs for a company. Shortly after the final module the COO requested that I put together a proposal for next year and then asked, "How do we keep the good work and learning moving forward in the interim"? Great question! We've all experienced going to workshops and then trying to apply the learning on our own. Putting into practice new skills is difficult because without ongoing support, mentoring, and focus, the tendency is to fall back into old habits. Therefore, the return on investment of time and money associated with the training is diminished, if not lost.

We designed our training and mentoring programs to effectively, efficiently, and measurably increase and improve work performance. Every program is designed to hardwire the content by utilizing methods and experiences that incorporate cognitive, physical and emotional learning. We call this the **3D Model**:

- **D**iscovery/Engagement
- **D**evelop/Practice
- **D**eploy/Reflection

The ***D**iscover(y)* phase is designed to introduce core concepts and competencies of the program and content areas. Its goal is to build knowledge, understanding, self-awareness, and encourage self-reflection and assessment. This phase also utilizes individual, team, and organizational assessments when appropriate to provide feedback, establish baselines and set measurable goals. During the Discover(y) phase, it is critical to gain full engagement in the learning process from all participants. A key step in the engagement process is to have participants create a vision of a positive future and how the training process can get them on the road to realizing their vision.

The ***D**evelop(ment)* phase focuses on building skills and introducing tools that transform concepts into competency. The use of experiential activities and debriefing sessions help to begin the hardwiring process. This phase is also where participants can reflect on the strengths and areas of development identified in their self-assessments. In the Development phase, participants begin to comprehend the level of practice they will need to become proficient, which is a critical step in building competence, commitment, and confidence.

The ***D**eploy(ment)* phase is the key to hardwiring. It focuses on committing to action steps, initiatives, and plans which flow from the **D**iscovery and **D**evelopment phases. Leadership, change, and performance are not passive. In order for new learning to become hardwired, individuals and teams must both practice using their new skills and learn from these experiences. In this phase, individuals and teams begin to deploy their learning to onthejob issues and challenges. A key aspect of the Deployment phase is learning to set aside time for reflection. Reflection is a skill that assists participants in debriefing what went right, what went wrong, and the reasons why. This allows for increased learning, fine tuning and a re-commitment to Practice, Practice and more Practice.

Improving the Hardwiring Process:

The probability that participants will change and incorporate new skills is exponentially higher when there is coaching and mentoring built into the program. Tiger Woods, benefits from coaching and mentoring relationships, as all professional athletes do. The most obvious example of this is Tiger Woods' close relationship with his caddy, who advises him on every shot. Alan Deutschman, in his book, *Change or Die*, discovered

that there was one element that made the difference in the rate and longevity of all change efforts: a supportive, challenging and encouraging relationship.

We highly recommend that all training programs be followed by six months to one year of either group or individual mentoring. The focus of these sessions is to support the efforts of participants in following through on their deployment plans and commitments and to help in sustaining their efforts. By providing a time and place to reflect and debrief, participants can expand their learning and acumen and develop the confidence to persist.

Summary:

The “**3D**” model is a learning process that individuals, teams and organizations can utilize to maintain and increase their proficiency and performance. The purpose of the model is to hardwire cognitive concepts and learning and translate them into behaviors that produce improved individual, team, and organizational performance and results.

Each of our signature programs: *Relationship – Centered Leadership™*, *Resilient Leader*, *Beyond Stress Management*, *Relationship – Centered Mentoring Program*, and *Taking Charge* utilize this model to create engaging programs that provide solutions to the critical challenges confronting leaders and organizations.