

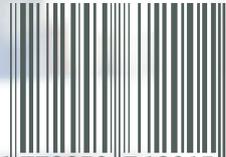


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FEATURE ARTICLE

**What coaching at
GUCCI & SAINT
LAURENT
have taught me about
employee performance**
by Shirley Soodeen

COACH TOOLS

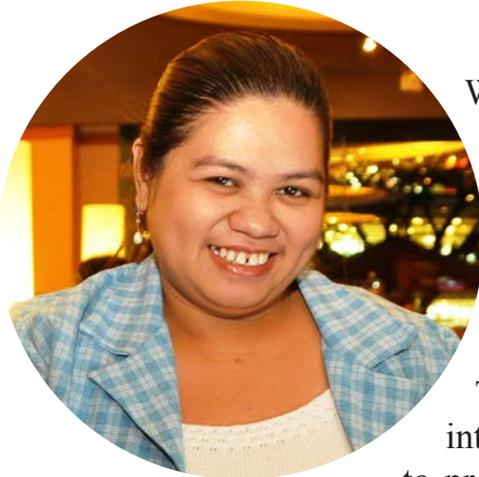
**Your personal brand
in a world without
imagination**
by Bianca Corau

**COACHEE
PREPARATION
– a key step in
successful matching**
by Caroline Taylor

**Executive Coaching
Tips from the
Makers of 'The
Coaching Movie'**
by Kasia Wezowski

THE NUMBER 1 MAGAZINE FOR LIFE AND BUSINESS COACHING

EDITOR'S NOTE



Welcome to yet another exciting edition of the International Coaching News (iCN) online magazine! For our 11th edition our theme is Executive Coaching. This edition is loaded with content on a variety of relevant topics on the issues that come with managing people, various leadership and relational styles to improve and enhance relationships and so much more.

The ICN is proud to have collaborated with several renowned international columnists, expert coaches and best-selling authors to provide insights on executive coaching. In this edition look out for our feature article from **Shirley Soodeen** in Australia ‘**What coaching at Gucci & Saint Laurent have taught me about maximising high performance, employee engagement and talent management.**’, where Shirley provides excellent guidelines that are fundamental in creating principles to engineer a high performance culture that continuously delivers results season after season in the luxury fashion industry. In our Coaching Tools Section ‘**Your personal brand in a world without imagination**’ by **Bianca Corau** from Romania, reminds us of the importance and benefits of how personal branding works. Another noteworthy article is ‘**Success Story in Business Coaching Leadership, Life & Optimism**’ by one of our regular contributors **Malcolm Nicholson** from the United Kingdom. He gives us insights on optimism and why it is an essential ingredient for innovation. He encourages us that the next time we have a difficult situation ahead, we should minimise negative thoughts and visualise the outcome we want by using positive affirmation statements. ‘**Deliberate Leadership Creating Success through Personal Style**’ by **Ken Keis** from Canada draws on how to deliberately create high-performance individuals & teams and that leadership style influences your ability to build credibility, productivity, quality, and job satisfaction in the workplace. Each of our columnists, too numerous to mention, have taken some really interesting perspectives, and I would encourage a thorough read-through of this edition.

Just like all our other editions, this edition is not just an interesting read, but it provides you with helpful coaching tools, personal development ideas and professional development techniques to grow your business.

We appreciate your support and look forward to your feedback!

Best wishes,

Loveliea

Loveliea Caracut
Editor, iCN Magazine

DISCLAIMER:

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this magazine are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the International Coaching News Magazine, or Noble Manhattan Coaching Ltd.

Success Story in Business Coaching Leadership, Life & Optimism ~ How Optimism Influences Your Success

by Malcolm Nicholson (United Kingdom)

Optimism

'ɒptɪmɪz(ə)m/

noun. *hopefulness and confidence about the future or the success of something.*



OPTIMISTIC LEADERS - *don't you just hate them?* You know, the type of person who always sees the best in a near impossible or difficult situation and constantly views life through rose tinted glasses, never admitting the potential pitfalls in anything. The type of person who always says “the answer is yes, what's the question?” After all, isn't it always better to expect the worst, then whatever the outcome is you won't be disappointed? Well, apparently not. In fact, it's quite the opposite. The real benefit of always seeing the best outcome in a difficult situation is that it has a positive influence on many things in your life ranging from your health to choice of career and ultimately your success and the success of your business.

Let's take a couple of examples from people I have coached. When responding to a job specification, the pessimist only ever sees what's written in front of them – must have led a major organisation, must have experience in driving turnaround situations, must be educated to 'degree level' etc, and probably not even

bother responding if they haven't got all of the skills required. (Apparently there is a strong tendency for females to see the gaps as well). Whereas an optimist will think, “I may have had my own business for the past 5 years, but I've worked as part of a team, with my suppliers, clients etc. I have good IT skills, they may be self taught but I can learn anything and I'm educated to degree standard, I just didn't take the exams. I can do this job!”

The difference is having the right mental attitude. And it's the right mental attitude that can have a powerful effect over your physical health, wellbeing and success. What optimists do is simple; they are hopeful and confident that they will succeed. Hence, they train their mind to believe only good will come from whatever lies ahead of them. There are three main areas where they do this, according to Seligman⁽¹⁾:

1ST

Permanence

– to an optimist, it's temporary bad luck, to a pessimist its permanent; they get back in the saddle quickly after a failure, whereas pessimists may take longer to recover - or may never make it. Optimists also look at specific temporary causes for negative events; pessimists attribute them to permanent causes.

2ND

Pervasiveness

Optimistic don't see failure in one area of their life as failure in all aspects of their life; whereas pessimists do see failure in one area as a failure in life as a whole.

(1) Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mind and Your Life. Martin P. Seligman Vintage Books USA; Reprint edition

Optimists are generally more confident, so quick to internalise positive events and blame bad events on causes external to them; whereas pessimists blame themselves and externalise positive events.

So Why Do Optimists Make Great Leaders?



Well, they do impact the bottom line – difficult to prove in experimental circumstances but optimism and its close associate confidence allow people to excel in achieving goals. Optimists see the big picture. They can then rally people to that better place that they see. Their mindset is to improve the current situation. They also have more energy and put in more effort as a result – it’s a compelling picture! An optimistic leader will also believe that any task is achievable and this attitude will be passed on resulting in a motivated, optimistic team. Even if the task does not go entirely as planned, they see this as only a temporary setback and motivate the team to look at it as another challenge to overcome. They always focus on an employee or team’s strengths and not their weaknesses, making those that work for them and those around them have a much more confident and positive outlook themselves. This has a trickledown effect as leader’s behaviours have a direct impact on their employees’ performance, attitude and loyalty – or as it’s now called, engagement. Optimism is contagious and it’s not long before even the most pessimistic team members are looking at tasks and challenges with a different attitude.

“ Optimism is an essential ingredient of innovation. How else can the individual welcome change over security, adventure over staying in safe places? ”

- Robert Noyce, Intel Co-founder

days; as we have seen they just choose to deal with them in a different way to the pessimist. However, a sense of personal humility allied to the optimistic approach is important. This humility should also ensure that the leader does not retain a monopoly on decisions—they engage those around them as they would say, “I don’t have all the answers myself”. This ensures reality checks are made and blind optimism doesn’t subsequently prevail.

And The Really Good News for Optimists?

A Mayo Clinic study showed that optimists, on average, live longer than pessimists, in fact nearly 20% longer. So if you want to live a longer, healthier and happier life, start practicing positive affirmations and begin to live the life that you really want. There’s a lot to be said for the “glass is half full” approach!



It’s not all bad news for the pessimist of course (or should that be “There is good news for optimists”?)! as it’s perfectly possible to train yourself to think positively and develop techniques that will change your outlook leading to a better more positive outcome to the situation you may be facing. We are discovering more and more just how much the brain can be reprogrammed.

How Can The Business Coach Help?

A good starting place is positive affirmations, or visualisation. These are a positive statement that describes your desired outcome to a forthcoming or day-to-day situation. This is a powerful tool and is well known in elite sports. It is being used increasingly in business and education, to aid creativity, health professionals use it to help treat anxiety and combat stress, and trainers use it to boost self-esteem and confidence. Successful people from all walks of life now use visualisation both at home and at work – with great success.

Visualisation is a powerful technique since the brain interprets the imagined scenarios very literally, so directly enhancing such psychological variables as optimism and confidence.

Performance is 90% perception and 10% reality. Our words have tremendous power over our minds and, as a result, our performance. It's always crucial to be aware of what thoughts and self-statements we use. A powerful way to structure thoughts and transform goals into results is through using affirmations. These are strong, positive self-statements spoken in the present tense about goals we want to see realised. They are powerful ways to cancel or correct old negative thoughts or ideas. They have a multitude of uses, from improving concentration to increasing strength and endurance.

Here is an example of a positive affirmation;

“I am completing the board presentation. As I look around, I can see smiling faces as they nod in agreement with me. I can hear them applauding me and congratulating me as I feel them shaking my hand in congratulation and I feel relaxed and in the zone”.

Principles to follow in constructing affirmations:

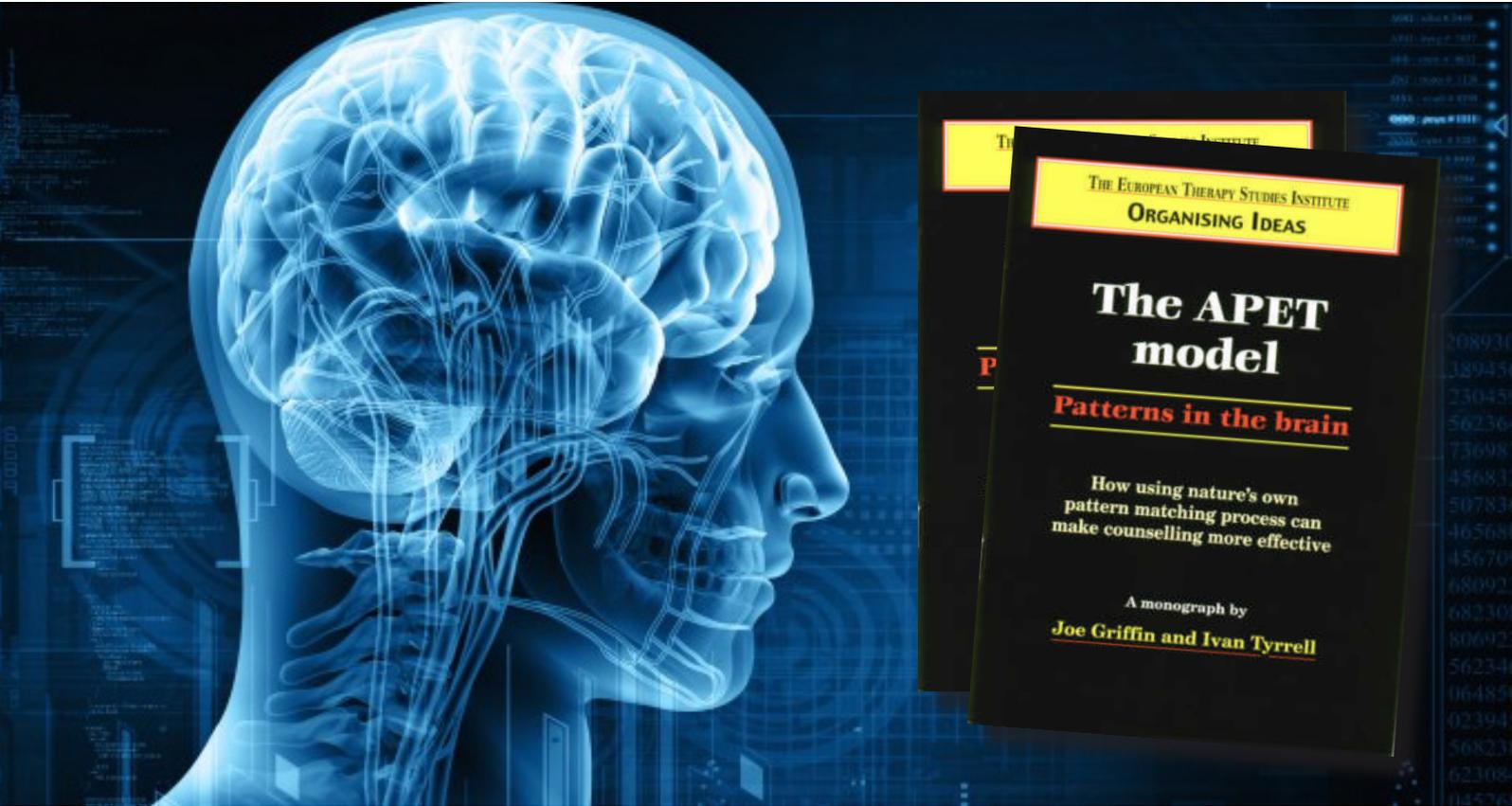
- Use the present tense - act as if it's already happening
- Employ a positive outlook – aim at what you want to happen rather than what you don't want to occur

- Use self-image statements - use the word 'I' whenever possible
- Use specific, brief phrases - easier to remember
- Use mood words that suggest strong, positive emotion
- Anticipate success - use whatever positive words work for you
- Write it on cards or Post-Its and place them where you will see them
-

So next time you have a difficult situation ahead of you, minimise those negative thoughts and visualise the outcome you want by using positive affirmation statements.

In *Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mind and Your Life*, Seligman also talks of the ABCDE model for coaching. The traditional ABC model has an Activating event triggers a Belief in our client, which leads to Consequences, usually in the shape of an undesirable outcome. The idea is for you as coach to work with them to reframe the thinking and change the outcome. Seligman adds to the ABC model. Disputation comes next, which is about providing counter-evidence of the negative beliefs in general, the causes of the event, or the implications. This leads to Energisation. Celebrate it, use the positive feelings and the sense of accomplishment that comes from a successful D or disputation.





(This model does not take account of modern findings of neurophysiology that shows humans process data much more quickly emotionally that cognitively. What the cognitive model misses is the fact the unproductive ways of thinking like “Everyone must like me”, “if I get something wrong I am a total failure”, have their origin in our emotional brain.). Coaches interested in this should research the APET model by Griffin & Tyrrell (2)

“ While we may not be able to control all that happens to us, we can control what happens inside us. ”

- Benjamin Franklin

So, employees – as well as customers - are looking for leadership and inspiration in turbulent times. Someone who can create a compelling vision and a great place to work. Some people will of course be complete naturals at this. However, you (or your coaching clients) can work on skills that will increase the impact and influence you have in your business and help the non-work you as well. These are skills that can be learned and in doing so will help rewire your brain. Great coaching can facilitate this process immensely. At a personal level I am amazed by the number of ex-clients who I hear from, sometimes years later, who mention the impact visualising has had on their performance and outlook. You can, by applying a change in focus, learn how to improve your optimism.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Malcolm Nicholson is the owner and Coaching Director for Aspecture, and has worked successfully with a wide range of senior business people for over 15 years, enabling them to improve business results through transformational changes. (see www.aspecture.com). To find out how he can help your organization contact him at malcolmnicholson@aspecture.com or on +44 1932 267597.

(2) Human Givens: The New Approach to Emotional Health and Clear Thinking: A New Approach to Emotional Health and Clear Thinking. Joe Griffin & Ivan Tyrrell. HG Publishing; 2nd Revised & enlarged edition (Mar. 2013)