

## AMERICAN “KNOW HOW”

A story on one of the recent morning TV news shows caught our attention. It concerned a gentleman who, due to an accident, had lost several of the fingers of his left hand. The loss curtailed some of the everyday maneuvers that we all take for granted and caused this man some frustration. A friend who happened to be an engineer came to his aid. Using twenty dollars worth of materials - including a glove, some wire, and several other items purchased at Home Depot - the engineer created a prosthetic device that fit over his friend’s hand. As a result, the man demonstrated to viewers his restored ability to hold a drinking glass and grasp a hand of playing cards with his prosthesis. On an even brighter note, these men are offering to the general public the instructions - for free - on how to make this prosthesis. So this story is not only about American ingenuity, but also about American generosity.

There’s another term for ingenuity: “know how.” Several years ago, Bill Bryson authored *Made in America*, a book about the evolution of the English language in our country. In it, he reveals that the use of “know how” dates from 1857, and he calls it a “quintessentially American term.” He illustrates American “know how” by writing about the efforts to save the life of President James Garfield following his shooting by a deranged man in July of 1881.

Other than provide nourishment (we won’t repeat how) to the president as he drifted in and out of consciousness, officials called in some of the “greatest minds in the country” to treat him. For example, Alexander Graham Bell attempted to use his telephone technology as a metal detector to locate the two bullets lodged in Garfield’s body. Unfortunately, it “heard” bullets all over his body because it was reading the bedsprings. In an effort to keep the president as comfortable as possible in that year’s extremely hot summer, they brought in naval engineers to build a cooling device. This involved a box containing ice, salt, terry cloth, and charcoal. A fan blew the cooled water through the terry cloth, and this cooled air, purified by the charcoal, brought the room temperature down to 81° F. Thus we have the first known and recorded air conditioner. It comforted Garfield, as well as those attending him, until he died on September 19, 1881. Such efforts fed the “American belief that any problem could be solved.”

Every organization has problems to solve. Some are technical, some operational, some financial. While these departments go through cycles of concern and resolution, there is one area that remains a constant challenge:



people. That’s why companies come to us and say: We don’t know how to find the people we need. We don’t know how to choose from among our applicants. We don’t know how to manage some of the people we have. We don’t know how to create productive teams. We don’t know how to motivate some of our people. We don’t know how to communicate with them. We don’t know how to help them interact more effectively. We don’t know how to help our employees develop all the skill and talent that we see in them. We don’t know how to decide whether to retain them or to let them seek opportunities elsewhere. **Professional Dynametric Programs®** provides a special brand of “know how” to meet challenges like these.

**PDP®**, with its headquarters in Colorado Springs, is an American company that knows what makes people tick. As the result of meticulous research, company founder Bruce Hubby and his team learned to measure four distinct human traits: Dominance, Extroversion, Emotional Pace, and Conformity. They developed the **ProScan®** Survey with its comprehensive report and its capability to plot each individual’s behavioral traits on a chart. The report thoroughly and concisely explains a person’s behavioral patterns, and the chart presents a picture that can be read and understood at a glance, once each trait’s characteristics are learned. In addition to **ProScan**, they produced **JobScan®**, a tool used to recruit, select and retain employees. Finally, they designed **TeamScan®** to help combine employee strengths and create decisive, cooperative teams.

With Bruce’s son Brent now at its helm, **PDP** continues to spread far beyond our borders. China, Indonesia, Brazil, Mexico, and India, to name just a few countries, use this tool to hire and manage their work forces. Organizations worldwide that use **PDP** are learning to respect individuals in all their behavioral diversity. That “know how” could be our best export.

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## BOOK LEARNING

We now know much about the human brain, especially about its neuroplasticity. In *Hardwiring Happiness*, Rick Hanson shows us how to create positive mental activity that alters our brains' neural structure for the better. He claims that, when practiced, his methods can facilitate positive changes in our personal and professional lives.

From a neurological standpoint, we humans have a lot to overcome: namely, our bias toward the negative. Hanson reviews the general knowledge about our needed alertness to danger that goes way back to prehistoric times. He thoroughly explains our neural structure and chemistry, and how our brains evolved to where we are now: the point from which we are still likely to focus with alarm on that small bit of negative feedback in an otherwise glowing performance review (or anything we perceive as danger). He compares the brain to a sieve that catches all our bad experiences, while allowing our good ones to escape. Hanson claims that, while our negativity bias may keep us safe, it tends to diminish our quality of life. He then shows us how we can neutralize negativity by focusing on the positive and "taking in the good."

Before Hanson shows us how to do this, he explains what constitutes quality of life. It involves the brain and whether its core needs for safety, satisfaction and connection are being met. When we can avoid harm, work toward rewards, and bond with others, our brains go into a resting state where a "sense of peace, contentment, and love" prevails. Hanson says our brain "goes green" in this state. He calls this the "responsive mode," and it allows us to face life's challenges with "an underlying sense of security, fulfillment, and caring." Unlike our ancestors, who were able to spend long stretches of time in this mode, we moderns are faced with daily stressors that keep us in a "reactive mode." Hanson claims that this is the new normal for us. By using his methods of "peace, contentment, and love," we can actually achieve these as goals.

We can put our brain in a green state by "taking in the good," which Hanson defines as the "deliberate internalization of positive experiences in implicit memory." Our implicit memory stores all kinds of information about ourselves, both positive and negative. Naturally, this accumulated data impacts both our feelings and our actions, and we often have negative material lurking there. In order to overcome the negative, Hanson gives us a four step process to "HEAL": "(1) Have a positive experience. (2) Enrich it. (3) Absorb it. (4) Link positive and negative material...Step 1 activates a positive experience, and steps 2 to 4 install it in your brain." The benefits, according to Hanson, are many: resilience, reduction of distress and dysfunction, better relationships and physical health, and increased happiness.

Hanson devotes a chapter on how to take in the good by noticing a good experience. To do this, he encourages us to tune into what's going on in both our foreground and our background awareness, while taking in our related thoughts, feelings, sense perceptions, and actions. "It's quite remarkable to recognize that our awareness in any moment usually contains some positive elements. Unless you're overwhelmed by something terrible, in your stream of consciousness right now are aspects of the peace, contentment and love you've always wished for." In addition to noticing a good experience, we can also create one.

Hanson gives us two ways to create a good experience: by deliberately looking for or thinking of something pleasant to make us feel happy, or by reflecting on some inner strength we've utilized in the past to meet a challenge. These are ways of self-activating a productive state of mind. "The states of mind that would be most useful for a person are often the hardest to self-generate. But with practice, you will get better at this." Hanson has suggestions for how to practice and embody the experience of a good fact to make implementation more natural and free flowing. His methods often show us how to engage our powerful imagination to help us achieve the emotional lift of a good experience.

Two of Hanson's sections about creating good experiences caught our attention: "Caring About Others" and "Seeing Good in the Lives of Others." Here's one suggestion that could help people who are negatively influenced by our competitive culture: "Think about a good fact in the life of someone you care about. Then see if you can feel pleased and glad for this person. This is sometimes called altruistic joy, happiness at the good fortune of others."

After Hanson shows us how to *Have* good experiences, he teaches us how to install them. First, he gives us ways to *Enrich* our experiences so that they can become integrated into our neural structure. Utilizing the methods of duration, intensity, multimodality, novelty, and personal relevance helps us "increase neural firing so you get more wiring during an episode of taking in the good." Then we must *Absorb* them, using several different visualization methods. Visualization itself isn't a new phenomenon, but Hanson has some good suggestions on how to make it more effective.

The final—and optional—step is to *Link*, which requires holding positive and negative material in our awareness at the same time, while keeping the positive more prominent. The aim is to eventually replace the negative with the positive. Hanson details methods we can use to accomplish this.

### *Hardwiring Happiness*

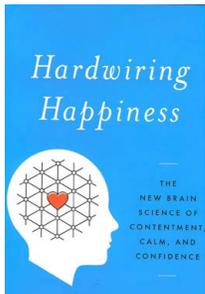
By Rick Hanson, PH.D.

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*“Everyday life holds many opportunities to learn something important and shift a bit as a result.”*

-Rick Hanson, PH.D.

## IN THE HOLE!

He was recently at the PGA Tournament in Louisville. If you watch golf on TV, you hear him - the man who shouts "In the hole!" after nearly every drive, fairway shot, and putt on the course of every major golf tournament. He really gets around. But isn't his encouragement a little after the fact? By the time golfers like Phil Mickelson, Rory McIlroy, or Iowa's own Zach Johnson, step up to the ball, they've already discovered that they have a talent and love for the game; they've put in the thousands of hours of practice and play necessary to imbed their solid swings in muscle memory; and they have the confidence to face the most difficult lies on the course. Though they're the ones who did the hard work, they were supported and encouraged by coaches and mentors all along the way.

We may not be professional golfers, but we each have our own swing, so to speak. All of us have talents and abilities that we use on a regular basis, in both our personal and professional lives. We all strategize the course a little differently. Some like to lead and initiate new projects; others like to support and complete what's in place. Some work best surrounded by other people; others prefer to work alone. Some plan their time and move at a steady pace throughout the day; others dive in and get the job done. Some prefer to follow standard procedures that they know will produce desired results; others consistently strike out and explore new ways to do things. It's important that we know our swing and be able to use it effectively.

**Professional Dynametric Programs®** shows players all the nuances of their swing that they can apply to their individual game strategy. We all bring different behavioral skills, in varying amounts and

combinations, to the game: dominance, extroversion, pace, and conformity. It's important to recognize the characteristics of these skills to ensure that we're on the right hole, our grip is firm, and our aim is true. That's just the first consideration.

More often than we'd like, we get a challenging lie. We're in the rough, the bunker, the trees, or even the next fairway. Then what? Sure, sometimes we get a drop onto more playable terrain, but not always. How do we then apply the basics in these situations? Which club do we use? How do we alter our stance and our swing? Do we open up the club face? Close it? There are many variables to consider, and that's where a coach comes in to help us make adjustments.

When we've hit off course, a coach first helps us realize the need to pull out a new club or change our swing. Then, using a tool like **PDP® ProScan®**, that coach helps us discover a new range of motion within our personal behavioral pattern to get us back in play. Because of behavioral flexibility, we can stretch beyond our comfort zones. Want to be more assertive, or more cooperative? Okay. Want to interact less, or more? Sure. Want to speed up, or slow down? Can do. Want to relax the standards, or follow them more closely? No problem. Behavioral shifts are possible, by degrees, for periods of time when life or the job pulls us in a new direction.

A good coach respects a client's natural swing. It's just that sometimes our behavior needs a little tweaking so that we can consistently put the ball in the hole to make (or beat) par and win.



### Here's A Thought

*"Inner strengths are the supplies you've got in your pack as you make your way down the twisting and often hard road of life. They include a positive mood, common sense, integrity, inner peace, determination, and a warm heart."*

-Rick Hanson

*in Hardwiring Happiness*

### Our Tools

Professional  
DynaMetric  
Programs®

ProScan® TeamScan®  
JobScan® Strat-Map®

## PDP® REPRESENTATIVE CONFERENCE 2014



Once again, **PDP** presented an information-packed meeting of representatives who shared their knowledge, skill, best practices, and successes for the benefit of the group. And, once again, Brent Hubby presented a sales award to Dan. We feel privileged to have access to such a valuable tool.

Over the years, Dan has given many presentations to our fellow **PDP** reps. His topic this year was succession planning, something that's frequently on everyone's mind because we are all consultants who own our own business.

His succession planning strategies for family and privately held companies included:

- ◇ Define why you're in business to provide your services.
- ◇ Use strategic planning to grow the business.
- ◇ Promote management synergy and teamwork when multiple employees are concerned.
- ◇ Develop leaders for continuity.
- ◇ Consider family dynamics if the plan is to keep the business in the family.

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## CLOSING THOUGHTS



### *from* DAN

Golfers get immediate feedback: the gallery either groans or cheers. We're pretty sure the pros filter out the groans and concentrate on their next shot. We do see them listening to their caddies. These de facto coaches often step up to help read the course and give constructive suggestions on the spot. Business owners, managers, team leaders, and co-workers do the same thing because they want to develop people with great potential. They want to build an organization of champions.

Feedback is tricky. While many of us tell others we want it, we often abuse the messenger brave enough to give it. Or, if feedback is delivered by a "system", we look for faults in the way the system was designed so that we can deflect the message and save or rescue ourselves from the embarrassment that usually comes with looking foolish.

As a result, we look for ways to provide feedback indirectly and hope that the person on the receiving end will be able to "read between the lines." My experience is that when I tried the indirect approach with what I thought might otherwise be taken as a personal criticism, the person reading between the lines usually read what he or she wanted to, which was seldom the message I really wanted to deliver.

So what kind of feedback is most important and

how is it best delivered? Here are a few suggestions that I have found work well.

- ◇ Tell the truth, but keep your comments and observations objective and nonjudgemental. This approach has the best chance of getting through to the receiver.
- ◇ Give your feedback in "real time," or as quickly as possible so that it still has impact.
- ◇ To deliver negative feedback, follow this simple formula:
  - Ask permission to provide some feedback
  - Avoid referring to a "failure" (there is no failure, only feedback)
  - Offer suggestions and options as to how others might have handled the circumstances or solved the problem. People seldom care how you would have "done it."
- ◇ Ask the person if he/she would/will do anything differently next time a similar set of circumstances occurs. Why? Why not?
- ◇ Treat people with dignity and respect.