

TOWARDS EXCELLENCE IN HUMAN PERFORMANCE

By

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Abstract

When you watch a hockey game or a dance competition, 'performance' becomes well practiced, well executed behaviours. It brings with it a certain amount of stress, before and during the performance, which may enhance or encumber the individual's performance. Put the word 'human' in front of 'performance' and we add the fragility of human emotion and the vagaries of the lives that we choose to live. Couple human performance with the requirement of running a nuclear power plant and you find yourself expecting predictable, correct human performance at all times. Since this may not be a reasonable expectation, we build into our work processes a set of standards or expectations, self-checking, peer-checking, physical and procedural barriers, compensation and consequence. All towards avoiding the inappropriate human behaviours which might lead to an accident, human or otherwise. When inappropriate human behaviours still occur we may confront each situation and adjust our processes accordingly.

But will this lead to excellence in human performance? What motivates us to perform our best? Rewards? Recognition? Ambition? or just for the love of what we are doing. What demotivates us? Boredom, too much stress and sometimes the inability to perform based on the other stresses that people or events have in our lives. What motivates or demotivates an individual can be a cultural expectation and is as diverse as we are. Is there any one thing that will inspire our best performance and discourage any inappropriate behaviour?

We have come to understand is that one size does not fit all; individually, our experiences form the basis of our beliefs. Our beliefs form the basis of our actions. Only those actions that we believe to be good human performance will produce the results, which we desire.