



## theathlete@work

### Programme philosophy

No mumbo-jumbo, nothing mystical. Not a diet plan, nor an exercise in motivational speaking - the athlete at work™ simply makes the secrets of world-class performance available to key players in the corporate arena. With the right skills, tools and techniques, the best players with the most talent can fulfil all their potential by learning something new – how to perform at their peak, whatever the circumstances. They can fulfill expectations and inspire others – and they can deliver the performance edge, benefiting professionally and personally in the process.

At the heart of the programme lies the question of performance. There is no argument that performance is the essential quality that makes the best stand out. Whether in respect of man or machine, it is not design, capacity, skill set, talent nor ability that marks out the elite. It is performance. “How can we perform better?” is the question we most often hear.

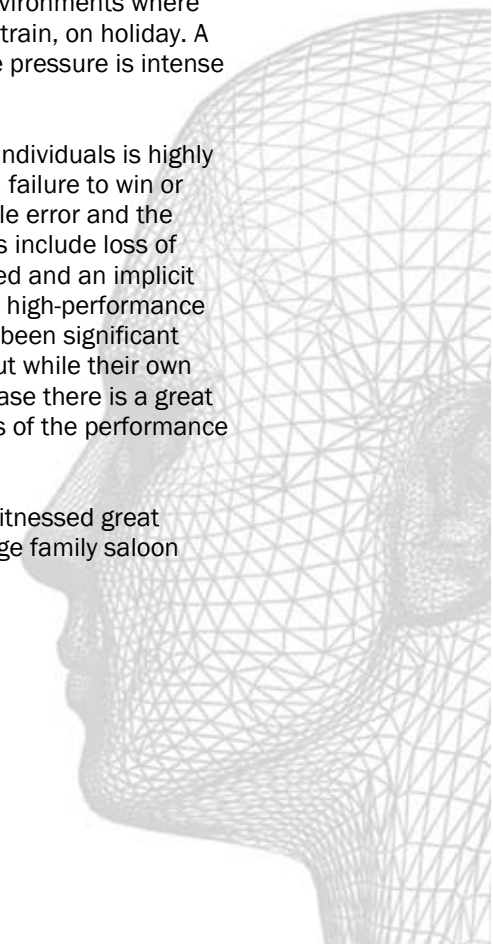
In a free market service-based economy, where competition is fierce and pressure intense, it is the performance of key people that almost always makes the difference. Given that resources, tools such as premises and equipment are freely available to all. It is the human factor that delivers the competitive edge.

So it's ironic that while performance is recognised as the key determinant for success, the question “what is performance?” remains largely unanswered. It remains a quality much referred to yet little understood, particularly in the workplace.

Consider the performance demands placed upon key players in the workplace. They are asked to perform at their peak almost daily, often more than once a day, sometimes unexpectedly. Working hours have increased and improved technology means that there are few environments where work is not accessible - witness work undertaken at home, in the car, on the train, on holiday. A culture of long working hours is now firmly established in an arena where the pressure is intense and the cost of failure high, for both the organisation and the individual.

For the organisation, the effect of poor or inappropriate performance by key individuals is highly significant. The visible costs include rising recruitment fees, healthcare bills, failure to win or renew important contracts, damage to the business caused through avoidable error and the increasing risk of litigation resulting from employee stress. The invisible costs include loss of talented staff to competitors, opportunities for growth that remain unidentified and an implicit recognition of those in a “one-down” position that they are not operating in a high-performance culture. Often this results in the next crop of talent, in whom there has often been significant investment, either leaving to seek a more inspiring environment or staying put while their own performance levels drop. It is difficult to state which is worse, but in either case there is a great danger of a poor performance spiral. Key people, after all, are the custodians of the performance culture, and the trickle down effect is inevitable.

For the individual the costs are also high. In the last twenty years we have witnessed great technological and scientific advances – the air-conditioning unit in the average family saloon





contains more computing power than was employed to send Apollo 11 to the moon! These advances have delivered the opportunity for us to deliver more in shorter timescales with fewer resources. We are wealthier than ever, better educated and the opportunity to nourish ourselves well and keep ourselves fit has never been greater. The pool of natural talent is as deep as ever. At the same time, every measurement taken shows alarming increases in absence through ill health, work related stress, obesity and unhappiness.

What has gone wrong? At a time when opportunities are so great why are we witnessing these sorts of effects? We believe it is because in the workplace, the fundamental question of human performance has been either ignored or misunderstood.

In the world of elite athletes however, the fundamental question of performance cannot be ignored. After all, human performance is the very essence of sport. As with business, to be an elite performer natural talent is a pre-requisite though the elite in sport understand that talent is not enough. If they are to reach the top then they must learn to perform. This concept of learning to perform is a vital one and lies at the core of the athlete at work™. Each element that makes up performance can be developed and improved through the acquisition of specialist knowledge and a work ethic that ensures the information is put to good use. Performance at work differs little from performance in sport. The real difference is that the elite in sport have recognised the importance of understanding performance and working to continually improve it.

The scientific framework that lies at the core of the athlete at work™ is that of self-determination. Developed over the last twenty years, primarily by Ed Deci and Richard Ryan, self-determination deals with the primary question of motivation. Through a process of value identification, understanding of motivational types and the ideal qualities required, the “gold standard” of motivation can be identified and developed in any individual. When combined with a detailed understanding of performance, the effects are remarkable, transforming key players into people who demonstrate all the characteristics of an athlete at work™.

The format of the programme is simple – it kicks off with a two day clinic where three things are achieved:

- An unrivalled understanding of the basic concepts of performance and motivation
- Knowledge transfer in key areas including body clock, nutrition and hydration
- A toolkit that enables graduates to start performing at their peak immediately

Subject areas covered include:

- What makes the elite different?
- What is performance?
- The true meaning of motivation
- Wellness
- The Body Clock
- Nutrition & Hydration
- Peak Performance
- Three key elite performer tools
- Bringing it all together

The clinic is then followed by coaching with one of K2's principle coaches, using the same model we have developed working with elite performers over the last 20 years. This is supported by a personal performance plan to ensure clear goals and measurable results. The coaching intervention typically lasts between three and twelve months.

#### **K2 Performance Systems Ltd**

200 Brook Drive Green Park Reading Berkshire RG2 6UB  
T +44 (0)118 925 3430 F +44 (0)118 925 3431 W [www.planetk2.com](http://www.planetk2.com)

Registered no.4720539 Registered office 71 Kingsway London WC2B 6ST

