

**PART 1****INTRODUCTION TO THE SCIENCE OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY****10 minutes****INTRODUCTION TO POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY**

Positive psychology is about looking at what is working instead of what is broken. As we all adapt to a new economic landscape, we can learn how to perform at higher levels by studying people and teams who are above the curve in terms of sales, productivity and positivity.

**5 minutes****INTERACTIVE: RIPPLE EFFECT SMILING EXPERIMENT**

This is an experiment that illustrates the neuroscientific explanation for why positivity and negativity spread rapidly through a team or a company. People are paired up and primed to think they are going to have a difficult experiment, but actually are merely asked to have one person smile while the other person attempts to stay neutral. 85% of business leaders in the 38 countries Shawn has worked with fail to remain neutral in this situation. This illustrates how we involuntarily mirror both the verbal and nonverbal behavior of those around us around us. Rather than isolated islands unto ourselves, we are actually hardwired for social connection in the workplace—a crucial realization as we attempt to make forward progress.

**10 minutes****SECTION ONE: RESEARCH FROM HARVARD ABOUT CHANGING MINDSET & PERFORMANCE**

From his study of top Harvard students and leaders at Fortune 500 companies, as well as the latest academic research in the field of positive psychology, Shawn explains how positive brains see more possibility in the midst of challenge, utilize more intellectual resources, and adapt more quickly to the demands of the environment. This section describes the competitive advantage that people in a positive mindset have over people who are negative or neutral.

**10 minutes****BREAK****5 minutes****INTERACTIVE: ATTENTION TRAINING EXPERIMENT**

Shawn uses an interactive video experiment to show how our brains can unconsciously delete information that could be helpful to our success. By increasing our level of positivity in the workplace, we can reverse this trend and learn how to utilize our brain's resources to achieve that success.

**5 minutes****SECTION TWO: STRATEGIC RESEARCH APPLICATION**

This section describes the research on three strategies individuals and teams can start to apply immediately: training the brain to look for positivity, neutralizing the effect of multitasking and high workload, and

overcoming negative habits while creating new positive habits to replace them. These three takeaways are described in detail and business examples are given.

**5 minutes**

**VIDEO: EXAMPLE OF HOW POSITIVITY CAN RIPPLE TO MAKE THE MUNDANE EXTRAORDINARY**

Brief video of how we can change something ordinary at work or in our environments to not only create a positive ripple effect, but to help teams and clients make better decisions.

**45 minutes**

**SECTION THREE: CHANGING HAPPINESS BASELINE AND COMMITTING TO CHANGE**

In this section, Shawn will explain what scientists have discovered about specific researched ways individuals can change their happiness baseline, learn optimism, and create a positive ripple effect throughout their team. The focus of this half of the training will be on leading and managing positive change, specifically tackling the bigger issue of why common sense is not always common action. Shawn will explain the psychological principles behind why it is so hard to commit to real change, how we can motivate teams to sustain positive changes, and how we can buffer ourselves against negativity. Shawn will also explain how to manage energy and stress on a team to prevent poor decision making, increase levels of happiness, and encourage individuals to perform at their highest levels of potential.

**15 minutes**

**CONCLUSION AND QUESTIONS**

**LUNCH BREAK**

**PART II**

**POSITIVE LEADERSHIP: HOW TO RAISE TEAM ENGAGEMENT**

**30 MINUTES**

**SECTION ONE: ROLE OF MINDSET IN SHAPING EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP**

Based on his work Shawn will share how positive mindset and mindfulness increase success, raise productivity, boost creativity and ripple to others.

**10 MINUTES**

**INTERACTIVE: SELECTIVE ATTENTION EXPERIMENTS**

This involves a classic experiment where participants watch a video of a card trick and miss the majority of changes occurring around them. This will encourage participation and sets up how, based on our mindset, we see or miss extremely important possibilities latent in our environment.

**30 MINUTES**

**SECTION TWO: RETHINKING STRESS GETTING INTO FLOW**

Contrary to popular conceptions, stress is not bad, and the absence of stress is not happiness. We feel most engaged when we have the optimal balance of challenge and skills. Too much challenge leads to anxiety; too low

leads to boredom. In this section, Shawn discusses how to choose a mindset that increases chances of experiencing “flow” at work. **Flow** is a term in positive psychology that refers to being “in the zone” where energy abounds, success rates skyrocket, one feels completely engaged with a task. Shawn includes both work and non-work examples of flow, and then describes how to increase flow. This section concludes with a section on locus of control: what is within our control and what is not.

#### 20 MINUTES

##### INTERACTIVE: LOCUS OF CONTROL EXERCISE

Tables will break up in groups of five to eight to make a list on flip charts of things in their control (i.e. project progress or mindset) and things that are outside of their control (e.g. most market forces). This creates a lot of discussion as many things are both. For example, the markets are out of our immediate control but our mindset when reacting to markets is within our control.

#### 20 MINUTES

##### INTERACTIVE: MOTIVATION EXPLORATION

Why do we feel motivated at sometimes and not at others? This section explores research on what gives us motivation and how to encourage others to feel motivated. This includes a description of internal versus external motivation. This also involves research on how leaders’ mindset has a direct effect upon how internally motivated employees feel.

#### 10 MINUTES

##### INTERACTIVE: MOTIVATION BREAK-OUT DISCUSSION

In breakout tables, groups will write out and delineate external and internal sources of motivation for doing work. Then groups will be asked to discuss how strong each source is and how to make one or more sources salient to their teams.

#### 10 MINUTES

##### SECTION 3: TAKE AWAY STRATEGIES

This section delves into the research on how significant leaders’ response to challenge can have upon the success of teams. In this section, we look at how much leaders can have an effect upon their own and their team’s creativity, success, motivation, energy, productivity and profitability. By consciously crafting mindset and choosing how to respond to challenge, leaders can transform stress into success.

#### 30 MINUTES

##### INTERACTIVE: BREAK-OUT GROUP ACTIONABLE STEPS

In breakout tables, groups will go through the list of things which they identified are within their control and will develop concrete actionable steps they can take over the next 2 weeks.

#### 30 MINUTES

##### SECTION 5: DISCUSSION OF ACTION RESEARCH

In this section Shawn describes research on how accountability, social support, and clear goals plays in the prediction of action and helps to overcome inaction.

## **10 MINUTES**

### **INTERACTIVE: BREAK-OUT AGREEMENTS FOR ACCOUNTABILITY**

In breakout tables, agreements are made about when leaders will check in to make sure that progress has been made on certain goals. If these are intact teams, the senior Leader will guide this. If these are not intact teams, then a sheet will be given to each of the members in the group where they can write down the contact information of an accountability partner within the group and when they will get in touch. Both will sign the form and can either be taken by the participant or collected by HR who will contact the individuals on the indicated date regarding how much action has been taken.

## **10 MINUTES**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECAP**

## BIOGRAPHY



SHAWN ACHOR, MA

“Success first, happiness second. The only problem is that this formula is broken. ... Even more important, the formula is broken because it is backward...[h]appiness and optimism actually *fuel* performance and achievement—giving us the competitive edge that I call the Happiness Advantage.”

[www.goodthinkinc.com](http://www.goodthinkinc.com)

Shawn Achor has coined the phrase “the secret to success is backwards.” As author of *The Happiness Advantage*, Shawn says that happiness creates success, *not* the other way around. Research shows a positive, optimistic brain helps us achieve higher levels of potential in any domain of life. As one of the world’s leading experts on human potential, Shawn speaks to organizations and businesses throughout the world on the topic of happiness and productivity. He helps leaders create cultures of confidence and provides concise, manageable steps to create positive change. The seven principles from his book *The Happiness Advantage*, have been developed into two e-courses: a compressive business course and a “life” course addressing topics related to family, work, health and resilience. His popular TED talk on the topic has been viewed by nearly 3 million people. He was also asked to film a national PBS special, “The Happiness Advantage with Shawn Achor.” Shawn spent over a decade at Harvard University where he won numerous distinguished teaching awards for his work. He graduated *magna cum laude* from Harvard and earned a Masters from Harvard Divinity School in Christian and Buddhist ethics. In 2006, he was Head Teaching Fellow for “Positive Psychology,” the most popular course at Harvard at the time. In 2007, Shawn founded Good Think Inc. to share his research with a wider population. When the global economy collapsed in 2008, Shawn was immediately called in as an expert by the world’s largest banks to help restart forward progress. Subsequently, Shawn has spoken in 45 countries to a wide variety of audiences: bankers on Wall Street, students in Dubai, CEOs in Zimbabwe. Shawn’s research on happiness and human potential have received attention from the Harvard Business Review, New York Times, Forbes, CNN, and NPR.