

INTRODUCTION TO THE SCIENCE OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

10 minutes

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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.

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.

60 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.

60 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.

10 minutes

CONCLUSION AND QUESTIONS

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

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.