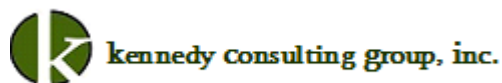


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# Mental Performance Training<sup>®</sup>

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This paper introduces Kennedy Consulting Group's Mental Performance Training<sup>®</sup> program in order to help readers determine how it can be used to help improve their personal and organizational performance.



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## Summary

Mental Performance Training (MPT) is a neuroplastic re-engineering approach to improve mental performance. It was originally created by applying Kennedy Consulting Group's (KCG) proprietary process-re-engineering methodology to a framework of foundational cognitive skills focused on the single most important factor in performance in every arena – the human brain.

MPT proprietary mental exercises utilize progressively accelerated cognitive exertion to physically change the brain in areas critical to information processing, creating positive results in just hours.

MPT was initially developed in 2006 for the most demanding and stressful mental environment – military units in combat. Since that first test with a deploying platoon of Marines, MPT has proven consistently successful at improving performance in every unit it has been implemented. These include:

- Special Operations Marines and their head quarters staff
- Battalion leadership and all department heads
- Small unit leaders during Infantry Squad Leaders Course
- Scout Snipers during Marine Scout Sniper Course (one of the toughest in all the military)
- Embedded Transition Team Regiment, including the Commanding Officer and his staff
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Force Recon Marines – reservists quickly ramping up for some of the toughest assignments in Afghanistan
- TBI and PTSD Wounded Warriors
- Marine Corps Rifle, Pistol and Combat Shooting Teams
- Air Force pilots in Flight School

The demands of the combat environment have created MPT's present form – a series of portable mental exercises easily performed in any location. Recently, MPT was introduced to the business, athletic and educational environments. Outstanding results were consistent with all previous military engagements. *"This was the best and most effective corporate training for my mental and emotional well being I have ever received."* – Chief Financial Officer

MPT provides an excellent program to performance timeline, with trainees starting to notice changes in as little as 3 hours of training. The program is also completely compatible with any existing training program and will maximize results if combined.

The following pages describe some of the benefits to date and will hopefully lead you to ask the question – *how can these mental improvements benefit my organization?*

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# Mental Performance Training

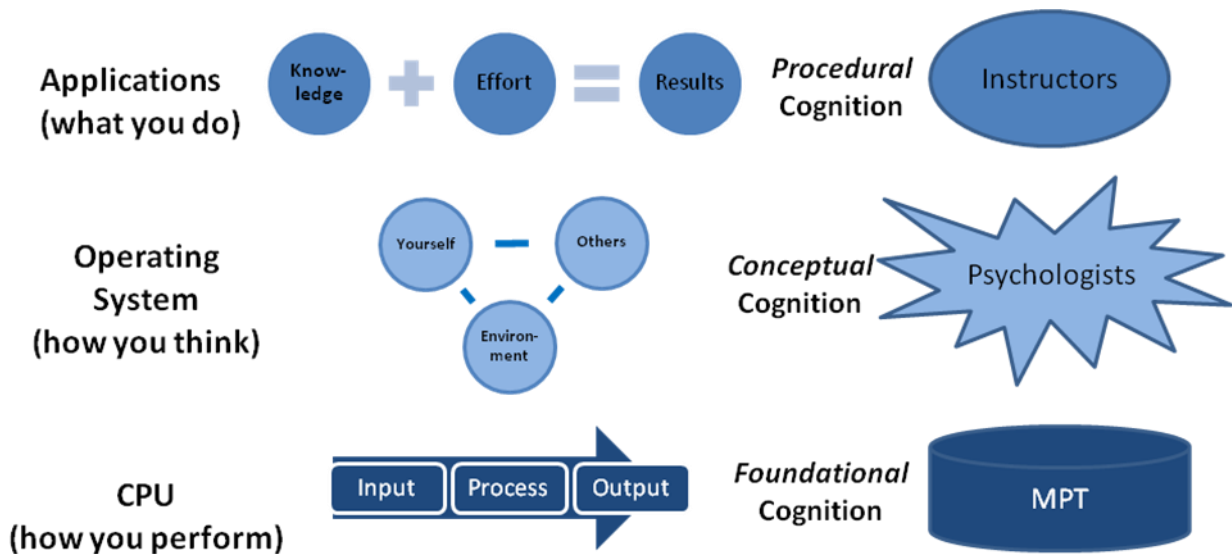
“...the discovery that the adult human brain, rather than being fixed or “hard-wired,” can not only change itself but works by changing itself. It is “neuroplastic” - adaptable, changeable, malleable. Neuroplasticity is the property of the brain that allows it to change its structure and function in response to what it senses, what it does and even what it thinks and imagines.”

- Norman Doidge, The Brain That Changes Itself

## Your Brain operates like a computer

For years, the study of cognition has been in the realm of psychology and based on the belief that the brain is primarily formed in early childhood and can't be changed. However, due to significant advances in brain scanning technologies in the last few years it was discovered that not only does the brain continue to change over time, but the changes can be created by focusing stimuli on specific areas of the brain. An example of this is what we call “muscle memory”. Repeating movements over time makes them more consistent, as in throwing a ball to become more accurate. But it's not the muscle that remembers, it's the brain which changes due to the repetitive motions.

One way to understand this is to visualize your brain as a computer. You do many different things just as a computer runs many different applications. You also have an “operating system” – your belief system which affects how you think about yourself and others within your environment. Believe it or not, you also have a “CPU” consisting of the foundational mental pathways that determine the efficiency at which your brain processes information.



The picture above illustrates this concept:

- Every activity (the applications) relies on *procedural cognition* and can be improved through education, training and practice. The more efficient the procedure and the more often it is repeated, the better the performance (“muscle memory”). This is why good instructors are so important. However, the procedural skills learned in a sales class don’t translate to better tennis since the training is focused on obtaining results in a specific area.
- How we view ourselves, others and our environment can be changed through psychology, and this can have a positive (or negative) effect on our overall performance in many areas. To this end psychologists can be very beneficial to help us improve our *conceptual cognition*. However, this process typically takes place over months or years and often starts with the mistaken belief that your personality remains constant (typically measured using DISC or Myers-Briggs).
- There are specific foundational mental processes – *foundational cognition* – which control the flow of information through our brains just as the basic input/output processes of a CPU control the data throughput in a computer. The efficiency of the CPU determines how well both the operating system and the applications will perform. MPT increases the efficiency of these processes, “pushes” them down to the unconscious, freeing the conscious mind to be more focused and relaxed. By also stimulating the pre-frontal cortex, the “conductor of the brain”, critical information is brought to the execution point (called Krinosynthesis) faster as well. Because all the “applications” as well as the “operating system” rely on the CPU to perform, MPT creates performance improvements across all activity areas. For example:
  - The members of the executive team of a large insurance company achieved their MPT goals of faster, more efficient meetings and more effective management, but also reported better athletic ability including lower golf scores and easier gym workouts, better relationships with family, and less stress.
  - Young Marines in the Squad Leaders class not only scored the highest averages in the history of the school and also significantly improved their marksmanship, but reported that they required far less time to study since their reading and comprehension skills were much better.
  - A professional basketball player achieved his goals of better focus and faster reaction times, but also reported significant improvements in his reading and ability to communicate during stressful contract negotiations.

Just as putting a faster processor in a computer is a relatively quick way to improve computer performance, MPT is also extremely fast to perform – noticeable performance increases often occur after as little as 3 hours of training.

## Effects of MPT on Performance

Over time, MPT creates a state of Cognitively Primed Anticipation<sup>®</sup>, where the mind is relaxed and waiting for input to process, rather than pushing it away to create more processing time. Some have described this as “like sitting on my own shoulder”, and “seeing where something will be before it gets there”. The more efficient mental processes are, the better the brain is at utilizing knowledge and experience in critical decision making, especially under stress. At an unconscious level, this improves intuition.

MPT is based on progressive accelerated cognitive execution and utilizes a variety of games and training tools, performed in a specific way individually and in teams. The exercises are all designed to be portable and can be practiced in the field as well as in a classroom. They are fun to do and provide a welcome respite from daily schedules, as well as provide a great team building experience.



An added benefit is that they are simple enough for a child to perform and many of the men play them with their families. Not only does this provide a fun family activity, but also helps develop the cognitive capability of even struggling children. One executive started performing the exercises with his daughter, diagnosed with severe ADHD, and after 2 weeks reported significant improvements in her ability to stay focused in school and complete her homework. Even a young girl with a genetic disorder causing 14 non-cancerous brain tumors experienced major advances in her school performance after MPT was included in her daily homework routine by her mother.



## Specific Improvement Areas

While MPT creates a broad range of improvements, it can be focused on specific performance objectives to meet the needs of the trainees. Following are some examples:

***Learning speed and retention ability.*** Excellence requires constant learning and application of new information. Marines must pass the 9 week Infantry Squad Leaders Course to be promoted and the average class score across the Marine Corps is in the low 80's. The two pilot classes with just 10 hours of Mental Performance Training scored 93 and 94, the highest scores ever at the school. This was echoed by the CEO of the business pilot who said his staff appeared to learn new material faster.



***Environmental awareness.*** For the Marines this means LandNav, the ability to orient oneself to himself and his environment and intrinsically sense movement toward or away from any point. In every MPT training for the Marines LandNav skills improved dramatically, even for Marine Special Ops (MarSOC), the smartest, best trained and best equipped. After one exercise at the Mountain Warfare Training Center, the commander said *“we usually allow 24 hours to complete our 4 peak orienteering exercise, yet we were back by sunset – never happened before!”* For the civilian this translates into the ability to successfully navigate his environment – work, family, and athletic field.



***Focus and quick thinking.*** To successfully hit the target, especially at long distance, requires tremendous focus as well as the ability to assimilate all the factors affecting the shot – wind, elevation, obstacles, sun and shadows, etc. – and execute the trigger pull at exactly the right time. These same skills come into play in sales negotiations, business planning and relationship building. In every MPT class improved marksmanship was a consistent result and has been recently endorsed as a required part of training by the Marine Corps Shooting Team. *“Marines had improvements in focus, in their ability to relax and clear their mind before shooting, could go through their shot process more easily since the training was allowing them to perform the steps subconsciously. This was from performing MPT exercises for just a couple days.”* Marine Corps Shooting Team Officer in Charge



***Critical decision making under stress.*** One of the toughest courses in the military is the Marines Scout Sniper Course with a 40-60% drop out rate. Not only does the student need to prove exceptional long distance marksmanship abilities but must pass the stalking test, the hardest part of the course. He has 4 hours to move under cover for 800 yards to within 200 yards of his target and fire two verified accurate shots without being seen by a trained spotter with an 8x scope. Drop outs from the stalking section average 6-12 per class – the two classes with 12 hours of Mental Performance Training averaged only 1 drop per class. The Officer in Charge said *“Decision making is one of the most important skills in Stalking since they have to constantly reassess and refocus in order to accomplish the objective. The youngest Marine in the class practiced MPT the most and scored highest scores in the school in Stalking, Marksmanship and Overall”*



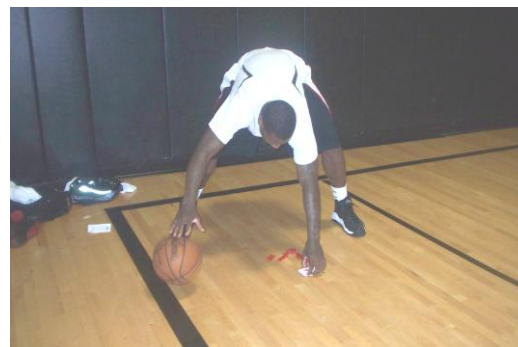
**Efficient planning.** Leaders need to be able to put together plans quickly in order to efficiently deal with continuously shifting priorities during the day. Just as important is the ability to quickly correct wrong decisions and readjust in order to keep on course. This is critically important for the FAC (Forward Air Controller). He is responsible for coordinating close air support for ground troops, often calling for fire dangerously close to his own Marines during combat with shifting battle lines and terrain. *“When I needed to create a situation, game plan, and 9-line, I was able to organize my thoughts and calculate all the information needed to relay to the aircraft much quicker. I also was able to communicate this information to the pilot effectively without studying it numerous times.”* – Battalion Forward Air Controller



**Teamwork.** MPT performed as a group provides a powerful teambuilding experience. Trainees not only improve their own cognitive skills but learn to connect and communicate at a deeper more efficient level with their team mates. For the initial MPT pilot the worst performing, most dysfunctional platoon (40 men) in the battalion (1000 men) was requested. They complied! 3 men had attempted suicide, they were below standard on all their pre deployment tests and the Platoon Sgt said that they would ruin his career because they were always getting in trouble. After MPT, not only were they the undisputed best platoon in the battalion, but at the final pre-deployment exercises at 29 Palms, one of the instructors said they turned in the best performance he had ever seen. Observing these men operate, the Battalion CO, *“These men move better and differently than any I have seen”*. Once they got to Iraq, they were give a Company (4 platoons) sized AO (area of operations) with the most insurgent activity and excelled, accorded to the Battalion Intel Officer.



**Athletic ability.** Next to the battlefield, the sports arena comes closest to the competitive demands on the mind and body. Athletes rely on the same critical mental skills as a marksman or Special Ops fighters in order to excel. Better focus, faster reaction time and improved focus all contribute to superior performance. Feedback from trainees indicates performance improvements in whatever sport or activity they compete in. These range from bowlers and video game enthusiasts to golfers and a professional basketball player.



## Conclusion

For three years, MPT has produced consistently positive results for any person who has followed the program regardless of age, occupation or environment. Not only has mental performance improved but also physical and psychological well being. These are evidence that MPT creates changes at the very foundational level of the brain, which everything we do relies on to accomplish.

*“I had been out of the cockpit for over a year and I felt I was losing my mental agility. After just a few hours of MPT I feel I have it back! – F-18 pilot*

MPT results also continue to be validated by each new advance in neuroscience, including its ability to make trigger changes in the brain so quickly, usually after only a few hours of training.- *“The development of particular neurological connections or skills does not occur gradually over time. Instead such changes tend to occur suddenly, appearing in short intervals after robust stimulation, it is as if there is a single important trigger and then a functional circuit rapidly comes online.” – Akira Yoshii, MIT brain researcher.*

MPT has shown to be, in the words of the Marines, *“beyond the tip of the spear”*. Using a solid proven process re-engineering approach to physically change the brain, MPT is unique in its ability to create fast, effective results in all areas of performance. MPT will improve focus, speed reaction time, accelerate learning, improve the efficiency and innovative ability of your people and your organization, improve team morale and maximize your investment in any other training program.

Please see the following pages for testimonials.

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## MPT Units Trained

### US Marines 3<sup>rd</sup> Division

- Embedded Transition Team
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment
  - Regimental Staff
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion
    - Battalion Staff
    - 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon, Golf Company
    - Forward Air Controllers
  - Regimental Schools
    - School Staff
    - Infantry Squad Leader School
    - Scout Sniper Course
  - Regimental Shooting Team
    - 2008 – 1<sup>st</sup> in Pacific Coast Matches
    - 2009 – 1<sup>st</sup> in Pacific Coast Matches
  - Wounded Warrior Battalion
    - TBI/PTSD Volunteers

### US Marines 4<sup>th</sup> Division

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Force Recon Battalion

### US Marines Training & Education Command

- Weapons Training Battalion
  - Marine Corps Shooting Team
    - Staff and Instructors
    - Rifle, Pistol Competitive Teams

### US Special Operations Command

- Marine Special Operations Command
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Special Operations Battalion
    - Battalion Staff
    - Alpha Company
    - Bravo Company

### US Air Force Training Command

- Vance AFB Flight School

### Business

- Hub Insurance Midwest
  - Executive Team
  - Customer Service/Sales teams

### Sports

- Pro Basketball Player – better focus, faster reaction time

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*“MPT is the first innovation in military training since WWII” – Maj. Matt Tracy, Reg. Schools Officer in Charge, 2007 Leftwich Award Recipient*

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*“MPT will help us in our mission to Train, Mentor and Advise. I have my men practice every evening to help them stay focused.” – Col. Langley, ETT RCAC-Central CO*

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*“When I needed to create a situation, game plan, and 9-line, I was able to organize my thoughts and calculate all the information needed to relay to the aircraft much quicker. I also was able to communicate this information to the pilot effectively without studying it numerous times.” – Capt. Caleb Wells, Forward Air Controller*

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*“The average scores in the Squad Leaders course went from low 80’s to 94 – highest ever at the School” – Sgt Weissmuller, Chief Instructor*

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*“Scout Sniper course is the toughest in the military. For the two classes with MPT drops from the stalking portion averaged only 1 per class with some of the highest marksmanship scores ever.” – Gysgt Mike Skinta, Chief Instructor*

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*“It used to take me a week to learn a new Jujitsu move, after MPT I have it solid in a couple hours” – GySgt Eric Johnson, Martial Arts Officer in Charge*

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*“It’s been a year and a half since I was in the cockpit and I felt I was losing my mental agility. After three hours of MPT I feel I have it back!” Maj. Brian Evans, F-18 Pilot*

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*“These men move better and differently than any I have observed.” – LtCol Max Galeai, Battalion CO*

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*“Our meetings finish faster and our efficiency and focus has improved. My stress level has decreased and my ability to mentor my people has increased.” – Dennis Pauls, Hub Insurance Midwest CEO*

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*“Not only has my focus improved but also my ability to pull myself back to attention when my mind does start to wander.” – Cpl Matthew Berg, TBI Wounded Warrior*

## **Additional Endorsements**

Leadership Development Consultant

*“As a founder of Inspiring Leadership Partners, I recognized immediately the immense possibility the MPT program would have for new leaders. MPT provides the individuals trained with enhanced focus, decision making abilities and confidence at a minimum. The process allows a team to share in a system that transcends itself and can easily become an efficient structure for meetings, conversations and projects.*

*I highly recommend this innovative program - because not only is it good, its fun!”*

Corporate CEO:

*“My team (that was in the MPT program) are learning faster and remembering better.”*

*“Our meetings are much more efficient and we are accomplishing more in less time”*

*“For the first time when I play golf I don’t get upset anymore at a bad shot. I calmly assess what I might have done wrong and have confidence that I will do better the next time”*

Corporate Operations Director:

*“I am able to identify areas that I am not as skilled at so I can focus on improving”*

*“I had a GREAT work out today (after MPT). I upped the incline level on the treadmill and increased the mph rate. And I felt good and not struggling to finish - AT ALL. If I had more time I would have extended the jog for 40 minutes instead of 30. Coincidence? I think not.”*

Corporate HR Director

*“We had our quarterly budget meeting today, which usually runs several hours and everyone hates each other by the time we finish. Today we were done in 90 minutes and everyone was singing kumbayah! Dennis (CEO) said it must have been the training so we’d like you to come back and train our customer service and sales departments.”*

Executive Assistant to CEO:

*“MPT increased my cognitive skills and built my confidence while facilitating a much needed bonding experience among our team.”*

Professional basketball player:

*“After only a couple weeks practicing the exercises I’ve noticed a big improvement in my focus and reaction time.” His coach concurred, adding noticeable improvements in learning and communication ability.*

Corporate Vice President:

*“Our daughter was diagnosed with an unusual eye disorder. She had tremendous difficulty tracking words from left to right and she was unable to consistently jump from one word to*

*the next which obviously had a negative impact on her ability to learn to read. After two weeks practicing the MPT exercises we brought her to her checkup with the specialist. He was amazed at her progress and said "Whatever you're doing, keep it up!"*

*"She was also diagnosed with ADHD which added to her learning struggles. To our surprise we watched her really come to life. She was having fun and she was able to concentrate while becoming more proficient in manipulating the games. The best part was that MPT wasn't "therapy". This was a little girl playing games but benefiting from having fun and not even knowing that she was strengthening those areas of deficiency. The more she played the better she did in school. Finally, we incorporated this into our bedtime routine with the whole family and found that we were all benefiting from the techniques but also it was a way to have fun communication time with all of our kids. We saw the same benefits with our two younger children who began playing with the games as well. John made a huge believer out of me and what a fun way to have fun with the whole family!"*

Wounded Warrior diagnosed with Traumatic Brain Injury:

*"I can really feel my attention ability improving. Not only can I stay focused longer, but when my mind starts to wander I can bring it back to attention much faster."*

Mother of daughter with 14 non-cancerous brain tumors:

*"My daughter really struggled in school and had a measured IQ of only 70 due to the crowding from the tumors. John showed us how to practice the exercises and we saw considerable progress in her school work. I really believe in the program."*

2007 Marine Corps Leftwich Award for Leadership Recipient, 3rdMarDiv Regimental Schools Officer in Charge :

*"Mental Performance Training is the first innovation in military training since WWII."*

*"I applied MPT to the 3D Reg. Rifle Pistol Team ... they won the Rifle Team Gold at the Pacific Division Matches. This was a team in which 3 of the 4 shooters were new to competitive shooting."*

*"MPT may actually improve cognitive ability to Observe, Orient, Decide and Act better and faster than their opponent and offer a concrete training solution to those who freeze or get over excited under high stress."*

Corpsman for first MPT pilot platoon:

*"I have to teach these Marines what I do so they can save my life as well as others if necessary. When I was in LeJeune it was like trying to teach rocks – these guys are so sharp they'll put me out of a job!"*

Marine Embedded Transition Team Commanding Officer

*"I have my men practice at the end of every day. It wakes us up and I know it will help us stay focused in Afghanistan..This will help us in our mission to "Train, Mentor, and Advise"*

Marine Corps Shooting Team Palma (1000, 900, 800 yds, iron sites, no scopes) competitor

*"I used to lose my focus after 10 shot's; the mental strain was too great. Now I can keep focused for all 15 after 6 hours of MPT.*

Forward Air Controller requested help with his Radio Operator who was having significant problems with correct coordinates. Five days after practicing exercises, said:

*"No more problems with coordinates and his self - confidence has increased significantly."*

Regimental Schools Martial Arts Chief Instructor:

*"It used to take me a week to learn a new jujitsu move, now I have it in a couple hours."*

1<sup>st</sup> Marines Special Operations Battalion Company Commanding Officer after observing his men post-MPT at the Mountain Warfare Training Center:

*"We noticed all of our teams completed the mountain orienteering package much faster than expected. Their route planning is good, but seemed especially sharp in this exercise."*

*"One of my element leaders told me that his ability to remain focused in his mission planning has improved noticeably, beyond the point at which he felt exhaustion previously."*