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# TD

## TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

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# Interview Minister Damien English TD

### MANAGEMENT

The author explains her research exploring how best to engage 'Generation Y' in today's workplace and points out how a little adjustment and extra effort pays back big-time in terms of commitment  
*Dr Mary Collins*

### LEARNING

Advances in neuroscience is providing new information that can refine how we approach people's performance  
*Geoff Greenwood*

### GRAD PROGRAMMES

Is your graduate programme fit for purpose? We speak to gradireland about the priorities for today's students and find out what can be learned from the lead programmes in Jameson, PwC and Lidl?  
*Mary-Rose O'Sullivan*

### BIG DATA

From shopping habits to Facebook posts, big data is everywhere, but what does it mean for L&D professionals and how can it be harnessed in the role? Part 1 of a 3-part series.  
*Jonathan Kettleborough*

# Neuroscience & Learning

Why do employees with similar backgrounds, intelligence, experience, skills and knowledge behave in completely different ways? Neuroscience research is teaching us more about how the brain works

Some of the biggest challenges facing organisations as they shift to knowledge-based structures is the issue of performance. What does a real performance culture look like and how do you make the paradigm shift towards becoming one?

Unfortunately, actual performance gets lost within the term 'Performance Management' and the obsession with appraisal and measurement of indicators. Total performance outcome is a product of the collective individual performances of management and employees. This follows from the behaviours of all in the workplace.

Until now, these behaviours and mental capabilities have been the domain of psychometric testing built upon the personality characteristics and cognitions of an individual. But what if we could add more research into the mix and improve the results of the testing?

## Behaviour & Brain Science

Behaviour mapping and traditional psychometrics stem from two different sciences with much in common but also three fundamental differences.

### 1. Neuroplasticity

Psychologists thought for many decades that the brain's physical connections were established in childhood and remained the same, hard-wired if you like, until later life degeneration. However, thanks to the

latest imaging technologies and clinical research we see that the brain's structure can change daily because of the thoughts, emotions, behaviours and experiences of the last 24 hours. This has huge implications for ongoing learning & development, particularly in relation to mature employees.

### 2. Adaptive Behaviour

The ability to change behaviour at work away from the underlying natural behavioural preference to one that fits the role, situation, environment or culture. This means the individual is not performing to their optimal and can highlight excess stress or frustration in the role leading to poor performance.

### 3. Dichotomous Profiling

Until now individuals have been labelled as 'either/or' in terms of behaviour and yet neuroscience identifies that we can exhibit opposing behaviours in different situations. An example would be being tagged as an introvert or an extrovert when this clearly is not the case, as we can exhibit both traits at different times in different situations.

So, if we are not to label people with a tag, we need to understand why employees who have similar backgrounds, intelligence, experience, skills and knowledge behave in completely different ways. This is where comprehensive synthesis of neuroscience research by the world's leading neuroscientists over the last two decades are discovering how the brain works, albeit there is still a long way to go.

The real performance difference is the fine tuning of the underlying brain networks in each person and in particular the balance between our natural instinctive reactions and our considered situational responses to everyday issues.

## Brain mapping

Brain mapping looks at the differences between the left and right cerebral hemispheres in terms of size, shape, architecture of neurons, neurochemistry and neuropsychology and why they do what they do and their attitudes and views of the world. Within the hemispheres are further divisions incorporating the lobes/cortices that interact with our electro-chemical system to produce neural pathways to thoughts, feelings and interactions with the world. As these electrical and chemical firings jump the synaptic gap towards another pathway to be reinforced and extended, they produce behaviour. So behaviour mapping adds brain structure and chemistry to personality to identify a unique individual performer.

## How do we get from the lab to the workplace?

A behaviour mapping instrument that measures the intensity of observed behaviour and the person's preference to a range of behaviours and activities related to those behaviours is powerful in terms of productivity, motivation,

engagement, wellbeing and focus towards the role, career progression and job satisfaction. It can demonstrate where strengths are being overdone or underdone in terms of being benchmarked with the role or appraised across a behavioural 360 degree feedback.

To see visual brain maps highlighting behavioural preferences across the four quadrants of the brain matched with detailed analysis and reports covering 26 key aspects of work preferences, emotional intelligence preferences, mental toughness and a summary of the 'Big 5' Personality traits is a powerful tool to add suitability to selection, recruitment and development and gives a much wider picture of knowledge of individuality.

This helps the approach to behaviour both for the individual and their superior in that it is not a subject to avoid but one to approach using positive produced maps and reports of behavioural preferences and not issues of good or bad behavior, which help nobody. It also helps in terms of making complex terminology and understanding into a practical and logical tool that show visually, performance gaps and the development needed to close that gap.

### How can it be used to help L&D?

The importance of the instrument is that it has a wide range of applications particularly for L&D. Many of your challenges ultimately involve the improvement of performance along with behavioural change of your workforce. A true performance culture changes the shift in development and performance away from technical driven training with scientific management control towards one of self-awareness, self-direction and self-regulation triggering purpose and total engagement of the individual who takes full responsibility for their own development, career plan and day-to-day performance.

Behaviour Mapping can be used for, among others:

- Performance Enhancement: To understand the behavioural performance

areas to improve and to target the true performance strategies for development.

- **Leadership:** The potential of future leaders can be mapped to see if they align with those required of the role and their cultural fit with organisational values.
- **Coaching Culture:** To identify the performance strengths and weaknesses of employees is a perfect starting point in any personal or executive coaching plan
- **360 Degree Behavioural Feedback & Competencies:** A visual picture of what customers, peers, managers and superiors think the individual's behavioural strengths and weaknesses are.
- **High Performing Teams:** Behaviour mapping is ideal for identifying the range of diverse performance behaviours in team members for dynamics and cohesion.
- **Training & Learning:** Understanding more from brain science about mental areas involved in learning and encoding can be used to devise more individual training and development plans.
- **Stress Management:** Most stress at work comes from not having the mindset and resources to deal with the demands. If you have to adapt too far away from your preferred style you will inherit stress.
- **Change Management:** Again this is resource v demands scenario and maps can identify weak areas of attitude and execution.

In addition, it can be used in adaptive enhanced selling (aligning into your customer's preference to facilitate decision making); recruitment and selection; customer service and communications.

### Real-life applications

- Behaviour mapping has been used in the Learning & Department of HSBC

Bank plc in maximising their training provision, especially in Sales Management Training and Executive Coaching.

- At Kleinwort Benson Private Bank behaviour mapping has been used for complementing the recruitment process, raising levels of individuals' self-awareness, understanding team dynamics and cohesion and behavioural diversity.
- Development Initiatives used behaviour mapping for realigning a charity's executive board and to minimise the margin of error in employing retail staff.
- Viridian Corporate Finance used it to identify and enhance performance in their individuals and teams and many more, such as Barclay's Capital, Siemens, Maersk, Deloitte and Lloyds TSB have used behaviour mapping in the above areas.

As we learn more about the brain and its functionality, and that it is the true originator of all behavior, then new tools that help us incorporate these findings into a day to day instrument should be welcomed as extra evidence towards an individual's potential and helps us to be in a better place today than we were yesterday.



#### Author

Geoff Greenwood MBA MSc is a Performance Specialist at Neuro-Performance.co.uk who helps create exceptional human performance and culture in the workplace with a combination of applications from the neuroscience and performance science worlds. He is also a Licensed Practitioner for Prism Behaviour Mapping available for business of all sizes. Visit: [www.neuro-performance.co.uk](http://www.neuro-performance.co.uk)