

MTQ48

Developing individuals and the organisation

The logo features a large, dark grey, rounded triangular shape pointing to the right. Behind this shape are several overlapping, glowing blue shapes that resemble stylized mountain peaks or a starburst pattern. The word "Keystone" is written in a white, serif font across the bottom of the dark grey triangle.

Keystone

What is 'mental toughness'?

“The quality which determines in large part how people deal with challenge, stressors and pressure... irrespective of prevailing circumstances.”

It's universal – applicable in many walks of life.

Is mental toughness important?

Mental Toughness is directly related to:

- **Performance** – explains up to 25% of the variation in individual performance
- **Behaviour** – more engaged, more positive, more “can do”
- **Wellbeing** – more contentment, better stress management , less bullying
- **Aspirations** - more ambitious, prepared to manage more risk

The 4 Cs

Mental Toughness has 4 components:

- **Commitment**
- **Control**
- **Challenge**
- **Confidence**

Which can be combined to provide an **overall measure of Mental Toughness**

Commitment

Identifies the extent to which someone commits to delivering what has been promised – “stickability”.

1**2****3****4****5****6****7****8****9****10**

Low scores

Don't like goals & targets

Goals & measures are intimidating

Give up more easily & ignore goals

Try to distract attention from the goal

High scores

Understands what success looks like

Motivated by measures

Like clear goals & measures

Work hard/stay focused

Control

Identifies the extent to which an individual feels in control of their life and their emotions.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Low scores

Don't feel in control

Prefer to handle one thing at a time

Poor Time Management

"Lose it" when pressed

High scores

Feel in control

Can handle lots of things at one time

Good Time Management

Don't show emotions even when provoked

Control – sub-scales

Control (emotion)



High scorers control emotions better, keep anxieties in check and don't reveal their emotional states to others.

Control (life)



High scorers believe they can control their lives, that they can make a difference and won't be thwarted. Self efficacy

Challenge

Identifies the extent to which people see challenges, variety, problems & changes as opportunities - or see these as threats.

1**2****3****4****5****6****7****8****9****10**

Low Scores

Don't like sudden changes

Don't like shocks

Overwhelmed by challenges

Fear Failure

Avoid effort

High Scores

Seek challenge

Like problem solving

Create change

Work hard & smart

Dislike routine

Confidence

Identifies the extent to which people have self belief in their abilities and the confidence to deal with setbacks and challenge.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Low scores

Give up when setbacks occur

Won't do something if it looks hard

Under achieve

Get talked out of things

Don't do it even if they know how

High scores

Keep going

Setbacks make them more determined

Make most of abilities

Get own way even when they are wrong

Have ago even if they have a doubt

Confidence – sub-scales

Confidence (abilities)

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7** **8** **9** **10**

High scorers believe they are worthwhile and don't need much external validation. Tend to be optimistic

Confidence (interpersonal)

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **6** **7** **8** **9** **10**

High scorers tend to be more assertive. Less likely to be intimidated and will push forward in social settings

Validity

Independent factor analysis confirms that these four components are valid – University of Western Ontario 2008.

Aiming for peak performance

- Flip side of the same coin...
- Can't achieve peak performance without effective stress management!

Characteristics of peak performance include:

- Seeing **challenge** as an opportunity for personal/ professional growth
- Feeling in **control** of environment and self
- Being assertive & having **confidence** in abilities
- Working hard & **committing** to goals
- **Awareness of self and your impact on others**

How do you measure mental toughness and what can you do about it?

MTQ48 diagnostic

- **Normative, valid and reliable measure**
- **On-line format (can print off questionnaires)**
- **Extremely easy to administer**
- **Only takes about 7 – 8 minutes to complete**
- **Results and reports are immediately available**
- **On-line facility also helps to manage data**

Post-MTQ48 interventions

Mental toughness capability can be developed in most individuals.

A normal process applies:

- **Diagnosis**
 - What are my issues?
 - What are their implications?
 - What will I seek to develop/improve?
- **Interventions**
- **Evaluation**

The purpose of interventions

There is now a lot of evidence showing that more mentally tough individuals adopt different coping mechanisms:

- ❑ ***"Consistent with expectations, mental toughness was found to be associated with **more problem or approach coping strategies** (i.e., reducing or eliminating the stressor) such as mental imagery, effort expenditure, thought control, and logical analysis; but **less use of avoidance coping strategies** such as distancing, mental distraction or resignation"*** Nicholls et al, 2008.
- ❑ ***Three performance strategies were found to be significantly and positively related to mental toughness in both practice and competition; these were relaxation strategies, self-talk and emotional control.*** Crust and Azadi, 2010

Seven effective training/coaching interventions

Recommended interventions fall into 7 broad areas:

- **1 Positive thinking** – affirmations, think three positives, turning negatives into positives, etc
- **2 Visualisation** – guided imagining, using your head to practice, etc
- **3 Anxiety Control** – relaxation techniques, breathing, etc
- **4 Attentional Control** – focus, dealing with interruptions, mindfulness
- **5 Goal setting** – SMART, balancing goals, how to deal with big goals, etc
- **6 The test itself + feedback** – people respond to the feedback. The feedback discussion is also an effective intervention. Careful feedback produces very good results.
- **7 Biofeedback** – monitoring self, guiding selection and adoption of tools and techniques

These all help to develop the capability to deal with stress, pressure and challenge and, where appropriate, to cope with these.

Thank You!

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Keystone