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Exponential Results – Using Neuroscience to Help Executives, Leaders, and Divisional Teams Reach Their Full Potential.



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CEOCFO: Ms. Brown, what is the overall idea behind Exponential Results?

Ms. Brown: Leadership development programs that produce exponential results – in other words, removing mental barriers and allowing executives, leaders, and divisional teams to reach their full potential.

CEOCFO: What is the difference between leadership development and executive coaching?

Ms. Brown: The difference between leadership development and business coaching is that business coaching focuses on the strategic and the tactical. The issues, the options, and which one is the best to take based on the coach's experience and knowledge, as well as the situational information available. Conversely, leadership development focuses on looking at behavioral patterns, which is the way our brain works. Our brains operate using behavioral patterns. It comes from Cognitive Neuroscience, which is a subfield of neuroscience that studies the biological processes that underlie human cognition, especially in regard to the relation between brain structures, activity, and cognitive functions. The purpose is to determine how the brain functions and achieves performance. In layman's terms, it is learning your brain's operating system. When you know an operating system well, you can leverage it to create better outcomes.

Over 25 years of being an internal corporate coach and senior leader, I always looked for better and faster ways to develop people and help them achieve dramatic results; to develop abilities and level-up exponentially. What I saw was that the traditional kinds of coaching, methodologies, and programs tend to be slow and produce mediocre results that aren't sustainable. They work at the surface, conscious level of our brains (strategic and tactical, as mentioned before), but once the coach goes away, the results are going to go away too. The results are also limited to whatever the coach has achieved.

I never liked the idea of being limited by those shortcomings, especially when I was looking to take companies much further faster and ascend several levels. Doing something that we had never done before, in the face of big challenges, was a radical idea at the time, but it reflects the new landscape we have today.

CEOCFO: *Do potential clients understand the difference?*

Ms. Brown: It's a mixed bag. There are some who have experienced coaching before in a traditional sense and some who have not. The difference comes when leaders reach the stage of self-awareness - when they start to look inward first to their contribution to things and results instead of looking outward at others and the situation. They start asking questions such as, "What is causing me to continue on the course that I am on, and what caused me to do this instead of that in this situation, as I try to achieve next level, or exponential results?" It's in this new inquiry that leaders realize they need a different kind of coach.

CEOCFO: *When you are taking on a new client, what is a typical engagement and how does the neuroscience part work through the process?*

Ms. Brown: A typical engagement starts with six months of one-on-one work with whichever senior leaders we are talking about in the company. It is usually from the director level (depending on the size of the company) up through the C-suite. They are looking to create exponential results. They want much higher-level results in a much shorter period of time. They could also be looking to develop the skills of successive leaders, because we are seeing that a lot right now in the marketplace. There are many senior leaders who are getting ready to transition out, and their successive leaders are not ready to take the reins, so they need a lot of development.

We've also deployed one-on-one, concurrent team member coaching, which is when we coach all team members at once (though still maintaining the individual sessions). This is most exciting because as you might imagine, when every member is coaching, growing, and developing simultaneously, the biggest, fastest gains occur, catapulting them to greater success.

"I discovered the power of behavioral neuroscience by forcing myself to work on behavioral patterns to achieve something monumental. What I learned was that each one of us has unlimited potential; it is just a matter of finding a way to tap into it." Karen Brown

The neuroscience element helps us identify, in conjunction with the leader, the current behavioral patterns that are being used. We then compare the ensuing results to the desired results, usually discovering a big gap. Then we collaborate to determine the new behavioral pattern that will produce the desired results and use our proprietary system (and mobile app) called Power Pathways Portal to facilitate the change rapidly and permanently.

Examples of behavioral patterns are: delegating too little; being reticent to engage in healthy debate with your team, which is holding back you and the entire team and therefore your results; inadequate performance management of team members, where the leader may see the performance gaps but does not have the necessary conversations and manage them effectively. Think about everything you do in a day and the results it produces; underpinning the results is the behavioral pattern.

CEOCFO: *You mentioned a variety of people at client's organizations. Is it the CEO or someone in HR, who comes to you from a company and how do you assess whether the company or the potential people you are going to coach are a good fit? Can you basically work with anybody?*

Ms. Brown: The person who reaches out to us is usually someone at the top of the sphere of decision-makers, if not the actual top decision-maker. It could be the CHRO, talent development Director, CEO, or CFO. We have noticed that the best decision-makers are usually the ones who can objectively look at the work that is needed. That may not necessarily be the person who is going to engage in the actual work. For example, a CEO who can't see their blind spots would not be the best person to find a coach for themselves. They may not even think they need a coach; someone objective can better fill that role.

Typically, what leaders do is look for someone whom they click with, someone who is similar to them, which is not a winning recipe for highly objective leadership development and coaching. What you want to look for is a coach who is different from you because they will provide different perspectives and will be able to ascertain your behavioral patterns. If you look for a coach similar to you, chances are they have the same blind spots as you, so they will not see and be able to point them out. As a result, your results will be greatly limited.

The good news is that we can work with anybody because all our brains work the same way. This isn't business coaching where you look for someone with specific experience and expertise in your industry.

CEOFCO: *How do you know when someone is right for your program?*

Ms. Brown: We ask two questions to ascertain that. One, on a scale on 1-10, what is the level of willingness to do this work and make changes to get the results they are looking for? If they are not a 9 or 10, we will just say right off the bat that they are probably not a good fit for this program. A high level of desire is needed, because they are working on themselves, their behavioral patterns, and that takes a good deal of work. It is simple, straightforward, but not easy.

If they feel like they are being forced to do it - for example, if HR is pushing for it because they feel that a specific leader needs to substantially improve their performance - that is almost never a good recipe for success because of the resentment the leader might feel. When they get to opt-in willingly and they have a high desire to do the work and make changes to create results, bingo! That is when the engagement is going to be phenomenal.

CEOFCO: *After you have been working with someone for a while, how do you know when it has clicked, and they understand what is needed to accomplish their goals?*

Ms. Brown: When I started the company 10 years ago, along with the methodology from neuroscience, we developed a proprietary system called the Power Pathways Portal, which is a nod to creating new neural pathways of success. In the portal, one of the functions is called Metrics, and we set these up to measure all client goals. When the metric graph shows consistency that a new pattern has been used, it's the indicator of permanent change. At this point we know they aren't going to backslide; rather, they will actually be able to use this new pattern and build on it further.

CEOFCO: *Would you tell us about your people who represent Exponential Results - what do you look for in terms of experience, personality, the ability to connect?*

Ms. Brown: All of our coaches and staff have the same high level, what I like to call "unicorn credentials." It is a blend of previous executive leadership, executive-level leadership coaching certifications, and expertise in behavioral patterns. They may also have HR and Talent Development, as well as clinical or neurolinguistic expertise, which is the science of the words we use and the behavioral patterns they reveal. All of this combines to help them quickly read and identify the behavioral patterns at play with a client. They can subsequently delve into them and help the client change them rapidly to achieve the desired goals and exponential results.

Because all our coaches hold high-level credentials, they are objective and connect well with any personality type, from highly analytical to gregarious and extroverted. Behavior is behavior to us.

CEOFCO: *Why the name change Velocity to Exponential Results?*

Ms. Brown: Originally, 10 years ago, I was focused on Velocity because the scientific methodology is faster and more effective. I wanted to impart that concept immediately to prospective clients. Now our name change is a modernization of a conveyance of the reasons that clients hire us and the results that they experience.

CEOFCO: *How do you reach out and how do people find you if they are looking for help?*

Ms. Brown: This article! We can also be found at www.youexponentialresults.com. We get a lot of referrals and word-of-mouth and sharing organically that way. When your peers notice a behavioral difference, they typically ask and want to know the resource you used. This is our case.

CEOFCO: *What are the one or two things you have learned or may have surprised you as you have gone down this path?*

Ms. Brown: I have learned that human beings are truly capable of any change they desire, any results they are looking to create. It doesn't matter what it is. This comes from the way that I discovered neuroscience 12 years ago. I was in a very challenging CEO position and pursuing a lifelong dream to compete in the Ironman World Championships. I was a super nobody in the triathlete and Ironman world. What I quickly found was that it was 90% mental and only 10% physical, because our bodies will do anything that our brains tell them they can do. It is all a mental game.

In that journey, I discovered the power of behavioral neuroscience by forcing myself to work on behavioral patterns to achieve something monumental. What I learned was that each one of us has unlimited potential; it is just a matter of

finding a way to tap into it. What I have seen over a couple of decades is that working on your behavioral patterns is the best and fastest way to do it.

The thing that has surprised me is the substantial number of self-aware senior leaders clamoring to grow and improve their leadership effectiveness and results.

CEOCFO: *Whether looking for self-improvement or company change, why does Exponential Results stand out from the crowd?*

Ms. Brown: We provide the ability to reach the next level or elevate several levels extremely quickly.