

Chapter 1: Course Introduction

Session Summary:

Welcome to the Principles of Personal Excellence course and training system. We are glad that you made the important decision to take personal performance to the next level.

During this session we will introduce the authors of the course, review the course structure, and provide an overview of the course itself.

By the end of this session you will understand the importance of personal leadership skills. As you work through the course materials you will improve your performance and effectiveness in any “Meaningful Life Arena”

The Principles of Personal Excellence: An Introduction to the Course

Greetings. My name is Dr. Bruce Jackson and it is my great privilege to introduce to you, Dr. R. Christopher Barden. It is our great opportunity to be here with you to discuss one of our favorite subjects: improving human performance!

Your Instructors for the Course

Just a few words of introduction about your instructors and then we’ll get right down to business.

Dr. Bruce H. Jackson

As a practitioner and student of applied human performance technologies, Dr. Jackson is dedicated to the ongoing development of individuals, teams, and organizations.

Searching for the common denominators of performance, Dr. Jackson has worked with young athletes, inner-city children, and Fortune 500 companies alike—recognizing that the principles of excellence and performance are as valid for the aspiring student as well as the well-established CEO.

Dr. Jackson is a certified member of the United States Professional Tennis Association and Professional Ski Instructors of America. He holds a Master’s degree in Counseling Psychology from the Boston University School of Education, a Master’s degree in Business Administration from the University of Minnesota Carlson School of Management, a Master’s degree in Organizational Development from The Fielding Graduate University, a Master’s degree in Public Administration from Harvard University, John F. Kennedy School of Government, and a Ph.D. in Human and Organizational Systems from the Fielding Graduate University where his research

identifies many of the core components and strategies that people use to search for and replicate their “peak experiences.”

Dr. Jackson was the Director for The Center for the Advancement of Leadership at Utah Valley University—a leading organization in the study and practice of youth and adult leadership development. He also directs the C. Charles Jackson Foundation, a national organization focused on promoting leadership, character, and life-skills development for youth throughout the U.S. In addition, Dr. Jackson also serves as the CEO of The Institute of Applied Human Excellence, a training firm dedicated to helping individuals, teams, and organizations find their peak performances through flow.

Dr. Jackson also serves as the CEO of The Institute of Applied Human Excellence, a training firm dedicated to helping individuals, teams, and organizations achieve peak performance. His new book: *Finding Your Flow: How to Identify Your Flow Assets and Liabilities—the Keys to Peak Performance Every Day*—was written to help individuals maximize personal performance.

As writer, speaker, author, consultant, coach, and leadership adventure facilitator, Dr. Jackson’s core interests are to help individuals, teams and organizations seek their highest capacities while fulfilling valued missions.

Dr. Jackson and his wife, Marta, with eleven year-old son, Blake, and seven year-old son, Lucas, currently live in Highland, Utah.

Since the early 1980’s, I have been fascinated by men and women who demonstrate exceptional skills and high performance. What makes them tick? What makes them the best at what they do in contrast to the average person who obtains only mediocre results? This has been my quest during 25 years of study, research and teaching.

R. Christopher Barden

R. Christopher Barden, J.D., Ph.D., LP is a licensed attorney, licensed psychologist, research scientist, speaker, writer and national science-litigation-legislation consultant. He has published in the leading journals and texts in child psychology, social psychology, clinical psychology, psychiatry, surgery, pediatrics, and law. Dr. Barden has helped draft and enact successful national health care reform legislation. As an attorney, Dr. Barden’s clients have received record jury verdicts and a record settlement in complex health care-science litigation. Dr. Barden has been interviewed regarding complex science and legal issues by U.S. Congressional Quarterly, CBS 60 Minutes, ABC NIGHTLINE, the CBS Evening News, TIME Magazine, Newsweek Magazine, U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT Magazine, INSIGHT Magazine, THE NEW YORKER, the L.A. Times, the New York Times, the Chicago Tribune, the Minneapolis Star and Tribune, the St. Paul Pioneer Press, the London BBC, U.S. National Public Radio, ABC NEWS 20/20, National German Television, National Finnish Television, 60 Minutes Australia, Canadian Public Radio, PBS FRONTLINE, NBC DATELINE and many other media sources.

Dr. Barden has held university faculty positions in a graduate science department,

a medical school, and law school. He has given invited national training addresses to the American Psychological Association, the American Psychiatric Association, the American Bar Association, the U.S. Surgeon General's Conference, the International Association of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons and other groups. Dr. Barden has also testified as an expert witness on psychological, scientific and/or legal issues in many states and before several state legislatures. Dr. Barden has also provided training and consultation to state and federal investigators including the F.B.I. the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He has also served as a member of a State Higher Education Coordinating Board (MN), a member of a State Licensing Board of Psychology (MN), and a State Special Assistant Attorney General (UT).

Dr. Barden received his training in psychology from the University of Minnesota, the University of California at Berkeley, and the U.S. Veterans Administration/Stanford University Medical Center. As a result of his research and publishing efforts in the field of psychology, Dr. Barden received several Fellowships from the National Institute of Mental Health and was awarded a national Young Scholar Award from the Foundation for Child Development and a national Faculty Scholar Award from the W. T. Grant Foundation.

After years of psychological research, teaching and clinical work, Dr. Barden turned his attention to legislative, social and public service issues. As the psychologist for the Craniofacial Surgical Teams of the University of Utah School of Medicine and the Humana International Craniofacial Institute, Dr. Barden studied the ways children, families, and adults cope with highly stressful and traumatic situations. Intrigued by the legislative and public policy issues such patients presented, Dr. Barden attended Harvard Law School (J.D., cum laude). With colleagues in law, medicine and public policy, Dr. Barden drafted the Emergency Medical System for Children Act -- model legislation mandating improvements in the emergency medical system for children. This work was published in the Harvard Journal on Legislation. Some version of this legislation has been adopted in more than 20 states.

Following successful efforts to reform the Emergency Medical System for Children, Dr. Barden began systematic efforts to reform the mental health system. Using a five-prong approach of education, regulation, litigation, legislation and prosecution Dr. Barden focused on eliminating dangerous, pseudoscientific notions. Dr. Barden's current projects include reform efforts in the family law, mental health licensing, public education and criminal justice systems.

Dr. Barden is also working with Dr. Bruce H. Jackson on the development of Optimal Performance Systems™ (OPST™), a performance enhancement program for students, athletes and professionals. OPST™ is the result of Dr. Barden's performance consulting work with Harvard Law students, Harvard College students, NBA All-stars, Olympic athletes, surgeons, attorneys, military pilots and business leaders. Dr. Barden has published in, and/or served as an editor or reviewer for, several of the most highly regarded journals and texts in a number of professional fields including Developmental Psychology, Child Development, Psychological Bulletin, Cognitive Therapy and Research, Ambulatory Pediatrics, Advances in Child Clinical Psychology, the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, the Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law, the Journal of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, the Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy, and the Harvard Journal on Legislation.

Before we begin: Some Important Questions

As an introduction to this course, take a moment to think about the many arenas of your life: work, school, home, social, church—even hobbies. Ponder the following questions:

- Are you performing at your very best?
- Are you getting the most out of life and yourself?
- Have you clarified your life missions?
- Can you see yourself as the high performer you were designed to be?
- Are you engaged in the moment?
- Do you enjoy what you do?
- Are you self-confident?
- Do you find happiness in the multiple arenas of your life?
- Are you learning and growing across a wide range of experiences?
- Are you becoming the person you wanted to become?
- Do you have a philosophy of life that will maximize energy, commitment, patience, joy, and gratitude?
- Are you your own best coach?

During this course, you will not only be able to answer these questions—you will be able to master the answers and apply them to your own life.

Whether you want to perform better at work, live a more engaging life, or learn the simple strategies of happiness, *The Principles of Personal Excellence* can help you discover your untapped potential while helping you perform better, even find more flow in your every-day life.

So where does one start in this journey of peak performance? A classic Buddhist saying says much to usher in this journey:

“Though he should conquer a thousand men on the battlefield a thousand times,
he who can conquer himself is the noblest victor.” -- Buddhist saying

Truth be told, any influence or impact one wishes to have upon the world begins in the 6 inches between your ears—your brain. Or as one Olympic Champion said it, “success is 90% mental and the rest is all in your mind”

Think about it, everything that is human progress started within the mind. The first spear, basket, building, every cathedral, pyramid, fighter jet, space shuttle, etc... everything was conceptualized in the mind first, then manifested by our fingers, feet and voice.

All of the great creations began inside someone’s mind -- born of need, will or desire. Thus too will be your formula for success.

During our time together we will cover 26 topics, each designed to give you the building

blocks to perform at your best and succeed within any “Meaningful Life Arena.” Whether you are in sales, medicine, law, education, art, a parent, a newly minted manager or executive, an eager student, or simply a person who wants to tap into your deeper potential, this program will give you the essential tools to maximize personal effectiveness.

Each topic is designed to build on and influence the other—recognizing that any one arena of performance will impact and affect every other arena of performance.

Each session will last an average of 1 hour and 15 minutes and focus on one to three core performance enhancement methods or tools with multiple accompanying concepts and principles.

Each session will include current theory, research, and most importantly, simple tools and strategies to help translate your new insights into daily actions that will foster your personal excellence.

As we begin this program it is important to differentiate between traditional (often pseudo-scientific) psychotherapies and what we will call Performance or Positive Psychology.

Traditional psychology and psychiatry, have long maintained a distinct focus on dealing with problems, deficits, trauma, depression, anxiety, and other issues that keep the individual from reaching a state of optimal functioning. Here we are reminded of such pre-scientific figures as Sigmund Freud and others who convinced the world that endlessly wallowing in the past, searching for “hidden” motives and desires was the gateway to a successful future. These “history focused” methods have proven spectacularly ineffective and even harmful to people who would have been better served by more practical, solution oriented, behavior driven approaches to personal change. Since Freud and other like-minded therapists, new approaches to psychology have focused on more practical strategies—one’s that produce concrete results.

In contrast to deficit-based approaches to psychology more positive and practical strategies for improving the lives of people have been developed. Such strategies include setting goals, modifying thinking patterns, understanding and managing emotions, time maximization, maintaining optimal physical health, and numerous other strategies designed to help individuals “self-actualize” and maximize their lives.

Today instead of thinking back to the time when you didn’t make the swim team or were rejected by a high school sweetheart, a shift in focus might have you visualize your most important life successes or draft a gratitude journal in order to tap into positive emotions and your own best life experiences. These strategies and techniques are known as Positive Psychology, Sport Psychology, Optimal Performance Systems™, Performance Psychology, even flow, because they focus on taking a person from where they are today and helping them maximize their potential tomorrow.

Performance Psychology is used by life's greatest performers: Olympic athletes, fighter pilots, surgeons, astronauts, conductors, chef's, and anybody else looking to gain that competitive edge.

For those intent on raising the bar and wishing to be a high level performer in their own field or domain, the modern, scientific, practical approach to positive and human performance technologies can make a significant difference in your life.

We are all performers. From the professional athlete to the airline pilot, from the salesman to the engineer, from the retail clerk to the teacher, we all are performers. The only difference is the arena.

The fact is: while almost every arena is technically unique (each has a unique knowledge or technical base) when it comes to the principles of personal effectiveness—even peak performance—every arena is similar in nature. This is the grand secret: the notion that personal excellence and success share common and consistent factors available to everyone who wants to discover, learn and apply these principles and master these practices.

As we introduce these principles and practices to you throughout this program, it is important to recognize that desire and awareness are more than half the battle. You must begin your journey to personal excellence with a firm resolve to succeed. Turn on your radar and become intimately aware of what's happening in your inner and outer life. With increased AWARENESS and understanding comes RESOLVE—the resolve to understand and engage in personal excellence. With resolve comes the DECISION—the decision to learn, make change, and to grow. With decision-making comes ACTION—thinking and behaving anew amidst old habits and patterns. With time these new actions produce new RESULTS—results that showcase a new desired end or goal—even new habit patterns that propel you without thought towards your most valuable goals and dreams.

Another way to look at personal transformation and change is to recognize that we first start out in any endeavor as *UNCONSCIOUSLY INCOMPETENT*. Simply said, we don't know what we don't know. Most of us are unconsciously incompetent about most things. Most of us don't know much, if anything, about sub-atomic physics or the circuitry of a computer. Similarly, most of us don't know much about the principles of personal excellence—even our own capacity to find peak performance in every day life.

This is a lot like looking under the hood of a Ferrari—the great Italian sports car. Pondering all of its mechanisms, few people really know how a Ferrari does its thing—or any car whose parts number in the thousands. The fact is, each part has a purpose and works in concert with other parts to create the performance that is Ferrari. Far beyond a car, you are the most intricate performance machine ever created.

As the world's greatest performance machine, with talents, skills, and potential unheard of in any other species on the planet, your potential is often hidden from view and your

awareness.

This program has been very carefully designed to assist you in the process of reaching phase II in the Self-Mastery Model—to move you from being Unconsciously Incompetent to CONSCIOUSLY INCOMPETENT.

This is the great stage of self-awareness! Without this stage change and growth have little chance. Being consciously incompetent means “knowing that you don’t know”, seeing the gap between where you are today and where you want to be tomorrow. Simply said, conscious incompetence is an essential step towards effective insight and personal understanding.

With personal insight, the world is open. Developing awareness and seeing the gaps in one’s potential means making a conscious choice to learn, apply and grow towards one’s potential. As you capture a new insight, a new principle, a new idea, then apply what you have learned in your daily behaviors, attitudes, perspectives, or any other insight or skill, you will then move towards the third phase of personal mastery which is to develop CONSCIOUS COMPETENCE.

Conscious Competence represents learning and acquiring new skills. It is here that you can demonstrate new levels of effectiveness and performance based upon new patterns of thinking and behavior. Like everything else you have learned in your life, learning the principles of personal excellence begins with awareness, is strengthened through learning and practice, and ends in the next great phase of developing UNCONSCIOUS COMPETENCE.

In this final phase of personal excellence you are now in synch with your new skill. It is something that you do automatically. It has moved from a simple intention to a lasting virtue. You become “one” with excellence.

All of us are unconsciously competent in dozens of things: brushing our teeth, driving our cars, getting dressed, or typing a memo. Such is the case with master musicians, assembly line workers—even our daily rituals for getting dressed. These are simply the habits that form over time and through repetition. The essential question is: are you a slave to your good habits or your bad habits?

Through this program we will guide you through more than two dozen insights and skill-sets that will give you the essential skills used by high performers to maximize their effectiveness and potential.

Whatever insights you gain and utilize in one Meaningful Life Arena can be transferred to other Meaningful Life Arenas. This is a valuable insight. What you practice in one arena you can practice in another. Success builds upon success. It is a self-perpetuating phenomenon.

Like any other educational program, your success will depend upon your commitment

and your thoughtful participation in the course.

Each session is built upon previous sessions. However, you should not feel constrained should you choose to review sessions in a different order. Please take 10 minutes now to review the course summary and syllabus.

How the Principles of Personal Excellence Program is organized:

Through your study of the course summary and syllabus you will notice that course elements will include the following:

- Course readings (assigned books and/or PDF articles)
- Course video and audio content
- Course exercises (MS Word or PDF documents to fill out)
- Course exams
- Additional readings (for the dedicated student)

Throughout this course, you will be building your own performance portfolio. This portfolio will be a “living and breathing” collection that you can use throughout your life to reference and update as needed. Just like any country or organization is founded with several core documents in place, so too will be the building of your new high-performance life. At any time you can amend or change these documents, but they are designed to serve you and direct your energies in the direction of your most profound values and goals.

The Principles of Personal Excellence course is designed to give you a significant competitive advantage in life. Few people study these principles in any depth nor know how to use them effectively. By making the commitment to mastering the principles and practices of this program you will set yourself apart and discover your full potential.

We will be on this journey together so enjoy the ride. The great philosopher Lao Tzu said, “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step” and so does the formula for personal change.

Enjoy the process, take each concept in stride, and watch as you begin to from this exciting process as the performer you were designed to be.

Please begin Session 2.