

# Consistent Performance Excellence<sup>SM</sup>

All organizations want to maximize results. These include meeting all customer needs within each line of business and optimizing customer satisfaction/the customer experience. By doing so, the bottom line will be significantly enhanced.

In order to do so, organizations must achieve Consistent Performance Excellence in areas where results depend upon superior and differentiating people-based ethical needs met, value-added service, and ethical management.

However, Consistent Performance Excellence has been, for the most part, an elusive and unrealized dream.

Inconsistency is the bane of performance excellence, and can also cause compliance problems.

Historically, traditional attempts at creating consistency have been ineffective, especially within larger and/or more complex organizations.

In a world that is becoming increasingly digital...and will continue to do so along with burgeoning artificial intelligence...the use of live representatives must be proven to be value-added and cost-effective.

Consistent Performance Excellence is the conceptual solution, and when fully realized, it will unquestionably be a positive marketplace differentiator, and may be the only significant antidote to a significant reduction of live representatives.

In fact, many organizations are currently and quite consistently talking about their representatives becoming “trusted advisors” as the value-added rationale for their existence. However, this is not a new concept as at some companies it is decades old. The challenge is not in the concept, which is clearly righteous. The challenge is a significant lack of executional excellence with respect to converting average representatives into A-level trusted advisors.

Furthermore, those organizations have focused on creating ethical needs met cultures, value-added service cultures, efficiency cultures, etc. We believe targeting individual cultural changes is a mistake. Instead, we believe there needs to be an overarching concept so as to achieve success in all of these initiatives.

Therefore, we strongly recommend what needs to be established is a *Consistent Performance Excellence Culture*. Once this is established, it can be directed at individual cultural initiatives such as ethical needs met and value-added service, and positively impact the desired specific cultural and/or behavioral skills improvements.

The bottom line is that Consistent Performance Excellence is necessary to rapidly and fully realize a company's vision and become “uncatchably first” against all competitors...not just now, but continuously into the future as well.

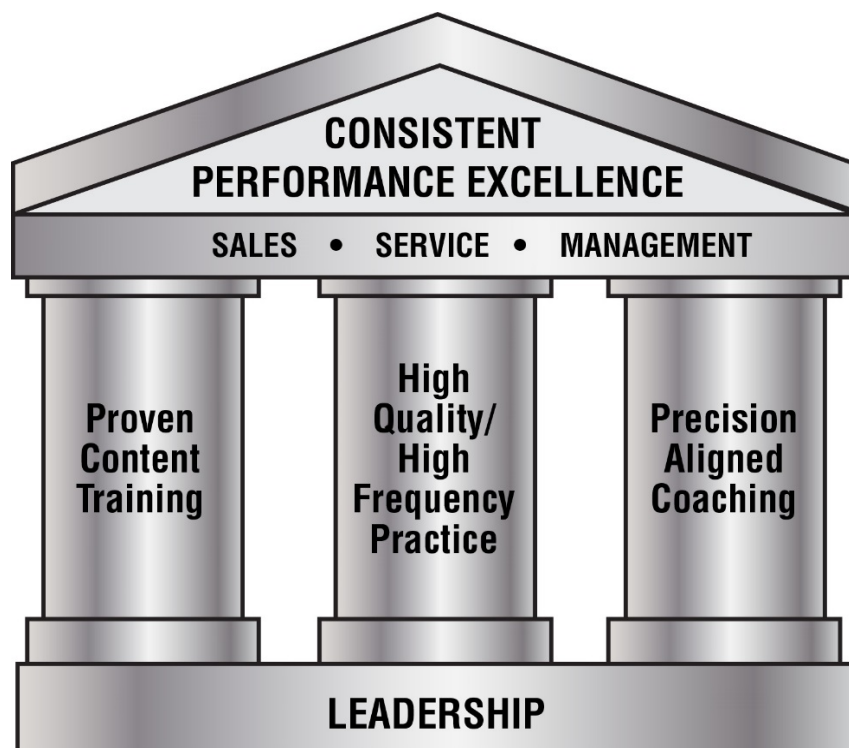


Cohen Brown's definitive solution to creating a Consistent Performance Excellence Culture is called The Three Pillars of Consistent Performance Excellence<sup>SM</sup>. The Three Pillars are:

1. Proven Content Training
2. High-Quality/High-Frequency Practice
3. Precision Aligned Coaching

These Three Pillars are embedded in a solid Leadership foundation, which consists of proven leadership protocols, techniques, and methodologies.

## The Three Pillars of Consistent Performance Excellence<sup>SM</sup>



***Important Note: Everything that now follows must be only ethical and appropriate.***

Each of the Three Pillars of Consistent Performance Excellence (Three Pillars of CPE) applies to ethical needs met, value-added service, and ethical management, operates synergistically rather than independently, and is absolutely essential for maximizing any desired results that involve the following three activities:

1. Verbal interactions (including ethical needs met, value-added service, and ethical management-related conversations)
2. Industry acumen (recommendations/options and the rationale behind those recommendations/options)
3. Consistent protocol implementation (protocols are the equivalent of “plays” in sports)

When representatives have mastered verbal interactions, industry acumen, and consistent protocol implementation, their confidence, engagement, and job satisfaction soar...along with performance results.

*We absolutely believe that without world-standard implementation of the Three Pillars of CPE, operating at maximum levels, it is virtually impossible to create Consistent Performance Excellence.*

This has been proven in sports, the performing arts, etc.

## **Proven Content Training**

### *Proven Content*

Words matter. Word patterns matter.

If words and word patterns did not matter, the entire marketing and advertising industry would be disbanded.

Therefore, the words that come out of representatives' mouths should be treated with the same importance as the words that appear in advertising copy, on television, on the radio, and through all social media outlets.

When the right “words/word patterns” are not used, we have seen consistent and chronic underperformance.

There has been an overall failure of “needs analyses or assessment” in most organizations to produce significant increases in customer and employee needs met. The reason is that the needs analyses that most people are using are flawed...typically overwritten, overly long, confusing to both customers and employees, and disliked...basically managers/coaches and representatives do them by rote and fill out even digital fields like a checklist.

The same goes for their responses to life events and clues, which rarely produce incremental customer or employee needs met.



Furthermore, understanding that all Three Pillars are synergistic, there is simply no value in perfectly training, practicing, and coaching the *wrong* content! In fact, *this will make things worse* as it will solidify and “make permanent” the wrong/ineffective verbal communications. In a nutshell, it “institutionalizes” mediocrity...or worse, underperformance.

Therefore, for training, practicing, and coaching to be effective, they must be utilized with Proven Content...defined as those verbal skills that have consistently engendered the best possible responses from customers in the real world...and those which will resonate most powerfully with the representatives who are expected to implement with customers.

Proven Content also applies to industry acumen. It is critical that representatives have the right responses and rationales to customers’ questions. For example, at the end of a needs analysis, representatives should be able to respond effectively and fluently to, “Now that you know about my needs (with specifics), what do you recommend...and why?”

Likewise, if a customer mentions any life or organizational event, the representative should be able to fluently and confidently deliver the correct response including “why.”

Proven Content is not every representative “doing their own thing”/using “common sense” (what they are currently using is their highest level of common sense!). Doing their own thing typically leads to inconsistency and “content and brand anarchy,” which oftentimes results in “wrong/ineffective responses.”

Especially in a world of increased compliance, it is essential that all representatives have a core consistency in communicating with customers that will pass any compliance scrutiny.

Furthermore, Proven Content is dynamic rather than static because as “newer/better” proven best practices are discovered from marketplace “test and learn,” *the training must immediately be modified* to provide representatives with the best content at any point in time.

Additionally, Proven Content includes all protocols that representatives should be implementing with customers, as well as all protocols that managers should be utilizing with representatives and between managers. They should become second nature and implemented as prescribed.

Protocols can be viewed as the equivalent of “plays” in sports.

But, *proven* protocols, just like proven words/word patterns, are key. This is the same in sports where some teams have better plays than others.

Sadly, oftentimes, when protocols have been established in organizations, they become “cemented” into the organization rather than continuously evolving into superior protocols.

But what about empowering representatives to come up with their own content/“scripts”? This is a very common notion that is in fact a significant mistake as it almost *guarantees inconsistency and underperformance*.

Once a proven best practice is discovered, it should become non-negotiable and scaled throughout an organization (within the appropriate job family).

For example, let us say pilots discover the best way to land an airliner in a serious storm...and this methodology has been proven time and time again to achieve the best outcomes. Why would anyone think it's better to allow each pilot to "do their own thing" rather than implementing what has been *proven* to drive the highest likelihood of success?

To be clear, empowerment and opportunity/problem-solving meetings are very important in order to develop potentially powerful new content that will be proven most effective when used in real-world environments. However, once the "right response/solution" is "proven," using this response/solution should become a way of life...at least until even better content is developed.

This is especially true when it is clear that the response/solution is unquestionably in the best interest of customers. That is, when an organization discovers what works best with customers and/or what customers like, the organization's representatives should not have the right to "do their own thing" because "their own thing" feels more comfortable.

The solution to *increasing comfort and confidence* with activities that initially feel uncomfortable to representatives is...Practice and Precision Aligned Coaching (once Proven Content Training has already been delivered).

But, don't people "hate" to just "read/deliver scripts" as it makes them feel rote and robotic? Absolutely correct.

That is why ProPractice (also known as Skill Builder) and Trusted Advisor (TA) do not require representatives to use precise scripts. Instead, they use "Key Elements" of Proven Content scripts, and then they wrap their own personalities and styles around those Key Elements. This has proven successful not only with customers, but in virtually eliminating "robotic" feelings in representatives.

Furthermore, unless one is a professional "actor," representatives cannot memorize scripts word for word anyway.

Proven Content is created by the following:

1. Proven Content from pre-existing experience that works better than anything else. Sadly, most organizations typically squander Proven Best Practices because they do not correctly gather them, deconstruct them into teachable user-friendly pieces, and/or scale them, practice them, and/or coach them.

There is an art and science to gathering and packaging "verbal" Proven Best Practices, but most organizations are unsuccessful at doing so. Cohen Brown has a unique and proven methodology for converting "competency-based" methodologies from the most productive representatives, so that they are "teachable" to the rest of the organization. This is because of ProPractice and TA. This also applies to proven best practices from leaders, managers, and coaches.

2. Proven Content that originates externally from other sources. These can be from Cohen Brown (we have the largest source of verbal Proven Best Practices), from competitors, etc.

3. Workshops and/or clinics within a company that create new content. However, as this content has not been used in the real world, it is not yet “Proven Content.” Therefore, it should be piloted and/or launched with a “test and learn” mentality. That is, if it drives the results that are desired...and it can be scalably used by the vast majority of representatives, rather than just only an elite few, then it truly becomes Proven Content.

This would include “scripting” from the product or marketing department. Unfortunately, at most companies, these scripts are written from an “ivory tower” point of view and are not the most effective approaches with customers...and are often “too academic” for representatives.

### *Proven Content Training*

Additionally, simply having Proven Content is not enough. There must be Proven Content *Training*, which means that the training methodology must also be proven and the best of the best.

There is no question that traditional training...live presenters, video presentations, digital presentations, workshops, etc...does have an impact. However, traditional training, in and of itself, rarely changes and/or embeds verbal behaviors at A+ levels.

For example, live presenters can provide powerful context, motivation, and insights into why people should be implementing what they are learning. However, verbalizing scripts from “the stage” or merely handing out scripts in workbooks rarely changes verbal behaviors significantly and/or in any lasting way. The same can be said for video and digital presentations.

Just to clarify, these methodologies are excellent to create context, motivation, and insights, but not embedded behavioral changes.

Furthermore, role models in and of themselves...be they live or by video...do not actually provide precise training. They provide “directionally correct training,” so that people get an overview of what they are ideally supposed to say/ask/do. Unfortunately, when you then watch the subsequent implementation of what was “learned” by watching/hearing what was role-modeled, inconsistency usually runs rampant and executional excellence becomes further diluted as time passes. Watching role models, in and of itself, does not build habits.

Workshops can also create context, motivation, insights...*and*...potentially powerful content. But again, knowing what is right to do is worlds away from being able to do so on a consistent basis.

Therefore, these preceding approaches to Proven Content Training are at best *precursors* to true mastery, embedding, and habit formation, which is necessary to create CPE.

The bottom line is that it is a *huge* leap of faith to believe that when people see/hear what they are supposed to do, it automatically converts into superior verbal behavioral change. It would be like believing that watching a video of how to correctly tap dance will assure first prize at a tap dancing contest.

The solution to Proven Content Training is the Three Pillars of CPE Model, which has been proven for centuries as it is the basic “apprentice model.” It consists of four steps.

Step 1: The “student” gets an overview of what they have to learn to do...verbally and/or in writing. (Proven Content Training)

Step 2: The “trainer/teacher” role-models what excellence looks like and helps the student focus upon the “key elements” of what has been role-modeled. (Proven Content Training)

Step 3: The student “tries out/demonstrates” the new behavior(s)...initially and then via ongoing practice. (High-Quality/High-Frequency Practice)

Step 4: The student gets feedback about their performance...and how to improve it. (Precision Aligned Coaching)

Steps 1–4 are repeated...with Step 3, Practice, being vital...but unfortunately it is the step that is virtually non-existent with respect to verbal behaviors within the majority of industries.

The apprentice model is the primary learning model in sports, performing arts, etc.

Any training model for verbal skills that does not include Steps 1 through 4 will *not* maximize outcomes.

Our Proven Content Training solution for verbal interactions is ProPractice, and for industry acumen and protocol mastery it is Trusted Advisor.

Note: ProPractice and TA literally deliver the four steps of the apprentice model within each Module.

ProPractice and TA also provide the only proven software-based, automated practice methodology. That is, ProPractice and TA are not merely reinforcement tools, but they are actually teaching tools as well.

Of course, prior to Step 1 above, the “student” needs to be provided with engaging context and insights so that what will be asked of them makes sense...and so that they are motivated to *want* to learn and then implement what they have been taught in the real world. This is where traditional lecturers/facilitators have unquestionable value. But, again, unless this is followed by the apprentice model, the probabilities of mastering and embedding new or modified verbal skills on a consistent basis are very low. Furthermore, ProPractice and TA are readily available 24/7 on PCs and most remote devices, whereas “live providers” are not.

Additionally, this critical initial “messaging” can also be delivered via video...which can be embedded at the beginning of ProPractice and TA Modules.

Furthermore, LCMX, our patented software engine that creates ProPractice and TA Modules *in under an hour*, is also capable of immediate modification as superior/improved Proven Content is discovered/developed. Therefore, improved Proven Content Training can be delivered virtually immediately.



## High-Quality/High-Frequency Practice

*Consistent Performance Excellence can only exist as a cultural imperative. It is not a flavor of the month. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary to have a world-class performance culture. However, without a world-class, high-quality/high-frequency practice culture, the desired performance culture cannot exist. The evidence in sports and the performing arts is irrefutable.*

ProPractice and TA assure quality practice, and these patented methodologies are the only ones that have proven effective in organizations worldwide.

Only habits assure consistency, fluency, and second-nature confidence. Top-performing athletes and entertainers know this.

Habits are not built by trying something “a couple of times” and then expecting to be a master of a particular skill.

The only way to develop habits is to practice at high quality and high frequency.

Role-play practice, in the mirror practice, “mumbling” written scripts, flash-card practice (hard copies or automated), live or video role models, and other attempts at practice software have proven *ineffective* in the majority of industries with respect to creating Consistent Performance Excellence.

Only ProPractice and TA have proven effective in building high-performance verbal habits, scalable industry acumen, and embedded protocols.

To maximize performance outcomes, High-Quality/High-Frequency Practice must be integrated with Proven Content Training and Precision Aligned Coaching.

Furthermore, just like in every great endeavor that requires practice, it needs to be scheduled rather than just telling representatives, “Be sure to practice when you find the time.”

## Precision Aligned Coaching<sup>SM</sup>

Every organization has a coaching program...or even multiple coaching programs. However, few organizations have a coaching program that actually impacts performance. In fact, most organizations’ coaching programs are 50% or more “psychotherapy” and are usually “general,” rather than precise and specific with respect to verbal skills, industry acumen, and/or protocol embedding.

Precision Aligned Coaching (PAC) is skill-focused coaching that is virtually identical to what is done in sports and performing arts.

When a golfer’s grip is off, a golf coach provides PAC and literally discusses and demonstrates the proper grip.

When a cello student does not correctly use the bow, the cello teacher/coach literally discusses and demonstrates the correct way to do so.



With respect to PAC, the “coach” literally discusses and demonstrates the correct verbal communication patterns, recommendations/options, and/or protocol descriptions that would remedy the underperformance...rather than discussing generalities or asking the “person being coached,” “What do you think?”

Of course there is room for “What do you think?”, but typically, if the representative, athlete, or performer knew how to do better, they would already be doing better.

PAC is the only way to scale-change behavioral skills from a coaching point of view, especially across a large footprint.

Because of the framework and design of ProPractice and Trusted Advisor, they already incorporate Proven Content Training, High-Quality/High-Frequency Practice, and Precision Aligned Coaching together in one complete turnkey package.

Because PAC is built into the Model and scoring process within ProPractice and TA, it makes just about anyone capable of being effective at PAC...including allowing the users to coach themselves.

## **Leadership**

Finally, nothing happens without great leadership.

Leadership includes, but is not limited to, visions, goals, plans, actions, results-tracking, follow-up and feedback, general coaching, motivation, resource management, and relationship management, which includes clearly communicating the foregoing.

Nothing sustains without great leadership. There are no perpetual motion machines and Newton’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Law of Thermodynamics guarantees that without continuous energy input, systems regress to entropy.

Therefore, the Three Pillars of CPE must solidly sit within the company’s current or improved leadership framework.

Furthermore, as the Three Pillars of CPE are unique to Cohen Brown, we also provide a custom-tailored launch and embedding blueprint.

## **The Three Pillars Loop**

Ultimately, the Three Pillars of Proven Content Training, High-Quality/High-Frequency Practice, and Precision Aligned Coaching should continuously loop with each other to maximize results.

The only caveat is that once the initial Proven Content Training is launched, and the content does *not* need modification, then the “Loop” is just between High-Quality/High-Frequency Practice and Precision Aligned Coaching.

## **Conclusion**

The Three Pillars of CPE are the only effective way to assure organizations develop a Consistent Performance Excellence Culture.

