



“ASK ROPELLA - THE HEADHUNTER”

Prepare for Victory: Mental Exercise is the Key to Success by Patrick B. Ropella

Q. We are ramping up for an eventful year and I want to help my employees prepare. Is there anything I can do to ensure they perform at their peak?

A. Achieving peak performance means becoming mentally fit. Make sure your employees are ready for the challenge by preparing them mentally, just as you would prepare them physically if you were training them for a marathon. Encourage them to exercise the following traits:

- Maintain exceptional concentration. Peak performers' focus on what they want to happen, not what they are afraid will happen.
- Remain relaxed despite outside factors. High achievers quickly recover their balance in the face of stressful circumstances.
- Learn quickly. Top performers welcome feedback and integrate it rather than getting defensive.
- Make goals that include personal value. Greater fulfillment is obtained by people who choose clear, inspiring, and personally meaningful objectives.

Q. Sometimes I find work to be very stressful and find myself getting upset and frustrated. Do you have any advice on how to manage work stress?

A. When you become frustrated, angry, or upset, you are exhibiting an innate Fight or Flight Response. The response was designed to protect you from bodily harm, but concentration is difficult when you are stuck in this survival mode. Regain a focused, relaxed, positive attitude in three easy steps:

1. Acknowledge that you are in survival mode. When you become conscious of the state you are in, you have an easier time getting out of it.
2. Actively elicit a relaxation response. Use exercise, deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, or yoga to calm yourself.
3. Find a new perspective. Think about your best outcome, action steps, or helpful qualities to diffuse the situation.

Patrick B. Ropella is president & CEO of Ropella & Associates, an international executive search and consulting firm based in Milton that specializes in working with the world's largest corporations. For more information on taking charge of your career, visit www.ropella.com, Ropella@AskRopella.com or call Patrick Ropella at (850) 983-4777.

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