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AQ-Performance & Productivity Studies
By Dr. Paul G. Stoltz

AQ—Predicting & Improving Productivity, Performance, & Retention

Research on the Adversity Quotient® shows it to be a global predictor of individual, team, and organizational success, based on a broad array of critical metrics that measure and define success. Below are highlights of three studies from more than 1,500 conducted at more than 150 universities and organizations over the past 40 years. These selected studies most directly highlight both AQ's predictive strength and the measurable gains in Productivity, Performance, and Retention, across diverse populations, that result from AQ training principles and tools

ADC Telecommunications—Productivity & Retention

Purpose: During a time of economic uncertainty and a weak economy, ADC Telecommunications wanted to determine what, if any effect AQ training would have on their two most critical metrics of success, Productivity and Retention. Their goal was to dramatically improve "productive retention", defined as keeping more of the most productive people.

Sample: 237 global sales leaders across a range of cultures, countries, languages, ages and educational levels.

- Age range 24-59
- 61 percent male

Group A—Those individuals who attended and completed an AQ training program, with pre and post AQ assessments.

Group B—Those individuals who had their AQs assessed, but were offered no knowledge of AQ and no exposure to AQ training.

Productivity was defined as the number of calls made, number of appointments made, and actual sales made. Productivity was compared to both prior years and compared to "control groups" who did not go through AQ training.

Retention was defined as one's likelihood of leaving, as well as whether or not one stayed on the job, compared to others in the control group, and to prior time periods.

Important Findings:
- The study was conducted during economically adverse times, when the entire industry suffered. Group B's productivity dropped during this period.
- However, those who completed the AQ training improved productivity (calls made, appointments made, which have been proven to affect results) by an average of 47 percent.
- Those who completed AQ training (Group A) therefore ended up 61 percent more productive than their non-AQ-trained counterparts (Group B).
- Those who completed AQ training (Group A) rose from moderate performing (just below quota) to 230 and 147 percent above quota in the two ensuing years after AQ training.
- Group B averaged 7 percent below sales quota for the same economically challenging period.

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DirecTV—Productivity, Performance, & Engagement

Purpose: The purpose of this study, conducted across five call centers in the US was to 1) determine what if any correlation there is between productivity and engagement with AQ, and 2) determine what if any comparative change in productivity and engagement occurred after the AQ training. The "control group" was the two call centers, with very similar populations, not included in the AQ training.

Sample:

- 753 individuals, 59 percent female.
- Age range 19-63.
- 9 percent had English as a second language (mostly Hispanic, serving the Los Angeles area).

Group A—Those individuals who attended and completed an AQ training program, with pre and post AQ assessments.

Group B—Those individuals who had their AQs assessed, but were offered no knowledge of AQ and no exposure to AQ training.

Productivity—How many calls one makes per hour, per day, and per week.

Performance—Customer satisfaction ratings, based on the call center representative's ability to handle their demands/needs.

Engagement—A yearly assessment conducted by HR to determine individual, team, and site-level engagement at work.

CORE—AQ has four dimensions that describe your pattern of response to adversity: Control, Ownership, Reach, and Endurance.

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DirecTV—cont'd

Important Findings:

AQ (and CORE) predict productivity—statistically significant correlations with call volume
- AQ—.73 (very high)
- CORE—.59, .69, .45, .61 respectively
- Those in the top quartile of AQ had more than double the daily call volume of those in the bottom quartile (109 versus 51)

AQ (and CORE) predict performance—statistically significant correlations with customer satisfaction
- AQ—.75 (very high)
- CORE—.61, .49, .38, .42 respectively
- Those in the top quartile of AQ had the highest, and those in the bottom quartile of AQ had the lowest customer satisfaction scores (4.7 versus 2.3 overall)

AQ predicts engagement—statistically significant correlations with engagement metrics/scores
- AQ—.81 (very high)
- Those in the top quartile of AQ were twice as engaged, overall, then those in the bottom quartile (4.6 versus 2.15)

Post AQ Training:

The DirecTV study showed a dramatic increase in productivity, performance, and engagement for those who attended the AQ training.
- Average productivity improved 38 percent for Group A versus no change for Group B (resulting in tens of millions of dollars worth of customer retention, etc.)
- Average customer satisfaction (performance) scores improved 42 percent from Group A, versus a 9 percent decline in Group B (both were given the added metric of "handle time," forcing them to terminate calls sooner)
- Average engagement level improved for Group A from 3.1 to 4.2 (five point scale) or "partially" to "fully" engaged for Group A, versus a slight drop 3.1 to 3.0 in Group B, during the same period.

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Olympic Athletes—Swimmer Study

Sample:
- 37 swimmers competing for Olympic team

Protocol and Important Findings:
- Coaches were asked to guess how well their athletes would deal with a big disappointment/setback
- Coaches were wrong 74.6 percent of the time
- Measured the swimmers' AQs.
- Timed swimmers on their best stroke.
- Round One—Added 1.2 seconds to their time. Asked them to swim again (after a rest)
- Round Two—Swam again. With the exception of one swimmer, those with the higher AQs swam faster after the setback. Those with lower AQs (bottom quartile) did worse.
- Put them through an afternoon AQ program. AQs measurably improved (tested twice after training, with reliability of .91) by 9-23 percent.
- Repeated the earlier test. 83 percent improved *both* their setback gap and their overall time, after their AQs improved.

Notes:
- Study conducted with/by graduate student
- Sample size too small for publication

Paul G. Stoltz, PhD.
Founder and Chief Executive Officer

Dr. Paul G. Stoltz is considered the world's pre-eminent thought leader on the science of Mindset. He is author of four international bestselling books on the subject—printed in 14 languages—was voted by *HR Magazine* as "One of the Top 10 most influential global thinkers," and by *Executive Excellence* as "One of the 100 Most Influential Thinkers of Our Time."

Dr. Stoltz guest lectures for the Harvard Business School Executive Education program. HBS incorporates Dr. Stoltz's AQ theory and methods into its prestigious executive development and MBA programs. Dr. Stoltz has been a featured blogger and author for the *Harvard Business Review*. Today, AQ—or Adversity Quotient—is the most widely adopted method of its kind in the world, currently in use by industry-leading companies and many governments across the globe.

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Keynote programs provide the sizzle and have their place. However, a comprehensive learning program needs to embed new behaviors and thought processes into your corporate culture and hold people accountable to make certain that positive change sticks. An expert at BigSpeak Consulting partners with you to customize a learning program specifically designed to fit your needs. Together, we construct the path to success, aligning it with your core business strategies and budget. Partnering with BigSpeak Consulting gives you the edge, ensuring successful implementation of custom corporate education programs.

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