

The Edge in Excellence... For Business, Athletics, Military and now Education

APEX Performance, Inc. (www.apexperform.com) moved to the Ballantyne Corporate Park in January 2006 bringing a new concept in leadership development to Charlotte. It began nearly 20 years ago at the United States Military Academy where then Colonel Louis Csoka, PhD had an idea to enhance military and athletic performance by impacting what he calls “core inner competencies.” After an executive career in the U.S. and London, Dr. Csoka adapted the program for corporate leadership training at a Fortune 500 company where the CEO and over 130 of its top personnel experienced peak performance training.

Fred Rockwood, then CEO of Hillenbrand Industries, in a taped interview states “I am convinced I don’t know what I would have done without this experience and training” referring to a specific high stress point of a major acquisition. Another executive stated “the science behind the Peak Performance Center validated and provided measurable results that years of personal coaching could not. It made it ‘real’.”

APEX Performance, Inc. was established in 2005 to take Dr. Csoka’s program to a broader audience. Dr. Csoka has joined with his partners, Brian Hackett and Paul Maggiano who have relocated to the Charlotte area. Dr. Csoka and Paul Maggiano are both West Point graduates where Dr. Csoka founded the Center for Enhanced Performance and Paul utilized the Center as the Strength Trainer for the Army Lacrosse team. After serving in the Army as a Blackhawk helicopter pilot, Paul most recently worked as a VP of Business Development for a manufacturing company. Brian has over 25 years experience in HR research, management consulting, and executive education. Brian also runs The Leadership Network which is a network of senior executives who share best practices in face-to-face, confidential roundtable forums.

Since opening last year, some of APEX’s clients include individuals or groups from the following organizations: Eastern Management Development Center (Federal Executive Institute and Management Development Center); Schneider, Inc.; Cornell International, an Adecco Company; MBIA Asset Management; Corning, Inc; Janus Capital; National Gypsum; Texas Instruments; Bausch & Lomb; and Assurant, Inc.

What separates good performers from consistently great performers? Dr. Csoka says, “Our unique approach uses advanced performance feedback technologies combined with individualized coaching, providing measurable improvements and eventually sustained peak performance.” Those who have experienced the training understand that you have to see and ‘feel’ the difference in order to fully appreciate it. Paul Maggiano adds “Until now, there was no systematic and scientific method to teach these competencies. The great athletes and executives have developed these inner skills through various genetic and experiential means. What we have is a way to train and measure them regardless of the performance situation.”

Dr. Csoka says they deliver results on the core of leadership: self awareness confidence, mental agility and composure. Maggiano expands by saying, “Many organizations use

360 degree feedback assessments for self awareness and they are certainly good tools. However, a 360 really deals with perception awareness as opposed to providing an understanding of underlying physiological and mental responses. The APEX program uses technology that provides the ultimate in self awareness which is the first step toward adapting and controlling one's thoughts and emotional responses to any situation."

In addition to marketing to executives for leadership development and athletes for performance enhancement, the company is also seeking funding for a foundation that will run a pilot program to work with middle school and high school children. Brian Hackett explains: "One of Louis' passions has been to improve the educational experience of children to better prepare them for the future. Imagine what tomorrow's leaders would be like if you could teach today's youth how to focus better and deal with stress and pressure without the use of medication. It is very powerful when you consider the possibilities and we want an opportunity to show the world how it will work."