

HOW TO OWN YOUR DEVELOPMENT

FINDING POSITIVE STRETCH

The most effective people are masters at the science of positive stretch or challenge – they stretch themselves, their colleagues and the organization at multiple levels. They push the boundaries of thinking and possibility, looking for innovative ways of doing things to achieve the organization’s goals, whilst at the same time strengthening their own performance and learning. However, in order to stretch yourself positively, you first need to know the extent to which your current activities/tasks are currently challenging you.

Once you have mapped these, you can focus your efforts on stretching in areas of strength (i.e. areas that naturally energize you and provide the greatest scope for challenge and growth) rather than areas of weakness. The aim is to move beyond your comfort zone and acquire new skills and experience to take your performance to the next level. Like an Olympic athlete or virtuoso musician, the aim is to ensure you are continuously improving and delivering better results through growing in areas which already energize you.

Using the diagram on the next page, identify:

1-2 AREAS OF YOUR ROLE WHERE YOU THINK YOU ARE IN THE “COMFORT ZONE”.

This zone is the one where the activity/task feels easy, straightforward and comfortable, almost second nature or automatic.

1-2 AREAS OF YOUR CURRENT ROLE WHERE YOU ARE IN THE “ZONE OF STRETCH AND PEAK PERFORMANCE”.

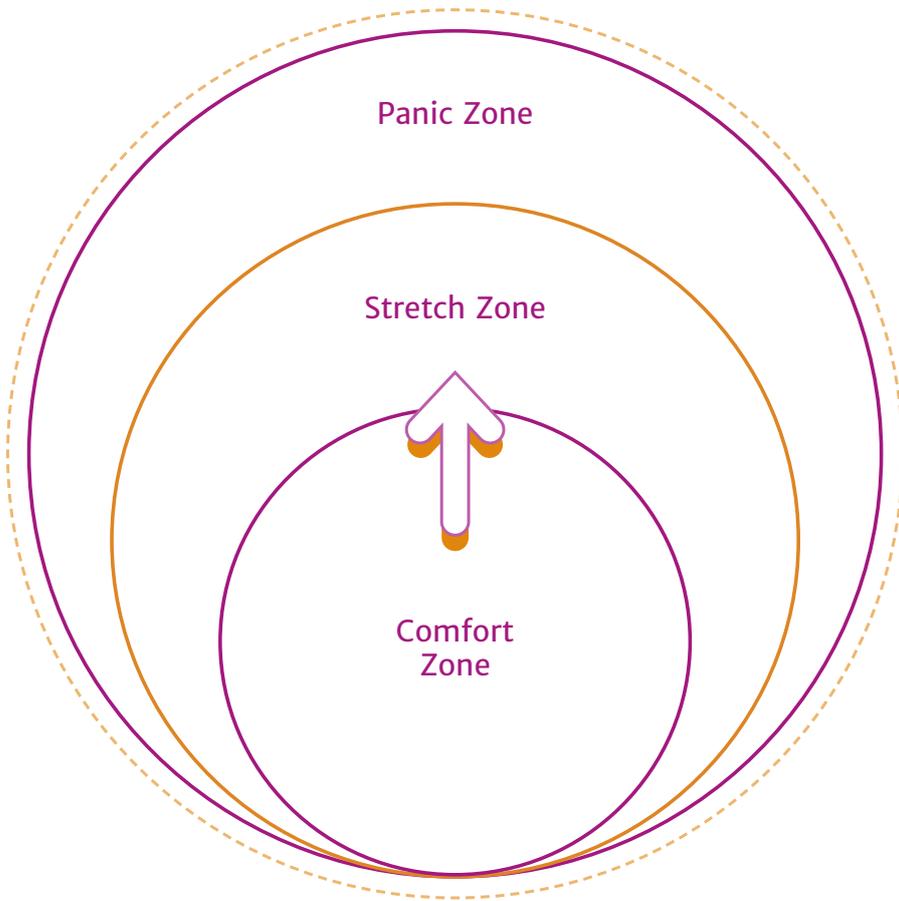
Activities/tasks in this zone feel challenging and require you to operate at the limits of your skill, knowledge and expertise to deliver effective performance.

1-2 AREAS OF YOUR CURRENT ROLE WHERE YOU ARE IN THE “PANIC & BURNOUT ZONE”.

In this zone, you feel you haven’t got the skills and experience to perform effectively. You feel out of your depth and negatively stressed having to perform these activities/tasks.



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Activities/tasks in the Panic Zone

Activities/tasks in the Stretch Zone

Activities/tasks in the Comfort Zone

Now, lets explore these in more detail:

1

In which areas have you grown 'comfortable'?

Why has this happened?

What are the risks of staying where you are?

2

How can you move these parts of your role into the zone of stretch and peak performance?

What are the benefits?

3

What skills and techniques will you need to practise to expand out the zone of stretch and peak performance?

What challenging assignments/projects or other development opportunities will help you to acquire these skills?
