

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE 4 ELEMENTS OF IDENTITY STRUCTURE™

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SUMMARY: Structure determines performance. Identity structure refers to the wholeness of the individual. It reflects the ways in which a person organizes and categorizes different aspects of their identity, such as their personal traits, beliefs, and experiences, into a coherent and meaningful whole. This structure can influence a person's behavior, attitudes, and interactions with others, and can change over time as a person's experiences and self-understanding evolve.



STRUCTURE DETERMINES PERFORMANCE

The adage “structure determines performance” is an essential principle that applies to individuals, businesses, and organizations alike. The structure refers to the arrangement of resources, processes, and systems that determine how efficiently and effectively an entity performs its tasks. Therefore, a well-structured entity is likely to perform better than one that lacks a coherent system.

One of the most relatable examples of how structure determines performance is the story of Jill, a new vice president with a passion for people. Jill had always been an exceptional leader, recognized by her direct reports, peers and leaders as such. In fact, it is the reason she is climbing the ranks. However, when she became a vice president, her performance began to decline, and she struggled to maintain the level of leadership which she was known for. Jill's initial assumption was that the rigors of being a new vice president, the meetings, the competing demands of her time, and long workdays were the cause of her decline in performance. However, after much reflection, she realized that her routine was to blame.

Before becoming a vice president, Jill had a structured development routine that she followed religiously. She would wake up at 5 am every day, taking time first thing for personal development which included reading, meditating, and exercising. She always had a healthy breakfast and prepared herself mentally and physically for the day ahead. Additionally, she had an intentional schedule for engaging in growth and development. This included a mentor who provided her with regular feedback on her performance. However, when she became a vice president, her routine was disrupted. She no longer had the energy to wake up early due to working long days, skipping meals, and late-nights trying to maintain relationships with family and friends. Moreover, she did not maintain her commitment to leadership development and certainly didn't have the time to connect with her mentor.

Jill's story illustrates how structure determines performance. Her performance as a high performing leader quickly deteriorated because she lacked a structured personal and leadership development routine. The structure, in this case, refers to the arrangement of resources and processes that support Jill's leadership performance. When she had a structured development routine and consistently met with her mentor, her performance was exceptional. However, when the structure was disrupted, her performance declined. Just as businesses and organizations are likely to perform better when they have a structured system that supports their goals and objectives, so too are individuals. It is crucial for individuals to prioritize the establishment of identity structures that support their performance and determine their outcomes.

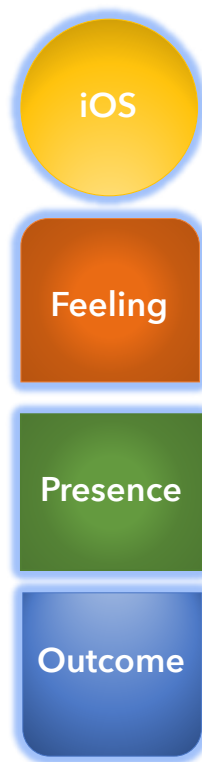
IDENTITY STRUCTURE

Identity structure is a complex and multifaceted construct that reflects who we are as individuals, and how we interact with the world around us. It involves a range of elements that shape our perceptions, beliefs, behaviors, and can influence the outcomes we achieve in life. Identity structure can be described as the internal and external elements that contribute to one's sense of self. These factors are often shaped by individual experiences, relationships, and cultural contexts. The 4 Elements of Identity Structure include the internal operating system, feelings, presence, and outcomes.

The internal operating system is the collection of beliefs, attitudes, and values that shape an individual's thoughts and actions. Feelings refer to the emotions that individuals experience, while presence describes the way individuals show up in the world. Outcomes refer to the results of an individual's actions. These four elements are interdependent and affect each other, and they all play a crucial role in shaping an individual's behavior, relationships, and overall sense of well-being. Understanding these elements can significantly impact an individual's life, including their ability to lead, communicate, make decisions, and develop meaningful relationships.



THE 4 ELEMENTS OF IDENTITY STRUCTURE™



INTERNAL OPERATING SYSTEM (iOS)

The internal operating system is an individual's thought process and mental framework. It comprises an individual's self-awareness, beliefs, values, purpose, and vision evolved over time through a combination of genetics, life experiences, cultural influences, and personal choices. It is the foundation of an individual's identity and influences how they interpret and respond to the world around them. It influences an individual's perception, thoughts, and decision-making process. It is the foundation upon which an individual's personality and behavior are built.

The internal operating system is critical in an individual's personal and professional life. In a personal context, it affects an individual's relationships with family, friends, and significant others. In a professional context, it affects an individual's leadership style, communication, and decision-making process, thus it can be a significant factor in the development of a leader's identity. It can shape the way individuals view themselves, their values, and their purpose in life. Leaders who are self-aware and conscious of their internal operating system can use this awareness to shape their leadership style and approach.

**Feelings****FEELINGS**

The second element of identity structure is feelings. Our feelings are linked to our internal operating system, as they reflect our thoughts, emotions, stories, mental models, and decision making. The element of feeling plays a crucial role in how an individual perceives and interacts with the world. They can be overwhelming and difficult to manage, particularly when they are intense or conflict with the individual's goals and values. Feelings are complex, and individuals may struggle to understand and express their feelings. However, understanding and expressing feelings is essential in personal and professional relationships. Feelings can be positive or negative and can influence an individual's behavior and actions.

In personal relationships, individuals need to express their feelings to maintain healthy connections. In professional relationships, expressing feelings can improve communication and collaboration. The ability to recognize and manage emotions is a critical skill for leaders to possess. Emotions are a fundamental part of the human experience. Leaders who are emotionally intelligent tend to be more effective in their roles. Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize, understand, and manage emotions effectively. Emotionally intelligent leaders are often better able to connect with their followers, build trust, and create a positive work environment.

**Presence****PRESENCE**

The third element of identity structure is presence, which is the way we show up in the world and interact with others. It is one's performance. Presence is a reflection of our internal operating system and our feelings, and it can have a significant impact on how we are perceived by others, ultimately leading to the outcomes we achieve.

Presence involves a range of factors, including our ability to influence, engage with others, intuition, competence, and technical skill. In short, it is how one presents themselves both physically and emotionally. Presence can be positive or negative and can influence the energy of a situation. Leaders who effectively manage their presence tend to be more effective in their roles. They are often more confident, decisive, and impactful.

**Outcomes****OUTCOMES**

The fourth element of identity structure is outcomes, which are the results we achieve in life, both personally and professionally. Our outcomes are a manifestation of our internal operating system, our feelings, and our presence, and they can be influenced by a range of external factors, such as opportunities, challenges, and relationships.

Outcomes can be positive or negative. They consist of our achievements, successes, joy, happiness, and fulfillment, or the lack thereof. One of the first steps in understanding our identity is evaluating our outcomes. They are an important measure of our effectiveness and impact in the world, and they can provide us with valuable feedback on our strengths and weaknesses.

THE INNER GAME AND OUTER GAME

Individuals' identity structure consists of two primary components: the inner game and the outer game. The inner game refers to an individual's consciousness and consists of the elements of the internal operating system and feeling. The outer game refers to an individual's competence or performance and consists of the elements of presence and outcomes. The inner game and outer game are interconnected and influence each other. The inner game is always running the outer game.

The inner game is a concept that refers to the mental (iOS) and emotional state (feeling) of an individual. It is the internal dialogue that occurs within the individual's mind and the way that they perceive and interpret the external stimuli they encounter. This inner game can have a significant impact on the individual's ability to perform at their best.

The four elements of identity structure work together to shape our identity and influence our outcomes. Our internal operating system provides the foundation for our feelings, which in turn influence our presence and our outcomes. Our presence and outcomes, in turn, provide feedback that can influence us to evaluate our internal operating system and feelings.

When we play to win, we are intentional about our identity structure, as structure determines performance. Take time to slow down, evaluate your performance, and identify the opportunities to update your structure. An effective way to do this is with the partnership of a coach. A coach can help you create greater awareness of your identity, of how you are showing up, and explore a path to evolve your identity structure, leading to improved performance.



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