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and society are shaped by our irrational and unpredictable behaviour, *100 Great Leadership Ideas*, *100 More Great Leadership Ideas* and *100 Great Business Leaders*. His books have been translated into Chinese, Korean, Thai and Indonesian. Jonathan's previous career was in newspapers and magazines; he was the launch publisher of *BBC History Magazine*. www.jonathangifford.com

Mark and Jonathan's first book, *My Steam Engine Is Broken: Taking the organization from the industrial era to the age of Ideas* www.mysteamengineisbroken.com was published in 2014. They have recently co-founded The Human Energy Organisation www.humanenergy.org.uk.



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Using the Techniques and Mindsets of the Arts to Deliver Winning Performances

"A must read for anyone who wants to stretch the performance of teams. Work should be something to live for, not just something to live by, and this book gives the essential clues to help make that a reality."

Patrick Lewis, *Managing Director Partnership Services, the John Lewis Partnership*

"Explores how top performing artists work to create outstanding performances and demonstrates convincingly how this can be used in our everyday business and personal lives. Loved it!"

Anton Musgrave, *FutureWorld - The Global Business and Technology Think Tank*

"Shows what it takes to become a true winner. Very thoughtful and practical. A must read."

Fons Trompenaars, *Partner, People and Change, KPMG*

"Reads like a novel but delivers more meaningful new ideas than a shelf-full of business books. A new kind of book for a new zeitgeist. Onwards!"

Ed Will, *founder, The Breakfast Agency*

"Anyone struggling to understand how the arts can teach real business lessons should read this book. It offers a clear picture of the impact that changing mindsets can have by retuning our leaders' experiences."

Craig Darroch, *Head of Learning & Development, BG Group*

PERFORM TO WIN

DR MARK POWELL & JONATHAN GIFFORD

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PERFORM TO WIN

UNLOCKING THE SECRETS OF THE ARTS FOR PERSONAL AND BUSINESS SUCCESS



In an increasingly competitive world, we need to reimagine the concept of performance. We behave as if individual and corporate performance can be assessed against relatively simplistic, linear measures; in the real world, people judge overall performances against a wider set of values, nearly all of which are subjective. It is not enough to be technically proficient in any arena; winning performances are those with elements of artistry and flair.

There is a growing recognition that we have much to learn from the arts, which have been exploring ways of delivering winning performances for millennia. Performing artists do things differently from the rest of us; they have a different mindset, and they work with their fellow performers in ways that are very different from our normal behaviours.

The techniques and mindsets of performing artist are best explored through experience. Because what they do is physical and depends on their interaction with their fellow artists, we learn best by watching great artists as they work and hearing them talk about what they are doing and why. *Perform To Win* follows a group of fictionalised business men and women as they attend a three-day leadership development programme, working with leading practitioners in the field of arts-based development and interacting with top performing artists in search of new perspectives and ways of working together that may help them to solve a very real business problem.

Enjoy the experience and learn the secrets of delivering a winning performance.

Advance Praise

“The humanities and the arts contain powerful lessons for leaders. The practice and discipline of the performing arts and the experiential insights they bring make fertile territory for leadership development. The lessons learned can be pivotal – they stick.”

Tracey Camilleri

Director Oxford Strategic Leadership Programme

“Takes us under the skin of performing artists and reveals the techniques and mindsets they use in search of a winning performance. The fictionalised approach brings everything to life and shows clearly how relevant these techniques are for all of us.”

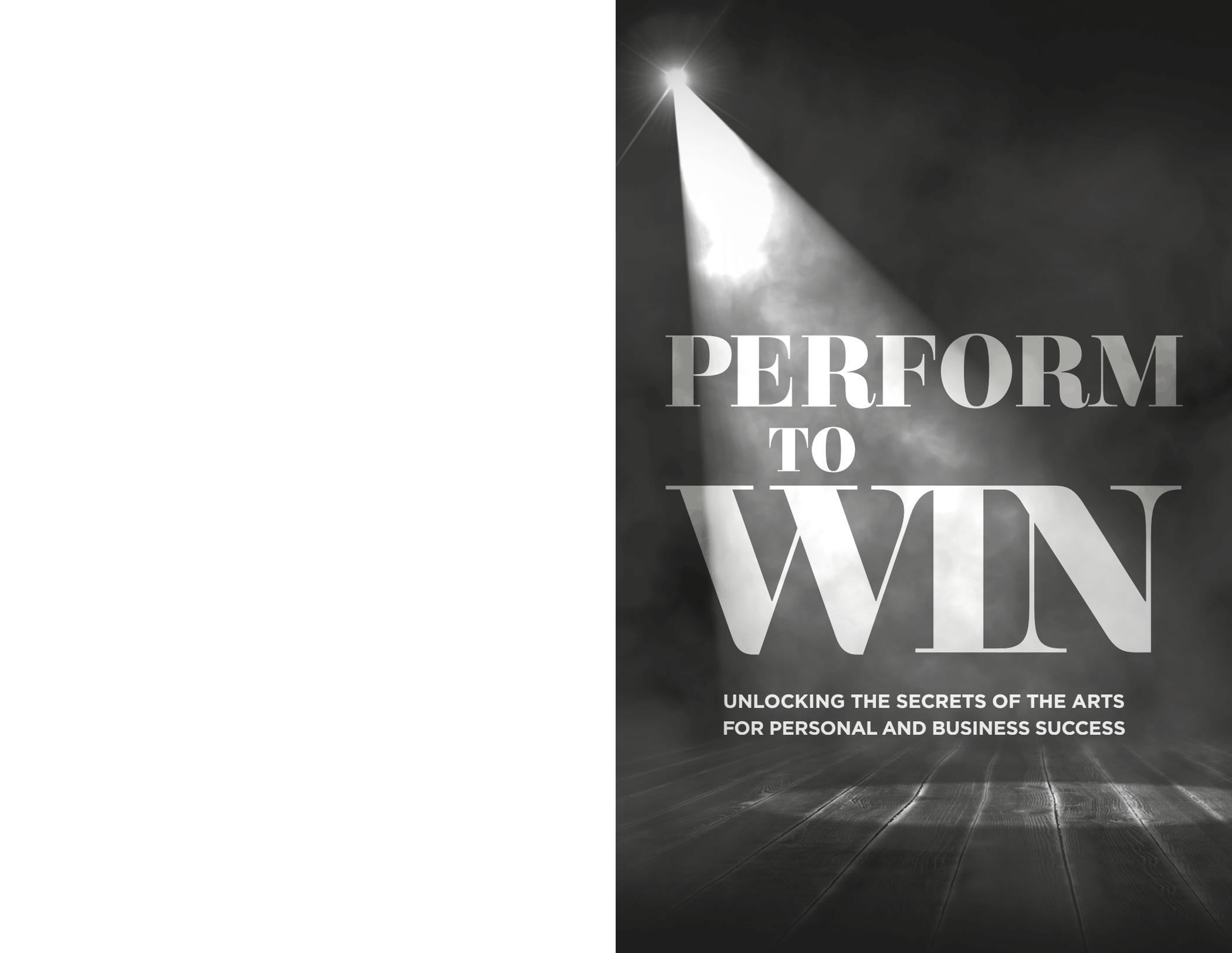
Neil Jacobsohn

FutureWorld - the Global Business & Technology Think Tank

“Goes right to the heart of what really drives business performance - the behaviours and mindsets of individuals. The innovative approach the authors take really brings to life the experiential nature of working with performing artists and draws out the lessons we can all use for our own success.”

Robert Williams

Transformation Director, Denton Williams Consulting



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TO
WIN**

**UNLOCKING THE SECRETS OF THE ARTS
FOR PERSONAL AND BUSINESS SUCCESS**

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PERFORM TO WIN



LONDON MONTERREY
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Special thanks are due to Piers Ibbotson, previously with the Royal Shakespeare Company as both actor and assistant director, now a business consultant and senior teaching fellow at Warwick Business School at the University of Warwick, and to Peter Hanke, choral and orchestral conductor, associate fellow at Saïd Business School at the University of Oxford and associate of the Centre for Art and Leadership at Copenhagen Business School.

Piers and Peter are pioneers in their own fields of arts-based leadership development programmes. They both appear in *Perform To Win*, alongside Dr Mark Powell, co-author of the book, as the real facilitators of an imaginary development programme attended by a fictional group of board director delegates. The workshop exercises that they facilitate in the book are fictionalized, and are not presented as exact accounts of their work, but are intended to give the reader a general impression of their sophisticated workshop techniques and a broad overview of their thinking.

Piers Ibbotson is the author of *The Illusion of Leadership* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008) ISBN 978-0-230-20199-6. Peter Hanke is the author of *Performance & Lederskab: Passionen Som Drivkraft*, (Børsens Forlag, 2008) ISBN 978-87-7664-263-1. English language extracts from this book are available under the title *Extracts From Performance & Leadership* by Peter Hanke.

Thanks are also due to the professional Latin dancers, Gunnar Gunnarsson and Marika Doshoris, who also feature as themselves in the book in a fictionalized account of a dance-based leadership development workshop.

Acknowledgements

In our previous book, *My Steam Engine Is Broken: Taking the organization from the industrial era to the age of ideas*, we argued that many organizations unthinkingly persist with a model of behaviour that has its roots in the industrial era. The rapid and hugely successful mechanisation of production that started with the industrial revolution and flourished in the early twentieth century led some management thinkers to conclude that workers' abilities and outputs should be measured and managed in exactly the same way as the machines that were revolutionizing global industry. In this mindset, people should be seen as a resource like any other, to be used as 'efficiently' as possible, and their behaviour should be tightly governed and controlled.

This mechanistic view of the organization is no longer fit for purpose in the knowledge economy, which needs people's uniquely human skills: their emotional intelligence, their creativity and their ability to form distinctive communities that are far more than mere collections of individuals. The inappropriate persistence of old-fashioned organizational behaviours leads to the chronic and damaging employee disengagement that is of such concern in the modern workplace. There is a growing gap between what people want and expect from their places of work, and what they actually experience day to day. This disconnect plays out in lost ideas and wasted energy.

The lack of commitment and engagement of people in the typical workplace stands in sharp contrast to the ways in which people behave in other contexts: people are increasingly turning to other activities to supply the passion and fulfilment that their place of work fails to provide. In these contexts, people's energies are once again released as they commit themselves fully to something that they care about and have willingly committed to.

This is especially true of the performing arts. People who choose to come together to 'put on a show' don't do this half-heartedly. It is not possible to be disengaged from a successful performance; there is a direct link between the energy of the performers and their performance.

Introduction

There is also a direct link between every individual performance and the performance of the other artists involved. A great theatrical performance is dependent on the support of the entire ensemble; two dance partners perform brilliantly together to deliver a winning performance or they fail; an orchestra or choir only succeed when every singer or musician performs their part exceptionally.

There is a growing recognition in the business world that the performing arts have much to offer as a model for more successful organizational behaviours (or 'performances'), but it is difficult to bridge the gap between these two very different worlds. The things that performing artists do and the ways in which they think are hard to put into words; these are things that ideally need to be experienced and felt at a visceral level to acquire their full meaning.

This book aims to bridge the gap between the vibrant, 3D world of the performing arts and the equally vibrant world of business by using a narrative form – by bringing the story to life. *Perform To Win* portrays a fictionalised group of board directors facing a very real business problem and follows them through a three-day arts-based programme, during which they explore the mindsets and practices of performing artists by observing and working with artists at a very close and intimate level. The activities they take part in and the experiences they share are based entirely on real activities and experiences, and the outcomes are based entirely on real outcomes: people who experience arts-based programmes emerge with new perspectives, new energies and new ways of working with their colleagues. They also find that their new ways of thinking have benefits in their personal lives. The focus, energy and skill that great performing artists bring to their performance, and the ways in which they form a deep connection with their fellow performers in search of a winning performance, is a model for success in every kind of human activity.



**Perform
to Win**

Perform to Win explores the mindset, attitudes and techniques used by performing artists to deliver winning performances, and sets out the ten most significant things that great performing artists do differently from the rest of us; ten core lessons from which we can learn, to help us deliver winning performances in our personal and business lives.

The book is based on Dr Mark Powell's years of experience in designing and running leadership development programmes. Over these years, Dr Powell's programmes have made increasing use of arts-based sessions, offering executives experiences that can help to deliver new perspectives and potential new approaches to the challenges that they face: sessions with poets and painters; actors and conductors; jazz musicians and storytellers. His work convinces him that it is experiencing something in a physical sense that allows delegates to gain the most meaningful new realizations: a new way of thinking; a new approach; a different mindset that allows them to see things with fresh eyes.

As Dr Powell told Jonathan Gifford, co-author of this book, in a recent conversation:

“Having spent so many years with so many people on leadership programmes, there is no question in my mind that the things that really stick with people have two things in common. One is that they are experiential; people experience things in a way that hits them as a human being in some way – it doesn't matter what it is. And those things tend to be arts-based, by definition. The second thing is that people are more open to learning if they are presented with something in a context that they are not familiar with. If you ask people to learn from something in an area that they are expert in, they generally close down to learning, at least to some extent. So to make an impact – to change the way that people think and behave – what works best, in my experience, is something that people can witness and feel in an immediate way, in a context that is out of their normal realm of experience. That's why arts-based learning is so effective. It presents something that is dramatic, but also entirely human, entirely understandable

at a gut level. Something in an arts-based programme will hit everyone at a visceral level. It won't be the same thing; people react differently. But there will be something that hits them at an instinctive level and makes them just 'get it'. And when they have experienced that, it really sticks. That's not something they know today but forget tomorrow. That's now a part of their makeup. And it's very powerful.”

The fact that we learn many things though experience, at a pre-rational level, is easy to forget. We have come to see ourselves first and foremost as creatures of reason, and we forget how much of our understanding of the world – and of other people, in particular – is embodied. We acquire this knowledge through our senses, not through our rational minds, and it works within us at a pre-conscious, pre-rational level.

In the field of psychology, there is a famous case that demonstrates this compellingly.

Henry Molaison was born in 1926, in Connecticut, US. As he grew up, he experienced increasingly serious epileptic fits. Molaison's epileptic episodes became so severe that, in 1953, it was decided to operate on his brain. It was believed at the time – perhaps 'hoped' is more accurate – that removing parts of his brain would reduce the levels of brain activity associated with epileptic fits: most of Molaison's hippocampus and amygdala were removed. This did, in fact, cure Molaison's epilepsy, but also destroyed his ability to form new memories. He could remember almost nothing from the year or so before his operation, though he could remember some things before that time, but he could not form new memories of things that happened to him after the operation; he was completely amnesiac.

Because Molaison could remember some things, we know that memory itself is not located in the parts of the brain that were removed. Memory is either stored somewhere else or more diffusely. But neuroscientists could be absolutely sure that the regions of the brain that were removed or damaged in Molaison's case are essential, in some way, to the process of forming new memories.

But researchers found, to their great surprise, that although Molaison could not form new memories, he could learn new skills. He was taught to trace the shape of a five-pointed star by looking at the reflection of the star and his hand in a mirror. This is surprisingly difficult. Everything is backwards; you have to train the hand tracing the shape to do the opposite of what it instinctively does.

Molaison learned how to do this, and he got better at it – but had no memory of having learned the skill. Whenever he was given the task, it seemed to him that he had never seen it before, though, in fact, he was getting better at it all the time.

Learning ‘how to do’ something is an entirely different process from remembering facts and figures, and has nothing to do with the parts of the brain that are responsible for forming new memories. Molaison couldn’t remember new facts or events, but he could acquire new physical skills. Despite his shaky memory of facts and events from the past, Molaison also retained his social skills: he was pleasant, even amusing, company, even though he would have no idea whether his companion was a stranger or an old friend.

Large parts of our behaviour have nothing to do with ‘what we know’ and can ‘remember’. We readily acknowledge that our level of emotional intelligence is a key factor in determining how successful we can be in most areas of life but we act as if we can acquire emotional intelligence by reading about it, or by attending lectures. In reality, this kind of embodied knowledge is acquired through experience and can only be enhanced by experience.

This is the realm of the arts. We use the arts to explore the human condition, and have done for millennia. We all understand artistic expression in exactly the same way that we understand facial expression, the nuances of the human voice and body language; expertise in human behaviour is something we acquire, for free, as we grow up in the world. Most of us have our favourite art forms, and these enrich us by enhancing, and even changing, the way in which we experience the world; by giving us insights into

aspects of human behaviour. It should come as no surprise that what we can learn from the arts, and from performing artists in particular, can enhance our experience of the world of work, just as it enhances our private lives.

* * *

Learning facts and acquiring knowledge-based skills is a mental process. Learning things that will actually change our behaviour is far more likely to come through bodily experience.

In this book, we follow a fictional board of directors as they experience an imagined three-day, arts-based workshop at a UK business school. The sessions they attend are based on those facilitated by real people, who feature in this narrative as themselves: Dr Mark Powell, co-author of this book, ex-champion ballroom dancer, management consultant and associate fellow at Saïd Business School at the University of Oxford; Piers Ibbotson, ex-Royal Shakespeare Company actor and assistant director, now a business consultant and senior teaching fellow at Warwick Business School at the University of Warwick; and Peter Hanke, choral and orchestral conductor, associate fellow at Saïd Business School at the University of Oxford and associate of the Centre for Art and Leadership at Copenhagen Business School.

What the facilitators say and do in the book is based on the sessions that they run in real life and on material drawn from their writings, but are not actual transcripts of real sessions or precise descriptions of real exercises. The workshops as described in the book should be seen as fictional accounts that offer an accurate reflection of the kinds of experiences that executives attending arts-based development programmes would undergo, rather than as an exact account of real development sessions.

As our fictional characters progress through the programme, we hope you will share in these experiences and get an understanding of their various realizations and ‘aha!’ moments as the delegates explore how performing artists work together to deliver

great performances. We have also set out some of the difficulties and frustrations experienced by the delegates as they work through the programme. Arts-based programmes are very different from programmes that deliver new skill sets, theories and best practices, they set out instead to offer delegates new perspectives and changed behaviours. It is impossible to predict how any individual will interact with any programme or what will give them the most profound insight but, in Dr Powell's long experience of such programmes, there is always something that offers a new perspective and opens the way to improved performance. At the start of the book, we give our fictional board members a very real business problem, and set out to show how their experiences as they progress through the programme help them to see their problem in a new light and to find new ways of working together towards a solution.

The core ideas about performance that emerge throughout the book are summarized at the end of each chapter. The final chapter explores what we believe are the ten most significant things that great performing artists do in order to deliver winning performances. At their heart is the understanding that the performance of every member of an ensemble is vital to the overall effect, and that ensembles succeed together, or not at all.