

The Development of the Theory of Proto-Deliberate Practice for Ill-Structured Environments and The Influence of Star's Social Contagion in Driving Firm Performance

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Abstract

This paper introduces a proto-deliberate practice model to demonstrate the impact proto-deliberate practice has on performance outcomes and performance theory for ill-structured environments. Proto-deliberate practice I define as “an emergent practice-based approach for organizational settings for fields of expertise that are ill-structured and characterized by ambiguous outcomes or no clear and objective standards of performance. Participants take an active design role through the integration of ‘working, learning and continuous iterating’ being the complementary drivers for reconfiguring and better calibrating the elements of their work practice within the context of practice habits and routines that will lead to the achievement of performance goals.” Greater clarity is needed on the development of expertise for ill-structured domains as much research has focused on well-structured environments. In line with proto-deliberate practice as a path to becoming a star performer and those ‘stars’ being responsible for a large percentage of results (Pareto principle), I conceptualize a model to demonstrate the impact proto-deliberate practice has through social contagion theory and two underlying mechanisms (social comparison and interaction) and aim to identify how the star performer emerges, communicates with others, interacts with other groups, and the role non-stars play in overall performance. Demonstrating how “star performers” influence outcomes through a culmination of factors and how each of these explains, expands, redefines, and contradicts prevailing theories and can impact through individual, group, organizational, and community level impact, I bridge the micro-macro discussion in organizational theory and inform and transform the meso trajectory .

Keywords: Future of Talent Management, Human Capital, Performance Management, Sense of Control, Star Performer