



Opportunity Briefing Paper

A New Competitive Edge Error Control for Athletic Coaching Staffs

Opportunity. The opportunity exists to evaluate and modify a proven approach to assist individuals and small teams in predicting and preventing error patterns in support of enhanced decision making and team performance in tightly coupled, error intolerant environments. It is hypothesized that this approach, which has been proven effective in fast moving, high stress environments such as combat aviation, may be beneficial enhancing timely decision making under stress for athletic coaching staffs.

Discussion. For the past several decades, human factors researchers in aviation have studied a variety of phenomena which lead to a dangerous condition referred to as *lost situational awareness (SA)* and *sudden loss of judgment (SLOJ)*. In these situations, a normally controlled pilot would depart from his or her typical habit patterns and rational thought patterns and react unprofessionally (and unpredictably) to external and or internal stimuli. These sudden losses of judgment would often end with degraded performance and occasionally more tragic outcomes.

Research into these phenomena was driven by the need to protect airline passengers and valuable equipment, and resulted in a series of learning programs designed to teach knowledge, tools and techniques for controlled response through enhanced situational/self-awareness, the application of emotional control techniques and standardized communications protocols. These programs have proven to be both effective and relatively easy to learn.

Potential Partnership. Convergent Performance (www.convergentperformance.com) is a private sector company that specializes in this type of cutting edge training and holds existing contracts with the Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security and the USDA Forest Service – among others - to develop and instruct these behavioral modification and performance improvement programs. Convergent seeks to expand the use of this concept into other environments where it may be of equal or greater effectiveness.

One potential outcome of this collaborative effort would be to develop and prototype a set of learning materials in support of improved coaching performance, followed by a one year field test of the approach in selected environments at the professional, collegiate and high school levels.

Next Steps. Please email your interest and ideas directly to Dr. Kern at the email address listed below.

Currently, Convergent is prepared to begin development with appropriate resources and stakeholder (user) interest. Next steps would include a meeting or conference call to discuss potential collaborative efforts, funding sources and partnership requirements, project team and implementation approach. Current point of contact for Convergent is:

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