



Partnership Opportunity Briefing Paper

“Predictable is Preventable: Relapse Control at the Moment of Decision” An interdisciplinary personal empowerment approach in support of substance abuse recovery efforts.

Opportunity. The opportunity exists to develop a partnership to evaluate and modify a proven approach to assist individuals in predicting and preventing loss of emotional control due to internal and external “triggers” that hijack normally logical thought processes such as restraint and judgment. It is hypothesized that this approach, which has been proven effective in dynamic, tightly coupled environments such as the cockpits of jet aircraft, may be beneficial in “controlling the moment of decision” in other environments, such as those where a momentary temptation turns into long term relapse into substance abuse.

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 tragically.

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 and the application of emotional control techniques. 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 programs. Convergent seeks a partnership 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 substance abuse relapse prevention.

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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