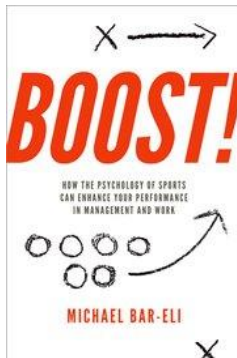


## PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***Boost! How the Psychology of Sports Can Enhance Your Performance in Management and Work***

Author: **Michael Bar-Eli**

Publisher: Oxford University Press

List Price: \$29.95      Format: Soft Cover, 328 Pages

Publication Date: Nov 2017      ISBN: 978-0-19-066173-1

Reviewer: **Michael Carlew, PMP**      Review Date: April 2018

### Introduction

We all desire to maximize our performance in one if not multiple areas of our lives. Whether it is in the office, on the playing field, or in our relationships, we all want to perform at a higher level more consistently. In his book, *Boost!*, renowned sports psychologist Michael Bar-Eli applies over 3 decades of experience working with some of the top athletes across the globe to explain how the correct mental preparation techniques can increase performance for leaders or managers in every aspect of life.

### Overview of Book's Structure

The book is comprised of 12 chapters, each of them dealing with a particular facet of cognitive practice and how it can be applied to improve performance. Each chapter opens with a quote from an ancient philosopher, inventor, composer, or athlete, setting the stage for Bar-Eli to explore how various mental coaching experiences with superior athletes can be equally as effective when used by leaders in the workplace.

Each chapter is an amalgam of anecdote, experimental data, reporting charts, and personal revelation, used to convey the ideology that high levels of performance and achievement are more often than not the result of an individual's successful endeavors toward meta-cognition.

### Highlights

The greatest inspirations to be drawn from this book are found in the one-on-one interactions that Bar-Eli describes with the athletes he works with. Through these interactions, the reader is able to look into the psyche of top athletes and understand that even those individuals are often times able to achieve high levels of performance not through natural ability alone, but by hard work and a repetition of

mental preparation and visualization that can be used by almost any individual in any situation where stimulation levels are extremely high.

### **Highlights: What I liked!**

Personally, I drew inspiration from Bar-Eli's interaction with basketball players trying to improve their free through shooting percentage. One athlete was coached to understand that not only does he have 5 seconds at the free through line to collect his thoughts, but also the 10 seconds of dead time before the free throw clock is set. There is a similar story in which a very famous basketball player was able to drastically improve his free throw shooting percentage by reciting a personal mantra at the free throw line; "this is for my wife and kids", thereby mentally reframing and putting a new perspective on the situation.

The way that Bar-Eli utilizes these experiences to explain stimulation, over stimulation, and how to find the balance between the two is easy to apply to almost any business situation. Bar-Eli explains how we often don't actually recognize or utilize all of the time available to us to mentally prepare for the task at hand, and that the use of subtle, repetitive cognitive awareness techniques can bridge the gap between stimulation and over stimulation, helping us to accurately assess the situation and achieve our goals.

### **Who might benefit from the book?**

While I believe this book would be beneficial to anyone looking to improve their performance in any area through mental awareness, it is clearly geared more towards those looking to apply the concepts presented to situations in the work place. As a business professional and manager, I often run into situations where I am able to draw on lessons learned about team work and leadership while playing organized sports earlier in life. This book, in essence, does the same thing by drawing from lessons learned by top athletes.

The book gives key insights into how control and understanding of the psyche can be monumental in effective management. I would recommend this book to anyone who is part of a business team, whether they have a distinct role on the team, or they are charged with leading it. *Boost!* not only provides insights into personal performance, but ideas about how to coach others to get past their own mental road blocks, and achieve at a higher level.

### **Conclusion**

*Boost!* does a wonderful job of drawing the parallel between legendary sports performance and legendary executive or business performance, by effective use of mental executive function. Whether a you are a top executive, middle manager, or working on the shop floor, all business professionals can draw inspiration from the stories of personal success presented in this book. *Boost!* is ultimately a roadmap that leads the reader to understand their own thought process, and how that thought

process can be harnessed and controlled to move the individual out of their own way, and propel them toward growth and success personally, and as a leader.

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For more about this book, go to: <https://global.oup.com/academic/product/boost-9780190661731?q=Boost&lang=en&cc=us>

*Editor's note: This book review was the result of a partnership between the publisher, PM World and the [PMI Dallas Chapter](#). Authors and publishers provide the books to PM World; books are delivered to the PMI Dallas Chapter, where they are offered free to PMI members to review; book reviews are published in the PM World Journal and PM World Library. PMI Dallas Chapter members can keep the books as well as claim PDUs for PMP recertification when their reviews are published. Chapter members are generally mid-career professionals, the audience for most project management books. If you are an author or publisher of a project management-related book, and would like the book reviewed through this program, please contact [editor@peworldjournal.net](mailto:editor@peworldjournal.net).*

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## About the Reviewer



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