

EBOOK

The four essential elements of capacity building

What is capacity building?

In its purest definition, capacity building is the method by which individuals seek, acquire, and develop the skills and abilities to **consistently perform at a higher level in pursuit of their innate potential.**

High achievers across all spectrums of life and business have found continuous ways to build their capacity at faster rates than their peers and use that extra capacity to stay ahead of the pack and achieve at the highest level; it's how they elevate. People who consistently elevate, or "elevators," have a competitive advantage, but it's one that you can replicate.

The story of an inquisitive high school student

To illustrate what capacity building looks like in real life, I'll share the story of an inquisitive high school student who became enamored with travel—with Asia in particular—after spending a year abroad. He set his sights on getting into Princeton, which is known for its strong East Asian studies program.

When a misguided guidance counselor told him he had no hope of getting accepted, he rightfully got riled, took the counselor's lack of faith in him as a direct challenge, and did the hard work to get himself accepted.

Years later, after starting his own business, he decided to take a trip abroad to get centered. To enjoy the trip and live in the moment, he was forced to set up processes for virtual work and delegation, because he had no employees.

At age 29, he turned the experiences from that trip and his outsourcing exploits into a book and pitched it to publishers. The first 25 publishers rejected it. The 26th surprised him by offering a contract.

We're betting on you.

When he asked them why, the publisher told him, “We can understand why publishers have rejected this work, but we aren't betting on the book, we are betting on you. We believe you will do anything and everything you can to make the book successful.”

That book was “The 4-Hour Workweek,” which went on to sell over 1.3 million copies in 35 languages and launched the career of Tim Ferriss.

Dismissed by many as a get-rich-quick book on marketing and outsourcing, for many in the Gen X/Y demographic cohort, “The 4-Hour Workweek” was really a new manifesto on capacity building and human potential—a new philosophy for how to live a more intentional and fulfilling life.

Tim lives and breathes capacity building.

And he's fascinated by others who do the same; he systematically breaks down and analyzes how top performers achieve success. He's experimented frequently on his own body. He's learned to speak five languages. He's the first American to hold a Guinness record in tango spins. He learned angel investing and backed a few small companies such as Uber, Facebook, Twitter, Alibaba, and Shopify. His podcast has had more than 300 million downloads, and he's now written five number-one New York Times and Wall Street Journal bestsellers.

Tim's commitment to personal development is insatiable, and it has led him not only to achieve incredible things in life, but also to inspire countless others to do the same. Not bad for a guy whose guidance counselor thought he wasn't Ivy League material.

To be clear, capacity building is not about doing more. It's about doing more of the right things. In fact, the art of the capacity-building process is knowing where you need to invest your energy and where you need to pull away.

Capacity building is similar to developing a muscle.

It doesn't happen overnight. I may be inspired to lift a heavy weight, but only after weeks of consistent commitment, work, and incremental improvement will I have built up the strength and physical capacity to do so. Suddenly, I have the capacity to do what I could not do before.

Inspiration is valuable, but it's not enough to affect real change. That requires follow-through and commitment.

In my own journey and in speaking with hundreds of others who have made meaningful and sustained changes to their lives, I have identified four essential elements of capacity building: spiritual, intellectual, physical, and emotional. These four elements are fundamental and are present in nearly every aspect of self-improvement.



The four essential elements of capacity building:

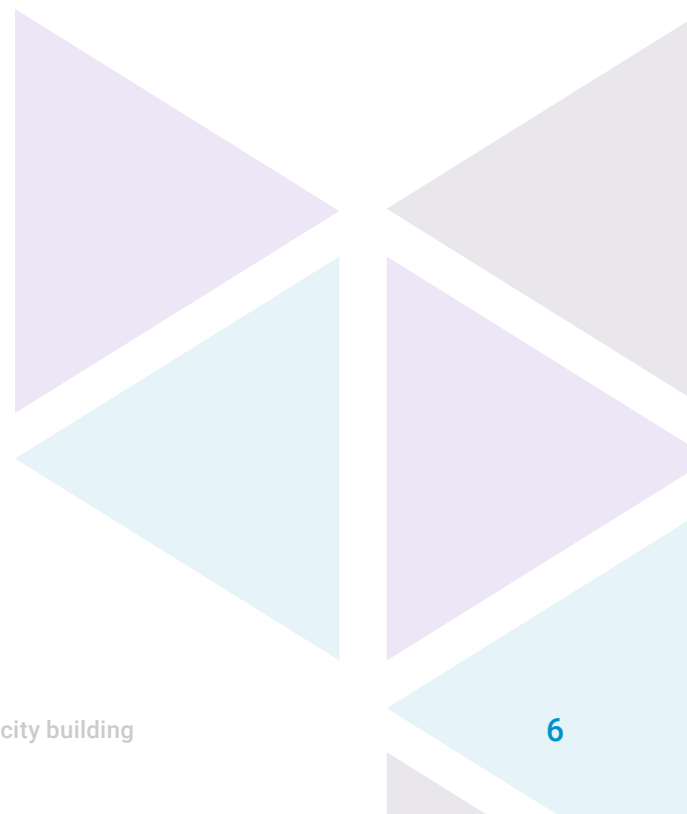
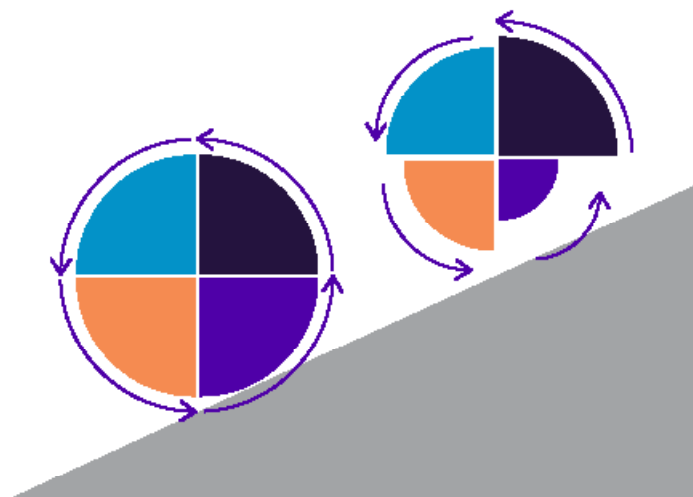
- **Spiritual capacity** is about understanding who you are, what you want most, and the standards you want to live by every day.
- **Intellectual capacity** is about how you improve your ability to think, learn, plan, and execute with discipline.
- **Physical capacity** is your health, well-being, and physical performance.
- **Emotional capacity** is how you react to challenging situations, your emotional mindset, and the quality of your relationships.

Capacity building starts with understanding these four interconnected elements and then developing them individually and simultaneously.

Think of each element as a chamber of an inflatable ball separated into four sections, and each section can be filled individually with a dense gas. The bigger the ball becomes, the more energy and mass it will have, resulting in optimal momentum as it rolls. It will perform best when all the chambers grow in tandem rather than one section getting too big at the expense of the others. If one chamber is bigger or another is underinflated, the ball will not roll evenly. Instead of gaining speed and building momentum, it's going to wobble awkwardly and get off track.

These chambers are also leaky and constantly need filling. Similar to tires on your car, they need continuous maintenance to ensure they have the right pressure and are in balance. **Balance is often hard to identify, but being aware of imbalance—and identifying exactly which chamber is slowing you down—is often the key to keeping you on course.**

Capacity Development

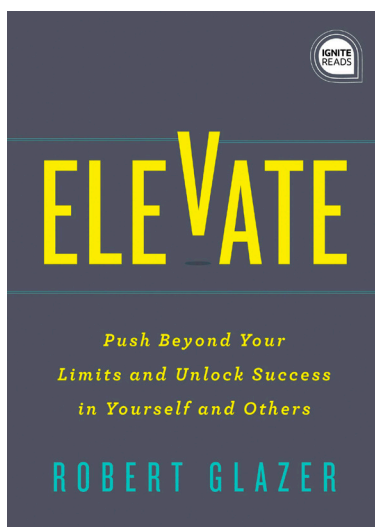


A leader's goal should be to inspire and elevate expectations so that team members can simultaneously improve in all areas of their lives.

These areas include leadership, time management, prioritization, decision-making, self-awareness, and self-confidence. These abilities have a domino effect. **When you improve in one area, you begin to improve in all**, and one of the most important outcomes in capacity building is the exponential effect it has on others, including friends, family, and those whom you lead. It has the effect of lifting while you climb—as you build your own capacity and achieve more, you develop the ability to help others do the same.

It's a virtuous cycle and benefits everyone involved.

By focusing on these elements, you'll be on a path to build your own capacity to elevate and support others in their journeys as well.



This e-book is an excerpt from Robert Glazer's new book "Elevate: Push Beyond Your Limits and Unlock Success in Yourself and Others."