

Adversity Quotient

*Turning Obstacles into
Opportunities*

Leader's Guide

Adversity Quotient

Turning Obstacles into Opportunities

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INTRODUCTION

About This Program

The video program, **ADVERSITY QUOTIENT: TURNING OBSTACLES INTO OPPORTUNITIES**, is based on the highly-acclaimed and best-selling book, *Adversity Quotient: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities* by Paul G. Stoltz, Ph.D. The video program, like the book, is designed to increase one's self-awareness of their ability to deal with adversity in work and life and to illustrate how improving your AQ — your Adversity Quotient — opens the doors to personal and professional success. It provides guidelines for improving one's own Adversity Quotient or AQ and, through anecdotes and the story of Antarctic explorer, Sir Ernest Shackleton, the viewer is shown how an improved AQ is the key to success no matter the challenges we face. The video itself is approximately 18 minutes and can easily be stopped between key learning points to facilitate discussion.

Dr. Paul Stoltz begins the video by detailing how the number of adversities we deal with daily has begun to escalate at an alarming rate. These adversities range from simple issues or minor annoyances, to large, complex life-altering events. With this introduction, he presents the concept that each of us has an Adversity Quotient—an innate ability to deal with adversity.

Paul shares that the challenge of the New Economy is to expand human capacity. Like computers, the demands placed on every person and every enterprise are growing at an exponential rate. Everyone is stretched. Many suffer under the burden or their capacity falls short of what is demanded when it matters most. Many people notice that their **Existing Capacity** (what they have) and the amount of their Existing Capacity they access daily — their **Accessed Capacity** — does not meet their **Required Capacity** (what the world demands). This creates two alarming trends— the first, **The Capacity Gap**, or when our Existing Capacity and Access Capacity shrink at a time when our Required Capacity is growing — and second, **The Silent Toll**, caused by dealing with The Capacity Gap, which impacts our performance, morale, attitude and health.

So, the goal of the program is defining the only technology that allows us to increase our capacity — identifying and improving our **Adversity Quotient** or our AQ. AQ, or Adversity Quotient, is the deeply grounded, practical science of human capacity. In the program AQ is defined as:

Adversity Quotient--

"An indicator of how you withstand adversity and your ability to overcome it."

The program then moves on to define **CORE. AQ is comprised of four CORE dimensions**. You must look closely at your CORE to fully understand your AQ.

The **"C"** in CORE stands for **"control"**. It asks the question: "How much control do you perceive that you have over an adverse event?" Notice, the keyword here is *perceive*. Actual control in a given situation is nearly impossible to measure. Perceived control is much more important. From day one, nothing happens without the perception of control. The difference between lower and higher AQ responses on this dimension are therefore, quite dramatic. Those with higher AQ's simply perceive greater control over life's events than do those with lower AQ's. As a result, they take action, which in turn results in more control.

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The “**O**” in CORE stands for “**ownership**.” This dimension of CORE asks the question: “To what degree do I own the outcome of the adversity?” The higher an ownership score, the more there is ownership for outcomes, regardless of their cause. The lower the ownership score, the more you disown the outcomes, regardless of their cause. People act with great responsibility and accountability if they believe they own a piece of the result. It is the leader’s imperative to communicate and specify how each person’s perception of ownership impacts the outcome.

The “**R**” dimension of CORE stands for “**reach**.” This dimension of CORE asks the question: “How far will the adversity reach into other areas of my life?” Lower AQ responses allow the adversity to bleed over into other facets of one’s life – the lower your R score, the more likely you are to catastrophize bad events, allowing them to spread. On the other hand, the higher your R score, the more you may limit the reach of the problem to the event at hand.

Finally, the “**E**” dimension of CORE stand for “**endurance**.” This dimension of CORE asks two related questions: “How long will the adversity last?” and, “How long will the cause of adversity last?” The lower your E score, the more likely you are to perceive adversity and/or its causes lasting a long time.

At this point in the video program, Paul Stoltz applies the key principles of AQ and the dimensions of CORE to the amazing story of renowned explorer, **Ernest Shackleton**. The story is depicted in the video through a series of remarkable images... images that along with the crew survived this incredible ordeal.

In August, 1914, days before the outbreak of World War I, Shackleton and a crew of 27 set sail for the South Atlantic in pursuit of the last unclaimed prize in the history of exploration: the first crossing on foot of the Antarctic continent. Weaving a treacherous path through the freezing Weddell Sea, they had come within eighty-five miles of their destination when their ship, the *Endurance*, was trapped in the ice pack. Soon the ship was crushed like matchwood, leaving the crew stranded on the floes. Their ordeal would last for twenty months, and they would make two near-fatal attempts to escape by open boat before their final rescue.

If not for the leadership of Shackleton and his high AQ, it is likely the story would have a different ending. The story of Shackleton, his crew, and their legendary journey shows how a high AQ response can insure survival in the most dire circumstances – imagine the success identifying and improving your AQ offers in approaching the adversities we each face day-to-day.

The Leader’s Guide for **ADVERSITY QUOTIENT: TURNING OBSTACLES INTO OPPORTUNITIES** provides you with the tools necessary to lead participants in identifying and the role AQ plays in their success, and beginning conversations on how to improve it. The guide and video are designed to be flexible; allowing you to develop the training format which best suits your organizations needs.

We recommend that you tailor this program specifically to your organization by incorporating information unique to your employee’s needs.

SPECIAL NOTE: To help enhance your understanding of this program and your facilitation of discussions, it is highly recommended that you read *Adversity Quotient: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities* (John Wiley & Sons), included in this package, or available at most major bookstores, online booksellers or through the distributor where the video program was purchased.

PREPARATION

Objectives

Define the objectives of your training session. Objectives should coincide with the particular needs of your organization and reflect the content of this video program. Following are some objectives participants should achieve through a properly conducted session based on **ADVERSITY QUOTIENT: TURNING OBSTACLES INTO OPPORTUNITIES**:

1. Understand the role adversity plays in your health, vitality, performance, and success.
2. Discover how AQ influences outcomes.
3. Explore how to overcome adversity.
4. Learn how to expand your capacity and exceed the expectations of your performance and potential.

Determining the objectives for your training session in advance will help you identify the approach to take for the training session. Each objective may be adapted to a variety of different presentation approaches. It is important to recognize that Adversity Quotient is not a quick fix or a formula for success. It is an approach to take for life — and a source for addressing adversity no matter the nature of your work, or what confronts you in life. Participants will begin learning about their Adversity Quotient within the training session — viewing the video program, understanding the concepts you discuss from the leader's guide and by gauging their AQ and working to improve it — both in the training session and on their own. The process will continue well after the training session has concluded as participants take their AQ, identify it, improve it, and use it as a tool for addressing future adversities — no matter how large, or how small.

Audience

All individuals within your organization will benefit from the **ADVERSITY QUOTIENT: TURNING OBSTACLES INTO OPPORTUNITIES** video program. By creating awareness that each individual has an AQ, that it can be improved, you will be providing these individuals with an invaluable opportunity to create greater personal and professional success.

Optimally, the training session should have between 10-20 participants.

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Invitation to Participants

Send out letters or memos to participants, and/or post a notice, at least two weeks in advance of the training session. Include location, date, time and agenda.

Sample Invitation

The following is one suggestion for a memo announcing the AQ training session:

Date: (Insert Date)

To: (Insert Attendee Name)

From: (Your Name)

Re: Adversity Quotient Training Session

Paragraph One:

Introduce your purpose for scheduling the training.

Paragraph Two:

Detail some of the credentials of the video presenter. Also, detail some of the research the video program and content is based on.

Paragraph Three:

Detail objectives of the training session (see those detailed on page 3 of this guide) and include your own as well.

Paragraph Four:

Insert your selected agenda (see options provided on page 7 of this guide).

Closing:

Detail location, date and time of training session.

Room Set-Up and Equipment

There are a few items you will need for an effective training session:

- A training room located away from major distractions or interruptions.
- Comfortable arrangement of chairs and tables, preferably in a circular pattern, with an opening for the TV monitor and other visual aids – to facilitate effective communication, be certain that participants can easily see both the visual aids and each other.
- Adjustable lighting that can be modulated while viewing the video.
- An unobstructed location from where you can present and lead discussions.
- The video, **ADVERSITY QUOTIENT: TURNING OBSTACLES INTO OPPORTUNITIES.**
- TV/VCR with remote.
- Copy of the training session agenda for each participant – the agenda should be as specific as possible, including discussion topics, break times, etc.
- Flip-chart, easel, pad, markers and masking tape.
- Additional supplies and visual aids you feel would be beneficial to your session.

With the appropriate planning and preparation completed prior to the participant's arrival, you will create a training session that is well managed, organized and beneficial.

TRAINING SESSION OVERVIEW

Agendas

1-Hour Session Agenda:

Introduction	15 Minutes
Self-Assessment	10 Minutes
Objectives Review	5 Minutes
Video	20 Minutes
Discussion	10 Minutes
Summary and Evaluation	10 Minutes

2-Hour Session Agenda: (Recommended minimum length)

Introduction	15 Minutes
Self-Assessment	10 Minutes
Objectives Review	10 Minutes
Video	20 Minutes
Discussion	30 Minutes
AQ in Action	30 Minutes
Summary and Evaluation	15 Minutes

4-Hour Session Agenda:

Introduction	30 Minutes
Self-Assessment	20 Minutes
Objectives Review	20 Minutes
Video	20 Minutes
Break	15 Minutes
Discussion	50 Minutes
AQ in Action	60 Minutes
Summary and Evaluation	25 Minutes

Presentation Outline

The following agendas are provided as a guideline only. Please remember that one of the objectives of this Leader's Guide is flexibility. Exercises may be substituted, and agendas lengthened or shortened, to suit your needs. The agendas are merely suggestions to provide you with a starting point for tailoring a session that best fits your needs. The video in this program carefully walks participants through the steps involved in understanding and improving your Adversity Quotient. You will want to expand upon each topical area covered in **ADVERSITY QUOTIENT: TURNING YOUR OBSTACLES INTO OPPORTUNITIES** in your training session to maximize the full benefits of this video program. We recommend following up the initial session with several discussion sessions so participants may share their progress, and any obstacles, with the support of others working through the process.

Following are recommendations for executing the sample agendas:

Introduction

- Introduce yourself and welcome the participants to the training session.
- Review the agenda and provide a brief explanation of the purpose of the session – to introduce the participants to AQ and the power improving it can have on their personal and professional lives.
- If you are conducting a two-hour or four-hour session, have participants introduce themselves by stating their name, their department or area (if applicable), and what they hope to get out of the session.

Objectives Overview

- **Welcome to the Program:** Introduce the specific training objectives for the session. Be sure participants understand what you expect from them during this process and what results you hope to see following the program – knowing what is expected up front will help them participate successfully. Explain that the objectives for the training session are to:
 1. Understand the role adversity plays in your health, vitality, performance, and success.
 2. Discover how AQ influences outcomes.

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3. Explore how to overcome adversity.
4. Learn how to expand your capacity and exceed the expectations of your performance and potential.

- **Pre-Test the Attendees:**

1. Ask the participants to vote, by show of hands, the answer to the question: **“What number of adversities do we currently face daily?”** Ask them to choose whether the answer is:

___ **7 adversities?** ___ **13 adversities?** ___ **23 adversities?**

Tell them the correct answer is 23 inclusive of adversities ranging from minor annoyances to full-blown catastrophic events. Point out that this compelling statistic demonstrates how critical it is that we learn to identify and improve our adversity quotient – our AQ.

2. Discuss the 5 major reasons why we should all invest in improving our ability to deal with adversity:
 - A. *AQ can be validly and reliably measured as well as tracked against performance or other critical variables.*
 - B. *AQ can be permanently rewired and strengthened.*
 - C. *AQ is a natural enhancer, not an add-on, for current learning, performance, assessment, and change initiatives.*
 - D. *AQ is an adaptable technology, not a program, lending it to a wide array of applications.*
 - E. *AQ is deeply grounded in 37 years of research and 10 years of organizational application and industries.*
3. Explain that few people are aware of their AQ – yet, we all have one. Unlike IQ (intelligence quotient) or EQ (emotional intelligence quotient), which are only identifiable, our AQ (adversity quotient), is able to be identified but most significantly – it can be IMPROVED.

4. Tell the participants that the rest of the program will address the primary components of AQ.

- **Start the Video:** You may wish to pause the video where you think it is appropriate to emphasize a point, or discuss a practical application or something relevant to your organization; or, you may choose to wait until the end of the video for discussion.

If you choose to view the entire video first, follow the video with a short discussion. This discussion need not focus on any particular question or issue; rather, it may be a simple roundtable discussion about the video and topics raised.

AQ in Action

- If you are following the one-hour agenda, and have time remaining before the summary and evaluation, begin a discussion with the following questions.
 1. What issues in the video did you specifically relate to?
 2. What are the major messages of the video?
 3. What skills or actions are necessary to improve your AQ?
 4. Why are these skills or actions essential to understanding and improving your AQ?
 5. How does the story of Ernest Shackleton exemplify AQ in action?
 6. What role did AQ play in the survival of Ernest Shackleton and the other expedition members?
 7. How can AQ be applied to manage the adversities you face daily?

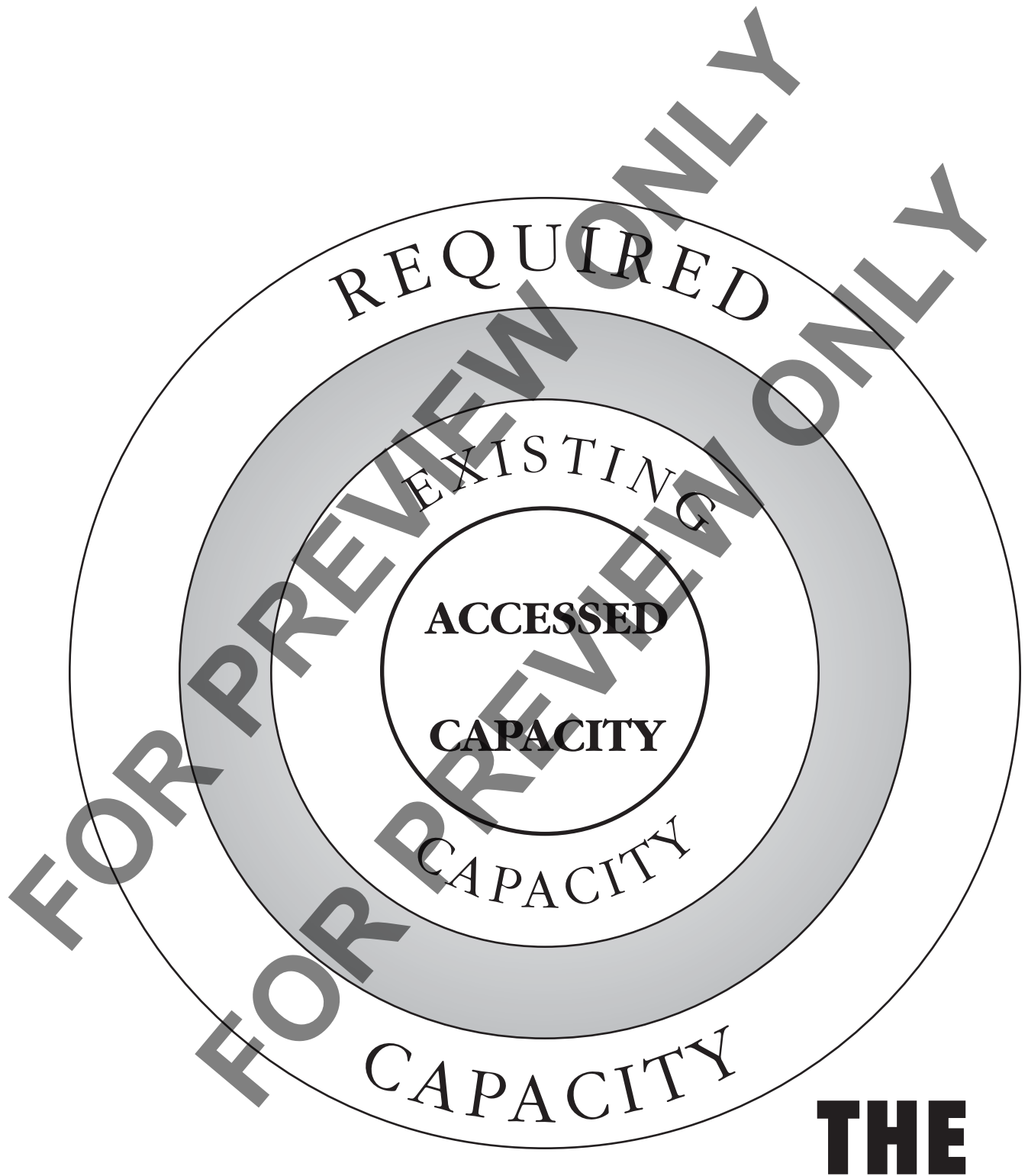
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- If you are following the two or four-hour agenda, continue the discussion with this content:
 - 1. Human Capacity Defined** – Use overhead.
 - 2. Capacity Gap Defined** – Use overhead.
 - 3. Adversity Quotient Defined** – Use overhead.
 - 4. CORE Defined** – Use overhead.
 - 5. Analyze Shackleton Story** – Discussion.
- **Summary:** Review the objectives of the training program and discuss how the objectives were achieved. If you are planning on bringing participants back together for follow-up sessions, set the date for the next session. Send them off with the assignment of identifying one major adversity each is confronted with and encourage them to apply the dimensions of CORE to that adversity by asking the following questions:
 1. How much control do I have in relation to this adversity?
(C = Control)
 2. To what degree do I own the outcome of this adversity?
(O = Ownership)
 3. How far will the adversity reach into other areas of my life?
(R = Reach)
 4. How long will the adversity last? How long will the cause of the adversity last?
(E = Endurance)

Follow-Up: Continue the follow-up session until all are well on their way to improving their AQ.

Evaluation: Distribute program evaluations to all participants and ask them to take a few minutes to complete them before they leave the session.

THE CAPACITY GAP



SILENT TOLL

Performance

Morale

Attitude

Health

AQ

Your pattern
of response
to adversity.

C
Control

O
Ownership

CORE

R
Reach

E
Endurance

Control

CORE

CORE

Ownership

CORE

D Reach

CORE

Endurance

“As our world
becomes more demanding,
AQ lies at the epicenter
of human capacity and our
ability to thrive”

— *Paul Stoltz*

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CORE Exercise

Consider each of the adversities you face daily – from the minor annoyances to a full-blown major issue you are currently dealing with. Take of these adversities and think through the following four CORE dimensions of the adversity chosen.

1. How much control do I have in relation to this adversity?
(C = Control)
2. To what degree do I own the outcome of this adversity?
(O = Ownership)
3. How far will the adversity reach into other areas of my life?
(R = Reach)
4. How long will the adversity last? How long will the cause of the adversity last?
(E = Endurance)

Now, give some time and thought to answering the following question and bring your thoughts or written response to the AQ follow-up session.

1. How does your individual AQ based on the four AQ CORE dimensions impact the way you are viewing the adversity?
2. Knowing what you know now about your inherent response to adversity, what steps could you take to improve your response to the adversity at hand?

Evaluation

Your input is IMPORTANT in helping us evaluate and improve our training programs. Thank you for taking the time to think about and respond to the following questions.

COURSE: _____ **DATE:** _____ **FACILITATOR:** _____

About the Course

1. Were the objectives clearly stated? _____ Yes _____ No
2. How well were the objectives met by the course (Circle one)?

Were not met 1 2 3 4 5 **Were met very well**

3. How applicable will this training be to your job?

___ Almost none of the material will be applicable.

___ Some will be applicable, but some was confusing or irrelevant.

___ Absolutely applicable, I look forward to seeing results soon.

4. Was the information presented in a logical or understandable order?

___ Didn't seem logical at all.

___ Some was, some wasn't.

___ Yes, all of it seemed logical and understandable.

5. How useful were the discussions, the *Adversity Response Profile*TM, and the exercises in helping you learn the information?

___ Not useful at all ___ Somewhat useful ___ Very Useful

6. To what extent did this training meet your expectations?

___ Did NOT meet ___ MET ___ Exceeded Expectations

7. What would you add or change to improve this course?

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About the Facilitator

8. Was the facilitator positive and professional?

Very much so Could Improve

9. How well was the facilitator prepared and able to explain the information?

NOT well prepared 1 2 3 4 5 **VERY well prepared**

10. Did the facilitator create an atmosphere that encouraged questions and learning?

Yes No Facilitator should have: _____

11. Did the facilitator explain the material in ways that made it applicable to your job?

Very much so Sometimes Almost none was applicable

12. Your comments on the facilitator:

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paul G. Stoltz, Ph.D., has emerged as one of the world's leading experts on human and organizational performance.

A sought-after consultant and speaker, and an acclaimed independent researcher, he is best known as the developer of Adversity Quotient, or AQ, a scientifically grounded technology used by individuals and organizations to measure and strengthen their response to adversity.

Stoltz is the author of the best-selling books, *Adversity Quotient: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities* (John Wiley & Son, Inc.), and *Adversity Quotient @ Work: Make Everyday Challenges the Key to Your Success* (William Morrow), an important, new follow-up book that applies AQ principles to the workplace.

A popular resource for business and consumer media, he has worked with *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, CNBC's *Power Lunch*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Investor's Business Daily*, *The Washington Post*, *Newsday*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *Fast Company, Inc.*, *Psychology Today*, and *Family Circle*, among countless others.

As president and CEO of PEAK Learning, Inc., an international consulting and research firm based in San Luis Obispo, California, Stoltz works with a variety of multinational clients including ADC Broadband, Cypress Semiconductor, Deloitte & Touche, Federal Express, Marriott International, Qualcomm, and SunTrust Bank.

He received a bachelor's degree in organizational communication and economics from the University of California, and a master's degree and doctorate in organizational communication, development and leadership from the University of Minnesota.

Over time, he has increased his own AQ from 168 to 197.

ADVERSITY QUOTIENT RESOURCES

PEAK Learning, Inc., was founded by Dr. Paul Stoltz in 1987 and has grown into an international firm of select professionals focusing on applying, researching and expanding the AQ philosophy, science, and methodology to address a broad range of issues.

PEAK is the exclusive and original creator of the AQ measure, programming and change processes. The PEAK team of professionals can provide the following services:

- Keynote Presentations on AQ and related topics.
- Customized AQ Programs.
- Web-based AQ Programs.
- AQ Consulting.
- AQ Coaching.

To learn more about Paul Stoltz, Ph.D., AQ and related AQ products and services, please contact:

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To purchase the **ADVERSITY QUOTIENT: TURNING OBSTACLES INTO OPPORTUNITIES** or **ADVERSITY QUOTIENT @ WORK: MAKE EVERYDAY CHALLENGES THE KEY TO YOUR SUCCESS** video programs and related books, contact:



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