



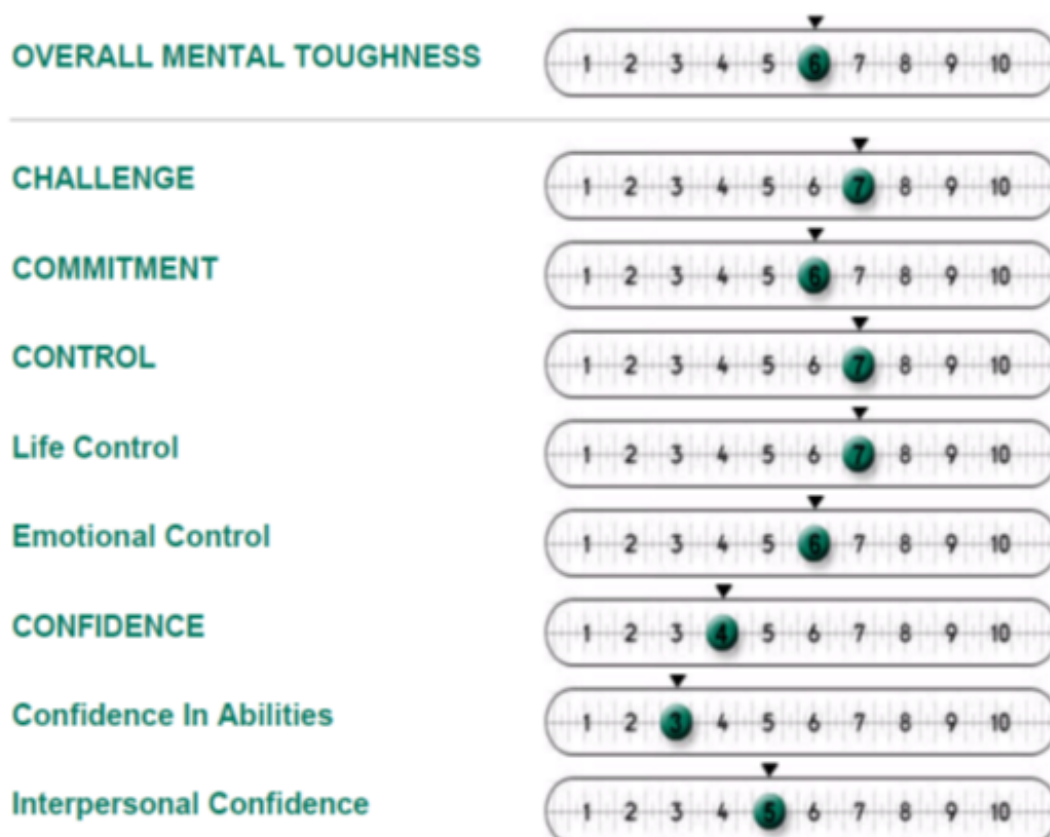
CASE STUDY – MENTAL TOUGHNESS AND BUSINESS START-UP

This case study features three entrepreneurs in the process of establishing their own businesses. The short case studies documented below show how use of the mental toughness measure, MTQ48, assisted the coaching and development process for each person and helped them identify key areas for goal setting and focus.

1. Case Study 1 – Adam Robson
2. Case Study 2 – Leila Nathaniel
3. Case Study 3 – Sarah Scoutman

Case Study 1 - Adam Robson

Adam had chosen to resign from his position at the Law Society to enable him to provide more care for his young son, who has a serious medical condition and a shortened life expectancy. Additionally, to ensure his professional aspirations and interest were maintained, Adam wanted to set up his own coaching business, using his recent qualification as a Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) Practitioner. This would allow him to work reduced hours, based from home and be on hand to care for his son.



On reviewing his mental toughness results with his Cascade coach, Adam immediately noticed that the scores around confidence revealed an important issue for him. Adam had a long and successful career at executive level and his confidence in his abilities in a corporate environment around leading teams, developing strategic approaches, generating new businesses and contributing at a senior level to the achievement of key business objectives was significant.

However, in relation to running his own business, finding clients, marketing strategies, dealing with company set up requirements and actually working successfully as a coach, his confidence was low.

From a coaching perspective, this insight facilitated work with Adam around creating a business plan with key milestones to allow him to move forward with a step by step

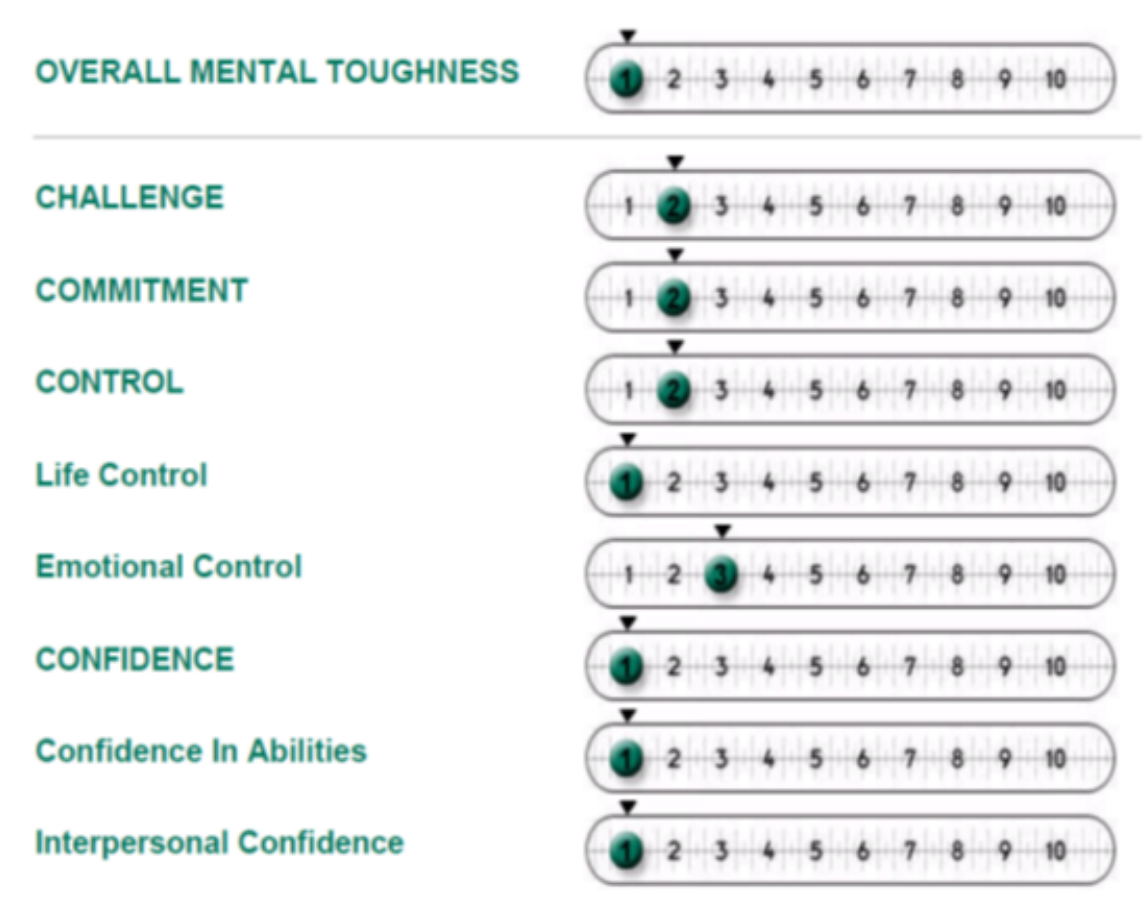
approach and see business set up and growth as something to learn from rather than face with no experience.

Adam also developed a mindset to act from an “as if” frame, a specific technique within NLP, which means in his marketing and communication with potential new clients, he acted as if he were already a successful business coach, rather than expressing himself in terms that confirmed his inexperience, recent qualification and new career direction.

Six months after the coaching intervention and mental toughness questionnaire, Adam has a full portfolio of coaching clients, is able to rely on word of mouth to generate new business and has found the work / life balance he was seeking with plenty of time to spend with his son.

Case Study 2 - Leila Nathaniel

Leila has been made redundant and finding that in the current economic climate, securing a new job was proving harder than she had anticipated. Leila also wanted to explore options for setting up a virtual PA business, as her background as an administrator and office manager had given her some strong skills and experience in this area.



In reviewing her mental toughness results and talking this through with her coach, it became apparent to Leila that she was more affected by the redundancy situation than she had realised, and this had left her feeling unfocused, demotivated and very unsure about how to move forward.

Her ambition to work for herself was clouding her determination to secure new employment and her lack of confidence about setting up on her own was hindering her ability to take this forward. All in all, she concluded that she felt “stuck” and needed to find a way to harness her energy and drive. She reflected on recent interviews and realised that this lack of direction, focus and purpose had no doubt come across.

Leila felt galvanised by seeing her scores, which she believed would have been very different six months previously when she was employed and busy enjoying a challenging and rewarding position. She used the information and development suggestions in the report to work through with her coach and develop a personal action plan to help her secure a new job and go through a planning process of actions and decisions required in terms of setting up her own business. She realised that she would feel more confident and determined about working for herself when she was in a position of choice about resigning from a job, rather than seeking to set her business up because she needed an income quickly.

This new direction and purpose allowed Leila to turn her attention to applying for jobs that were more in line with her previous position, rather than seeking a promotion as she had in effect been doing with recent applications. After one further application, she was successful in securing a part

time post. She described the interview as the best she had ever done, as she felt confident, determined and clear about her skills and what she could offer.

Having some structure back in her life with a working routine and some disposable income has eased the pressure on Leila and she is now working through her personal development plan, with the ongoing support of her coach, to set up her own business, creating a website, exploring options with potential customers and for the moment plans to run the business whilst working and as the business grows, will make a decision about handing in her notice and working for herself full-time.

Page Break

Case Study 3 - Sarah Scoutman

Sarah sought out personal coaching and support with hypnotherapy as she wanted to lose weight. During the initial exploratory discussion, it became apparent that Sarah was dealing emotionally with a range of other issues; feeling tired and run down, and recognised she was taking her stress and anxiety out on close family members.

She became upset and tearful during the conversation and made a very strong statement about how much she hated her job working night shifts in a local garage, as she felt it was purposeless, poorly paid and did not interest or motivate her in any way. She began to talk about how much happier she had felt years previously when she worked as a child minder and nursery nurse, finding fulfilment and enjoyment in working with children, using her qualifications and working hours that were much better suited to family life.

Sarah realised that her overeating and general unhappiness had developed during the 18 months she had been working at the garage and that if she were to get back on track with a job she enjoyed, these other aspects of her life would come back into balance and within her control.

The remainder of the coaching sessions were then directed by Sarah to focus on how she could set up her own childminding and nursery business and she was very excited by this new challenge.

Using the mental toughness measure allowed the coaching conversations to focus in on the key areas that Sarah needed to develop. These were not to give up at the first hurdle, to understand and expect that there would be problems to overcome, solutions to find and that she needed to strengthen her resolve and “stickability” to see her ambitions come to fruition.

She also needed to learn to become less associated with immediate feelings in dealing with business set up issues so that her negotiation and communication skills always remained professional and business-like, as she had a tendency to become very overemotional very quickly, lose her temper or burst into tears if she felt that something was becoming difficult, or someone was being obstructive. Within the safe confines of a coaching session, Sarah learnt and practised techniques for doing this and became more confident in her abilities to manage her emotions, present herself professionally and take control back of her life, her eating and her career.

Sarah is now childminding from home, has given up her night shifts at the garage and subsequently lost in a stone in weight. She would now describe herself as happy and fulfilled, doing something she loves and having found balance in her life.

