



DEVELOPING MENTAL  
TOUGHNESS IN LEADERSHIP  
DEVELOPMENT  
CONSULTANTS

## Background

Refinery Leadership is a consulting firm which designs, delivers, and measures initiatives to develop and grow leaders. It had recently hired a number of consultants to build capacity for further growth. A concern however was the low level of confidence seen in many of the consultants, demonstrated by feelings of anxiety about performance, feelings of intimidation and reluctance to facilitate new material.

## The Study

The MTQ48 was used to explore the effects of interventions, before and during “performances”, on the development of mental toughness in 9 Leadership Consultants. Performances included client meetings, workshops, coaching sessions and group facilitation work. Interventions were introduced to all participants. These included attentional control, visualisation, and self-talk techniques. Participants completed the MTQ48 assessment and were then introduced to one or more of the intervention techniques before and/or during performances for the duration of two months. At the end of the intervention period, each participant completed the MTQ48 for a second time.

## The Results

Overall Mental Toughness scores, pre and post-intervention, are provided in the table below.

|               | Pre - Mental Toughness score | Post - Mental Toughness score |
|---------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Participant 1 | 5                            | 6                             |
| Participant 2 | 5                            | 5                             |
| Participant 3 | 6                            | 8                             |
| Participant 4 | 6                            | 9                             |
| Participant 5 | 8                            | 5                             |
| Participant 6 | 8                            | 9                             |
| Participant 7 | 7                            | 9                             |
| Participant 8 | 6                            | 8                             |
| Participant 9 | 6                            | 7                             |

## Outcomes

The study showed an overall improvement in mental toughness for the group. For 7 of the 9 consultants, mental toughness shifted in a favourable direction. These shifts in mental toughness were accompanied by participant reports of more successful outcomes during their performances.

Successful outcomes reported included better facilitation as evidenced by feedback, better relationships developed with others, more organised and more productive meetings, and perceptions of greater confidence in all areas.

This case study confirms that there appears to be a positive relationship between mental toughness and improved performance and wellbeing, but also in selecting interventions and improvement in mental toughness.