

## Editorial

# National Mental Model and Competitiveness: Transformation Towards Achieving and Progressive Behavior

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Mental Model is believed to be a crucial issue for turning this nation to be a developed nation. There are seven mental qualities that delay development, which are quality-despising mentality, shortcut mentality, vertical-feudalistic dependency, easy to complain and to find excuses mentality, power-oriented, extrinsic-oriented, myth and fate believer. It will require reconstruction and transformation to have an achieving and progressive mental model. There are seven mental qualities required to improve this nation, which are adaptive to changes, appreciative of time and resources, independent and responsible, achieving-oriented, trusting science, having self-control and committed to morality. In order to bring about this constructive mental model, quality education and constructive habits are needed to optimize critical thinking. Hence it will strengthen the process of constructive habits and reinforce culture of accountability, starting from family upbringing, school education and interaction in the society.

*Keywords:* mental model, competitive, accomplished behavior

Model mental diyakini merupakan persoalan krusial bangsa ini untuk menjadi negara maju. Ada tujuh kualitas mental yang menghambat kemajuan, yakni mental yang meremehkan mutu, suka jalan pintas, ketergantungan vertikal-feodalistik, gampang mengeluh dan mencari alasan, orientasi kekuasaan, orientasi ekstrinsik, dan percaya mitos dan nasib. Dibutuhkan rekonstruksi dan transformasi menuju model mental yang lebih prestatif dan progresif. Ada tujuh kualitas mental yang dibutuhkan bangsa ini untuk menjadi lebih baik, yakni adaptif terhadap perubahan, menghargai waktu dan sumberdaya, kemandirian dan tanggung jawab, berorientasi capaian, percaya pada ilmu pengetahuan, pengendalian diri, dan komitmen moral. Untuk mewujudkan model mental yang konstruktif tersebut dibutuhkan pendidikan yang bermutu dan akuntabel, dengan mengoptimalkan fungsi berpikir kritis, memperkuat proses pembiasaan konstruktif, dan memperkokoh kultur akuntabilitas, mulai dari pengasuhan di keluarga, pembelajaran di sekolah, dan interaksi di masyarakat.

*Kata kunci:* model mental, daya saing, perilaku prestatif

Along with academic experience, observations and meditations in relation to individual's behaviors, came an underlying question in my mind: why is one more successful than others? Why is one athlete more accomplished than others? Why is one leader more influential than others? In macroscopic scale, why is one nation more developed than others? This is an interesting issue to be examined although it is

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not easy to resolve. Not only that the variables are not singular, but also there are differences in the meaning of success for each individual and culture. Many viewpoints and opinions emerged, trying to resolve the issue. The first opinion stated that talent, including intelligence, has a great influence towards an individual's success. This opinion had been fundamentally argued after Benjamin Bloom tested 120 individuals with various successful professionals such as artists, entrepreneurs, scientists and athletes (Bloom, 1985; Dweck, 2012). Bloom found that they have mediocre childhoods. They did show any signs of outstanding talents. Some even had delay in

reaching the development milestones. Similarly, a research done by Goleman (1995) indicated that non-intellectual factors such as self-control, collaboration, and persistence were more detrimental in achieving success than the intelligence factor. Lately Robert Kiyosaki (2013), bestseller author, also found that “A” quality student was actually working for “C” quality student. This confirms that although talent can’t be ignored, it is not detrimental to one’s success.

The second opinion stated that the availability of infrastructure and facility, including big funding, are the keys to success. This viewpoint lost its relevance if we examined Indonesian’s sport success in 1962, when we ranked second in Asian Games (Asian Games is an Asian sporting event, which is held every four years; now Indonesia is the 15<sup>th</sup> in rank). Was Indonesia wealthier than now? Did the athletes have better nutrition? Did the athletes have better bonus? The answer is no. Similarly, if we study the achievements of badminton athletes in 1970-1980s, there was hardly any wealth at the time. Through their modest facilities (Lutan, 2013), they dominated international badminton championships, both in single and double matches. Rudy Hartono, the maestro, admitted that it was harder for them to beat fellow Indonesian players than to beat other countries. In contrast, we currently have ample facilities and funding, as well as significant bonus increase for the athletes, yet there are fewer achievements. Hence the availability of facility and funding are not the main factors of success.

The third opinion stated that time is the most important means to achieve success. Older individuals, who have more opportunities to work, will be more successful. Countries that had their independence earlier would be more successful than those who had their independence later. This opinion is also

debatable; there are many individuals who are younger yet more successful than those who are older. Some countries which independences were earlier than Indonesia (India in 1947, Malaysia in 1957, Singapore in 1965) are far more developed than Indonesia. South Korea, which independence is only two days apart from Indonesia, is far more advanced than Indonesia. As well as some countries which independence were centuries ago, yet their developments are far behind, such as Greek in 1821, Cuba 1902, and Dominican Republic in 1844. This proves that the length of time is irrelevant with achievement.

### The Root of the Problem

The above-mentioned viewpoints have weak arguments and some even have lost its relevance. The underlying question is; what is the root of the problem to one’s success and failure, as well as the development and the decline of a nation? My main thesis attempted to resolve the issue in relation to mental model that resides in the individual’s mindset, including a group of individuals in a nation. In this research, mental model is defined as a set of beliefs, attitudes, perceptions and values that influences individual’s mindset and action. Mental model can also be understood as assumptions, generalization, image or rooted impression that influence how individuals understand the world and how they take a course of action (Senge, 2006; Groesser, 2012).

There are three reasons why mental model becomes the root of the problem and significantly influence the success of an individual. Firstly, mental model becomes a predisposition in individual’s thoughts and actions. Every stimulus from the surrounding is interpreted and responded by mental model (Peters, 2012; Brockman, 2013). The quality of the response

Table 1  
*Top Ten Olympic and Asian Games Medal Tally Nations*

2012 London Olympic Games			2010 China Asian Games		
Rank	Country	∑ Gold Medal	Rank	Country	∑ Gold Medal
1	USA	46	1	China	199
2	China	38	2	South Korea	76
3	Great Britain	29	3	Japan	48
4	Russia	24	4	Iran	20
5	South Korea	13	5	Kazakhstan	18
6	Germany	11	6	India	14
7	France	11	7	Taiwan	13
8	Italy	8	8	Uzbekistan	11
9	Hungary	8	9	Thailand	11
10	Australia	7	10	Malaysia	9
63	Indonesia	0	15	Indonesia	4

*Note.* This table was adapted from various sources.

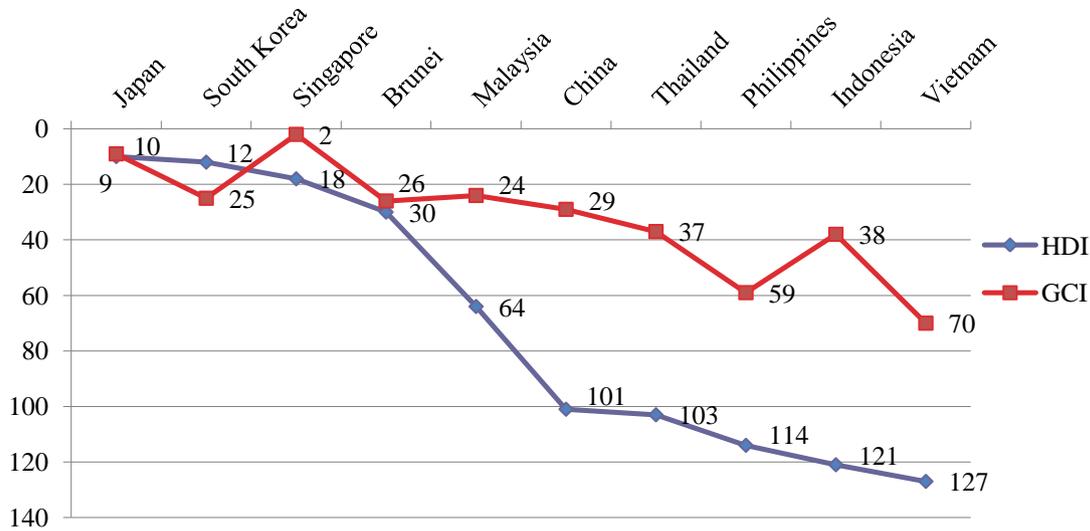


Figure 1. Indonesian HDI and GCI rank compared to other countries\*  
 Source: World Economic Forum, 2013 & UNDP, 2013

that comes out will depend on the individual’s mental model. Hence the attitude demonstrated by the individual is essentially a reflection of his/her mental model. Secondly, what someone has achieved, whether it is a success or failure, an incline or decline, is an aggregate and an accumulation of experiences derived from the individual’s mental model. The true achievement of an individual is a product of his/her mental model (Brockman, 2013; de Bono, 2004; Tracy, 2003). Thirdly, there are many researches about successful individuals in the world and it is evident that those with high achievements possess constructive mental model. They are relentless, achievement-oriented, self-reflective, good self-management, highly committed and accountable. (Maksum, 2006; 2010; Markum, 1998; Pink, 2009, Dweck, 2012; Zolli & Healy, 2012).

We can further examine the success of certain countries in sport, demonstrated both in Olympic and Asian Games, such as USA, China and South Korea (see Table 1). Why are USA and Canada more developed compared to Latin American countries? This is due to the American’s progressive attitude and values compared to traditional Ibero-American in Latin American (Harrison & Huntington, 2000). The same explanation is given in the case of China and South Korea (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012). Their development is closely related to Confucius values which give emphasis to the future, effort, achievement, education, purpose and money-saving attitude. Interestingly, there is a linear correlation between sport and achievements in other area, such

as Human Development Index – HDI and Global Competitiveness Index – GCI (see Figure 1). Japan, South Korea and Singapore, which have high index of HDI and GCI, are known as nations that have high working ethic. This fact strengthens the argument that human quality is more detrimental to nation’s development than its resources and geographical position. This is similar to the outcome of international conference initiated by Harvard University, which then documented in a book called “Culture matter: How values shape human progress” (Harrison & Huntington, 2000). Similarly Acemoglu & Robinson (2012) research’s outcome documented in a best-seller book “The origin of power, prosperity and poverty: Why nations fail?”

Observing the life story and career path of world-class athletes such as Mohammad Ali, Michael Jordan, Michael Phelps, and Lionel Messi, we can conclude that mental capacity can exceed physical capacity (Gladwell, 2010; Dweck, 2012). Judging by his physical potential and boxing style, Mohammad Ali was not an exceptional fighter type. Michael Jordan was eliminated once from his school’s basketball club because he was not regarded as a talented player. Michael Phelps was diagnosed with attention deficit disorder at the age of 6. Lionel Messi was diagnosed with a growth hormone disorder at the age of 11. Messi’s circumstances were particularly difficult as the medical cost was \$900 per month, whilst his dad was only a factory worker and his mom worked in a Laundromat.

In the context of Indonesia, there are many success stories that did not include wealth. Icuk Sugiarto was

only a son of a blue-collar worker of Cultural Affairs Department in Solo Council. He even had to borrow racket to practice badminton. Padepokan Gajah Lampung, founded by Imron Rosadi 50 years ago, has produced world-class weight lifter champions. Similarly, Indra Safri who recently became a phenomenon due to his success to fantastically brought U-19 soccer team to become AFF champion, defeating South Korea, the longstanding defending champion. He admitted in *Tempo* magazine that in his early days as a trainer, Safri had to search players in remote areas even though it wasn't part of his contract. Due to severe internal conflict of the board of directors in 2011-2012, Indra Safri also did not receive his salary for a year. While searching for players, once he had to starve himself, as he ran out of money to buy food. Nevertheless, he strived in the limitations ("Indra Sjafrri, Berawal," 2013). Thus, for the high achievers, limitations, obstacles and discomfort are not the causes to cease. They become the driving forces toward success. In this context, individual's mental model becomes a detrimental factor.

### **Theoretical Foundation of Mental Model**

In this section I would like to briefly explain the theoretical foundation of mental model, especially from neuropsychology, cognitive psychology and human motivation point of views. In the last decade, neuroscience has progressed a long way due to the highly curious scientists on their quest to reveal the complexity of human brain mystery, its structure and working mechanism. Human brain has more than 100 billion neurons and quadrillion synapses connections (Chopra & Tanzi, 2012). The neuropsychology scientists concluded that the brain is a commanding and controlling center of human's behavior. They also found that human's behavior have a neuron base in brain structure (Kurzweil, 2013; Peters, 2012). There are three crucial parts in the brain that are responsible and interrelated in shaping mental model, which are: frontal, limbic and parietal area (Peters, 2012). Frontal area has a function to make decision based on rational reasoning, which includes careful consideration, analysis and weighing out an action from positive-negative and benefit-loss point of views. People who think logically and thoroughly use mostly the frontal part of the brain in the thinking process. In contrast, the limbic area has a function to respond to stimulus instinctively and emotionally. Its response tends to be hasty, impulsive and often destructive. People who

respond to an issue emotionally, irrationally and judgmentally and having a prejudice use mostly the limbic area of the brain in the thinking process. Meanwhile, parietal area is used to store information that includes attitudes, beliefs and values resulting from processes that happened in frontal and limbic areas. Mental model lies and stored in parietal area. The quality of stored information will depend greatly from the input. If the input of the frontal area comes from education that values the essence of humanity, then the quality of information is relatively constructive. On the other hand, if the input of the limbic area mostly comes from education that distorts the essence of humanity, then the information quality tends to be destructive. The stored information will be used every now and then to respond to stimulus automatically and will also be used as a reference in decision-making (Peters, 2012; Kurzweil, 2013). Hence that is why one's response to particular problems has certain pattern as a consequence of brain mechanism responding to arising stimuli.

The research also shows that experience will influence the physical shape of the brain (Peters, 2012; Medina 2009). Hardworking people have different brain shape than lazy people. People who use their logic in their thinking will have different brain shape than people who mostly use their emotion in their thinking. Brain is basically elastic like a muscle. The more it interconnects the neurons, the more it grows and the stronger it will be. When an individual is studying, his neurons will move, grow more and divide themselves to new branches, connecting one dot to a new dot in the close proximity. The forming of a new connection strengthens the dots and this improves into information relay efficiency. This confirms the law of exercise principle by Thorndike (Maksum, 2012), the more frequent we study/practice, the more effective our knowledge and skills will be. Vincenzo Malacarne, an Italian scientist, conducted a biological experiment in a flock of birds, which yielded in a remarkable result. The birds were trained complex motions. After he cut open their brains, Malacarne found that the trained birds had more fold pattern in their brain than the untrained birds. Charles Darwin conducted similar experiment after he carefully examined the brain of wild animals compared to tame animals. Darwin found that the brain of the wild animals was 15-30% larger than the tamed animals (Medina, 2009).

In cognitive psychology perspective, mental model review has stepped into a frontier zone. It does not only relate to main issues of psychology, but also has expanded to other fields, although it is still interrelated

to human behavior. Daniel Kahneman (2011), an expert psychologist from Princeton University studied judgment, decision-making and individual economical behavior and came up with a new theory which he called prospect theory. Kahneman believes that economy is closely related to human behavior. From this study Kahneman received Nobel Prize in economy in 2002. This is a remarkable accomplishment. He compiled his ideas and academic works in a bestseller book: thinking, fast and slow. According to Kahneman, people are often bias in making decision. They do not optimally using his/her rational thinking and tend to put priority in short-term need. Consequently, there are many counterproductive and less effective results in reaching economical goals. Kahneman used thinking fast and thinking slow terms. Thinking fast is typically emotional, intuitive, spontaneous, careless when considering and has an instinctive-out of control desire. On the other hand, thinking slow is identified by rational decision-making with careful consideration; it is relatively flexible and adaptive to rules.

In the history, humankind did not have a good record in making decision and tended to be bias in their thinking (Dobelli, 2013). There were many previous decisions that were reckless after being carefully revisited based on data and logical facts. Research in US toward lawyers showed that 44% among them did not recommend their children to choose their careers as lawyers. 40% executives resigned from their job in the first 18 months, and more than half of teachers left their jobs in the first 4 months of their career (Heath & Heath, 2013). That fact proves that many individuals took the wrong decision and often resulted in regrets. The more limbic system is utilized, the more thinking fast is used.

In the context of decision-making, the role of mental model is vital (see Figure 2). Stimulus and information obtained from the surroundings are processed and interpreted by mental model to generate decision and action. If the mental model is counterproductive, then the generated response will

be linear to the mental model. On the other hand, if the mental model is constructive, then the generated response will correspond with the mental model. For example, being poor and not having facility will make the destructive mental model individual helpless, cranky and hopeless. But for the constructive mental model individual, this condition becomes a challenge to overcome. For an individual with destructive mentality, victory has to be won by any means. This may include dishonest ways such as using fake ID, falsifying documents, bribing referee and harming the opponent. But for an individual with constructive mentality, victory in a match has to be won through good sportsmanship.

Carol Dweck (2012), a psychology expert from Stanford University, has a slightly different point of view. She uses fixed mindset and growth mindset terms in order to describe how mental model becomes a vital part of reaching success. Fixed mindset is the individual's thoughts that are undoubtedly very difficult to change. On the other hand, growth mindset is the individual's thoughts that are open to changes to and will continually develop as a part of his/her effort to learn to achieve something. For the fixed mindset people, failure and obstacle are regarded as something horrible and they will do everything they can to avoid them. While for the growth mindset people, failure and obstacle are reflections to introspect themselves as well as challenges to improve themselves. For the fixed mindset people, other people's success is a threat; hence they will try their best to prevent it from happening. Whilst for the growth mindset people, other people's success becomes a lesson to learn so that they can achieve the same thing.

How are mental models of a group of individuals in developed countries? We can study from McClelland's research findings (1961), a psychology expert from Harvard University, that was done forty years ago. He studied what made the developed countries different than the third-world countries

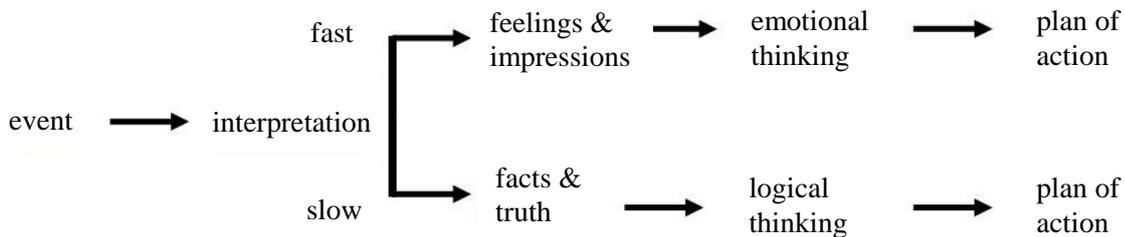


Figure 2. Differences in thinking process (adapted from Peters, 2012).

from psychology perspective. His research was done to a group of individuals in more than sixty countries. He concluded that the developed countries are filled with people with strong need for achievement, characterized by high standard of working, not afraid of challenges, accountable, self-discipline and risk-taker. On the other hand, the third-world countries are filled with people with strong need for affiliation, aiming for alliance, common feelings, cord of kinship, and conformity, which often resulting in destructive consensus. A country can have a delayed development if it has an excessive need of power. This is typically shown by having strong desires to control other people, chasing position and pursuing hedonistic lust that distorts ethic and public moral. We can also study recent research by Harrison & Hutington (2000), Acemoglu & Robinson (2012) and Jacques (2012). They generally agree that the development of one country is influenced by perceptions, attitudes, beliefs and values in the mindset of individuals, especially if they have a position and strategic role in decision-making. The role of a leader and government becomes crucial to create a healthy organization culture, as it can achieve optimal achievement. (Drucker, 2005; McClelland & Boyatzis, 1982).

### Mental Model which Delays Development

Whether we are an athlete, trainer, referee, advisor, student or even a lecturer, we may or may not realize that we have mental qualities that delay development. An athlete who is tardy, trainer who favors one athlete than others, student who hands in plagiarized assignment and a lecturer who never updates his teaching material are few of examples of reflected

behaviors from counterproductive mental qualities. Koentjaraningrat (1990), a well known anthropologist, once reminded this nation that there were many mentalities which prevent Indonesia's development, such as bypass, indiscipline, weak, easy to give in and feudal mentality. Additionally, this issue of human resource has been a hot topic in many seminars, conferences and trainings. There are many mental qualities that have to be deconstructed so that we can transform ourselves and improve our nation.

**Quality-despising mentality.** A mental quality that dismisses high standards and only performs to get the job done and because of mere duty. There is no fixed and measured standard of procedure and quality. There is no effort and pride in the work that they do.

**Shortcut mentality.** A mental quality that does not appreciate the process and hard work. The individual is lazy to think creatively and he/she only wants to copy other people's work. Those who like to take a shortcut often dismiss rules and regulations and tend to push their way in. For example, a district would like to be successful in PON without training the athletes, instead they "buy in" athlete from other district.

**Vertical-feudalistic dependent mentality.** A mental quality that only wants to serve the superintendent and does not have the ability to think critically. In the long term this may lead to the loss of independence and courage to make a decision.

**Mentality that easy to complain and find excuses.** These are weak mental qualities and vulnerable to pressure and hard work. Hard work becomes a burden and it is easy for them to find excuses to justify their complaints, including blaming other

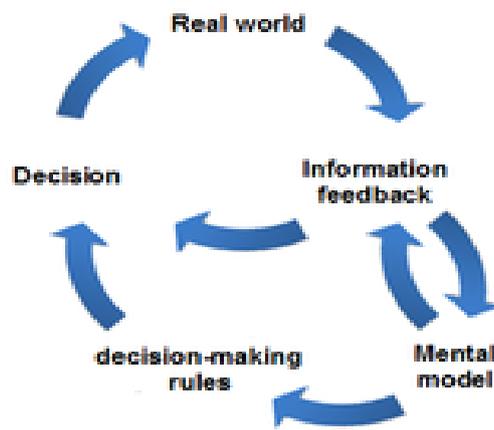


Figure 3. Mental model's role in decision making mechanism.

people to avoid being accountable.

**Power-oriented mentality.** A mental quality that regards position as gift and a means to obtain social recognition and luxury. Furthermore, in order to achieve power, they often arrange for an agreement that may harm other people's well being.

**Extrinsic-oriented mentality.** A mental quality that admires material things, accessories of life, and pursues social virtual recognition. Success is measured from what position they hold and what material possessions they own. They want to do something because of what they can gain, such as position and bonus. In the long run, extrinsic admiration may distort intrinsic genuineness and this can be very harmful.

**Believing in myth and fate.** A mental quality that is permissive to the superstitious knowledge and fortune that are far from empirical facts and logical thinking. When an individual has a need, they will come to a psychic reader to be given some sort of chanting and instruction to do irrational things.

Mental models that prevent development as explained above have been internalized in our mindset through the journey of life, from the family, school, friendship and surroundings. However, we cannot just accept that condition, we have to make an effort to change our mental model to a progressive way to reach our accomplishment. The question is which mental model is effective to achieve accomplishment?

### **Achieving and Progressive Mental Model**

There have been many studies nationally and internationally regarding what kind of mental models are required to achieve accomplishment. Many research centers in America have done in depth study regarding required skill set in the 21st century (Koenig, 2011). Zolli & Healy (2012) have examined why a number of individuals, societies and companies have more survival rate and more progressive than others. Jacques (2012) did a similar research; examining the success of China, Connors and Smith (2011) studied multi-national company successes and Acemoglu & Robinson (2012) studied the success and downfall of a country. In national level, there are a number of similar researches, for instance, Markum (1998), Maksum (2006) and Kasali (20102). From these numerous researches I can conclude that there are seven effective mental qualities to achieve high accomplishment that I call achieving (the term achieving refers to McClelland, which is individual who has strong need for achievement) and progressive

(progressive refers to mental quality that is adaptive to development) mental models that are as follows:

**Adaptive to changes.** This is a mental quality that is open to ideas and creative thinking, such as non-linear thinking that is out of the box. Changes are the essence and energy of life that are inevitable. Because of that everyone always desires to progress to something better. Resisting changes will only make someone miss the benefits of the changes.

**Appreciative of time and resources.** A mental quality that is adaptive to rules and regulation as well as efficient in time and resources. Time is a valuable asset that everyone consumes at the speed. The difference is how one chooses to spend it. Individuals who spend their time with useful activities will be more progressive than individuals who waste it with useless or counter-productive activities. Individuals who appreciate time and resources generally have strength in planning, committed in execution and efficient in action.

**Independent and responsible.** These are mental qualities that are oriented to development and self-management. They are accountable in what they do and do not spend their time finding a scapegoat. These individuals do not depend on assistance and facilities from other people, but has strong initiatives, active in self-learning (autodidact) in pursuit of improving their capacity.

**Achievement-oriented.** A mental quality that has strong ambition to achieve accomplishment with a measured and challenging target. Individuals who are achievement-oriented are not easily satisfied with what they have achieved, they will strive to continue improving their performance, not because of power, pleasing other people or pursuing bonus.

**Trusting science.** A mental quality that puts science as the basis of consideration in making a decision. They analyze the data critically. Their logical thinking avoids intrinsic-emotional thought and myth, which have no empirical facts. They strengthen meritocracy that is based on competence and preventing themselves from the snares of feudalism, nepotism and affiliation.

**Self-control.** An ability to hold and control its instinctive lust that can distort the greater well being in the long run. I suspect that this is our main issue. Often it is easy for us to be tempted with luxury and pleasure around us, whether it is position, social recognition, material things, bonus, commission and other form of gratifications. Classical experiment by Walter Mischel on a group of 4-5 year old is very interesting to digest. They were seated orderly in a room and were given marshmallows. They were offered

two options, the first option allowed them to eat the marshmallow directly. The second option required them to wait for 15 minutes until the researcher came back and gave them double marshmallows. Some picked the first and some picked the second option. After they turned into teenagers and adults, a follow up check was conducted. The result showed that those who delayed their gratifications were more successful, both in academic, social competition and their ability to handle pressure compared to those who did not have self-control. The message of the research is simple: small reward now, bigger reward later.

**Commitment to morality.** A mental quality that promotes ethics and public morality. True success can't be separated from moral issues including fair play and good sportsmanship. If an individual is successful through ignoring moral values, then destruction is just a matter of time. Great goal should be achieved by great ways. The case of Lance Armstrong, a seven times American champion of Tour de France in 1995-2005, can be used as a lesson. The anti doping agency had been suspicious with Armstrong abnormality for a while. Many doping tests had been conducted but he always passed them through sophisticated ways. Finally in 2012, the American doping agency evicted Armstrong to be positively using illegal substance and revealed how he cheated all these times. Consequently, it was decided that all the victories he achieved were revoked and his name was excluded from the list of Tour de France. At the end Armstrong admitted and regretted his actions for the rest of his life. He now has a ruined reputation as well as having testicular cancer.

### How Do We Make it Happen?

If we have agreed that achieving and progressive mental model is needed in order to obtain accomplishment, the question is how do we make it happen? It is not easy to form the desired achieving and progressive mental model. It will take years or even generations to shape mental model. Time is not the only means; time will not make us reach the goal. The most important thing is to teach the most urgent matter and what are the strategies to achieve it. There will be steps on how to do it.

Firstly, we need to improve the quality and accountability of education in a broad sense, starting from the pattern of education at home, school and training in the field. A set of attitudes, beliefs and values possessed by the individuals from their home

(Chua, 2011), need to be continued at school and reinforced in the training at the field (Maksum, 2012). Thus, the role of the parents, teachers, sport's teacher and coach becomes detrimental in order to create an athlete who has achieving and progressive mental model. The next question is, what kind of education that can make that happen?

**Education that optimizes critical thinking.** Based on TIMSS Data done by Global Institute demonstrated that our education system tends to produce low ability to think. An expat soccer coach in Indonesia once said that Indonesian athletes' intelligence is quite low, they can't think tactically in playing soccer. We have to admit that the ability to think becomes the main instrument to development. Innovation can only be produced by people who can think critically. They have the skills to resolve issues. The individuals will need to be trained more in the frontal area of the brain to think logically than their limbic system as it put forward their instinctive-emotional thoughts.

**Strengthening habits.** Words will never be enough to shape attitudes, beliefs and values. These need to be constructed in their mindset and put into practice (Duhigg, 2012). The habitual process becomes a crucial part to implement mental model and reinforce in parietal area. The habitual process can be a means to strengthen stimulus-response relationship as mentioned in classical conditioning theory by Pavlov (Maksum, 2012). In some cases, deconstruction of negative mental model is often needed in order to re-install new mental model that is more progressive.

**Strengthening individuals to balance hijacked association.** One of the strength of educational system in US, Korea and Singapore is the emphasis individual independence and initiative. This has made the children to be more confident and have higher survival skill. Our children are relatively weak, being surrounded by associative culture and conditioned by conformity, they are powerless to choose or reject destructive behaviors. The dark side of association prevents critical thinking. This will result to an association that is disadvantageous to both sides. For example, one always needs to wait for his peers to practice. Although the time has passed, if one person is not there to practice, the rest of the team decide to skip practicing altogether. Another example is to overly celebrate victory.

**Education that strengthens accountability culture.** An individual has to be taught to be accountable to himself and to his community. He needs to be reminded that success or failure in life is mostly

determined by himself. He also needs to understand that he is responsible to his community microscopically and macroscopically. He needs to significantly contribute and not become a parasite to his surroundings. The public civilization has beginning to collapse by the rising of corruption, collusion and nepotism. These signs demonstrate that this nation is greatly plagued with accountability deficit.

Secondly, besides strengthening education with the above characteristics, another strategy is to plan a grand design of building mentality that encompasses encouraging creative and innovative ideas as well as creating substantial programs with a clear road map. The goal has to be well managed, from the planning which integrates all resources, followed by a clear and measured responsibility. This process starts from family, school, training field, society and government. After the grand design and roadmap are formed, they have to be followed up with commitment and implementation.

Thirdly, there has to be a strong and transforming leadership. So far, the common weakness was having a weak or weakened leader. This is often caused by short-term transactional business interests and sacrificing the long term and big picture interests. Leaders have to be able to transform to constructive values (Burns, 2010) and lead by example, as recommended by social learning theory from Bandura (Maksum, 2012). This way, a leader can create a progressive culture (Connors & Smith, 2011). He is not easily influenced harmful culture that prevents development. In this regard, recruitment of a leader becomes crucial.

Fourthly, there is a collective commitment among the stakeholders to realize the big dream together. Just as a big ship that is about to arrive in a dreamland, it is at everybody's best interest not to let a cabin crew or a passenger wreck ship intentionally or unintentionally before it arrives to the destination. All the members of a nation, from the individual, family, community, private sector, club, sport parent organization, KONI and government should work together to reach the destination.

Last but not least, is having a constructive public media. They should not exploit hedonism and consumerism. The press and social media have become significant parts of an individual's life. There is so much information out there, whether it is educational or misleading. If we are not vigilant, the media will take over the role of family and school in constructing our children's mental model. Even if that is the case, given that it is almost impossible to

prohibit our children to access information in the midst of free press these days, the young athlete still can be educated to choose and sort out the healthy and constructive information for them.

### Final Note

As a final note, I would like to emphasize that mental model has to be the essence of changes toward improving the nation's competitiveness. Whether we realize it or not, most of us still choose mental model that prevents development. Mental model is not a matter of right or wrong, nor good or bad. It is about our choice of actions and behaviors. We have to be effective to reach the goals that we set. If we want to improve ourselves, then we need to change our backward mental model to constructive mental model that is achieving and progressive to development. Achieving mental model becomes very critical to be reconstructed in order to make a better Indonesia, Indonesia that is competitive.

As a closing statement, I would like to quote Benjamin Barber, a renowned American sociologist. He mentioned that the world couldn't be divided into the weak and the strong, the successes and failures; he divided the world into learners and non-learners. Hence, we have no choice except for learning, learning and learning toward accomplishment and development of ourselves and our nation.

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