

COLLECTIVE BRAIN ANALYSIS: A POLYMATH MANAGER'S ABILITY TO MAKE SENSE OF THE LITTLE BITS IN MAKING STRATEGIC DECISIONS.

How is it that I have to apologize for being hyper intelligent?

As an aspiring entrepreneur, I attended as many incentive meetings as possible but was always left wanting. The wind of trainings focused on making people believe in that one thing they are most passionate about and that they can only be effective if they specialize. I realized the audience is almost always filled with individuals who need motivation to believe that one or two talents is enough. While I understood this trend addresses about 84% of the general population who are classified between borderline and higher average IQ range (Wechsler WAIS-III, 1997), there is about 15% of the population who do not have challenges with talents because they can do many things effectively. The more meetings I attended, the more I felt like there was something wrong with me. I sought for mentors and they all thought it's not normal to be equally passionate about many talents. A few of them said it was ok to be multitalented but dropped me when they noticed that my passions cut across both sciences and arts. I was asked several times to choose a side but that was exactly my problem, *my brain doesn't know the difference between arts and science, I only see life happening.*

This had been my life always. Never fitting into the systems. As an African child who liked to ask so many questions and always challenge the answers I got by the way I was thinking about it, I often got shunned by most people. At 8 my school headmaster said I have to stop asking questions in class because I confuse the other kids. He said he had received several complaints from teachers and told my parents to increase my play time.

When I went to secondary school, my brain activity only increased. School seemed really slow. I read all my subjects/textbooks within few weeks and the rest of the year would really seem like wasting time. I was that science student who read all the literature textbooks being studied by the arts student and I will tell them the stories with dramatic expressions and emphasis on the ironies, suspense and humor which helped them understand and remember the stories. I had the charisma of a story teller and the smartness of a scientists. I found myself most often helping people understand a subject no matter which field. I could dramatize the function of the nephron with a funny story that will stick in your mind or display a history lesson with diagrams. Interestingly, the more I did this, I began to realize that arts and science are really connected. When people came to me with their challenges, I somehow just understood how they were thinking and my brain will quickly produce a particular explanation that fits that individual. I spent more time doing this than attending classes or reading the prescribed books for class. I read different books in the library. Of course I got into trouble all the time with my teachers for not attending classes. The students loved me for being able to get to everyone except when examination results are posted and I topped in subjects I hardly even attended.

I had long noticed that I was not the same as others but as I grew up I realized that I might not have any friends. They got angry with me for having it easy as they thought and more isolation issues stepped in. most people I cared about got insecure around me and this broke my heart. I

started trying so hard not to learn anything, I got scared of living up to my potential as I could clearly see that I will be abandoned. Over the next few years, I stopped reading, I tried shutting down my brain so that I don't learn anything and thus a war began within me. My brain didn't stop being creative. Every time I set my eyes on something that seemed like a problem, my brain will construct a complex solution but how will I let that out. All those years I only lived in my brain, battling with the need to be loved against living up to my potential. And in the later years, I became very emotional unbalanced and pushed to a place of frustration.

I really needed help but all mentors and counsellors I met kept telling me, being equally passionate about both science and arts is a malfunction. They said it is not normal for my brain to not be able to focus on one field and I may never achieve anything because this malfunction will always make me confused. They asked me how do I explain the fact that after my bachelor's degree in Biochemistry I went to pursue another bachelor's in Business management rather than going for a masters? I was asked if I still read my science books after switching to management? Honestly these questions were weird to me because I didn't feel like I switched, the knowledge was useful altogether and the clear picture of the future I see will work just fine. Then it suddenly clicked: it's the system and as usual I don't fit.

I took a special study to find out if there were other people like me.

It is surprising how many are unaware of the existence of polymaths talk less of the value of one.

POLYMATHS

A polymath is defined as a person whose knowledge is broad and spans across different fields. They are usually known to draw on complex bodies of knowledge to create solutions to particular problems. Polymaths don't think of themselves as smart or of others as less smart, they are just very curious people.

Some things we must know about polymaths in case you are bringing up a polymath child, teaching one, working with one or have any kind of relationship with one.

['Polymath' is an identity

If we will live well and benefit from the relationship with a polymath, the first thing to know is that being a polymath is who they are. They will always be curious and creative. They are not trying to show off or do it all. Their minds can't help being creative. As a parent or guardian bringing up a polymath child, you don't want to push them into depression by trying to define them with an occupation. Most polymaths crash when their access to knowledge is blocked.

[Their ability to learn fast.

One of the big differences between polymaths and everyone else is in their ability to learn fast. We can only learn as much as we permit our minds to learn. For most people, they understand the reality in literature and are therefore good at it, others may understand the reality in chemical compounds. Polymaths however, are known to permit their minds to think about just anything and everything. they can hardly draw a line between science or art subjects. In a polymath mind,

they see the reality in the right paint on an artist's brush same as the understanding in the fact that lightning and thunder are produced same time but you see lightening first because light travels faster than sound. A polymath doesn't see different subjects they just see life happening. To them its knowledge,

[The complex analysis (solution finder)

Because of their ability to learn fast and their unending curiosity, they hold a great deal of knowledge buried in their 'mind palace'. They are able to identify problems and their brains will effectively draw pieces of collected knowledge to create complex processes that will fix particular problems. I discovered in my secondary school days that I could create a solution to a present problem from something I came across ten years back and it is usually like a swift reaction.

[Active energy

Polymaths possess hyper brain energy which keeps their minds constantly busy. Now in my experience, trying to shut down on my curiosity for knowledge did not stop my brain from working. It only meant that my brain will go on with the negative analysis. There wasn't a reduction in my brain energy just a shift in content. Also that brain energy always needs to be translated to action. If the ever creative energy in a polymath's mind is not used to realize the goal, they will feel like an overcharged device ready to explode.

WHY EVERY MODERN DAY BUSINESS NEEDS A POLYMATH LEADER.

Modern day businesses are becoming complex and the need for continues innovation is indisputable. No matter what sector a business is in, the intertwining of arts and science will make a better company. In most cases while science and technology are used to build, analyze and evaluate systems, the skills or arts to communicate and implement strategies are inevitable. So we need collective intelligence. However, bringing brains together is not necessarily success. I have seen the most intelligent people put in a room but unable to come to a settled point because no matter how smart people are, if they specialize in separate fields without good understanding in the others field, it will always be hard to come to an agreement. This is where a polymath comes in.

[THE LUXURY OF UNDERSTANDING HOW OTHERS THINK:

“The most important thing in communication is to hear what is not being said” (Peter DRUCKER)

Selecting the team for one of my ventures was tough but interesting. Our event/travel consultancy firm. The firm is made up of very smart young people who are specifically creative in their departments. When talking with people they most likely want to tell you what they think you want to hear. But I always listen between the lines. Polymaths are most likely to look

beyond your words and understand even things you haven't said. It is an enriching quality when it comes to recruitment, client understanding and building workplace strategy. Now meanwhile each department members may not understand the other perfectly, I seem to be able to get the various compartments and I'm able to merge everything to make sense. I also get to be able to explain stuff to department leaders in ways or language they can understand. It is hardly about me being able to do what they can do but to understand why they think the way they do and with patience and careful communication, I feel like I can get right into their brains.

[COPING WITH CHANGES.

I am particularly fascinated by technological changes even though it is not a common aspect in the hospitality industry. Few months into the job, I realized that event planners had a hard time finding event vendors and vice versa so I told my team we can fix this by creating an automated ecommerce site for event vendors. So we built the app which will soon be launched and our network of vendors can't wait to use this service which is likely to increase their sales, reduce costs and stress and save time too.

[CONNECTING WITH CLIENTS.

“The most serious mistakes are not being made as a result of wrong answers, the true dangerous thing is asking the wrong question.” (Peter F. Drucker)

The hospitality industry will easily be classified in the arts domain but we will be surprised how much science could be needed in there. The first time I was asked to organize an incentive meeting for engineering students, I had an interesting chat with the client. At first all he wanted was for me to arrange logistics while they handled the content but in our meeting I asked him questions that helped me understand their objective and I created a strategic content. What they had as content was almost a repetition of what they had been doing in school but I was able to understand that and align it to the ever changing art of event planning and produce something unique. Actually I had been worried about attending incentive and corporate meetings that were all the same but I realized that I can change the event industry by aligning my science and art knowledge to create unique strategic contents that suits the particular event.

COLLECTIVE BRAIN ANALYSIS

the collective intelligence which has been defined as grouped intelligence that emerges from collaboration, collective effort and completion from individuals and appears in consensus decision making is the secret to success for every modern day business (Michael Muthukrishna and Joseph Henrich, 2106)

The idea about the collective brain is that it is not enough to put smart people in a room. Every business needs a leader who can understand the way the workers think. Because most polymaths have been active in various fields and are very much capable of analyzing information faster and more effectively than other people, they will make the best leaders of modern day businesses. When trying to make a strategic decision, they will be able to get the raw knowledge (from individual employees or groups) and process the data while considering all departments, clients and organizational goals. They will know what won't work and what will. They will rearrange the data into a single strategy or system making sure that all necessary plan from each department is included then recommunicate this system to the organization. Meanwhile most smart leaders might be able to do this, it is interesting to note that a polymath leader can do it way faster and even more effectively with the help of their vast knowledge collected from over the years.

Honestly, being a polymath has not been easy as I most often have to deal with different kinds of emotions, mine and other peoples. But it has been my most valuable asset as an entrepreneur. I run 2 businesses and an NGO which focuses on teen geniuses. In just a few years I have achieved much and the impact I am able to make in peoples' lives just by understanding how they think and creating solutions for them is the reason I'm happy I didn't give up on my identity.

As much as every specialized talent ensures for high productivity and effectiveness, every entity needs a polymath leader to make sense of the tiny bits in creating just the right solution to every problem.