

Reading List

by Margaret Jaworski

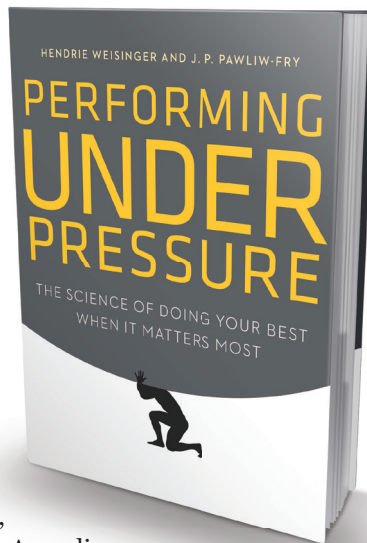
Performing Under Pressure

The Science of Doing Your Best When It Matters Most

by Hendrie Weisinger and J.P. Pawliw-Fry

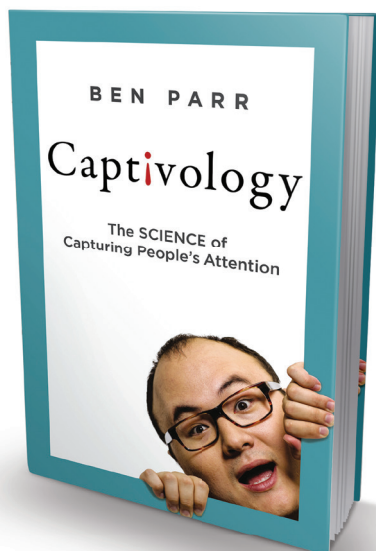
Pressure is “the enemy of success,” a saboteur that adversely impacts cognitive function and behavioral performance, write psychologist Hendrie Weisinger and performance coach J.P. Pawliw-Fry.

The duo conducted 20 years of research on the intricacies of managing stress levels and common pressure traps while working with organizations such as NASA, the CIA, the FBI, Merrill Lynch and Morgan Stanley. According to the authors, “more often than not, when people want to do their best, they don’t.” And contrary to conventional wisdom, even athletes “rarely do better than their average in pressure moments and most—even the great ones—do worse!”



Weisinger and Pawliw-Fry explain the difference between pressure and stress, identify common traps that may make us “choke,” and reveal how pressure adversely affects thinking. For example, “pressure distortions” are thinking patterns that needlessly intensify anxiety (last-chance scenarios) while “magnification” is the extreme exaggeration of a situation (making a mountain out of molehill).

While the science is interesting, the book’s real value lies in the countermeasures readers can use to control stress, along with in the 22 long- and short-term strategies that readers can easily implement to ultimately overcome pressure and improve performance. Even if you skip through the science, you’ll want to incorporate the tips, tools and advice into your life. (*February; Crown Business; \$26*)



Captivology

The Science of Capturing People’s Attention

by Ben Parr

Thanks to technology, we have easy access to copious amounts of information, amusement and global connectivity. But that access comes at a cost, writes tech journalist and entrepreneur Ben Parr. As a result of our 24/7 world, our attention spans have diminished, making it more difficult for individuals and companies to be noticed. The “science” of captivology explains how to rise above the noise to capture and hold on to attention for your brand, company, idea or cause. Parr amiably explains the three stages of attention and seven captivation triggers that can save a company or idea from disappearing into oblivion. These triggers include:

- **Automaticity:** Exploiting compulsive responses to specific sensory cues such as colors, symbols and sounds.
- **Framing:** Adapting to or changing another’s view of the world to get his attention.
- **Disruption:** Violating people’s expectations to redirect their attention.
- **Mystery:** Creating uncertainty and suspense to keep an audience intrigued.

Showing how to implement each trigger, Parr supports his reasoning with scientific studies, interviews with individual attention-grabbers and the examples of companies such as Airbnb, Kickstarter and the Make-A-Wish Foundation. He also ties in his personal experiences as co-founder of a venture capital firm. Throughout the book, Parr keeps readers engaged, amused and focused, proving that the science of captivology works. (*March; HarperOne; \$27.99*)