

## **AUDIO: Ways to stay cool under pressure**

- **The secret of the pro athletes**
- **“It is something people can learn”**

Everyone has a melting point -- when pressure gets to be too much and things derail. Performance deteriorates, composure crumbles.

But the ability to stay cool under pressure is not necessarily a personality trait. It can be learned.

“I found out working with top leaders and also top athletes that this is not a personality trait,” says Zurich, Switzerland-based performance coach Christian Marcolli, whose global client roster includes executives and business leaders, market-leading brands and Olympic champions. “It is something people can learn, people can develop and it is a necessary thing to become amongst the best in the world.”

He says that today stakes are higher than ever in this highly competitive economy, and workplaces have become pressure cookers filled with disruptions. So the professional price paid for “losing our cool” can be steep: Teams lose confidence, targets are missed, and careers stall out.

Mr. Marcolli has a background as a professional soccer player for a Swiss team that has helped shape his research into performance excellence.

“I observed something when I was a professional athlete. There are players, who in practice are not necessarily better than others but when competition’s on, the spotlight’s on, the TV’s on, they perform amazingly well,” he says. “There are others when in practice you feel they’re pretty good athletes, but when the competition came up and it was TV night, they almost disappeared.”

The factor is what he has come to call the melting point.

“Probably the best athletes around the world have managed to develop that skill to really expand their ‘melting point’ to the max,” he says. “That makes a difference in the end between winning and losing.”

He is the founder of Marcolli Executive Excellence, a boutique-style consulting firm focused on personal leadership excellence, driving team effectiveness and creating organizational health and author of a series of books, the latest of which is “The Melting Point: How to Stay Cool and Sustain World-Class Business Performance,” (Urbane Publications Ltd., June 2017).

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