

## **Activating Your Natural Genius**

*By Michelle LaBrosse, PMP®, Chief Cheetah and Founder of Cheetah Learning, and Kristen Medina, CAPM®, Co-Author*

When you think of the word “Genius,” what first comes to mind? Perhaps Albert Einstein, Ludwig van Beethoven, or Isaac Newton. You may be imagining someone who is very different from yourself—someone who sits in a basement and tinkers with experiments, and who routinely forgets to use a hairbrush or eat a meal.

It’s time to change what we associate with the word “genius.” Start by getting up and looking in the mirror: Can you spot the genius? If not, you may need to change your perspective, because it is there.

The capacity to be a genius is a part of our physiology. The human brain is a fascinating piece of work. It’s a dynamic neural network that makes billions of connections per second. New neurons are being made constantly in response to mental activity and learning. The reason that this is so fascinating and fantastic is because we are not stuck in any holding pattern—the ability to change our minds, literally, and become a genius on a subject matter is within our capabilities.

Whether you think that you are born with natural genius, or you obtained it through your experience and environment, the important thing to be clear: You have it—genius, that is. We all do. Here are some ways to tap into that natural genius.

**Know Your Strengths and Challenges.** Being a natural genius does not mean you have to have a natural aptitude for every subject matter under the sun. Albert Einstein, a legendary genius, failed his University Entrance Exam. While he excelled in the math and science sections, he failed the rest (history, languages, and geography). What this should tell you is: “Don’t get down because there are areas where you do not excel.” Recognize them as challenges, and work to mitigate them. But to tap into your true natural genius, discover the areas that you excel, and work to develop those into true genius status.

**The Drive To Fail.** Fail? What, are you crazy? For most of us “Type A” project managers, the thought of failing bring shivers to our spines. But the fact is, you don’t know where your limits are until you push them, and in pushing your limits you are bound to fail once in awhile. To tap into your genius, you can’t be afraid of failure or run away from it. You have to chase after, fail, and learn how to fix your mistakes so that you don’t fail (in the same way) again.

**Deliberate Practice.** Casual Practice is going out and playing on an intramural baseball league. Deliberate practice is going to the batting cages every night until you have perfected your swing. You will strike out a lot more in deliberate practice, but this is the only way you will master your skill. So what does this have to do with you? When you find your natural genius, you have the ability to perfect it with

deliberate practice, during which you will rise out of your comfort zone to see just how good you can be.

**Kick Stress to the Curb.** Every wonder why you can't think when you are rushing around late trying to find your car keys? Once you find them, it's so obvious that, of course, they would be in your key bowl on the coffee table. The thing is, stress reduces our ability to think. If we live with chronic stress, our brain is taking the majority of the burden, and it's impossible to tap into your natural genius, let alone your natural sanity. Pinpoint the biggest stress factors in your life, then mitigate them fast.

**“Somewhere, someone is looking for exactly what you have to offer.”—Louise Hay, Motivational Author.** It's hard to recognize our natural genius if we are not in the environment that appreciates or needs those specific skills. You can try to change yourself to best fit into a professional environment, but the likely result will be mediocrity. To fully develop your natural genius, you need to find a place to be the “Best of the best,” where you can do what you are best at. Find out what that is, and go there.

In 2013, make a commitment to discover your natural genius—it is in you!

#### About the Author:



Michelle LaBrosse, PMP, is an entrepreneurial powerhouse with a penchant for making success easy, fun, and fast. She is the founder of [Cheetah Learning](#), the [author](#) of the [Cheetah Success Series](#), and a prolific [blogger](#) whose mission is to bring Project Management to the masses.

Cheetah Learning is a virtual company with 100 employees, contractors, and licensees worldwide. To date, more than 50,000 people have become “Cheetahs” using Cheetah Learning’s innovative Project Management and accelerated learning techniques.

Recently honored by the Project Management Institute (PMI®), Cheetah Learning was named Professional Development Provider of the Year at the 2008 PMI® Global Congress. A dynamic keynote speaker and industry thought leader, Michelle was

previously recognized by PMI as one of the 25 Most Influential Women in Project Management in the world.

Michelle's articles have appeared in more than 100 publications and websites around the world. Her monthly column, the [Know How Network](#), is carried by over 400 publications.

She is a graduate of the Harvard Business School's Owner President Manager's (OPM) program and also holds engineering degrees from Syracuse University and the University of Dayton.