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By Stacy Blackman and Jeremy Dann

Is Brain Mapping the Future of Leadership?

By **Stacy Blackman**

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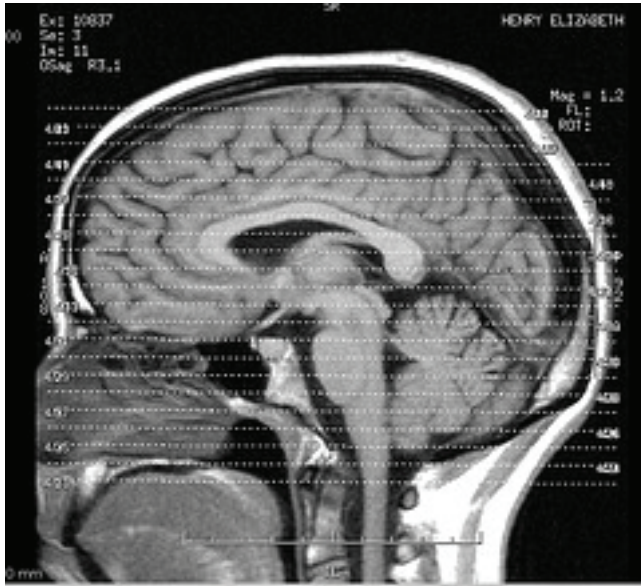


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While looking at a person's brainwaves to study their leadership skills might sound like something out of a science fiction movie, such technology is closer than we may think.

In fact, **Pierre Balthazard**, an associate professor at the **Carey School of Business at Arizona State University**, has been studying brain mapping and leadership for a decade, the *Financial Times* reports.

Balthazard conducted research with **Dr. Jeffrey Fannin**, the executive director of Arizona's **Center for Cognitive Enhancement**, whose work has included identifying patterns that signify dysfunctional behaviors. Debbi Gardiner McCullough of the *Financial Times* reports, "Through exercises and scanning, he was able to help patients train their brains to change their behavior."

How it works

Balthazard and Fannin similarly measured brain activity associated with leadership skills and believe neuro-feedback training can help people become better leaders. Here's the part that sounds especially like science fiction to those of us who haven't studied the brain extensively. McCullough writes:

Using pictures and sound on a computer, they are taught how to control their brainwaves by consciously managing systems of neurons. After several sessions a new brain map is completed to assess the changes.

Is brain mapping right around the corner?

Perhaps because of the futuristic sounding nature of the project, Balthazard has had trouble finding funding and estimates that developing his brain mapping technology could cost \$500,000.

Yet he already has many interested parties. Arizona's **Thunderbird School of Global Management** plans to brain map its students before starting and after graduating from the program to study their development. Balthazard is also developing brain profile exercises with **West Point**.

While it's probably going to be some time before you show up at work and find out it's brain mapping day, the possibility that this may be in store for us is an intriguing one. What are your thoughts about this "brave new world" of brain mapping?