

LEADERSHIP COACHING AND MENTORING –PACK

May 2022

Established in 2006

Welcome to this month's edition.

Damian Piper CBE our Resilience Coach starts this month edition with: **What got you here won't get you there** "I like the expression 'what got you here won't get you there'. I first came across it in Marshall Goldsmith's book of the same name. This is the acknowledgement that something that has served us well could get in our way as we progress in our careers. As much as I like it, I also think it's worth challenging what this relates too." An important piece and as Damian mentioned in his article "Like all the content of my articles. To read them is not enough. If a topic resonates with you then taking action is key."

From me **'Being Bettina's Dad – LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP' (Always Achieving)** "Faced by six people forming a horseshoe shape as an interview panel as they fire questions at me from all angles (to which I think I am managing to give suitable replies) comes the 'killer' question. What happens if the people you support are not making progress? (How would you feel?). I am being interviewed for the role of a Community Support Team Leader, my first appointment of my second career following 24 years in the Army."

By David Sandell, Creative Director & Joint MD Triad Limited. **Charisma isn't always enough.** "I often wonder if I had trusted my instincts at an earlier age, whether I might have achieved more in life. I've always considered myself slightly introvert, which may surprise some that know me. Being introverted may well have held back many successful people in their early years, until they decided to step forward; like so many things in life it is often simply confidence that opens doors." I had the good fortune to share a 'billet' with David during my first career. There have been three or four people who have had a profound effect on my outlook on life and David is one of those.

Steve Raw FInstLM, FCMI, GCGI

Email: steve.raw@dosh.org

Blog: www.leadershipintheraw.org

Instagram: @stephenraw6

Twitter: @SteveRaw836

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/steve-raw-72454721/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/steve.raw.771/>

It's not about how good you are

It's how Good You want to be

What got you here won't get you there

I like the expression 'what got you here won't get you there'. I first came across it in Marshall Goldsmith's book of the same name. This is the acknowledgement that something that has served us well could get in our way as we progress in our careers. As much as I like it, I also think it's worth challenging what this relates to. I've certainly seen people become detached from the practical realities of life as they have been promoted and leave behind something that is critical to their performance. Using judgement about where this phrase is appropriate is worthy of consideration. Here's a few common areas to get you started.

The weight of your words

This one can get you into all sorts of trouble. An eager to please team might pick up on something you say and see it as an instruction or directive. So, a casual comment about "it would have been good if we had consulted with x or y", could have someone in the team changing the plans for the day or worse still working late to respond to what you have innocently said. Equally you not commenting on something can be interpreted by some as you not liking what they have done and then second guessing how to improve things. This area can be a minefield. This isn't about tying yourself up in knots, it is about raising our awareness of the impact of what we do or do not say.

Staying connected to the frontline challenges of change

Increasingly we work (and live) in a dynamic world of change. In many workplaces this change is driven by increased quantitative and qualitative feedback. When sitting in a board meeting being presented with the next compelling 'improvement' powerfully represented by a graph or articulate middle manager it's easy to lose sight of the real-world implications and often unintended consequences of change. Once you'd have used your judgement to consider this before deciding. Perhaps years of decision making have made you numb to the potential negative implications. Some things you might want to consider as you think about this.

- Who have you got to keep you grounded?
- Could you spend time each month with a team on the ground to stay connected?
- What could you do to improve the feedback environment to give you the things people might self-sensor for fear of unsettling you?

Our autobiography getting in the way

Often your experience is a key part of the value you bring, providing insight and judgement that benefits you, your team and wider organisation. Your experience will help form your opinions. As we get more distant from the things that generated that experience there's a risk that we become a HIPPO leader (Highest Paid Persons Opinion). This is where despite

lots of work being done to assess a particular situation, we jump in with our experience to run roughshod over the work. There are times when our instinct to do this is right. However, too often in doing this we are viewing the situation through our own autobiography and not the facts and current reality. Equipping yourself with some powerful questions to get underneath the situation is a useful addition to your approach. For example asking people:

- What assumptions have you made in preparing the material?
- How have you tested your conclusions?
- What alternative approaches could exist?

Caught up in your position

One of the worse things I've seen happen with leaders is when they confuse their title as an excuse to dehumanise people. I've never seen this work beneficially in the medium term. Despite on some occasions the illusion of progress in the short-term. I'd always encourage treating people with dignity and respect as an essential, no matter what the circumstance. This one is something I do think is at odds with the title of this article. If you have treating people with dignity and respect early in your career. Keep doing it. I'm confident this is the bedrock of great leadership and high performance.

These areas are just examples to get you thinking. Like all the content of my articles. To read them is not enough. If a topic resonates with you then taking action is key. To know about something that is relevant to you and then not doing anything about it is not to fully understand the point.

As always, I'm interested in how you get on or if you have questions, please let me know.

Damian

damian@effectivechallenge.com

Damian Piper CBE

Change and Resilience Coach

www.effectivechallenge.com

www.effectivechallenge.com/podcast



Being Bettina's Dad – 'LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP'

(Always Achieving)



Bettina and her dad in 1995 on holiday

Faced by six people forming a horseshoe shape as an interview panel as they fire questions at me from all angles (to which I think I am managing to give suitable replies) comes the 'killer' question. What happens if the people you support are not making progress? (How would you feel?)

I am being interviewed for the role of a Community Support Team Leader, my first appointment of my second career following 24 years in the Army.

Thanks to my youngest daughter Bettina, who copes with a learning disability & autism, this question and similar ones are not particularly difficult for me as Bettina is never far from my thoughts and I only need to picture her to find my answer(s).

What happens if the person you support is not making progress? At the time of this interview, Bettina had not started to use verbal communication and often struggled to communicate how she was feeling and using behaviours instead to get her message across.

Related: [Being Bettina's Dad: What is Courage without Fear? – Leadership in the Raw](#)

Fast forward 25 years later to 'Love and Friendship' and Bettina has become frustrated as there is something missing from her magazine, and she has torn it out of frustration (we can all identify with that!). After cooling down, Bettina approaches Joyce (mum) with the ripped magazine and hands it to her for repair. Bettina says (sheepishly), "Love and Friendship". We had not heard her use this phrase before and it is yet another occasion when Bettina shares a window into how she is thinking. This is another occasion of how Bettina is 'always achieving'.

Related: [Being Bettina's Dad and being married to Bettina's Whisperer – Leadership in the Raw](#)

What does 'always achieving' look like for Bettina?

- **Practicing sentences and phrases in her room.** Verbal communication is a constant challenge for Bettina, so being able to articulate how she is feeling and being understood with her message being acted upon gives her great delight and the confidence to try even harder.
- **Trying something new and then doubling down on the activity once 'B' has successfully achieved it.** With courage and perseverance Bettina will try something new, likely an activity, and it is always a wonderful surprise when Bettina achieves something for the first time. Once achieved, Bettina will endeavour to perfect this activity for herself.
- **Completing a Task.** *"Nothing is so fatiguing as the eternal hanging on of an uncompleted task."* William James - readers acquainted with autism will know how important this is to a person who copes with this condition.
- **Being Independent and taking responsibility.** The important people in Bettina's life will always look to help Bettina rather than do everything for her. For example, once Bettina worked out how to use the car seat belt, you would likely be pushed away if you tried to help her in future. Bettina always takes charge of car's stereo system - there are some downsides to her taking responsibility – so I rarely get to choose my music when she is onboard!
- **Forming relationships.** I came across a YouTube video from Bettina's former school (Market Field School in Elmstead Market near Colchester in the UK) Bettina started there as a 5-year-old and left at 16 years of age. In the video the Head Teacher, Gary Smith, talks about the school moving to new premises and reflects on his memories before the current building is closed. We were overjoyed as a family to hear that one of those memories was of Bettina and what that memory meant to him. Bettina left the school 18 years ago! The memory had significance and left an impact. Here is the link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gB71K1XLI_w Bettina's relationship with Gary and her teachers helped accelerate her development. The relationships they formed with each other are enduring.

What happens if the people you support are not making progress?

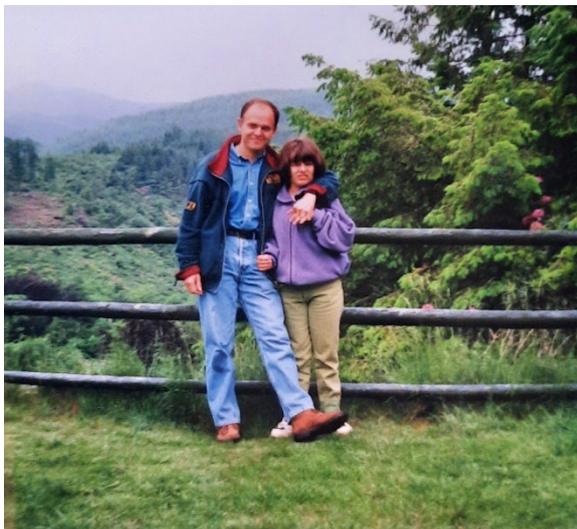
- **Change the environment.** I believe this is the same for everyone. During my army career a different posting often accelerated my progress – possibly due to a change in environment or people. In this career, supporting adults with a learning disability, the change I saw in people previously living in the NHS Victorian institution, progressing to supported living, was astounding.
- **Reflect on your role in helping a person to progress – what could you do ?** This is something I have done consistently with Bettina and whilst supporting people with a learning disability. Could I have done something differently? For example, when Bettina and I went to the cinema the first time. I still regret not breaking this new activity down into stages – it was my fault she became distressed when the 'house lights' went down.

- **Reflect on your communication style – is it right for the person you support?** Too loud? Too much eye contact? Talking too fast? Bettina prefers mild-mannered and softly spoken people who have positive body language. I have been lucky because Joyce regularly gives me feedback on how I communicate, and I recommend finding a ‘critical friend’ who will give you feedback.
- **Allowing the person time and space – not everyone can go at your pace.** Bettina has exceeded our dreams and aspirations for her, and we believe it is because we have been super patient, knowing we need to go at her pace and never losing faith in her will to succeed. We are in it for the long haul.
- **Don’t measure someone’s progress by your own standard or understanding of what progress means.** Bettina’s family have always been astounded by how she has progressed. Although not particularly significant to people outside of her circle, they are of huge significance to us and Bettina.

Related [Being Bettina’s Dad – What Bettina taught me when supporting a person – Leadership in the Raw](#)

Love and Friendship

If I could summarise Bettina’s propensity for always achieving, it would be to borrow Bettina’s phrase ‘Love and Friendship’. When you give Love and Friendship, and you have Love and Friendship, you will flourish.



‘Love and Friendship’ Bettina (with her dad) in 1999 always achieving at the Redbridge outdoor pursuits centre in Wales.

“We cast a shadow on something wherever we stand....(so) choose a place where you won’t do harm – yes, choose a place where you won’t do very much harm, and stand in it for all you are worth, facing the sunshine.” From *A Room with a View* by E.M Forster (English Novelist, 1879-1970)



By David Sandell, Creative Director & Joint MD Triad Limited.

Charisma isn't always enough.

I often wonder if I had trusted my instincts at an earlier age, whether I might have achieved more in life. I've always considered myself slightly introvert, which may surprise some that know me. Being introverted may well have held back many successful people in their early years, until they decided to step forward; like so many things in life it is often simply confidence that opens doors.

As it happens I generally enjoy the company of those more outgoing than myself. Some such individuals are very dear to me and I often work well with extroverts, like the ying and yang of personality.

The question often asked is this: does being louder and forceful mean your ideas are more likely to be chosen, regardless of whether the ideas are any good or not. History suggests it does. But talkers are not necessarily leaders.

The US Army has a name for this phenomenon: "the bus to Abilene." It's about a family sitting on a porch on a hot summer day and someone says, 'I'm bored. Why don't we go to Abilene?' When they get to Abilene, someone says, 'You know, I didn't really want to go.' Then the next person says, I didn't want to go – I thought you wanted to go,' and so on.*

The phrase "I think we're getting on a bus to Abilene here" when used in US military circles usually sounds alarm bells, it can stop a conversation and acts like a brake. This suggests we all have a tendency to follow those who initiate action, whether it's right or not. As they say... the squeaky wheel gets the grease.

It therefore follows that authority should to be endorsed carefully, perhaps even earned.

Leadership within a formal institutional structure will normally be underpinned with some form of recognised authority. Without such authority leadership has to be proven, involving stepping up to take the initiative and leading by example.

I had some formal leadership training during my time in the armed forces but only to a point. Adapting to civilian life, observation and instinct helped me build on this. Whether that made me a good leader or not I couldn't say, you would have to ask my managers and staff. My business partner and I have managed a design company for 26 years employing around twenty very talented individuals in what is generally considered an extrovert environment; designers, programmers and marketing people, young and old all require a

different approach to maximize their potential. When creatives and programmers collaborate properly amazing things happen. This probably requires a certain type of leadership because it's not as easy as it sounds; designers, administrators and programmers all have quite different mindsets and respond to authority in a different way to that of the military; that said, the fundamentals still apply.

I don't consider myself a charismatic leader, so I try and lead by example or at least by being close enough to people to advise and guide; I'm not saying I'm right, I'm simply trusting my instincts to be in the right place at the right time to be able to say the right thing.

Many accounts indicate that the Duke of Wellington did this so much better than Napoleon at Waterloo. Napoleon hardly moved during the battle, some say due to ailments; deciding to pick his spot and delegate to his generals. Were crucial mistakes a result of blind spots? Wellington in contrast seemed to be omnipresent, intervening at each crisis point of the battle, changing formations in the chaos, rallying etc. They say, Napoleon was adored by his men, was this charisma? Wellington was simply respected; but Wellington's presence showed empathy even though he demanded order and discipline at all times, particularly at each crisis point. This proved to be a major factor in his success.

Personally I don't think good leadership comes easy, you have to work at it. When I need to address staff in a large group, I have tried, sometimes unsuccessfully, to avoid saying too much to fast, trying to make each work count.

John Wayne, famous American actor and film icon, once said, "Talk low, talk slow, and don't say too much."

Coming back to the extrovert/introvert factor:

As a young person I often heard adults saying, "Oh, the quiet ones are the worst". I used to think, how dare they, do they say that because they don't expect the quiet ones to speak up. Then one day I picked my moment and spoke out for the quiet ones.

For those shy ones who feel they may not prosper. I believe many will reach a tipping point when just watching events bumble along unsuccessfully becomes unbearable. You will eventually have to trust your instincts and intervene.

Many of the world's best CEO's are in fact introverts. I do enjoy the company of extroverts, but extrovert leadership has the potential to become oppressive and good management comes in many forms.

"The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking"

Susan Cain

David Sandell | Creative Director and Joint MD Triad Limited

www.davidsandell.co.uk

www.triad.uk.com

YOUR ROUTE TO THE TOP

CREATE A CAN-DO SPIRIT

Get together. Research shows that a strong sense of purpose improves employee engagement and performance, as well as organisational success. Create a shared purpose in the form of a mission statement and your team will work better together.

Find the noble cause. Some of the most engaging missions are those linked to helping others. Wal-Mart's 'give ordinary folk the chance to buy the same things as rich people' is a great example of giving business objectives a human touch.

Make an emotional appeal. A focus like Google's 'Don't be evil' won't appeal to everyone, but it will draw like-minded people in. How do you want people to think, feel and behave?

Aim high. Set a clear and compelling target that will unify your efforts – and make it stretching. You may not win that national award, but in striving to be best you perform better.

Piggy-back. Select a well-known success and emulate it. Whether it's to be to the retail sector what Apple is to design, or to be the Warren Buffett of mortgage brokers, communicate what success looks like in a way that works for your team.

Create a healthy rivalry. A recruitment company organised its consultants into two teams. The mission was for each side to place more candidates than the other. The teams even had their own songs: Simply the Best and Eye of the Tiger; whenever they made a new placement, the relevant tune would boom across the office.

Open it up to the floor. Present your mission in draft form and invite everyone to critique and refine it. Then, discuss how you can all make it happen. The shared sense of ownership will guide people's day-to-day work and decisions.

Make it real. Relate the mission to each individual's cares concerns and role. What does the mission mean to them? As their situation changes, so will their connection to it.

The Mind Gym

My top 4 picks from Ted.com for May:

1. Two reasons companies fail and how to avoid them

https://www.ted.com/talks/knut_haanaes_two_reasons_companies_fail_and_how_to_avoid_them

Is it possible to run a company and reinvent it at the same time? For business strategist Knut Haanaes, the ability to innovate after becoming successful is the mark of a great organization. He shares insights on how to strike a balance between perfecting what we already know and exploring totally new ideas — and lays out how to avoid two major strategy traps.

2. Secret to great public speaking

https://www.ted.com/talks/chris_anderson_teds_secret_to_great_public_speaking

There's no single formula for a great talk, but there is a secret ingredient that all the best ones have in common. TED Curator Chris Anderson shares this secret — along with four ways to make it work for you. Do you have what it takes to share an idea worth spreading?

3. The unexpected benefit of celebrating failure

https://www.ted.com/talks/astro_teller_the_unexpected_benefit_of_celebrating_failure

Great dreams aren't just visions," says Astro Teller, "They're visions coupled to strategies for making them real." The head of X (formerly Google X), Teller takes us inside the "moonshot factory," as it's called, where his team seeks to solve the world's biggest problems through experimental projects like balloon-powered Internet and wind turbines that sail through the air. Find out X's secret to creating an organization where people feel comfortable working on big, risky projects and exploring audacious ideas.

4. Wisdom from great writers on every year of life

https://www.ted.com/talks/joshua_prager_wisdom_from_great_writers_on_every_year_of_life

As different as we humans are from one another, we all age along the same great sequence, and the shared patterns of our lives pass into the pages of the books we love. In this moving talk, journalist Joshua Prager explores the stages of life through quotations from Norman Mailer, Joyce Carol Oates, William Trevor and other great writers, set to visualizations by graphic designer Milton Glaser. "Books tell us who we've been, who we are, who we will be, too," Prager says.

'Do nothing for others is the undoing of oneself. We must be purposely kind and generous, or we miss the best part of life's existence. The heart that goes out of itself gets large and full of joy. This is the great secret of the inner life. We do ourselves most good by doing something for others

Horace Mann

PROBLEM SOLVING – A FOUR STAGE MODEL

1. Accept the existence of the problem and its context.
Identify what the problem really is.
2. Gather as much information about the problem and its context as possible.
Build an interpretation and explanation of the problem.
3. Devise a range of potential solutions for the problem.
Discuss possible solutions with others. Choose the most promising approach and prepare to experiment with it.

4. Take Action – reflect on the outcome and evaluate your chosen approach.

Modify your strategy and prepare to implement alternative approaches. Try to learn from experience and develop your problem-solving skills.

‘Let your enthusiasm radiate in your voice, your facial expressions, your personality, the words you use, and the thoughts you think! Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm’

Ralph Waldo Emerson

This Mindset Will Kill Your Organisation

Time to read: Just over 3 Minutes to avoid just that

Dear Steve

I hear it all the time – from organisations around the world – it always goes something like this...

CEO “Why is this project late?”

Response “Well, projects are always late, that’s a well-known fact”

Silence – I mean, how can one challenge such a statement?

By knowing this

NO – not all projects run late, or over budget, or with no measurable Return on Investment, or don’t meet Outcomes

It may seem this way because most do. Hey, get that, in 2022, in the age of ‘Digital’, ‘The Cloud’ and ‘AI’, little seems to have changed since the age of The Blackberry!

And it simply does not have to be that way – make the following three absolute cast iron rules:

1. Prioritise ALL your projects – sorted by Return on Investment – then select the 10% that bring in 90% of your value and stop doing all the others. That’s your business and simplicity sorted.
2. Have one overall team responsible for giving the go ahead for every project, which must show a minimum of 3 X Return on Investment - a financial value that is always agreed right at the start - and tracked continuously.
3. Time - Use the ‘Theatre Curtain Up’ approach – our play, to be performed in front of The Queen / President etc. opens on – date for project completion - And it will be ready, and open then.

Yes, this is a rant, it is also the blindingly obvious, and this nonsense about projects must stop now.

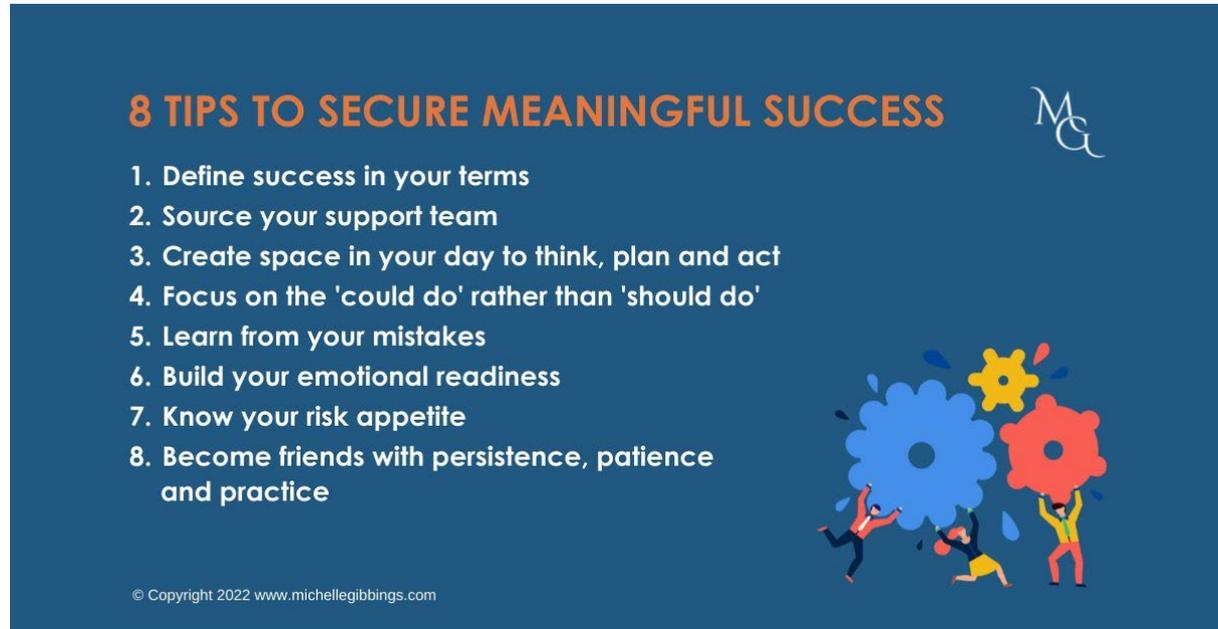
David

(David Taylor author and broadcaster)

@nakedleader across all social media

www.davidtaylorblog.com

www.thorlhome.com



8 TIPS TO SECURE MEANINGFUL SUCCESS

1. Define success in your terms
2. Source your support team
3. Create space in your day to think, plan and act
4. Focus on the 'could do' rather than 'should do'
5. Learn from your mistakes
6. Build your emotional readiness
7. Know your risk appetite
8. Become friends with persistence, patience and practice

© Copyright 2022 www.michellegibbings.com

The infographic features a dark blue background. On the right side, there is a white logo consisting of the letters 'M' and 'G' intertwined. Below the list of tips, there is an illustration of three stylized human figures in various colors (red, yellow, and blue) interacting with large, colorful gears (blue, yellow, and red). The overall design is clean and professional.

CAREER MASTERCLASS

DEAL WITH CRITICISM

Ask for it. Avoid an ambush by having regular performance catch-ups with your manager. The truth may hurt, but the sooner you hear it, the sooner you can fix it.

Keep calm and quiet. Don't interrupt critics with excuses (you'll look defensive) and don't glower (you could stop them sharing a crucial insight). Instead, be neutral and encouraging and focus on hearing and memorising everything they say.

Reframe. See criticism as proof the other person cares. Why else would he spend time and energy telling you how to improve?

Clarify. The more specific criticism is, the more helpful it is. If you don't agree or understand, delve deeper with questions. Find out exactly what you did and how it caused a problem, then summarise back to show that you've taken it all in.

Pick your battles. Criticism is rarely groundless but often exaggerated. From the hyperbolic overview ('your client meetings are never successful'), select the elements you have the power to change ('you're often unprepared').

Say thank you. Welcoming feedback not only means you'll receive more (and so improve faster) but your popularity will be boosted. It shows confidence, dedication and grace, too.

Ask critics for advice. If you can stomach the home truths, turning your critic into your coach will fend off future attacks.

Switch on your filter. If a critic's comments seem irrational or emotional, ignore them. You are not a punch bag

Bounce back. Spend time with someone who thinks you're great, whether it's an old client, colleague or adoring partner.

Learn. How will you handle criticism next time? Write down three things you have learnt. Remember them. Move on.

The Mind Gym. Relationships is published by Little, Brown at £12.99 – www.mindgym.com/books

'Success in life comes not from having the right cards, but from playing bad ones properly'

Joshua Dool

'You can do anything if you have enthusiasm. Enthusiasm is the yeast that makes your hopes rise to the stars. Enthusiasm is the spark in your eye, the swing in your gait, the grip of your hand, the irresistible surge of your will and your energy to execute your ideas. Enthusiasts are fighters, they have fortitude, and they have staying qualities. Enthusiasm is at the bottom of all progress! With it, there is accomplishment. Without it, there are only alibis'

Henry Ford

PRESENT WITH PANACHE

1. Know your audience
2. Keep slides to a minimum
3. Make eye contact
4. Stick to the point
5. Keep it brief
6. Think about tone
7. Share your own experience
8. Vary the pace
9. Remember: practice makes perfect
10. Relax – but not too much

KINDNESS

Guard within yourself that treasure, kindness. Know how to give without hesitation, how to lose without regret, how to acquire without meanness.....Know how to replace in your heart, by the happiness of those you love, the happiness that may be wanting in yourself.

George Sand (Amandine Dupin) 1804-1876 French Novelist

THE RULES

APOLOGISING

Accept your role – If you're the boss, sometimes it is down to you to apologise on behalf of your team (and sometimes your organisation!) for things that may have had nothing to do with you personally. Do so without any reservations or excuses otherwise your apology will sound hollow.

Swallow your pride – accepting responsibility is not the same as admitting you were wrong. View your apology as strength not a weakness – a vital skill that will help you gain, not lose, the respect of staff and customers.

Don't wait to be asked – say sorry as soon as possible. Delaying will make it harder and up the chances of others asking you to apologise first. If you didn't realise your mistake, apologise as soon as it's drawn to your attention.

Choose your words carefully – 'I'm sorry but...' will always make an apology insincere. Instead, be clear and concise, stating why you're apologising and what for. Also ensure the aggrieved party gets their say. Listen to them and acknowledge their anger.

Rectify the situation – be honest and admit why the problem has occurred. Outline how you plan to ensure it doesn't happen again, without making promises you can't keep. Any form of compensation should be carefully thought through and appropriate for the level of upset caused.

ILM Edge Magazine

"Because everything we say and do is the length and shadow of our own souls, our influence is determined by the quality of our being." Dale E Turner

3 Steps to Finally Tackle Your Tedious Tasks

By Mary Carlomagno

Every job has some degree of repetitious, uninspiring tasks that can often be boring and exhausting. Most people dread tasks like stuffing envelopes or filling out expense reports and would prefer more fulfilling and stimulating work. As a professional organizer who encourages people to [find the joy in tidying up](#) their desks, calendars and filing cabinets, I

am very familiar with the thinking behind grunt work, as organizing often falls into that category. But I don't get offended, because I know that 99% of this is mental; that is, managing how you feel about the tasks instead of achieving the actual tasks themselves.

Three major emotional obstacles stand in the way of muscling through the grunt work.

- How we feel about what we are doing, which places us in a judgmental, often unpleasant state.
- We wait for perfect conditions to begin, such as being in the mood or the right time of day to engage in certain tasks.
- The greatest obstacle we face is procrastination, which by definition is the choosing of a more pleasurable task over the task at hand.

1. Change your mindset.

Let's begin all of this emotional thinking by giving the term grunt work a more desirable title, such as "the necessary." These smaller jobs are necessary players in your ensemble of work. The famous actor and playwright Constantin Stanislavski once said, "There are no small roles, only small actors." He meant to encourage his actors to invest in what they were given, regardless of the amount of lines or stage time. Since our perception is that these jobs are small or menial at best, and at worst demeaning or boring, we find ourselves labelling or judging the work. When you trivialize the work from the start, your emotions take over. The first step is to release the emotion and judgment you have around this work and [simply engage in it](#).

Recently we had our kitchen remodelled with all new cabinetry. The cabinetmaker came every day for several days and made all of the cabinets by hand. I marvelled not only at his craftsmanship but also at his ability to perform repetitive tasks over and over again. He did not question what he was doing or emotionalize it; he simply built beautiful cabinets, one step at a time. The small daily steps he took brought him to a beautiful body of work (and a beautiful new kitchen for us). He understood that each task built upon the next, all equally contributing to the final product.

2. Stop waiting.

The second obstacle people face is that they [wait for the perfect condition](#) to attack these jobs, fooling themselves into thinking there is a right time of day or certain mood they need to be in before they can start. Set up your daily schedule with the most favourable times to engage in this kind of work. If you [work better in the morning](#), take the early part of the day to do these less desirable tasks. This will also give you an early sense of accomplishment, which carries you throughout the day. Consider setting a timer, even just 15 minutes to start. As you [get better at focusing](#), you can extend the time. This will give you an idea of how long it will take you to accomplish these tasks. You might find that 15 minutes a day helps you accomplish all that you need in one week.

3. Stick to it.

It doesn't take much to [derail us from our work](#). Something as simple as a text or social media post can cause us to put off the work at hand. Suddenly, procrastination has replaced our emotional thinking. This could happen in just about every situation where a choice has to be made; there will simply always be something better to choose. I'm not alone in my thinking. Procrastination experts say this delay of tasks does little to help you. It just puts off the inevitable. Wouldn't it be better to get the nasty task out of the way to begin with?

[Handling procrastination habits](#) can be solved with simple reward-setting. If you set up a plan to clear up your office filing system over the course of a week, make a daily routine for doing the work. By week's end, you can reward yourself with something commensurate with the goal achieved. I don't mean booking a trip to Vegas for clearing out one desk drawer; instead, reward yourself with a latte or small treat. This system of work and reward will not only get you to your goal faster, but also makes the work more pleasurable along the way.

With these simple [shifts in how we think](#) and feel about the necessary, [we can be more productive](#). In the words of St. Francis of Assisi, "Start by doing what is necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible."

This article was published in October 2017 and has been updated. Photo by @Korneevamaha/Twenty20



[Mary Carlomagno](#)

[Articles](#)

Mary Carlomagno is the owner of [Order](#), which specializes in clutter control, urban apartment solutions, office spaces and shopping addictions. Mary's philosophy is simple: do not let clutter control your life. Her easy-going approach, sense of style and strong communication skills create an atmosphere that makes organizing fun. She is the author of three books, [Give it Up! My Year of Learning to Live Better with Less](#), [Secrets Of Simplicity](#) and [Live More, Want Less](#). Mary has been featured on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, *The Today Show*, *CBS News*, in *Redbook*, *Real Simple* and *Woman's Day*. She has been interviewed on *National Public Radio*, the *Joan Hamburg Show* and *Martha Stewart Living*.

Courtesy of USA 's Success Magazine

And finally, this month

Do you have an interview coming up anytime soon? This is a technique I have used when answering an interview question (although I substitute T. for Target I am looking to achieve)
Steve



STAR INTERVIEW TECHNIQUE

The STAR method is an interviewing technique that lets the interviewer analyse in detail if you are well-suited for a job. STAR stands for Situation, Task, Actions and Result, which are the four pillars that interviewers will be searching in your answer.

SITUATION	TASK	ACTIONS	RESULT
<p>Situation – Mention the company and set context for your story. For example:</p> <p>“ABC Oil Company in Houston had 6 expansion projects requiring \$6 billion of CAPEX”</p>	<p>Task – Mention your position and what was required of you. For example:</p> <p>“As Non Executive Director, oversaw corporate governance to ensure business plans & delivery were robust and efficient.”</p>	<p>Actions – what you actually did. For example:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Provided business advice & assurance2. Engaged stakeholders via board committees3. Aligned JV partner goals with company objectives4. Identified weaknesses in SMS & developed solutions	<p>Result – how well the situation played out. For example:</p> <p>Successfully improved capital efficiencies by >\$500mln and improved profitability.</p>

Use this method to create a number of stories so you are prepared for an interview. Make sure the stories are relevant for the role, substantiate the required skillsets and also demonstrate a measurable outcome.

bigger-fish.co.uk