

# LEADERSHIP COACHING AND MENTORING –PACK

January 2023

Established in 2006

Welcome to this month's edition.

Happy New Year and I hope you had a good Christmas. Everything about this edition is aimed at supporting you to have the best year ever.

Damian Piper CBE our Resilience Coach starts this month edition with '**Beyond the glamour of the start**' .....”Often people fall victim to the glamour and enthusiasm of starting something and then meet the reality of daily life. Maybe 2023 is different. Here's my BEST framework with four areas to consider in pursuit of what you want to achieve. In all four the thing to determine want will help or hinder your success.”

I was invited by Justin Smith (Operations Manager for Thera East Anglia (TEA)) to listen to a series of audio tapes, which are included in TEA's 'My Happiness Project', and to hear more about the workshop Justin has designed for working better with families who have sons and or daughters with a learning disability. Justin asked me if I would write an article from a parent carer perspective . I hope you find it interesting.

And here is something from Justin Smith: '**Practice Leadership and happiness!**'.....” So, what is practice leadership? Well in the world of supporting people with a learning disability, it hasn't really been that well-defined, but....”

**'BEING BETTINA'S DAD – A PLEASE, A THANK YOU AND A SMILE'** “The courtesy of showing politeness in one's attitude and behaviour towards others is paramount to Bettina. She has observed her parents and big sister's interactions with each other all her life therefore it has become the most natural thing in the world for her to follow.....”

Meike Beckford, Head of Impact Management for Thera Trust brings this article to our attention: [Feminine Power Is Not All About Women \(mailchi.mp\)](#)

Steve Raw FInstLM, FCMI, GCGI

Email: [steve.raw@thera.co.uk](mailto:steve.raw@thera.co.uk)

Blog: [www.leadershipintheraw.org](http://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*

## **Beyond the glamour of the start**

It's likely that at some point over the last couple of weeks, you have had a conversation or read something about new year's resolutions. I know I have. You will also know someone, maybe even yourself that starts each year full of enthusiasm for a goal to achieve only to find that you fall short of what you want within weeks of starting. You'd be in good company if you are. There are multiple research studies on this topic. A common component is that circa 10% of people achieve what they set out to do. Despite 50-60% being confident of success at the start.

Often people fall victim to the glamour and enthusiasm of starting something and then meet the reality of daily life. Maybe 2023 is different. Here's my BEST framework with four areas to consider in pursuit of what you want to achieve. In all four the thing to determine what will help or hinder your success.

### **Your Behaviours**

I guess this is an obvious place to start. What behaviours can you draw upon to help you achieve what you want? And equally important are there behaviours you have that will get in the way of you being successful. This takes a degree of self-awareness so allow time to reflect and consider the answer to the two questions fully. It can sometimes be insightful to ask someone you trust the same questions.

### **Your Environment**

First, let me clarify what I mean by your environment. Everything in and around your personal world. The people, the physical things, your job etc etc. Doing an audit of your environment with your resolution as the focus can be very powerful.

### **If your resolution is to get a bit fitter...**

- Have you got clarity on the 'why' you want to be fitter? Writing it down and having that in your environment where you will see it can be a game changer. Or having your why expressed in a picture or photo some people find equally beneficial.
- Assessing the people in your environment could reveal the friends who you might exercise with or the friend who is going to drag you to the pub. You can then decide if you need to do something different with them.
- Want to run? Is there a new top you need to buy that fits your current body shape? If ignored, this is one that can really set up resistance. If you don't feel comfortable, your brain will do all it can to protect you. Much of this protection is likely to be irrational. That's not how it will feel.
- What triggers are in the environment? Some will encourage what you want, some will trigger you to do the opposite.

## Your Skills

Are there particular skills you could enhance or develop to help with a sustainable approach? If the resolution is to say what you think instead of holding back. Do you need to develop your communication toolkit?

## Your Time

Often time is the blocker to so many resolutions failing. Steve R recently recommended this [Ted Talk](#) by Laura Vanderkam to me on 'time management'. I would recommend it to anyone being challenged by this topic. I'm not a fan of the term time management. It's a fallacy that draws people into a whole host of 'time hacks' in the belief that they hold the solution to their time challenges. Don't misunderstand me, there can be some value in the tools, tips and tricks. However, I agree with Laura's hypothesis that it's about priority management. If your resolution is really a priority make sure you schedule it first as you think about the week ahead. Yes, life won't pan out as you'd like. However, if you have a true understanding of your priorities then you will find a way to make them happen.

As I write this it's the 14th of January. Two weeks into 2023. If you have fallen short of what you'd like, when it comes to your resolution, please don't negatively judge yourself. Negative judgement is like poison. You need to get it out of you before it does even more damage. I can't think of a single time personally or professionally where judgement has served well. Instead, how about reconnecting with your resolution intent and using the framework above to set yourself up for success?

2023 could just end up being your BEST year yet.

As always, I'm interested in your thoughts and observations. And if you have questions please ask.

Damian

[damian@effectivechallenge.com](mailto:damian@effectivechallenge.com)

### **Damian Piper CBE**

Change and Resilience Coach

[www.effectivechallenge.com](http://www.effectivechallenge.com)

[www.effectivechallenge.com/podcast](http://www.effectivechallenge.com/podcast)



## **‘My Happiness Project’ – ‘A Family Members Perspective’**

I was recently invited by Justin Smith (Operations Manager for Thera East Anglia (TEA)) to listen to a series of audio tapes, which are included in TEA’s ‘My Happiness Project’, and to hear more about the workshop Justin has designed for working better with families who have sons and or daughters with a learning disability. The audio is of interviews with the family of a person TEA support and the journey they went on and which forms the social history for the person we support.

### **Justin shared with me the essence for this initiative and workshop as:**

1. Thera East Anglia wants the best for people we support and that means working positively with families and appreciating their perspective and experiences.
2. We need to know more about people’s histories and journeys. We can support people better by understanding their journey.
3. The person we support is THE expert on their life and how they want and need to be supported. Families can be a close second: we must respect and involve them. This is part of the route to working in a co-productive way.
4. Families want to trust us, and we want them to trust us. It’s a journey involving communication and relationship building.
5. Understanding the perspective of the families and loved ones of people we support and hearing them can only lead to better support.

### **My Five takeaways from listening to the mother and sister from the audio tapes:**

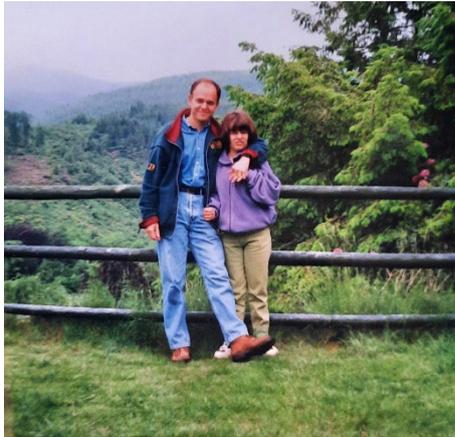
1. Bewilderment – what do I do next? On receiving a diagnosis for their son.
2. Trying to understand what the ‘professionals’ (doctors and or social workers) are telling you about your child’s ‘condition’.
3. Finding support when there appears to be none. Especially for the family I was listening to, this was in the 1970s and few people knew what autism involved for a person who was having to cope with this condition. (Even in the early 1990s, as a family we were faced by a lack of understanding from those around us).
4. The age of deference – ‘professionals’ know best (often even when they didn’t) and therefore you should do as they suggest.
5. Guilt – Could I have done more? Could I have done things differently? Did my son know how much I loved him? Did I need to be separated from him? Did my other children miss out on my time and or love? Would I ever be able to make it up to him for the time we were not together?

In my experience as a parent carer for our youngest daughter, and a Trustee of a Carers Centre for families, these five takeaways are common to many families.

Related: ‘Being Bettina’s Parents – The Barriers we face’

<https://leadershipintheraw.org/2022/10/12/being-bettinas-parents-the-barriers-we-face/>

**Reflections as a parent for our daughter, Bettina who copes with a learning disability, autism, and epilepsy:**



*Bettina and I at an outdoor pursuits centre in Wales. At the time of this picture Bettina was still struggling to come to terms with her autism and her complex communication system. Which is demonstrated by my need to hold her hand.*

**How it all started.....**

Dozing on the settee after a hard day's work my pager started to beep. I woke up and phoned my transport department. They had the call that Joyce was going into labour, and they were sending a vehicle round to our flat to rush me to the Berlin Military Hospital (BMH). We were 10 months into a two-year tour of occupied Berlin, and it was still a couple of years before the 'Wall' was to come down.

Within a couple of hours our beautiful daughter Bettina had come into our lives. It would be another 18 months before she was diagnosed with severe autism and a learning disability, but that didn't matter to us (and still doesn't) she is our beautiful daughter and love is enough.

**So, what did we do?**

- ✓ We did our research to find out what resources were available to us as a family – even in the early 1990s as I have mentioned they were few and far between.
- ✓ We started pulling together those people around Bettina who loved her and wanted to be part of her life. We called this her “circle of support” – it was really her network.
- ✓ We decided that traditional ‘reviews’ when it came to planning Bettina’s future was a waste of time. We wanted to do something which meant that Bettina would take centre stage and lead. We wanted a person-centred planning meeting. As there was no one to facilitate it from Social Services at the time as Bettina was in the transitional phase of the 16-19 age group where services dip, I got off my backside and facilitated it
- ✓ Bettina’s big sister, Jennifer, was our artist drawing and recording what Bettina and her Circle was telling us and we ended up with a PATH to her Vision to which everyone was signed up.

- ✓ Joyce, the 'Leader of our Gang' and Bettina's mum, then put it all into a Support Plan
- ✓ From the Support Plan came the 'Personal Budget' and Bettina is now 'living the dream'.

**Bettina's support has taken us through five stages – our 'Project Life Cycle':**

**Stage 1:** Coming to terms with a daughter with learning disabilities and finding ways and support to help her cope

**Stage 2:** Finding the right education

**Stage 3:** Supporting her through her transition from school to adulthood

**Stage 4:** Connecting her to a wider community that is not just her family

**Stage 5:** To have a great life now and after we are gone

Becoming a parent to a person with learning disabilities is unique. It changed our lives – and mostly for the better. Her family value the relationships we have built with those who have smoothed her path towards a fulfilling and rewarding life.

Related: 'Being a Carer' <https://leadershipintheraw.org/2022/07/19/being-bettinas-dad-being-a-carer/>



Bettina today – a valued member of her community.

**'My Happiness Project – A Family Members Perspective'**

**Five reasons why I think this is initiative: is so important:**

1. Working in partnership with the family can fill the gaps in a person's history – we all have a past and that forms our present.
2. By sharing: experiences, knowledge, capabilities, and learning from their childhood so they are not lost in adulthood.
3. We can often easily attribute all of the persons habits and intricacies to a person's learning disability and or autism and therefore not see the real person. Perhaps the way a person acts is actually a family trait? You may see this by spending time with a family. I did with a person I supported many years ago. After spending time with her mum (before she sadly passed away) I could see 'Mary' was just like her mum in

the way she reacted to different situations, it had nothing to do with her learning disability.

4. By building trust with a family, it can go some way in rebuilding whatever went wrong in their earlier experiences of the social care experience and the education system.
5. **We believe Bettina leads a fulfilling life because those who support her pull together and work as a team. We are all 'Team Bettina'**

I am delighted that Justin and Thera East Anglia are taking this initiative for the people they support and by sharing this project and article, I hope other agencies will do something similar for the families they work in partnership with.

Steve Raw

My Background: After 24-year career in the Army, for the last 27 years, I have been supporting people with learning disability as:

- A support worker
- A 'Community Support' Team Leader supporting people who had been excluded from their day services and their community
- A manager for a Registered Cared home and a Hostel
- Area Manager for Registered Care, Nursing Care, Supported Living, Older Peoples Home, and a Mental Health Hospital
- Regional Director for Supported Living
- Director of Learning Disabilities for supported living, registered care, and a respite service
- Managing Director for a national company which supports people with their money
- A Citizens Advocate for a person with a learning disability
- A school governor for a special needs school for children with a learning disability and autism
- A Trustee for a Families Carers Centre.
- And Being Bettina's Dad for 35 + years

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere"

Martin Luther-King Jr. US civil rights leader

## **Practice Leadership and happiness!**

The Thera East Anglia Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) team has recently met up with two groups of staff who support people who occasionally present with complex behaviour. These PBS sessions have got Justin and Graham (PBS Coaches) thinking about the link between good practice leadership and happier people we support.

So, what is practice leadership? Well in the world of supporting people with a learning disability, it hasn't really been that well-defined, but..

*“In order to ensure that staff work together as an effective team, good leadership is required. Given that the people providing support need to work consistently and to the agenda of the individuals they serve, team leaders need to be able to support the development of staff knowledge and skills and to provide ongoing motivation and direction. We call this ‘practice leadership’ to distinguish it from the boarder sense of management and leadership found in any organisation, to emphasise its focus on the quality of life of the individual served. (Mansell & Beadle-Brown, 2012)”*

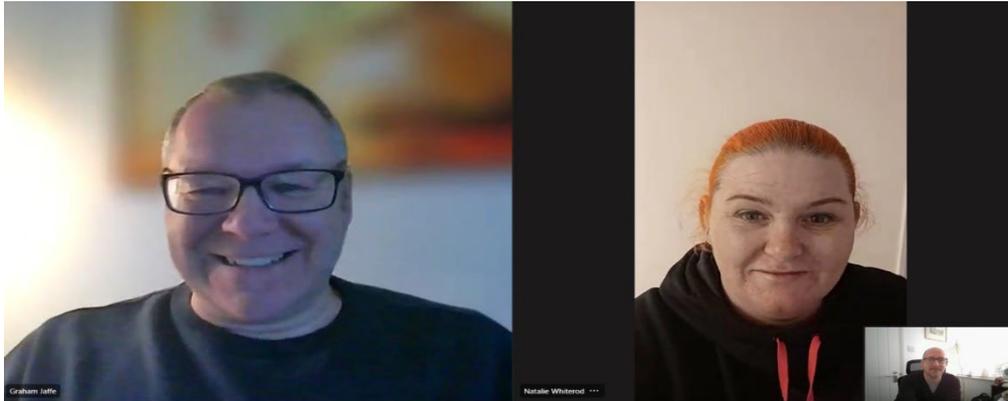
Graham and Justin found an example of sound practice leadership when working with one of our teams in Sawston – Cambridgeshire. This turned out to be a bit of an unusual PBS session, as it turns out things are going pretty well for the person this team supports; we very often end up in these PBS sessions when things really are not going well, so, we spent time exploring *why* things are going well: because they will have been going well for a reason! We spent time discussing the types of environments, and approaches that result in happiness for the person the team supports, and there were no real surprises when it came to understanding staff behaviours that lead to good outcomes and quality of life for the person we support. But, in the middle of this conversation, one of our amazing Support Workers commented on what a great leader CSL Melanie Capes is. Melanie was described as approachable and supportive, with a can-do attitude and a trustworthy approach. Later, Melanie explained to Justin that she always agrees changes to approaches in supporting people not only with the person we support but with her team, and that any feedback (positive as well as constructive criticism) happens there and then and is not just saved up for that monthly supervision. For Melanie, it is all about teamwork, supporting each other and keeping conversations going in order to improve outcomes for the person the team supports.



*Melanie Capes CSL – a superb practice leader.*

The PBS teams meet up monthly with leaders and staff in one of staff team in Soham – Cambs. Once again, it turns out that things are going well for the person we support, with no need at all for any reactive strategies (agreed staff responses when other methods have been tried and complex behaviour is happening) in the preceding month. Graham and Justin met with TC Natalie Whiterod and pointed out that this was simply another example of great practice leadership from her, and her management team colleagues, but *not only* the management team. SW Tina Pleasants has been instrumental in taking a lead role in the

support of one person known to the PBS team. Any grade can be a leader. Any grade can model excellent practice.



*Graham and Justin from Thera East Anglia's PBS team meeting with excellent practice leader, Natalie Whiterod TC*

Melanie and Natalie, and their management teams are out there, modelling good practice and picking up on things as they happen rather than just waiting for that monthly supervision. Their teams trust them, and they are the link between good PBS training, and good practice, resulting in quality of life and happiness! See the link below to understand more about practice leadership. Do call on the PBS team any time: specially when things are going well!

[What is practice leadership - YouTube](#)

Mansell, J., and Beadle-Brown, J. (2012) Active Support: Enabling and Empowering People with Intellectual Disabilities. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Justin

Justin Smith  
Operations Manager for Thera East Anglia  
[www.thera.co.uk](http://www.thera.co.uk)



“If we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change”

Giuseppe di Lampedusa

## BEING BETTINA'S DAD – A PLEASE, A THANK YOU AND A SMILE

Steve Raw



Bettina waits patiently for her hot chocolate and cake in 'Pop-Pins'.

It is another super fun Saturday morning with Bettina in Frinton on Sea. Before we go for a walk on the beach, we must have a drink and a cake in our favourite (50s themed) coffee bar, 'Pop-Pins.'

Bettina has already chosen a cup-cake and a hot chocolate. Bettina is pleasantly surprised when a waitress comes over with a with a couple of chocolates, which we had not ordered, as she thought Bettina would like them with her hot drink. "Thank you very much" is Bettina's response. Her eye contact: beautiful smile and (because she is not used to hearing Bettina speak as her verbal communication is limited) the spoken words delight our waitress. I believe that, once again, Bettina has melted another heart.

Bettina, a woman who copes with a learning disability, autism, is very much her own person. She sets her own standards and adheres to them without fail. Bettina has her own code of conduct: [Being Bettina's Dad: Bettina's Code of Conduct – Leadership in the Raw](#)

The courtesy of showing politeness in one's attitude and behaviour towards others is paramount to Bettina. She has observed her parents and big sister's interactions with each other all her life therefore it has become the most natural thing in the world for her to follow.

With these days of social media and text speak, it is not surprising that people omit important words such as "please and thank you". How often have you been in a queue at your favourite coffee shop when a person in front of you has said "can I get..." or "give me..."? I must admit it rankles with both Joyce (my wife) and me when this happens. I assume the barista is used to not receiving a common courtesy of please or thank you.

Expressing thanks is a far from straightforward business. To be properly skilled at it, we need to learn the art of getting specific.

## How Bettina's shows courtesy towards others

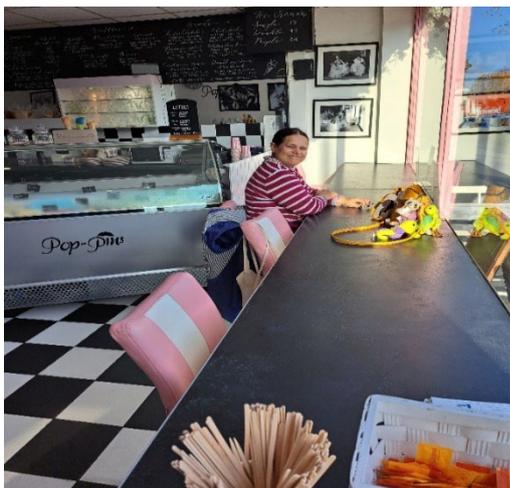
Bettina:

- Is specific about what she is saying please and thank you for.
- Gives eye contact so people can see she is being sincere.
- Smiles naturally when saying "thank you very much"
- Shows gratitude which prompts a positive reaction from others.
- 'Verbal Nods' with her reassuring noises

## Five consequences of saying please and thank you.

1. People feel valued and appreciated. You only need to see the reaction when Bettina expresses these courtesies.
2. Deepens a friendship and forms new ones.
3. Improves rapport - people are pleased to see you. People light up when we go into a shop in Frinton especially if they have not seen her in a while.
4. "If I am nice to you, you will be nice to me". Reciprocal behaviour - a social norm of responding to a positive action with another positive action. Rewarding kind actions often starts a chain reaction. If you are polite, the likelihood is those behind you and within earshot will also be polite.
5. "It changes someone's response and approach. Start with a please, and you will likely receive cooperation and goodwill. Finish with a thank you and it will confirm that cooperation and goodwill. ." - Joyce Raw

A regular customer in 'Pop-Pins has just mentioned how much she loves Bettina's handbag, especially the accessories attached to her bag. Bettina smiles and says, "thank you very much" and someone else's day has just been made.



Bettina having the best time in Pop-Pins

A call to action. Courtesy and manners are contagious, and it starts with you. Like Bettina, let's start spreading the contagion with a please, a thank you and a smile.

**Steve Raw**

## 2023 - The Year of The Human Being

### Time To Read – Just over 2 minutes

Dear Steve

2023 - The Year of The Human Being

Why?

Because people are not the number one asset in our organisations – people are the only asset in our organisations.

Every challenge and opportunity is always a people issue, all dressed up as something else entirely, such as ‘change’ or ‘reorganisation’ or ‘project’ or (insert your favourite buzz word here).

#### What to Do – the starting three:

1. Realise that the wellbeing of your people is your number one priority – by ensuring that your organisation is not just a great place to work, it is also a great place to be.
2. Wrap your organisation around your people, the very opposite of the traditional, failing other way around – replace ‘Job Descriptions’ with Rolling CVs – let people work whenever and from wherever they want, as long as they deliver their outcomes, and set them free, within clear boundaries, by getting those **eggs frying**
3. Unleash all of the strengths, passions and genius in everyone – not just a chosen few. Ask people ‘what is the number one skill you have, that we are not using?’ People are great at what they love doing and they love doing what they are great at. Watch the film ‘Moneyball.’

In 2023 don’t try to ‘retain’ your people. WOW them, give them freedom and let them know they belong. Of course, some won’t want to play, let them leave - most will love it and will give their all. You will also save a fortune in recruitment fees and the time and expense taken to bring new people up to speed.

The above represents a power shift in organisations, which will be uncomfortable for many. However in these times of great uncertainty, they are the only way to bring success in 2023 and beyond.

A very happy new year to you all

David

@nakedleader across all social media

[www.davidtaylorblog.com](http://www.davidtaylorblog.com)

**“Every man should be born again on the first day of January. Start with a fresh page. Take up one hole more in the buckle if necessary, or let down one, according to circumstances; but on the first of January let every man gird himself once more, with his face to the front, and take no interest in the things that were and are past”**

Henry Ward Beecher

## **YOUR ROUTE TO THE TOP**

### **HOW TO PRAISE**

**Do it often.** Five times a day minimum (like fruit and veg); 25 times would be even better.

**Spread it around your team or colleagues** to avoid a sense of favourites.

**Remember, it’s for their benefit, not yours.** This will make it more genuine.

**Don’t mix praise with negative feedback,** otherwise it will not be heard.

**Choose the right moment.** Broadly, for praise on a minor matter, do it straight away, otherwise it will look like a bigger deal than it is.

**Give the context.** If the praise isn’t offered immediately, it helps to let them know what exactly you are talking about: ‘Thanks for the report – it was great’, you are not giving the other person anything they can usefully apply in the future. Was it great because the report was detailed, had a succinct summary, included good questions.....?

**Describe the impact it has had.** This is the part that motivates. The good/positive consequences that flowed as a result of what they did well are what encourages them to repeat this behaviour.

**Describe the skills they demonstrated,** or what it tells you about them as a person. This is the part that makes the other person feel really good: ‘Thanks for leading the meeting so inspirationally; what a great team of people you have persuaded to get involved in the project.’

**Congratulate.** This is usually the beginning, middle and end of praising. It has a role but if it’s all you do, you get only one star.

### **TEN WAYS TO..... BETTER JUDGMENT**

1. Know what you want
2. Get good information
3. Separate fact from assumption

4. Don't be unsettled by uncertainty
5. Be led by the outcome, not your tastes
6. Keep an open mind
7. Find the lessons in your mistakes
8. Learn from others
9. Empathise
10. Remember: you're in control

Modern Management

## **CAREER MASTERCLASS WIN AN ARGUMENT**

**Let them speak first.** Listen, identify their concerns (getting promoted, closing a deal) and then tailor an irresistible argument.

**Give them credit.** Ask questions that guide them to your conclusion. Who'd reject an idea they've come up with themselves?

**Stay calm.** Focus on what your opponents are saying rather than what you think of them as a result of it (they're a fool). Calm a rising temperature by asking yourself what you want to achieve and how you can make it happen.

**Be prepared.** Write down every challenge your argument could provoke, hone your answers, and then practise delivering them.

**Don't bamboozle.** Most people would rather reject an idea than admit confusion. Break your argument into bite-size chunks, simplify and clarify. Make it fool proof.

**Strike a match.** Feeling a connection with others makes us more open to their ideas. Give natural synergy a nudge with body language. Adopt their posture, laugh when they laugh.

**Reason with them.** Of the nine major influencing tactics, logical reasoning is the most effective: saying 'because' after a statement increases the percentage of those converted by 50%. Reinforce your argument with accurate facts and figures.

**Get emotional.** Logic not working? Go for the heartstrings. Align your argument with your opponent's values and aspirations and paint a glowing picture of the future you want.

**Flatter.** 'I know that you of all people will be able to cope with the new process I'm suggesting.' Just don't overdo it.

**Use your allies.** Refer to someone they respect. The more it appears you're widely supported, the harder it will be to reject.

**Believe.** If you're not convinced, why should they be?

**The Mind Gym: Relationships**

## **YOUR ROUTE TO THE TOP GO FROM GOOD TO GREAT**

**Don't try to do everything.** Ask yourself. 'Where do my strengths lie?' Focusing on one area will help you pinpoint and hone the necessary skills to move up.

**Watch and learn.** How did those you admire get to where they are now? Ask questions, read professional biographies and track career achievements. Keep note of how they did it and map your own journey.

**Make a commitment.** Be clear on your desired outcome and set goals that stretch but don't strain. 'Action illusion' is a common procrastination trick – doing anything to justify putting off the task. Remember exam-revision timetables?

**Bring your boss on board.** Learning new skills, knowledge and capabilities improves your personal prospects and ensures that the business competes more effectively.

**Seek out opportunities.** Join cross-team projects and get involved with all aspects of your job. Keep your eyes and ears open to everything going.

**Make the most of mentors.** Over the course of your career, you should put together a range of experts whose knowledge you can dip into. Where possible, arrange face-to-face sessions, e-mail exchanges and even work shadowing.

**Surround yourself.** Online tutorials, skill exchanges with colleagues, and industry bestsellers are all excellent vehicles for building your knowledge. Take advantage of what's out there.

**Get ahead.** Try teaching yourself the basics and spend the budget on an advanced course to hone your skills. Time with an expert is better spent learning the harder bits.

**Give it a go.** Whether in your own time or as your role demands, try to learn on the job. Offer to work in other areas and suggest new tasks that put your dormant skills to use. Don't call in the experts, become one.

**'The Mind Gym' (from this month's Modern Management)**

# 5 PRACTICES OF *humble* LEADERSHIP

— DAN ROCKWELL —



VISUAL NOTES ON  
LEADERSHIP & LEARNING  
AT [QASPIRE.COM](http://QASPIRE.COM)  
BY TANMAY VORA  
@TNVORA

A FINAL THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH.....

We spend January 1 walking through our lives, room by room, drawing up a list of work to be done, cracks to be patched. Maybe this year, to balance the list, we ought to walk through the rooms of our lives... not looking for flaws, but for potential."

Ellen Goodman