

THE CAPTAIN'S JOURNEY



2nd Edition

Ian Scott

**Inspired action stories of leadership and survival in
the harshest of environments - bush warfare!**

**An easy going yet highly motivating guide
to the transformation of your leadership abilities.**

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It was these experiences, the mistakes made and the successes enjoyed which accelerated our individual growth and taught us to lead.

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For more information on the author go to www.thecaptainsjourney.co.za

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Ian Scott was educated in Zimbabwe and the University of Natal (Psychology and Economics) before joining the Rhodesian Army in 1975.

Commissioned initially into the airborne Rhodesian Light Infantry, such were his leadership qualities that he was appointed as a Captain in the elite Selous Scouts.

Moving to South Africa in 1980, Scott was appointed as Adjutant of a Special Forces Recce Battalion.

Operational in a variety of countries he gained invaluable insight into the motivation, leadership and survival of soldiers of all races in the harshest of environments .. bush warfare earning the respect and trust of those in various Special Forces units.

In 1983, he was recruited by Alexander Forbes, a large international firm of Employee Benefits Consultants, where he ultimately served as a National Director until his move in 1999 to form his own Leadership Consultancy.

A respected, dynamic and highly entertaining Conference speaker, outdoor instructor, (and accomplished guitar player) Scott has been invited to run a vast array of courses in South Africa and Mauritius and Singapore.

With the unusual combination of a military career in elite units together with seventeen years in the Corporate sector, Ian Scott brings to the table a wealth of knowledge and fresh ideas to cater for the building and maintenance of relationships within that environment.

His presentations are drawn not only from extensive research and knowledge of the industry but also from his own unique experiences.

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DEDICATION

To my Parents and Companions from a war who will never read this book.

BURRELL Bruce, Lt - Killed in action
CAMPOS Porky, Tpr - Killed on active service
COMACHO Tony, Tpr - Killed on active service
CONNOLLY Kev, FR - Killed in action
COOKSON Doug, Cpl - Killed in action
COURTNEY Paul, Lt - Killed in action
DENISON Andre, Maj - Killed in action
DIEDERICKS Chris, Tpr - Killed in action
DU PLESSIS Leon, Air Lt - Killed in action
DU PLOOY Joe, Capt - Killed in action
DU PREEZ Theunis 'Dup', Cpl - Killed on active service
ELLIS Mark, Tpr - Killed in action
FALZOI Fabio, Lt - Killed in action
FANNER Grahame, Tpr - Killed in action
GINGLES Allan, Lt - Killed in action
HARDY Mick, Capt - Killed on active service
HAVNAR Doug, Capt - Killed in action
LANGERMAN Mark, Lt - Killed in action
MAGUIRE Ray, L/Cpl - Killed on active service
MANN Ted, Rfn - Killed in action
MARNEWECK Koenie, Sgt - Killed in action
NEL Eddie, L/Cpl - Killed in action
O'DRISCOLL Gary, Cpl - Killed in action
PARKER Dave, Col - Killed on active service
PEARSE Martin, Capt - Killed in action
PEINKE Kevin, Air Lt - Killed in action
PIRINGONDO Edward, Lt - Killed in action
PITCH Len, Capt - Killed in action
POWELL Spike, Maj – Shot down in Viscount disaster
ROBERTSON Ian, Capt - Killed on active service
ROSENFELS Chappie, Lt - Killed in action
ROSENFELS Ian, Tpr - Killed in action
SMITH Richard, Sgt - Killed in action
SNELGAR Bruce, Maj - Killed on active service
STEEN Norman, Lt - Killed in action
THERON Nigel, Lt - Killed in action
THOMPSON Bruce, Lt - Killed in action
VAN NIERKERK Nick, Cpl - Killed in action
WALTERS Johnny, Lt - Killed on active service
WEBBER Spider, Lt - Killed in action
WHITE Pete, Sgt - Killed in action
WHITFIELD Johnny, Tpr - Killed in action
ZIETSMAN Andrew 'Ziets', Tpr - Killed in action

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Thank you to all the people who after attending my seminars have encouraged me to write this book; without the initial impetus and support, it wouldn't have happened.

You will note that some of the photographs look a spot old and worn – it's because they are. At least they managed to survive the conflict and most have never been published before.

Cameras were not allowed in the operational areas and for what reason, I have no clue. Bush looks like bush wherever you are, and I'm not aware of our hierarchy cunningly concealing any clandestine deposits of nerve gas between the rustic branches of the ancient baobab tree. Therefore most 'happy snaps' were sneaked by amateurs in 'cloak and dagger' format utilising inferior quality equipment – that's the way it was.

Thanks to those who rallied to the call and took time out to find those dusty images.

Over the last 30 years a lot of research has been stored in the 'hard drive' above my shoulders and I don't remember from which library it came, let alone the name and finer details of the book. Therefore you'll note some omissions in the Reference Section. However, I believe acknowledgement is very important, so to all those who have contributed to my gathering of 'intelligence'—writers, forum speakers and the many teams that I have had the privilege of leading – much appreciated!

In particular thanks to my wife Gill, sons Craig and Brett, Paris Sumner, Kim Cruickshank, Rev Vernon Loker, Colin Vermaak, Rod Smith, Simon Willar, Ian Macfarlane, Pat Armstrong, Dale Collett, Tom Thomas and Richard Mulvey for their input and advice.

And a special thanks to Val Waldeck for her courses and invaluable advice (and patience) on the complexities of publishing on Kindle. Appreciated!

And thanks to *you* as well – enjoy the read!

WHAT THIS BOOK IS NOT.....

The objective of this book is not to regurgitate ‘official’ leadership philosophy with all the incumbent tables, graphs and rhetoric.

By necessity a minimal amount of theory has been included.

This is a series of stories; a practical, easy to read reference, meant for the everyday leader and not intended to be an all encompassing text book on management. It does however, include the essential stuff.

If you only want to read the anecdotes, you’ll find them on the contents page. However at the beginning of each chapter you’ll also notice a synopsis of factors important to personal development and leadership.

I consider myself extremely fortunate because most folks don’t go through six years of a prolonged bush war in their early twenties.

It was these experiences; mine and those of others, the mistakes made and the successes enjoyed, more than any theory which taught us to lead. Some of these stories are recounted in this book. There are many others, but I have only included those relevant to the context of this publication.

General David Petraeus, the soldier in charge of US forces in Iraq and Afghanistan explained to Fortune Magazine in April 2010:

“Tell me anywhere in the business world where a 22 year old is responsible for 40 other individuals on missions that involve life and death. Their tactical actions can have strategic implications for the overall mission. And they are under enormous scrutiny on top of everything else. These are pretty formative experiences. It's a bit of a crucible-like experience they go through.”

Harvard Business Review spotlighting ‘Leadership Lessons from the Military’ had similar sentiments, culminating their treatise..... “These are the same skills that companies need today to prevail in a climate of intense economic uncertainty.”

In the late 80’s I started reading the works of the great leadership authors. They put on paper what we (in the military) had learnt in the prolonged conflict in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) in the 60’s and 70’s – we just didn’t have

the theoretical terminology.

The more I read the more I understood what had transpired in my own mind and to me that was encouragement enough – we were on the right track.

Principles haven't actually changed much – the 'latest' concept of Servant Leadership can be found in the Bible and people are still referring to 'The Art of War' by Sun Tzu dating from 512 BC.

Members of the business community are always looking for some new theory to give them the edge. Over time, a host of authors have added new versions to reinforce, but not change, the original basic concepts. The secret is to transmit the message in a novel approach. That's why I've been asked to write this book – to tell it in the way I do on seminars.

Certain key dynamics; recognition, discipline and communication amongst others, have been reiterated on occasions under different stories and contexts – that's because they are important and need to be reinforced; the adage "Repetition is the Mother of Skill" applies.

A lot of subjects are covered, although not necessarily all in depth. The objective is to make the reader aware of the many avenues in the leadership spectrum. There is more than ample information available from a variety of other sources for personal research.

As I point out to people on leadership courses;

"I can plant the seed and inspire the motivation process; thereafter, it's up to you!"

1. WHERE I'M COMING FROM.....

When I was seven I toppled out of a tree and broke my arm. Arriving at the hospital late in the evening, I had to spend the night there before they repaired me the next day. There were only two of us in the male ward; myself and a very sore policeman. He had arrived from Britain a mere two weeks previously. The climate as normal was 40°C in the shade and our law enforcer enquired of his fellow police officers where a hot Pom could swim. They suggested he pop down to the Umshagashe River. What they failed to tell him was that a reptile he was not likely to find in the UK resided there in large numbers – it was called a crocodile.

Off goes our sweaty fellow with a large tube to cool down from this unaccustomed heat and launches into the aforesaid river. Seconds later a large crocodile, having duly espied some tasty bum, takes a huge bite out of his rectum.

I remember looking at him in total disbelief. How could anybody be so stupid? We as kids fished in the Umshagashe but managed to dodge these lethal reptiles. I started to learn that other people might be different.

My mother was born Elizabeth Jacoba van As Jordaan, so as you can gather, was not from British stock. She had two degrees and was a Natal high jumper.

My father was a South African Junior 440 yard record holder, a Transvaal weight lifter, wrestler and gymnast. A small man, but with a grip like hyena jaws, I once saw him tear a telephone directory in half. An accountant and a fitness fanatic he never smoked, touched alcohol or swore.

Both were achievers, emigrated from South Africa to Rhodesia, and in 1952 I was born into a family who always wanted to win.

We lived on the outskirts of Fort Victoria, near the renowned Zimbabwe Ruins. Opposite the house was bush - 300 kilometres of the thorny stuff until you reached Umtali on the Eastern border. Subsequently my childhood was spent with friends scampering around the veldt; shooting, fishing, climbing trees, riding bicycles and swimming at the local public pool.

Your status revolved around the make and size of your air rifle or the attachments to your bicycle. If you had a Sturmy Archer 3 Speed fitted to your bike and a dynamo powered bully lamp, you were sitting on the top

rung. We got up to the normal things little boys do – Ant Watson and I used to take turns with the rifle shooting empty tins off each other's head. We had that kind of trust.

In those times cell phones, PC's and fax machines didn't exist. In fact they were the days of four digit telephone numbers – ours was 2761. When you travelled long distances, your folks would hang a canvas water bag on the front bumper. The air pressure through the fabric kept the water ice cold, so no need for a cool-box. Do it today and your kids would duck under the dashboard from embarrassment.

My parents instilled the initial discipline required in both my educational and sporting spheres. Because of this I was in the top three in the academic 'A' stream and excelled on the sports field, representing the school in Provincial athletics and rugby

A teacher at the local Fort Victoria High School, my mother insisted that I set an example becoming of the school. This I did in terms of academics and sport but unfortunately I also had a little bit of a rebellious streak. I found it quite difficult being the son of a teacher.

'Ma Scott' had a fearsome reputation as well as a very caring streak and tutored many grateful students through their exams. She applied the same principles as a coach on the athletics track; there is even a sports field named after her.

In their blueprint for my life, my parents considered a career as a brilliant surgeon or at least a highly respected doctor would suit them. As Fort Vic High only went up to 'M' level (the equivalent of Matric in South Africa) I was packed off in my 6th Form year to boarding school at Milton in Bulawayo to do 'A' levels.

Unfortunately, sport and the social calendar outweighed that of academics, and although I was made a House Prefect after the first term, my penchant for the grape got me into a little hot water.

I had decided to venture into the wine making industry and had 'borrowed' a flask, beaker and a couple of glass tubes from the biology laboratory. Manufacture started in the roof of the hostel boarding house. Regrettably, over-fermentation instigated a minor explosion, and wine started to seep through the ceiling into the room below. The slight dilemma was that the room belonged to Mr Vernon Hochuli, the biology master.

A culmination of these types of transgressions eventually led to the House Master suggesting that Fort Victoria probably needed me more than he did,

and I should return from whence I came. This I did, reformed to some extent, became Deputy Head, and then moved onto the next phase of life; The University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg in South Africa.

University was a lot of fun and not too strenuous. I kept my nose clean and did just enough to get through the more important exams. My only misdemeanour was to climb the Men's Residence clock steeple fairly late one evening and change the time. When the security guard challenged me, I told him to come up and get me. He didn't – just waited for me to lose my grip and come sliding down. For this crime against mankind I was fined R10. This doesn't sound much but in 1971 it was half of my monthly allowance. In those days a beer only cost 18 cents at the Imperial Hotel.

It was whilst at University that I deviated from athletics and entered the arena of weightlifting. I needed more challenge, in all probability instigated by my encounter with Bob Cheffers, an Australian coach contracted to the Rhodesian Athletics Association. Whilst on a training camp in the Inyanga Mountains, I mentioned to Bob that besides sprinting, I would like to get into the 'strength' events. He unceremoniously stated that my body structure was such that I would never make it.

It took me two years of heavy training to win a Bronze Medal in the South African Junior Weightlifting Championships held in Howick in 1971.

Here I also met [Rod Smith](#). From Swaziland and educated in South Africa, he and I were to follow the same road together for many years. Besides his illustrious Rhodesian Army career where he earned a Bronze Cross for bravery in action, he has also been a mercenary in the Middle East, a body-guard to a prominent ex-OPEC Arab Sheik, a ski instructor in Andorra, a crocodile hunter in Mozambique and currently manages a Safari Lodge in Zambia.

We still see each other every year. He calls me 'Licentious' (disregarding accepted rules or conventions). His name is 'Bibulous' (fondness for beer).

Psychology and Economics were my majors, but at this time, the war in Rhodesia had started to escalate. During my formative years I had an absolute fascination for anything military. I had read every volume of Winston Churchill's 'The History of World War II' and anything else relating to this conflict. Therefore, come the end of my spell at University, I decided to join the army. It was a decision I would never regret and had the most profound

influence on my life.

Selected for an Officer's course, I underwent the rigours of military training at the School of Infantry. Upon graduation, I was posted to 1 Commando, the RLI (Rhodesian Light Infantry) as the commander of 1 Troop.

As a youth in your early twenties you were expected to manage the administration, logistics, morale, planning, communication, team dynamics and leadership of your troop. The penalty for error was injury or death. You learn quite quickly. You had to be totally competent and professional with all facets of your trade.

However, at the same time under these excessive demands, we were brought together and the close relationships developed with colleagues became unbreakable and as tightly knit as any intimate family. Forty years later, that formidable bond still exists.

Adversity builds character and unity.

Encompassing young professional soldiers, often from rough and dubious backgrounds, the RLI had a reputation – they loved fighting wherever they were.

There were four commandos. Each would be deployed in an operational area for seven weeks and then return for ten days 'rest and recuperation' (R&R) before re-deployment.

It was during the R&R that the battalion came into ill repute. The troops would congregate at Le Coq D'or, a Salisbury (Harare) nightclub and drink as if an eternal drought was imminent within the breweries. This was then pursued with a fight with anybody in any vicinity for any reason.

During my time at the School of Infantry I had been on course with Don, the son of Lord Graham who at that period was the Minister of Defence. Don was an excellent chap, highly intelligent and very unassuming. He was posted to the Services Corps.

One R&R a fellow officer, [Joe Du Plooy](#) and I bumped into him in Salisbury, and he invited us to a function at his father's mansion on the outskirts of the city.

Having imbibed a fair quantity of the fruit of hops, Joe and I considered ourselves to be the most eligible suitors in the palace. We engaged the conversation of two lovely ladies nearby.

"So where are you gentleman from?" they sweetly enquired.

“The RLI,” Joey replied.

Immediately the floor for about 20 metres around us cleared as if we had just dropped a bucket of cholera.

“Who let the dogs out??!! Lock your daughters up, the RLI has infiltrated. How did you guys get in here? Who invited you?”

We left shortly thereafter, but not before Joe opened all the stable doors in the race horse enclosure nearby.

However, it was in the bush where the RLI really made their name.

To quote from ‘The Saints’, a publication about the regiment:

“In its short 19 year history, from 1961 to 1980 the Rhodesian Light Infantry was to carve for itself an enduring legacy as counter insurgency fighters par excellence. Made up of over twenty different nationalities, the RLI was a ‘foreign legion’ in the truest sense. Having defined the Fire Force concept - that of total airborne envelopment of the enemy - in collaboration with the Rhodesian Air Force and the Selous Scouts, the RLI was to develop and refine this technique with ruthless and devastating effect against the overwhelming communist tide of Robert Mugabe’s ZANLA as well as Joshua Nkomo’s ZIPRA guerrillas. Overstretched and undermanned, troops were at times parachuted (mostly under 500 feet) into two or three contacts per day; the highest number of descents by one paratrooper being a staggering 73 operational jumps!

Kill rates don't win wars, but it is estimated that the RLI accounted for between 12,000 and 15,000 enemy guerrillas, with the loss of 85 men killed in action and 50 men who died on operations.”

History records Warrant Officer Herod from the Rhodesian African Rifles (RAR) stating after one contact, “We in the RAR used to laugh at your soldiers. To us they looked like boys – but you have shown us how to fight. [They have the faces of boys, but they fight like lions.](#)”

After being injured on operations in Zambia I was posted to a staff job to recuperate and then on to the Selous Scouts as the Adjutant.

The ‘Scouts’ were a multi-racial Special Forces ‘pseudo’ unit, responsible for infiltrating and then eliminating the ranks of the rebel organisations. In the guise of ZANLA, ZIPRA or FRELIMO forces they were additionally

employed to undertake the more 'unconventional' cross border raids, besides other covert actions. All their operations came under the 'Top Secret' banner.

Come independence in 1980, there was a significant dispersal of Rhodesian military talent to the Middle and Far East, South America and numerous locations in Africa – wherever there was a need for armed forces experience.

I was destined to be recruited by the South African Special Forces and my next post was a Captain in the Reconnaissance Commandos. Comparable to the Scouts our sphere of operations extended into Mozambique and Angola.

Besides the move, there was a massive lifestyle change. In Rhodesia the civilian population were as much a part of the war as the soldiers. The fight was in the urban areas as well as the bush. In Fort Victoria, the Milne's house, five doors down from my folks was attacked one night.

Again in my home town, the local fuel depot 400 metres from where I stayed, suffered a major rocket strike. I was immediately called back to the Brigade base, leaving my wife alone, knowing there were a horde of dissidents bent on destruction still in the immediate vicinity.

The Zimbabwe Ruins Hotel raid, another one. On this occasion Major Andre Dennison was killed as he tried to dislodge the enemy entrenched on the hill overlooking the establishment.

Everybody carried a weapon, even the ladies; every pub had a rifle rack. The population was highly aware that the conflict was around them at all times.

In South Africa, however, the war was a long, long way away – in South West Africa (Namibia) and Angola. The public was only aware of it because it appeared in the press or someone they knew was there. To be on a combat footing as a civilian was an alien concept.

Leadership here also took a different turn in that we were trying to amalgamate seasoned operators into a system which was a lot more rigid and inflexible than our previous scenario.

The clock keeps ticking, and there comes a stage when you change direction. The way of life, finances and the system were not conducive to family stability.

A number of organisations were employing Staff Qualified military personnel as leaders. [Pat Armstrong](#), my superior in both the RLI and Selous Scouts, was one of them. He invited me to join him at Norwich Union. Pat

then moved on as a Senior Director to Alexander Forbes and again, I followed.

The transition from military commander to civilian leader took time. I had arrived in South Africa having just lost my country. We had never lost a battle, but had come second in factors beyond our control - the political war; the 'Game of Thrones.' I was angry, arrogant, hardened and displaced. Where I came from resistance to the opposition was solved by the one with the most accurate firepower. For those amongst our ranks who stepped over the line, 28 days in Detention Barracks was deemed the suitable solution. These generally weren't considered the correct options in civilian life.

My ex-wife Sally, an artist with international acclaim recently completed a wall-hanging dedicated to the RLI with the following inscription:

"This piece is dedicated to the men who go through war and make it to the other side. Upon their release from duty, they take with them the physical, mental and emotional scars of their journey, but lose the authority and recognition that they have been accustomed to. They are then expected to carry on business as usual as if the war had never happened. The task is near impossible, for a man who has lived through war will never be quite the same again.

The challenge is for him to take what he has learned from his experience and redefine it in such a way that he is able to forgive and truly release himself from the bonds of this turbulent past. In my view, this challenge is equal to the magnitude of his sacrifice."

Sally Scott, 'In Memoriam'

I had to adjust and accept ongoing change as the only constant.

Take what you have learnt; meticulous planning, attention to detail, logistics, personnel management, command and control.

Ingrained already is the quest for adventure. Now add a whole new set of business proficiencies; negotiation abilities, customer service and the like adjust your monocle, re-set the range and you're back on the road again.

Para Delta

"We the willing, led by the all knowing, are doing the impossible for the mainly ungrateful. We have done so much for so long with so little, we are now qualified to do anything with nothing."

Nineteen years later, and wrapping up as a National Director of Alexander Forbes, it was now the time for something completely different.

I had been involved on a 'part-time hobby basis' in an outdoor adventure concern. Now the moment to get serious about teaching and developing individuals appeared.

To this endeavour Scott's Teambuilding Adventures, running leadership and teambuilding courses for the Corporate sector was born; the mission statement, simply:

“TO GROW PEOPLE”

“The sure way to miss success is to miss the opportunity.”

Victor Chasles

Commentary:

Many who enter adulthood expect big opportunities to be handed out to them as part of the package. Except for the very fortunate, life doesn't work that way – you have to make that break yourself.

One of our activities is rock-climbing where delegates scale up the vertical face using slight protrusions of rock as a finger hold, a narrow crack as a foot support or a slight ledge to grasp as they labour slowly to the top.

In the review we ask them, “Did anyone fall?” The answer is invariably “No.”

Why? Because, although secured by a safety rope, they still did not want to fall (fail). They had to use every little opportunity, every tiny grip to attain their objective without crashing.

Drive your leg upward and you WILL find that slender gap in the rock-face of life.

And having passed that barrier, you learn with amazement at what small supports can sustain you in your quest forward.

All you have to do is take that next step!

“The future belongs to the risk takers, not the security seekers. The more you seek security, the less of it you will have and the more you pursue opportunity, the more security you will achieve.”

Brian Tracy

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding: 22nd February 2012

2. YOUR LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL

“Life is Tough ... Accept It!”

Have you ever heard that dreaded sound...?

When involved in a series of cross-border raids into Mozambique, we were tasked to ambush a road and cut off ZANLA guerrillas escaping from a nearby camp. Besides my RLI ‘stick’ there was also an SAS (Special Air Services) call-sign under the command of an old friend of mine, Willy McIntosh.

Abruptly the sound of a FRELIMO T34 tank could be heard in the near distance searching the track for Rhodesian insurgents.

Please understand that the snarl of a tank’s diesel engine drawing closer and closer tends to drop your morale fairly hastily. The fear of facing this steel ogre escalates; especially when you’re armed only with automatic rifles and a couple of machine guns. It would be like defending yourself against a charging buffalo with a stick of candy floss.

Willy, sporting a wry crooked smile, whispers to me, “Never fear, Scott-man I have some evil schemes!”

Nonetheless, I’m trying to squirrel under the grass like a weasel hiding from a buzzard. I see the barrel of the tank traversing towards us. Anxiously, I await the muzzle flash followed by an 85mm shell for breakfast. The flash came, but from UNDER the tank!

The SAS troop had the forethought (and prior intelligence) to lay centre-blast mines along the road. To my intense relief, these were used to great effect, rendering the approaching armour from a threat into a pile of scrap metal.

If you want to grow as a leader, plan on moving out of your comfort zone.

“The Road Less Travelled” by Scott Peck begins with the theme, “Life is tough, accept it!”

And if we accept this as truth, living becomes easier. Why?

Firstly, we begin to THINK and THINK some more. What could happen in any number of scenarios?

Research, information gathering and reasoning leads to foresight. We now PLAN for any eventuality in the future so we are prepared for the moment of truth when it comes.

Secondly, we also start to recognise the opportunities.

Be bold; we tend to live in this negative, anxious society where everything is dangerous to your health, future and whatever else comes to mind. We live in an environment controlled by ‘authorities’ and have lost the ‘common sense’ we were born with – the innate sense of self.

Whilst operational in Mozambique and Zambia, and let me assure you, water is not at a premium in those dry countries, we used to find murky water holes laden with algae and other ‘dirt’. However, we had no hesitation in clearing the muck away and slurping. When you are that thirsty you will drink engine oil. Sure, it looked vile, but kept us alive without any adverse consequences.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF OURSELVES

Luke has been with a vehicle manufacturing company since he left school. Starting off as an apprentice he worked his way up to become a chief technician. Recently the company employed a number of university graduates to assist on his Research and Development projects. His animosity towards them is evident. He has spent twenty years doing this job and now they are coming up with ideas he has never thought of.

Change has never occurred to him since his brain turns so slowly and time moves so fast. Luke is intimidated. Every morning he stumbles out of bed, retrieves his teeth from the grain bin and starts the day by thinking of everything in his power to discredit the youngsters.

As opposed to welcoming new ideas to make his job easier and place the company in a top competitive position, Luke resists. He might be made to look wanting. He feels exposed and lacks self esteem. He sees a threat, not an opportunity.

Look around you... there are lots of ‘leaders’ like this out there.

Whenever we commence a development course, I ask the question “What is leadership and team building?”

The answers are always the same..... working together, respect, shared vision, trust, communication - the list continues. People tend to think of leadership only as the development of relationships with other people.

However, a very important factor is missing.

Look inwardly - if you cannot trust yourself, how can others trust you?

And if you can't trust yourself, you tend not to be sure about other people.

The first requirement in leadership is the Development of Ourselves

What Needs To Be Changed?

To become a leader, look initially at your own internal development. This builds self esteem and self worth. You are not threatened by other people; you have your own self value, and readily accept others for what they are. You have confidence in yourself, and amongst the essential competencies one must have as a leader, John Adair rates confidence as among the top.

You are also a happier person. An accepted fact is that you are going to spend most of your life in the workplace. Also understand you are going to spend the rest of time with yourself.

It is your choice whether you are cheerful or not.

You saunter into the office and there is Bad Bart. He lives in the sewer with a witch and comes to work on her broomstick. He's got a face like an incensed bush-pig and breath like an ailing skunk.

Bart's all-consuming whine on life is "What about me? What about me!" His middle names are Complain and Criticise.

Is Bart happy? No, he is his own worst enemy. You tend to avoid characters like this and if something is not done to negate their destructive attitude, that virus seeps into the work environment.

However if you seek someone who is happy, the feeling is contagious. We grow and learn more when we are in good spirits.

According to some research guru, 70% of people are discontent in their employment. And it is not so much the job they are doing, but their attitude towards their job. They would be unhappy wherever they are. The only way to enhance the situation is to ask yourself the questions, "What can I do to improve my lot? What can be done to improve this job? What needs to be changed ...?"

"I wanted to change the world, but I found that the only thing one can be sure of changing, is oneself."

Aldous Huxley

Commentary:

Where did the conquering spirit and imagination go leading you to climb Everest or win Gold at the Olympics? Fantasies that were as valid to you as having to go to school every day. Adult pressures in the real world allow no time to re-visit these realms of childhood delight. Disappointments and hardships are what we expect; "Always happens to me, doesn't matter what I do"

What **does matter** is how **you** effect change on your life. Accept this; change is the great law of nature; everything changes - it is the only constant in existence and when one cannot change a situation, better you change yourself! And a change for the better always starts with a change of **thinking** - let your dreams become clear visions of your future.

Find your passion and then begin by taking the necessary steps:

Define your goals and take charge of future success by developing a blueprint and **written plan** of action in which your long term goals are broken down into practical and measurable activities.

Set deadlines and organise activities systematically. By planning your progress step by step, day by day, week by week, a productive results-orientated routine emerges.

Disciplined, self confident action and **focus** will ensure success. Become excited; feel, anticipate and with determination, follow through - get the wind beneath your wings, make that change and vision real!

"Change favours only the prepared mind." Louis Pasteur

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding: 19th July 2005

What Problems Face Us In Our Development?

So where are we going? What stops us achieving our aspirations?

Denis Waitley in his book 'Psychology of Winning' said, "It is not who you are holding you back; it's who you think you are not."

Waitley implies that we are held back by our personal self limiting beliefs, borne of factors amongst others such as:

Fear

Fear of the unknown, failure, ridicule and success.
And what do we mean by fear of success?

“I don’t think I could be as competent as our Chief Executive so I won’t even attempt it. What would happen if I did get there; could I handle the pressure? No thanks!”

It is the fear of the unknown trip in the gloomy fog on the journey to the top, followed by the responsibility which would ensue.

“I feel more secure here where I’m at ease and don’t have to venture out of these calm waters.”

A Low Self Image

Our own self image, derived from our past. Were you told you were bad at maths or science or geography at school? And if so, why did you believe the teacher?

We believed because the tutor was the same size as our parents, another trusted symbol of authority. Albert Einstein, physicist and atomic genius, was thrown out of his class as a dunce and this begs the question; was this teacher competent or not? Or maybe even a threatened tutor?

Fortunately Einstein was not influenced by these setbacks and rose to the heights of his own aptitude, but numerous adolescents do grow up believing they are just not good enough. By age fourteen our characters are fundamentally set and at that time many youngsters tend to believe a whole lot of things about themselves which might not be true.

Tradition and Resistance to Change

When I was at university, a good friend of mine, Bill Hammond qualified as a biochemist and joined Coca-Cola. He went to Namibia, looked at the processes in the plant, and suggested some changes.

All the resident Germans said, “Vee hav been doing zis for sirty years.”

Bill told them in no uncertain terms that for thirty years they had been doing it wrong! Brave move for a youngster just out of college, but they followed his advice and improved production.

Resistance to change, and change is the only constant. Caused by fear of failure, ridicule

The Influence of Others; Do It My Way Or Else.....

Insisting that people ‘conform to the norm’ just stifles them into a strait-jacket and inhibits their freedom, creativity and development...

Mad Dogs and Englishmen

During yet another attempt by the British to resolve their ‘Rhodesian problem’ the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs visited us at Mtoko airfield.

A Sandhurst graduate, Lord Carrington served in the Grenadier Guards and was awarded a Military Cross in the 2nd World War. He subsequently held the portfolios of First Lord of the Admiralty and Minister of Defence. Carrington was well known as being a stickler for detail, regimentation and a well-groomed appearance.

We were formed up beside the runway to welcome the dignitary. As was the custom, he set about reviewing the troops. Since we were on standby for a callout our webbing was on the ground behind us. We were all issued standard gear but over time would modify our individual kit to suit our differing experiences and preferences.

Lord Carrington went through the ranks and stopped at [Corporal ‘Dup’ Du Preez](#). Eyeing his webbing and indicating to the trooper he had just reviewed, he said, “My good man, why is your equipment so different to his?”

Dup had a profound stutter and replied, “B..b..b...because, Sir, I skeem his w..w..webbing is a ***** heap of *****!” He then launched into a vehement stream of staccato verbal abuse which left our Nobleman in no doubt about his absolute disdain for the other soldier’s outfit. The intensity of his language would have melted the ears off an Alcatraz inmate.

Corporal Du Preez obviously had never been to The Enkeldoorn School of Etiquette.

Too polite to walk away our guest withstood this molten gush of fury and then answered with a rather suave, “By Jove.”

I nearly vaporised. You are not allowed to howl with laughter whilst standing stiffly to attention on parade. I glued my mouth shut and stared into the horizon. My upper lip stayed rigid but the lower one resembled a worm trying to escape from a fishing hook. My teeth started fighting with each other and my gut was reverberating like a bullfrog’s throat.

I was at the end of the Troop and presumed it was my duty to say something intelligent. At this juncture, with all orifices in emergency shut-down mode, I was breathing by osmosis.

I have to give it to Lord Carrington. He saw my tears, just said, “Mmm” and passed me by. However, I did note a twinkle in his eye and a smirk on his lips.

After the incident a member of the Brigade staff suggested I try to mould ‘Dup’ into a bit more of a gentleman for situations like this.

I disagreed.

Let people be who they are and express themselves in their own way. Accept their upbringing, and if their unconventional ways do not affect their performance then do not force them to conform to your values.

I suspect too many leaders attempt to change others and mould them into the company image. This only fosters resentment and lack of productivity. Value people for who they are; non-conformity often breeds progress. Look at the success of the SAS in the North African desert during the 2nd World War.

In the business community, unfortunately this subject of changing people to fit your mould happens all the time, and more often than not, stifles ingenuity.

Let’s take the example of Alf who answers an advert from a large organisation looking for innovative, focused, self-starting employees. He gets the job. Alf is a very dynamic and ambitious youngster. A creative thinker, his first idea on improvements to service delivery is pooh-pooh’d and squashed by all the nay-sayers who have been clogging the organisation for ever. The same with his second, third and fourth suggestions.

Alex Houghton-Blake, the manager, explains, “This Corporation was established in 1893 and we have developed systems and a culture. These may not be questioned or changed. This is the way we do things around here.”

Alex appears to have been there since inception; he stills wears a pin striped suit with braces and a top hat.

Alf works there for many years and over that period the environment suffocates every bit of innovation, creative thinking and drive he ever had. After all he does get a fine salary. He becomes a perfect cardboard company clone and even gets to wear a pin-stripe suit with braces and a top-hat.

It’s a good company. It’s an efficient company, but it will never be a GREAT company.

A Shortage of Patience is another hindrance;

"We do not have to become heroes overnight. Just a step at a time, meeting each thing that comes up, seeing it is not as dreadful as it appeared, discovering we have the strength to stare it down."

Eleanor Roosevelt

Commentary:

Meander down memory lane and recall Easter as a child the many chocolate treasures hidden in the garden by the rabbit, the excitement and sheer thrill of locating each egg. We knew they were out there somewhere and used boundless energy and enthusiasm in our quest. As the cache grew so did our beams of satisfaction.

It wouldn't have been as exciting if there had been only **one** big egg. This would have entailed a lot more searching and still only a single prize. The combination of the little successes far outweighed a solitary big triumph.

And so it is with life; with impatience we want that big egg today but when we see what obstacles surround those ambitious objectives, we frequently become disillusioned at the seemingly intimidating challenges, lapse into apathy and forego the prize for another day.

However, the combination of smaller attainable goals is easier, brings regular satisfaction, leads to a positive attitude, and in no time at all we find we actually have conquered the 'insurmountable.'

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding: 8th April 2004

Other Factors

Other features inhibiting us include a lack of abstract thinking and visualisation. Apathy, complacency and low confidence also dampen the creative processes.

We are continually told that South Africa is a third world country. America has the opportunity, Japan the technology and Germany the efficiency. Well this didn't stop Gary Player, Chris Barnard or Mark Shuttleworth.

It is not where you are in the world that makes the difference; it's where you are at in your head.

Decisions: Base Them On Fact...

.....and not on emotions, prejudices, pride or obsessive behaviour.

High flyer

At some point in time my Troop was positioned in Fort Victoria with a view to being dropped into Mozambique to do some hit and run stuff.

I decided that an investigation of the target area before we took the plunge would be in order, so I flew down to Chiredzi in a Police Reserve Air Wing Cessna aircraft. PRAW, as they were known, did great work in the transport of personnel as well as internal air survey operations and were an invaluable supplement to the overstretched Air Force.

An Air Force Lynx piloted by Mick Delport then took me for a flip over the 'Russian Front' as it was called so that I could ascertain the lie of the land.

Arriving safely back in Chiredzi I was due to return to Fort Vic via the same Cessna.

The weather was becoming overcast and Chiredzi control tower advised that it might be a little risky to fly if the cloud dropped any lower. For the uninitiated, the idea is to be able to see the landmarks on the ground to ensure accurate navigation. However, should this not be possible, the pilot can then use his instruments to ascertain direction and position – this is if he is 'instrument rated' and the aircraft has the necessary equipment. Even the smaller aircraft in the Air Force, for example, had what was known as a 'Bekker Homer' which picked up VHF radio signals and could be guided to their source.

The pilot was edgy and extremely anxious to get back to his farm on the outskirts of Fort Vic and insisted that he was going.

Fair enough, I thought, he's the pilot and knows what he's doing. PRAW aviators were good and selected on merit, so there would be no problem. We take off and for the first five minutes visibility is good.

Then the clouds came billowing in towards Mother Earth. The pilot dropped below the haze and flew at treetop height along the Mtilikwe River. Low level flying, what a pleasure! The speed as the trees flip just under the wing tip – exhilarating!

Then the mist descends a little more, so we drop again, just above the water line and the trees on the banks are now higher than us. Excitement turns to apprehension. I also note the cloud has foamed in to obscure a mountain ahead of us and is fingering into an acute bend in the river. Now there is no way of knowing if we can see any terra firma as we turn the corner.

No problem – our intrepid man in the flying machine hauls the stick deep

into his groin and the aircraft groans very slowly upward into the mire. I look to the left, mountainside. I glance to the right, mountainside. I don't look to the front.

I'm not breathing as a rocky outcrop scrapes between the wheels. My sphincter leaps up to strangle my liver.

A gust of wind uplifts the Cessna and we suddenly peep safely over the top of the clouds. All around us as far as the eye could perceive was just rolling whiteness.

Safe from flying into immovable objects, there is still one very small problem; sometime before the little monoplane runs out of fuel or light we have to descend through the fog and perch ourselves on the underside so we can see where to land. During the same descent it is advisable to miss the mountains in the path. Having grown up in the area I knew that there were huge outcrops all the way along the route and in the vicinity of the airfield. If the navigation was not spot-on, we were going to collide with one of them. And that would be very messy.

The pilot examines his compass, adjusts the flight path, throttles down and comments, "I hope this is the right direction."

"Well just use your Bekker Homer," I advise.

"I haven't got one."

Whoops!

Our plane had no radar either. The only items on the instrument panel were an altimeter, compass, fuel gauge and a kitschy sticker saying 'Rhodesia is Supa'.

We couldn't rely on Fort Vic radar because it didn't exist. In fact the control tower was only occupied during commercial flights; two per week to Bulawayo and three to Salisbury.

Norman Glover who ran the local Manica Travel Agencies would transport passengers to the airport building, open up, do the check-in, issue the tickets, serve a couple of drinks and then go through the boarding procedures at the exit. Finally Big Norm would ascend the staircase to the cabin on the roof and authorise the take-off.

A man of many diverse skills to be sure!

So here we are over a clouded area stretching from Brisbane to Siberia, and 'Jimmy' here has chosen to fly with a jockey who hasn't got the full ticket.

The cloud is sitting at about 2000 feet and we strain to see a hole in the

undercover for a safe drop – nothing. The pilot calculates we should be in the vicinity of Fort Vic and we circle and circle. I check the fuel gauge. The needle is flattening itself into the red section.

“Why is the fuel so low?” I politely enquire.

“I didn’t refuel at Chiredzi because I wasn’t expecting to fly for an extra hour or so.”

Oh, wonderful! Great contingency planning for any eventuality.

We continue circling and circling and circling.

The engine coughs; it’s slowly dying of thirst. We are going to go down in style – a power dive straight into the dirt like Evel Knievel.

Now I am starting to pray in earnest.

Abruptly the cloud directly below us swirled into an opening like a bathplug letting the water out. And directly below, with windsock waving – Fort Vic airfield. How’s that for Providence!

The little aircraft stands on its starboard wing, darts through the gap, and glides onto the runway!

Let’s look at the reasoning behind this mindless preoccupation to get back to Fort Victoria at ‘all costs’.

His decision to fly was firstly based on emotions.

I knew the pilot’s background. His farm was on the ‘hit list’ and obviously he did not want to leave his wife alone and risk an attack. Understandably he had concerns, but to blatantly disregard sound advice about the high risk of appalling weather in an ill-equipped aircraft and put himself and his family in jeopardy was pure folly. He would be of no use to his kin in the wreckage of a plane with his hands tightly clutching the control column and intestines loosely draped over the rudder pedals.

Secondly, thoughtless pride swayed his judgement. He was a cocky individual, quite high up in the community and did not like people advising him.

A “*don’t tell me what to do*” and “*I’ll do it my way*” attitude predominated. People like this don’t take counsel easily and tend to neglect discussion. Therefore I was unaware of his rationale. If he had let me know of his concern for domestic security, I would have radioed through and deployed my Troop to protect his farm – a far better solution. Tunnel vision and obsession impaired his judgement and caused irrational decisions.

Be alert to other agendas, fixated and reckless behaviour. I should have

questioned him as to his motives. Get to know the background of your employees. *As a leader you also have to be a detective.* In addition, encourage staff to investigate all options, not just the one tattooed on their forehead.

Understand That Your Potential Is Higher Than You Think...

Surviving the crossfire.....

In the early 70's, as the war was escalating, we had a skirmish in the south east of the country near Rutenga. A stream of enemy fire was coming from the vicinity of a couple of huts in a village line and so I instructed my machine gunner to "wipe them." During the subsequent sweep, we found a pregnant woman in one of the huts bleeding from two hits in her stomach. The medic patched her up immediately and called for a helicopter to uplift her. Unfortunately it was last light and the aircraft could not land. Her flight to hospital could only come in the next day.

We made a bed for her within our defensive perimeter, kept her as comfortable as possible and waited for her to die. Not a sound came from her all night, not a complaint, not even a groan. At first light, miraculously (and thankfully) she was still breathing. The helicopter landed, and as one of the troopers was unloading the stretcher, I turned and there she was WALKING towards the aircraft!

A few weeks later she was discharged from the hospital. Sadly the baby had not survived, but the mother was none the worse for wear.

The human race is a lot more resilient than we think.

Further support for this argument comes from Dr Viktor Frankl, an Austrian psychiatrist who was interned in the Nazi concentration camps in World War II and wrote 'Mans Search for Meaning'.

If anyone doubts their ability to adapt and endure in trying times, read this book. As long as you have a purpose in your existence, your chances of survival are greatest.

But it starts with you and your attitude towards life.....

ATTITUDE – WHAT CAN I GIVE TO LIFE?

In any enterprise you undertake with a team there are three factors which will influence the outcome.

Knowledge – what to do.

Skill – how to do it.

Attitude – WHY are we doing it?

You can give people as much knowledge as they can assimilate, you can train them all day on the skills, but if they do not have the right attitude, they will fail to achieve full potential.

Life Expects Something From You..!

Dr. Viktor Frankl relates how fellow inmates from the Auschwitz Concentration Camp came to him complaining about the severity of conditions and declaring, “We expect nothing more of life.”

He pointed out to his colleagues they had it backwards. Life was expecting something from them!

Life asks for a contribution of every individual and it is up to this personality to discover what this contribution will be; and for those who survived the concentration camps, they all discovered a purpose in existence.

Do not expect anything from life; life is waiting for something from you! Don't anticipate anything from your company; they expect an effort from you. This was the basis of your employment; to help THEM, not the other way around. There was an expectation that you, above all the other applicants, would be the one to deliver.

Unfortunately many individuals seem to have an attitude of “What can I (me, me) get from this company?”

I was with Alexander Forbes for seventeen years and observed the people who were there just for the salary, medical aid, pension and the *sick leave*.

Guess where those people still are?

At the bottom, drinking Mainstay for the rest of their lives.

However, as soon as we start to give to life, life does give back. The problem in our current age of technology and computer driven solutions is we expect everything immediately. The last cell-phone came out four minutes ago; the next one will turn up before you've finished reading this chapter. In

this modern world, we desire new and exciting material innovations instantly.

Unfortunately this doesn't happen with the mind.

Oscar, thirty kilograms overweight, goes to the gym for the first time. He does sit-ups, leg raises, crunches, sweats, puffs and passes wind like a ruptured cyanide tank. That evening he checks himself in the mirror ... and there's NO change, NOTHING'S happened - he still looks like an over-filled tin of apricot jelly. The next day the same.

However, nine or ten months later after regular training, Oscar's bathroom scale doesn't hide under the basin when he appears. The hippo has become a cheetah! But it takes persistence and time....

Plant that tree; it requires daily watering, nourishment, care and effort before it matures. But spend this period nurturing the plant and suddenly it bears fruit.

Nevertheless, it starts off with us initiating and continually persisting with the process. And do not get despondent. As the old cliché goes; the best moment to plant the tree was 10 years ago. That occasion is gone, but the next best instant is now!

Do not hesitate; just accept the fact that the mind and our attitude takes a while to change. Just persevere and you WILL triumph.

Act upon Your Life

What do we mean by acting upon your life?

Douglas Bader was a fighter pilot in the Second World War and lost both his legs in an aircraft crash.

He had two options; to live as an invalid or resume his flying career. Bader chose to take to the air but was faced with three major problems: Learning to walk with wooden legs; training to fly with artificial limbs (no-one had done this before) and the most difficult; to convince the authorities to change their limiting paradigms and let him fly their most advanced aircraft.

He marched the corridors of the War Office in London gaining support for his mission, sharing his vision and enabling others to believe in him. With fierce determination and a belief in himself he finally persuaded the authorities to let him rejoin his squadron. He went back flying and through his courage and commitment became a Group Captain and highly decorated air ace.

However, in 1941 Bader was shot down over France, captured and interned in a prisoner of war camp. Here Bader took on his biggest challenge; that of escape. As history has shown, it was not easy to get away if you were physically intact, let alone disabled. Undeterred, he tried to escape so many times that the Germans finally confiscated his artificial legs and packed him off to Colditz Castle, the high security detainment centre.

Sure, he failed to escape but not for lack of determination, effort and persistence. Nevertheless, the inspiration he gave other people is recounted in the book (and movie) called 'Reach for the Sky.'

Bader didn't say, "I'm disadvantaged; life owes me; give to me".

He said, "I'll give to life. I will make myself accountable to this world." This is how great leaders are born.

Take control of your destiny. Much has been written on the law of positive thinking or law of attraction – this is acting upon your life by looking for opportunities and being aware of the numerous courses which can improve and enhance your life.

It's a lot more constructive than complaining...

"Complaining is a big clue that you are not taking responsibility for your life. Grumbling will not change things in your life; only action will."

Dr Sue Jeffers

Commentary

Robert West said, "Nothing is easier than fault finding; no talent, no self denial, no brains and no character is required to set up in the complaints business."

How many of us, or your employees, are in jobs only because of the monthly pay cheque and the attitude of 'what can I get out of this company?'

The more we invest in life, the more life gives back to us; the more we give to the company, the more they will recognise our efforts and reciprocate - but it STARTS with US and a shift in attitude of 'let me take control of my situation.'

Either that or life will continue to control us.

Analyse where you are right now and focus intently on where you want to be. Write it down. Concentrate on how **you** can change **your** situation for the better; do not dwell on your problems (and this is a conscious effort) but instead hone in ahead to a solution. You are what you think!

Take responsibility for your life and exercise discipline in your quest to get ahead. It's hard to get into the habit, but just persist; ten minutes, half an

hour, one hour per day - the sooner you commit to your goals, the sooner they become reality and the greater joy in your new found purpose.

And by taking this responsibility, you will get to where you only hitherto dreamed of going.

"Our very business in life is not to get ahead of others ... but to get ahead of ourselves."

Thomas Monson

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding: 18th October 2006

Take Responsibility

Act upon your life and take responsibility.

Who's heard the phrase "it's not my job".....?

It IS your job! Pick up that bit of paper, help someone with a task, or do their work when it needs doing and they are not around. When this happens what qualities are being displayed?

You are showing leadership, responsibility and accountability.

Furthermore, you are also growing yourself: you are learning and making yourself more marketable!

Make yourself indispensable to the organisation.

Having attained the right attitude, the next step is to decide what we want to do in our future; where we want to go. We have to define our purpose, our mission and vision for our lives.

Mission and Vision

In 'Alice in Wonderland' by Lewis Carroll, Alice is seen running to a tree at the cross roads on top of the hill. There's a Cheshire cat looking down from the tree, and on arrival Alice asks of the cat, "Which road should I take, left or right?"

The Cheshire says to her, "Where do you want to go?"

Alice replies, "I don't know."

The cat answers, "Well then it doesn't matter which direction you take."

So it is with life. Too many people are running up the road but don't know

where they are going. There is no defined route, and more than likely the direction they are taking is not of their own choosing, but someone else's choice.

Harry Tucker said, "Everyone's life is under someone's control; it might as well be under your own so you can direct your own destiny."

Determine your own direction. Decide what YOU want to do in life? What do you want to achieve?

Write down your own **mission statement**. Make it personal and defined. This will indicate where you are right now, where you want to go to, and thereby chart your route.

You start to see your direction in your mind, you catch sight of the finish line, you feel the victory – you have a vision!

There has been no successful company, no invention, no sporting achievement, no great success that has not been borne of vision and purpose - the list is endless; Mother Theresa, Soichiro Honda, Henry Ford, Thomas Edison and Warren Buffett to Bill Gates and beyond.

They all had common threads in that every one of them had an idea in which they believed and then passionately developed it to the final conclusion.

"The losers in life are not the poor and underprivileged, but rather those who have opportunities and potential and don't use them".

Denis Waitley

3. PREPARE FOR ACTION

The Character Within

Come the end of the war in Zimbabwe, elements of the Selous Scouts were silently filtered through the border into South Africa.

Arriving at an unmarked dirt road a few kilometres from the outskirts of Phalaborwa, we were shown to our newly constructed Recce base.

A couple of weeks later a number of prominent locals invited us to the Golf Club, probably as much to view these mysterious aliens as to welcome us to the little mining town. A young lady struck up a conversation with me. Her first words, “So, what car do you drive?”

A bit taken aback, I replied, “A Ford Anglia”.

“And what else, what accessories?” she demanded.

“None”, I confessed.

Visibly unimpressed she stepped back to give her stage space and then unleashed into a full-on description of her boyfriend’s space-mobile. His vehicle had an engine big enough to push an aircraft carrier and turbo’d up with jet afterburners. Included in the stylish interior was a laser guided steering wheel, Rayban rear view mirrors and a sound system that could power up an Olympic stadium. I assumed her brain was also wired to the exhaust.

Having grown up north of the Limpopo in a sanction starved country ravaged by war, we were quite happy with any vehicle as long as it had four wheels and a rubber band.

She continued, “When I go out, I have to look good. I like to step out of an expensive car so people can admire me. That’s how you make friends and become popular”.

The more she jabbered the more I realised that the blood flow only went as far as her jaw – it didn’t reach the grey stuff next to her hairstyle. Fearful of being pinned in the corner for another lengthy diatribe, I didn’t ask her what she did for a living – probably a hat-stand at the local vogue shop.

However, sympathy is due. A lot of people grow up believing possessions are the requirement for success and our self image is dependent upon what other people think of us.

It takes a lot of energy to maintain your peak and what happens when things go wrong in those troughs of life and we lose wealth or wrinkles replace the smooth exterior? 'Friends' disappear like rodents avoiding a rattlesnake, popularity evaporates and self-worth plummets.

This is when you have to have character and firm relationships to raise your game.

Recognize that self-esteem arises from WITHIN you and is not determined by external trappings. Act upon and take responsibility for your own self-improvement. Appreciate that relationships are only built when you show real interest in others and consider their needs before yourself – this is how you make and keep friends.

“You will make more allies in a week by getting yourself interested in other people than you can in a year by trying to get other people interested in you”.

Arnold Bennett

“Despite all new technology, nothing has replaced the call for character in people or the need for friendship”.

How do we go about achieving our vision? Where do we start?

Develop A Positive Self Image.

The first step is to look at ourselves and develop a positive self image.

“Who am I? Where would I like to go? What is holding me back? What needs to be done?”

These are questions that are required to be answered prior to moving further.

However, before we proceed, let's have a brief look at our Control Tower....

The Mind - Conscious versus Sub-Conscious

*There are two levels of thinking; the **conscious** and the **sub-conscious**.*

“The conscious mind collects information from the situation, sends it to the memory bank and makes rational decisions. The sub-conscious mind, amongst other duties, is also responsible for the storage of information in the

memory.

During the course of our early lives, we develop our own self image out of reactions to every incident that we experience. This includes everything we have been told and (many times without questioning) accepted as true.” Denis

Waitley

For example, take Hilda, an abusive mother who lives with a box of frogs in a stolen container alongside the swamp. Hilda screams insults and reprimands her children all day. They grow up in a repressive environment with no direction whatsoever and expect to be admonished at their every move. With absolutely no intellectual stimulation they are the unfortunates who through no fault of their own, grow up to be labelled ‘challenged’ – to them a mango peel floating across the Limpopo border river is foreign exchange. Insecure, deficient in confidence and often rebellious, they don’t have a great start in life.

On the other side, children and teenagers whose parents do everything for them, invariably grow up lacking assurance in themselves. Those kids are given the message that they are not capable of doing things - and this self image sticks.

Also a lack of discipline applied by some parents seeps into their offspring’s lives and they struggle to come to terms with the ‘real world’ when they get there.

However, kids who are encouraged to do things for themselves, and readily accept challenges, tend to respond by developing a far higher self image than those just left to their own devices.

“In decision making the conscious mind cannot continue until clearing it with the sub-conscious. This scans the self image, confirms your strengths, verifies your limitations and then relays available data back to the conscious for action.

The sub-conscious therefore controls the conscious level of thinking. Action frequently takes place without consulting the conscious mind, but no action ever takes place without reference to the sub-conscious. Our belief system and decisions about who we are and what we are capable of, is controlled from the sub-conscious.” Denis Waitley

Prior to abseiling over a fourteen storey high dam wall, I ask delegates

how they feel.

“Whoa, this is not good!” Consciously, they know that no harm will come, otherwise we would not be doing it (and more than a hundred thousand people have descended this particular wall without incident). The sub-conscious mind, the controlling factor however, is saying, “Don’t do it, what if the rope snaps, what if the dam wall bursts?”

And then the excuses start coming out, “I would like to do it, but the safety line doesn’t match my Gucci socks.”

The dilemma is caused by the sub-conscious mind. It takes this ‘new’ scenario and plunges it into doubt because they’ve never done it before. They are moving into the ‘unknown’ – and this is scary!

“The function of the sub-conscious is to follow instructions based upon previous inputs. Many of our every-day decisions and aspirations are based upon information about ourselves which has been stored as ‘fact’ but is just not true.” Denis Waitley

“I will never be a top level rugby player because I’m not over 100 kilograms.” This didn’t stop Breyton Paulse or Gio Aplon.

And how many times has ‘tradition’ stored in the memory bank jaundiced our opinion about various factors such as, for example, the male versus female roles in society?

In the 1950’s you would have been crushed at the emergency exit had you seen that the captain of your airliner was a woman.

Now, we even have female fighter pilots!

Our choice ...

“Our greatest power is the capacity to choose. We can decide where we are, what we do and what we think. No one can take the power to choose away from us. It is ours alone. We can do what we want to do. We can be who we want to be.”

Geronimo

Commentary:

We all seem to admire power. Yet the one power that is ours alone and always at our disposal is choice. Choices are seldom expressed and even less often, acted upon. We accept choices that others have made for us, because we all want to fit in and be accepted by our peers and society. We remain neutral and indifferent to opportunities placed in our path and therefore are undecided as to our future. Allowing others to make choices for us robs us of our free will and places us in situations not of our choosing.

How do we behave in a way conducive to making choices that are our own and not be dictated to by an ever changing society?

Take responsibility for your life and set yourself apart from the ‘others’ by making choices of your own volition.

As children we make Christmas lists and act in a manner that will ensure we receive some of those gifts. As we mature we stop making those lists of our options and how we are going to attain them. We let others take responsibility for what we receive and then quietly bemoan the fact that the gift was not of our choosing.

Start by making a ‘gift list’ for yourself and choose to act upon it – become your own Father Christmas and receive the gift of your choice.

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding: 12th December 2003

Beware of Prejudice

“Dogs bark at a person they do not know”

Heraclitus

Roy is a friend who was a member of a renowned local band. He started out with a Fender guitar and has never deviated. To him, nothing created can ever come up to the resonance of this instrument. However, take the Gibson, Les Paul and the like – all strumming at the top alongside the Fender; and as many musicians will tell you, each guitar has unique sounds to suit every genre of music.

Nonetheless, no amount of persuasion will convince Roy as to the validity of other makes. He is utterly dogmatic on this issue.

For all he knows his guitar could have been constructed out of old litchi boxes in the galley of a leaking sampan in Bangkok - but as long as it has F-e-n-d-e-r inscribed somewhere, Roy will pay homage - it's fused into his cortex.

Sadly, Roy's intolerance to alternate guitar brands reduces his credibility as a musician.

Our environment ensures that we all grow up with certain prejudices. Whatever opinions were implanted in our youth tend to be embedded like the roots of a giant Redwood tree. A change of philosophy regarding our perception and treatment of others, responsibilities in the workplace, education, class (or whatever), is not an option we easily embrace.

And this unfortunately holds many of us back – more often than not, bias only sees what it pleases and ignores the actual truth of the matter.

Beware of judgements based on sentiments as opposed to fact; because invariably it will be the wrong verdict.

“Everyone is a prisoner of their own experiences. No one can eliminate prejudices – just recognize them”.

Edward Murrow

How Do You Change Your Sub-Conscious?

“When your conscious and sub-conscious come into conflict the sub-conscious always has the best chance of winning, unless your fear or desire is strong enough to override it.” Denis Waitley

We've heard the story of the frail mother in the United States who lifted an overturned vehicle just enough to free her trapped son. Her desire to save the boy was so great her mind overrode every obstacle she had learnt or experienced about weight and moved the immovable.

I guarantee she didn't have any problems lugging the fridge around the kitchen after this!

“Any enduring change in your personality or behaviour should first involve a change in your self-image and then your exploits will automatically follow” Denis Waitley

Now how do we get there?

Visualisation

In the development of a positive self image, visualisation is the key - the initiation point.

The definition is ‘Not visible to the eye but perceptible to the mind.’ You see yourself, in your intellect, at the place where you want to be. Vision is linked to your mission, your purpose in life.

Visualisation is not day-dreaming and coming up with a wish list. It is a concentrated and focussed exercise to hone your mind into the reality of your future. You SEE AND FEEL yourself at the place where you want to be – you have already succeeded!

“Behavioural psychologists agree in that your sub-conscious self image cannot distinguish between actual experiences and those which you have vividly imagined.

Therefore if you continue to feed your imagination in line with your aspirations, you will change your self-image and therefore transform your personality and behaviour.

You will start to think and act differently – all in line with your new vision derived from your sub-conscious. You will become that person you so vividly imagine.” Denis Waitley

You’ve seen those guys who run along the road shadowboxing. The question is, “Are they winning or losing?” They are winning! You don’t see a fist fly out of the hedge and pound them onto the sidewalk. They are winning in their mind, and this is where all victory starts.

Stephen Covey in The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People nurtured the theory of ‘all things are created twice.’ The first creation is in the mind - the vision. How is this going to turn out?

It is definite; not just a possibility - it’s going to happen!

The second creation is the finished product.

The Walrus

[Chalkie van Schalkwyk](#), sporting the facial growth of a walrus rejoined 1 Troop after a long period of convalescence. He had been on the impact end of a landmine explosion which rearranged his spine and necessitated him permanently wearing a corset. Refusing to be medically boarded he had managed to connive himself back to operations. Further Chalkie was a

haemophiliac! Any gunshot wound, no matter how minor, would see him bleed to death. How he had managed to sneak himself into the military was a mystery but no-one bothered to question that. We were short of manpower and every available soldier was welcomed.

And yet despite these impediments, van Schalkwyk never considered himself to be disadvantaged. In his mind he was up to any challenge, and beware any trooper who suggested otherwise. As one of the older members he seized the leadership of any task from carrying sandbags to loading troop stores. He was always in front setting an example. In the many close encounters, Chalkie was right up there beside me, his rifle ejecting blistering cartridge cases over my barrel.

The point of difference – he didn't see himself as inhibited. All negative thoughts about what could happen were extinguished. Chalks so wanted to do his duty alongside the others that he blocked every thought of his shortcomings and spotlighted only on what he desired in life. He then connived his mind into believing, and became this person.

Also, slightly insane, during R&R he used to go with Boris Scrivener from pub to pub towing a dog-leash. When propped up at the bar, invariably a local resident would sidle up next to them and order.

Chalkie would yelp, affix him with an arctic glare and growl, "EXCUSE me, but you're standing on my walrus!"

The hapless local would retreat one space, probably to escape the same mental disease as van Schalkwyk.

He would sociably continue, "You can't see him because he is dehydrated. Barman, one bitterly cold Castle Lager for me and one for my walrus!"

And in any crowded pub you would see a gap next to Chalkie occupied only by a beer on the counter and the leash on the floor.

"To get there we need to carry out daily visualisation of where we want to be, what we want to become.

Get a vivid clear mental picture of yourself as if you had already achieved your new role in life." Denis Waitley

Imagine your goal is to become a first order rugby fly-half. See yourself on the field taking that brilliant break or drop-kicking the ball over the crossbar. Change your attitude to fit your new self image and your behaviour will change to achieve greater heights than you ever thought possible.

To make this task easier, to help your mind get around this journey, start

with the accumulation of as much knowledge in line with your mission as possible. Become immersed in research.

Let's take an example of a final in a major rugby tournament, rather like the James Small, Jonah Lomu scenario in the 1995 World Cup.

In this David and Goliath setting we have two opposing wings both of the same speed. Jimmy Smyth is 1.8m and 90 kilograms and his opposite number is Joe Logan, a man mountain of 1.9m and 115 kilograms. Besides the normal physical training, what would you do as a coach, to ensure that Smyth could effectively mark and beat Logan?

The stock answer would be to 'think positive', but it goes a lot further than this. To enable Smyth to 'be positive', you would offer as much available information on Logan as was possible. You would find every video of every match featuring the big man. You would analyse his every run and every player that has tackled him and come up with the most plausible way of getting him down. This approach, that angle, this technique. Having decided the plan, Smyth would go through this scenario, time and time again, in his mind – at breakfast, on the bus to practice, after supper until the moves are entrenched in his mind – but still the research would continue.

Finally a further snippet of information comes to light, a barely perceptible weakness in Logan's attack. The plan is refined and suddenly the whole manoeuvre now becomes astonishingly clear and falls into place. At this very moment Smyth is enlightened! He now knows that the plan will succeed. He entrenches this thought, this picture in his subconscious mind and suddenly he BELIEVES!

And if you believe; the job is already done. No longer is he apprehensive about facing this giant – he cannot wait to take him on. He KNOWS he is going to flatten him!

Vision is the ability to vividly picture the future; to BE the future.

"Success or failure begins with belief. Whether you believe you can do something or believe you can't - you're right!"

Henry Ford

Commentary:

Belief grows from aspiration. This is the desire to fulfil one's dreams. Many fail because they do not know how to launch their first step.

An attitude of discipline, accepting personal responsibility and

accountability for your actions is initially required.

Follow up with visualisation and the accrual of knowledge on the subject. Search every opportunity, analyse your findings and leave no stone unturned in your relentless quest over the challenge and you'll find that a **belief** in your capability to do what you hitherto thought was impossible, is now a **reality**.

Once you **believe** you can do something, you are no longer anxious about the challenge - you look forward to it!

And with this attitude the focus becomes razor sharp, you visualise and see yourself successfully completing the venture - and when you *mentally* believe, success is guaranteed - you *already* have achieved your assignment.

“A person with little ambition believes according to what he achieves. An aspiring person achieves according to what he believes.”

Sri Chinmoy

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding: 19th March 2007

The more you read or research your subject in whatever form, the further your mind is stimulated, and the more you want to know. You also become a lot more interesting to other people.

Knowledge Is Power

Slipping up in Zambia

In June 1978 I was given the task of raiding a ZIPRA base in Zambia in the Simani Mine area just east of Lusaka. We were airlifted to an area in southern Zambia and began the long walk to the settlement. My preferred method of travel was to keep to the high ground (an advantage in the event of an enemy attack), and just below the ridge lines (so that we were not profiled against the sky).

We were on the side of one particular hill when an inordinate amount of gunfire was heard coming from a valley to the north. According to our briefing there were no deployments near us, and we were supposedly in an area devoid of population. We watched and waited. That night I invited one of my corporals and took a sojourn into the valley. It was absolutely crowded with locals. There was no moon and it was pitch black but we could hear them talking and moving whatever direction we took. After about 800 metres into this village line we decided to move back up the hill; the last thing we

wanted was to get compromised by the residents. Word of our whereabouts would spread like the Bubonic Plague and our whole operation would be in jeopardy. However, what we did know is in this settlement somewhere, was a large contingent armed with automatic weapons which spelt ZIPRA rebels.

Something was bugging me, so very early the next morning I decided on another 'look-and-see'. Leaving the hideout, I slipped awkwardly, bounced down the side of the hill and landed with a serious spine injury. Scott was now out of the equation and a casualty evacuation helicopter was called upon. Being so close to the ZIPRA location, the helicopter came in at tree-top level and when it arrived a couple of hours later, had to put down in the lee of another hill about two kilometres away. Not being able to walk, [Papi Bolton](#), one of my larger corporals, actually carried me this distance; an event for which I am eternally grateful and will never forget. Try and carry someone for 200 metres; then multiply this by ten and you'll start appreciating the magnitude of his effort.

I was airlifted back to our camp at Deka and debriefed before being flown to Wankie Hospital. Following this information, the Air Force flew some photographic runs over the 'village line' and it transpired that all those 'locals' were actually ZIPRA dissidents, about 200 of them. Evidently intelligence had an inkling of a large camp in this area, but was not sure of its exact location.

Now, back to the point. A whole lot of people went "ooh, aah" how 'daring' Scott had entered the camp and was going in again when unfortunately he lost his footing. (In fact, very fortunately as it turned out). Allow me to assure you, if I had known what those photos had revealed then, I would have been hiding under a rock twenty kilometres away.

However, the pertinent question is, "Why did I attempt to go in again the next morning?"

The answer; not courage, but plain old fashioned CURIOSITY!

Because of a mentality developed through copious reading and knowledge seeking, this desire to KNOW overrode any feelings of apprehension.

Knowledge is power; it gives you the courage to go forward with your dreams.

"I have no special talents. I am only passionately curious."

Albert Einstein

Courage over Fear

“You gain power, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You must do the thing which you think you cannot.”

Eleanor Roosevelt

Commentary:

Do you often find your employees (or yourself) avoiding difficult situations in the workplace?

Avoidance is a classic strategy for negating fear and effectively halts advancement in life. Ever heard the phrase, ‘it’s not my job’?

This fear lurks; stopping individuals from taking on any extra responsibility or proposing new ideas. The world is narrowed into their security zone and effectively limits potential.

Kathy O'Dowd who conquered Everest stated, “You will never know what you cannot do, unless you attempt what you think you cannot do.”

One way to rid employees of fear is to set tasks slightly above their ‘perceived’ aptitude. Let it be known that you trust them to have a positive outcome; encourage them, walk with them and let them do it!

They might not do the job as you would; do not interfere! Let them discover themselves. If mistakes are made, they learn and at best they might even detect a way to improve the existing procedure as they complete the assignment. Let them!

Share in the satisfaction of their success and growth. Give them recognition.

And the upside is that you will have employees who appreciate your support, motivation and reassurance. They feel good about themselves and you, form an integral part of the process and start taking ownership.

“Progress always involves risks. You cannot run for second base and keep your foot on the first.”

Frederick Wilcox

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding: 11th December 2009

Focus on the Lift-Off

I was the airborne commander during a battle in a densely wooded and

mountainous area. Directing from a helicopter, my job was to deploy and then guide my troops into various positions enabling them to cut off and eliminate enemy forces. Owing to the very thick terrain visibility was limited, so my effectiveness in this particular case was diminished. Rather than senselessly circling the area, I decided to join my troops on the ground. Arranging to meet one of my call-signs a short, but safe, distance from the contact, John 'Plank' Blythe-Wood, the pilot flew to a rather tight LZ nearby and landed. He was going to stay there to conserve fuel.

As the rotors were slowing down I prepared to disembark. Suddenly a shattering explosion a few metres away! Shrapnel splinters the Perspex canopy. I decide not to disembark.

Some disgruntled ZIPRA dissident had lobbed a grenade at us - we had obviously parked on a yellow line.

The problem now was to get out of there – with SPEED! Restart the motors, get the blades spinning at full pitch and only then, gently manoeuvre the whirly-bird upwards. This takes a minute or so and that is a l.o..n..g time when you are sticking out like a burst paw-paw and nervously anticipating a spiteful guerrilla with 20 of his closest friends to come firing out of the jungle for the final curtain.

My eyes, now the size of a Rottweiler's food bowl, were locked and following my rifle, probing the bush around us.

I glanced over my shoulder at 'Plank,' his eyes boring into the instrument panel – utterly absorbed in the task at hand, detached and focused. No emotion, shaking or panic!

As the rev counter slowly..... oh, so slowly.... crawled up to maximum pitch, he tenderly levered the 'collective' control and the aircraft lifted into the hover.

The most vulnerable state of a helicopter in this situation is on lift off. Rising above the short scrub and trees, there is nothing to hinder those taking a shot at you. The insurgents were in grenade throwing range, so they were close. We expected an RPG rocket to come and destroy our day.

It never came!

Gradually, we skimmed over the trees, then John dipped the nose and we made good our escape. It was only then that we both looked at each other, and simultaneously expressed our feelings, "Wheeeeewaa!!!!"

To this day, I wonder why the rebels never pressed the attack on such an easy and exposed target. But I'm not complaining!

However, let's take the lesson here. There was huge pressure on Blythe-Wood and any pilot would be forgiven for trying to yank the helicopter into the air on minimum power. But John, regardless, was going to do the job correctly and eliminate any take-off errors.

He allowed **no distraction** at all to interfere in the execution of his task and although he could not manipulate the actions of the enemy, he certainly could control that which was **in his circle of influence** – and he did so with distinction!

On teambuilding courses we do an exercise called Oliver's Travels. An A-frame structure supports two parallel logs, ten metres above the ground. Two delegates, one on each log, walk across the divide supporting each other. During this intimidating process there is lots of wobbling, sweating and gnashing of teeth.

At the end I ask delegates, "As you crossed, were you thinking of the weekend sport?"

"No way! We were so *focussed* on getting across nothing else entered our minds. We could not fail!"

If we, in our business and daily lives can do likewise, as did John Blythe-Wood; *totally centre our minds* on the task at hand and the end result, we too cannot fail.

Sharing Your Vision

As a leader, having ingrained the projected image in your own mind, your task is now to do the same for your team; inspiring a shared vision.

Align individual and organisational values (behaviours). Start by clarifying the mission and protocols. Explain the procedures of the business and expectations from the team?

Do not charge straight into the plan. Bring the vision into line first. This is the foundation.

Present a vision which is a little above the apparent capacity of the team, but not out of sight.

This establishes 'creative tension'. Necessity, the mother of invention, is borne of this phenomenon. If we take for example, the advances in

technology in the 2nd World War, life itself was at stake putting the various combatants under enormous pressure to perform. Owing to this tension (or need for survival), man tends to raise his game and become more creative in the endeavour to stay ahead of the pack.

Do a situational analysis.

Where are we now? What is our objective? Indicate resources and limitations. What are our options? How will we achieve this?

When each hurdle is overcome confidence escalates, and as you rise to the next challenge, your expectations are elevated.

This results in team members being inspired and willing to exert extra effort. They are part of the process and take ownership.

We can try and inspire people by words and plans but the task is made a lot easier if we can paint and imprint a picture in their minds.

In the military, we made extensive use of models of the target area before an operation. The troops could 'see' the ground before they got there, and it is far more effective if you can provide a visual as well as an auditory message. People take in a lot more with their eyes than their ears. The soldiers therefore were more familiar with the surrounds when they got there and could identify certain key landmarks from the model.

For example, you are in the tourist industry and your company decides to construct a lodge in a secluded bay along the coast.

The team views the plans – lines, measurements and technical data. Informative, accurate but not very inspiring.

Now get an artist to paint a picture of the lodge and surrounds. You see the thatch, the swimming pool and tennis court, kids on horseback and sundowners on the beach.

Now the imagination is stretched and inspiration flows! The vision is clear in our minds. Now we want to do it, to get there!

Further, keep a focus on your vision, irrespective of how tough times get.

During the 2nd World War, the Germans planned a massive air raid on the English city of Coventry. The Allies nonetheless, were capable of cracking the

Nazi Enigma code, and were forewarned of the impending attack. However, Winston Churchill, although aware of the imminent devastation, declined to alert the citizens of Coventry. If he had done so, the Germans would have realised the British could decipher their code, changed their procedures and thus preclude the Allies of an exceptionally valuable information source.

This was an extremely daunting decision, and although there was great loss of life and destruction in the Coventry raid, Churchill had to proceed with this resolution in line with the vision of winning the ultimate conflict.

And for the duration of the war, the Germans never discovered that the Allies could interpret their signals.

In summary, what are the **Benefits of Vision?**

- *Identifies where you are now and where you want to be in the future. The focus is on direction and purpose.

- *Provides the basis for, and initiates planning.

- *There is a focus on results not activities. We start to think more creatively, breaking away from 'boundary thinking.'

- *Facilitates energy to purpose, resulting in productivity. Things start to happen.

- *Promotes interest and commitment.

- *Motivates and encourages individuals. Confidence is also a by product.

- *Builds loyalty through involvement.

Goal Setting

Having implanted the vision the next step is goal setting.

I often pose the question, "I want to run Comrades Marathon. Is this a goal?" The reply is usually in the affirmative. But it is not a goal; it is merely a preference. All that is being said is, "It would be a worthwhile challenge to run Comrades Marathon and enjoy the achievement".

A goal must be quantified and defined, achievable, and in line with your mission statement.

My aim is to run Comrades in 10 hours and 30 minutes within two years from now. You have quantified your speed and defined the time frame. You

are putting pressure on yourself to complete this within your self-imposed parameters.

Further, this goal must be achievable. Too many people shoot for the moon before they have climbed the hill before them. There seems to be a desire to run before we walk. We want a 'quick fix' or we lose interest.

If you want to run Comrades, don't try a dash from Durban to Pietermaritzburg on your first day of training. If you do this you will surely fail. You try tomorrow and again you crash. Now we develop a mindset of failure.

Rather start by running to the nearest shopping centre and back. You can do this; it is easily accomplished. Shortly you are doing the whole exercise twice and on each occasion you succeed your mind is being reinforced - I am a WINNER. Small successes lead to bigger successes and build self confidence.

You persist, month by month improving gradually and finally complete Comrades. Analyse your training from inception and you will find that each day you were doing an attainable distance, but stretching yourself that little bit extra until the goal has been conquered.

"It is when things go hardest, when life becomes most trying, that there is the greatest need for having a fixed goal."

B.C. Forbes - Founder, Forbes Magazine

Commentary:

As we hurtle into year after year, many of the resolutions and resolves made have already been compromised or set aside. Yet, a sense of loss lingers ... once again external pressures have influenced our direction in life.

It seems logical that a planned, organised life is more fruitful than one lived haphazardly without any carefully considered purpose. We have heard ad-nauseam about goal setting yet have never had the motivation to set our own, or are daunted at the task.

To resume control and to build a bridge towards your ambitions definitive steps need to be taken to guide your actions.

Begin now! Firstly examine the view from where you are now to across the gorge. Are you facing a daunting chasm or will you be able to take that leap of faith? Too often we set unattainable targets making the reason for failing easier on our conscience.

Notice the way a bridge is built - incrementally, each section adding to the distance spanned.

The first step is to test the goal by visualising yourself basking on the far bank. Once you have firmly planted this image in your mind then set about gaining the tools to build the bridge.

List what needs to be done each week in order to reach your prioritised objectives. For example, what further **skills** do I need to assist me in improving my job productivity? What **challenges** must be overcome to successfully achieve my new year's tasks?

Once a month, set aside 'goal time' to evaluate your achievements and by doing this you are taking concrete action that will go a long way to enable you to attain those goals and contribute very positively to your personal growth.

“.....to make a goal of comfort or happiness has never appealed to me: a system of ethics built on this basis would be sufficient only for a herd of cattle.”

Albert Einstein

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding: 3rd January 2004

Focus on Results not on activities.

Too many people are diligently spending their day being very busy. Being energetic doesn't mean you're getting results.

On our teambuilding exercises I do an activity which entails multiple movements of tin cans to certain positions. It is quite easy to confuse the moves and when this occurs, two scenarios emerge. One, 80% of the team are shouting directions and two, members spend an inordinate amount of effort moving the tins at great speed without due thought as to the consequences. We tend to think that if we are moving, we are achieving. And the faster we move, the more we accomplish. Wrong! There are 360° on a compass, but only ONE of those bearings is correct.

When confusion reigns, STOP!

Think! Listen to all team members who have an idea, plan effectively and then act accordingly. It is not easy to stop and keep your head in a crisis, especially when it seems the competition is moving forward out of your reach – but condition yourself.

Focus on the next small move; what can we do, and for what reason, what can't we do - why? Option one or two? If we go to option one, what is the next move?

In the military it is called an 'appreciation' - in the corporate world, a 'situational analysis'. Follow this and the direction and momentum will then return.

The action here is to:

Believe in yourself and your ability to query and make choices.

Take the initiative in your life in line with where you want to go.

As mentioned earlier, if you fail to do this, someone else will act on your life, and the possibility is that they haven't planned on the direction you had hoped to take.

Jim Rohn said, "If you don't design your own life plan, chances are you'll fall into someone else's plan. And guess what they have planned for you? Not much."

Analyse where we spend our time. Focus on the **important**.

Mentally attune yourself to where you want to be. Think of the positive; the rewards at the end of the challenge – your purpose in life for yourself and others;

Rod Smith explains.....

[Selection Course](#)

I opted to participate in the Selous Scouts selection course and reported to Andre Rabie barracks with volunteers drawn from all races in the Rhodesian forces.

Bundled into trucks we headed out to Wafa Wafa, the Scouts training camp on the shores of Lake Kariba. Come last light, on some bush track before the camp, we disembarked with only our rifles and webbing. Beside the road was a pile of heavy mopani logs. Divided into five-man teams we were ordered to pick up a log and start running. We finally staggered in to Wafa Wafa at midnight. No welcome hot meal and coffee, each squad was taken to an area of steep stony hillside. Sentries were posted and without the

comfort of bedding, this is where we slept.

No breakfast the next day, and every day the same. Each was spent in some form of physically taxing exercise; PT and run at first light, map reading, fire-and-movement, shooting and contact drills.

Then the initiative tests. One involved getting your team and some large mopani logs across a section of Lake Kariba. These are too heavy to float and this bay was wide, deep and notoriously full of crocodiles. Many of the African* operators couldn't swim. This is where you discover how to support your fellow soldiers. We needed an all out effort for the team to cross.

Later on, in the afternoon, if not out on an extended exercise we were put through a demanding and dangerous ropes course. Activities continued into the dark with compass marches, night shooting and the like, so it was after midnight before we slept.

In the first two weeks we ate only four times. On the menu; maize meal porridge with a portion of half-dried fish and a dead maggot infested baboon that had been hung in the sun for a day.

Everybody suffered from blisters, cuts and grazes. Because of the lack of nutrition every minor wound became infected and festered. Blisters were treated by sucking the fluid out with a syringe and injecting them with methylated spirits.

After two weeks 75% of the applicants had been eliminated.

The tempo now was raised. Each man was issued with twenty five kilograms of rocks to be carried in addition to our basic military equipment. Issued with a far ranging map reference, the orders were to reach it by that night.

During the next four days we walked 130 kilometres up and down the steep ravines of the Zambezi escarpment. At noon on the fifth day we jettisoned our rocks and were given mopani poles, one to five men, and told to run the 30 kilometres back to Wafa Wafa.

After 12 kilometres we were told that we could stop - it was all over. We refused, thinking this was another cruel psychological trick; but on this occasion it wasn't – we had finally made it!

This certainly was one of the toughest challenges of my life. The hardest, however, was the psychological aspect; there was no set duration and we had no idea how long this would go on for. Exhausted and deprived of food and sleep, we were constantly reminded that we did not have to be there. We could give up at any stage, have a good meal and shower, sleep in a bed and

get transport back to town. The instructors reiterated that it was no shame to fail a Scouts selection.

What got us through?

For me there were three main things that helped:

I was hugely proud of my parent regiment, the Rhodesian Light Infantry, and I was determined if others could do this, then as an RLI soldier so could I!

A friend who had done the course advised me to “just take it one day at a time,” so at every thought of giving up I would tell myself, “Just get through today.”

The emphasis on team spirit; ‘Pamwe Chete’ - Shona for “all together, forward together”, especially towards the end, the support and encouragement one received from, and the need to give it to others was of utmost importance to me.

Captain Rod Smith

*In the context of this publication, ‘African’ refers to members of the Black population.

Manage Your Time around the Important

“Time is an equal opportunity employer. Every human has exactly the same number of hours and minutes every day. Rich people can’t buy more hours. Scientists can’t invent new minutes. And you cannot save time to spend another day. Nevertheless, it is amazingly fair and forgiving. No matter how much you wasted in the past, you still have an entire tomorrow.”

Denis Waitley.

Commentary:

Many of us spend our days handling ‘urgent’ problems such as taking or making unimportant telephone calls, writing ‘never to be read’ reports, analysing junk mail, attending unnecessary meetings and generally squandering your life. If your schedule is filled with unimportant urgencies, you won’t have time to learn new things, research and exchange ideas or try to prevent future problems.

It is said, *"The person, who concentrates entirely on sawing wood, is likely to forget to sharpen the saw."* Recognise that by putting off the inevitable only generates stress and embarrassment.

The best way to begin managing your time is to recognise your tendencies. There are many time management techniques, but the basic premise

utilised by successful leaders and team members is to learn to focus on the IMPORTANT issues.

Furthermore, the planning of one's day is the end result of a sincere and definite decision to attain a production level more in line with your potential – and a prerequisite is the determination of long term missions and goals.

Personal leadership is managing your time to put you in control of your day - and the resultant relaxed state of mind of 'being totally organised' will follow.

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding: 17th August 2003

Exercise and maintain discipline. Make and keep commitments in accordance with your intended route. Discipline often means doing something that you don't want to do – but it's good for your development. Ask yourself, "Will this activity benefit me in the quest for my mission?" If yes, do it, if no, cut it out of your life. Spend time on the activities with the greatest positive consequences.

"Anyone who doesn't know what they want in life must be satisfied with what they get."

George Bernard Shaw

Develop habits doing certain valuable activities every day.

Before you react to circumstances, slow down and think before choosing a response.

Practice, practice, practice. Be patient with your progress but persistent.

Keep focus; maintain your vision of the end in the forefront of your mind. As the well known Nike slogan states;

"Just do it!"

"Action is a great restorer of confidence. Inaction is not only a result, but the cause of fear. Perhaps the action you take will be successful; perhaps different action or adjustments will have to follow. But any action is better than no action at all."

Norman Vincent Peale.

Commentary:

As part of our intra-personal programme, delegates have the option to

abseil over the fourteen storey Shongweni Dam Wall. The post activity review dialogue goes like this;

“What did you physically do which convinced you to go?”

“I put the harness on.”

“Once the harness was on, what happened in your mind?”

“I was committed to going.”

“Then, what was the most difficult part of the abseil?”

“Taking the first three steps.”

“And after this, what happened?”

“It became easier.... I got into it; I started to get excited!”

“And how did you feel at the bottom?”

“I felt great! Awesome! I DID IT!”

There is a huge sense of achievement!

And so it is with any action in life. If you really want to go forward, accept that you have to make a genuine DECISION to proceed. Not a wish, a COMMITMENT.

The most difficult part of any challenge is the first few steps, before you gain momentum. Charles Givens affirmed, “Success requires first expending ten units of effort to produce one unit of result. Thereafter, your momentum produces ten units of result with each unit of effort.”

Now the venture becomes exciting, and having completed the challenge, you feel great within yourself. And this is where most of us want to be - feeling good within ourselves, boosting our self-esteem, self worth and receiving recognition for our success.

And the final question we ask is, “And what effect does this have on the people around you?”

Your successes motivate and inspire other people within the team to do likewise. If you are surrounded by achievers, you will start to **think** and **act** as they do.

Roger Bannister set out in May of 1954 to run the mile in four minutes. Every scientist claimed the human body could not attain this summit. He did it, and within one year, 27 other people had done the same. They chose to think and act like him.

We've heard this before, “If you can do it, I can do it but you go first.”

Follow the steps above and YOU can lead the way and inspire the rest!

“It is time for us to stand and cheer the achiever, the one who recognises

the challenge and does something about it.”

Vince Lombardi

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding: 24th August 2010

4. EYES ON THE TARGET

Kavalamanja

In March 1978, we were dropped into Kavalamanja in Zambia, a staging post just over the Zambezi River. Reconnaissance had indicated there were a large number of ZIPRA insurgents in the base.

With us was an element from 3 Commando under command of John Cronin (a zany, thoroughly likeable American). As we were moving forward this terse whisper came over the radio. "Call-sign One One, you are about to walk into an ambush!"

It was Chris Schulenburg, the Selous Scouts man who had done the recce.

Being in fairly open ground we dropped flat, ripping fire into the undergrowth ahead of us. The enemy realised that the element of surprise had been lost so a string of grenades came soaring out the bush towards us in quick succession.

John Cronin's rifle had a round jammed in his barrel after his first shot and to see him bobbing around dodging grenades like a Chihuahua trying to avoid a Pit-Bull was, for some inexplicable reason, absolutely hilarious. I guess it was an outpouring of the emotional tension in the guise of laughter.

Years later, John dropped me a line and recounted, ".....when that yahoo was throwing grenades at me as I was lying there out in the open with a stoppage. I remember you as not being very sympathetic either, you ****!"

However, we managed to eliminate the opposition and move on. Cronin relieved a dead guerrilla of his AK47. Ken Reid took some shrapnel in his backside, but thanks to Schulie's warning, there were no further casualties in that incident.

What wasn't so funny later on was the rebel concealed in thick undergrowth who wildly emptied half his magazine at me. As the stream of tracer bracketed my face I dived and rolled behind a small mound of earth.

Separating us was a very low ridge and he was on the opposite side about three metres away. I could hear him shuffling around and he could probably smell my under-arms. When you are that close you stiffen into extreme mute mode so no sound gives away your location.

Putting your head up to see is not an option. Paul Courtney did this and is not around to tell the tale. Just keep your rifle barrel trained on the lip of the rise and hope there's only one of them.

A grenade would have been the answer, but in the long day's fight, I had utilised my supply. Your senses now are pitched up to full volume... and the seconds took months to tick by. Torrential sweat created an irrigation system under my eyelids. The wait for the next move

Abruptly a series of reverberating detonations splintered and shattered the area over the mound a few metres ahead of me!

I was galvanised instantly into the crouch position and witnessed my late adversary. It was only then I heard the helicopter. The K-car flying overhead had also seen the insurgent and their 20mm canon settled the dispute with absolute finality. To this day I still marvel at the accuracy of those K-car gunners. Precision in the workplace saves you having to go around another time.

The Air Force did a lot of work that day. Always a highlight of a major camp raid was the availability of the jets. You would call for a strike on an obstinate enemy position and get this casual drawl of the pilot, "Call-sign One-One, this is Red Lead turning in live".

Then little lights twinkled in the wings as the 30mm canons revved up. Mini-seconds later, like enraged waves crashing on the beach, a kaleidoscope of highly explosive flashes obliterating the target with faultless accuracy. Job done – a barrel roll and back to Salisbury for tea and scones.

We continued the battle throughout the day and into the night. There were sporadic fire-fights in the dark – plenty of noise and tracer ricocheting around with casualties on both sides.

The next day we continued the advance through the camp. As Rick van Malsen and I entered a clearing we came upon a very uncharacteristic sight. As opposed to highly camouflaged bashas, a light blue tent was pitched at the edge of the glade. We very carefully cat-footed to the entrance and peeked inside. Therein lay the treasure....

Lying in a box like a bored Egyptian mummy was the latest in Russian technology - a shiny new STRELA anti-aircraft missile launcher. Never before had one of these been captured.

Upon uplift, Rick and I had visions of happily playing with our new found toy in the playground back home. Unfortunately this was not to be – Schullie had obviously been observing the same tent and when the helicopters landed back at our forward base we were met by this huge black monster beard - none other than the commander of the Scouts Recce Troop, Major Neil Kriel.

"Anything to declare?" he gently growled, "perfume, whisky, choice

Zambian wine anti-aircraft weaponry?”

We had impeccable family values and could not lie.

Apparently our acquisition was shipped off to a South African Intelligence agency for a million notes. Van Malsen and Scott are still waiting for the profit share....

However, let's go back to Chris Schulenburg. When he warned us of the ambush we realised how close he was. Schulie was on the very perimeter of the camp, just above the nostrils of the inhabitants and had been there for a week! One of his previous reports indicated that the guerrillas were not bothering to tie their bootlaces – to acquire this kind of detail, you have to be sitting right on the touch line. To position yourself, dodge the local population as well as the insurgents, remain concealed and view the camp from a number of angles required phenomenal stealth, skill, focus, determination and exceptional courage. This was the ultimate in professionalism.

In reconnaissance sorties, the conventional way to operate was with a minimum of three men but normally one or two more. The rationale behind this was that if one was injured there would be at least two others to assist. No-one had ever challenged the validity of this argument.

Additionally, the method of long range deployment into other countries would be via helicopter or parachute. The problem here remained that anybody on the ground could see or hear the low level aircraft and know this meant a Rhodesian troop drop. The recce call-sign could then, very shortly thereafter, expect foreign troops on their tracks to compromise their mission.

Enter Chris Schulenburg who was about to re-write the script.

He argued that the more operators you had the less flexible and mobile you would be. True, no problem with this. When you think about it, our bias, albeit subconsciously, was safety in numbers first and then the success of the task.

Schulie suggested deploying in pairs (one White and one Black soldier) and then splitting up when in the recce area. Rural black soldiers were invaluable in that they had a far keener bush sense than the normal white operator and if warranted, they could also successfully infiltrate the guerrilla base camps.

Further, any enemy forces finding the tracks of only one person would not

suspect a military presence. Similarly, locating a single sleeping place in the bush would more than likely be that of an animal. The enemy would certainly not be expecting a one-man call-sign – their mindset would be on a group, so no suspicions would be aroused.

Schulenburg expanded. A man on his own makes less noise and can move faster. Being alone makes you super-vigilant to your surrounds and forces you to operate at the top level of your adrenaline.

He put himself under intense pressure to raise his game and be ultra-alert—how's that for audacious thinking?

There was still one problem; being compromised by the enemy in terms of the deployment mode. Low flying aircraft attracted the adversary's attention. On the other hand, high flying commercial flights didn't even score a glance.

Schulie's solution – skydive into the target area from extremely high altitude at night. As far as the opponents were concerned this would be a business flight to an East African destination and there was no way that they would see two specks in the darkened sky bulleting earthwards for a low chute opening.

Chris would infiltrate with only one other Black soldier and arduously locate the enemy camps. They would then split up and functioning from their respective observation posts, watch for days or weeks on end, sending information back to Selous Scouts headquarters. Schulenburg was the pioneer and shortly thereafter the rest of the newly formed Recce Troop would be operating in the same way with outstanding successes.

This whole concept was totally alien to conventional military thinking and perilous if discovered by the enemy. However, its very merit was in the daring of the mix.

This approach put the opposition thoroughly off guard. And so it is with business - think in a totally unconventional way to slice the edge off the competition.

The Japanese business principles of Genchi Genbutsu (utilising lean systems and speedy, efficient decision making processes) as opposed to the lumbering Corporate methodology, addresses this phenomenon to some degree.

Richard Branson with his skeleton head office applies the same principle. As leaders in organisations, don't just accept the norm and bumble on till you die. Question every process, "Why can't we do it this way? Is there another

approach? What's stopping us?"

Think, scheme and plot around the problem. Use every faculty at your disposal. It also makes life a lot more stimulating. Solving challenges keeps us on the peak.

Let's drill a bit deeper and analyse this leader. Much has been postulated in recent years on 'Presence' and this Schulenburg had in abundance. 'Presence' is not the loud, boisterous type craving to be the centre of attention but rather the one who combines an imposing dignity and bearing within the character. Chris displayed a quiet assurance but spoke and acted with powerful authority. A deep thinking man, he was in no way influenced by 'the norm' or conventions but instead cut through the peripherals and attacked the root of the problem.

Schulie had an absolute commitment to the purpose and **a total belief in his ability**. This led to the excellence he demonstrated in the field and earned the eternal respect and veneration of his troops. Read any publication on the Selous Scouts to get an insight into his exploits and you'll start to get an understanding of the aura of this man.

A quirky off-beat side too; Tim Callow (also in Recce Troop), invited us to dinner one evening and Schulie arrived wearing a kaftan. Men in the early 70's in Rhodesia didn't wear kaftans; this would be the equivalent of an Australian sheep farmer manicuring his nails. All the patrons goggled for a couple of seconds then hastily returned to their fare. There was something about the atmosphere and deportment of this being .. and no one said a word.

I also had the privilege of operating on a couple of occasions with Grahame Wilson from the SAS. Another one with presence. He was fast moving, inspired and with laser purpose. Such were his attributes that he finally became the last CO of the Squadron.

In time, both Schulenburg and Wilson, besides their existing decorations, were rewarded with the country's highest award, the Grand Cross of Valour – the only two recipients of this medal.

Another admirable quality about both of them – they never ever spoke about what they did – **their actions spoke for them**.

As leaders these are the beacons set before us to emulate.

THE GROUP OR FUNCTIONAL APPROACH

Peters and Waterman published '*In Search of Excellence*' in 1982 and summarised their research into the traits common to America's top performing businesses. In each excellent company they identified the presence of a top leader who had initiated the practice of excellence in the first place and driven it thereafter.

Peters went further in *A Passion for Excellence*.....

"In each excellent company, those that survived recession, we found that it was not just an exceptional leader at the top; these companies had great leaders at every level."

Commentary

How do we endeavour to ensure success in tough times and periods of uncertainty?

Develop leadership from two aspects. Firstly from an inter-personal approach (relationships) and secondly encourage each individual from an intra-personal outlook (self leadership).

To quote Steve Shelby, Vice President of Giant Impact, USA

"Nobody can forecast the future, particularly this year. However, there are some things in my power. I can control my attitude. I have a choice to be encouraging, optimistic and enthusiastic. I will respect and serve others, as well as instil hope. Most importantly, I am going to welcome opportunities to learn.

My hope is to start the new year strong. My plan is to invest in leadership development. Good leadership will have a great return; my aim is to equip my team with the tools where they can provide clients with exceptional service. I will give my company superior results by encouraging my employees in their personal growth."

When an organisation invests in training, both employees and management are learning, growing and therefore feeling proficient within themselves. This averts thoughts of the negative; providing a positive attitude to elevate them into the select fraternity of those who consistently succeed – the people not adversely influenced by fluctuations in the global market.

Growth is not an option; it is a requirement for survival!

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding: 13th January 2009

The message so obviously portrayed is;

‘Develop great leadership THROUGHOUT your organisation’.

If there are good leaders at all levels, this means that they share in the leadership and free the top executives to get on with the vision. Further, it lightens the load of the decision makers; more people are involved in, and contributing to leadership making the appropriate evaluations at a lower level. This results in a higher degree of growth, experience and authority in subordinates. They are not afraid to think and make conclusions.

The more a company can tap into the thoughts and ideas of their combined staff, the more innovative and stronger they become.

Exodus 18:22

“And let them judge the people at all times. Every great matter they shall bring to you, but any small matter they shall decide themselves. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you”.

Compare the British and German forces in the Second World War and we note in their operational orders the Germans drilled down to Corporal level, whereas the British stopped at the higher 2nd Lieutenant or Warrant Officer echelon. This led to a more efficient fighting force in favour of the Germans as more people knew what was going on, were involved in, and contributed to the leadership of the unit.

However, at the top end of the scale, quite the opposite occurred with Hitler. Desperate to maintain absolute control over his HQ and threatened by the input of others he insisted on making all strategic decisions himself, often over-riding existing sound principles offered by his generals. This factor, together with the vast resources of the Allied army, lost Germany the war.

So where are we now?

LEADERSHIP is getting RESULTS through people.

It is the ability to DEVELOP and EXTEND people to reach their full potential.

“Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is about growing others”.

Jack Welch

All the recent theories (Co-operative Leadership) interlink and focus on a Group or Functional approach (a phrase coined by John Adair). This is based on the thinking of not what the leader **is** or **knows** but what a leader **does**.

It is the **psychology** of getting the best out of people.

The focus is on the improvement of the right **mental attitude** within your team.

Leadership revolves around **understanding** and **empathy** for other people - not on qualifications.

Good leaders treat others as they themselves would like to be treated.

“The premier high achievers function effectively because they maintain a healthy dialogue between themselves and others, treating them with the same integrity, respect and care as they accord themselves.”

Denis Waitley, Psychology of Winning

WHAT DOES THE LEADER DO?

When a leader is appointed, they are accountable for instilling the essential attributes within the team, to hold them together and to achieve the objectives of the organisation. These include:

- *Aligning people to the **vision** of the organisation.
- *Setting an **example**.
- *The **development** of both individuals and teams.
- *Removing barriers between team members and **resolving conflicts**.
- *Inspiring and **motivating** their subordinates.
- *Maintaining **discipline** within the group.

*Getting **results** by facilitating action.

*AND developing and growing other leaders.

They should **focus on the direction**, co-ordinate and balance the talents within the group. Leaders must always be **aware** of what is happening in the execution of the **task**, relationships and dynamics within the **team** and the concerns of each **individual**. They ought to be familiar with **diverse leadership** styles and have the **skill** to adopt these effectively.

Training

Leaders should initiate and provide **on-going** training for the team.

Whilst at Alexander Forbes I attended a presentation by Bob Pfifer a previous US Presidential advisor. One of his comments was, “When times are tough many companies cut down on training. This is ludicrous! When the economy falters so does the moral of employees. Uplift them with training and teambuilding. This is the most important function guaranteeing success in any organisation.”

Another US President, Benjamin Franklin said, “An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest.”

The aim of training is to develop your staff to a point where their belief in themselves is so strong that they are willing to take on and succeed, in any challenge that comes their way. The more training you have, the more prepared you are and the more confidence you have in your own abilities.

A Perfectly Serviceable Aircraft

One of the highlights of my military career was the completion of the Parachute Course.

The Air Force definition of a paratrooper was, and I quote “One of those insane people who see fit to jump out of a perfectly serviceable aircraft.”

The aircraft in question was the old Dakota and let me assure you that sometimes it was preferable to jump out than risk the landing. It used to touch down like an angry rhino stamping out a bushfire. Anyone not wearing a helmet would end up with a head resembling a bent drainpipe.

On one occasion we had been called out for a deployment against a group of insurgents, lost them and decided to return and wait at the airfield whilst the

call-sign on the ground re-established contact. We landed on a rough bush strip at Mrewa and the pilot inexplicably missed the runway and started 'fish tailing' to rectify the problem. I was sitting at the back in the 'No 2 out' position opposite the open door, still in 'jump mode'. This means I wasn't strapped in. As we recoiled from side to side, I ended up tightly clutching the overhead static cable and swinging like a dyslexic monkey on a trapeze until the plane came to rest.

However, in fairness, although old and noisy, the Dakota was a tough and thoroughly reliable aircraft.

Mind you, I note that some of our airlines today have planes of a similar vintage. I took the Johannesburg to Botswana flight recently and they transported us to this dilapidated flying machine hiding behind the hangar at the end of the runway. It was so senile it was leaning on the fuel bowser. Rather like a relic from the 2nd World War, I wondered if I'd get to sit in the rear gunner's turret?

I digress, back to the point....

The completion of the parachute course takes you from the normal Commando infantryman into the Special Forces category. It's not that you are above mankind or those other mere mortals cannot emulate your achievement, but it certainly gives you that psychological edge and enhanced self-esteem. The more qualified you are in the field of your choosing, the greater your confidence.

Popularity

Leaders should not be overly concerned about being popular; gaining respect from your employees and achieving the task is the aim. Be fair and consistent - this will keep your reputation intact.

In order to prevent too much familiarity and dependent upon the maturity of your team, maintain an element of **distance** from your subordinates. This is not to say that you must be cold and aloof. Indeed the opposite applies, but workers must also know who is in charge and that you are ultimately responsible and accountable to the organisation.

The Romans resolved this problem by moving newly promoted centurions to another unit. This separated them from old companions and therefore they could not be tempted to favour their friends. This is usually not practical or possible in many organisations but be aware as a new leader, you are the one now under

scrutiny from both the top and the bottom.

Do not let people get away with indiscretions. It reduces your credibility and dilutes your integrity.

Abuse of Authority

Avoid trying to impress people with, or abuse, your authority.

Water for my horse.....

We had intelligence that a group of ZANLA were infiltrating through a line of villages in the north-east of the country.

One evening we were silently sneaking through the area when abruptly red and green tracer thumped through the night sky. Boris Scrivener had stumbled upon a group of insurgents in one of the villages and was having an almighty punch-up.

Being pitch black, we needed to switch the lights on, so I called the Air Force and requested they drop parachute flares. In the meantime my call-sign set up ambush positions as there was a strong likelihood that the guerrillas escaping the contact would come in our direction.

The flares lit up the night. As they burn they drop glittery sparks. One flare passed directly over our position and what I hadn't realised before was that those pretty embers were white hot particles of phosphorus. And guess who was underneath?

It was raining fire on our ambush position so we conducted a very hasty withdrawal to another spot. At the same moment we could hear the dissidents approaching our position. The modus operandi of the enemy was to drag branches behind them to obliterate any spoor. With the amount of noise coming down our way, these guys were obviously towing a whole baobab tree.

As they drew level, we fired at point blank range. We were so close the muzzle flashes from our weapons lit up their faces and the tracer rounds didn't have time to ignite before they found their targets.

My machine gunner had obviously forgotten in the hasty move that he had dropped his pack in front of him. His first couple of rounds shredded a tin of rations showering the rest of us with scorched chopped ham – nice aroma though.

The next morning we cast around for tracks, but the rebels who had survived the ambush had many hours on us so it was now the occasion to

summon the Mounted Infantry Unit (MIU). They were soldiers on horseback and being such, could close in on the gang a lot quicker than we could on foot.

Enter the cavalry. The commander clearly had been watching too many John Wayne movies. He wore this massive Stetson and carried an impressive silver .357 Magnum revolver in a crafted holster. Upon entering the village, he 'slapped leather' and drew his weapon like a gunslinger from OK Corral.

Shoving the Magnum into the nostril of a local he bellowed, "Hey you! Give me water for my horse!"

Boris and I nearly fainted with mirth. It was so out of character in the Rhodesian bush to see an 'actor' portraying a scene out of some low budget spaghetti Western.

His troops looked on with absolute disdain and embarrassment; they'd obviously seen the cabaret before. This commander was endeavouring to impress us with bravado and pomp, rather like Mussolini's efforts with the Italian nation in the 1930's era.

That's when Boris muttered, "It's going to be lonesome in the saddle when his old horse dies." We composed a Commando song about this incident with the same title.

Don't endeavour to be something you are not. Leadership is a responsibility to serve the human race; a privilege, not a glamour poster on the wall.

The MIU became the Grey's Scouts and the occasion above certainly does not reflect the quality of their operators. You get people like this in every unit or commercial enterprise. They were a highly professional entity and could cover an extensive amount of ground compared to the normal infantryman on foot.

Carel Bosch, who in my experience was one of the best Officer instructors around, hailed from their ranks.

Maintenance of Discipline

Keep discipline within the team and yourself.

"Discipline is the refining fire by which talent becomes ability."

Roy L Smith

We all need regulation. In this current age it seems that everything is about

my rights and me. People seem to be more concerned about their privileges than their responsibilities.

However, this legalistic attitude does not bear any resemblance to real life. I have the view that if you don't take responsibility you have no rights. William Feather remarked, "If we don't discipline ourselves, the world will do it for us."

Covey endorses the more mature inter-dependence attitude, where we need to give of ourselves to receive. Regulation also provides a healthy platform for morale.

We need discipline to achieve. Question any top class athlete. And so it is with our employees.

Discipline also has the effect of bonding people together within a team. They are bound by the same code and each person's role is defined. Employees having regulation feel a lot better about themselves and are more likely to achieve.

"Discipline is the soul of an army. It makes small numbers formidable; procures success to the weak, and esteem to all."

George Washington

And let me hasten to add that discipline is not about shouting at people. That's abuse of power! Discipline is about quietly letting each employee know the difference between what is right and what is unacceptable. If they step over the line then immediately institute corrective procedures. Neglect to enforce your rules and you do so at your peril. You will be regarded as inconsistent and weak and employees will lose their respect for you.

Nick Mallett who was the Springbok rugby coach in the late 90's imparted that on tour he would get the team to discipline any member guilty of misdemeanours – not a bad concept. Share the leadership amongst the responsible players.

Further, having disciplined a subordinate, move on and do not dwell on their previous faults.

The Zambezi Valley Convoy Run....

Dave Parker, the Commanding Officer of the RLI was based at the Joint Operational Command (JOC) at Mount Darwin in 1975. The fire-force base

was across the road and we had just returned from a battle with some dissidents. It had been a long dehydrating fight, so I decided to have a couple of drinks at the JOC with Gawie Venter. He was a South African helicopter pilot in the Rhodesian Air Force and a wonderful character.

Anyway we consumed a fair quantity and very late in the evening, became exceptionally rowdy. The senior Air Force man, a Wing Commander, came to remonstrate. There was a tree just outside the pub and Venter, at this juncture was hanging from one of its branches going “Ba-hoo, ba-hoo” at his superior, rather like a baboon protecting his corn cob.

We dispersed and very early the next morning I was summoned to have breakfast with Colonel Parker. Not surprisingly I had breath like a diseased hyena and the back of my head felt like it had been hacked off with a cheese grater.

“Morning Sir,” I murmured to the CO.

“Morning, Scotty, have some breakfast.”

The thought of a greasy egg slipping down and blending with last night’s beer would no doubt create an explosive amalgam not deemed safe for those in my close proximity.

I very politely declined, “No thanks, Sir.”

“I insist.”

When the Commanding Officer insists, you have no option but to accept with alacrity – and enthusiasm!

He then briefed me as to my task for the rest of the week. I was delegated to be the commander of a convoy of vehicles doing a re-supply run into the Zambezi Valley.

Five days languishing in the scorching sun riding shotgun on the back of a slow moving truck. The ultimate degradation! This cured me of any misdemeanours with the hierarchy in the future.

The salient point is at no time during the breakfast did Dave Parker ever raise his voice beyond a conversational tone. On no occasion after the incident did he ever mention it again or hold it against me. It was done and finished and I didn’t feel jeopardised. There was no malice and I was still going to give him my best. This is effective disciplining!

I’m not sure what happened to Gawie. Think he had to fly his helicopter back to Salisbury – upside down...

Stay In Touch

As you are promoted through the different levels of leadership, do not neglect to keep in contact with your teams below.

To some degree be constantly in touch with all individuals in the organisation. This has the effect of making those people still feel important and maintaining morale.

In many of the talks I give to companies, I get comments like, “All very good concepts, but they are theoretical and don’t work in practice” or “I wish our leaders could listen to this.”

Well they do work. Look at the successful companies around the world who have utilised this approach.

Further, this is the way to develop junior leaders. Give them the message so they don’t make the same mistake as their current ‘un-enlightened’ leaders at the top. Then get them to spread the word upwards.

Choose the Company You Keep

"Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do this, but the really great make you feel that you too, can become great."

Mark Twain

Commentary:

Have you ever voiced your aspirations to a work colleague only to receive disparaging comments or foul facial expressions? You then retreat with as much dignity as you can muster, to once again hide in your protective shell.

Have you ever contemplated beyond these small-minded folk who harbour jealousy and resentment in their present situations, using their own confined thinking to justify lack of accomplishment or motivation? Their attitude brushes off on you and negative thoughts and actions emerge.

Rise above those people. Cast off the shackles and seek a like minded co-worker or mentor who has broken through the restraint barrier. Together you will challenge the boundaries and encourage each other to new limits and personal growth.

Likewise, encourage others. Take time to actually listen, think and analyse their words. (And as you read this don’t just glib over the next three adjectives – they are the mantra of the successful). Offer **honest, constructive, unbiased** discussion and then follow with united ACTION!

Just do it: forgiveness is easier to acquire than permission and this is the kind of response that earns the respect of others - so you too, can become great.

“I can do all things through Him who strengthens me”

Philippians 4:13

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding: 24th January 2005

TRAINING FOR LEADERSHIP

Can leaders be trained?

A natural leader is considered to be one with charisma, the ability to inspire, empathy for people, sense of humour, aptitude and talent .. the list continues. This is an inherent gift in certain people but leadership is also a science (knowledge) which can be learnt and perfected.

The gift component makes it easier for some to have a better start, but does not deny leadership to those less endowed.

“In warfare men will follow a leader with great training (and thus knowledge and greater confidence) than someone with immense charisma but no hands on experience.”

Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery

Experience Is the Secret

However, people learn best from experience. There are four components feeding into this dynamic.

Intellectual: People call for a clear model of the functions and requirements for leadership.

Exercise: They require abundant opportunity to test drive this model; to feel it out for themselves in practice.

Feedback: Time is necessary to reflect upon and analyse the exercise. Talk about what happened and where improvements can be installed.

Example: The ingredient we are most often unaware of, is the living example of those who lead. If this is inconsistent, it leads to confusion.

“Leadership is an apprenticeship that never ends.”

And continually keep appraising:

- *Your performance as a leader.
- *Your own learning and training needs.
- *Your longer term self - development goals.

SO YOU WANT TO BE A LEADER?

"Leadership is not so much about technique and methods as it is about opening the heart. Leadership is about inspiration - of oneself and others. Great leadership is about human experiences, not processes. Leadership is not a formula or a program, it is a human activity that comes from the heart and considers the hearts of others. It is an attitude, not a routine."

Lance Secretan

Commentary

In my time I have been privileged to know many outstanding leaders. I have also seen some with 'theoretical' qualifications who regardless of their credentials are still insecure around or do not value, people. They tend to isolate themselves and look down on others because they are protecting their own turf. They are daunted and lack self-worth.

To uplift and inspire themselves, leaders must invest in their own self-development programme; vision, attitude, interaction, result-orientation and other associated topics. This intra-personal growth allows them to value themselves and not be threatened by others.

This is step one; building their own self esteem. If they are not intimidated by those around them, they can then accept others and acknowledge their points of view with trust and a genuine interest.

In a nutshell; you have to learn to enjoy the human race.

Leadership revolves around insight and concern for other people and not on your aptitude. When you show genuine interest in your subordinates, mutual appreciation is the result.

As opposed to 'having to work for you' they 'want to work for you' – they raise their game and productivity increases.

Although it is vital to grasp knowledge, organisations succeed only after something is accomplished.

Leadership success is not measured against what is known but rather against what is **done**.

“People don’t care how much we know until they first know how much we care.”

Zig Ziglar

Commentary published by Scott’s Teambuilding: 18th March 2010

“A good leader inspires people to have confidence in the leader;
a great leader inspires people to have confidence in themselves”.

Eleanor Roosevelt

5. SETTING AN EXAMPLE

The Mapai Episode

[Dale Collett](#) was an Officer in the Selous Scouts and decorated with the Silver Cross for ‘Conspicuous Gallantry and Leadership in Action.’ This was Rhodesia’s second highest award for bravery.

In June 1976 the Scouts raided the FRELIMO base in Mapai, Mozambique. Collett single-handedly charged up a staircase of an enemy building to attack the barricaded occupants. He was shot in the spine and paralysed from the chest down.

A couple of minutes later [Tim Bax](#), Bruce Fitzsimmons and Jannie Nel hurtled up the same stairs to finish the job. More bursts of fire and Nel was hit. The other two assisted him and retreated down the stairs. Sadly, he was dead before they got to the bottom.

Now Bax warily went up alone. Moving very cautiously along a passageway, a volley of AK rounds shattered his legs. Falling into an empty room, he managed to alert the attention of his men below as to the nature of his very severe wounds. Piet van der Riet organised a mattress and Tim managed to haul himself over the lip of the balcony before he lost consciousness and collapsed onto the bedding.

The story above is merely a summary of the action. However the point is that all of them went above the call of duty and led by EXAMPLE. They each showed a considerable degree of courage and self-sacrifice. In doing so they earned the ultimate admiration of others. **Respect comes from setting an example.**

Back to Dale Collett. Confined to a wheelchair, his disability has never deterred him from simply getting on with his life with vigour, enthusiasm and complete confidence.

Living in Botswana, he has built up his own business employing disabled local citizens, and developed a small farm from scratch in the raw bush. This included erecting the farm-house, outbuildings, animal pens and drilling boreholes.

Over time Dale has had numerous operations in an endeavour to counter the side effects of paralysis and pressure sores. In 2011, whilst renovating a building on his property, the roof collapsed on top of him and the resultant

injury called for the amputation of his left leg. He subsequently suffered a shoulder injury which, despite surgery, could not be repaired.

Nevertheless, he has been an absolute inspiration to anybody who has ever met him. Not just content to run a business and a farm, Collett has also advanced into the motivational speaking industry with the theme '*Nothing is Impossible*'.

Knowing him as I do, it is difficult to describe the boundless energy, enthusiasm and that booming voice – always one push of his wheelchair ahead of you.

He recently acquired an ancient 750cc motor-bike with sidecar. Fitted with a platform over the seat so he can ride lying down, his comment, 36 years after the shooting was, "62 years old, running at top speed and improving."

A press release in April 2014 reported, "An elderly one legged paraplegic has successfully ridden a vintage motorcycle the 1548 kilometres from Botswana to Cape Town, lying on his stomach. Despite the extent of the physical ordeal, his focus remained on the reason for the challenge – to gain sponsorship for the kids supported by the Ray of Hope Foundation in Gaborone."

In his sidecar Dale carried everything required – wheelchair, fuel, spares, tools, clothing and rations. He intended to sleep on his bike but at each stop, hospitable citizens put him up for the night. Four long days later the Harley Davidson Club escorted him into Cape Town to a thundering reception. Mission accomplished Dale then repeated the journey back to Gaborone.

The thought to ponder; here is a seriously disabled individual, who you would think needed the aid himself, and yet he is the one reaching out to terminally ill children – to give them some quality and comfort in life before they die.

Dale Collett is one of those people who just seizes life and gets on with it, never expecting help from anybody. Rather he sets the example, and in so doing, encourages others to do likewise.

"You get the best out of others when you give the best of yourself"

Harvey S. Firestone

'Idealised influence' as conceived by Bass and Avolio in their publication, 'Transformational Leadership', simply means 'setting an example.'

These days if you want to sell your new concept together with your book

you have to invent new words and phrases.

Setting an example is a very powerful form of leadership, but sadly is often not carried out by senior personnel. They have arrived in their management position after doing many years of the hard yards and the attitude unfortunately is, “I am here now, so people must do as I say, not as I do.”

However, be cautioned, as revealed before, people take in more information through their eyes than their ears. If people talk big, but don’t do, they lose credibility.

*“As I grow older, I pay less attention to what men say.
I just watch what they do.”*

Andrew Carnegie

And Carnegie was certainly qualified. By the time of his death in 1919, this American industrialist had already **given** away \$350 million and he got to be there by consistently setting an example.

People look up to those who do likewise and being a leader is about gaining respect from your subordinates. So if you want to become one – set an example first.

Being at the helm implies the personal willingness to go out in front, accept the risks involved, and ensure your team goes in the right direction and at the right speed.

To initiate this, you need your team to assist you. The easiest way to get the team to support you is to set the example yourself, so employees follow suit.

If there is no standard, there is nothing to follow. So, YOU set the model for staff to emulate.

However, this does not imply that you do the job yourself. Too many leaders imply, “Give the job to me because I know it will be done properly” – what message is being given to the staff?

Your task as a leader is to support, monitor and regulate your team.

There are nevertheless, circumstances when you go in at their level, roll up your sleeves, and help do the job yourself.....

New Horizons

Firstly, when you **take over a new appointment** with different staff or a **new type of undertaking**.

It is very important to identify yourself with the 'new.' Whatever you want your team to do, you must be willing to do yourself.

The Way to Go... My Brightest Move

"Our task as we grow older in a rapidly advancing world is to correct older ideas, and to learn from our pupils as we teach them."

Hans Zinsser

Commentary

In the early 70s, when assigned to my first unit, the RLI, reality suddenly hit me that it was now my responsibility to lead these very experienced operators into battle. I reflected. I had been to university; then attended the School of Infantry and now was a Lieutenant, qualified on paper; yet previous battle experience –nil!

So, I resolved to get them to teach me. This was the brightest action of my whole military career.

On arrival I was met disdainfully by Sergeant Stu Taylor and Corporal [Boris Scrivener](#) who looked like they were straight out of 'Prison Break'. Scrivener used to shave with a chainsaw, then applied jet-fuel as an Eau de Cologne.

However, I spent the next three months under their command, and it was the fact that I had done this period under the mandate of two subordinates which gained the respect of both them and my other men. They educated me on things beyond normal leadership courses and I got to see life from their perspective.

My relationship with the Troop was cemented. I was one of them. We related, communicated, understood and were unified; supporting and learning from each other through every situation. Some time after taking over, one of my corporals even named his son after me - an honour greater than any medal!

Back to the present, especially in the current economic mood; keep striving for new information and opinions - it is the only way we can go forward. As leaders, spend time with your employees and peers; listen, coach, encourage and allow them to grow.

The message you are giving is you value them and their input. Fresh ideas flow. They acknowledge your recognition and take ownership. And it does wonders for morale!

Bill Blakeway, the Regimental Padre, on his regular visits to the troops in the field, insisted on joining a 'stick' on helicopter deployments and fought alongside the boys. He then went on a parachute course and subsequently jumped into action with the operators. To get his message through to the guys, he had to 'be one of them.'

Problems within the Team

Secondly, when problems within the team arise. For example, with staff who are not doing the job correctly or need to be shown how to do certain tasks. Don't do the job for them, but help in their endeavours. If there is friction between people, get involved at their level. Listen to their troubles or point of view and resolve.

Further, "can I help?" are three very powerful words. If you want people to assist others at work you can best convey that by doing the same yourself. The message is, 'It's OK to be involved in helping others.' It also negates the 'it's not my job' syndrome. By members willingly assisting others in problem areas you are on the way to creating a 'self sealing' unit.

"A gram of example is worth a kilogram of persuasion."

Freidrich Engels

Symbolic Gestures

Thirdly, occasionally be involved in symbolic gestures. This as John Adair suggests, is a very powerful tool.

For example, when Michael Sykes, the Financial Director gets onto the factory floor and assists with the maintenance. "Henry, please pass me a number 19 spanner, this bolt needs tightening."

Later Henry exclaims to his co-worker Ben, "Did you see that? Mike Sykes was in here, up to his armpits in grease, fixing the stamp press!"

Do not underestimate the **grapevine**. It spreads like wildfire. The message is; he is one of us, he is at our level - I can relate to this person. It shows solidarity. And if you can get people to relate to you by putting yourself in their position, you've won the battle.

Montgomery did exactly the same thing with the 8th Army in the North African desert. He had ten divisions of over 220,000 troops in the field at the Battle of Alamein. He couldn't meet all of them, but spent an inordinate amount of time in the frontline trenches rubbing shoulders with varied units. Word spreads, and in the next couple of days the message proliferated, "Monty was in the trench with Tommy in sector four. He's one of us!"

The flagging morale recovered. Montgomery's gestures made all the difference, and he won the war in North Africa.

"People are touched by imaginative gestures."

John Adair

Everyday Examples

And don't forget the everyday examples.

Be punctual. Arrive at work early and do not leave before close (unless obviously you have meetings or functions to attend).

Staff notice when the boss gets to work late because he or she can. If the person in charge leaves early, staff won't have a problem doing the same, or slowing down if the head is not there.

Adhere to your commitments.

If you schedule a meeting for 08h15, ensure you start at 08h15. Arriving late without a valid reason is unacceptable. It shows a lack of discipline and respect for peers— and let the guilty know it! Respond to the timely by starting at the appointed moment.

Respecting and appreciating differences within people as well as **listening** are all best conveyed by example.

You are the role model. When communicating, spend more time listening than speaking. It's amazing how much you can learn from subordinates.

You can only recover the treasure if you dive down to the wreck.

Get to know employee names; they know yours.

It shows you care for, and acknowledge them. The significance is, "You're not just a number, you're one of us."

Colonel Dave Parker, the commander of the RLI until he was killed in 1975, was a master at this. He endeavoured to meet and find out the name of every soldier in the unit, and the troops responded to this by calling him “the King.”

And don’t be embarrassed at asking someone’s name for the third time... at least you are seen to be trying and suddenly it sticks.

Say “thank you”, the two most under-rated words in the English language.

By showing gratitude to people, you are giving them recognition and respect; two very powerful factors in motivation.

In a nutshell;

Treat others as you would like them to treat you.

Treat people as equals. However, do not relinquish your authority or discipline. Be approachable and fair, but firm.

“Good example has creative power, especially if it involves some self sacrifice – it works in people’s minds to alter their ways.”

John Adair

Self Discipline

“In the study of great people, I found the first victory they won was over themselves; self-discipline with all of them came first.”

Harry S. Truman

Commentary:

Self discipline is essentially doing what you know you HAVE to do, even if you do not want to do it.

It means sacrificing some pleasure to realise your ambitions in life. Self discipline is making the choice between what you want NOW and what you want MOST!

It is born by having the vision of where you want to be, what you want to achieve and then letting no distractions hinder your pursuit to this end.

We can have the best time management systems in place, the biggest goals

– but if we do not have the self discipline to act upon these tools, we may as well stay in bed.

Many folk these days are inclined to expect immediate results and if these are not forthcoming, they tend to become dejected and lose interest. However, if patience and persistence are displayed, all by-products of self discipline – success will come!

It is not your motivation that produces results — it is your ACTION. Persistence allows you to keep taking action even when you don't feel motivated to do so. Practice perseverance and the results, slowly but surely, become visible.

Firstly, you must have the aspiration to achieve your goals; not a feeble wish but a genuine desire. Then make a COMMITMENT. The peak of self-discipline is when you make, and keep, a conscious decision. This done there is a virtual guarantee that you'll follow through with it. Further, keep this picture foremost in your mind of the rewards you will enjoy on reaching your target - the vision of yourself in triumph at the finish.

From a practical application, concentrate on starting the task – this negates procrastination. When you get into the assignment the focus becomes easier as you develop the habit of self-discipline.

Let's take daily exercise as an example. If I return from a long, tiring trip the temptation to forego gym training beckons. I simply tell myself that I will do only ten minutes of an exercise with a very light weight. My mind doesn't see a problem with this at all.

If I only do a few minutes, all well and good - it is better than nothing and the habit is still alive. But invariably once I start, it is easier to continue and in no time I have completed a full training session.

Make self-discipline a habit. It builds inner strength, character and stability. People with self-discipline also command respect from others. It is an essential for personal leadership.

“Self - discipline is the bridge between goals and accomplishment.”

Jim Rohn

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding: 5th August 2011

“One half of life is luck; the other half is discipline - and that's the

important half, for without discipline you wouldn't know what to do with luck”.

Carl Zuckmeyer

Self Control

If you cannot control yourself, it will be doubtful whether you can control others.

Leaders with bad tempers who are easily ruffled, lack control of their tongue or are guilty of backbiting and complaining, will quickly lose the respect of both subordinates and peers.

I learnt that in Mozambique.....

Strolling through Estima

In the mid 70's I was ambushing a road near a place called Estima which was a FRELIMO base supporting the movement of ZANLA through the area. One evening, a signal came through and tasked us to relocate to another target to the east.

At midnight we started curving north-east to bypass the town. It was then we encountered the dreaded Jesse bush. This is very thick, tightly knit, intertwined thorn scrub. And the more I cut and slashed at this, the more frustrated I became. I was making more noise than a warthog giving birth - and then I just lost it!

I did the unthinkable; moved south onto the main road, turned south-east and followed the track THROUGH Estima, leaving huge jumbo sized tracks in the process. If one militia member of the town had been awake, myself and 15 other men would have been decimated. But in my intense stupidity, born of the fact that I had totally lost my temper, I was prepared to take on the whole FRELIMO garrison; and you have only got to have a brain the size of a 3-amp fuse to understand we would not have won that fight. And yet I was quite willing to put the lives of my troops at risk, because I had become totally irrational, owing to my lack of self control.

This kind of behaviour does not engender any respect from subordinates. As opposed to me cooling off and saying, “Guys what do we do now?” and involving them in the decision making process, I was going to do it my way!

Fortunately I regained some credibility later on by admitting I had blundered and apologised to them.

If you express regret, it wipes the slate clean and people **regain** their respect for you. Everybody makes mistakes; they realise this, but if you apologise, it clears the air and normality returns. It's another way of setting an example.

That lesson stood me in good stead a few years later.

The Escape and Evasion Exercise

I was asked to be a DS (Directive Staff) and assist in an Escape and Evasion exercise with some new Officer Cadets. The recruits were taken to a training area near Gwelo, dropped off and given a task to make for a certain destination without being 'captured.' This assignment took about three days, and it was my duty to follow one group and monitor their actions and performance.

As I had been accustomed to deployment in operational areas, I really wasn't looking forward to playing nurse maid to cadets in a 'secure' training zone. Subsequently I tagged along, with my mind firmly ensconced in neutral, assuming at this stage that some of these kids could actually read a map. As evening approached this group realised that they were lost, and Scott who hadn't been fully concentrating couldn't help much. Highly irate, I ordered them to 'stay put' and stormed off into the last light in an endeavour to find out where we were.

Neglecting my usual caution, I barged into a nearby village line and came face to face with a ZANLA guerrilla. Simultaneously, a number of his colleagues took a bead on me and opened up with automatic fire. My adrenalin powered retro-rockets kicked in and I catapulted backwards behind the cover of an anthill, and retaliated.

In his sheer desperation to avoid the cross-fire, a disorientated, terrified tiny African boy ran out and scrambled up the anthill I was shooting from. I distinctly recall seeing his eyes the size of frying pans and in my anger was going to 'blow him away.' He actually was not the object of my wrath; rather it was my complacency at having let things slip that fuelled my ire, but in this extreme tension of survival you want to 'get even' and anything goes. I was about to squeeze the trigger, when an overwhelming force within me said, "DON'T!" Think of the consequences! Lessons of self-control from the past flooded in and to my everlasting relief, I didn't.

Thankfully, I don't have that innocent life on my conscience.

Another lesson here in terms of being given such a task - no matter how insignificant and menial the chore, prepare properly, pay absolute attention to detail, concentrate and give it your all.

Mistakes

There are two kinds of mistakes. Those made through neglect and those made through effort.

The former is unacceptable. Here you know you are deviating from the straight and narrow because of carelessness, rebellion, laziness or apathy.

The latter is where you look at a problem with due thought, and believing this is the right decision, go ahead – only to find it was the wrong choice.

Winston Churchill said, "Success is the result of making many mistakes, and learning from the experience."

Commentary:

Instead of putting ourselves down when blunders occur, use the errors as a growth tool!

Let's look at the psychology behind this process.

Having made a mistake, there are three steps to embrace:

Acknowledge:

It's not easy to admit your faults, and to do so entails venturing out of your comfort zone. However, taking this first step means that you are strengthening your mind and resolve. Also by doing something challenging develops discipline.

Further, in standing up and acknowledging your error shows character and (whether they come clean or not) engenders respect from other people. However, there are always going to be people who will ridicule. Have compassion on them – they are normally the type who have never done anything themselves anyway, for fear of being criticised.

Rectify:

Immediately, and don't be shy to ask others to help if you need assistance. People like helping other people; it makes them feel good about themselves. Quality leaders always ask for help from their followers; in this way they show

value and recognition for their input.

Learn:

Edison failed nearly two thousand times to get his bulb to shine before he found the solution to the electric light. At every failure he tried something different, and with unswerving discipline continued until the illumination came.

His genius came from the acceptance of and ability to learn from his mistakes, re-align and then continue with absolute persistence until the inevitable triumph.

Vince Lombardi once said “Errors and mistakes are the necessary steps in the learning process; once they have served their purpose, they should be forgotten.”

Emulate this, and we too can find the prodigy within.

Commentary published by Scott’s Teambuilding: 15th July 2009

Keep Your Cool (And Your Humour)

Happiness and good humour are contagious.

However, be warned and walk with caution; anger, panic and fear are also highly infectious. Should things not be going in the intended direction, maintain a ‘cool’ pose. Believe me, this is a conscious effort. You know you want to detonate! Exert absolute restraint over your mind and force a smile instead. It certainly confuses the antagonists.

Through my employment with Forbes I attended many Union meetings. During negotiations, when emotions were running high, members raised their voices into a full crescendo in an endeavour to belabour the point. The trick here is to not say a word. Let them continue until they have run dry and then drop your voice to a whisper. Delegates have to lean forward and strain to hear you. This non-threatening approach has the effect of draining the emotion and dropping blood pressure back to normal – and the meeting can continue in a more orderly fashion.

Anxiety and fear are normal, but let this fear get out of hand and paralysis strikes. The leader must neutralise that apprehension to keep the group moving and one way is to take a very big deep breath and never show your alarm.

Further, you'll find that courage and an attitude of composure is also contagious.

Look at any school playground when the younger group are off to retrieve their soccer ball from the plundering older group. It takes just one of the younger boys with a bit more fortitude than the others to stand up and go and you'll find the rest will follow (albeit a short distance after him).

On the other side of the coin, having shown your resolution, as a leader you also draw strength and encouragement from knowing your team are right behind you.

And one of the easiest ways of setting an example ..

“Eyes radiate authority and give direction, focus and meaning to your message they answer critical questions when you are trying to connect”.

Nicholas Boothman

Commentary

You meet Bert at a client cocktail party. He has a face like an outraged weasel. His thin lips stretch into a barely susceptible smirk - more of a contemptuous snarl than a smile. As you speak his eyes are straying all over the room like a dog looking for a hole in the fence.

How do you feel and what message is he giving out?

On the other hand, Don looks you straight in the eye and gives you a beaming smile. This person is enthusiastic about you! As you speak, nothing distracts him from giving you his complete attention.

Now how do you feel?

The most successful way to reinforce the bond between yourself and other people is to look them in the eye and smile.

Eye contact is one of the most crucial avenues we have for communication. In business it sends subtle signals; we tend to be uneasy with someone who won't look us in the eye.

Conversely, there's an implication of trust in those engaging your eyeball. They exude an approachable and confident stance which states, “You are important to me. I am interested in you and your requirements”.

These are the attributes people look for when dealing with others. When you smile, it shows you are happy to be dealing with them. And a cheerful person invariably does a better job than those who are miserable.

Your expression tells people who you are.

“The face is a picture of the mind with the eyes as its interpreter.”

Marcus Tullius Cicero

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding on 2nd May 2013



My first encounter with the RLI – the well groomed Boris Scrivener (left) and Scott rehearsing “hot extraction” drills (right)

Behind enemy lines



Family holiday in Mozambique, 1976. Scott at left, Ian MacFarlane, Gordon Cameron, Kevin Maas

Photo courtesy of Dave Scott-Donelan

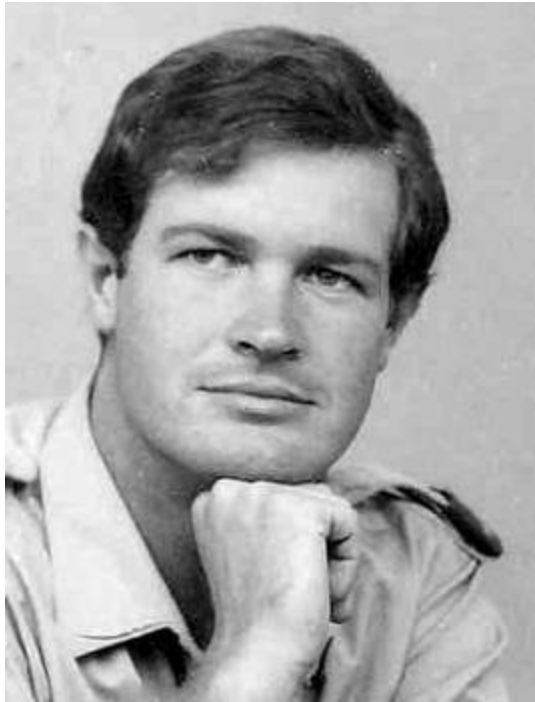
Members of 1 Commando, RLI.



Standing: Boris Scrivener, “Dup” Du Preez, Billy Wiggill, Les Wentink, Brendon Houston-Brown
Seated: Dave Roberts, Paul van As,
Dave Bradley, Willy

Photo courtesy of Billy Wiggill

Richard Smith



One of those killed in action at the Battle of Chibara Hills, 28th February 1976 – a day that 1 Commando will never forget....

Photo courtesy of Paris Sumner

Securanca raid



Utter exhaustion and dehydration after a 12 hour walk in and six hour fight. Scott in foreground

Photo courtesy of Dave Scott-Donelan

Paratroopers



Ken Daly standing
Scott in foreground right

Photo courtesy of Chas Lotter

Securanca burns....



Photo courtesy of Mark Taunton

Captured weaponry, the collection starts....



RPK machine gun foreground, RPG rockets and AK assault rifles behind

Photo courtesy of Mark Taunton

Mozambique camp attacks – mopping up



Photo courtesy of Mark Taunton

1 Commando Officers at Mount Darwin, 1976



Back: Rick Seyton-Rodgers, Dave Scott-Donelan, Roy Matkovitch, Neill Storey.
Front: Ian MacFarlane, Mick Walters, Scott

Photo courtesy of Dave Scott-Donelan

Brian Smith and Richard Hay



“They have faces like boys, but they fight like Lions”. WO Herod, RAR

Photo courtesy of Brian Smith

Selous Scouts



Returning from operations in Zambia
Ian Colquhoun, 'Stretch' Ferreira, Max MacCullum. Jim Schneeberger (seated)

Photo courtesy of Jim Schneeberger

Bath time



Blondie Leatham, Merv Bramwell and Chalkie van Schalkwyk

Photo courtesy of Chalkie van Schalkwyk

Joe Du Plooy



Judy Hamilton and Joe
Picture taken a few weeks before Joe
was killed

Lt. Col. Pat Armstrong



Second and final commander of the Selous Scouts after Lt Col. Ron Reid-Daly

Selous Scouts



Rod Smith and Tim Bax

Photo courtesy of Phee Fletcher

Selection Course



Recruits on Selous Scouts selection with the ever-present instructor

Photo courtesy of Jim Schneeberger

Selous Scouts



Operators in training

Photo courtesy of Tom Thomas

Selous Scouts



Convoy break on the way to deployment

Photo courtesy of Tom Thomas

Selous Scouts raid



Crossing the Gairezi River en route to Monte Cassino, Mozambique

Photo courtesy of Jim Schneeberger

In the Recce's...



Scott's ID photo in the South African Reconnaissance Commandos

5 Recce, Phalaborwa



Checking my son's first "Situational Analysis"

Return to Kariba, 1990



Neill “Bubbles” Storey



On the way to the aircraft before a jump into action in 1977. With pack between his legs under the reserve chute, Bubbles elegantly models the “bush-pig walk”



“Officer Storey commenced his ascent of Mount Darwin in late 1977. Two weeks ago and 34 years on, Bubbles reached the top of the “gomo”, only to discover he had steered off course and summited Mount Kilimanjaro. Well done Bubbles!”

Caption by Simon Willar for the Annual Servicemen’s Lunch, 2011

Dale Collett



“62, running at top speed and improving”.
His epic journey from Gaborone to Cape Town

Photo courtesy of Barbara Bresler

The Smith family in 2009



Paris, Richard Junior and Amber. Scott second right

Photo courtesy of Paris Sumner

RLI and 1 Commando reunion, 2010



Back: Des Archer, Piet Olivier, Basil Dippenaar, Dave “Bongwe” Russell, Mick Walters
Front: George “Papi” Bolton, Gary Huxham,
Dave Hosking, Vince Buckingham

Photo courtesy of Vince

Mervyn Bramwell



35 years later

Photo courtesy of Merv

After the course



Playing guitar and sing-along with clients at the Beach Shack Restaurant, Singapore

Teambuilding



With Senior Instructors, Patrick Mchunu (left) and Sbu Mkhize (right) – two of the best!



Extending and growing people!

6. UNDERSTANDING THE INDIVIDUAL

Leadership revolves around the ability to motivate people.
And to be able to motivate people we must understand them.

Respect and Appreciate Differences

The first thing a leader or team member must understand is that everybody is different and each individual has specific and diverse needs.

Unfortunately the human race tends to lean on the negative side. How often have we heard people at a supermarket ensuring the cashier, the floor manager and anybody else in range gets it straight in the neck for some minor problem? Guaranteed also as they are dribbling over beer at some weekend function, they will let the universe know of their displeasure and inconvenience. They maneuver to be the centre of attention, especially if they can recount a 'did you hear what happened to me' story. It engenders sympathy from the audience. However, have good service at the same supplier and not a word is mentioned unless somebody asks.

No, we would rather complain than praise.

However, if we realise that it actually gives us greater pleasure psychologically to praise rather than criticise, we are moving onto the correct road.

I had to navigate by experience to get there.

The Battle of Chibara Hills : The Awakening... Lesson One

February, 1976 and my unit, 1 Commando RLI were based at Mount Darwin in North-East Zimbabwe. As Commando personnel, we were the 'Rambo's.' Anybody else in the galaxy was merely sub-human. In the camp, we had signallers – they were the cockroaches who hid in cupboards and occasionally transmitted messages from HQ to the call-signs out in the field. One of these aliens had pigeon toes, knock knees, buck teeth, was squint, wore bottle top glasses, had a quaff of red hair and his name was [Willy](#).

On the 28th February 1976 we were tracking a large group of guerrillas when I walked into the mother of all ambushes and the Battle of Chibara Hills commenced. We were outnumbered by about four to one and in the

initial eruption of fire, a number of our people went down. Suddenly we were very short of manpower so I hastily called for reinforcements.

Who do you think they sent me?

I couldn't believe my eyes as I turned round, saw the helicopter land and out bounced Willy the misfit.

We were still under fire and I was lying under as much cover as possible. Totally unperturbed, Willy floated towards me like a butterfly. Still standing, as if he was in the library, buck teeth tripping over his tongue, he nonchalantly asked, "What seems to be the problem Sir?"

I conveyed the situation to him and indicated I needed support from Sergeant Pete White who was on my left flank. Off Willy drifted and I'll never forget the radio message I received from him, "Sir, Sergeant White has passed away." No panic, no, "what should I do?" and in the next few minutes, Willy led the call-sign to take out the rebel machine gun causing the damage.

And this from a signaller!

My mistakes and the lessons learnt

In my arrogance, I had judged Willy on two counts.

My opening verdict came from who he was; his appearance and demeanour. Physically he was not 'in our class'. He was smaller, quieter and less robust than the infantrymen. Yet he did not shirk his duties when it came to the moment of truth on the battlefield. Courage and initiative comes from the heart and mind, not from physicality, size, intellect or position.

On how many occasions do we meet someone who is 'dressed funny' or has different opinions and automatically write them off? It has been said we form our opinions of people in the first few seconds of meeting. I submit we should reserve our judgement until we actually spend time with the individual.

I had a very jaundiced and superior attitude to others (which fortunately on this day changed and kept me in good stead thereafter). Know that regardless of who the person is and no matter what your first impressions might be, there is a huge amount we can learn from others which can help us. Each person, given the right opportunities, can accomplish great feats for the benefit of the team and themselves.

Everybody has something to offer.

Secondly I judged Willy, by what he was. He was a signaller. He wasn't the same as us. And therein lies the universal problem. As a leader I had a negative attitude about him – I didn't trust he could do the job, just because he was different. Now the pressure was on; I had to hold this position and needed someone else to find Pete White. Willy showed me that regardless of his status, he was up to the task!

As it happened, a couple of years later, we got a signals man as a Commando Commander who, in my opinion, was by far the best leader we ever had.

It happens in every single company; we have people involved in HR, finance, management, IT, in different locations and so forth; and there always seems to be the reluctance to bring all these diverse divisions into the equation because 'they are not where we are.'

Many times I have done courses with production lines where Shift A will not liaise with Shift B because they are in some kind of competition with each other. If they could only get it into their mindset that we are all in this together. Shift A might have ideas which could help Shift B. Share them, because if this becomes a culture, then Shift B will reciprocate with their conceptions. They all become winners and the company goes forward. And don't only restrict this to the familiar; maybe a marketing person has some ideas on boosting production. The more thoughts you get from others the more innovation is forthcoming. Do not operate in 'silos' and withhold information significant to the operation.

Listening

We've all been told that listening is the most important factor in communication. Why? If I'm talking I am learning nothing, but if I'm listening, I'm gaining knowledge and growing.

But there are certain ways of listening;

The lowest form is 'pretended' listening and those of us with kids know all about this. Next we have selective listening; hearing only what you want to hear, especially in a conflict situation. Then we have empathic and attentive listening.

When I ask my groups which one is the most successful, they normally say ‘attentive’ – it sounds stronger.

However, if you study great leaders around the world you’ll find they attained a lot of their power from the ability of showing empathy. They were great listeners.

Not only did they understand what people were saying, they also understood the underlying meaning behind the speech and could act upon this information accordingly.

Chibara : My Biggest Mistake...

Let’s go back to the Battle of Chibara Hills mentioned before. In one of the encounters on this very long day, a lengthy burst of enemy fire cut down two of my number. One of them, [Richard Smith](#), a National Parks tracker, crumpled onto his face a couple of metres from me. Desperately I pulled him into cover behind a tree, turned him over and noticed a bullet hole in his chest. A lung wound is not a serious injury in that it does not bleed much and all you’ve got to do is stop the air coming out; so I retrieved my zinc oxide plaster, which sticks like crazy, and applied it to his wound. Smith was now okay. Air was not coming out of his lungs so he was physiologically fine. There was no problem, he was going to survive. However, I did not give him morphine, as this was not so good for a respiratory wound as it increases your metabolic and breathing rate. It also makes you high.

(I know, because I went down operating in Zambia a couple of years later and my medic gave me morphine. It was a wonderful experience! Eyes squint and chuckling, I kept telling myself jokes; didn’t laugh at all of them - some I’d obviously heard before. Like Jimmi Hendrix at Woodstock, I was soaring in the same orbit as the helicopter when it came to pick me up).

Rich Smith would be flown back to base and into the hospital where they would pump him full of drugs. At least there, they could monitor and control his condition. However, he would be very woozy for the next four or five days and probably would not be totally ‘compos mentis’.

So bearing this in mind, he said to me, “Sir, my wife’s name is Paris, she is pregnant and if it’s a boy, ask her to call him Richard.”

Obviously Paris was just about to give birth and therefore, knowing he was going to be a spot mindless for the near future, just wanted to confirm the name.

We carried him to the helicopter and continued. It was a long, hard fight and ended with us having a 30% casualty rate. Inflicting a higher toll on them, we theoretically won the battle, but with so many good men down it was a rather hollow victory.

I was uplifted at last light, flown to Mount Darwin and went to the Operations Room for my debrief. Upon asking the condition of Rich Smith, I was informed that he had died on the way back in the helicopter.

Stunned is not the word. Absolute disbelief and shock! Another good man gone. Why? I had patched him up correctly. What went wrong?

The doctor said he had died from severe trauma and not from physiological causes.

And now to the point. If I had known this; if I had known his state, I could have saved him. Yes, I would have given him the morphine - not great, but they still could have stabilised him in hospital and the feeling of euphoria from the narcotic would have overridden the shock and he would have lived.

But the big question is: how did I miss his meaning?

How come I did not realise that under this acute distress, he believed he was on the way out? And this is what he had actually been trying to tell me.

I had been listening attentively to what he had been saying. This incident was over thirty years ago and I still remember his actual words. I understood exactly what was being said, but had missed the underlying reason – “Hold my hand, I’m dying.”

And this for me was when the awakening happened. I suddenly realised that the reason I had missed his meaning was because I had been coming from MY reference system. Me, me, I, I - and to quote the old cliché, “There is no ‘I’ in team.”

I made a decision on HIS condition, based on MY experiences. I had been in many battles and seen lots of casualties. As a 24 year old I had survived some fairly hazardous encounters and thought I knew it all.

I wasn’t listening to what Rich Smith was saying. I was listening only to what ‘I’ was thinking and had super-imposed my thought patterns onto his dialogue. Then I made a decision based, not on what he had said, but on *my* perception of the situation; not on *his reality*. And because of this, it was the wrong decision.

Tragically Rich Smith was also coming from his belief system. He had taken for granted the fact I knew he was going. We were both on a totally different track and each assumed the other knew what he was thinking.

And this is where the lines of communication break down.

Many leaders know that listening is the most important facet of communication. Unfortunately, however, too many only pay lip service to this aspect - they bend forward and pay you the utmost attention whilst you speak, nodding appreciatively at your wisdom but they haven't heard a word. With closed minds they have already made their decision based on what THEY think!

How many occasions has someone interrupted you and finished the sentence you have just started?

They seem to know what you are going to say before you say it. Irritating, and more often than not they are wrong. Impatiently, they are completing your sentence from their reference system and not listening to you at all.

Acknowledging their error, "But I thought you meant," the emphasis being on "I thought."

Don't think until you've listened!

So how do we negate this problem and listen empathically?

Simply by spending time, quality time, with your employees. Take an avid interest in them and ask question, after question, after question.

Yes, it is invariably a hassle; we have deadlines and the clock is counting down, but there is an old military adage which says: "Time spent in recce, is not time wasted."

Listen and listen some more; it's like a prospector; chip, chip, patience, chip, persistence, chip; and then suddenly he hits gold!

You'll find revelations that will change your perspective on life.

"I know what I know. I want to listen to what I don't know."

Questions; What do you mean? Please explain. How do you feel about

this? Kindly elaborate. When? Why? Where?

You don't have to agree with what team members are saying; as long as you give them the opportunity to air their views.

The message you are giving them is that you are interested in what they have to say, you value their opinion, you welcome their contribution, you appreciate their input.

If you show a genuine interest in people, they feel good about themselves and you. They are going to open up and give you a full understanding of their situation. Individuals like to talk about themselves and their experiences. As Joyce Meyers records, 87% of what we talk about is ourselves.

Further, people will seek your company. They enjoy talking and sharing with you because you listen and uplift. A sense of trust prevails and this gives you a lot more vital 'intelligence' about the real situation.

As they share feelings and ideas, you will open up too. Stephen Covey said, "Seek first to understand then be understood". We are both receptive to each other and the result of empathic listening is that we see life from another perspective.

The lines of communication are now open and you will get the right answers and make the correct decisions, based on fact not on feelings.

Synergy

Good communication leads to synergy - listening with empathy (this is the foundation), thereby understanding and learning from each other. This promotes a better solution than the one you or the other party had before - a combination of the best suggestions.

Synergy is the interplay of ideas. It stimulates the imagination and leads to innovation and this is where we want to be; spawned by empathic listening.

Postscript: Reflections on Chibara

Each unit has certain events which will reflect as defining moments in their history. For 1 Commando it was The Battle of Chibara Hills

It was this incident, more than any other, which profoundly shaped my attitude on life and other people. We had started the day like any other. The sun was shining through the holes Dave Scott-Donelan had shot through the

prefab wall the night before in his handgun accuracy demonstration. The relaxed discussion over morning coffee with Pete White on the reliability of the Browning shotgun.

Then came the siren, the frenetic rush to the aircraft, deployment, tracking and the ambush. Other contacts over time have become a bit hazy in my mind, but this one is engraved on my brain. I remember it like yesterday. There were so many incidents:

The first guerrilla to be killed was the detachment commander. He abruptly emerged on my left out of thick bush. We both glimpsed each other simultaneously and reacted. What he didn't see was the incoming NATO round that dropped him. This left me very thankful for my training. A fraction of a second does count!

Then there was the immensity of the fire put down by the dissidents and the overwhelming number of them all over the place. They were trapped in thick bush surrounded by open fields, so they were committed to stand their ground and fight it out until last light before they could make good their escape.

The nerve wracking assaults over a period of six hours on well defended positions in dense vegetation, closing in at ranges of no more than five or ten metres.

[Dave Hosking](#), taking five rounds in his midriff and the intensity of the incoming gun fire as I covered the two medics, [Ken Daly](#) and Dirk de Beer, as they pulled him out.

Paul Morpuss, stunned and just staring, wide eyed and in utter disbelief at the blood gushing out of his severely shattered arm; so traumatised he didn't comprehend or respond to me at all as we applied the field dressings.

Finding Pete White so peacefully asleep cradling his jammed shotgun; only a faint trace of blood on his teeth indicating that he would never wake up again.

The admiration at the character of the boys. We all had the same anxiety – who was going to be the next one down? But regardless of the casualties we kept attacking, harassing and striking. Each time I turned around, there they were right beside me, their faces distraught and quivering with tension. But through the acrid smoke they still kept moving forward in support.

Gawie Venter in helicopter Yellow 3, who flew in perilously close to the skirmishes and courageously held his exposed aircraft in the hover just above a very rocky LZ, so that we could speedily evacuate the dead and the wounded. Malcolm Baldwin the same. Pete Simmonds, Ray Fitzpatrick and

the rest of the Air Force did a magnificent job as normal.

Doug Cookson, his beads still swinging from his neck, as we carried out the big man's body. In Mount Darwin, some distance away, there were female Police Reservists on duty who could hear the radio transmissions from the command helicopter (K-car).

Roy Matkovich, our OC in K-car circling above, radioed Ian Macfarlane for the first of the updates, "Who is down?"

Ian answered, "Hosking wounded and Cookson dead."

Matkovich, "Confirm Cookson's dead?"

The reservist doing radio watch in Darwin heard the broadcast. And this lady was Doug Cookson's mother... I shudder to imagine her reaction!

It puts you onto another plane of the awareness of the tragedy. It's one thing when you're in this position; detached because you have become hardened, but there are mothers, wives and kids out there. They are the ones who bear the real brunt. It's time for the human race to understand this.

At breakfast there had been 24 men. At supper there were only sixteen. It had been a very harsh day.

And that's when you face the loneliness of command.

There's a sequel to the story. On New Year's Eve in 2009, I received a phone call from Deta Clark, one of my colleagues in the Outdoor Adventure industry. He had located [Richard Smith Junior](#). I had never seen Paris again after the funeral and often wondered if the unborn child had indeed been a son.

What a privilege to meet Paris, her son Richard and the family for New Year's breakfast, 33 years after the Battle of Chibara Hills.

The Needs of the Individual – An Overview

Having grasped the two concepts above, let's look at the needs of the individual.

There are a number of more recent models but probably the most commonly known is AH Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. This describes the various levels of requirements in any human ranging from the strongest basic essentials for survival to the optimum in development at the summit of the pyramid.

Physiological necessities are the basis of life. Man must breathe, eat, drink and sleep. Now that we're not hungry, we seek **safety** and establish measures to protect ourselves and our surrounds. Secure at present, we then lean towards acceptance by the human race and develop **social** networks and friends. Acceptance by our peers gives us **esteem** and self respect. Achievement in our lives leads to recognition and status. And so we climb to the final peak where we enjoy **self actualisation** and cherish our growth, accomplishment and personal development.

Also be aware that if our basic, strongest needs are threatened (physiological and safety), we jump down the steps to defend.....

You do not worry about status if you are starving; and seconds after surviving the tsunami, Betsy Beautiful is not likely to worry whether her makeup pouch is under the rubble or floating on the tidal wave. Our senses are wound up into the highest state of awareness of self preservation and all other 'higher' values fade.

This also is the reason why leading men into battle has to have such a specialised touch – your safety and survival is being put under fire. An elevated level of training, discipline, belief in the mission and an undeniable sense of duty are the precursors to motivating soldiers forward.

Therefore in the workplace, there will always be **resistance if you threaten** people's security. For example, you might have an operator on the floor whose wife and young family reside in a high crime area. You are not going to be engulfed with gratitude if you continually put him on the night shift - and you might not even be aware of his situation. This is where your communication skills must come to the fore – find out all about your people and their concerns.

Also, be alert to the fact a satisfied need ceases to motivate. An established professional golfer who has won gold for the past ten years, is not normally as motivated as the young challenger anxious to taste the cup.

Likewise, many top level executives who have acquired huge wealth are often no longer driven by money. Power now is the motivating factor; and so they move up a rung.

Feedback

Keep your staff informed. Each must know not only how, but why.

Explain the importance of what they're doing and they will embrace the task with purpose.

According to research by Ken Blanchard the most common mistake leaders make is failing to provide feedback.

Whenever you have your staff meetings, give the results of the assignments back to the team immediately. This also includes for example, the receptionist, who possibly was not directly involved but is still part of the act. The more people that are 'in the loop,' the further they can contribute. They feel worthwhile and embrace the undertaking with added enthusiasm.

If there is a negative result to a particular job, prompt and honest feedback will allow those concerned to rectify and improve their performance without delay.

Compassion for People

The Shangaan Massacre

Whilst recuperating from injuries, I was posted to 4 Brigade in Fort Victoria and did a stretch as the Intelligence Officer. Early one morning we received a report of a guerrilla strike on a group of our Shangaan trackers based with their families in a village at the nearby Zimbabwe Ruins. A group of insurgents had snuck up whilst they were preparing their evening meal around the fires and hacked them to death with cane knives.

The Brigade Commander, Dick Tilley and I scuttled off to the incident. Upon arrival it was the most tragic and awkward scene to survey. The families just stared vacantly, the bodies still lying where they had fallen. Widows and children were immovable; wooden faces, numbed beyond comprehension.

I had seen a lot of death in my time, but this was the saddest. What do you do? I just went up to the senior wife and put my hand on her shoulder. A minute gesture in solidarity, but this was all I could do. She bent her head and I walked away.

Show compassion to people – you might not be able to solve the problem, but it at least shows you care, and that is an important psychological message of support. If people have this backing they can cope with the situation a whole lot easier.

“A man who wants to lead the orchestra must turn his back on the crowd.”
James Crook

Commentary:

Imagine what would happen if a conductor of a large orchestra faced the audience as opposed to his musicians? His movements and facial expressions would be visible to the gallery only. Behind, the entire symphony would be a cacophony of tunes - out of synch with each other and played to every musician's tempo. Each would look to one another for direction and have no clear view of the final arrangement.

Such is the case of a manager or team leader who expects his co-workers to follow his back and take commands thrown over a retreating shoulder whilst he concentrates only on the next line of management. This type of leadership evokes non-communication, resentment and lack of respect.

Instead, face and become a part of the team; lead them towards harmony, giving a full and detailed picture of the requirements for each task. Be instrumental in coaching, mentoring, uplifting and improving qualifications and effectiveness.

Tune in to their needs as well - growth, security, advancement, empowerment and recognition. This will ensure that the leader will earn the respect and dedication of the team and subsequently orchestrate greater success.

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding: 25th August 2004

7. MOTIVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

A leader should be able to motivate the group and individual members to move in the desired direction.

Morale is the platform, and motivation is the ability to move and excite people to action.

THE LEADER'S ATTITUDE

Nonetheless, before we investigate this, let's have a word about the Leader's attitude.

Firstly, **Create A Positive Environment.**

At the outset, we have to look at ourselves first. When faced with a group of individuals, many leaders tend to assume either negative or positive theories about mankind.

Bruce is a grumpy fellow whose handicap is golf. Nobody wants to play with him. He surreptitiously drives off the ladies tee. A massive swipe and a veering hook-shot lands him in the long grass. The man is a magician - his ball slinks mysteriously from the rough to the fairway without him even firing a stroke.

He whacks his next shot – oops, a slice into the car park. The ball fortuitously bounces off the Chairman's new Mercedes and embeds itself into the bunker. Two explosions with his wedge and the ball settles on the edge of the green. Three earth-gouging putts and plop – it's in the hole.

The Estate Manager shudders as he surveys the green; minutes ago, snooker table smooth – it now resembles a lunar landscape.

Still a master of deception, Bruce's score-card reads; two shots down the fairway and one putt. A bogey!

He assumes the rest of mankind is like him, not totally honest and with a scarcity mentality.

Bruce sums up the human race as follows, "They dislike and will avoid work, cannot accept responsibility, are only motivated by money and have

little creativity except when getting around management rules.”

Harvey however, is a little more adventurous and understands that given the opportunity employees will direct themselves to an accepted target and can enjoy work in the right environment.

They want to be given responsibility and he finds the discipline people impose upon themselves is often more severe than that imposed upon them. (Look at any marathon runner).

Moreover, many are stimulated by a desire to attain their own potential and have abundant creativity and ingenuity. These folk are widely distributed but unfortunately grossly underused.

A Synopsis of Theory X and Theory Y by Douglas McGregor

Whatever you assume or believe as a leader will often turn out true; it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. If we have a negative attitude about our staff we are going to fail as competent leaders.

"Trust men and they will be true to you; treat them greatly and they will show themselves great."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Commentary:

As a leader, if you indicate to someone they are ‘limited’, they will tend to match up to your prediction. However, if you show that you have high regard for them (which might not always be justified by the facts), they will be inclined to rise to meet your expectations.

The only way to unshackle employees from their self imposed limitations is to arrange a challenge slightly above their ‘accepted’ capability - let it be known that you trust them implicitly to have a positive outcome; encourage, walk alongside, and watch them break boundaries.

Responsibility stretches ability!

Start small and recognise that the fear of failure is in excess of the actual ‘danger.’ The raging torrent of today becomes a fordable stream tomorrow. A challenge taking people out of their comfort zone will accelerate growth, break down the self imposed barriers of their minds and direct them on the path to further achievement. And they will enjoy the expedition!

Commentary published by Scott’s Teambuilding on 15th August 2008

People are apt to behave how they are treated. If we remember the theatrical production of 'My Fair Lady' we see the Pygmalion Effect in evidence. Professor Higgins teaches a flower girl how to speak perfect English and she moves from the standing of a street vendor to highly sophisticated female. He treated her like a lady, and she became one!

So if you as a leader expect favourable results from your team, handle and regard them from the outset as a winning entity. Treat others as you yourself would like to be treated.

SO HOW DO YOU MOTIVATE PEOPLE?

The first response to this would be "money!"

Historically, when faced with a morale problem in a company, the typical solution was an increase in salary, more fringe benefits and improved working conditions; but this simple solution did not work. Frederick Herzberg, a Professor of Psychology, conducted studies on what motivated people in the workplace and came up with two distinct 'factors' influencing the morale of workers.

Hygiene factors are those which provide short term approval, and which one expects to be in place in any organisation. If they are not evident acute dissatisfaction would result.

These characteristics include efficient company administration, supervision, relationships with other employees, salary, status, job security, working conditions and personal life.

Now if these are NOT at hand employees would exhibit great discontent. For example, if your salary is not paid you are going to be highly irritated. However if we receive our remuneration and all other benefits are in place, it is to be *expected* as part of our package. However it does not ELEVATE morale.

Money predominantly stimulates entrepreneurs and those on a commission basis but does not motivate others in the sense that they walk around each day saying, "I'm getting my salary at the end of this month, so I had better work a bit harder."

And now back to Maslow; their basic needs of an income are being fulfilled, so why exert extra effort?

“It is good to have money and the things that money can buy, but it's good too, to check up once in a while and make sure you haven't lost the things money can't buy.”

George Lorimer

The following is an extract from an article published in The Durban Sunday Tribune.

"The best way to get people to work harder, more productively and so make more money for a company is to offer them a varied range of incentives," says Peet Kruger, Senior Manager of Human Resource Services at PriceWaterhouse Coopers SA.

"Reward strategies have normally been isolated interventions, but it is crucial these be aligned with that of the overall business, and all elements of reward are used to drive the right behaviour. Direct financial rewards normally echo an employee's worth and played a critical role in attracting the right people, but have a short term motivational impact."

He concluded, "Research shows that employees were leaving companies because of a lack of recognition, limited learning and development opportunities or because of bad leadership."

Commentary:

Psychological Survival (recognition and growth) is a far more powerful force than financial reward and facilitates development of a greater sense of self worth and esteem.

To comprehend the motives and conduct of people, effective communication is vital. This invariably means empathic listening; not telling, dictating or starting off with preconceived ideas in line with previously misdirected perceptions.

Take time to recognise their needs and abilities. Then empower them to grow and develop. This leads to a cohesive, responsible and committed team of highly productive employees. This is good leadership.

“Fail to honour people and they will fail to honour you, but of a good leader, who talks little, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled they will all say "we did this ourselves."”

Lao Tzu

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding: 6th October 2003

Research and practical experience have shown other dynamics are responsible for greater motivation of people, producing quality and long lasting satisfaction.

Responsibility, achievement, recognition, advancement and job interest are included in Herzberg's **motivators**, the second factor in his motivational theory.

This, in a nutshell, really focuses on the....

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Atmosphere of Understanding

Firstly, as mentioned in the last chapter, create an **atmosphere of understanding** whereby we are aware of the diverse differences and needs within the team and there is open and honest communication.

As revealed previously, we find that many leaders, although aware of this extremely important issue, show this by the cosmetic movement of the ear towards employees, nodding wisely and saying, "Yes, I fully understand" - then shelve this information and do whatever they had planned to do in the first place anyway. This is exactly the mistake I made with Rich Smith in the Battle of Chibara Hills.

Employees need to be heard and understood. Spend quality time with your workforce. Take an avid interest in them, asking questions so you can appreciate where they're coming from. This sets the platform for growth and development.

Assuming the physiological and safety necessities have been met, the individual's greatest requirement now is acceptance and growth and here the leader should initially focus on the development of each team member. Training, coaching, mentoring and encouragement are the key factors in this stage.

Analyse each person's capabilities and delegate tasks at the top end of their capacity. Help them through any problems they might encounter - show them the way. Do not 'do' the job for them as they are learning. This only serves to frustrate and discourage the student, their learning is impeded, and the result is a half-trained employee. Patience. The rewards will come and when they do, employees feel elated with themselves. They are now more

willing to accept responsibility and grow.

Responsibility

“It is the paradox of life that the way to miss pleasure is to seek it first. The very first condition of lasting happiness is to find a purpose for your life and then take responsibility for getting there.”

Hugo L Black

Commentary

As kids, joy was abundant, but as we grow older many people tend to neglect this attitude and get immersed in the competition of life, losing that spontaneous, relaxed, fun outlook.

Give a child responsibility and they rise to the challenge. Feeling important at being chosen, they experience elation and an elevated self esteem. Furthermore at a young age this delegation starts to instil leadership qualities.

There is no difference with adults, just take them back to this mindset.

When delegates complain about lack of advancement in their work environment I suggest to them, “If someone doesn’t give you responsibility, it could well be you have never shown you can take it. Seize the initiative and reach up to the next level. Do something above your job description and you’ll start to fly.”

The more they do it, the better they become and the further they go forward – and this is the stepping stone to high morale, motivation and happiness in the team.

If you give people responsibility they are made to feel a valuable part of the squad, it stretches their competence and they give more of themselves to the task and the company.

Take Richard Branson as an example. He had immense trials but regarded them as a competition, rather like a school sports day as fun and a challenge.

He took responsibility for his direction, became accountable for his actions and reaped huge satisfaction from his achievements. Like a child, he was happy and enthusiastic in everything he did, and because of this advanced to become a household name in the world.

“The office of those in authority is not to confer happiness, but to give people the opportunity to work out happiness for themselves.”

Delegation

Increase the responsibility and use **delegation** to empower members and increase their chances for growth. I put this into practice on external military operations into Mozambique with gratifying results. Our objectives there, in very small groups, were to disrupt enemy activities. These included ambushing groups on their way to Rhodesia, carrying out reconnaissance missions, employing hit-and-run tactics and laying landmines.

[Family Holidays in Mozambique](#)

Allow me first to digress and paint a picture of for example, the Tete province in the NW of the country. The temperatures are in the 35^o centigrade range, savannah vegetation with minimal shade and the riverbeds are desert dry. Together with all the operational equipment needed (including landmines at 9 kilograms apiece) we could only carry enough water for a few days. Consequently, we had to find a bend in the river lines and continually dig for water. Excessive thirst was a major dilemma.

Being between 50-150 kilometres across the border, resupply by air only came once a week. Because the air drops were at night, this meant that the cargo chutes were often off track or released at too low an altitude; the result, shattered boxes of ruptured tins and leaking water containers spread over the dark countryside.

Besides the continual threat of ZANLA operating from 'safe' bases, there was continual harassment from FRELIMO and in my experience, besides some very isolated incidents, never seemed to operate in groups of less than thirty. Subsequently we were always outnumbered by about two to one, normally more.

Communications were a problem as well. We were too far over the border for the standard VHF (Very High Frequency) radios to work so had to resort to the long range TR48 High Frequency sets. These were big, heavy transmitters and more often than not had to set up aerials in the surrounding trees – not an easy task when on the run. The problem was compounded if we had casualties. First get a readable signal through to home base and then

evade or ambush enemy forces for a couple of hours whilst waiting for the helicopters to arrive.

So here we are in hostile territory, always thirsty, hungry and running; and a long way out of our quarter according to the United Nations. It fortunately never happened but had anyone of us been caught, torture and interrogation would have been the next step, followed by a showing on the newsreels of the world, and finally at best, left to languish in a Maputo prison or at worst execution. We all knew the risks; we were operating illegally in a foreign land with whom we were not officially at war, so there was no 'prisoner of war' status – it didn't do a whole lot for morale.

So with this situation as a backdrop, how do you motivate your troops?

One method which brought excellent results in raising morale was the delegation of authority to members of each call-sign.

On a daily basis, I would select one of the troopers per stick, and give him the responsibility for map reading, plans on our action if attacked, identification signals, positioning of ambushes and escape routes, encoding and decoding of intelligence radio messages and very importantly, liaison with his peers in coming up with the final plan.

All this required on-going 'in the field' training under real operational circumstances. If one of the members needed extra tuition, I would get one of the corporals or even troopers 'in the know' to give the lesson. The best way to learn is to teach!

Suddenly the focus moves from 'we are not in a good place,' to 'we can do something about this.' We are in control; we are the ones responsible. You are not relying on another party.

And then we add the entertainment – cooking competitions. Who could come up with the tastiest mix of the limited ration pack? My best was 'chopped ham au gratin mark 3' comprising one tin of ham and three tubes of cheese – it wasn't a winner. However, it got to the stage of before each deployment the guys would stock up with herbs, spices and all manner of ingredients. I was doing the routine check before uplift and smelt this pungent mix in Chalkie van Schalkwyk's pack. "What's in there Chalks?"

"Ishe, I can't tell you, it's my clandestine herb and curry mix and it's protected by the Top Secrets Act. But beware, when I've finished cooking,

I'm going to oust that ouk Gordon Bleu!"

Regard tackling a challenge as an 'adventure' rather than a daunting task. It is an attitude shift but will work to your advantage and keep you inspired. Make work fun; you are going to be there most of your life.

A word on the delegation of tasks and targets...

We received intelligence to the effect that a convoy of ZANLA vehicles carrying men, munitions and supplies was making its way from Barragem to a camp at Chicualacuala, a border village in the Gaza Province of Mozambique.

Elements of 1 Troop were dropped along the convoy route to the north-west of Mapai. We found an ambush site overlooking a dip in the road, set up and waited in eager anticipation. I say eager because ZANLA ration packs were supplied by all manner of agencies who sought the best for their heroes. One of the items provided, amongst other delicacies, were tins of creamy, smooth Swedish cheese. Our 'rat' packs too, had cheese. It was in a tube and resembled old wood glue. It stuck to the top of your mouth for days causing a speech impediment. Nevertheless, tinned Swedish cheese – now this was real class! And a consignment was coming up the road for re-distribution to the RLI. I was lying in wait, my mouth drooling like Pavlov's dog.

Come midnight and the sound of an engine; but not the convoy. It was an Air Force Lynx droning in from our west. As was the standard 'after hours' procedure, you would turn your radio on if you heard an aircraft. One of the Majors on the Brigade planning team came over the air, "Call-sign One One. You are to vacate your location and reposition to"

The gist of the message was that we were to move twenty kilometres to the north-west, link up with another call-sign at 05h00 and then before first light, attack a communications and tracking station manned by FRELIMO and Russians. The site in question was called the Troposcatter and was surrounded by a complex defensive trench system. They numbered about 50 and their weaponry included 12.7 and 23mm heavy machine guns as well as the infamous 'Stalin organ' – 122mm rocket launchers.

What a bonus!

Counting myself, I had twelve men; three machine guns, nine automatic rifles, an RPG-7 rocket launcher and a box of matches named Herbert. Not great odds.

Another prickly issue was that the Gaza Province, covered in thorn scrub and low trees, was also flatter than a tape worm on diet so there were no hills or other evident landmarks. Therefore, accurate map reading in the day was difficult – in pitch darkness it was nigh impossible. Just move two degrees off course over 20 kilometres and you'd end up in Ethiopia. Therefore, in the limited time available, there was as much possibility of locating the other call-sign as finding a Hottentot in Alaska.

In the still night air, an hour after we had withdrawn, we heard the rumble of trucks passing our recent ambush position.

At 03h00 we were skipping with unbounded glee towards the Kremlin when the Lynx reappeared. "Abort the operation."

Oh how disappointing, we get to live for another day.

The Major continues, "Get back to the road, word has it that the convoy is on the way."

I reply, "The convoy has passed."

Silence.

We rigged up a couple of booby traps on the track to irritate the returning drivers but there was no point in hanging around – the column was safely in Chicualacuala – together with our Swedish cheese.

Uplifted shortly thereafter back to Chiredzi, the Major greets me icily with, "How come you missed the convoy?"

I was incredulous. He obviously had a memory shorter than a pygmy's dork.

The lesson. The column was a difficult target. An attacking force should theoretically outnumber the defence by 3 to 1. We estimated that there would have been 40-50 defenders on those vehicles. We had a quarter of their strength. However, with the element of surprise and a well sighted ambush we were standing on good ground. Because of the odds, mentally we were revved up like Hot-Rods, and were not going to fail. Tough, but achievable.

The Troposcatter, however, was way out of sight.

Your normal 'patrol speed' was between 4-7 kilometres per hour. Not fast to the layman, but bear in mind you were carrying a pack of 30 kilograms, had to move cautiously with regular stops to observe the ground to your front and re-align your compass direction. To cover this kind of ground in the period available was pushing for an Olympic gold.

Further, the fact that there was no time for a recce of the target, no formal

attack plan, the formidable defensive network facing us, not to mention being outnumbered, was putting a huge dent in my normally enthusiastic quest for adventure.

In this case, go for the smaller prize. At least there is a greater chance of success. Having achieved this objective morale is uplifted; motivation is improved and becomes a stepping stone to greater success.

I've seen too many companies whereby management try and wring every drop of available juice from their employees to attain unrealistic targets. All they are achieving is the draining of their resources and de-motivating their people.

Moreover, another point from the example above, be decisive and do not vacillate; if you lack decision making ability, you lose both ground and the respect of your team - and in this case, the convoy.

Achievement

The leader must also know that achievement in terms of the common goal builds team identity – the psychological gaps close, barriers are broken down between people and morale escalates. People are cheerful in a successful team.

Take any sports final, whether it's Super Rugby or soccer. As the last whistle is blown, see the winning team's ecstasy. Being a centre you might not even be partial to the full-back, but this is all forgotten in victory – you celebrate with joy together.

Based on these accomplishments, in-house interface and team spirit expands. This scenario also affords a contented platform for the individual. It follows that the confidence now generated will ensure the team will more than likely succeed in future ventures. Success breeds success.

As an aside. We all seem to admire great athletes and marvel at their stamina. However I learnt that although I had a troop of 'average' athletic ability, when being outnumbered and hunted by hostile forces in Mozambique or Zambia, displayed an endurance which would outstrip the best sportsman. Give people the right motivation and they are all up there alongside the sponsored champions.

Recognition

“There are two things people want more than sex and money- recognition and praise.”

Mary Kay Ash

Commentary

Recognition is the tonic that keeps us going.

Take parents for example who are encouraging their baby to walk. When the child trips over the dog dish or topples into the fish pond they don't pronounce, “Oops....walking is not for you, my son, just keep crawling for the rest of your life.”

No, they pick the toddler up and say, “Well done, that was great, let's just try again. Go for it!”

And this acknowledgment for small achievements is actually what gets the child to walk. And so it is with adults, motivation still comes from getting recognition.

Charles Schwab said, “I consider my ability to arouse enthusiasm amongst people the greatest asset I possess. The best way to develop someone is by recognition and encouragement.”

As a leader you should seize every opportunity to motivate people by showing appreciation for their worth, services or input. Ensure everybody in the team, no matter how insignificant their contribution, gets recognition. This is the way to make them feel good about themselves and is the platform for their development.

Yes, I know it's their job, and they get paid for it.....but it does not cost us one cent of breath to say, “Thank you, well done.” And by these effortless gestures you are reaching into the very core of each individual. They appreciate you and your encouragement - it enhances morale and thereby productivity.

And further, pleasure also comes from providing others with encouragement and approval. Giving unto others is rewarding - it makes us feel good!

“Recognition is one of the most important needs people have. When you share with someone your appreciation and gratitude, they will not forget you. This investment will return to you many times.”

Steve Brunkhorst

So in concluding the Mozambique scenario:

We gave the team members **responsibility**, taking their minds off the disagreeable factors inherent in the environment.

We ensured that with a little bit of help, they all **achieved**.

We gave them **recognition**, which increased their motivation.

They retained **job interest** in that they were not merely following; they were leading. **Advancement** became evident as they were actively involved in decision making, enhancing their aptitude and commitment.

They became **competent** and **confident in** their ability resulting in the elevation of morale.

Also remember motivation doesn't last forever. It is an ongoing management activity that needs regular replenishment and is to be repeated and reinforced continually.

"People often say that motivation doesn't last. Well neither does washing – that's why we recommend it daily".

Zig Ziglar

The Value of a Good Assistant

The time came for Sergeant Stu Taylor to be posted out of the commando. He was my original mentor in practical warfare, bush-craft and the like. An excellent soldier with a 'rough and ready' attitude, he would be a hard act to follow.

Enter [Mervyn Bramwell](#), a lean Englishman who joined us at Rutenga, in the south east of the country. As we were introduced, I realised that he had no Rhodesian bush experience and I hoped my disappointment wouldn't show. However, lessons about my pre-judgement of Willy at Chibara Hills came to the fore so I gave him the benefit of the doubt.

A couple of hours later the Fire Force siren wailed. There had been a

sighting of insurgents to the east so 1 Troop were deployed by helicopter to intercept. As often happened, there was a lot of flying, circling and looking but this group had evaded us. It was coming up to last light and the pilots, understandably, were not keen to fly into unlit bush strips at night, so we recovered to Buffalo Range airfield at Chiredzi. Being thirsty after a long afternoon of searching, I repaired to the Air Force mess for a drink with my new Sergeant.

There was a Corporal behind the bar. Upon me asking Mervyn what he would like to drink, he settled for a triple cane and orange. On being duly presented with a triple cane, orange, ice and water Bramwell stiffened and spat out, "Corporal, I distinctly recall my Officer ordering me a triple cane and orange. I do not recall him asking for ***** ICE AND WATER!"

And for the rest of his time, this is how Mervyn Bramwell did things - short, sharp, quick and concentrated. An excellent operator, he rapidly learnt local bush-craft and fighting techniques. (Cool, almost nonchalant under pressure, he personally accounted for over 20 guerrillas in his first 40 contacts earning a Military Forces Commendation). Very conscientious and with a great concern for the welfare of the troops, he always kept me fully informed on all aspects of the call-sign. Anything I delegated to him was done to the absolute maximum of his ability. There were some decisions I made which he didn't like, yet he always stood firm in endorsement.

Like Stu Taylor, he was a great motivational force to me as well as to the others. As a leader you need a character like this to bolster support.

And he had a dry humour to match. On long deployments into Mozambique, whilst resting up we used to play a word game rather like a crossword. Mervyn would come up with the most dubious spelling. When I objected his reply would be as follows, "With all due respect Sir .." (when an NCO says this to an Officer, you are about to get a legal rebuking)..... "I am British and we invented the English language. When I say G A W Y is a word, it IS a word. It could be Welsh, but it definitely IS a ***** word!"

I resigned myself to the fact that Bramwell was a cheat.

"Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a beautiful and well preserved body, but rather an invitation to skid in sideways, thoroughly used, totally worn out and loudly proclaiming.... "Hey! What a trip that was!"

Unknown

Commentary

The difference between a rut and a grave is only the depth.

So many of us short-circuit our living by choosing the path which is most comfortable. Our world is abundant with opportunity, yet far too many people approach life with a scarcity mentality ... a teaspoon as opposed to a front-end loader. They expect little - as a result, get little - and settle for less.

Many spend their time dreaming of 'what could be' or as a defence mechanism, criticising other successes in the daily gossip menagerie - but the real problem, **fear**, paralyses the potential of the faint hearted. And I don't use the term 'faint hearted' in a derogatory manner - I have seen those especially during my military career, given the right motivation and circumstances, rise above Alexander the Great - it is just a case of (especially as a leader) providing the catalyst or opportunity to unlock this potential, followed by that very important encouragement and guidance to see them through.

Enjoy your job and live life; make your choice. Take the first tentative step (we all watch our kids do it). The more you do each day (no matter how small), the further you grow and feel capable of doing that which before was 'impossible' - and the more satisfaction life gives. Do this and the route will be stacked with opportunities and the view breathtaking.

"There is such a thing as psychological suicide in which one does not take his own life by a given act, but dies because he has chosen - perhaps without being entirely aware of it - not to live."

Rollo May - Man's Search for Himself

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding: 10th June 2006

8. KEEPING THE TEAM ON TRACK

“.....it is difficult to describe the heightened sense of collective awareness experienced when in action with a highly motivated, skilful team - almost like a pride of lions on a hunt; you just seem to know exactly what the others are thinking and anticipating.

You don't need to talk to one other; everything flows naturally.

It is truly a unique psychology.”

Lt Simon Willar from RLI: Africa's Commandos

WHY DO WE FORM TEAMS?

*To achieve the organisational mission. “Many hands make light work.” This is the principle around which we form teams. Amongst others, they provide a support structure for the undertaking in the following ways:

* To investigate different points of view. To harness the intellectual (and sometimes physical) resources of the team.

And please note; One of the most under-utilised resources we have is the creative capabilities of our own staff. We tend to seek external guidance before consulting with those under the same roof as us.

*To utilise the talents of different specialists within the group for specific tasks on the way to our final objective.

*To delegate responsibilities to members, leaving the leader free to focus on the vision.

*As a support mechanism - psychological and physical. People feel more secure within the embrace of a team. It also improves social relationships.

*Ensuring maintenance of momentum during the process until the successful completion of the assignment.

"Organisation doesn't really accomplish anything. Plans don't bring about

anything either. Theories of management don't matter much. Endeavours succeed or fail because of the people involved. Only by attracting the best individuals will you accomplish great deeds."

In a brain based economy, your best assets are people. We've heard this expression so frequently it's become clichéd. But how many leaders really 'walk the talk' with this stuff?

Too often, people are assumed to be empty chess pieces to be moved around by grand viziers, which may explain why so many top managers immerse their time in deal making, restructuring and the latest management fad.

How many submerge themselves in the goal of creating an environment where the best, the brightest, the most creative are attracted, retained and most importantly, unleashed?

General Colin Powell from a Leadership Primer

STAGES OF TEAM DEVELOPMENT

At the outset there are many models on team development and leadership styles, which seemingly become more complex as each new theory evolves. This is fine for consultants who are brought in to analyse organisational shortfalls but I don't see the average manager walking around the shop ascertaining whether we are in Sheard & Kakabadse's 'storming to norming stage' or are we in the 'norming to performing' leg?

So let's keep it short and practical with four simple phases.

Initiation (Exploration)

First of all let us imagine an individual joining a team for the first time. He or she is anxious and will be asking **questions** such as ...

Where do I fit in?

What are my responsibilities?

What is expected of me?

How will I be needed?

How well am I performing?

Who are the other members and what are their capabilities?

There is a need **to secure and establish** oneself. The leader has presented us with our assignment and duties. We now enquire of other team members and make an effort to form relationships with the 'safe' personalities.

We go further and explore the structure and routines in place. We investigate the task and procedures for accomplishment. There is generally a positive attitude with lofty expectations, and morale is fairly high.

Dissatisfaction (Testing)

It's time to take off on the mission and as the butterfly tries to free herself from the cocoon, inconsistency is perceptible between hopes and reality.

Problems arise with no clear solutions. Frustration is creeping in about tasks and action plans. Disagreement is evident; everyone is doing their own thing and there is no unity. No-one is listening. We find contradiction and a negative reaction to other members.

The authority of the leader is tested as you compete for power and attention.

Resolution

In this phase the leader accepts the differences and encourages participation. The focus now is to assist the team and to negate the problems.

Start with resolving the discrepancy between expectations and reality. Connect with, and encourage the team to concentrate on the vision. Implicate all members in the planning and be swift to celebrate achievements, no matter how small.

These accomplishments build harmony, trust, respect and support. Self esteem and confidence within the team is the result. There is now open co-operation, shared responsibility and the development of a 'team language.'

Production

The final chapter is characterised by continuing success as the team grows together.

There is a feeling of **growth** and excitement in participating in team activities. You are working **together** and feeling team strengths. You have **confidence** in accomplishing tasks and feel **positive** about success. Winning becomes expected - the presumed outcome.

You take **responsibility** as individual strengths emerge and start **sharing** leadership as your ship forges ahead.

THE DYNAMICS OF AN EFFECTIVE TEAM

Team Needs

A team can be compared to an individual in that each is unique and has their own 'personality.' However, there are also common requirements.

Achieve the Common Task

There must be an unrelenting desire to achieve the common task. This is the reason the group comes together. Can you imagine playing soccer with no goalposts? Teams would endeavour to keep possession of the ball, but what satisfaction would transpire at the end of the 90 minutes?

A team will not be held together unless there is a common purpose.

A task is like this football match. There is a need to score goals which provides the inspiration and sense of achievement so imperative to success.

Respecting and Appreciating Differences within people.

Value diversity and be aware there are a number of routes to a successful culmination. Investigate fully, through different ideas from the team the most effective strategy or tactics. (See Chapter 6)

Successful **Communication and Listening** results in **Synergy**.

(See Chapter 6)

The Ability to Manage Conflict

Whenever people are gathered together in the workplace there will be personality clashes, disagreements, misunderstanding and conflict.

Do not ignore! Deal with this immediately and nip it in the bud before the little abrasion becomes a gaping wound.

Too Little, Too Late...

There was an occasion when one of my troopers was having an altercation with another on underlying differences of opinion.

I stepped in like a hippo charging back to his pool and tore a strip off the trooper. It was a totally high handed and unnecessary approach. I hadn't even found out the real cause of the dispute and was just using my rank to suppress a subordinate's argument. Later that evening, I reflected and certainly wasn't happy with the way I had handled the situation. I would rectify the problem the next day.

Early the following morning, the siren howled. Rushing to the briefing, we were informed of a sighting of insurgents. We donned parachutes, flew into the area and jumped in.

It was destined to be one of those days when nothing goes right. The ground was very hilly and vegetation extremely thick. I was just about to climb up a cliff onto a rocky ledge when Bernie Schooling, my machine gunner, silently indicated that there was a rebel aiming at the point where my head would pop over the rise. Because of the cramped situation on the side of the rock-face, Bernie couldn't bring his gun to bear. No problem, I am going to resolve the dilemma with a trusty M962 grenade. My handful of high explosive flies over and a thumping detonation indicates the demise of one ZANLA dissident. I barrel over the lip of the ledge and in the clearing smoke look for the casualty. Nothing! There were signs. A water-bottle, a couple of loose 7.62mm AK rounds, a discarded jacket, and the hasty tracks of a man scampering away. Surrounded mostly by rock faces, the only place he could have escaped was to take a jump over a ten metre cliff. He wasn't sprawled at the bottom either, so I presume a generous quantity of adrenaline assisted his departure.

Gun-fire abruptly reverberates through the valley. Seconds later I get a call from one of my corporals. "Get down here fast!" Arriving at the scene there lay the trooper from the night before, three rounds having carved open his stomach. I started patching him up but with the severity of his wounds suspected this was going to be a lost cause. I tried to lessen the pain by administering morphine but by this time his eyes were already glazing. Before I withdrew the needle he was dead.

Too late to rectify the dispute or say sorry now.

Sure, this example is extreme, but it played with my mind for many years. Problems of any description just don't go away. And the more you wait the more tension you build up in yourself and the bigger the dilemma becomes. Do it now!

Establish the origin of the dispute, whether it be conflicting work styles or goals, different perceptions, animosity or hidden agendas.

Acknowledge the quandary, understand the predicament and consent to communicate. Clarify the position, look at the problem from both sides, reach agreement and resolve.

On the positive side, conflict can be constructive since it can drive differing parties to learn from one another, generate diverse ideas and **accept change**. This leads to a healthy and innovative team environment.

"Change, not habit, is what gets most of us down; habit is the stabiliser of human society, change accounts for our progress."

William Feather

Commentary

Colin Powell stated that too often change is stifled by people who cling to familiar territory and job descriptions. One reason why even large organisations wither is because managers will not challenge old, comfortable routines.

However, good leaders understand in the current economy that every one of our jobs could become obsolete.

Effective leaders help create a climate whereby people's worth is determined by their willingness to learn new skills and grab new responsibilities, thus perpetually re-inventing their jobs.

These days' changes come fast, and stop assuming something which has never been done before cannot be done at all. Accept there is a better way of doing everything - and persist in finding this way, before someone else does!

"The most effective way to cope with change is to help create it."

L.W. Lynett

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding: 13th February 2008

Co-ordination

There must be clarity on responsibilities and contributions. The talents, loads and functions ought to be balanced – share the tasks equally amongst team members.

Situations will arise where a couple of individuals have skills which others

don't and you might find there is a disproportionate load on them. If they need help on the 'simpler' aspects of their assignment, offer to assist. If they decline, that's fine; at least the team has shown they are willing to help and negates any feelings they might find for 'non participation.' Psychologically, as long as you are 'there to lend a helping hand,' they feel the support.

However, if possible, the first prize is an opportunity for extra schooling of the 'unskilled' members in these more specialised projects. Training and mentoring equals growth and the outcome is an increase in proficiencies, self confidence and production.

Taking Responsibility and Being Accountable

Standing up to and accepting the task, both within the group and individual sphere, spawning a willingness to help each other. The focus is solely on the objective; the desire and the will to overcome all the inherent problems and see the project through to a successful completion.

Efficient Planning, decision making and problem solving.

Describe the problem, brainstorm the various options, analyse the alternatives, choose the most appropriate solution and action the resolution. This is covered in greater detail later.

Open to Learning, appraisal and review.

This leads to empowered members who gain satisfaction from working together and to their full potential. There is **unity** and a confidence in success.

THE LEADER'S ROLE

Team Maintenance

It is the leader's duty to facilitate the upkeep of the group.

To ensure continued unity there is an ongoing requirement for team maintenance. Players are threatened if there is no cohesion, so it is essential to maintain and reinforce good relationships and growth within the team.

To this end the Head must be the facilitator, mentor, trainer and coach but in this context the two very important functions are those of discipline and

encouragement.

Maintain Discipline

To ensure that everybody pulls their weight and participates equally, uphold discipline.

Everybody has a little ‘rebel’ inside and it is human nature to try shortcuts and the ‘easier’ path.

And by the way, there is nothing fundamentally wrong with trying to find shortcuts. There would be no inventions if people were not constantly seeking an easier way - the wheel, combustion engine, telephone, personal computers to name a few.

“Always employ a lazy person; they will look for shortcuts that will save you time and money. Encourage laziness!”

The statement above is the only input I got for this book from my business associate, Colin – in legal terms they would call him a sleeping partner.

Now let’s get back to reality.

What I’m talking about here is neglecting essential procedures in an endeavour to make life easier for yourself at the expense of the team or task.

Often we find those with a ‘devil may care’ or a ‘chip on the shoulder’ attitude. Then there are those who gossip and malign other team members. Jealousy within the group is another team buster. A lack of discipline causes dissension and also encourages others to follow suit.

As leaders, set the boundaries and take decisive, swift action when those parameters have been breached. Ensure you have an intimate working knowledge of the disciplinary procedures allowed by law and then apply them without hesitation. Where there are no consequences for bad conduct or performance, people will not be held accountable and as a result, will not change.

It is not only those with a poor attitude who need discipline; over-eager staff may also cross over the line occasionally in an attempt to ‘triumph’ prematurely.

Preserve Your Vigilance

During a particular fire fight, one of my new troopers kept moving out of position as we crept forward. In his impatience, he ventured too far forward,

leaving himself exposed. Seconds later he was shredded by a rebel RPD machine gun. He had just turned eighteen.

Keep discipline and a rein on subordinates.

Lesson learnt; be on the alert at all times for any transgressions or irregularities.

Postscript: This trooper was from the Cape in South Africa. He apparently had never told his parents he was going to join the RLI 'up North.' When informed of his death they were convinced there was a mistake in identity. According to them, he was working on the mines in Johannesburg.

Psychologically people are a lot more at ease in a disciplined environment. They know where they stand and there is security in order.

If you are disciplined, your mind is centred on the task; there is no room for vacillation.

“No life ever grows great until it is focused, dedicated and disciplined.”

Harry Emerson Fosdick

Keep the Vision in Sight

Leaders must never let their team lose sight of the **vision**.

Keep encouraging members to come up with more innovative ways of achieving the desired goal.

Sit down with the group and clarify where you are right now and then formulate the target. Make this a little above their own expectations but still attainable. This establishes that 'creative tension,' a situation whereby you are under pressure to perform.

People become more productive when having to overcome adversity and achieve. Threats become opportunities; they become more alert, rise to the challenge and escalate expectations.

The result is the team is inspired and exerts extra effort – they are in control of the process and take pride in ownership.

And on this subject, don't just accept any strategy passed on down the line.....

Allow the Team to Question the Approach if they are not totally

comfortable with the plan.

The Raid on Securanca

Operation Mardon was a series of cross border raids culminating with a strike on Securanca Camp, a FRELIMO and ZANLA base situated on the north bank of the Luia River about twenty kilometres inside Mozambique. The plan was to walk in on the evening of 30th October 1976, be in position at 03h00 and commence the attack at 05h00 the following morning.

We had done many 'external' attacks on enemy camps, but the deployment mode had always been via helicopter or parachute. This was a 'walk in' model and unfortunately hadn't anticipated the problems which were about to present themselves.

The Commando left our staging post a few kilometres inside Rhodesia at last light, crossed over the border and walked and walked and walked. There are no prominent landmarks in this area of Mozambique so map reading, especially at night, was a very difficult proposition. Needless to say we strayed off the intended route and lost valuable time finding our correct position.

Furthermore, October is known as 'suicide month' – the heat is particularly oppressive, even during the night. Besides our normal operational equipment, each of us was also tasked to carry the extra weight of four 81mm bombs for the mortar team who would initiate the attack. Together with the fact we took a lot longer to reach our objective, de-hydration and exhaustion started to set in. Most men had finished their meagre water supply of two litres long before midnight. I was probably more fortunate than the rest because in addition to the normal issue water bottles, also carried a two litre 'commercial' bottle, which besides the extra weight was a very worthwhile acquisition.

04h00 then 05h00 passed and we still had not arrived at our attack line. I remember passing my mortar bombs to the renowned Dutch de Klerk from Support Commando Mortar Team at 05h30 as we closed in on the target. I had never met him before and just recall this huge moustache and gleaming white teeth packing the ordnance into a neat pile next to the tubes. I don't know where his body was – just moustache and teeth.

Exhausted and absolutely parched we continued for the next few hundred metres to the southern bank of the Luia River. The next trick was to sneak

over the river undetected. Ian Macfarlane with 2 Troop led the way. I followed down a path with sandbanks on either side.

Suddenly a shattering blast in my right ear. I turned to glimpse the muzzle flashes of a Gurynov machine gun arcing towards my head at point blank range. I could see the eyes of the gunner. I felt the intense pressure of the first couple of rounds skimming my forehead. There was absolutely nothing I could do. The weapon is firing at nine rounds per second, my rifle at hip height facing forward and the side of the sandbank is obstructing movement. This is the END! In a 10th of a second the next round in the belt is going to demolish my brain. That's it. I prayed very quickly. The sheer force of the muzzle velocity knocked me off balance. Then SILENCE. The gun had stopped!

The Gurynov had *jammed* after those three rounds! The gunner bolted, followed by a 28R rifle grenade fired by Gary Huxham. It didn't hit him but certainly caused lubrication in his underwear.

Other weaponry blasted Macfarlane from the northern bank, but he and his call-sign had made it without casualty. Now it was our turn. I will never forget the sprint across the river under fire – desperate to avoid yet another nightmare like the one I had just stumbled upon.

Six hours of conflict followed, slowly clearing every defensive position. Men literally dropped from dehydration and exhaustion. Grahame Fanner suffered a shot in the stomach. According to the medics it was as much the weakening effect of dehydration as the wound which finally caused his death. Midday and it was all over. We awaited our support trucks and re-supply, and then collapsed into a fitful sleep before we continued.

Although we had captured vast supplies of ammunition and weaponry, the kill rate had been lower than expected and we did not really achieve our goal of eliminating the 150 combatants in the camp.

However, the real lessons took us back to our original preparation phase.

In the past within the RLI, there had been two kinds of external operations. The first; a clandestine, prolonged manoeuvre with a small force involved in reconnaissance, ambushing enemy targets and laying landmines. We had the experience of operating for weeks 'behind enemy lines.' In this situation we had learnt to 'pace' ourselves; the distance travelled per day, the quantity of water to be carried and the amount of ordnance we could handle.

An extended period was spent on reconnaissance so we also knew our area.

The second tactic was a surprise attack on a dissident camp by a large force of (normally) airborne troops.

Nevertheless, for this particular operation, the proposal was concluded by those 'higher up' in the corridors of Army HQ and they seem to have forgotten the rules of engagement.

Always beware of those who make a detailed plan with a large scale map. Two short centimetres on a 1:250000 map is actually five long kilometres through dense bush on the ground.

The distance to be travelled in the time given was extreme to say the least. Further, there was no allowance for deviation, error or unforeseen circumstances. We were not familiar with the terrain, loaded with excessive ordnance and our water supply was rationed to about half of the prescribed level.

As was the custom in the military at this time – our charge was to receive and pass orders on – we were not expected to, nor did we allow people to question, the validity or sense of any decision made at 'superior' level.

And therein lay the problem. My misgivings were confirmed when I conducted the official briefing to my troops. There was an uneasy silence as they questioned me with their eyes. Not a word said – just acceptance of folly.

"I have just spent the day at Army HQ. Listening to some of those people, I now realise why we lost this war. The only thing that confuses me, is why it took so long?"

Lt. Simon Carpenter, 1980

When planning the unfamiliar (or out of the ordinary) focus on what is going to be different. To get the maximum value, the full realisation of resources, involve the team in discussion. Listen to your personnel, note their concerns and take advantage of their experience in different situations.

Pat Armstrong was the first military commander I know who used this approach to great effect. Far better plans were made in half the time; the operators now took ownership and by doing so, enhanced their commitment.

Securanca – Postscript:

Some months later, Ian Macfarlane was posted to 3 Brigade as an Intelligence Officer. During his stage there the same gunner who had burst my ear drums was captured and on interrogation, told Macfarlane the FRELIMO and ZANLA forces knew the Rhodesian raiding party was coming in. Apparently we had a double agent in our Central Intelligence Organisation and the message about the attack had gone to London and then back to FRELIMO. This would also explain why there was only a skeleton care-taking element at the camp, and not the strength we expected.

Tim Bax in his book ‘Three Sips of Gin’ has a lot more to say on the subject of leaking information. Be aware of those in your own organisation whose politics and other agendas tend to cloud decisions.

Look down but also look up. Be alert to any eventuality.

Accept Criticism

Accept the fact that sometimes you are going to get criticised.

Do not allow this to sway decisions you deem correct.

“Everybody wants to judge the boss, but no-one has his responsibility.”

Joyce Meyers

General Colin Powell maintained, “Good leadership involves responsibility for the welfare of the group, which means some people will get angry at your actions and decisions. It’s inevitable, if you’re honourable.

Trying to get everyone to like you is a sign of mediocrity; you will avoid the tough decisions, you’ll avoid confronting those who need to be confronted and you will avoid offering differential rewards based on differential performance because some people might get upset.

Ironically, by procrastinating on the difficult choices, by trying not to get anyone mad, and by treating everyone equally ‘nicely’ regardless of their contributions, you will simply ensure the only people you wind up angering are the most creative and productive in the organisation.”

“There is one way to avoid criticism. Never do anything, never amount to anything. Never get your head above the crowd so the jealous will notice and attack you. Criticism is a sign that your personality has some force.”

Norman Vincent Peale

Commentary

As soon as we break boundaries to effect positive change, criticism will be unleashed.

Fear of change and moving out of their comfort zone inhibits people in that they would rather endure painful situations than move away from them. Fear stops us from experiencing growth and keeps us from changes which could well re-invigorate and energise us into a more productive state of mind.

Franklin Roosevelt once said, "There is nothing to fear except fear itself", and once having accepted this, ask yourself (or your staff) the question, "What is the worst that could happen if we action these changes and move ahead?"

Yes, static people are going to criticise and ridicule; learn to take it - it's part of the game. Yet the up-side is, even if you make mistakes as you move forward, at least you have had the character to try; you will learn and grow from your mistakes and in a short time, progress above your critics.

"The moment you step forward you'll attract attention, and not always the kind you want. Learn from the duck. She stays calm on the surface, keeps paddling underneath, and lets the water run off her back. We know that failure is an inevitable part of success and always brings criticism. But while others fear stepping out into a new opportunity, the winner fears missing out on it".

Unknown

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding: 30th August 2007

Break Routine

Do things differently. When I was in the corporate sector I used to have regular informal briefings and feedback sessions with my staff. On Fridays, we used to go to a cafeteria around the corner and have our meeting there – a different atmosphere in a relaxed and ‘out of the office’ environment. It was a refreshing break and we achieved more at this meeting than any other during the week.

Team-Building Outings

Still on the subject of diverse ‘out of the workplace’ activities, arrange teambuilding outings. Ensure you interview your potential supplier and get a handle on the character of the facilitator. Just because they have an MBA in

the subject does not mean they have any experience in, or can teach leadership or teambuilding. The same applies if your tutor happens to be an Olympic paddler or extreme sports competitor.

Team builders need to know the **principles of instruction** and have an outstanding track record in actually leading people.

Generally leadership and teambuilding companies are broken down into two main types; those supplying intellectual classroom tuition with insignificant practical application or those involved in outdoor activities with little or no theoretical input.

In my experience, there does not appear to be a lot of common ground between them.

I believe you should combine **both intellectual and outdoor** practical experiences in any course to gain maximum benefit.

The value of this is that theory is presented in a pleasurable, relaxed open-air setting. Staff are receptive to new ideas which are not as conducive in the office atmosphere - there is a creative shift and a stimulating hands-on approach to individual development, leadership and teambuilding.

Delegates are put through a series of adventures focused on self management and their ability to lead others - teaching the theory and then putting them into challenging situations where they can put it into practice. Positive vivid experiences build people's own self image and self esteem. What a person thinks of oneself has a great influence on how far they go in achieving personal goals.

Some will not do all the activities, but they are still given support tasks and made to feel part of the team. A comment in my introduction is, "Many people have reached the top but no-one, as far as I know, has made it without the backing and encouragement of other people."

Many find their greatest achievement is in helping others, in reaching out and giving assistance – this is a gift; an extremely valuable asset and service in the workplace.

Giving team members a duty which looks daunting and nearly impossible but after considerable mental effort and sweat can be performed inspires confidence and the feeling of success. This is now translated into more assurance, cohesion and co-operation in their daily lives.

Reviews:

At the completion of every activity, reviews must be done, the objective

being to scrutinise the actions of the teams and by so doing reinforce, gain insight and learn from practical experience the lessons in question.

We find that most of life's challenges are tough only in our imaginations and when we face and overcome them, we often discover they were smaller than anticipated and we are bigger and better than we really think we are.

Benefits to the organisation:

Firstly, management can observe staff and gain vast insight into their characters and how far they will dig into themselves to overcome problem areas - a very useful exercise in evaluation of members for future tasks.

Secondly, it shows people how easy it is to prevail over and achieve the 'impossible' and this will reflect in the workplace; helping to get the most out of employees.

Thirdly, having completed the course, staff feel they have been given recognition by the organisation – management has taken them out of their comfort zone and shown them what they can do. There is renewed pride in the organisation. Personnel have the confidence to accept challenges, and when you have a team who accept these trials and use their initiative, there is no limit to their potential and that of the company.

Further, it is viewed as a reward, an enjoyable and exciting outing –an excursion which states:

“I have done it, I can do it!”

“I learned early that the richness of life is adventure. This calls on all faculties of mind and spirit. It develops self-reliance and independence. Life then teems with excitement. But man is not ready for adventure unless he is rid of fear. For fear confines him and limits his scope. He stays tethered by strings of doubt and indecision and has only a small narrow world to explore.”

William O. Douglas

Commentary:

Do certain people avoid difficult or frightening situations?

This classic strategy for negating fear is ensuring that they stay exactly where they are; even if the situation is painful or stressful. So, they hesitate to advance themselves in the workplace, they turn down challenging opportunities or even fun events, resorting to excuses or the old adage; "It's

just not me" or even worse..... "It's not my job." Yet anxiety is always lurking in the recesses of their lives. It stops them from taking on any extra responsibility. Their world is narrowing into their security zone.

So where to now?

The only way to rid themselves of fear is to set an assignment, visualise a positive outcome, take a deep breath and do it!

A challenge which takes you out of your comfort zone, will accelerate your growth, break down the barriers of your mind and direct you on the path to further achievement.

"Inaction breeds doubt and fear. Action breeds confidence and courage. If you want to conquer fear, do not sit and think about it. Go out and get busy"

Dale Carnegie

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding: 17th June 2003

The Condition of Your Team

Be aware of the state of mind of your staff. Look for signs of intense stress, over-work and burn-out.

Fire Force

Fire Force was a concept whereby, upon the detection of an enemy group, the operators were deployed by helicopter or parachute to the sighting. If there were four helicopters, 16 men would deploy as 'first wave' whilst the paratroopers were kitting up and then the 'choppers' would return for the second wave.

Obviously if you were in the first wave you would get into the action first. The night before, a list would go up in the Operations Room indicating the Troops on each wave. It was not uncommon for the Troop Commanders, if they were positioned on one of the later waves, to sneak out at night and change their Troops to first wave. Such was our enthusiasm to get into the contact first!

On another occasion, I was on patrol in the SE of the country. Mick Walters and Neill Storey were on fire-force duty at Rutenga. A call-sign in the field had a sighting of ZANLA dissidents and the helicopters deployed. I was twenty kilometres to the north but could hear the conflict on the radio.

There was a Territorial camp five kilometres to my south and our commander was planning to uplift some of these troops to plug any holes in our sweep-line. The action neurons in my brain began to short-circuit in envy, and hatching some evil plot, I ran my stick the full distance to the outskirts of this base.

As a helicopter was about to pick up one of their call-signs, I re-directed the pilot (or maybe the word hi-jacked would be more appropriate) to a landing zone close to me, and was uplifted to the contact. Unbeknown to the helicopter crew, they had picked up the wrong people, but at least we were going to get into the mêlée.

Gradually however, things changed.

Walking On Broken Glass

At a show in Gatooma, someone popped an empty chip packet in the vicinity of a couple of operators. Gary O'Driscoll convulsed as if he had been thrown across a high-voltage electric cable, collapsed, rolled and took cover under a table – all in the space of half a second. Gary had been an old soldier and this incident is imprinted on my mind. Outwardly calm, as a show for the boys, but inwardly a totally uncontrollable tussle of tattered, bleeding nerves.

It was an indication of how a lot of us felt. Seven weeks out and only ten days back for R&R - month after month after month, contact after contact. The range of the average clash in thick bush was between three and twenty metres, so mini-seconds count and there was no room for error. Also, no amount of training prepares you for the devastating noise of battle; hundreds of ear-shrivelling detonations at close quarters in rapid succession. Your head spins as you desperately cling to maintain command and control.

This starts playing with your mind.

Read 'Fire Force' by Chris Cocks and you'll get more insight into the mind of a soldier under stress. It was only a matter of time before that fatal bullet was going to find you.

Sadly, some months later, one did find Gary O'Driscoll.

Stress

Stress places an excess demand upon our mental energy and is a bodily response to events threatening or upsetting the stability in our lives. It is an

utter lifesaver when activating your adrenaline to catapult you up the tree when that rhino charges, but the problem arises when faced with the psychological threats.

Stress is triggered by any negative major life event, problems involving strain, conflict and illness. These symptoms encompass mental, emotional, behavioural and physical manifestations.

Anxiety, irritability, depression, sleep problems, aching body parts and poor judgement are only a few.

Our reaction is called the stress response – fight or flight?

The body's resources are activated to resist the threat; confront the problem and deal with it (fight). Conversely, flight is simply to put off any action, ignore the problem and hope it will disappear.

However, when we notice the menace is persistent or beyond our control our ability to cope decreases and the stress response has a negative impact on our health and wellbeing.

Our reaction is the secret. 'What you think, you become.'

Identify what causes your stress. Look at the **physical** aspects such as nutrition, exercise and sleep. It often requires **behavioural changes** and a shift in **attitude**; taking responsibility for your thoughts, emotions and behaviour and the way in which you **solve** problems and turn them into opportunities (or neutralise them entirely). **Action** allows you to feel more in control – at least you are doing something about it. Your mind is concentrated on the task and not on your stress. Whatever you accomplish makes you feel better. Learn to **manage conflicts**. Learn to say "no" and **give time for yourself** and family; hobbies and other interests are very important. Think of leisure periods as maintenance. Build on other relationships. Be around people with humour. LAUGHTER is a wonderful relaxant!

On the positive side, stress provides 'creative tension' offering us the impetus to achieve.

We all need stress to improve our performance and motivate us to go forward in life. It's only when we have too much that the problems manifest themselves.

[Stand To The Door!](#)

This was the command delivered by the dispatcher to paratroopers before stepping out of the open door and hurtling into the uncertain situation ahead of

you.

‘Operational descents’ were parachute deployments into a contact and the psychological effect was dramatic.

We used to jump from 500 feet and for 19 seconds were totally exposed to enemy gunfire – you could hear that awful series of ear-rupturing cracks as the rounds flicked by. You tried to shrink into your body like a tortoise disappearing into its shell. There was nothing you could do to protect yourself against the whiplash of fire. Your rifle strapped inaccessibly at your side, we carried 9mm hand-guns but against AK automatic rifles, a can of aerosol deodorant would have had the same effect.

You were desperately trying to manoeuvre yourself away from the source of the gun smoke below – the last thing you wanted to do was land in the centre of the rebel’s position. At the same time there was a struggle to avoid your colleagues in the vicinity so the parachutes would not foul together.

‘Ground rush’ - the feeling of intense speed comes in at fifty feet; you brace yourself, frantically trying to steer away from the trees and rocks, and finally crunch and roll.

On landing, you are still encumbered with your parachute gear. It takes precious seconds to free yourself and then you still have to pull in and secure your billowing ‘chute. Your troops are in the same position and still dispersed, so if you happen to land close to the insurgents you are in a very precarious position.

We counted 17 bullet holes in [Neill Storey](#)’s parachute after one particular jump. Others weren’t so lucky - I remember on one raid into Southern Mozambique seeing an operator, still in his harness, hanging lifeless in a tree.

The French, according to their policy, would only allow their troops to do one operational jump a week. I recall on one occasion we did three in a single day.

In the 2nd World War, parachute deployments were normally only done on massive operations like Overlord and Arnhem, so it is unlikely that any individual operator did more than 10 at the most. Compare this with Neill Storey (34), [Mick Walters](#) (69) and [Des Archer](#) who holds the world record at 73.

Those are big numbers, and bear in mind they don’t include the contacts where they were deployed by helicopter or on normal ground patrols. Small wonder troops succumbed to intense mental and physical stress.

We were inclined to utilise the good operators first to maximise results. All you are doing is killing the ‘golden goose.’ The same at Forbes. We had a number of very loyal, conscientious workers who tended to take on a lot more than they could handle.

Give them a break and spread the weight. Be vigilant. Monitor the work load and give the less experienced people an opportunity also to grow. Let the ‘old operators’ train the new.

Further, you might not be able to control the influx of work, but at least you can try and improve the conditions or forgo a few formalities.

Percy the Puff Adder

When creeping around on a recce patrol you kept a very tight rein on the call-sign. There was no talking whatsoever for weeks on end - only whispering and sign language.

On one particular sojourn in Zambia when we were all fairly tense, I encountered a large hissing Puff Adder on our path. Ed Dwinger was my machine gunner and an obsessive snake catcher. Neglecting formalities, I indicated to Ed – “go get him!” Off he bounded like a flea on a monkey and returned joyfully clutching one extremely poisonous and highly irate reptile. Bonding with the aforesaid twin fanged new pet, he named the snake Percy and it certainly served to raise my gunner’s morale. I have no clue as to where he kept it – didn’t really want to know either; from then on I didn’t sleep anywhere near him.

Again, when on deep penetration external operations, although strictly forbidden, we would tune in our TR48 high frequency wireless to Radio Rhodesia and let one trooper at a time strap on the headphones and listen to a song on the Lyon’s Maid Hits of the Week.

Little deviations can help morale.

9. THE COURSE OF ACTION

The Dirty Tricks Brigade

A little known fact is the vast majority (75%) of the Rhodesian Security Forces were Black Africans and unlike their conscripted White colleagues, were all volunteers.

Two thirds of the Selous Scouts were African. The advantage of the Black soldier was that they had an acute bush sense, could speak the language of the tribesmen and knew the ethnic customs in the operational areas. In the gathering of essential intelligence they were supreme. And this was one of the roles of the Scouts.

They would infiltrate an area in the guise of ZANLA or ZIPRA insurgents, observing the countryside from lookouts located in the hills. If they detected the enemy they would either call in the Fire-Force or try and make contact with the group in an effort to gather more intelligence about other revolutionary camps. They would then capture or eliminate them.

Their operations were known to the insurgent gangs making their manoeuvres an exceptionally tricky and dangerous business. However it also sowed dissension amongst the enemy in that they did not know which group to trust and therefore had to resort to a complex security system in an endeavour to identify 'them from us'

Prisoners were critical in the collection of crucial information. As an added bonus, captives could be 'turned' by our Special Branch (SB) personnel. The captive was taken to the local Scouts 'fort', interrogated and convinced that he was on the wrong side. SB had an amazing success rate in persuading guerrillas to change allegiance. These 'Turned Terrorists' or TT's as they were known would also divulge all the new passwords, code names, cover stories and location of the resident and transit rebels.

Within hours, they would be deployed again in the same area with a Scouts call-sign. Their faces, known to the locals and insurgents, gave credibility to the 'pseudo' group, who could now gain further access to other dissident gangs.

Lieutenant Edward Piringondo was my neighbour in the Selous Scouts barracks and one of the first Black Officers in the Rhodesian Army. Awarded the Silver Cross for his numerous exploits, he took professionalism to another level.

He didn't just watch a camp – he went right in. It's one thing observing a base, but to go in alone requires a special touch.

On one occasion in Zambia he spent five days in a series of camps conversing with the inhabitants. He visited their command points, radio shacks, sleeping areas and defences. Such was his assertion no-one vaguely suspected who he actually was.

In a number of other occurrences he was seriously challenged. Once he was caught by surprise when he walked into a group of ZIPRA guerrillas. Immediately taking the initiative he verbally assaulted them for being in the wrong area. A bit intimidated, they took his advice and departed.....as did he when they were out of sight with long, rapid strides.

How did he get this self-assurance, this bold skilful approach? He simply became one of them.

Piringondo would spend an inordinate amount of time chatting to the TT's about the training institutions in Tanzania and getting meticulous, detailed descriptions of camp layouts, personalities, training methods, routines, procedures and punishments. Question after question – until in his mind he had actually been there.

He then went onto the routes used, transit camps and entry points into Rhodesia. Edward sponged every item of information, no matter how irrelevant, into the life of a ZIPRA guerrilla. To do what he did his cover story had to be good – very, very good!

He looked the part as well. Filthy, long matted hair, beard, and dirty denim clothes. His body odour could have been patented for chemical warfare; but that is how ZIPRA were and he had to put himself in that position to achieve the infiltration.

Edward Piringondo's intensity of professionalism and belief in himself permeated to his team and his style of leadership started with raising the bar to the peak by setting the ultimate example for his unit. When you see someone perform what he achieved, your attitude changes and you aspire to do the same. What's more, if your attitude improves, your ability follows suit.

Like stages of teambuilding, numerous models are evident in the arena of **Leadership Styles**.

You are going to find staff who are unqualified because they don't know

how to do the job, lack training or resolve. Then there are those who might have the necessary expertise but are reluctant to follow because they are resentful or not motivated sufficiently.

This is where your approach is important - taking into account the attitude or ability of individual team members to complete the assignment.

Different circumstances or groups require separate styles of leadership. This supposes that the inclination to accomplish the job is dependent upon both the work at hand and the maturity of the individuals.

Leaders adjust their style according to the willingness of each member to perform in line with the complexity of the job. They then select what is suitable to the situation, (from directing to delegating) depending upon the reliability of the team.

For example, where development is low leaders should be task motivated and direct, rather like a schoolteacher – a commanding approach; as maturity increases, they should be more relationship motivated and supportive, giving additional rein to employees.

The situation also dictates - if there's a fire in the factory you don't call the workers in over a bottle of Schnapps to discuss the crisis – you take charge, irrespective of their experience, and act!

Further, you will have varying characters in your charge; Type A and B personalities, left and right brained individuals; bonders, analysers, drivers, animators – all requiring a slightly different touch. You're going to have to gently feel your way.

The over-riding consideration is to never forget your task is to achieve the objective and not let your ego get in the way when dealing with difficult staff members. Development of your team is the first priority. Relationship building, raising self confidence, fostering empathy between members, honest communication and encouragement to achieve should all be factors dictating which particular style you use in leading.

Also be yourself. I've seen too many people promoted to positions of authority who think they now must act like the commander of a space shuttle in a Star Wars movie. It was your initial character that got you there in the first place – so keep it!

And remember, whatever approach you utilise always show your appreciation to your team members....

Years ago, a boat was wrecked in a storm on Lake Michigan. Students from the nearby North Western University in Evanston, Illinois formed rescue teams. One student, Edward Spencer, saved seventeen people from the sinking ship.

When asked if anything in particular about this heroic act stood out in his memory, Spencer replied, "Only this, of all the people I saved, not one of them thanked me."

Extract from a sermon by Ben Dykman, Rector of Christ Church, Pinetown

Commentary

Take a glimpse into your past; you can clearly recall the times when you were recognised for your input, concern or assistance. A feeling of self-worth and pride exude. To share heartfelt thanks with a colleague creates an instant bond and a commitment to gain further approval.

In a society which places such excessive value on success, it is difficult when you experience failure after being given new targets or challenges. Often failure comes not because we have tried, but because others expect us to fail, causing erosion of self-esteem and confidence. It is unrealistic to expect immediate change - yet with gentle encouragement, genuine support, respect, acceptance and approval, people **do change** and move forward.

Show appreciation for your associate's efforts, even on daily routine tasks. "Thank you, well done!"

Never underestimate the power of psychological survival; recognition and growth of individuals.

"To encourage a greater sense of responsibility in others (and yourself), emphasise the anticipation of accomplishment, not the penalties for failure".

Roger Crawford

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding: 27th May 2004

The Task and Objective of the Team

As a leader, spend time on very clearly explaining the task and objective to the whole team – do not let anybody feel left out; and I'm including the tea lady and the driver.

If done correctly this negates any confusion about the direction, and

employees are all on the same page; they all know the aim of the organisation and what is expected of them.

When there is a plausible and understandable reason behind an undertaking this creates 'buy in,' purpose and commitment by the members.

Planning

Who makes the plan, the leader or the team?

Do not try and compete with the combined brain power, skills education, experiences and culture of your employees!

This is why you have a team; to draw upon all those diverse resources in an endeavour to come up with the best plan.....

Angela

When at Forbes, Angela was a conscientious but very quiet, shy and introverted typist. I used to have regular group meetings and always asked Angela her opinion.

Her normal response was an embarrassed look and an attitude of 'it's not my right to give an opinion – I'm not worthy.' However, we persisted with Angela, and finally she woke up to the fact she was allowed to contribute. And note I said "we" not "I" – it is the team responsibility to build other colleagues. Her input shortly thereafter caused an increase in revenue of 27%. She had ideas we had never contemplated, but had been too bashful to share. Encourage all your team; they are the source of great concepts – just unleash them!

As Angela gained confidence, she went up the ladder and became one of my managers. When I left Forbes in 1999, she also went on her way to set up her own business – a step she would never have dreamed about had she not been shown her potential and a reason to believe in herself.

"The outer limit of your potential is determined solely by your own beliefs and your own confidence in what you think is possible."

Brian Tracy

Commentary

Colin Powell encourages us to learn from the professionals, observe and seek them out as mentors and partners. But remember, even the experts may have levelled out in terms of their learning and skills and could even have become complacent. Leadership does not emerge from blind obedience to anyone. Barry

Rand from Xerox warned his people if you have a 'yes man' working for you, one of you is redundant. Adrian Gore, Chief Executive of Discovery Health and previous Entrepreneur of the Year, said to me at a conference, "We welcome and encourage staff to challenge our decisions and come forward with suggestions. It is the one and only way we will go forward."

Good leadership encourages everyone's evolution.

Commentary published by Scott's Teambuilding: 8th March 2004

Briefing and the Final Checklist

Although we should have all been involved in the planning, spend time before the execution of the task doing a final briefing to ensure and confirm everybody is fully aware of their role in the process.

We assume everybody has provided their full attention to, and understands the course of action – don't! Somewhere in the background, someone is sitting with their eyes wide open, but fast asleep. Question the team. "Who does this? What happens here?" Never ask the question, "Do you all understand?" The response normally is "yes" regardless of the actual fact. Rather get them to explain the plan back to you. Do not ridicule those who are a bit slower or don't comprehend; instead encourage them - they'll get there.

Also check, check and re-check. Pay attention to every detail. The slides for the presentation, the documentation necessary for the client, changes to machinery for the new production run, the equipment you need for the undertaking – whatever you require, formulate a checklist, so all is in order and available.

Safety as well, is of utmost importance.

Perfect Grouping

My wife and I were invited to a wedding of an old school friend on a farm a short distance outside Salisbury. As the function was 'out of town' I drew an Uzi sub-machine gun from the armoury for protection against vehicle ambush. Basil Clarke, another old friend from the school was coming with us. He was a member of the Educational Corps; their task being to provide tuition on various subjects to the military and their families.

Off we go and as we turned off the main road onto the dirt track towards the farm, it was now time to get the fire-power ready. Casually, like Clint

Eastwood in 'Dirty Harry', I placed the butt of the Uzi between my knees, one hand on the steering wheel whilst the other drew back the cocking handle and then, as normal practice, released it forward. Instantly four 9mm rounds exploded through my windscreen before the weapon jammed. Needless to say the three of us dirtied our seats, although I must confess the grouping in the windscreen was range perfect – less than an inch in diameter.

Basil just took off. To him this was the absolute best. Here was a steely-eyed bush fighter and fire-arms expert who had just had an accidental discharge (a very serious military offence).

With unbounded glee, he told everybody from Beit Bridge to Mukumbura about this episode. For years he kept suggesting the Educational Corps should teach Special Forces how to utilise their weapons correctly.

What made matters worse, on the way back some policeman at a roadblock wanted to give me a ticket for driving with a broken windscreen.

On my return the armourer found one of the working parts of the Uzi had been shorn off. But this is no excuse. Before taking delivery I should have thoroughly checked every detail of the weapon. And even more importantly, I should have stopped the vehicle before cocking. There is no substitute for safety.

Beware of complacency, and in my case, complete bravado and stupidity.

Execution of the Task

Where should the leader be? In the movies Rambo is always at the front. With our customary very mobile small four man 'stick,' you would find me in the lead. However, if in command of my whole troop, I would then revert to a central point. There I would be in the best position to react in any direction and give support should some eventuality arise. Be visible and within reach at all times to your whole team.

Assess the situation and locate yourself where you can render the best assistance in all circumstances. This is leading from the front.

I normally ask the question, "Who is the leader of a soccer team?" The answer invariably, "The captain." No, it's the coach! Sitting on the *sidelines*, but with a comprehensive overview of the match, he directs operations, amends the game plan and changes players. The captain merely manages the process on the field.

Assume a helicopter view of the procedure and supervise to completion. Step in to help where you have to, resolve a conflict if it occurs, mentor and encourage. Give recognition, and not only at the culmination of the

undertaking but during the performance as well. Give your people the reins. They might not do the job as you would have done it; they might even make mistakes and go off track, but at least they'll learn and in time be competent. And it is this proficiency you are looking for to allow you to focus on the final achievement. On the other hand, they might evolve a better way of doing the task than you – and that's an opportunity you don't want to miss!

Have the vision, or end in mind, on all occasions.

The Little Red Warning Light..

Although difficult to substantiate, occasionally take cognisance of your 'gut-feel.'

During a contact in the SE of the country we were advancing onto the enemy positions across a patch of open ground. One of my troopers indicated a dissident crouching in a bush waving a white bit of cloth. Prisoners were a vital and very valuable source of information, but something was just not right.

I took a bead and squeezed the trigger. As the round found its mark an intense flame consumed the insurgent. Confusion? What happened there? 7.62 bullets are not explosive! We crept forward and on closer inspection found the guerrilla had both an RPD machine gun and an RPG rocket launcher trained on my call-sign. The round had penetrated the RPG rocket booster and caused the flame-up. Had we accepted his 'surrender' overtones and not knowing the weaponry at his disposal or his obvious intentions we certainly would have walked into a very lethal hail of fire.

I don't understand the 6th sense – maybe the angle of his body, perhaps the way he was waving the cloth.....maybe born from previous experiences on which you cannot quite put a finger?

Strange things do come about. Martin Pearce, an SAS Captain, is reputed to have predicted the details of his death in Zambia with uncanny accuracy. In the most unusual circumstances, it happened just as he had said!

Rob Bresler was a policeman who met Richard Smith awaiting uplift to join 1 Commando as an additional tracker just prior to The Battle of Chibara Hills. He recalls Smith saying, "Rob, I am not going to make it today". And sadly as we know, he didn't.

Joe du Plooy was a very close friend and earmarked to be the Godfather of my first child. He was with Judy, his long standing partner one evening in Salisbury when he was urgently summoned to report for duty. He bade Judy

farewell, telling her that he would never see her again and left. A couple of days later, on Op Uric in Mozambique, Joe was killed.

How do people who seem to 'know their fate' continue?
What kind of courage pushes them forward?

Craig my eldest son, is the custodian of Joe's RLI silver mug. Judy gave it to him. It bears the inscription "From Both of Us."

Evaluation

We have had a remarkable accomplishment – what is the next step?
Celebrate your success! Yes, but more importantly, establish the reason why you had this achievement and how you could do it better next time.

Whether, you succeed or fail, always evaluate – your competition does!

10. GREEN LIGHT..... GO!

Green light... Go! As a paratrooper, those are the final words you hear before you launch yourself out of the aircraft and are buffeted away by the slipstream.

You don't know what lies ahead, but you have been trained and prepared and you are *going to take that jump.....now* it is the test!

We have spoken about the general aspects of leadership but let's investigate some other factors which must not be ignored:

Your **health** is of primary importance. You need ENERGY to keep going.

You meet an old acquaintance after many years. He used to be fit, vigorous and charging. Now, after many years of neglect, he wobbles around like a tub of fresh Malva Pudding.

Take a very long range view of health!

A lot of people know more about their car motor than their own engine room. You can exchange your vehicle but the Consumer Protection Act doesn't cover your body.

Do research; get to know the necessary nutrition and fitness requirements. And exercise means panting at the end of your set. Life is a fight right to the end and the healthier your physical condition the more you will cope. Once it's gone, it's too late.

Bryan Dyson, the former President and CEO of Coca Cola in his famous 30 second speech spoke of juggling four glass balls in the air Family, Health, Friends and Spirit. Drop one of these and there is irreparable damage. The fifth, a rubber ball was Work. Drop this and it will bounce back.

Maintain your **emotional**, **mental** and **spiritual** wellbeing. This includes quality time with your family, sufficient leisure periods and meaningful relationships. You need a balanced blend of all of these to ensure you keep yourself vibrant and sustain yourself through all that life throws at you.

I know; I have neglected some of those aspects in the past to my deep regret.

I've found the spiritual is most important. Through all my trials, faith in this Power has kept me going. Read the Word and pray daily. It has always

kept me positive and optimistic.

A couple of other reminders:

Lead by example. Every action you take on will be inspected, dissected, analysed and spoken about by both your subordinates and superiors. If you get it right, your staff will become what you are. However, become complacent and they too, will follow suit.

Be brutally **honest** in all your dealings. Staff and clients will always find out if you are not entirely truthful. Once you have the reputation of being a liar, it's going to stick for ever.

However, being straight means you don't have the hassle of trying to 'cover up' any discrepancies along your path. People gravitate towards those they trust, an attribute which cannot be overstated.

If you cannot deliver because of some hitch along the line, get on the phone and **keep those involved informed**.

At least they know you are concerned and trust you to rectify the problem. It's far better than ducking and diving like a penguin dodging a shark. Being kept in the dark is extremely irritating, whereas informed people at least recognise where they stand, appreciate your information and are far more likely to accept that glitches do occur. Getting the problem into the open also helps to relieve your stress.

Make decisions. Get the relevant information and then make a clear decisive decision. Do not vacillate – you will make mistakes, but the more you make, the better you become at getting it right.

Stand up, acknowledge and **take the blame** if you are at fault. You'll get through it.

Spend a lot of time **reading**. Not only are you increasing your knowledge but also improving your vocabulary. People respect those who can put words together; just take a look at any political elections. Some of the candidates I have seen in the past couldn't lead a monkey to a bowl of peanuts, but it still appears those of 'smooth speech' get the votes!

Offer to help. People never forget those willing to assist. I joined Norwich from the SADF Recce's, and Pat Armstrong was my manager. I was displaced and struggling to come to terms with a totally unfamiliar environment. Enormous adjustment pressures started to tell on me and the family. I had just bought my first house which required huge maintenance and repair. Armstrong realised I was taking excessive strain. No problem, he and his wife Mary came around, rolled up their sleeves, assisted us in getting the home ship-shape and then also provided the food and drinks for the braai afterwards.

This is concern for team members, the ultimate in leadership.

Take the initiative. Take the lead if something requires to be done. You need to be visible to inspire those who will follow.

Never take your mind off the **team**. They should be an integral part and an extension of *yourself*. Whilst at school or college you were graded on personal performance. In the real world you are judged on what your team achieves.

Leadership is primarily about enjoying the human race and being confident in your own space.

I used to play guitar around town at 'jam' sessions and one of the venues was at a pub in one of the rougher areas of the city. When you arrived in the car park every vehicle was a Thunderbird GTX with airbus tyres and an F-14 jet engine sticking out past the bumper.

The sign on the door said 'No guns or knives.' It actually made no difference; the patrons couldn't read.

However, before my guitar-set, I interacted with these folk; conversing, hearing their every word and just being there. Like in the old days I found once you get through to them, they were just like my troops – all very good, loyal people.

I was never the best musician in the line-up, but each time I did a set they would all come out of the pub next door into the hall to support me – not because of my talent, but because I had listened to, and identified with them. I gave of myself, now they were reciprocating.

And this is one of the most important lessons I have learnt over time.

So it is with leadership. It is not a position of employment; it is a CALLING – a commitment to the human race.

Brand Pretorius, CEO of McCarthy, summarised it this way:

"I have learned that leadership is a responsibility, it isn't a right. I have to earn the support, loyalty and the respect of the people.

I can never demand it. And I have to earn it on an ongoing basis.

Leadership is not about ego and authority; it's about results and achievement. Leadership thrives on results, and not on salutes.

It is not about how many people we control; it's about how many people we liberate, so they can achieve their own potential.

Leadership is not about instructing, but about coaching and encouraging. It is not about taking, but about giving, serving, showing real interest and caring."

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves - Philippians 2:3

I once had the privilege of running a course in Mauritius with the One & Only Resorts Group. Heinrich Morio, the General Manager of Le Touessrok Hotel shared this philosophy with me.

Hello Scott,

It was great to have you with us and personally I would like to add it's been a real pleasure to get to know you. I thought you might like the wisdom below: I hope we meet again.

Best regards,

Heinrich

Face it, nobody owes you a living.

What you achieve or fail to achieve in your lifetime is directly related to what you do or fail to do.

No one chooses his parents or childhood, but you can choose your own direction.

Everyone has problems and obstacles to overcome, but that, too, is relative to each individual.

NOTHING IS CARVED IN STONE.

You can change anything in your life if you want it badly enough.

Excuses are for losers:

Those who take responsibilities for their actions are the real winners in life.

Winners meet life challenges head on knowing there are no guarantees, and give it all they've got.

And never think it's too late or too early to begin.

Time plays no favourites and will pass whether you act or not.

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR LIFE.

Dare to dream and take risks...

Compete.

If you aren't willing to work for your goals, don't expect others to.

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF!

GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED

African: In the context of this publication, 'African' refers to members of the Black population.

Call-sign (c/s): A group of men, with one radio identification number. For example, 1 Troop 1 Cdo RLI was c/s 11. The first numeral was your Commando and the second number, your Troop.

Cdo: Commando. The RLI had four commandos.

Chopper: Slang for helicopter.

CO: Commanding Officer.

Contact: Fire-fight with insurgents. Battle, skirmish.

Dakota, Dak: Douglas C-47 twin engine Transport Aircraft.

External: External Operation into a neighbouring State eg. Zambia, Mozambique.

Fire Force: Airborne rapid response assault group supported by helicopter gunship and ground attack aircraft.

Forbes: Alexander Forbes Consultants and Actuaries.

Fort Vic: Fort Victoria, near Zimbabwe Ruins. Now called Masvingo.

FRELIMO: Frente De Libertacao De Mocambique: Liberation Front of Mozambique.

Gomo: Hill, mountain, kopjie (Shona).

I skeem: Slang for "I think," scheme.

Ishe (Eishe): A term of respect; chief. (Shona).

JOC: Joint Operations Command comprising members of the Army, Air Force, Police and Internal Affairs.

K Car: Helicopter command aircraft and gunship armed with a 20mm cannon.

Lt: Lieutenant.

Lynx: Cessna FTB 337G Skymaster aircraft modified for reconnaissance and ground attack.

LZ: Landing Zone.

Medic: Medical Orderly. Para-medic.

Mopane, Mopani: *Colophospermum mopane*. A tree with very heavy, dense wood.

Natal: Kwa-Zulu Natal, a province in South Africa.

NCO: Non Commissioned Officer eg Sergeant Major, Sergeant, Corporal.

OC: Officer Commanding.

Ops Room: Operations Room, Command Centre.

Operator: Soldier.

Ou, oen, oke: Afrikaans slang for "man."

PRAW: Police Reserve Air Wing.

Pom, Pommy: Slang for British person.

R&R: Rest and Recuperation / Retraining.

Rat Pack: Ration Pack consisting of one day's food supply.

Recce: Reconnaissance.

Recces: SADF Reconnaissance Commandos.

RLI: The Rhodesian Light Infantry.

SADF: South African Defence Force. Now SANDF; South African National Defence Force.

SAS: C Squadron, Special Air Service.

Shangaan: An African tribe found in the South East of Zimbabwe.

Stick: A four man contingent, originally created as the Alouette 3 helicopter in service with the Air Force, could only uplift four fully equipped soldiers.

Territorial: Territorial Force (TF); the reserve Citizen Force

Transvaal: Now called Gauteng, a province in South Africa.

Veldt: Bush.

VHF: Very High Frequency.

ZANLA: Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army.

ZIPRA: Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army.