

LEADERSHIP – COACHING AND MENTORING PACK

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(Established 2006)

Welcome to this month's edition.

This month, Damian Piper (Effective Challenge <http://effectivechallenge.com>) has added to his series with 'A moment to reflect - pressure on our shoulders.' This is now my favourite post from Damian. I hope you enjoy reading it too.

You don't have to be an entrepreneur (someone with a big idea) to find our second article of interest. 'OVERCOME ENTREPRENEURIAL ANXIETY, 6 WAYS TO STAY IN CHARGE.' In our society, the entrepreneurs who make it big, tend to achieve hero status. People look at them and think they have it all together. But many of the most successful leaders in business face challenges similar to the rest of us.

Each month, I trawl through Ted.com for inspiring presentations, so you don't have to. My criteria is: Do they inspire? Do they make you think differently? And will they help me in my leadership role? The first of my four chosen presentations comes from Celeste Headlee - it certainly met my criteria.

https://www.ted.com/talks/celeste_headlee_10_ways_to_have_a_better_conversation

What do you think?

Something I look forward to and something I very much enjoy, is delivering training to managers and leaders. Last week, I had the pleasure of delivering my organisation's ILM Management Qualification (Project Management module) in Scotland. Tomorrow, I am meeting with some colleagues to discuss the possibility of designing a Project Management methodology for our organisation. With my Project Management hat still on, I have included a piece on 'Estimating Time and Resources.'

During a break in last week's workshop, we had a conversation about work 'cultures' (how we do things around here). I shared my take on the culture within you. This is our last article in this month's edition. Do you have a work culture in your team? Most importantly, have you written it down and shared it?

This month's quotes have been taken from my wife's @JoyceRaw1 and @livelikearaw Twitter feeds – thanks Joyce. I am also on Twitter: @DoshLtd sharing leadership thoughts at 7am, 7 days a week. We welcome new followers!

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It's not about how good you are,

It's how good you want to be!



A moment to reflect - pressure on our shoulders

There's a lot written and talked about when it comes to taking responsibility for the situations we face. I'm an advocate of that myself. There is however, a tricky trap which we can get caught out by. I've been working on a couple of projects recently where I've seen a few people getting caught by this. I call this the 'it's all about me' trap.

When stepping up and taking responsibility, sometimes we can get confused in thinking that all the work and/or solutions need to come from us as individuals. This often results in our thinking narrowing and our time often being spent in ever decreasing circles of effectiveness. So, what are the indicators of falling into the trap and what can you do to intervene before they take hold? Here are three common things you might want to look out for:

- 1) We are repeating the same activities with ineffective results
- 2) Over-commitment that your solutions are the right ones
- 3) Lack of connection with others

Repeating the same things over with ineffective results

Einstein suggested that the theory of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different response. In this context, this applies readily. Failing to make progress with a project but keeping going with the same activities.

There's a judgement call here. As sometimes we need to give an approach a chance to work (not everything happens overnight). There is however, a tipping point. Raising our awareness that we need to use this judgement and do something different is worth practising. This leads to the next indicator.

Over-commitment that your solutions are the right ones

Like the situation above, there's a judgement call to practice here. The judgement call is particularly important when we have responsibility for leading others. It can be incredibly

frustrating to work for someone who is constantly changing their mind. That said, if we are overly invested in a particular solution that isn't working; we can find that our ego gets in the way of progress. We can begin to search for all the evidence no matter how small that we are on the right track and get blinkered to all the contrary evidence.

Lack of connection with others

Having the right support team to help you deal with situations is something that is worth your investment. They can certainly help assess your evidence of how things are going. Evaluating where you could have blind spots and/or having different creative input is a great place to start. Again, the ego can kick in here. Some people I've worked with describe involving others as a sign of weakness or something someone does when they lack confidence. The critical difference for me is the intent you have to engage with different people.

I've been fortunate to work with some world class individuals in business, the military and sport and one of the things that resonate for me is there never-ending quest to involve others to improve situations and performance. I've come to see the ability to keep asking great questions as a sign of confidence and strength. This takes real humility and an open mind. The first thing is to know is who are in your group. And ensure you are actively keeping it fresh.

I've never seen a situation where a leader who carries all their pressures on their shoulders is happy and performs optimally. Think about challenges you might be facing and assess if you've fallen into the 'it's all about me' trap and perhaps more importantly, decide what you could do differently to help. As always, I'm interested in what you do as a result.

Source: Damian Piper from Effective Challenge <http://effectivechallenge.com>

The purpose of life is to live it, to taste experience to the utmost, to reach out eagerly and without fear for newer and richer experience - Eleanor Roosevelt

OVERCOME ENTREPRENEURIAL ANXIETY

6 WAYS TO STAY IN CHARGE

In our society, the entrepreneurs who make it big tend to achieve hero status. People look at them and think they have it all. But many of the most successful leaders in business face challenges similar to the rest of us. Owning a business can be extremely stressful and exhausting and the entrepreneur's resulting anxiety can be crippling to their business.

Usually stepping back and disconnecting from big issues to calm down is helpful. Try these strategies to cool your nerves:

BRAIN DUMP

Your brain loves holding on to what it thinks is important, which easily causes overwhelming thoughts and exhaustion. Take 20 minutes and write down anything that comes to mind, your worries, to do list and everyday tasks. Don't think; just purge what's in your head.

MEDITATE

After creating space in your brain from everything that it's been holding onto, give it a short break from all the thinking. Choosing a guided meditation, a clear framework for your thoughts, can be very helpful in relaxing your mind.

SHIFT PERSPECTIVE

Changing how you look at a situation can give you incredible relief from stress. Ask yourself how you will be looking at your life situation a few years from now. Picture the worst thing that can happen and come to terms with it. Then create a strategy on how you would handle that situation.

CELEBRATE

Instead of focusing on everything that's going wrong, switch your approach and make a list of all your past and current wins.

SIMPLIFY

Your brain is wired to solve basic problems. Essentially it needs to decide between a fight or flight response. Create and write down a simple but efficient action plan for the next 30 days which will leave you with a sense of control and certainty.

TAKE ACTION

After getting clear on your action plan, execute. Focus on the process of your strategy on a micro level, instead of the bigger picture and vision, which might seem unreachable and intimidating at the moment.

Source: Katy Trost, ICF Certified Coach from USA's Success Magazine

"When you are content to simply be yourself and don't compare or compete, everybody will respect you" Lao Tzu

My Top 4 Picks from Ted.com

Each month I trawl through Ted.com for inspiring presentations, so you don't have to. My criteria are: Do they inspire? Do they may you think differently? And will they help me in my leadership role? I think these do, what do you think?

https://www.ted.com/talks/celeste_headlee_10_ways_to_have_a_better_conversation

When your job hinges on how well you talk to people, you learn a lot about how to have conversations -- and that most of us don't converse very well. Celeste Headlee has worked as a radio host for decades and she knows the ingredients of a great conversation: Honesty, brevity, clarity and a healthy amount of listening. In this insightful talk, she shares 10 useful

rules for having better conversations. "Go out, talk to people, listen to people," she says. "And most importantly, be prepared to be amazed."

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

Melissa Marshall brings a message to all scientists (from non-scientists): We're fascinated by what you're doing. So tell us about it -- in a way we can understand. In just four minutes, she shares powerful tips on presenting complex scientific ideas to a general audience.

https://www.ted.com/talks/stefan_sagmeister_7_rules_for_making_more_happiness

Using simple, delightful illustrations, designer Stefan Sagmeister shares his latest thinking on happiness -- both the conscious and unconscious kind. His seven rules for life and design happiness can (with some customizations) apply to everyone seeking more joy.

https://www.ted.com/talks/tom_griffiths_3_ways_to_make_better_decisions_by_thinking_like_a_computer

If you ever struggle to make decisions, here's a talk for you. Cognitive scientist Tom Griffiths shows how we can apply the logic of computers to untangle tricky human problems, sharing three practical strategies for making better decisions -- on everything from finding a home to choosing which restaurant to go to tonight.

https://www.ted.com/talks/ari_wallach_3_ways_to_plan_for_the_very_long_term

We increasingly make decisions based on short-term goals and gains -- an approach that makes the future more uncertain and less safe. How can we learn to think about and plan for a better future in the long term ... like, grandchildren-scale long term? Ari Wallach shares three tactics for thinking beyond the immediate.

I do the very best I know how - the very best I can, and I mean to keep on doing so until the end. - Abraham Lincoln

People love doing what they are good at...

Time to read: 17 seconds

Dear Steve,

People love doing what they are good at...

And they – we – are good at what we love doing.

When I said this recently, at a school, a young boy responded: "Duh!"

So, ask everyone in your team, on your project, in your organisation, what do you LOVE doing at work?

And have them do it more. So, as to release people's passion.

David

Source: David Taylor 'Naked Leader' series author.

"If you are depressed, you are living in the past. If you are anxious, you are living in the future. If you are at peace, you are living in the present" Lao Tzu

FAST TRACK TO.....

DEVELOPING A WINNING MINDSET

All too often, the difference between those that achieve success and those that don't is that the winners have a different state of mind. Mark Rhodes, author of Think Your Way to Success outlines the top attributes of a 'success mind-set.'

EXPECTATION IMPACTS RESULTS

When you have an expectation that things will go well, they end up going far better than they would have. Thinking negatively affects everything – the words you use, the hesitation in your voice, your confidence and your body language.

CONFIDENT AND DEFINITE

Rather than being vague when faced with a request from a prospective client or customer, be confident and definite that you can help them. This doesn't necessarily mean you have all the answers but will help instil the message in you that, one way or another, you will help them get the solution they need.

RESPOND, DON'T REACT

Instead of reacting (or over-reacting) to situations, you need to respond to them. Successful people take a step back, consider all the evidence and make a logical, rational response.

YOU CAN'T FAIL

Failure is within your own control; you only fail when you decide not to go for your goal any more. If there is an opportunity to achieve your goal in a different way on a different day, you haven't failed.

CAN'T OR WON'T

99% of the things we say we can't do are actually things we won't do. Perhaps you say you can't delegate? If so, it's probably that you won't delegate for whatever reason.

SHOULD OR COULD HAVE?

When you come out of a situation that didn't go very well, focus on the things you could have done. Thinking about what you should have done focuses on the failure of the situation and puts you off ever doing it again.

ASK BETTER QUESTIONS

When struggling with a situation or project, don't fall into the trap of getting frustrated. Instead ask a better question of yourself like "What else could make this work? What could make things better?" Ideas will come if you allow your mind to work.

END RESULT OR PROCESS?

Focus on the end result rather than the process involved. Very often focusing on the process puts us off getting started. If I think about all the effort needed to wash the car, I'm unlikely to get started. However, if I just focus on how good the car will look when it's nice and clean, I'm much more likely to get going.

From the ILM's Edge Magazine

Never regret doing the right thing or being a good person. Not everyone will appreciate you...but the right people will

Ten ways to.....

MAKE THINGS HAPPEN

1. Be clear about what you want
2. Explain why it's needed
3. Listen to any concerns from your team
4. Get the support of key influencers
5. Tell them what's at stake
6. Give a time frame
7. Keep on the case
8. Don't be too ambitious. Set up short-term goals....
9.then build on them after they've been successful
10. Show your appreciation along the way

Source: Modern Management

"Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom" Aristotle

HOW TO INFLUENCE

People specialists' Learn Purple suggest managers should focus on two or three of the following characteristics each year to develop their influencing skills:

CLARITY:	Seeing the big picture and making sense of complex situations
DECISIVENESS:	taking decisions to force actions that will bring about progression
VISION:	looking forward in an enlightened and open-minded way
COURAGE:	being able to make the tough decisions
ACTION:	making things happen and bringing them to a conclusion
RESPECT:	giving and earning
POSITIVITY:	handling bad news in a way that makes people feel they're in safe hands
FLEXIBILITY AND ADAPTABILITY:	
	being able to champion change
CONSISTENCY:	Staying calm and demonstrating emotional intelligence
SUPPORT:	being prepared to listen and ensuring people are given the best chance to succeed
CHARACTER:	being charismatic, aspirational and inspirational
TALENT-SPOTTING:	recruiting great people and putting together fantastic teams, including embracing those who are more talented than they are
EMPATHY:	having the ability to make people feel valued and important to the success of the organisation

More on 'influence' can be found in my blog post 'Being Bettina's Dad – Influence a force for good' <https://leadershipintheraw.org/2017/08/15/being-bettinas-dad-influence-a-force-for-good/>

"Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom" Aristotle

Some excellent advice that I keep in my mind for workshops from David Taylor:

WHEN running a seminar, dress as an obvious expert. Have presence. Choose your clothes carefully; you don't want to be dressed as though you are ready to do some gardening. Be well groomed. (Extract from The Naked Millionaire)

I may not have gone where I intended to go, but I think I have ended up where I needed to be- Douglas Adams

YOUR ROUTE TO THE TOP

HOW TO GET YOUR WAY

Keep your enemies close. Let the other person speak first. You'll gain invaluable insights into their true concerns and they'll be more likely to listen when it's your turn. Delve deep. Ask questions to find out what's driving them. Whether they want to be inspired or to be given irrefutable facts, you can adapt your approach once you know their motivations.

Engage them. Be clear about what's in it for them: 'This project will involve working closely with a number of different people. I believe this will appeal to your social side.' People make decisions for their own reasons, not yours.

Choose your words carefully. Use phrases like: 'he's....' or 'shall we try...?' If you're pushy, they'll be less likely to comply.

Flattery will get you everywhere. To get a colleague to adopt the next proposal, explain what was good about the last one and why: 'The PCP examples work really well and I like the humorous tone.' If they feel favourably towards you, they'll be more open to persuasion. Just don't overdo it!

Guide them. People are most likely to agree to something if they feel they've come to the conclusion themselves. In *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, the protagonist's mother uses gentle questioning to get her way. It's so effective that the daughter leaves to follow her dreams, and her father thinks it was his idea.

Make your case. State all the facts, and be clear about the pros and cons. Offer solutions that will resolve their concerns and open a debate to incorporate their views. Focus on areas where it's easier to adapt without damaging the integrity of what you're trying to achieve.

Be prepared to compromise. Is your way really the best way? Present your proposal as a first draft to work on together. A collaborative solution is more likely to lead to a positive outcome for everyone.

Source: 'The Mind Gym.'

"To keep your marriage brimming within the loving cup, whenever you're wrong, admit it; whenever you're right, shut up" Ogden Nash

("it's worked so far" Joyce Raw)

If you think you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping with a mosquito.
-Dalai Lama

ESTIMATING TIME AND RESOURCES

I've outlined a variety of methods below to help you do this. Whichever methods you choose, bear these basic rules in mind:

- To begin with, estimate the time needed for each task rather than for the project as a whole.
- The level of detail you need to go into depends on the circumstances. For example, you may only need a rough outline of time estimates for future project phases, but you'll probably need detailed estimates for the phase ahead.
- List all of the assumptions, exclusions and constraints that are relevant and note any data sources that you rely on. This will help you, when your estimates are questioned and will also help you identify any risk areas if circumstances change.
- Assume that your resources will only be productive for 80 percent of the time. Build in time for unexpected events such as sickness, supply problems, equipment failure, accidents and emergencies, problem solving and meetings.
- If some people are only working part-time on your project, bear in mind that they may lose time as they switch between their various roles.
- Remember that people are often overly optimistic and may significantly underestimate the amount of time that it will take for them to complete tasks.

Tip:

The most reliable estimates are those that you have arranged to be challenged. This helps you identify any assumptions and biases that aren't valid.

You can ask team members, other managers or co-workers to challenge your time estimates.

Methods for Estimating Time

We'll now look at different approaches that you can use to estimate time. You'll probably find it most useful to use a mixture of these techniques.

- **Bottom-Up Estimating**

Bottom-up estimating allows you to create an estimate for the project as a whole. To analyse from the "bottom up," break larger tasks down into detailed tasks and then estimate the time needed to complete each one.

Because you're considering each task incrementally, your estimate of the time required for each task is likely to be more accurate. You can then add up the total amount of time needed to complete the plan.

Tip 1:

How much detail you go into depends on the situation. However, the more detail you go into, the more accurate you'll be.

If you don't know how far to go, consider breaking work down into chunks that one person can complete in half a day, for example. Sure, this is a bit circular but it gives you an idea of the level of detail you should aim for.

Tip 2:

Yes, this does take a lot of work, however, this work will pay off later in the project. Just make sure that you leave plenty of time for it in the project's Design Phase.

- **Top-Down Estimating**

In top-down analysis, you develop an overview of the expected timeline first, using past projects or previous experience as a guide. It's often helpful to compare top-down estimates against your bottom-up estimates, to ensure accuracy.

Note:

Don't assume that the bottom-up estimates are wrong if they differ widely from the top-down ones. In fact, it's more likely that the reverse is true.

Instead, use the top-down estimates to challenge the validity of the bottom-up estimates and to refine them as appropriate.

- **Comparative Estimating**

With comparative estimating, you look at the time it took to do similar tasks on other projects.

- **Parametric Estimating**

With this method, you estimate the time required for one deliverable and then multiply it by the number of deliverables required.

For example, if you need to create pages for a website, you'd estimate how much time it would take to do one page and you'd then multiply this time by the total number of pages to be produced.

- **Three-Point Estimating**

To build in a cushion for uncertainty, you can do three estimates – one for the best case, another for the worst case and a final one for the most likely case.

Although this approach requires additional effort to create three separate estimates, it allows you to set more reasonable expectations, based on a more realistic estimate of outcomes.

Tip:

In the early stages of project planning, you often won't know who will do each task – this can influence how long the task will take. For example, an experienced programmer should be able to develop a software module much more quickly than someone less experienced. You can build this into your estimates by giving best, worst and most likely estimates, stating the basis for each view.

Preparing Your Schedule

Once you've estimated the time needed for each task, you can prepare your project schedule. Add your estimates to the draft activity list that you produced in the second step, above.

You can then create a Gantt Chart to schedule activities and assign resources to your project; and to finalize milestones and deadlines.

Tip:

If your project is complex, you might find that identifying the critical path on your plan is helpful. This will help you highlight the tasks that cannot be delayed if you're going to hit your deadline.

Key Points

You need to estimate time accurately if you're going to deliver your project on time and on budget. Without this skill, you won't know how long your project will take and you won't be able to get commitment from the people required to help you achieve your objective. More than this, you risk agreeing to impossibly short deadlines, with all of the stress, pain, and loss of credibility associated with this.

To estimate time effectively, follow this four-step process:

1. Understand what's required
2. Prioritize activities and tasks
3. Decide who you need to involve
4. Do your estimates
5. Use a variety of estimating methods to get the most accurate time estimates

“A diamond is a chunk of coal that did well under pressure.” Henry Kissinger

The Culture within You

Lying on my bunk on the Liverpool to Belfast ferry in 1977, I started to think about what was ahead of me in the coming hours. I was heading towards Northern Ireland at the height of the troubles for a two year tour. I was 20 and had no fear but I was nervous about how I would fit into the ‘culture’ of the Royal Signals unit I was joining. I had heard they loved drill, discipline and short haircuts! It was all that!

In 1984, I was joining a Royal Marines Commando Squadron and I was excited, as during the previous couple of years I had shared a room with a Royal Marine who had caught my imagination about their 'culture'. He told me that their culture was one of positive attitudes, adventure, fitness and humour. It was all that!

Then 12 years ago, I arrived at the offices of Thera www.thera.co.uk for my first day. I knew I was going to have to up my game. I had done some checking and their 'culture' was (and is) that it is all about people with learning disabilities, hard work, commitment and innovation. If you don't have plenty of enthusiasm, energy and momentum, you are not going to cut it. It all sounded right up my street!

I have always been fascinated by 'cultures' within teams and organisations:

- What are they? - Cultures are a sense of identity, tradition, history and structure
- How has culture developed? - Cultures develop through rituals, beliefs, legends and values
- What difference can you make as a Leader and developing a culture? - Let's see....

Developing the Culture within your team and organisation

My 10 tips and recommendations are based on what has worked for me:

- ✓ Be open and talk about what you are about – and do it often, so it becomes entrenched in people's minds. People can then decide at the outset if they want to be part of this culture
- ✓ The culture must fit and match your organisations values, aims and objectives
- ✓ If you want to change the culture it is better (and it works) if you start with making small changes over a period of time. It is tempting at the outset to go big with change but, believe me, it will fail
- ✓ Cultural change requires long term investment for the people you support and for me it is a life-long commitment
- ✓ Recruit people, not just for their competencies but also for their values, attitudes and beliefs
- ✓ Knowing the culture of your team and organisation – the best leaders are those who adjust their style to suit – they are all different
- ✓ Develop a 'can do' attitude that becomes shared – we say "yes" then get busy finding out how to do it
- ✓ Just like your 'vision' you must live your culture everyday – there are no days off. As Leaders there is no putting your feet up and thinking "today I feel like being negative, idle and miserable"
- ✓ Always remember culture is led from the top but grows from the bottom!
- ✓ At the outset tell everyone that we are going to have 'fun' and mean it

"Culture eats strategy for breakfast"
Peter Drucker, US Management Consultant

What does a great culture look like for me?

My Top 10:

- We have great stories that inspire (we share those stories with each other)
- The culture doesn't need to be written down - it is in people's minds
- We have a dynamic culture that changes and develops
- We know who we are and what we stand for – We have a sense of identity
- We are proud about what we do – our culture is that we want to make a difference
- We have a common language, rituals and routines “how things are done around here”
- We have a “no blame” culture
- Managers are close to the people on the ground and they care about them –
- It matters that people are happy
- There are no surprises – everyone knows what is coming next – because we all talk to each other – trust and integrity

“The thing I have learned at IBM is that culture is everything”

Louis V Gerstner Jr,
US businessman

As the Managing Director for Dosh Ltd, I wrote about our culture in ‘Leadership the Dosh Way’ <http://leadershipintheraw.org/2014/09/25/leadership-the-dosh-way/> I hope it inspires you.

So as a leader, have you considered the culture within your leadership team and organisation recently? Now that I have your attention what are you going to do to develop it?

Source: Steve Raw www.leadershipintheraw.org

"The best motivation is self-motivation." The guy says, 'I wish someone would come by and turn me on.' What if they don't show up? You've got to have a better plan for your life."

—Jim Rohn