

## LEADERSHIP COACHING AND MENTORING –PACK

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Established in 2006

Welcome to this month's edition. Our highlights include.

Damian Piper CBE our Resilience Coach starts this month edition with: **'Closing the gap between talked and lived behaviours.'** "It's common to find ourselves talking about the changes we want to make or the personal progress we'd like to see and then find that our actual behaviours are some distance from what is required. In this article, we'll explore an approach to working on behaviours that can raise awareness and empower our progress to see more of what we want and less of what we don't want."

From me. **Being Bettina's Dad – Community Engagement & what it has meant for Bettina.** "Having nine years of experience of supporting Bettina our daughter in her community prior my first role in the Social Care Sector, in what would be the start of a second career, I had decided I wanted to support adults with a learning disability. My first role involved forming a team which would support people who had previously been excluded from their community. I had a wealth of ideas I had learned from Bettina on how to do this and I was keen to see if they worked in equal measure."

From Joyce Raw **'Positive Vibes - A Way of Life'** "Being positive, and creating positive vibes for those around you, is a way of life. It is a choice anyone can make, despite the adversities they face, it is not a secret. There is no trick. So, how is it done and where do you start?"

I never stop learning from the great polar explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton and his expeditions. I have included his tips on recruiting and selecting his team. I endorse them and recommend them to you. (As long as the HR department don't have an objections)

There is lots more in this month's edition so let's dive in together.....

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*It is not about how good you are.*

*It is how Good You want to be.*

## **Closing the gap between talked and lived behaviours.**

It's common to find ourselves talking about the changes we want to make or the personal progress we'd like to see and then find that our actual behaviours are some distance from what is required. In this article, we'll explore an approach to working on behaviours that can raise awareness and empower our progress to see more of what we want and less of what we don't want.

### **Reflecting on Behaviours**

To kickstart the process, we must get clear on the behaviours we want to cultivate and those we'd like to discard. This process lays the foundation for resilience and the ability to make the most of opportunities that come our way. Asking ourselves who we want to be in each area of our lives is a good place to start. Consider how others perceive us, what they need and want from us, and equally important what they don't. Take a moment to envision these behaviours in different timeframes – the present, one year from now, five years down the line, or even decades into the future. This exercise provides valuable insights into how our behaviour can influence not only ourselves but also those around us. Of course, putting this into practice is often more challenging than it may seem.

### **Balancing Expectations with Reality**

Achieving desired behavioural outcomes and minimising unwanted ones may not be as complicated as it seems. However, it's essential to acknowledge that it's not an easy feat. Often, we set ourselves up with expectations that may clash with the realities of our everyday circumstances. This discrepancy can lead to frustration and a sense of stagnation. Or finding that we yoyo between the idealised version of ourselves and the complete opposite. This situation is often seen in extreme diets. Addressing this dynamic is a crucial step to achieving the change we'd like to see. I'd always look to work out what is sustainable.

### **Practical Strategies for Success**

Here are three actionable strategies that can aid us in making progress:

1. **Less is More:** Simplify our priorities to a core set of behaviours that truly matter. Write them down and choose a few from the list to focus on initially. By doing so, we'll build momentum towards meaningful change.
2. **Daily Check-Ins:** Allocate a specific time each day to reflect on our progress. Develop proactive and engaging questions for each behaviour. Ask ourselves, "Did I do my best to..." and rate our efforts on a scale of 1 to 10. Or maybe you are more attracted to a traffic light system or emoticons to provide immediate feedback. This brief check-in exercise takes only a few minutes but can significantly shape our day by directing our attention towards our goals. Raising our awareness is a critical step. Don't underestimate the power of it.
3. **Accountability Partner:** If you find it challenging to hold yourself accountable for the suggestion in action 2, seek the support of an accountability partner. This could be someone who asks you the pertinent questions, or it might be as simple as texting your answers to them. Consider using a summary number, like an 8/10 rating for your progress. For some, having external support can be a powerful motivator in maintaining focus and momentum.

## Overcoming Common Obstacles

In pursuing personal growth, it's important to be mindful of common stumbling blocks. One such challenge is overstretching ourselves, which can lead to resistance to engage with the check-ins. Additionally, it's common to overestimate our willpower. Recognise our own limitations and consider enlisting the support of an accountability partner. Remember, seeking assistance is not a sign of weakness but rather a proactive step towards realising what you want.

## Conclusion

Embarking on a behavioural change is a powerful investment in our personal and professional development. By consciously shaping our behaviours, we can build resilience, seize opportunities, and chart a course towards what we want. **If you are keen to experiment with this and would like a template to help you, drop me an email, and I'll be happy to share one I use when working with coaching clients to achieve behavioural change.** Remember, the path may be challenging, but with focus, practical strategies, and the support of others, we have the power to unlock our true potential.

As always, I'm interested in how you get on.

Damian

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"POSTIVE THINKERS – GET POSITIVE RESULTS – BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT AFRAID OF PROBLEMS"

Ken Blanchard and Norman Vincent Peale

'The Power of Ethical Management'

## Being Bettina's Dad – Community Engagement & what it has meant for Bettina.



*Bettina at the heart of her community.*

Taking a seat in our favourite café, Bettina and I wait for our cake. Our server comes up to Bettina and says, “when I see your smile it makes me feel so happy.” Recently on social media a ‘follower’ on X (twitter) commented: “Was Bettina in town yesterday? I am sure she walked past me on St John's Street.” Even though I had not met this person before, he recognised Bettina. It is not unusual for people I do not know to cross the road to say hello to Bettina.

Having nine years of experience of supporting \*Bettina our daughter in her community prior my first role in the Social Care Sector, in what would be the start of a second career, I had decided I wanted to support adults with a learning disability. My first role involved forming a team which would support people who had previously been excluded from their community. I had a wealth of ideas I had learned from Bettina on how to do this and I was keen to see if they worked in equal measure.

\* Bettina is a woman who copes with a learning disability and autism.

### What Community Engagement has meant for Bettina – Her 5 x ‘C’s’

- **Communication.** Bettina was non-verbal until the age of ten. Bettina struggled to communicate her needs and anxieties and how she was feeling about life. Both Joyce (B's tiger mum) and I honestly believe that Bettina's progress in her communication skills have been accelerated by her exposure to her community.

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

- **Connection.** For Bettina this has been about building relationships with others in her community and the people with whom she spends part of her week. This could be at the local garden centre where she works (supported employment), or the life skills farm she loves. Bettina has an interest in animal husbandry and gardening, and she shares her passion and skills with those around her. Bettina's Personal Assistant's role is to help her maintain her connections with people within her local community.
- **Contribution.** Bettina has always been a role model for what is possible at each stage of her life, starting with her schooldays and right up to the present day.
- **Choice.** Initially we chose the activities and places we thought Bettina would enjoy in her early years and, based on our observations of how Bettina reacted to different situations and environments, we accumulated a series of options over a period of time. As a family we are overjoyed that Bettina now makes those choices for herself.
- **Confidence.** Confidence and being confident means something different to everyone. For Bettina it means understanding and knowing her abilities, trusting without question those around her to keep her safe and secure. Bettina has accumulated a huge amount of life experiences over the last 36 years. It is these challenging experiences she can recall when her confidence dips. You did it then – you can do it now!

*Bettina's Personal Assistant told us that she had never met a person who copes with a learning disability who was so positive and confident.*

Related: [Being Bettina's Dad: Bettina's lessons in confidence – Leadership in the Raw](#)

#### **Five benefits Bettina has had from being engaged with her community.**

1. **Self-Esteem.** Bettina feels equal to everyone. She has been able to express her needs and has a positive outlook on life.
2. **Valued.** I am always pleased when Bettina and I have an opportunity to visit a town close to where we live and which we have regularly visited for over 30 years. It is a place where she is a valued customer in her own right and she is missed if we have not been there for a while. I sense the relief from the shop assistants when we walk into a shop, especially when they have not seen her for a while, and I am always moved by the greetings she receives.
3. **Fulfilled.** Bettina always has something to look forward to. Every day is different and so are the weekends. Her fulfilment is evidenced by her happiness and satisfaction. We believe this is because Bettina is reaching her potential.
4. **Independence - Being in Control.** Bettina values opportunities to make her own choices at her own pace and timing, especially within her community. One of those choices is who she chooses to engage with and deciding the level of close support she needs to achieve her goals, i.e., making her own judgement about the tools she needs to use when gardening instead of having them chosen for her.

**5. Safe and Secure.** Because Bettina has been part of her community and has actively engaged with her environment from an early age, as a family we have been able to take reasonable managed risks. This has given Bettina confidence to try new experiences (safely).

**What you can do to support someone to engage with their community. This is about sharing your:**

**Community knowledge.** It is likely that the people you support will not know their community as well as you do.

**Networks.** This is an opportunity to introduce people to the person you support who are not paid support workers, so their personal network (Circle of Support) becomes enriched with people who want to be part of their life.

**Interests.** Think about the interests, sports, and hobbies you enjoy. It is possible the person you support has not had the opportunity to experience those things or attend those events.

**Trust** Bettina will always need to have someone by her side, so how did our relationship evolve over the years so that new experiences no longer fazed her? It had everything to do with 'Trust.' These are Bettina's Five lessons in Trust:

1. Reliability. Someone whom you can believe in and rely on (so turn up every day with your A Game). You need to be dependable as a person in everything you do.
2. Honesty. This builds confidence in the decisions you make to support someone.
3. Responsibility. Take your obligations seriously – in Bettina's case she is incredibly vulnerable so we can never let her down.
4. Consistency. As Joyce, my wife tells me - stick with the plan! If you say you are going somewhere, and you have communicated each stage of the plan always stick to it.
5. Belief. Demonstrate that you believe in the persons hopes, dreams and expectations.

### **Routines & Rituals and being Recognised.**

Bettina is reassured and builds her confidence with routines and rituals and is therefore often recognised within her community. We have several places we visit as a family (each one having its own special name allocated by Bettina).

One of those rituals and routines is our annual holiday to Whitby, always during the same week in August. During our last holiday, one of the assistants from a shop we popped into on our arrival, spoke to Bettina "hello I remember you, how have you been." I was flabbergasted! Out of all the thousands of visitors that must have visited their shop and she remembered Bettina!



*Taking community engagement to the next level when Bettina featured in an ITV news bulletin in Whitby with her dad during Covid.*

Steve Raw

[www.leadershipintheraw.org](http://www.leadershipintheraw.org)

“Do one act of kindness each day of the year and change 365 lives”.

Anthony Douglas Williams

### **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

“Learn as much as you can from those who know more than you do, who do better than you, who see more clearly than you” Dwight D Eisenhower

## Positive Vibes - A Way of Life

It is always a head-scratching moment when someone asks me how I remain such a positive person in a pessimistic world and, more importantly, how do I do it? Is it because I am a lucky person who always gets what she wants? Is it because I have a fantastic counsellor? Or is it because I just do not realise what is happening in the world around me? How can I be so positive when such a lot is wrong with the world today?

Well, it is none of the above. Being positive, and creating positive vibes for those around you, is a way of life. It is a choice anyone can make, despite the adversities they face, it is not a secret. There is no trick. So, how is it done and where do you start?

Here are some easy pointers to help you start:

- Gratitude: If you want to read a good blog post on gratitude and being grateful, log on to [www.leadershipintheraw.org](http://www.leadershipintheraw.org) Being grateful for what you already have, which may be considerably more than most, is a good start to feeling positive.
- Start your day with a quick mental checklist. Did you wake up in a nice warm bed? (Check) Is your house still standing? (Check) Are your loved ones all ok? (Check). Is the earth still turning? (Check) Do you have enough money/food to take you through the day? (Check) All positive vibes,
- Look around you when you go outside. Feel the day. By that I mean taking notice of the weather; your surroundings; signs of life and fresh(ish) air. If someone gives you eye contact on the street/bus or in the shop - smile (obviously only if it is safe to do so!), most people will smile back! See, creating a positive vibe not just for you, but for others.
- Give to others your time and a sympathetic ear. Listening to someone at the bus stop, railway station, shop, work, or home is a cathartic exercise. It makes you feel happier about your own circumstances and may actually keep someone from harming themselves or others or make them feel that they are not invisible in our big world.
- Spread the love is a favourite saying of mine when I have helped someone. I truly believe that even the smallest act of kindness can make all the difference to someone's life and is what makes the world keep turning. More positive vibes.

I am very fortunate in that I come from a large family where I learnt very early on that you are not the centre of the universe and that there are many others out there who will have less than you. I am not saying that it is not okay to feel down or upset from time to time, especially where circumstances seem to appear to have plotted against you, but it is not okay to dwell in that trough of self-pity. YOU have the power to turn to the positive.

But, be very careful. Being positive is highly contagious, it is not for the weak-hearted, and it is how we livelikearaw.



## **SUCCESS IS AN ATTITUDE OF MIND**

Success is available to everyone: it really is, if only you can get in the right frame of mind. You only need to be awake, sober, and positive (and I'm not really sure about sober).

### **Try these tips for success:**

- Think about doing yourself justice rather than success.
- You are almost certainly much more talented than you'd ever imagined. It is your duty to make the most of your talents.
- Succeeding gives you a buzz – go on, you know it does.
- Money matters, if you have a choice. But never be ruled by money. It's a means to an end, not an end in itself. The cliché that you can't take it with you when you go is true.
- Doing things, you believe to be worthwhile will make you feel and be successful.
- Flex your muscles. Try new things. Do stuff you didn't think you could do. Get out of dozing in your comfort zone. It's a bad place to be because you can never get better.
- You can't succeed in anything unless you have a plan and unless you set yourself milestones.
- You need to succeed without taking yourself too seriously.
- Failure is a great teacher. Don't be frightened of it. Don't blame others when it happens. Learn to succeed by curing failure.

Source: Richard Hall

Kind words can be short and easy to speak but their echoes are truly endless. Anon
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### **Ten Ways to.....Admit You're Wrong**

1. Understand it's for the best.
2. Don't stress about it.
3. See it as a stepping-stone to success.
4. Do it promptly.
5. Be honest.
6. Keep a level tone of voice.
7. Hold eye contact.
8. Don't grovel.
9. Put it behind you.
10. Don't repeat the mistake.

Source: Modern Management

## Understanding Assertiveness

When you are in conflict with someone, you need something from them, or they are denying your rights, it may seem as if the only way out of the situation is to back down or to fight for your rights. But there is a third way. An assertive approach means being adult about your needs and your wants, neither giving up nor being oppressive. It means knowing you have the right to ask for what you need and to be heard. It also suggests ways of achieving that. Assertiveness is not a one-way ticket. You need to be prepared to listen to the other person, recognise their point of view, and negotiate a win-win solution.

## Acting Assertively

Think through what you need to say, and then make a simple, short statement of what happened, your feelings, and your preferred solution. “When you took credit for my idea, I felt belittled and angry. I would like you to tell the boss it was me who did the work.” Choose a quiet time and place to raise the issue. Neither attack nor apologise. If the other person argues or gets upset, repeat your statement calmly. This will make it easier for them to take it on board and start negotiating a solution.

Source: Positive Thinking. Susan Quilliam *‘Essential DK Lifeskills’*

“It takes 20 years to build a reputation and 5 minutes to lose it. If you think about that, you’ll do things differently.” Warren Buffett

## WINTER WELL BEING

Jeff Archer from the Tonic on wellbeing strategies that will help you to thrive during the winter months.

Most people would agree that taking care of their wellbeing is easier in the summer and that making healthy living choices can feel like more of a challenge as we move into October, November and beyond. So, what can we do to boost our resilience, energy and mood for winter?

### Plan for year-round wellbeing results

The first thing to do is to stop thinking about the potential healthy living pitfalls that arise at the end of summer and instead put an end to the seasonal ebb and flow of positive wellbeing results.

### Set month by month guidelines.

One easy way to break this cycle is to sketch out a wellbeing schedule on a 12 – month planner and write out your priorities for every month. This is the quickest way to achieve clarity on what you need to do to feel great and perform well for the entire year. Pick out some seasonal themes and then add detail to these with monthly and weekly guidelines.

### **Think carefully about your exercise options.**

For many people getting active during the summer can become a pleasure rather than a chore. They run or cycle outside, play tennis, football, softball, or netball and generally get a bit more social with their exercise, even if this is as simple as walking with friends or colleagues. When an autumn approach has many of these same people tend to think about migrating back towards exercising along in the gym – or at least intending to. But think about it. If you really enjoy outdoor and social activities, there's a limit to how inspired you'll be at the prospect of pounding away on a treadmill on your own. So, give some thought to how you can maintain at least an element of your outdoor training and/or social exercise during winter.

### **Healthy eating**

What you eat is more crucial during colder, darker months when you really need to boost energy levels, resilience, and immunity. Winter options that are packed with vegetables, pulses, lentils, beans, and wholegrain carbohydrates will optimise your effectiveness and your mood.

### **Maintain life balance.**

In the winter there's a temptation to hunker down and hibernate. The danger here is that we risk narrowing our weekly schedule until we're left with only work and family issues to deal with which might be satisfactory for a period, but to achieve the optimum sense of purpose, satisfaction, and balance, it's a good idea to make a conscious plan to include hobbies, interests, and socialising throughout the year.

For regular wellbeing updates, top tips and motivation follow The Tponic on Twitter @JDArcher

Source: ILM's Edge Magazine

### **MY TOP 3 PICKS FOR PRESENTATIONS FROM [www.Ted.com](http://www.Ted.com)**

[https://www.ted.com/talks/scott\\_dinsmore\\_how\\_to\\_find\\_work\\_you\\_love](https://www.ted.com/talks/scott_dinsmore_how_to_find_work_you_love)

Scott Dinsmore quit a job that made him miserable, and spent the next four years wondering how to find work that was joyful and meaningful. He shares what he learned in this deceptively simple talk about finding out what matters to you — and then getting started doing it.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/amy\\_cuddy\\_your\\_body\\_language\\_shapes\\_who\\_you\\_are](https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are)

Body language affects how others see us, but it may also change how we see ourselves. Social psychologist Amy Cuddy shows how “power posing” — standing in a posture of confidence, even when we don't feel confident — can affect testosterone and cortisol levels in the brain, and might even have an impact on our chances for success.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/nigel\\_marshall\\_how\\_to\\_make\\_work\\_life\\_balance\\_work](https://www.ted.com/talks/nigel_marshall_how_to_make_work_life_balance_work)

Work-life balance, says Nigel Marsh, is too important to be left in the hands of your employer. Marsh lays out an ideal day balanced between family time, personal time and productivity — and offers some stirring encouragement to make it happen.

## **FAST TRACK TO NEGOTIATION**

**Prepare your position.** Why give anything away in order to get what you want unless you have to? Before you start your negotiation, ask yourself whether it is necessary.

If you do go ahead identify exactly what issue you need to negotiate in order to get the best outcome for you and your team. Be absolutely clear in this but also devise a fallback position.

**Ensure you can 'seal the deal'** Negotiation can be a protracted process so the last thing anyone wants is to reach an agreement only to be told that it now has to be approved by a superior.

Unless you are the decision-maker make sure you are clear before any negotiation starts the other person has that power, simply by asking them up front.

**Adopt a win-win attitude.** The only truly successful negotiation is one in which both parties believe their needs have been met. So, avoid entering negotiations with your outcome cast in stone or by adopting bullying tactics.

If you win at the expense of the other party, the deal will most likely come back to haunt you. Look to build a relationship – talk about potential future benefits that could follow the deal under negotiation.

**Allow yourself space.** At the outset leave room for negotiation ask for more than you expect to get and concede less than you are prepared to give. But make sure you consider the amount of leverage you have, compared to the other party. Overestimating the strength of your position could jeopardize your desired outcome.

**Listen attentively.** Brilliant negotiations are always good listeners. It is essential to pay attention to the other person's cues and listen to what they want. Always look for ways of solving the other party's problems first. This will motivate them to meet your demands and reach agreement.

**Get commitment.** Once you have reached an agreement ensure both sides are committed. Keep the momentum going: the end of the negotiation should mark the beginning of the action phase, so agree on follow-up actions and deadlines as part of the deal closure. Ensure everything agreed is recorded.

Source: ILM Edge Magazine

## CAREER MASTERCLASS

### BE A TOP COACH

**Prioritise.** When deadlines loom, coaching is all too easy to postpone. Don't. Find a format that works for you (weekly check-ins over breakfast, Skype chats while you travel) and commit.

**Start Strong.** Don't waste your first session on niceties. Ask your team to bring a list of things they want to achieve and how they think you can help. This is coaching, not a coffee morning.

**Educate.** At first, coaching (that is, apprenticeships) involved telling trainees exactly what to do. Today, we ask questions to guide people to answers. But the ideal is a mix. For example, if you're setting goals, ask them what exceptional performance looks like and share what you think they could achieve.

**Build trust.** Coaching relationships rarely work without it. Highlight shared interests, show you appreciate them, be consistent, and don't ever breach their confidence.

**Craft their dream job.** We're more productive when doing tasks that play to our strengths. Find out what they relish, then delegate accordingly. If you can't change their role, change their perception by showing how tasks fit with their long-term goals.

**Keep them motivated.** Are there tasks they just can't learn to love? Show them how they link to the company's goals: 'I know you hate data Analysis but we're moving towards a more data-driven approach; you're making yourself 'indispensable.'

**Give them the inside track.** From the CEO's pet projects to the resource controller's sweet spots, show your protégés how to impress those who matter most, and keep your ear to the ground about the impact they're having.

**Get real.** If you know they want to leave, do what you can to prepare them for their next step. It's better they're engaged in their final months than mentally checking out.

**Swallow your pride.** If things aren't working, have an honest chat then help in the one way you can: find them a new coach.

Source: The Mind Gym

"It is time for us all to stand and cheer for the doer; the achiever – the one who recognises the challenges and does something about it".

Vince Lombardi

## Some Recruitment Trips from:

### **SHACKLETON'S WAY OF SELECTING AND ORGANIZING A CREW**

- \* Start with a solid core of workers you know from past jobs or who come recommended by trusted colleagues
- \* Your No2 is your most important hire. Pick one who complements your management style, shows loyalty without being a yes-man, and has a talent for working with others.
- \* Hire those who share your vision (and Thera's). Someone who clashes with your personality, or the corporate culture will hinder your work.
- \* Be a creative, unconventional interviewer if you seek creative, unconventional people. Go deeper than job experience and expertise. Ask questions that reveal a candidate's personality, values, and perspective on work and life.
- \* Surround yourself with cheerful, optimistic people. They will reward you with the loyalty and camaraderie vital for success.
- \* Applicants hungriest for the job are apt to work hardest to keep it.
- \* To weed out potential slackers, choose workers who show a willingness to tackle any job, and will take a turn at the unpopular tasks.
- \* Hire those with the talents and expertise you lack. Don't feel threatened by them. They will help you stay on the cutting edge and bring distinction to your organisation.
- \* Spell out clearly to new team members the exact duties and requirements of their jobs, and how they will be compensated. Many failed work relationships start with a lack of communication.
- \* To help your team members to do top-notch work, give them the best equipment you can afford. Working with outdated, unreliable tools creates an unnecessary burden.

'Shackleton's Way' Margot Morrell and Stephanie Capparell

"Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life don't be trapped by dogma – which is living with the results of other people's thinking. Don't let the noise of other's opinions drown out your inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary."

Steve Jobs

## BRAINWAVES

### Common Problems Solved

**Feeling the Butterflies?** Then why not try the ‘walking breathing technique’ from public speaking expert Lynne Copp, founder of the Worklife Company. Before each presentation she gives, Copp walks into the room much faster and more determined than usual. Not only does this give an air of confidence, but it also releases excess adrenaline – calming those nerves and slowing down your pulse.

**Making the most of your time.** Do you ever feel like there’s just not enough time in your working day? Then you need to learn to organise the chaos that surrounds you. One simple method is to address each project or piece of work you have due and outline four key things: What you have already done, what you are waiting on from other people, what is left to be done and when your final deadline is.

**Managing those difficult conversations.** CMI (Chartered Management Institute) has some simple advice to help you handle difficult workplace conversations: remember the acronym ‘TALK’:

**T** - Think about approaching the conversation from a different standpoint. Don’t label it as ‘difficult’. It may be about a tricky subject but, by suggesting solutions or alternatives during your discussion, you can focus on constructive outcomes.

**A** – Always use clear, simple and neutral language. Refer to specific examples and facts.

**L** – Listen to what the other person is saying and hear their point of view. Demonstrate that you care about how they see things.

**K** – Keep the focus on the issue, not the person.

‘Don’t let Success go to your head. Don’t let failure go to your Heart’.
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Dear Steve

### **A Traveller’s Tale**

A monk lived a quiet, reclusive life in the hills, just off a little used track that connected two distant villages, one in the north, the other south. Occasionally travellers would pass, and he would always invite them in to share some time, food and conversation.

One day, a tired looking man called in on his way from the north. He was exhausted, unfriendly, and made short, sharp efforts at exchange:

“Tell me, monk, what are the people like in the village to which I travel?”

The monk replied.

“Before I answer, tell me, how did you find the people in the village from which you’ve come?”

The traveller said, “It was a horrible, unfriendly place. The people made no effort, and I hated my time there.” To which the monk replied, “In which case, I must tell you that you will find the people in the south, much the same.”

Two days later another traveller arrived, much fleet of foot, and of a far happier disposition. He asked the monk about the people in the village ahead, and the monk asked the same question about those he had met in the north.

The traveller said “The village I have come from was a wonderful place, a real community. People made me feel so welcome, they shared their stories, their food, and their hospitality. They became some of my closest friends, and I was sad to leave”.

To which his host replied, “In which case, I must tell you that you will find the people in the south, much the same.”

David

(David Taylor, author, and broadcaster)

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