




DUCKETTS
 TRUSTED ADVISORS

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 Newsletter

Change management special. Short.

Holidays (like second marriages?) are a triumph of hope over experience. Come September, when everybody is back at work, there's renewed optimism that things will come together. It usually takes till about day 3 to wonder if you were ever away. July and August are therefore good months to think about what needs to change (and how to make the changes work) when normality returns.



Possible books of the month

William Bridges – “Managing transitions: making the most of change”. This is the classic text on the subject and has recently been updated – lots of real life examples.

<http://www.wmbridges.com/index.html>

There is a very real distinction between change (doing things differently) and

transition (doing different things). Arguably, the world is in transition to the Global Knowledge Economy. Or maybe we're just changing the way we do a few things? Either way, if the book looks too much like hard work, try the article about Moses and the Israelite transition on leaving Egypt. The translation from Bible-speak to Management-speak proves that there really are no new ideas. More alarmingly, the Israelites spent 40 years in the desert before they were allowed into the Promised Land and Moses himself never got there. All Prophets please beware. I have the article as an Acrobat file if anybody wants it.



Recovering from disaster?

The Sage of Bishopswood has developed some new tools for his website. The tools are effectively mini exercises designed to encourage you to think about what you are doing (even if you're not on holiday). There's a new one each week – the links alone could keep you out of mischief for days.

<http://www.thestrengthscompany.com/>



Herding cats

If I'm feeling professionally dispirited (not unusual), I generally head for the Trusted Advisor website. I can usually find something to help get the latest idiotic issue into perspective. So, I picked on an article discussing leadership in the service industry. Most of the management literature talks about big leaders having big visions. [Very close to megalomania?] Everybody would laugh if I harped on about being Number One in all markets. We work (one way or another) in fragmented service industries; (client) service is what we do and it's all about leading by example and getting the right people with the right attitudes doing the right thing. Pretty much like herding cats?

<http://www.trustedadvisor.com/articles.html>

Salesmen are go

Given that we routinely work for organisations that struggle with salesmen, I felt obliged to read the Harvard Business Review double issue on the subject. To my delight/surprise, I came across a remarkably straightforward article on the subject. The gist of the thinking is that you can manage salesmen for results or for activity, but never for both. In other words, experienced (good) salesmen will live or die by their commission. They don't need to be managed: just left to get on with it. By contrast, management tendency is to set targets (number of cold calls, for example) and monitor performance. On the basis that activity produces results, if you know what activity is being undertaken, you know what result will emerge. In the real world, the 2 approaches get muddled and all sorts of dysfunctional things happen. We frequently get asked about reward schemes: make sure you understand what sort of sales force you really have/want before you go down this route. And, read the article.

Tax returns are go (too)

Some real news: Lord Carter suggested moving the tax return filing deadlines and promptly disappeared to Australia to avoid the furore. He's now had to change his mind (like everything else in the budget) and the new suggestion is an October deadline for manual returns and a January deadline for electronic ones. Why did he bother? Christmas is cancelled again.

Tricks of the trade

The new Home Secretary has promised to revamp the Home Office in 100 days. Politics aside, can any one person really make much difference in 100 days? Well, apparently Napoleon escaped from Elba, took charge of France and lost at

Waterloo in this time frame. Whilst this particular snippet of information is of dubious relevance, it did allow The Times to run an interview with a successful businessman (Sir Gerry Robinson of BSkyB, Granada et al) and ask him what he would do. The answer is an amazingly succinct analysis of how to run any organisation:

- Decide what needs to be done and in what order
- Allocate tasks to people
- Have a meeting every week to review progress and set next week's objectives

So, what's the problem? Read the article yourself on

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,7-2266992.html>

Lessons on the web

The print media are determined to make best use of the web and there are a number of subscriber services where you can access the wisdom of well known business people. The Telegraph runs such a service on

www.telegraph.co.uk/50lessons.com. I

suggest that the real value is created by taking generic solutions (there are no new ideas in business) and applying them (with intelligence) to your particular circumstances. Then tweaking the plan when it doesn't quite work first time. Maybe not as sexy as a web interview, but a lot more effective?

Disclaimer

"Extreme laziness may have a medical basis, says a group of high-profile Australian scientists, describing a new condition called '**motivational deficiency disorder**' (MoDeD). The condition is claimed to affect up to one in five Australians and is characterized by overwhelming and debilitating apathy."

benefit gets coded out, so it's usually a nasty shock when the tax catches up with you.



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