

Special launch issue



Agile Mind Premiere: The Soap Opera with a difference

Plus!

Changing Organizations: grow with them
7 sins of time management, teams, and decisions

THE zine for people heading to the top

Successzine

And! Witty guides to systems, recruitment, sales and marketing, and information management.



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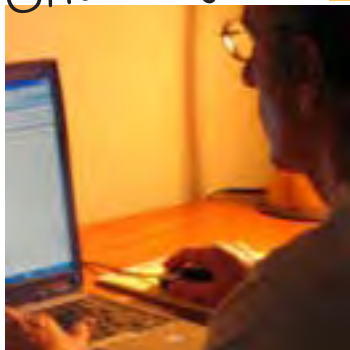
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IT'S A WRAP

My name is Alison and I have an obsession: I am a compulsive learner.

I think I'm lucky, because studying so many different subjects has given me a great variety of careers. I just cannot sit still and I lust after new experiences.

Studying Mass Communications was my latest venture and this Successzine is the result. **I saw the light. Entertainment is THE way to communicate learning.**

Education shouldn't be dry, full of jargon and delivered by professors that are dustier than the ancient tomes they spout from. If people in the education business could entertain, then many more people would learn more – and enjoy it more.

Do Cosmo or Esquire absorb you? Do you forget all your worries when you watch your favorite TV show? Do you sing along with the bands playing on your iPod? You relax and enjoy. AND you remember contents of magazine articles. You can tell your colleagues who said what and what happened in the latest episode of Desperate Housewives or whatever is your favorite program. You know all the words to your favorite hits and could sing them backwards if you wanted to. You look forward to getting the news – but only from The Daily Show on Comedy Central, which entertains whilst it informs, whereas the regular news shows simply inform in a mundane way that doesn't make the information stick..

How much do you remember of what your teachers told you? 50%? 5%? Any%? I guess if listening to them sent you to sleep, then one reason you know anything at all is that you slogged to cram it in before exams. Wouldn't you like to consume, remember and understand new educational knowledge as easily as you do mass entertainment?

Read Successzine and be entertained as you learn about business and management. It's free. There will be a new issue every month. Every month you will become better in your job because you will learn and understand new things. As you read more issues, you will gather as much know-how as anyone who has struggled to get an MBA. AND you will have fun while climbing to the top.

Enjoy this first issue.

To your success!

Alison

Alison J. Macmillan

www.wordisworth.com

“Your chances of success in any undertaking can always be measured by your belief in yourself.”

— Robert Collier <http://robertcollier.wwwhubs.com/>



IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU

Every month this section will have articles for your personal development. This month there's time management, decision-making, and teams. Be warned: they are not like anything you've read before.

Ask the expert

Brian shares his wisdom

This is the web's one and only business and management soap opera. Every month you will follow the lives and loves of the staff at Agile Mind. It's sure to become your favorite serial!

IT'S ALL ABOUT THEM



Brian's space

New stories each month

Brian Staff is a novelist and business expert. See more of his writing on www.wordisworth.com

IT'S ALL ABOUT BUSINESS

Here you will learn about 4 key business and management functions - people; sales and marketing; information and finance; systems and methods. It's your jargon-free guide to the knowledge you get studying for a business or management qualification.

Grin and giggle pages are dotted about.

Enjoy!

“Most people fail in life because they major in minor things.”

Anthony Robbins



The seven deadly sins of time management

Darn it! Where are those sales figures? If you could just find them amongst the phone messages, journals, project papers and unanswered letters on your desk and spilled around the floor, then all you've got to do is analyze them against last year's, add them into the report with a couple of charts and you're done.

But it's already past 8.30 p.m. It's quiet except for the wheeze of Joe's vacuum cleaner and his awful hacking cough. Everyone else has gone to Darren's leaving do at the Banshee Bar. You wanted to go, but if you do the report will never be finished.

Cuss, think about how unfair it is, and fume because no-one else works as hard as you ... if it makes you feel better. But that won't get the report finished.

Guess what? **Your vices are the problem.** **One or more sins consume you.** You won't be smothered in brimstone or fire, or force-fed rats, toads and snakes, but you will be running around like a headless chicken. **Here are some tips to help you conquer your sins: >>>**

Vanity: Pride comes before a fall.

Time spent competing for the spotlight, dressing up yourself and your work, and pooh-poohing the efforts of others because only you can do it right helps you create an impression ... but is it of substance or moonshine? You're right to aim for quality and perfection, but it's what's under the wrapper that counts.

Concentrate on adding quality and perfection to ingredients rather than the icing. What key things must you do in your role? What standards must you meet? If you don't know, find out, do it, keep doing it, stop just talking about it, and quit doing things that won't lead to promotion.

Do the right things right.

Greed: Keep it for yourself; pay for it in time.

You are eating up so much work, there is none left for anyone else. Your colleagues want fulfillment too. It's very common to carry over work from a previous position into a new role, just to keep your hand in. But what about the hands of those working for you or with you?

You know you should delegate. Why don't you? Don't you trust your colleagues? Are you doing familiar things to avoid your scary new responsibilities? >>>

Habits of the vain:

Spending time talking about what you are going to do rather than getting on with it;
Adding bells and whistles to reports, presentations and even messages you leave for others;
Re-doing the work of others because they didn't do it like you would.

Stop being greedy:

Do everyone a favor and start working as a team, supporting each other as you all learn and gain confidence. Leave other's work to them and leave at a decent time tonight.

Let others attempt the tasks you mastered long ago. They'll learn, you'll learn to trust them, you'll stop interfering ... a vicious cycle will become a virtuous one.

Envy: You want what's not yours to have.

Whining again because the promotion goes to that young whippersnapper who's still wet behind the ears? I can even hear you thinking that you should be the boss and it just isn't fair (are you stamping your feet, too?).

Dare I suggest it might be fair? What does that green-eyed monster lead you to do or not do? Maybe withhold co-operation? Ignore requests? Work to rule or do more than everyone else? Keep knowledge and information to yourself? Spend time dreaming or net searching for what could be, if only?

Give yourself a break. Focusing on what's not happened – fairly or unfairly - just adds stress.

Gluttony: You want more, but face it, 24 hours is the limit.

You need more time to finish the report, prepare the presentation, talk the customer into buying, make the decision, get organized, prepare the plan. You want more and more time, and the more you have the more you want. Why is that? It's likely that you face some challenges. You lack some skills, you procrastinate, or you don't know when to stop. >>>

No more envy: Remember you are good at what you do, your standards are high, you are an achiever, you're positive - at least you are when you concentrate on achieving your goals rather than whining that things are unfair. Life is a bowl of cherries. Ignore the pips, enjoy the sweetness and you'll get through more in less time with your just deserts.

No more gluttony: If you suffer from not knowing when to stop. Set aside a time to achieve a task and stick to it.

“Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go.”

T. S. Elliot

Get into the habit of scheduling time in your diary for your important tasks. You keep your appointment for the dentist, so keep your appointment for working on the marketing plan.

Sloth: All that non-activity keeps you sleepy all day.

Do you wonder why you can't be bothered, can't get motivated, have endless coffee breaks, and always idle your time away? You're in a vicious cycle of inactivity leading to sluggishness, which leads to weariness, which leads to slow production, which causes daytime to disappear down a sleepy hollow. Get out of it. You can break your habits if you put your mind to it. If you think you need a little help from your GP, then make an appointment.

Focus on the cost of your lethargy if you don't change. What's it going to feel like if you go on like this for another few weeks, months, or years? Feel it badly. Feel it hurt. Then change it.

Lust: Craving power, success or recognition blinds you to what you love.

The temptation to lust after something can become a habit you no longer enjoy. Are you too busy making a life you thought you wanted rather than getting a life? It's good to demand more of yourself, to want more out of life and to chase the masses of opportunities around. >>>

Wake up the sloth:

If you procrastinate because you lack a skill, then spend time mastering it. That will take a lot less time than constantly having to work around your ignorance!

Tell yourself you CAN do it. Get down to it. Once you start you will be able to keep going. Plan treats for achieving tasks.

Goodbye lust:

Write down five things you can do without then toss them away. What have you put on the shelf for later? Take it down, dust it off and go get it.

There are no limits to achieving your dreams. But what do you dream of? Is the future rosy if it always consists of working long hours, foregoing holidays, living to work? Move away from what you don't want to what you do want. Focus on the pleasure of leaving work at 5 p.m., having time for dinner with friends or family, taking in a movie, getting to the gym,. Imagine awakening fresh and ready for the day.

Think of all the good reasons why life-work balance makes sense. You'll be motivated to get it. Think you can't? You're right. Think you can? You couldn't be more right.

Anger: Stamp it out.

It won't fix anything, it won't do any good, and it may make things a whole lot worse. Dealing with difficult people or situations can make you seethe, lose your cool and do things you don't want to do. Managing your side of a situation will boost your confidence and your productivity. You know it's not productive to get into an argument with the bank clerk, or take a hammer to your computer.

Take control of your moods. ☹

What one thing must you really have? Are you spending time getting it? If not, stop doing the things that are getting you what you don't care for. Make time to go for the things that matter.

Banish anger
You can choose how you react to a situation. Do you want revenge? No need to waste your time. What goes around comes around, so let Father Time take a misdoer to task. Anger will distract you from what's important and have you prioritize incorrectly. Concentrate on the present and future, learn from the past and move onwards and upwards. ☹

THIS
IS A
GRIN AND GIGGLE PAGE



*These little gems came from the BBC -
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/6435311.stm*

Bring your lingo into the 21st century:

***iPOD**: insecure, pressured, over-taxed and debt-ridden young working people*

*to **ski** is to: spend the kid's inheritance*

*a **neet** is: a 16-24 year old not in education, employment or training*

*if you are feeling a bit under the weather then you might have **Mss**: money sickness syndrome*

*do you know any **Fids**: fully involved dads, or are the ones you know **Fuds**: fully uninvolved dads?*



Deer in the headlights

A guide to making decisions

You're driving along in the dark of the night and the moon is in the sky. There's a deer in the middle of the road. It sees you. Your headlights show its panic. It needs to make a decision. It can't make up its mind. Splat!

When you make the wrong choice, the consequences are not so severe, but it can hurt nonetheless. What makes you so different from the deer?

Well, basically, you learn through observation. You can see it's not a good idea to walk in front of a bus.

But what about at work? When you are pressured to make a decision, how can you be sure you get it right? Consider:

Is it really necessary to make the decision before taking time to weigh up alternatives and their consequences?

Making a decision is better than making no decision at all.

Don't be pushed into deciding something just because someone puts pressure on you. If you want to

think about it, get input from others, and measure the pros and cons, then do exactly that - then decide.

If a quick decision is unavoidable, e.g. when there's an accident, then just decide quickly. But don't stop there. Learn from it and make sure others learn too. Record the learning, build it into training. >>>

Whenever you make a decision – rational or intuitive – learn from it.

Here's a little known snippet: most managers make the right decision only about 50-60 percent of the time! (As far as we know from the ones who own up!) Given that, you could decide not to worry about whether your decisions are right or wrong. Or, you could decide to do better than your boss.



When you reach for a goal, you are more likely than not to get only part way there. Therefore, if you want to achieve your target you have to set it higher than you actually want. If you're up for it, set a target to make better decisions than your boss and aim to be right 99% of the time. Exploring decisions will give you a head start. >>>



Decisions

Explore

In broad terms, there are 2 types of decision-makers. Type A – the American Airlines pilot – she can't just decide to loop the loop on a whim – all decisions are thought through, planned and rational.

Then there's Type B – a Jimi Hendrix type – his music would not have been half as good if he had thought through every note. He made it up as he went along; he was an improviser.

Which do you think you are? If there is a bit of both in you that's perfect. Sometimes you need to be a pilot, sometimes Jimi Hendrix and sometimes both – a sort of Mozart, both organized and spontaneous.

This takes us to 2 main types of decisions – rational and intuitive. Let's say you need to decide how to get to a new town to meet a new client. That's a rational decision because you have a specific goal. Will you take your trusty little Honda or put yourself at the mercy of Amtrak or something else?

To make the choice you consider when you have to be there, train times, possible road hold ups, your confidence in finding the place, how close to the train station the office is, etc. You make the decision, do it, and when you eventually get home after a hard day feel pleased about making a good decision. >>>

Now let's imagine that you took the train and got to your destination ready to implement the second part of your plan – to take a taxi the last few miles. Well, the train stop is in a small town and there are no taxis about. What are you going to do?

In this case, something, anything is needed. This is an intuitive decision. There is no way you can make a plan, and consider alternatives until you do something and get some information to go on. ■

Decision makers Pilot vs. Hendrix

Are you a Pilot or a Hendrix?

If you usually plan and consider every alternative before acting, when you are faced with an emergency or a need to make a quick decision, you may dither rather than get on and do something. **It's OK to act on impulse.** Sometimes the situation needs it.

If you usually make spur-of-the-moment decisions without thinking, then you would be wise to learn to take a step back and consider whether you could make a better decision. If you thought through what you are trying to achieve and weighed up the alternatives you could find a better way to get what you want.

Link to the fact pages of WordLisWorth.com for more about decision-making techniques and to get some practice using them. ■

To be a

MEET 6 DIFFICULT PEOPLE AND LEARN TO
DEAL WITH THEM OR WALK AWAY >>>

team p

L

Player

HOT TIPS

Be assertive

Be neither a raging bull nor a shrinking violet. Assertiveness is not aggression. Recognize others' points of view, and express yours without anger. Confidently state your views and don't give in just to avoid conflict. Do the best for the team.

Play the right role at the right time

If you are usually the one who lightens things when others get hot under the collar, consider stretching yourself to also co-ordinate the team and clarify what you are trying to achieve.

Pay attention to the job and other people

Several heads are better than one. Give your ideas and solutions. If others are quiet, bring them into the discussion. Everyone has a role to play - recognize and encourage others. If someone has a hidden agenda (ulterior motive), attempt to bring it out. >>>

THE INSIDER'S GUIDE TO DEALING WITH *PROBLEM PEOPLE*

Here's a truism: there's always someone at work that rubs you up the wrong way, or is a pain in the proverbial. It could be one of many team members. Here is an introduction to some of the people you can meet in a team, with some tips for keeping your sanity, being an excellent member of the team, AND being the person who helps the prima donna fit in.

SUZIE SHIRKER



She does less and earns more. She's late in the morning, but bang on time leaving at night.

Why not suggest starting a merit system? Sell it to your boss by pointing out that your targets can be linked to the strategic goals of the company so that everyone is working to the same ends. You will be motivated to earn more. Suzie Shirker will miss out, you will gain, and you will impress management with your forethought.

Or, tackle the problem head-on. Is the team covering for her failings? Why are you doing her job? If your report isn't finished because Suzie didn't produce her figures, then use some psychology to make her think you can rely on her. Tickling her ego will get her to be reliable. Rather than "I might have guessed you'd let me down", say "I really appreciate that you go all out to get the job done."

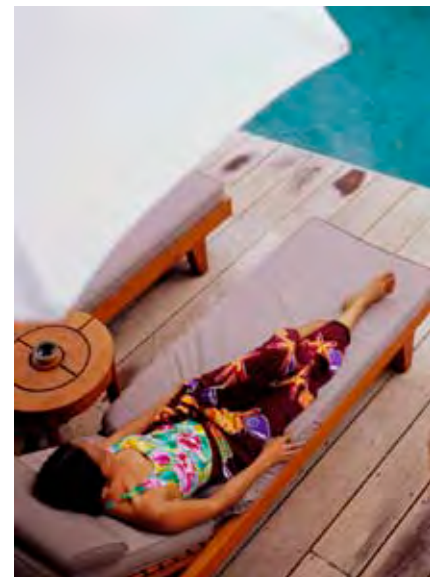
DOLLY DAYDREAMER

She so wants to be somewhere else, be someone else, or do something else. She thinks it's unfair that she's not had the luck that those above her have had. She daydreams so much that she doesn't pay attention, makes mistakes, and is just not up to scratch - credentials sure to keep her at the bottom of the tree.

She can imagine herself as a VP in the company - they haven't a clue and she could sort out the company, but 'they' are all against her.

She bad-mouths her boss and colleagues to everyone to make them look incompetent and paints a picture of her imagined superiority

Simple solution: don't listen, don't join in a discussion. Or call her bluff. "You've got loads of ideas, Suzie, why not bring them up at the next meeting." Or, "there's an ad for a new head of department - why don't you go for it?" Get her to walk her talk. >>>



PETER PUTTER-OFFER

He's had a week to do something, but doesn't start until the last minute and messes up your schedule. He's disorganized, goes round in circles, starts one thing and then another before finishing the first. He doesn't make a decision until the crisis is boiling over. He deliberately doesn't do something because he doesn't think he should do it, or he doesn't like doing it.

You are fed up constantly reminding him.

You could just stop reminding him to save your energy and sanity and let it play itself out. Either he'll sort himself out or someone else will. Or, in a positive vein, think about what he wants or fears. and play to that. Do you only speak to him when you want something? Work with him. Involve him in the team, make him feel valuable and useful. Spend time with him and help him to prioritize and get organized.



GORDON GOOF-OFF



He is allergic to conflict, being part of the group, and putting his thoughts forward. So much so that he rarely says anything, and you could forget he is there.

He is probably really likeable because he never criticizes and he never puts forward controversial ideas - if he did that someone might disagree and then he could get into a difference of opinion.

Everyone has something to contribute.

To encourage him, get him on his own and draw him out.

Tell him you really value his opinion on the latest management proposal, and ask him for coffee to talk about it. Ask him to bring some written ideas. Don't let him finish coffee until he has written something down and come forward with some ideas. Build his confidence. >>>

NORA KNOW-IT-ALL



She knows best, is always right and listens to no-one. She is so convinced she is right that even when you show her facts to counter her “truth” she will wave it off with a “whoever wrote that must be deranged”.

She takes over in meetings, talks on and on about her ideas, not even noticing that everyone else has fallen asleep.

She interrupts when anyone else is talking.

She always disagrees with anything she has not input to.

You let her have her own way, because you are so worn down by her verbal torrent. Oh - and she also has a very loud, strident voice.

You might not feel comfortable doing it, but you have got to get her to listen to others and do what’s best for the team.

When she interrupts, you must say: “Hold on I haven’t finished”, or “Please could you give me a chance to add to what’s been said”. A great phrase to use instead of “I don’t agree”, is “I see it differently”.

BOBBY BUCK-PASSER

His greatest skill is explaining why something is not his job. Before reading Successzine you would have gritted your teeth and done it for him, just for a peaceful life.

Is the task part of your job? Find out by asking your boss whether he thinks you should be doing it. If he says no, ask him to suggest who should and explain that it is important for the team to get it done.

Or, don’t take the buck! Say something like: “mmm, if it’s not your job I wonder whose it is? Let’s go and check with the boss.”

Bobby may also pass the buck for an error or problem. Oh no, it wasn’t his fault.

Turn the error into an opportunity to learn. The most important thing is for the team to figure out why it went wrong so that you get it right next time. Get the facts. Bobby might just tell a blatant lie. If so, be sure that you have the right facts for the next time.

Play the attorney! “Oh, if you didn’t do that, then how did it get done? Julie was doing the design, Matt was doing the technical stuff, Purvi was out that day, and I was at a meeting.”





Brian's space

SWIMMING WITH SHARKS

THE MARKET IS A SHARK TANK. LEARN TO DIVE IN AND SWIM RATHER THAN WALLOW AND BE EATEN.

I'm learning to swim.

If you'd asked me a couple of weeks ago if I could swim, I'd have replied "Yes." And it was true. I could manage to swim a quarter of a mile or so, as long as I got rests between lengths. But it was labored, and apart from the sense of attainment at having the energy to cover a respectable distance, I didn't enjoy it. My swimming was little more than barely avoided drowning. A brick will fly when thrown, but its always battling its true destiny, which is to obey gravity and fall to the ground, and so it was with my swimming. By splashing around vigorously enough I could just about stay ahead of the game, but I was about as graceful a swimmer as a brick is a flyer.

I consoled myself by saying that it must be boring, plowing up and down the same stretch of water again and again. I run and I cycle, and I can sightsee while I'm doing it, but no matter how assiduous the designers have been, surely studying the tile pattern on the bottom of the pool must get boring after a while? But at the same time I envied people who seem able to glide through the water. Their arms describing lazy arcs for length after length after length. I studied their bodies and told myself that they had natural buoyancy and it was bound to be easy for them. Skinny guys like me are destined to take on water and sink. If I ever got fat, I told myself, I would have the consolation of being able to swim easily at last. Every cloud has a silver lining.

But then some friends tried to get me to sign up for a triathlon. The five mile run and the 15 mile bike ride would be easy for me. How long is the swim? I asked. And when they told me it was three quarters of a mile, in open water, with nothing to hang onto for spluttering support every thirty yards or so, I guffawed, and demurred. But they told me that all was not lost. That it was all about technique. Ha. I said. I've heard that before. The perfect golf swing is all about technique, but how many people have one, and not having a great golf swing isn't dangerous, compared to, say, being stuck in the middle of a large reservoir with a lousy swimming stroke. But they explained and it sounded logical, and now one of them is teaching me how to swim, properly. >>>

Link to Brian's bio

At our first lesson my friend asked me to swim two lengths, without a break, so that she could look at my stroke. I finished the two lengths, out of breath. I didn't enjoy them and I didn't relish the idea of swimming any more, unless she could perform miracles.

Well, without going into details, she performed miracles, and half an hour later I was swimming length after length, relatively effortlessly, and enjoying it like I never had before, like I had never believed possible. And what had she corrected? My technique. I was doing some basic things wrong, and by putting them right I became more at one with the water, accepting it for what it is and using its very nature to make progress, rather than frantically battling it to stay alive. And with technique came pleasure, the pleasure of slicing through the water rather than flailing in it.

And much of life in general and the business world in particular are the same. It's not what you do that matters, but how you do it. It's about doing the right combination of things, in the right order, in the right way at the right time.

Sales and marketing are complex processes that require getting a lot of things right. The market is a shark pool, and the flailing swimmer is easy meat. To be successful requires having the right product (product management), having a viable market to aim at and positioning the product correctly (product marketing), building a supply of information about and endorsements of the product and communicating them to the market (marketing communications), getting market opinion formers on your side (press and analyst relations), creating a consistent buzz about the product with special offers and specific messages (campaign management), and training the sales force how to sell the product. If anyone of these components fail, the whole process can fail, of if they are performed at the wrong time or in the wrong order, the overall process can be hindered or broken. Just like a swimming stroke or a golf swing, every thing needs to happen in harmony, so that the different components work together to maximize their effect. And when this harmony is achieved, success is the result, and brings with it the innate satisfaction of seeing a well-oiled machine run smoothly and powerfully.

Treat the market like I learned to treat water - accept it for what it is and use it to make progress rather than frantically battling it to stay alive. And the added bonus is that when your technique is good, the mere act of doing your job will give you a great sense of pleasure to accompany your positive results. ■

THE NET'S FIRST BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

The Soap that has:

- people like you
- employees you will love or hate - just like your workplace
- business and management problems that are all too familiar to you
- the personal agonies that creep into work life
- gossip, back-stabbing and politics
- the good, the bad and the sloppy

Soap

Relax and laugh while you peek into the lives and loves of the staff, and learn to avoid the pits so many people and organizations fall into. The Agile Mind soap shows you how to glide past your colleagues effortlessly.



Maura's angry

AGILE MIND
THE WEB COMPANY



Jay's sore



Markus is cynical

the
first



Tamsin flops



Kate's in trouble

episode



Where's Dougal?

>>>

Agile Mind is a small, growing and changing web design and web hosting company. It has ambitions to grow and move into selling web templates and photography.



AGILE MIND THE WEB COMPANY

Maura McGovern, the founder and CEO of Agile Mind, is dealing with an unhappy customer, Mr. Davies of Trugrow Plants, who claims that his staff and customers are looking as prickly as the cactuses he sells because no-one can see images on the website or use the shopping cart.

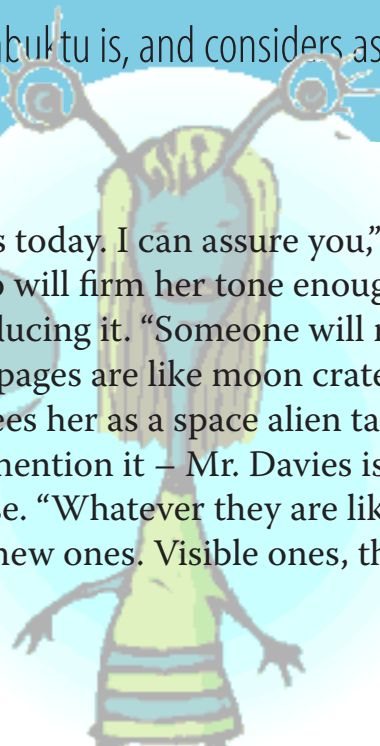
“I’m sorry. I’m not sure what went wrong, but I’ll look into it. Yes, yes, we won’t charge you for this month. What? Really? Okay, we won’t charge you for last month either. We’ll give you a refund against next month’s service.”



“It’s like the moon on our screens Maura. “You promised continuous updating of images to show our monthly specials, and “a design to get the traffic we need” – I’m quoting from your damn brochure here – and what I’ve got is more like Timbuktu on a bad day – empty and forlorn.”

Maura wonders where exactly Timbuktu is, and considers asking Mr. Davies if he knows, but decides against it.

“Mr. Davies, we’re going to fix this today. I can assure you,” she says, as she pulls her posture straight, hoping that doing so will firm her tone enough to placate him before he has a seizure and tries to sue her for inducing it. “Someone will replace all the images.” “There are no bloody images, the pages are like moon craters!” Davies tells her. “Okay,” says Maura, thinking he sees her as a space alien targeting his plants from the moon, but again deciding not to mention it – Mr. Davies is in no mood for distractions, scientific, geographic, or otherwise. “Whatever they are like, they will be changed by the end of the day and replaced with new ones. Visible ones, that is.” >>>





Eventually she manages to end the call, and realizing she's about to put her head in her hands she forces herself to snap out of any feelings of desperation or self-pity, and instead picks up the phone again, jabbing her bright red finger nail on 3 to summon Jay, her technical sales account manager.



Maura is Scottish and in her early 40s. She's been streaking her light brown hair with blonde for the past ten years. Jay is African, in his late 20s, with classical features and jet black hair, which he decided to dye blonde two weeks ago. Every time Maura sees the newly blonde hair atop Jay's egotistical head, she struggles to stop herself from laughing. Not that it makes him any less handsome. She just wants to ask him "Why?"

"Who looks after Trugrow? Is it Kate?" Maura asks.

"Aye, it is", replies Jay mimicking Maura's Scottish accent. She hates it when he does that.

"Ah hope there's nay wee problems, noo."

Maura soars out of the seat stretching her 5'10" frame on her 4" stiletto heels to make sure she can tower over the 6' slim, yet muscular, Jay. She walks over to him and gets so close that he has to step back before her steely eyes manage to bore right through his head. Now the door handle is pressing into the small of his back and Maura is making him squirm so much that he is reminded of the time he had an encounter with a police officer, but he banishes the thought from his mind as Maura bellows only one statement:



"You recruited her, didn't you?"

"Well yes." He manages not to squeak as the door handle kneads into his back. "She's been with us a few months now. She's a quick learner and pretty right on with everything."

He's dropped the Scottish accent now.

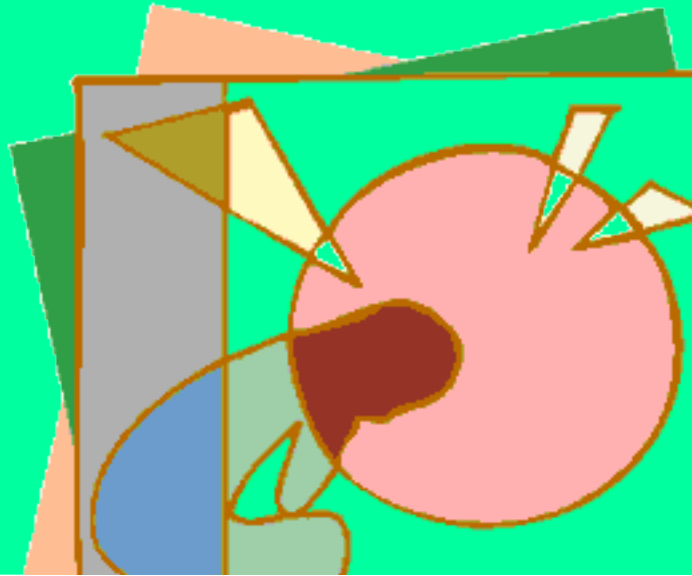
"She has no IT or Web design qualifications, but she's been tinkering with DreamWeaver



for, like, years and years. Man, she showed me some real cool examples of her designs and I knew she would be just the babe for the job."

Maura is too het up about the Trugrow problem to spike her heel into his groin for the sexist comment, and steamrollers ahead with her tirade:

"But Jay, did you ask her to look at a good website alongside a disaster and ask her to spot the difference? Did you ever sit her down in front of a PC and get her to demonstrate what she could do, so she could show she could do more than switch it on?" >>>



Jay laughs. The bright white teeth, the brown skin and the incongruous blonde hair strike Maura so hard that this time she can't stop herself laughing at the sight, but at least Jay will think she's humored by her joke and not by his appearance.

“Seriously, Jay. She may have fooled you into thinking that she was on top of the job when all she really knows is how to set herself up on MySpace. She comes across as being so confident and bubbly that you probably recruited her personality. You need to prod and poke when we're getting new people on board to make sure they really know what they're doing and can use initiative and react to unusual circumstances.”

The article, *The easy way to recruit the wrong people*, will help you avoid such recruitment errors. [Link here.](#)

Just then a rip roaring guffaw erupts outside in the main office, only just outdoing a banshee shriek. Kate is at the reception desk with Tamsin. The pair of them are falling about like limp ragdolls and Tamsin is snorting like a pig. Maura grabs the door handle behind Jay's back before he can move and yanks open the door. Jay is sure she's broken his back.



“Jeezo”, says Jay.
“I couldn't put it better myself”, says Maura.
“I don't normally like blasphemy in the office, but on this occasion, Jay, you're right, the two of them are acting like they're at kindergarten.”

Off she marches towards reception while Jay massages the small of his back. The Stars and Stripes sounds – Jay's cell. He tries to ignore Maura's glare as he flips open his razorphone.



“Hey, Sweetie, are we getting together tonight, I've had one hell of a day”, says Jay, sitting down and stretching his Gucci-clad legs across Maura's desk. “I need a back massage and I can't think of anyone who can do it better.” >>>





Jay lowers his voice as he spots Markus, a scrawny individual, standing just outside Maura's office. Jay is paranoid about being spied on, especially by someone like Markus who's a sneaky old dog. Markus is the company techie and he wields his power like George Bush. If you haven't been licking his boots then you're ignored or last in the line to get anything done.

Meanwhile, Kate screams and Tamsin lands in the trash can, her legs splayed like a puppet's. Maura slams her hand hard on the reception desk. Silence. The heads that had been raised above work cubicles in the open-plan area duck down instantly and, as if on a pre-arranged signal, the air is filled with the sound of clicking keyboard keys, phones dialing, and the photocopier resuming its churning and clunking as the staff launch into activity that distances them from the scene at the front desk.

Maura's face is purple with rage and her arms are crossed around her middle, not to look threatening, but to stop herself from hitting one or both of them.

“Explanation, and now” says Maura.

“You could have given me a heart attack”, whimpers Tamsin, and then with more assertion, “or worse...”

Kate makes to walk away, but Maura stops her in her tracks.

“You're going nowhere, lady. In my office now.!!>>>



“But what’s wrong, we were only laughing”, says Kate. “Look at Trugrow’s website. It’s hilarious. Somehow the new images haven’t gone up and there’s all shapes, sizes and colors of containers with my nicknames for all their plants. Look, there’s *stinky pool* – that’s for that one that smells disgusting when you water it. And look, *gingangooley* for the one that looks like, well, has a clump of berries with a long stem.”

“Let’s have this chat over coffee in my office”, says Maura. “When did you notice this?”
“Oh, its been like that for months now.” Kate starts to giggle.

“Each time I put up new images, it looks OK on my machine but when Tamsin logs onto it, it’s all squiggles and gobbledygook. I think there’s something wrong with Tamsin’s machine.”

“Has anyone mentioned there is a problem, at all?”

“Oh yes, every month Mr Davies yells down the phone at me, but I assure him it’s a bug with his machines. And if it isn’t, I’ll keep working day and night to fix it for him. He tries to be an ogre but he’s really a sweetie.”

“Have you looked at his webpages on his machines?”

“Oh, yes. I went over there a couple of months ago, and he showed me the blank spaces, but I thought the images were just slow to load. I keep telling him not to worry”

“You keep telling him?”

“Yeah, I told him he just needs to be patient. The images need time and positive thinking to appear.”

“Positive thinking?”

“Yeah, you’ve got to give them space. If you crowd them, they just disappear, like people. Like men in particular.”

Maura scratches her head, and notices a wisp of hair fall on the desk in front of her. A blonde hair with a grey root. >>>





Maura is in her office with Markus and Jay. Markus is biting his nails - he isn't allowed to smoke in the office. Jay looks as chirpy as ever, and particularly glad that Markus isn't able to envelop him with smoke

as he usually does. The IT area is very much Markus' domain, his natural habitat, where he does exactly as he likes, whereas Maura's office makes him feel uncomfortable and constrained. Like one of the machines he cherishes, he thrives in the right environment and crashes in the wrong one.



"I've called this meeting to talk about Trugrow," Maura says. "One problem here is communication, another is staff management, and yet another is team work, or lack of it", she says. "You've both been on the management courses, yet none of the lessons seem to have penetrated. You might have the knowledge but you are not using it and acting like professional managers. All the information we needed to see what was coming, was in these offices. We just didn't put the pieces together and act ahead of us getting landed with a customer satisfaction issue."

Markus grimaces. "Customer satisfaction issue," he thinks to himself. Pissed off punter more like.

"Kate screwed up," says Maura. "Badly?" She moves her glare from one to the other. "Jay, you recruited her. Markus, you trained her. So, which of the three of you do we fire?"



The Week Magazine -
www.the weekmagazine.
com - has a section *It
must be true ... I read it
in the tabloids.*

On the week of March
23, 2007, they revealed
a German man's solution
to getting his half of his
divorce settlement. He
chain-sawed his house
in half and drove his bit
away on a forklift truck.



**THIS
IS A
GRIN AND GIGGLE PAGE**

Successzine feature on
change.



**WHATEVER
HAPPENED
TO
THE WANG?**

Three certainties in life are birth, death, and taxes. Organizations can avoid death, but their future is dust unless they spot changes affecting them and act. It's often thought that start-ups are the only species that need to evolve as they mature, however, to stay alive all organizations need to constantly, and often radically, adapt and change, as do the products they make and the services they deliver. And this thing, *an organization*, is not some machine that churns day and night all on its own. People steer and fuel it. They have to change, too.

Find out how to avoid going down even if your organization is crumbling around you.

Back in the era of Flower Power and Woodstock, when *The Who* smashed up their musical instruments, and *David Crosby* became more famous than his father, *Bing*, Wang was THE name in word processors.

Why did such a successful leader go the way of the dinosaur? When it wasn't looking, the all-powerful T.Rex got overtaken by change and evolution. And so did *the Wang*. >>>



Want more on the 60s? I like this site:
<http://www.rob-insweb.com/60s/index.html>.
Google *The 60s* to find others.



Out on 3 counts:

Firstly, the company didn't notice that the word processing market was being pushed asunder by the computer market.

Secondly, Wang focused on the mini-computer as the market bought into the PC.

Thirdly, when they jumped into the desktop market they failed to fit it with an IBM-compatible lifebelt.

Wang went bankrupt in 1992, however, a few years later it re-invented itself as a network services company. It was acquired by Getronics in 1999.

In evolutionary terms, this prehistoric company died out, then evolved into other species, and then rose from the ashes as a bird.

In the animal kingdom, extinction is a by-product of evolution.

In the business kingdom, extinction is a by-product of failure to adapt to changes and failure to compete successfully with others. So, to state the obvious, if a company adapts to change and builds itself up to compete it will live on like, well, Mick Jagger, sort of.

Some companies go from birth to maturity and re-birth. Others go from birth to extinction when they fail to notice that the world is not as it used to be. Still others try to live in the past, like people who insist on only listening to music on vinyl records. They have never made the transitions from tape, to cassette, to CDs, or, heaven forbid, MP3 downloads. >>>

THE WINDS OF CHANGE

Technological change is flying faster than a speeding bullet. And that bullet has shot through the armor of many solid organizations products, and people.

SOME EXAMPLES OF CHANGE AND EVOLUTION:

ORGANIZATION CHANGE

Remington, once shorthand for typewriter, just as Hoover is shorthand for vacuum cleaner, is now focusing on the arms business.

PRODUCT CHANGE

The erstwhile revolutionary companion of the secretary, the typewriter, has been replaced by desktops, laptops, PDAs and all manner of gizmos.

PEOPLE CHANGE

The secretary of old is unrecognizable now that computer keyboards have been mastered without a whimper by men who wouldn't have been seen dead at a typewriter in the olden days.

How do organizations stay in the game while being buffeted around by whirlwinds?

SOME EXAMPLES OF HOW TO SURVIVE:

STAY IN THE SAME INDUSTRY AND CHANGE PRODUCTS

If you can move with the groove, you're OK. If Carbon paper makers could adapt to make photocopying paper, they are still in business.

USE THE SAME MATERIALS AND PROCESSES IN NEW INDUSTRY

If suppliers of vinyl plastics to the record companies could get into the vinyl windows or fences markets they are still around.

MAKE THE SAME PRODUCTS BY ADAPTING TO NEW TECHNOLOGY

If phone companies could update to wireless technology and produce cordless phones they stayed in business.

>>>

How have people adapted to changes to stay employed?

SOME EXAMPLES OF SKILL AND ROLE CHANGES

The Architect has learned CAD-CAM.

The secretary is skilled in desktop design and publishing packages.

Some secretaries are now administrators and project managers, having learned management and organization skills.

Journalist don't just write now. They are skilled in design and layout. They do much of their research on the web, rather than on the street.

Technicians are specializing increasingly because of the variety of software and hardware.

Database administrators are using new tools so that they can show that the company's databases are working within the law.

Telesales and customer service agents now have immediate access to all customer data in Customer Relationship Management systems.

Offshoring is big business and skills in working with remote organizations are a must. Some workers have gone overseas to stay employed.

Managers are skilled with technology and can produce many of their own reports.

Web designers are in high demand.

Mechanics are not using tools, they are controlling robots that use the tools.

Marketing specialists bid to get their company a high ranking on Google and Yahoo.

Campaign managers write copy, design layout, code it with HTML or a package like Dreamweaver and launch mailings over the web.

Engineers have learned to work with new materials.

There are lots more. Join the Successzine discussion forum and tell us how your job and skills have changed.

Keep an eye on what's happening and pay attention to warnings so that you will swim rather than sink.

>>>

SURVIVAL WITHOUT A CRYSTAL BALL

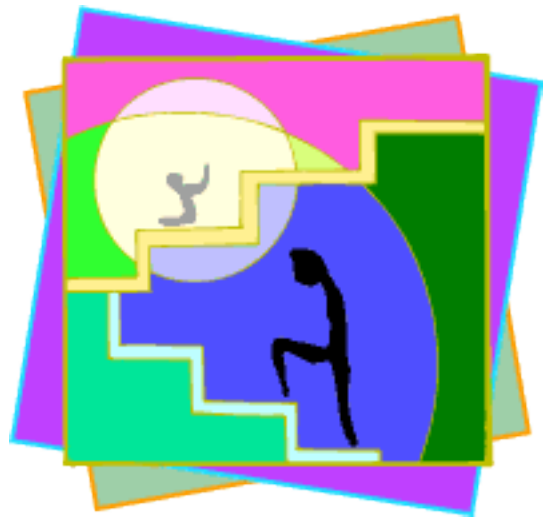
Future gazing is not only bestowed upon the sixth daughter of the sixth generation. If you know how and can put your mind to it, anyone and any company can keep their pencil sharp enough to tackle even the meanest Soduko game.

You don't need to be a prophet to know what changes are on the horizon. The signs are bright enough for anyone to see, if you know how and where to look. Then all you have to do is re-shape, re-clothe and hang out with the new cool.

On Absolutely Fabulous, when Saffie told Edina that all she needed to do to lose weight was to eat less and exercise more, Edina's scorn lightened the load carried by Weight Watchers members the world over: "If it were that easy, everyone would be doing it, hmm, Sweetie?"

Managing change effectively is similar. Change sticks it to some and some stick to it and see it through, emerging leaner, healthier and much sought after.

TAKE PHOTOGRAPHY, FOR EXAMPLE:



Once upon a time when you took your photos to be developed at the pharmacy you had to wait for days, and then wait in a line to collect them.

Nowadays, the wait and the lines are shorter and a new self-serve machine has appeared – one that prints your digital photos for you.

The business has changed in three ways to survive in the face of different kinds of changes:

1 Recognizing that digital cameras could make film obsolete it uses new technology to stay in the photographic print business.

2 It provides as many printing options as you are offered when ordering a sandwich in Subway. Do you want 2x4 or 6x8? Do you want it framed? Do you want it printed as a 24x30 poster? Do you want it scanned and then digitally enhanced? Ford was able to say that you can have any color as long as it is black, but nowadays we expect choice.

3 It provides quicker and better customer service - we can take our business elsewhere if the staff aren't nice to us or we don't get what we want when we want it. >>>



Where you work has changed for many. Remote working, telecommuting and freelancing can give workers more freedom.

There was a time when just about all workers worked in a workplace. Now we can work in our pajamas at home.

In the days of old, workers belonged to the company that paid them, told them what to do and made their working lives pleasurable or painful.

Nowadays, remote working is the name of the game in many occupations.

This mode of working benefits organizations and homeworkers:

Rising costs and competition from overseas have to be reigned in somehow. One way organizations do that is to pay for skills they need when they need them, rather than pay a monthly salary and benefits to people who work their little socks off at some times of the year and who take ever-longer lunch and coffee breaks at others.

Offshoring jobs - having roles, like telesales, carried out in other countries brings big cost savings.

Organizations get other savings through reducing office space, utilities, and other overheads.

The homeworker can ditch the boring and expensive office suits, live on top of a mountain (if it has Internet access) if they are so inclined, and choose their own working hours to fit in with family stuff, hobbies and blah days.

And the best of the bunch of benefits may be that they can avoid that dreadful commute and all the stress that goes with it.

Oh, the planet is fed with fewer obnoxious gases, too.



New legislation brings change:

In the past an organization could hire people just like all the others. So, white male managers recruited white males. Those with a color or a disability, or who are female may not have been considered despite their qualifications.

Or they could pay as little as they could get away with to some groups. But equal employment legislation makes such discrimination illegal.

Organizations need to set up systems and procedures to ensure that they work within the law. This can cost the company money, but in the long run it should see benefits as they get the right people into positions and pay them properly to encourage them to stay. It protects employees from old Scrooges. >>>



Environmental concerns are leading to changes in various industries, for example farming and food production, the automobile industry, and waste management industry. Some of these changes lead to new legislation.

Look at how the car industry is changing. With a need to meet low emission restrictions, clean-air technology is advancing and hybrid cars are rolling off production lines, changing the economics of the industry. Where once a brand name could guarantee big sales, environmentally aware consumers are spending their bucks on natural gas or electric cars. The rules of competition are changing and companies have to change to stay at or near the top, or just to stay in the game.

It's one thing to know you need to change but pulling it off is quite another.

In coming months *Successzine's* feature piece will go further into the topic of managing change to help you become an expert manager of change.

WATCH AND PLAY

If you've stuck with this article then you know a lot about the consequences of standing still – you get run over. You also know that keeping within shifting goal posts is essential to survival. You may not realize that you've also learned a way to figure out what the future is bringing. The previous section, *Survival without a crystal ball*, showed the results of an environmental STEEP analysis! The theory is outlined on the next page.

Change in what customers want, developments in society, new technology, enhanced and different products are all changes that organizations with any strategic awareness watch. You need to know what's happening so that you know what to do to adapt to it and keep up with it.

Successful people, too, watch what's going on. Many a typist who shunned the word processor and then the computer and didn't think they needed to learn how to make good PowerPoints, found themselves tripping while those coming after them raced up the ladder with promotions and new responsibilities. You gotta keep up to date to climb up the career ladder. >>>

ANALYSING THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT



WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

Social change

Customers asking for something else and going where they can get it. Changing tastes and expectations. Changes in the way we live.

Technological change

Advances in technology that could leave you behind, or that mean you need to do things differently.

Economic change

Currency values around the world shifting so that your imports are more expensive.

Environmental change

People and governments calling for a greener world and legislating to get it.

Political change

New legislation on any sort of work practices. Political decisions like going to war lead to changes in the available workforce and work needed.

WHAT MIGHT NEED TO CHANGE:

Employee's attitudes, skills and knowledge
How the business is organized.
How the business does things.
What the business and its people do.
The equipment used.
The suppliers the business deals with
... and more. ■

More on **Managing Change** in future editions.
Register here for your free subscription to Successzine.

If you want some more on change

The BBC online magazine http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/default.stm on 16 March 2007 had a story about the demise of the lightbulb as we have known it for 127 years.

I still vote for candles, I can't imagine getting smoochy under fluorescent.

The easy way to recruit the wrong people

Do you have some weak colleagues? Perhaps there are poor or no recruitment procedures in your organization.

I woke up knowing that doom, gloom, and stress beyond belief were in my stars for today.

"What's the matter, honey?"

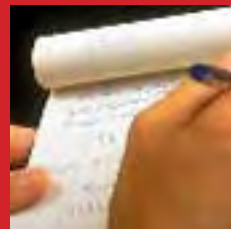
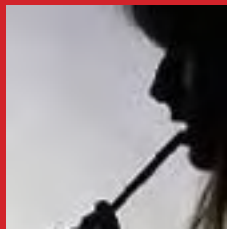
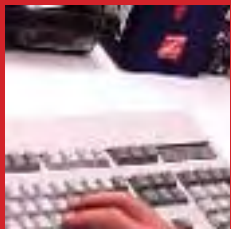
I so wish I could just snuggle under the blankets with Sasha. Even with sleep in her eyes and her hair all tousled she looks gorgeous. I don't know why she hates her hair. I like the way it tumbles over her

not. He's one hundred billion times worse."

I bury my head into her goldilocks and groan.

"I can't believe it!", she says as she sits up in the bed and starts punching the mattress and then she pulls her hair over her face and groans. She peeks out from behind her curtain of hair. She's looking at me as if

The right way to get the right people



Analyze the job

Describe it

Specify the person

Advertise

Start selection

shoulders. If I could only have some of those orange corkscrews to cover my onion head I would be a happy man. I wish it were so simple.

"Oh, it's just the usual again, Darling."

"You are joking", she says as she flops over and starts nibbling my ear. "That new techie who started last week, tell me he's not like the one before and the two before her?"

I don't need to think about my answer: "Oh, I can assure you he's

it is all my fault.

"Didn't you give Andrew all that material about recruitment I looked out for you?" She says as she rolls off the bed and proceeds to stomp around the bedroom, doing a few quick jabs and upper cuts as she goes.

I tell her that I hope it's Andrew at the end of these punches.

"This uppercut will finish him off", she says. "I can't bear it when you come home each night like a grizzly bear with a hangover and then try to

Choose people the same way you choose a car.

37

Two are sometimes better than one.

38

Get the people you need the same way you buy the car you need



What must it do?



Describe features



Specify types



Seek possibilities



Select

become a comatose one.”

I hate it when she accuses me of drinking too much.

“Of course I gave him the materials. Do you think I want to continue doing the techie’s job as well as my own because the ones he recruits are total jerks? I even took him through it all. He said he was going to clear his desk for a day, sit down, really think, and write down what the job involves.

“He even said he was going to ask the rest of the team for their suggestions. If he had just done that and then put together a description of what the job involves, he could have got a decent advert

If you don’t describe what’s involved in the job, then you can’t specify the kind of person you need and the qualifications, abilities, and experience they need.

together and we wouldn’t have got 1000 applications from people who have never even backed up a hard disk, let alone fixed one. Aargh,

give me strength. He must just have chosen six resumes with the best writing and pulled them in for interview.

“He had no idea what kind of person he needed. He’s been charmed or hoodwinked by a taut ass and slick talk. I’m amazed that the one before was female, they’re not on his diet usually. He would have had no clue how to ask the right questions and give the right tests to get

the applicant to prove they could do the job.”

“What did he say to you after the interview round? Darn it this skirt is too tight at the waist, I shouldn’t have had that chocolate mocha praline ice-cream last night, but it was yuuumaay.”

“I like the burlesque look.” Oops. Her glare tells me I shouldn’t have said that, so I quickly move on. “He told me they were all good but Sammie stood out. He talked about his wide range of responsibilities, the large companies he had worked for, his ability with just about any technical problem you could imagine and more.

“Andrew was totally taken in by someone who could sell ice to Eskimos. The way Andrew interviews, the only

If you haven’t described the job and worked out what kind of person can do it, how can you draw up an advert and place it where they are likely to read it?

thing he finds out is that the person knows some technical buzzwords. What a waste of time, money and energy and we have to go through it all yet again.

“Sasha, what was the key thing you learned at your recruitment course that persuaded you that following a recognized procedure for recruitment would get you people worth their weight in gold?”

Einstein said the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.

“That’s easy”, she says. “It’s no different from the process you go through to buy the right car.”

“Eh..?”

“Look, when we were getting a new car last year we narrowed down our options. We knew it had to hold our ski stuff for the winter, seat my sister’s three kids and the dogs, take us comfortably and economically on long trips and be good for buzzing around town. Oh, and we wanted something eco-friendly.

“That’s what you do when you look for a new person for a job. You go through all the tasks they need to do in the job.

If you get the advert right then you narrow the field and attract people who can do what you need and fit your description.

Then you know you can narrow the field. We didn’t look at a Crossfire even though it is a beautiful car and can buzz us around town, be-

cause it just isn’t economical. We didn’t look at a Hummer, even though it could carry everything and get us around in super-swish comfort, because it is neither economical nor eco-friendly. In fact we ended up getting two vehicles because we couldn’t get one that could do everything we wanted, and now we have a great little eco-friendly town car and a larger vehicle for our longer trips.

“We actually saved money getting two because they have all the criteria needed to do everything we want them to. It’s no use employing someone who can do bits of a job – who is going to do the rest? It’s also a waste of money to employ someone who can do far more than is in the job – unless you can see a higher opening for them coming up. Actually it’s good to employ people you can see have the capability of moving on and changing with the organization because it saves on training costs and eliminates the team upsets and cultural adjustments that always happen when a new employee comes on board.

“Look, give him the stuff again, sit down with him, and go through the check sheet with it. Don’t say you

haven’t got time. If you spend that time with him and he gets the right person next time, then you will release so much of your time, and we will be able to take a ski trip this year.”

When you know who you are looking for, then you have some criteria to select people against - otherwise you could be the victim of a slick talker.

ASK THE EXPERT

A problem shared is a problem solved



This month the expert throws some light on a mystery that many of us can't fathom. Email him at brian@wordisworth.com if you need his help with any of your issues.



Brian, you seem to motivate and encourage people without trying, but others who have read the books, been on the courses and got the T-shirt don't really get it. What's your secret?



Well, thanks for the compliment. I'm sure it's not deserved. I could have done better. But having said that, I guess I've started to answer the question. So tip number one is:

Feeling that you can always do better yourself is a key part of bringing out the best in others. If you think you've 'arrived', and you can sit on the top of a mountain dispensing words of wisdom, then you need to get back down to sea level and understand that you never stop learning, providing that you learn from the mistakes and advise yourself and others how to avoid making them the next time. Making the mistake not only means that you've had the guts to do something (rather than just procrastinate indefinitely), but that you have real life data to tell you how not to make it again.

Good managers don't 'do' (they leave their people to do their jobs and don't interfere), they guide, and guiding is a lot about decision making. Success comes from making hard decisions and following through. So how do you make hard decisions? Suppose you have to choose between action X and action Y. If the decision is hard, it means that both X and Y have a lot of pros and cons, which means that you can probably make either work, but only IF you support it completely and MAKE it work. Don't look back. If you go with decision X, sure it will turn out to have some messy aspects that make you wonder if you should have gone with Y, but constantly revisiting past decisions is a waste of time. You can make lesser decisions work if you focus, but there's no way you can make a better decision work if you're constantly looking over your shoulder and asking if you should have done something else.

So far I've mentioned general management skills, now let's talk about relating to your people and getting the best out of them.

continued on page 43

One is from Mars, the other from Venus

If Sales and Marketing are at each other's throats, maybe they just don't understand each other. Tune into Mark and Sal below.



“It’s all about selling. The marketing department is a bigger waste than how some of my tax dollars are used. It’s full of people who can’t sell so they set themselves up as gurus. “The names they pass us are all a load of trash. Do you know, they passed us hundreds of names of people who had attended that webinar where they got all the industry experts to say great things about us and they went on about what hot leads we were getting. We just logged some tasks in the sales database to say we’d phoned and the people weren’t interested. I never phoned any of mine. I just filled in some tasks over a few weeks and marketing didn’t have a clue – they are thick as a plank.”

“If the salesguys picked up a phone as often as they pick up a coffee we would have many more customers. They keep saying they never get anything from marketing, but we’ve added 4,000 good leads over the past few months. They haven’t followed them up and think we don’t know that they just log false calls in the database. The only calls I hear Ruben making are to his bookie. He’s got a mortgage up to his armpits. Oh, well, he can’t sell anyway so he’s more likely to make money from gambling than from sales commission. “If they would just use in their sales calls all the stuff we’ve put on the web about the product, and the press mentions, and the prompt sheets, they would get a prospect out of every call.”



Why do sales and marketing beat each other up? Sales seem to be from Mars and Marketing from Venus. Go out and ask some random people what they think marketing is. It’s a good excuse to chat someone up. How many people said “advertising”, or “getting people to buy things they don’t want”, or even “selling”? Read on for the similarities and differences >>>

Marketing prepares the market.

Sales gets it to buy.

Marketing is preparing the market (the customer) to buy what the salesperson has to sell.

You can relate it to archery. Marketing supplies the bow, loads the arrow, points to the target, and leaves the salesperson to aim and fire the arrow.

Marketing and sales are different, but also the same in some ways.

They depend on each other and the sooner they and the rest of the organization realize that the closer all will get to a beach-front property in Malibu.

Marketing is all about matching the needs of the customer to what the seller provides. Therefore, the seller needs to design its products and services to satisfy its customers' needs.

First-class air travel and local bus travel are both intended to get a traveller from a to b. However, the traveller in each case is a different kind of person with different needs.

That's why these two types of travel are designed differently to appeal to the different markets.

The next page shows how sales and marketing link together.

Charting it and understanding it is the easy bit. The next challenge is getting the organization to recognise the links.

But that's for another issue. If you want to be sure of getting your copy of next month's Successzine then sign onto our mailing list here.



Sales and marketing depend on each other

Both have a role in identifying the types of customers who want your product or service. Marketing captures their interest and Sales persuades them to buy.

Senior executives, plus sales and marketing, are involved in building the organization to satisfy customer needs.

Research your customer < > **Look inside the organization**

Who is your customer?

20-25 year old yuppies?
All households with children in San Jose?

What are you selling?

A product - e.g. a bicycle?
A service - e.g. dry cleaning?
A product/service mix - e.g. restaurant meals?

What does this customer want or need?

An affluent image?
Value for money?

How should you design it to fit the customers' wants or needs?

Quality materials and packaging? Source from overseas to keep costs down?

What will they pay?

Anything to get the best brand name? Discount price?

What will you charge?

Cut price to get market share?
Special discounted offers?

Where are they likely to see adverts?

Lifestyle magazines? Newspaper?
Junk mail?

Where will you advertise?

Vogue/in-flight magazine/local paper/buy a list of names and send mail?

Where and how will they buy it?

Online? Phone a number in advert? Shopping mall? Speciality store?

Where and how will you sell it?

Shopping cart on your website?
1-800 call-in number? Stock in all discount stores?

There will be more on this topic in future editions of Successzine

ASK THE EXPERT

A problem shared is a problem solved

continued from page 39



As a manager, you have to set clear goals and make sure your whole team is striving cooperatively to achieve them – that’s what makes them feel as if they’re a team and not just a collection of isolated players. You have to make sure each individual understands their role in meeting the overall objectives of the group, and the indispensable part they play in reaching those objectives - that way they not only understand why they’re doing what they’re doing, but why they are as vital a part of the team as anyone else.

Most jobs are multi-dimensional, consisting of a variety of skills. Try making a list of all the skills involved in doing your job, then assess each skill as to how good you are at it (from awful to great), and how much you enjoy doing it (from hate to love). Be objective and honest. You’ll probably find there’s quite a mixture! Usually, the things you are best at are the things you most enjoy. As a manager, if you get your people to really excel at what they’re good at, they will love their work, they will develop huge self-confidence, and that will help them improve the areas where they’re less good. If Joe is good at PowerPoint, tell him you want him to be the company’s ‘PowerPoint Superstar’. He can’t neglect his other duties, but when he gets to be admired for one skill, his self-respect will soar and his overall work output will improve. Joe will be an excellent employee and his work will also make him feel good - win/wins don’t come any better than that.

What about the things that Joe is really bad at and even his new self-confidence doesn’t help him improve at? Get someone else to do them! Teams support each other. Don’t enforce job descriptions to the letter. If team members need to swap specific duties for optimal efficiency, that’s fine. If Bill needs to give presentations but is really lousy at it, and despite coaching shows no sign of improvement, get Mary to give the presentations and have Bill do one of the tasks that Mary hates but he likes, like vetting partner contracts for example. We all have to learn new skills, but when the peg is obviously square and the hole is unchangeably round, try and find a round peg.

I’ve saved the most important tip of all until last: Communicate! One of the biggest failings of management is to fail to communicate regularly with the whole of the team. This leads to an “us and them” mentality, a feeling that management is plotting in secret, or is oblivious to the problems that the rest of the team is facing, or is taking credit for what the team is doing, or is being lazy, or is viewing the team as just a bunch of low-level worker bees, and on and on. And the communication must be bi-directional. A team meeting where the leader spouts forth and the rest listen is not communication. If people don’t open up in public, talk to them in private. If they don’t want to talk, don’t make them, but assure them that you’re ready to listen whenever they need to be heard. Good communication requires empathy. If you’re having trouble understanding someone’s problems, try putting yourself in their position and see how it feels. Constantly remind the team of the overall direction. It’s amazing how quickly people lose sight of the big goal and get swamped in detail. Lifting their eyes to see the prize will reinvigorate them and ensure that they don’t lose direction, momentum, or enthusiasm. If you have a fitness coach, you’ve probably heard them shout “Don’t forget to breathe!” now and again. That’s because we sometimes get so wound up in doing the exercise properly that our breathing technique suffers. Well, managers get so wound up in the mechanics of the business sometimes, that they forget they’re managing sensitive people. When that happens, someone needs to shout “Don’t forget to be a human being!” We’ve already replaced some workers with robots, and maybe one of these days we’ll replace managers with robots. But until then, we’re all in this together! ■

How to lose clients and watch your company sink

What do you do when a business lets you down? Ever wondered what people think of doing business with your company and what they do if you let them down?

Where can you get a Venti strawberries and crème frappuccino with whipped cream and an accompanying chocolate cream cheese muffin?

What ingredients go into the drink? >>>

Systems

Including

Is your company a hard or soft boiled egg?

46

A fly-on-the-wall look at Soozie and Darrell

47

What does the drink taste like?

If you answered Starbucks to the first question, well done! You might not know the precise list of ingredients in the drink, but what you do know is that whether you order it in Starbucks, Bond Street, London, or your local Safeway Starbucks, it will have exactly the same ingredients.

And the taste? Well it's the same everywhere, even though some of you might think it is heavy and sickly and others think it is deliciously, indulgently creamy.

Look at how Starbucks is growing. This news headline says it all:

New stores lift Starbucks profits

Starbucks saw its profits climb 18% in the last three months of 2006, boosted by opening more than eight new stores per day around the world ...

Starbucks said it opened a record 728 new outlets during the quarter.

BBC NEWS: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/business/6319525.stm>

Why is this company flush with success? Among the many reasons are systems and consistency. Read on. >>>

Among the many reasons Starbucks is so successful is consistency. Customer service is consistent. Ordering procedures are consistent. Record keeping is consistent. Suppliers enjoy the same partnership arrangement. Everyone does the same things in the same way so that the company can scale its operations. ('scaling operations' is a fancy schmancy business term for grow bigger and get cost savings and better earnings because you do everything in bulk).

How does your workplace measure up for consistency? Do you ever get a load of nonsense from your databases?

>>>



One airline, which shall remain nameless, must be in a real muddle. I get an offer every day from them to sign up for their visa and get extra airmiles. My information must be stored in different places in the organization in different ways because different departments and members of staff do things differently. Flight prices gone up because of oil shortage? No way – they have to recoup the fortune they've spent sending me all these mailings! And I don't want their credit card either. If they duplicate their mailings, how can I be sure they won't duplicate my charges? Appearance is everything and they appear inefficient to me.

Systems are it!

Having said all that, I'm now going to make up a quotable quote: "Any organization, or subsidiary, or department in a company that runs its operations with the consistency of a soft boiled egg will find that customers run away faster than yoke runs off toast. Plus they will find they have more difficulty picking up new customers or new business than toast has picking up the yoke."

But, you know, some companies don't seem to care, or they think that's just how business is. >>>

"Why worry about duplicate data in the customer database – join the real world, every database has errors." A salesguy said that to me when I was presenting the results of my days of researching how and why their database was such a mess. "What harm does it do if a contact is in more than once or a company is there in several places under a slightly different name", said another. What do you think, dear Reader? Lets be a fly on the wall watching a scene that wouldn't be out of place in the TV program The Office.

>>>

THE EASY WAY TO LOSE A SALE - SNUB THE SYSTEM



Look, there's Darrell, Director of Systems and IT, yanking on his tie and wiping his shoes on the back of his pants, swaggering into Soozie, his VP's, office. Oh boy that office shouts money. Those tapestries on the walls look like handmade originals. And Soozie, too, that suit must be Chanel. I wonder what she looks like when she takes off these glasses and let's her hair down? Ah, Darrell is sinking into one of the cream leather sofas. I think she's got the hots for him, look she's joining him ... and she really shouldn't sit THAT way with that skirt! And Darrell is so full of himself that he starts the conversation first to show just how smart he is.

"I've been negotiating with that new company, Focus On Operationally Lean Services, to purchase their new software that should help us target customers better. I think we should try to conclude the deal soon."

"We should get it. I looked at their web yesterday", says Soozie. "It's impressive, and their library of materials is one of the best I've seen - but I had to register for it so I guess I'll be on their mailing list now! There's some clever people there with a clever product. Let's Oh, hold on I'll just get this phone call..."



"What Company did you say you are from?" asks Soozie and gets the reply. "I'm the sales manager from F-O-O-L-S."

"Hang on a sec." She looks very formidable when she peers over the rims of her specs. She puts the phone on mute.

"Who's your contact there, Darrell?" Darrell's ego is tickled because his boss recognizes that it's him leading this initiative.

"I always deal with Yong, he's one of their top guys." He says.

"This might be him", says Soozie. "Isn't that good timing just as we were talking about them? I'll probably pass him to you as you're the expert here." Soozie returns to the call.

"Hello again, Yong ..."

"Actually my name is Bert."

There's that quizzical look again, and she's taking off her ear-ring. Darrell's looking a bit hot trying not to notice that she's fiddling with the top button of her blouse. "Oh, OK, Bert, what can I do for you?"

"I represent F-O-O-L-S and we have new technology. I am contacting you as you will be interested in it. We are a new company, you can get background on ..."

Soozie cuts him short. She's going to show this guy what's what:

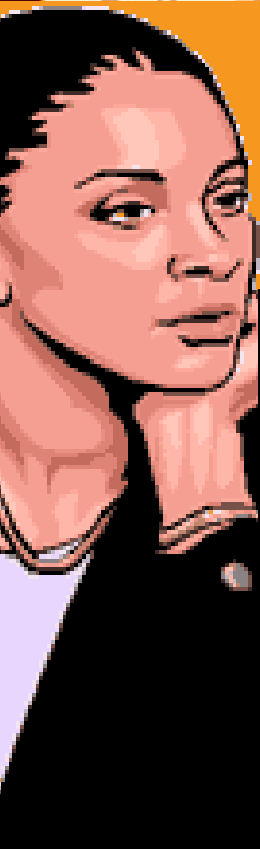
"Do you have a colleague called Yong?"

"Yes, do you know him?" says Bert.

"Do you ever speak to him?" Bert is blissfully unaware that his phone call has cost his company many big bucks.

"He is sitting right next to me."

"Well, sitting right next to me is Darrell, who has been negotiating with Yong for months. >>>






The air around Soozie is blue and Bert is about to go blue with despair.



“Bert, this is the last time you will speak to this company. We are not afraid of making U-turns. I am reversing the authorization I gave Darrell 5 minutes ago. No, we are not interested in your product. Please pass the message onto Yong, and ensure that he is left with no doubt that we don’t buy database solutions from companies that don’t use their own databases properly.”

Darrell is speechless seeing Soozie in action. And he’s also fuming that his plans to shake up the operations in their business have just disappeared in smoke. But he shouldn’t be.



“Look, that is one big lesson for all of us. If I ever hear that our company gets as sloppy as FOOLS, then I’ll, I’ll ... well I’ll get out of business and go sailing around the world. I’m going to give you a new project. You will work with the VPs in charge of departments dealing directly with customers to get them all to run their operations consistently. Make sure systems and procedures are sensible, easy and consistent and that everyone in the company is singing the same tune to the customers.”

We’ll follow Darrell in his new quest in future editions of Successzine. In the meantime, though, if you link to the business fact pages of WordisWorth, you’ll find some step-by-step instructions for implementing consistent systems and procedures in an organization.

“Now it’s time for a drink”, says Soozie





**THIS
IS A
GRIN AND GIGGLE PAGE**

According to the Onion on August 31, 2005, Google was going to destroy all the information it can't index.

What I don't understand is why they have a problem with the US Government asking it to hand over a load of search data - can't they just say they can't index it?

Anyone out there know?

If so, please email alison@wordisworth.com

Finding pearls deep in a sea of rubble

Learn how to test for quality and find out how your organization is likely to fare if it took the test

Your organization contains a ton of information, and more flows in each day. Is it what you need? Can you access it easily? Is it clearly presented? Test it against these ten points.

You can't do without it.

It makes complete sense.

It has just the right level of detail.

It arrives neither too late nor too soon.

It contains neither too much nor too little.

It gets straight to the point.

You can believe it.

Words. Hundreds and thousands of them burp into your mailbox every day. Read on to apply the test to your situation.

>>>

You, not anyone else, need to deal with it.

It arrives via the most sensible route.

It's well worth the time and money spent on it.

Information. Do you love it and drool for more or hate it and screw it up if you can? Are you an *enough's-enough* kind of person or a *too-little-too-late* sort? Do you ever complain that *they* never tell you anything, then do a U-turn and complain about the amount of trivia in your email box?

Words. Hundreds and thousands of them plop into your mailbox every day. You start your hand-eye-coordination workout and your eyes scan a couple of lines of the message while your hand propels the mouse to the red cross on the top line of your screen.

If you're really adept you can almost read, point and delete all at the same time, but if you don't get it quite right then you might trash the snippets of important stuff that seem to slip in the way extra inches slip on to your belly after Thanksgiving.

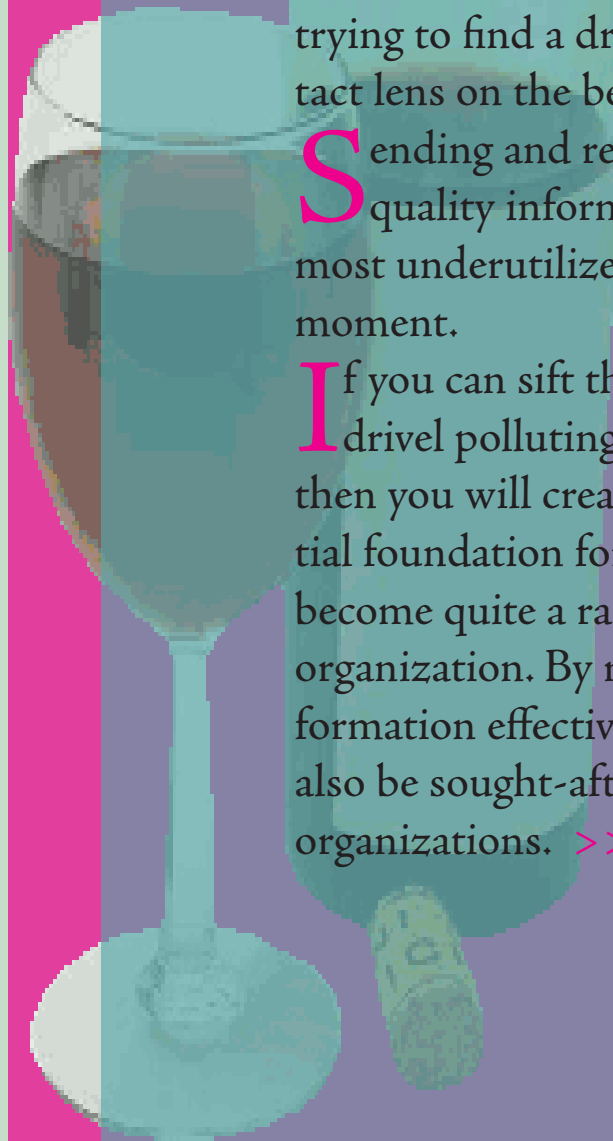
How do you decide whether your in-tray is

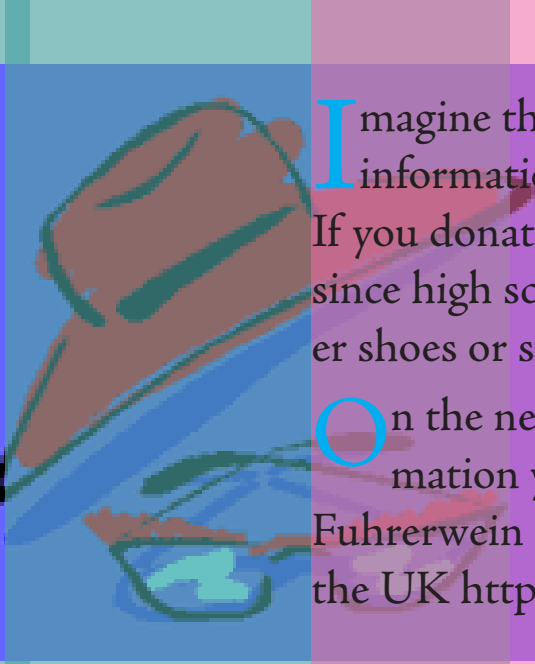
half-full of junk? If you think size matters and love your big mailbox then do yourself and everyone a favor and read on to find out why it is quality that counts.

Information is the lifeblood of an organization. Why, then, do so many of us rant and rave about the information flowing around our organizations? The answer is quite simple, really: most of us find that recognizing quality information in a sea of trivia is like trying to find a dropped contact lens on the beach.

Sending and receiving quality information is the most underutilized skill of the moment.


If you can sift through the drivel polluting your life, then you will create an essential foundation for success and become quite a rarity in your organization. By managing information effectively you will also be sought-after by other organizations. >>>






Imagine the space that would be freed up if you only kept the information you really need. It's a bit like your wardrobe, really. If you donated to charity the clothes and shoes you haven't worn since high school, you would have space for a collection of designer shoes or suits or whatever your predilection.

On the next page are 10 ways to recognize whether the information you send and receive is as worthy (or not) as the 1943 Fuhrerwein (a personal wine of Hitler's!) auctioned recently in the UK <http://www.decanter.com/news/109918.html>. >>>



Do you rank your crate of information alongside a 5-litre box of Chardonnay, which gives you 34 glasses for the same price as bottles that give you only 6 glasses (well 4 actually if you want a decent sized glass)?



If so, you are likely to be a quantity rather than quality person and may not be interested in reading any further.

Detail of it? Being told you don't know doesn't mean anything. Information could show how much you've spent, e.g. spending \$100,000 on advertising for new customers. Or compare the year before to show you've improved or worse. If you get meaningless information you need to enable the person to send empty data, ask the person how you could improve it.

What do they know? How much information has appeared in People but is it new information in the past from you or someone else before you started? Always supplying the correct information. "I think so" ask if they "know" and prepare something and tells you "no", check – if it's not needed, move on to other priorities.

When do you want it? You know you're waiting and are waiting for the sale. They arrive after your decisions have been made. If you need to tell the people that the sale has gone well, their jobs are safe and you've emailed, many will have gone away after you've licked the stamp.

Why are you preparing a new, never-been-done-before tray that cleans like a magnet? You've got reams of technical information. Your target audience is interested in the bottom line. If you send out the reams of information on a disk expecting them to read through it then you expect too much.

Do you get bogged down in its detail? Unnecessary accuracy down to the finest detail takes too much time and money. What's good enough? A summary – e.g. the percentage of the budget spent in the first quarter? Or detail – e.g. how much is left in the marketing budget? Or specifics – e.g. actions and recommendations from the report? Get the level of information that's right for the level of person.

Send the
right
things in the
right way at the
right time to the
right people at
the right cost.

How much has it cost to produce? Cost is more than \$. It includes employee time, equipment, storage, space. If people are in the habit of sending as much information as possible with the fanciest images possible, the organization might use as much energy as is generated by the runners on the treadmills down at the gym. Do you have to put statistics into a PowerPoint? If your audience is only interested in the bottom line figures, get on with it and bash out what's needed. ■

Coming

next issue

Agile Mind: the next episode

Will Maura fire someone?

Why is Jay paranoid about Markus?

... and some insights into private lives ...

Plus!

More fun articles to take you as far as you want to go.

Head to the top in the face of change.

The personal development section is all about you.

And! More guides on business and management issues.

More from Brian.

Your questions answered.

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free copy.**