

Sunday 1st July

Weekly tips and ideas for business professionals



Negotiation Update

The search for value



The Hague is a great place to stay but dodging the trams and cyclists means that driving is more of an art than a science.

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Sunday morning...

Sunday morning in a rainy/sunny/warm/cold South London...you can hardly believe this is July weather.

No armed guards this week just a pleasant few days in The Hague. I've learnt from previous experience not to drive home on a Friday night from The Netherlands...early Saturday morning was a breeze.

That's the last piece of work before I go down to South Africa for the Victoria Falls trip. I'm going on a course as a participant in 10 days but I'll tell you about that next weekend. I'll be spending the next few days getting my head around my new copy of Visio and looking at some product development.

Gordon Brown gets a lively start as Prime Minister. Thankfully the terrorists we get in London are a pretty poor bunch when it comes to planning and performance. Business as usual in London of course...but then when did you ever expect anything else.

Have a good one...with 3 tips as usual.

This week I...

Just for fun this week I'll mention my favourite published cartoon character. I've been reading Ogri for 30 years in Bike magazine and it never fails to get me smiling and the art work is outstanding. Check out www.ogri.co.uk If you really want to know why the Brits love queueing and why they talk about the weather all the time then read "Watching the English" by Kate Fox. It's a very insightful look at the way we operate...almost too insightful.

And finally...

(06-29) 19:04 PDT PENN HILLS, Pa. (AP) --

A man who thought the clerk at a fast-food drive-through was rude for not saying "please" and "thank you" punched her in the face, police said. Duane L. Williams, angered by what he felt was the clerk's rudeness, walked into the store to complain just before 8 p.m. Wednesday, Penn Hills police Chief Howard Burton said Friday.

Before the manager could meet with Williams, he walked back outside, pushed open the drive-through window and punched the 19-year-old woman in the face. The clerk was bruised, but not badly hurt, Burton said. "He didn't like the girl's attitude because she didn't say 'please' and 'thank you,'" Burton said.

The store manager ran outside to get Williams' license plate number and called police.

Williams, 46, told police he had "anger-management issues" when he turned himself in later that night, Burton said.

"He was unable to tell the officer why he did that. He said he remembered opening the drive-through window, but could not remember if he punched the victim or not," Burton said. "I guess he just had a bad day."

Nobody answered the phone listed at the address police supplied for Williams and it was not immediately clear if he has an attorney.

Police filed charges of simple assault, disorderly conduct and harassment Thursday, which were mailed to Williams with a summons to appear in court, Burton said.



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Management Tips

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Follow me boys...

“Follow me boys...I’m right behind you” is a famous quote about leadership.

I met two leaders recently who lead from the front. One boss went on a training course with their team to ensure that he knew the same material and trained with them. I’ve met many bosses who be too embarrassed to do that so a big “Up” to that boss who shared the experience and even bought the drinks afterwards.

Another big “Up” to another boss who spent 2 days personally training a new hire so that the new person could hear the right messages from the top man before they became fully operational.

I’m sure there are many other examples of bosses doing simple things right...these are just a couple I’ve encountered recently and need to be logged and communicated.

It’s too easy to blame bosses for getting it wrong...we need some applause when they get it right.



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Sales Tips

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Cold calling

I spent a couple of hours recently discussing cold calling with a sales manager.

It was a fascinating discussion for me because it's not something that's part of my sales arsenal...and in the world of consultancy...is not likely to be very prominent.

I listened carefully and the word "script" came up repeatedly. This is a word I'm very familiar with because I use it a lot in my negotiation classes.

What we're talking about here is the set of lines that sellers use when they're in certain positions. New sellers (or negotiators) need this crutch because they've not done it before and don't know the best words for each situation. For more experienced people it tends to come naturally.

I've got my polished phrases for negotiation and I learnt some good ones on selling this week.

I hope that you've got your polished phrases and that your colleagues who are new to this business are being given the support they need until they can survive with their own set of powerful words.

Good actors always know their lines.



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Negotiation Tips

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What if

If you've been on one of my negotiation courses you'll have heard me drone on at great length about contingent planning and the need for a good set of "what ifs" and BATNAs.

I've mentioned BATNAs many times before in this series so I'll focus on contingencies this time.

If anything surprises you in a negotiation then you really must blame yourself for your lack of preparation. You should have predicted it...no excuses.

That's getting ready for contingencies.

Use a decision tree, flowchart or just ask yourself what you'd do in their position to come up with a long list of potential situations that you can now prepare for.

Nothing in a negotiation should surprise you. Indeed it's a good mantra for any business transaction.

Don't rely on your experience. Sit down with your colleagues and work out all the possible outcomes and have a response for each of them.

Don't be surprised in a negotiation...it can be an expensive experience.