

Negotiation Update

January 25th 2009

Value creating reading for business professionals

Searching for Value

Sunday morning in...

Sunday morning in more Summer sunshine in Cape Town. Busy week doing an SDI course and it seemed to go well. I'm juggling my business practice with the SDI business and the pendulum is slowly swinging towards the SDI side.

First trip of the new year this week...out on Tuesday and back on Saturday to a location that I'll mention on Facebook so if you want to follow my travels this year it'll be there and not here mainly because I can post photos more readily there and it updates by using the browser which makes it more simple than updating the blog on the website with Macromedia.

So the USA has a new President and we all watched it on TV and swapped stories about where we all were at different important times. I can remember exactly where I was on 9/11 and the Lockerbie crash. I can remember hearing about JFK's assassination and I know exactly where I was when I heard that Jimi Hendrix had died. And of course I know exactly where I was in June 1966...a date close to the heart of all Brit sports fans. I guess I'm just a product of my generation.

Have a good week with three tips as usual...



This week we used, read, visited, played with....

Yesterday I went off to meet some fellow travellers to discuss opportunities for trips around Africa this year. I was the only Patrol driver among a whole host of Landcruisers and one sad guy with a Land Rover. We met via a letter in a 4x4 magazine and I'm looking at taking a trip this year up north. Maybe Cape to Cairo won't work but Nairobi is definitely in our sites.

Got a note from Chris Harvie who read my note in this newsletter that I was reading his book. I gave him a positive review and I'm glad that he found us by googling his name. I guess we're all there somewhere on Google if you look hard enough.

Tried to buy a radio in South Africa and failed. Evidently SA is a backwater for quality radios. I'll bring one back from my travels.

and finally...

(01-23) 08:17 PST LONDON, United Kingdom (AP) --

Some of the Britain's brightest minds have resolved one of the country's biggest cinematic cliffhangers: How the robbers could have got away with the gold at the end of "The Italian Job" 1969 heist film ends with the robbers' gold-laden bus teetering over the edge of an Alpine road, with their loot — and their lives — in doubt.

On Friday the Royal Society of Chemistry offered fans a little closure, announcing the winner of a competition to find a scientific solution to their predicament.

"Like many people, I watched the film from when I was a young boy," said John Godwin, the winner. "It's one of those classic British films, with great actors — Michael Caine, Noel Coward, Benny Hill — and a great car chase, and at the end of the day they've done all the hard work and it seemed a waste to leave them hanging on that mountainside."

"The Italian Job" follows Charlie Croker, played by Caine, as he assembles a crack team of likable crooks to pull off a complex plan to steal a stash of gold in the Italian city of Turin. The ensuing car chase — which cuts across the rooftop test track of Fiat's Lingotto building and down the steps of Turin's Gran Madre di Dio church — ranks among the most gripping in movie history.

But things end badly when the gang's getaway bus slides halfway off a mountain road on its way to Switzerland. The bus seesaws precariously, with the men gathered at the front and the gold weighing down the back, which is hanging over the cliff. A wrong move could send the bus tumbling into the chasm below, but Croker says: "Hang on a minute lads — I've got a great idea." Then the credits roll.

Royal Society of Chemistry Chief Executive Richard Pike said the competition to find an ending to the movie that preserves both the gold and the men was aimed at "promoting science and chemistry to a wider audience in an entertaining way," adding that some 2,000 people had tried their hand at extricating Croker's gang. Some of the more novel solutions including burning the asphalt to glue the bus to the road or dissolving the gold with acid, he said. Godwin said his fix took him an afternoon to work out:

- _Break the windows at the back to reduce weight.
- _Break two windows at the front, hold one gang member upside down out of the window to deflate the front tires and stabilize the vehicle.
- _Drain the rear fuel tank through an access panel at the bottom of the bus
- _Gang members leave one by one from the front, collecting stones to replace their weight.
- _Keep adding stones until someone can safely go to the rear to retrieve the gold.

A picture is worth a thousand words...



Another easy picture to choose this week.

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The search for value

SDI Tips

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Meetings

Went to a meeting this week and there were about 10 people in the room none of whom knew each other.

I think we can make some guesses at their SDI MVSs.

One gentleman thought we should all fill in a form to describe ourselves and then it could be photocopied and we'd then all know each other better. I filled in the form and then realised I'd done it wrong and he didn't have a spare copy!

Another lady was going round with the drinks and crisps and she purposely came up to me and said that I was on my own and not talking to anyone.

I sat in the corner bored waiting for things to start.

Several people immediately started a small group and engaged in enthusiastic conversation.

You guess the colours...shouldn't be hard if you've been following these notes over the weeks.

N.B. All the above is true and just proves that folks is folks wherever you go.



The search for value

Sales Tips

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In the land of the blind...

the one eyed man is king.

Went to a restaurant this week. It was my first visit. The food was OK, the price OK and the service was stellar.

I mention this because in many restaurants in Cape Town the service is very less than stellar and I have a long list of places I'm not going back to because they can't seem to do a cup of coffee in less than 15 minutes.

My belief is that in sales you don't have to be great you just have to be better than the opposition. In Cape Town the opposition is often rubbish so it's easy to stand out. Elsewhere in different locations and in different markets the task might be harder.

What I'd suggest is that you try to sample your competitors offerings and compare them with your own. Always ensure that you're a step ahead.

Ironically I left a note on one of my competitor's sites this week asking for sales details. They still haven't got back to me and that makes me happy. They really do make it easy for you...it seems almost unfair!



The search for value

Negotiation Tips

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I'm just too generous

I've had two negotiations recently where I've been accused of being too generous.

The irony is that the people making that accusation were in turn being far too generous themselves.

In both cases we had tough negotiations trying to give more money to the other side!

The reason for this is simple. When you're dealing with people with whom the relationship is more important than the outcome you're likely to wish to "invest in the relationship" by suboptimising the outcome for yourself.

I have sometimes accused clients of cowardice in the face of battle when they've not asked for enough...but that was because they were fearful of a negative outcome rather than investing in a positive relationship.

Every deal is a balance of outcome and relationship. I always know where I stand on these two items before every deal I do.