



Getting in the flow

Clive Wilson, Managing Director

On two occasions in the last month I found myself coaching business leaders who were excited about new opportunities but concerned about the impact these would have on the vision they had previously held for the future. The specifics are interesting but not as important as the principle which I think is worth sharing with others.

The truth is that we all have some sort of vision for the way the future will unfold. Communicating this is an essential part of leadership. However, as we share this insight, we may discover that others appear to have pieces of a bigger picture. The key learning for both my clients is that it is not a sign of poor leadership to modify our plans to take account of new information. Rather it is a strength to be open to new possibilities and make connections with others.

A vision is a powerful picture of the future that can be used to motivate others. It should never be a constraint when a new opportunity comes along. The sensible action is to check out the opportunity against the previous vision and against the underpinning purpose of the business, evaluate the pros and cons of a change in direction, plan a new course and communicate it with passion. It's all about getting in the flow with others rather than steering our business in isolation of a bigger and better picture.



Primeast has been helping clients to make the most of a changing world since 1986.

Sometimes we need a little nudge to make us rethink the way we do things. Training is no exception and with this in mind, we welcome Stephen Brown, an associate of Primeast with a passion for speaking, for training and most importantly for films. For our feature column opposite, we talked to Stephen about the use of films for motivating people.

Action, take two

Stephen Brown, Training Associate

Matthew, the managing director of a computer company, claimed intent to "do at least three things differently at work" following training with feature films. In his company three workforces had recently merged and were trying to settle in with each other. Matthew discovered that engagement with movies and television excerpts was a useful means of stimulating creativity towards workplace solutions.

Entering a story is important to people. This makes film-watching a great stimulus for lateral thinking and problem solving. The laughter and fun that ensue are also great ways of releasing tension and allowing creativity to flow.

In his work with films, Stephen encourages companies to use pre-event questionnaires to determine the best material to work with. For example if your people were asked to complete the following, what would they say (no coughing - there are no wrong answers)?

Working here is most like:

- (a) Die Another Day
- (b) The Greatest Story Ever Told
- (c) Star Trek
- (d) Jurassic Park

This is a simple measure of how people are feeling about the company and the output can be addressed in an appropriate forum.

Stephen regularly encounters organisations laying out good money on improving information systems. But databases, websites, and filing cabinets are no substitute for cultures where people are interacting to make connections. Perhaps an equally valid investment would be a few minutes of *The Full Monty* or *The Two Ronnies*. It's win-win.

Pretty Woman has a lot to teach us about creating situations for sharing employee-employer benefits. And if you're contemplating brand, what is it about the *Bond* movies that make us want to go back time and again to see much the same thing?

One finance company was making valiant attempts to develop new markets and found *Raiders of the Lost Ark* helpful in thinking outside the box to find ways of singing from a new hymn sheet.

Robin Hood was instrumental in convincing delegates at the Institute of Directors that earning respect is a key issue. And health workers agreed that holistic care was vital and managed to profit from a case study of work-life balance in *The Godfather*. Think that one out!

Which films do your people need to engage with in your journey to greater things?

