



Emotional investment - Clive Wilson, MD



In case you're thinking this picture looks familiar, we featured it in our January edition with a different slogan. It is of the last stage to the summit of Ben Nevis and as my then five-year-old son discovered in 2000, you get to what you think is the top only to see this – literally the extra mile.

So many so-called teams pack up and go home at the end of the shift or focus on the urgent but unimportant. The challenge for leaders is to build the team that will go that extra mile when it is needed.

To be effective, teams need to be well-equipped in terms of **PURPOSE, PROCESSES & BEHAVIOURS**. Understanding these is an essential part of team development.

Perseverance is partly to do with strength of **PURPOSE** and partly to do with establishing appropriate **BEHAVIOURS**. In both cases, the role of the leader is critical. And a key thought is around their emotional investment.

Steve Covey describes the concept of people having an emotional bank account (which tends not to work very well in overdraft!). Before we can expect people to expend their emotional energy for us, we have to first make substantial deposits of our own energy for them.

So before we ask our people to go the extra mile perhaps we need to demonstrate that we will go the extra mile – for the company and for them.

The short story opposite was sent in by one of our readers in support of National Friendship week. Forgive us if you've already read it but in a roundabout way, it fits our theme for the month. Please pass on in the spirit of friendship to others if you so wish.

Case study – Anon, courtesy of Hartley Maiden

His name was Fleming, and he was a poor Scottish farmer. One day, while trying to make a living for his family, he heard a cry for help coming from a nearby bog. He dropped his tools and ran to the bog. There, mired to his waist in black muck, was a terrified boy, screaming and struggling to free himself. Farmer Fleming saved the lad from what could have been a slow and terrifying death.

The next day, a fancy carriage pulled up to the Scotsman's sparse surroundings. An elegantly dressed nobleman stepped out and introduced himself as the father of the boy Farmer Fleming had saved.

"I want to repay you," said the nobleman. "You saved my son's life."

"No, I can't accept payment for what I did," the Scottish farmer replied waving off the offer. At that moment, the farmer's own son came to the door of the family hovel.

"Is that your son?" the nobleman asked.

"Yes," the farmer replied proudly.

"I'll make you a deal. Let me provide him with the level of education my own son will enjoy. If the lad is anything like his father, he'll no doubt grow to be a man we both will be proud of." And that he did.

Farmer Fleming's son attended the very best schools and in time, graduated from St. Mary's Hospital Medical School in London, and went on to become known throughout the world as the noted Sir Alexander Fleming, the discoverer of Penicillin.

Years afterward, the same nobleman's son who was saved from the bog was stricken with pneumonia. What saved his life this time? Penicillin.

The name of the nobleman? Lord Randolph Churchill.

His son's name?

Sir Winston Churchill.



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