

Breaking the Mould

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“What Does The Dentist Of The Year Get? A Little Plaque.”

<http://www.facebook.com/#!/JackTrot>

England

On Linked In the thread “*Is This Why Change Fails?*” is seeing some subtle changes that may indicate a move away from the eternal search for the magic bullet that will force the workforce to make changes. We are seeing a shift towards the more supportive approach of listening first. <http://tinyurl.com/43zaef7>
It is good to see this group, once confident that they would find the directive solution that would make change happen, now seriously involved in a debate about what is going wrong. Most of the proposals are still driven solutions but there is scope here and we suggested their top down approach may be the problem, not the solution. <http://tinyurl.com/6la83q7>

In the HR Review we read a headline “*Employers agree that staying away from the office reduces absenteeism*” It is one way that employees can escape from the destructive influence of their managers. <http://tinyurl.com/63ebayq>

Nick McBain showed us an article in the HBR “Unmasking the Alpha Male.” The author Gill Corkindale describes a coaching session with three Alpha Males, their behaviour and what drove it. She describes some very emotionally incomplete people, the effect that has on their existence and on those around them. What is most amazing however are the number of comments attached to the article by people purporting to be Alpha males, defending their abysmal behaviour as if it was an aspirational goal to set, to be so arrogant that it was OK to insult and ignore the feelings of others. These are the people who are preventing the majority of the working population from engaging and experiencing pride in their work. While these few role models exist other lesser management mortals will still aspire to their level of arrogance. This is exactly the Mould we are trying to Break. Thanks Nick. <http://tinyurl.com/44z1mau>

North America

On the Performance measurement thread there was a question about why people were outraged when the writer suggested measuring complexity. Most of the answers were fairly predictably about people’s negative reaction to being measured. We thought a little differently. <http://tinyurl.com/4x56bfu>

On the Organisational Change Practitioners group is a long thread about the top reasons why change initiatives fail. Ordinarily we would jump in and suggest that we stop trying to tell people what we think they should do and instead listen to what they need. This is a long thread that is completely

wrapped up in conversations about what to do to make other people do what we want. Sometimes the hill is a little too steep and the view from the top, not really worth the climb. <http://tinyurl.com/6aof7sl>

Tina Pericone from Toronto asked what consulting companies could deliver to their clients if the deliverable was not a report. The obvious answer is an ROI but this thread readership must be traditional consultants. They seem unable to consider that any deliverable other than a report is possible. We used the quote from Winston Churchill to suggest how useful a consultant’s report is. <http://tinyurl.com/68b7jyr>

India

Ram Nayam Singh opened a discussion on Linked In asking whether showing a sense of decency towards ones subordinates diminished the significance of the manager. The way he phrased the question sounds as if he is discussing what he sees as an accepted norm, that part of being a manager is to treat subordinates with disdain. We know this to be true in almost every culture but in many it is not admitted so openly that part of the expectation of being a manager is that one must openly disrespect subordinates for no logical reason except, it is what managers do. <http://tinyurl.com/63w87ey>

On a list of low cost things to do to motivate a workforce we found this advice. “*After a big win, call in the caterers to treat the team to a nutritious and tasty lunch. Team camaraderie will also increase as a side benefit.*” We are not completely sure why but we find the assumption that managers need advice like this slightly disturbing. <http://tinyurl.com/5subcvq>

Tanzania.

A thread asked for some experience dealing with the complexity of cultural change initiatives. The question acknowledges that human behaviour is complex. When we try to manage it the complexity creates outcomes and effects that we never anticipated. Complex systems cannot be driven. We gave the example of herding cats. Everybody knows the impossibility of herding cats because they are all individuals. Funnily enough, so are human beings, but it does not prevent their managers from trying to herd them. <http://tinyurl.com/5vrafwf>

The same person followed up with an almost missed second question, “*How do you change the culture of a country?*” We are expecting BtM to take over the way we do business, Why would it not spill over into the way we behave socially? <http://tinyurl.com/3zp8oz7>