



Interesting Stuff - April 2011

You're receiving this newsletter because at some point over the years we've come into contact. Our aim is to share with you the things we're doing, the projects we're involved with and the people, programmes and books that inspire us. We hope they'll inspire you too in the things you do.

We don't share or sell our contact information, but we don't want to spam you either, so in the next few days you'll receive an email giving you the option to opt-in to our future newsletters.

Neil & Steve

Inspiration in Kibera

I wonder if you saw the Comic Relief programme where Lenny Henry, Angela Rippon, Samantha Womack and Reggie Yates spent a week living in the Kibera slums in Nairobi? If you did, I'm sure you were as moved as I was.

It was shown just a couple of weeks after I returned from Kenya, having myself spent some time in Kibera visiting aid projects.

I was blown away by much of what I saw – not just the appalling conditions that a million people live in, but by the breathtaking work that's going on there.

One man I met is a youth worker called Moses. He works in Peace Clubs set up following post-election violence in 2008, helping overcome conflict between ethnic groups.



Born and living in the slums, he's had no formal teacher training. Yet his rapport with the school children is immense. He is funny, engaging and has the children participating. Even children who were clearly nervous, came up to the front of the class to talk with pride about the Peace Clubs and the hope they bring.

He's not looking for handouts or sympathy. Moses works to earn money to continue his own studies, so that one day he can move out of the slums. Born into unbelievably difficult circumstances, he's making things happen for himself. And I'm sure he'll succeed. He's a fantastic example of the leaders we need today – he's taking responsibility for his future; he has a passion for what he's doing, a vision for where he wants to go; and he's taking action, doing whatever he can to progress.

He is truly inspirational – to the children of Kibera and to me. With leaders like him, things can and will change, and I'll be returning to Kibera in September to help him continue this great work.

A life, not just a business

When we set-up The Red Rubber Ball Company, Steve and I were clear that we wanted to devote time, money and energy to community projects like these.

Why? We simply decided how we wanted to live our lives. Then we made it our business to ensure that we:

- have time with our families
- take part in adventures
- make a real difference to people's lives, and
- hang out with really cool people (this is how we describe our coaches, business partners, clients, suppliers and supporters who provide inspiration to us and to each other).

These criteria dictate everything we do in our business – so we have a successful business AND live the life we want now.

Some people work hard on their business in the hope that it will give them the money to live the life they want – only to find that it's too late. By then you might find the children have grown up or you no longer have the energy to do the things you wanted to do.

In today's world, technology and travel make it more possible than ever to live your life now and build your business around that, so it supports that life.

And some of this is easier than we often think. What are the things that you dislike doing, that take you away from the things you're better at or enjoy more? If you hate cleaning or it causes arguments - get a cleaner, if it gives you more time for the things you want.

Focus on what you do want and how you can make it possible.

Both Steve and I have great support – from people who will provoke and challenge us when we need it, and reassure and encourage us when we need that too.

We've extended our own programme – TheLeadersForum, exactly for this reason – to support people who want a life not just a business. If that includes you, then do take a minute to look at the package.

The directors and executives on this programme ease the burden on themselves whilst growing their business. They take action. We know because we follow-up to make sure they do! They become accountable, and things happen. **Lives change.**

You can find out more at www.redrubberball.co.uk/theleadersforum.

Our community projects in Kenya

In case you've missed them, I've posted a number of blogs at which give an update on various aspects of our work in Kenya, people who've inspired us and life in the Kibera slums.

The latest one answers an often asked question – "Why Kenya?".

To find it simply [click here – redrubberball Kenya blog](#).

Book review – "24 Carat Bold" by Mindy Gibbins-Klein

One of the books I've completed recently is "24 Carat Bold – The Standard for REAL Thought Leaders", an intriguing read which does challenge the way we think.

It sets out to encourage people to become real thought leaders, to put forward new ideas, which offer something new, which challenge current thinking, which provide a new perspective. To do so requires us to take some risks. Are we prepared for others to hear our voice, to hear what we have to say? Are we prepared for the consequences (which may of course be different from what we imagine)?

One aspect that particularly struck me was this idea of being BOLD. Mindy believes this is not about simply having a USP or being different. Instead it's much more about being authentic and having a plan to influence the market; being yourself and being aware of your emotions. Emotions are neither good or bad, not positive or negative. It's what we do as a result that matters most; how we react; whether we get stuck or take action.

The book is certainly BOLD and if you're prepared to ask questions of yourself, then it can shift your thinking and what you achieve.

I certainly came away challenged. Am I being BOLD enough in what I do? Quite possibly not. As a result, I've reviewed my own aims and aspirations. I've decided to be bolder, to aim higher. I now have an A1 sized vision board on my wall. It's a daily reminder of my BOLD aims and what I want to achieve this year and next. It helps me think each day – what's the most important thing for me to achieve today to move each project forward?

When doing it, I also realised that we ask just one thing of ourselves and our coaches – that is to be so good that they can say, "today I changed someone's life". That's all we ask and all we aspire to.

So I thoroughly recommend this book. It's available through Amazon, so we've set up an easy link on our website to [books we like](#).

And if you'd like to learn more about my vision board or how to create your own, do get in touch.

