



Interesting Stuff - November 2011

Expect the Unexpected

I've spent much of October in very different places. The first was the Lough Erne Resort in Northern Ireland, a fantastic hotel and golf complex in beautiful surroundings, being looked after by the most attentive, genuinely caring staff you could wish for. And the food from head chef Noel McMeel is simply stunning.

All this I'd expected. I've been to Lough Erne before and will return again. What was unexpected was the Spirit of Enniskillen. This is both a charity and a philosophy. It describes the generosity of spirit shown by Gordon Wilson - the father of Marie, who was killed in the Enniskillen bomb blast in 1987.

It seemed appropriate that our Retreat took place in the Gordon Wilson Library at Lough Erne. His words rang out. They had a profound effect in 1987 and continue to make an impact today.

"I bear no ill will. I bear no grudge".

A generosity of spirit to others. But also, just imagine the consequence for the person who forgives.

Who knows what effect his words had on those he forgave, who carried out or provoked the act. They didn't ask for or maybe even know of his forgiveness. But consider for a moment, anything less than forgiveness means carrying around the hate or desire for revenge forever. Then another life is destroyed. The simple act of forgiveness to others allows each and everyone of us to let go.

The Spirit of Enniskillen lives in those who choose.

TheEnableProgramme

I'd also not expected the response to news that on 1st & 2nd December I'll be running a 2-day workshop called **TheEnableProgramme**.

"I would be one of those who rated the Enable Course as some of the best leadership training I have had."

It's ideal for **existing owners or directors** who want to improve their leadership skills to cope with a growing business. It's ideal for **managers or consultants** with potential, who are identified as possible future leaders and want to hone their leadership skills. And it's ideal for **managers or other staff** who run projects or departments, who want to improve their skills and their career prospects.

Covering the four themes of Choice, Passion, Vision and Action, the aim is to develop people who perform well and get the best out of others; who are self-motivated and low maintenance; who are accountable and deliver what's expected of them.

And above all, develop people who **make no excuses, get things done**.

And perhaps best of all, over just two days it keeps time away from the office to a minimum.

Please give me a call (07887 955643) or email neil@redrubberball.co.uk for more details.

Funding

I've mentioned LMAS funding before and since our last newsletter I've received a cheque for £1,000 from the Leadership & Management Advisory Service, allowing business leaders to grow their organisations.

It's a really simple process to apply, so I'd strongly urge all businesses (and charities) to look at it. But do it NOW. The funds are only available until February 2012.

What's happening in Kenya?

October also saw me return to Kenya to visit our farming education project and to meet the children who we're sponsoring through secondary school.

You can read more on this and see some photos of the progress being made on our blog (<https://redrubberballkenya.wordpress.com>). I think you'll be amazed at what's been achieved in just nine months.

Utility Warehouse supports the Red Rubber Ball Foundation

For a number of years we've bought our gas and electric from Utility Warehouse - for one good reason - they've consistently been the cheapest we could find. From time to time other companies have called at our door and quoted me their prices. Each time I've checked and each time Utility Warehouse has been the lowest.

So I was delighted when they said that anyone who buys their gas, electric or telephone from Utility Warehouse can support the Red Rubber Ball Foundation. How? By simply paying your bill! Not only do you save money by having the lowest tariff available but Utility Warehouse will make a contribution to our funds based on the value of every bill you pay.

So if you'd like to save money and raise money at the same time, please contact me on neil@redrubberball.co.uk.

Look Out

As well as our monthly newsletter, we're also tweeting with regular quotes and thoughts to challenge and encourage you. And you can find more detailed info about the attitude of success on our blog.

The links for these are all on our home page at www.redrubberball.co.uk

Book review – "Bounce" by Matthew Syed

Most books I read offer something new or insightful and I'm generally happy if I come away having learned something.

With "Bounce" I feel like I learned something on almost every page. I was absolutely gripped by the quality of the ideas, the reasoning and the supporting evidence. If you're a leader, a coach, a parent, a manager; if you're at school or college; if you want to achieve something you don't yet have, read this book. You can borrow my copy if you like.

When we see experts we often attribute their success to talent. We rarely witness the hours and hours of practice (even in so called prodigies). The main premise of the book is that success depends not on talent, but an Opportunity & Purposeful Practice. Citing countless examples and academic studies, he shows that given the right opportunity and hours and hours of purposeful practice, it is possible to become an expert in your chosen field; your particular skill.

For me, this is encouraging news. If we're not presented with Opportunity, we can find or create it. Often all we need to do is ask. And we can Practice Purposefully, so that we're challenging ourselves to learn more and improve our skill, whatever we may choose to do.

This is a fantastic book – do read it.

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