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Wry Smiles!

Welcome to Edition 4



Welcome

Welcome to Edition 4 of Wry Smiles! We have taken time out to look at our website recently and made some radical changes that we hope will make it much more informative, quicker and easier to use. We are conscious that we all get busier and busier with little time to read... so please see my starring appearance, complete with voice-overs to explain our ethos and more importantly how to get the best out of the publications we have developed on Leadership & Coaching. Better still drop us an email to let us know what you think of the new look www.cognitiveleadership.co.uk

Clive

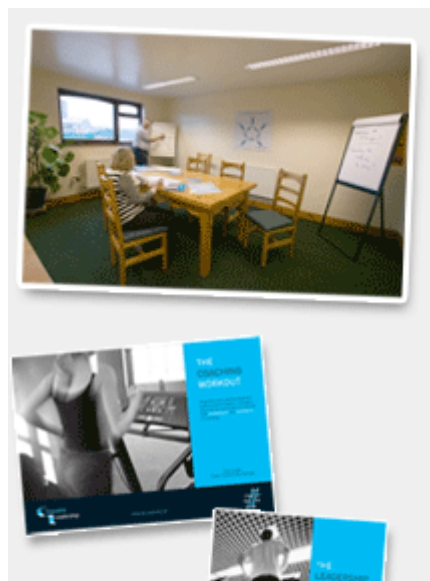


Cognitive Leadership Goes Public Cognitive Leadership is going public by popular demand!

Our Leadership and Coaching workshops are well established within many corporate organisations but we have had enquires from corporate business that would like to send just one or two delegates, and smaller companies who would value the experience for their key players.

That has led us to develop a public programme for both Leadership and Coaching workshops that will be held in our 'Thinktank' at Kiln Way during 2008. People can be assured of individual attention with a maximum of only six delegates attending each workshop.

The workshops consist of a two day session in the 'Thinktank' with a further day's follow up and on-going telephone support, fees include all publications, materials and



refreshments.

For further information about the content, dates available and fees visit www.cognitiveleadership.co.uk where you can also book on-line.



CPD for Managers 'Gut Feel' Leadership?

"I'm a gut player. I rely on my instincts", President George W Bush explained to Bob Woodward of The Washington Post regarding his decision to launch the Iraq war. And he's not the only one!! When working with a number of my coaching clients we, during the course of our monthly coaching conversations, talk about decisions they've made. In the reflection stage i.e. what decisions did they make? How did they make them (the process)? Why did they make that decision? I sometimes get the response of 'I don't know why I made that decision, it just felt right!' or 'I just went on gut feel!' So what is 'gut feel' and how does it affect leadership.

Studies over the past decade have confirmed that our brains operate with a vast unconscious mind that even Freud never suspected. Much of our information processing occurs below the radar of our awareness – out of sight. This is called Automatic Non-conscious Processing (ANP) and the extent to which ANP impacts is a difficult concept for most leaders to accept. After all, its experience and 'life' that counts!! Also we tend to 'fly through leadership life' on autopilot (unconscious competence) and are not aware of everything that is 'going in'!

So what is 'gut feel' or intuition? In his 2002 Nobel prize lecture, psychologist Daniel Kahneman noted that we have a two track mind. Track 1 - our 'behind the scenes' intuitive mind - is fast, automatic, effortless, associative, implicit (not available to introspection) and often emotionally charged. Track 2 - our familiar conscious (explicit) mind – is deliberate, sequential, rational and requires effort to employ. Two phenomena are thought to shape the processing performed by Track 1. The first is the evolution of mental shortcuts (heuristics) which enable efficient, snap judgements. In fact, research shows that we often form positive or negative impressions of people in a mere 'blink' of time (within a quarter of a second!) The second influence on our intuitions comes from learned associations, which automatically surface as feelings that guide our judgements. Our life history provides us with a great reservoir of experiences that inform our actions.

The reality is that thanks to the pathways that run from the eye to the brain's rapid-response, emotional-control centres – bypassing the thinking part of the brain, the cortex – we often feel before we analyse!! There is more bad news for men.....there appears to be real truth in the presumption that women may, on average, slightly exceed men at quickly reading others' emotions. They also have an edge in spotting lies and spotting whether a man and a woman are genuinely romantic or are a posed, phoney couple.

So therefore if experience informs our 'gut feel', albeit unknown to our conscious us, then as we learn to associate 'cues' with particular feelings, many judgements become automatic – autopilot. Look at some professional experts, a car mechanic who can tell what is wrong with your car just by the sound of the engine, or a chess grand master playing speedy 'multi-game chess' who merely glances at a chess board and then plays without any noticeable decline in performance or the Japanese chicken sexers who separate 1000 newly hatched male and female chicks an hour with near-perfect accuracy. Ask them how they do it & they are all hard-pressed to explain. Their response is usually "I don't know but I just do it".

So just by living we acquire intuitive expertise that enables quick and effortless judgements and actions. So gut feel – fast, automatic, unreasoned thought and feeling – harvests our

experiences. So what's the downside as leaders? Gut feel is powerful, often wise, but sometimes perilous, and especially so when, as leaders, we overfeel and underthink!

For leadership we require smart critical thinking. This often begins as we listen to our Track 1 mind and builds as we evaluate evidence, test conclusion and plan for the future; Track 2.

So is there such a thing as gut feel? Intuitively, I don't think so!!!

Clive

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this article then please do not hesitate to contact me at clive@cognitiveleadership.co.uk

Coaching Afloat

In our last edition we highlighted a new departure for us – Coaching Afloat. We understand that everyone needs some time to step back, reflect, re-charge their batteries and then bring clarity to their business thinking. Watch this space if you want to experience a very different type of coaching ...we promise a fantastic experience is just waiting for you!

Call Claire or me on **01283 222973** to find out more about booking yourself onto 'Coaching Afloat' – a totally new coaching concept!



**Yes it's that run up to Christmas again.....
so keep a look out for.....
The Cognitive Leadership e-Xmas card!**

By popular request Cognitive Leadership is already having fun developing this year's interactive Christmas e-card.

We will let you have some fun throwing missiles at our faces again and you could be one of the lucky winners to get a half day 1:1 coaching session for your business!





Pause for thought

Continuing with the 'gut feel' theme.....

**Trust your hunches. They are usually based on facts
filed away just below the conscious level'**
(Joyce Brothers – US psychologist)

'Never ignore a gut feeling, but never believe that it's enough'
(Robert Heller, magician, mentalist & musician)

And finally if all else fails.....

**'Intuition is what tells a wife her husband has done wrong
before he thinks of doing it!'**
(Unknown)

See you in Edition 5!

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