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October - December 2012 / Issue 11

the newsletter



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Dear Readers,

Welcome to another action packed issue of octara.com that focuses on improving productivity with Mind Maps as its Cover Story, featuring the redoubtable Tony Buzan as he sets about explaining how we can add an extra day to our work week.

A good deal of the Octara action this past quarter took part in Dubai where elder statesman Javed Jabbar inspired the Pakistan Professionals Wing (PPW), a part of Pakistan Association Dubai (PAD) who organized a seminar on "Pakistan: Dream, Nightmare, Vision" as part of their Silver Jubilee celebrations. Javed

Jabbar boosted the overall image of the country as well as motivated the Pakistani community in Dubai to extend their positive role in every field.

Inspiring the Karachi corporate set was Bob Urichuck who visited Pakistan after a lengthy absence. Accompanying Bob was his son and successor Dave, on his first ever visit to these shores. Bob shared the stage with Dave in the conduct of his signature Sales Success Seminar, which was a runaway success both in terms of attendance and the learning obtained as evidenced from the participants' feedback.

Octara associate Ben Stevens was fully in the fray in Karachi, conducting two exhaustive workshops, each spread over two days of intense interaction on how to extract efficiencies through equipment reliability and maintenance improvement, and we carry a detailed report on these engagements.

Contributions from two of our favorite people from Down Under feature in this issue. Voice Coach Lucy Cornell writes about how we should leverage our voice for maximum advantage in life, and Jim Truscott writes on Crisis Response, and how employees can be an organization's best ambassadors during a crisis.

Octara senior associate Ramiz Allawala played to a packed to overflowing full house at the Trainers Resource Group's 178th monthly Meeting at the Sheraton Hotel, and laid bare his life story and the happenings that have shaped his evolution as a trainer. We carry a report on this, and regret that space constraints may not have permitted us to carry all the details that we would have liked to.

In this issue also Tommy Wier has provided insights on leveraging social media, and Leon Menezes has dealt with the ego trap that impedes retirement with grace.

All in all it has been a very hectic and rewarding last quarter for Octara, and we look forward to reconnecting with you in the new year.

jamil janjua, CEO, Octara & Chief Editor

Feedback: info@octara.com

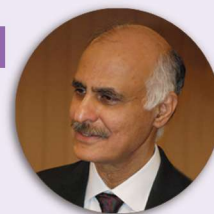
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Transiting to Retirement
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* Octara seeks to expand its pool of professional Trainers. Opportunities exist to partner with Pakistan's premier training & event management company. Write to: janjua05@gmail.com *

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Free Your Voice, Free Your Power

Years ago, a professional woman said to me: "No, I am stuck with this voice. You can't change your voice." I was perplexed and a little sad. The voice has an extraordinary capacity to express the infinite complexities that make us human. When you are born, your voice expresses over 8 octaves. Believe it or not, you once had a voice that was full and expressive (unless you were born with a pathology). It is your birthright.

So how do we get this less expressive adult voice? Very early on, we adapt our expressive self through mimicry and learned behaviors. We learn that to express fully is unfavorable. We get messages in our different cultures and families such as: "Little girls should be seen and not heard", "Stop whining", "Pull yourself together", "Grow up", "Don't speak until you are spoken to" etc. These messages register emotionally and psychologically in the suggestible beings that we are as 2, 3, 4 year olds.


In turn, the body and voice begin to contract and repress the actual desires that we wish to express. And here is the birth of the civilized voice.

Over the years, our natural voice becomes more contracted and the civilized voice is further shaped by the emotional knocks and bumps of life; finding your place in your first school, fitting in with your friend groups, the search for identity through puberty, evolving through your rights of passage from a girl to a woman, establishing your voice in the world through university and your career, and fitting into the way of speaking in your business.

As you can imagine, the voice creatively adapts to help you 'fit in'. However, this civilized voice is far from the free expressive voice that you had as a child.

When business people come to me to work on their voice, they are, in fact, overwhelmingly delighted to find that a freer voice gives them a sense of ease, joy and energy. It allows them to express more of their personality and power in communications.

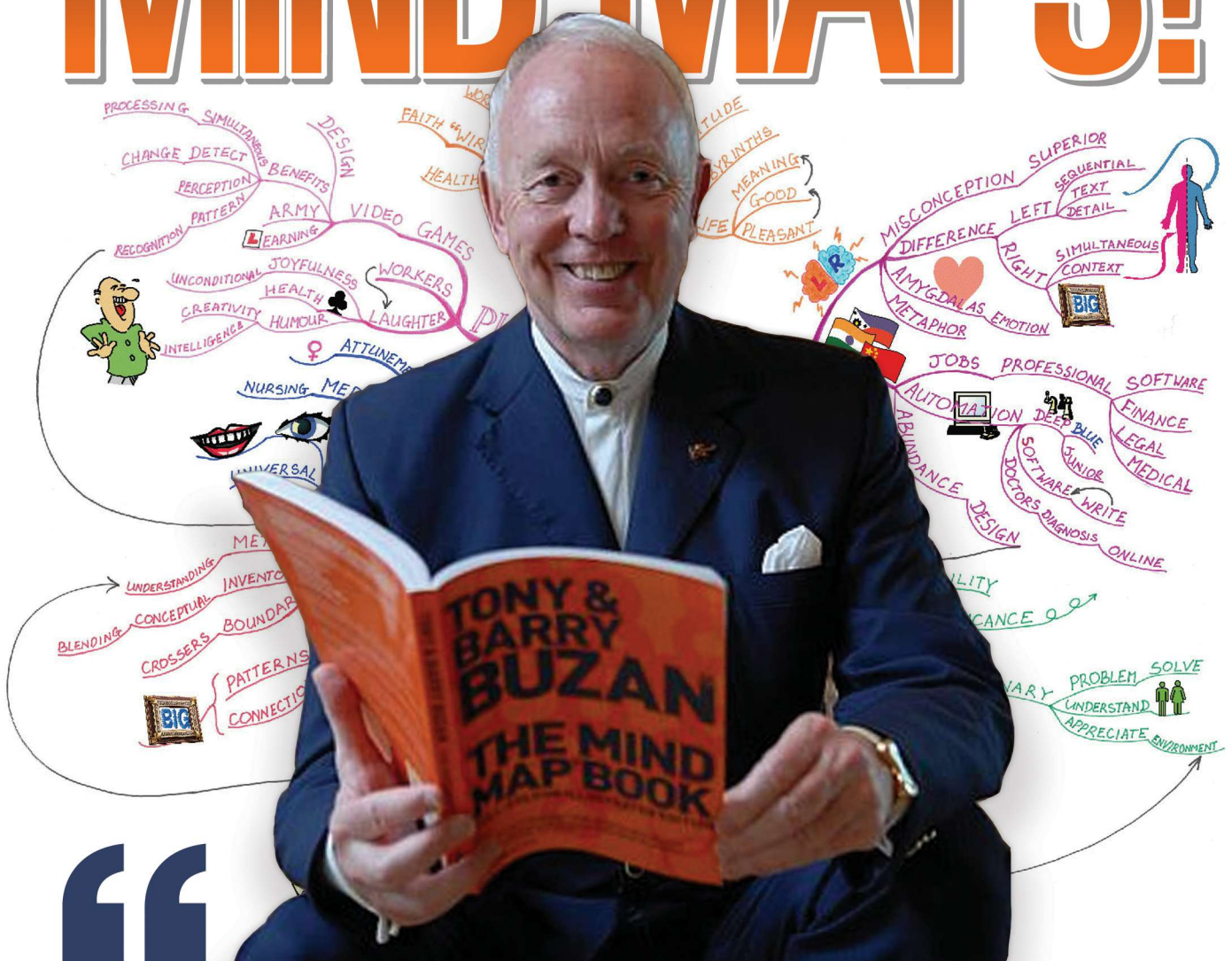
To think you can't change your voice is to hide your light under a bushel. Your natural voice is your energy and spirit revealed from inside to out. What a gift for both you and your listeners. Free your voice, free your power. ■



**"To think you
can't change your
voice is to hide your
light under a bushel"**
Lucy Cornell, VoiceCOACH



Improving productivity with **MIND MAPS!**



Using Mind Maps can streamline your working day and is proven to improve productivity by 20% - that means you can gain an extra working day every week!

Tony Buzan

Walking into the office each morning, you are already performing mental gymnastics trying to figure out how you'll get through your task list for the day, only to be confronted by twenty equally urgent and demanding messages, and the phone ringing off the hook. Sound familiar?

The past decade has seen meteoric advances in communication with emails, Facebook, SMS, Twitter, Skype, Ping, blogs, feeds and a myriad other indispensable forms of 'connecting' and absorbing information. With such resources at our disposal, productivity should be soaring, shouldn't it? However, whilst the world may well be at your fingertips, you are unfortunately equally within reach of the world too.

Managing this bombardment of information you receive everyday and juggling the resulting tasks is in itself a full time job. There just aren't enough hours in the day - so what can you do? Well you can start by creating more time. Using Mind Maps can streamline your working day and is proven to improve productivity by 20% - that means you can gain an extra working day every week!

How can Mind Mapping improve your productivity?

One of the simplest and most effective ways to use Mind Mapping and boost your productivity is to begin each day by spending five minutes creating a Mind Map 'to do' list. This will allow you to view and review your tasks, prioritizing according to deadlines and realistically determining what is achievable in the time you have available.

As you build your Mind Map you can get a clear picture of your workload and view each task objectively. You can determine what's important and what's not, see how certain projects will relate and impact on other tasks, and block your time to

achieve optimum productivity.

A good way to track your progress through the tasks is to create a separate Mind Map with the main branches as different time segments of the day. Then select tasks from your day's Mind Map to add onto these branches, creating a schedule for the day.

How can Mind Mapping help you long term?

There is no need to restrict this to a daily schedule. The same principles work for weekly, monthly, even annual planning. You can create main branches that cover broad topics, such as Finance, Personal Development, any long term projects, and personal issues - anything that requires action on your part. Then use child branches to drill down into tasks, deadlines and deliverables. A Mind Map allows you to group tasks or ideas in a limitless radiating structure, so you can have a clear, organized picture of what you need to do to achieve your goals all in one place.

Productivity is about streamlining your work practices and making the most of your time. Mind Mapping can be easily incorporated into your working day, providing a space to keep track of your 'To Do' list in a concise, practical and productive way. Regain control of your workload, reach new levels of productivity & lower your stress levels with Mind Mapping! ■

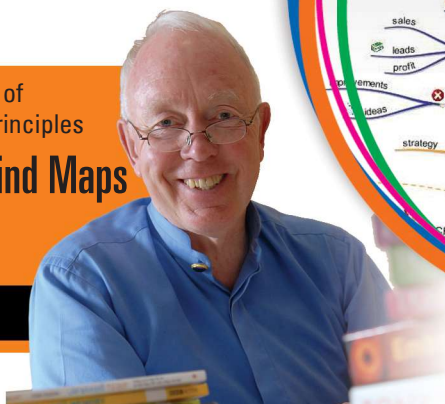
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February 18, 2013 at Karachi

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1.

Begin by making your day your map's central idea

Monday

2.

Add on main branches for key tasks or projects that you need to accomplish or work on that day.



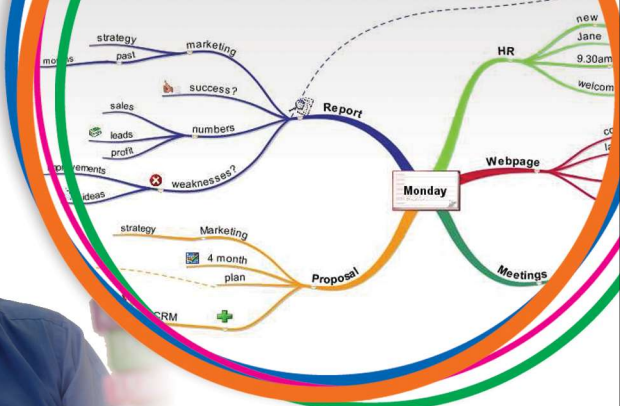
3.

From these main branches, draw child branches with names, events, time deadlines or other keywords that make up the specific actions needed to complete the bigger task.



4.

Look for links between different tasks. Does one task directly impact another? Draw relationship arrows to demonstrate this.





DUBAI'S PAKISTAN PROFESSIONALS WING HOSTS JAVED JABBAR

Pakistan: Dream, Nightmare, Vision



Javed Jabbar, former information minister, has diverse interests in writing, film making and mass media and is also involved in international and national affairs, voluntary development work, social and cultural issues. His worldwide recognized book, "Pakistan -- unique origins; unique destiny?" was published in Pakistan in April 2011. Subsequent to this Javed Jabbar embarked upon a meet-the people campaign and flesh out their understanding of Pakistan's past and present, and their vision for the future. In this regard, Octara was accorded the privilege and pleasure of joining Javed Jabbar in facilitating this process, and the seminar titled 'Pakistan – Past, Present, Future' was organized by Octara at Karachi.

With the huge success of the event, where Javed Jabbar's vocal chords spectacularly modulated the flow of his mesmerizing thoughts, Octara inspired the Pakistan Professionals Wing (PPW) a part of Pakistan Association Dubai (PAD) to introduce Jabbar to the Pakistani community in Dubai. In September 2012, Pakistan Professional Wing organized a seminar on "Pakistan: Dream, Nightmare, Vision" as part of their Silver Jubilee celebrations with Javed Jabbar speaking at the event and boosting the overall image of the country as well as motivating the Pakistani



Munir Mahmood (Chairman PPW) presents a memento to Javed Jabbar, as Iqbal Malladwala and Naimatullah Jafri look on.

community to extend their positive role in every field.

There was an air of great anticipation at Dubai's Shangrila Hotel situated on Sheikh Zayed Road. Many Pakistani professionals had gathered to hear the Asian elder statesman on an issue of considerable import to each one of them, eager to glean insights from his formidable store of knowledge and experience, immaculately delivered in a commanding voice that mesmerizes with its tonal inflections.

Mr. Munir Mahmood, Chairman Pakistan Professionals Wing, in his welcome address appreciated the role of community in general and professionals in particular to support the PPW throughout the last 25 years. He then introduced Javed Jabbar to the audience, and paid glowing tribute to the man who has developed an enviable reputation for integrity in politics, and a concern for the environment that has seen him complete a





four year term (2009-2012) as one of the four global Vice Presidents of IUCN - International Union for Conservation of Nature, the world's largest and oldest environment organization.

"Pakistan has the single most unique set of origins amongst all the nation states of the world," said Javed Jabbar, adding that nationalism invented nations where they did not exist, and that there was no scientific definition of a nation. "A state can contain many nations both willing and unwilling. Despite an uninterrupted democracy in the United Kingdoms, the Scots today are clamoring for independence. The two-nation theory turned into a two-nation three-state theory in the subcontinent in 1971. The Muslims in Bangladesh and India are more adherent to Islam than Muslims in Pakistan. Islam and cultural identity are not opposed to each other. They are in fact complimentary."

There is no singular Muslim nation in South Asia, said Javed Jabbar, nor even in Pakistan or India. "There is a wide diversity of languages, clothes, cuisine, sects and ways of life amongst Muslims within both countries." The 192 nation-states that are members of the United Nations fall into six categories, he added. "Historical nation-states like China, Japan, Egypt, and Iran. Mass migration nation-states like USA, Canada, and Australia. Permutated nation-states like Germany and Italy. Post-colonial nation-states like India, Iraq, and Uganda. Those emerging from the disintegration of larger states like Uzbekistan, Bangladesh and Serbia. And nation-states created on the basis of religion like the Hindu Kingdom of Nepal, the Vatican, Kingdom of

Saudi Arabia and Pakistan."

Responding to a question from a member of the audience, Jabbar said: "In my view, feudalism in Pakistan has become weak with the passage of time." Jabbar, who has served three terms as federal minister referred to the Indus Water Treaty signed between India and Pakistan as a major source of interaction between the two neighboring countries. "It is the only treaty in the world not effected by three wars (1965, 1975 and 1999) and it still exist. But for us however, it is time to focus on setting up new dams, small and big, and to save water."

In his book, Jabbar provides 8 reasons for Pakistan being unique in its origins, 2 not-so-good reasons for being unique in its post-Independence history, 57 collective strengths and individual achievements, 38 weaknesses, 14 elements of the evolving identity of Pakistaniyat, and the critical challenges facing Pakistan and the possible ways to address them. His formidable store of knowledge and incisive analytical ability, coupled with an unerring resolve to walk his talk, has made Javed Jabbar irresistible to the governing class of Pakistan, and he has served as a Minister in three Federal Cabinets of Pakistan and as a Senator for a 6-year term. He drafted several progressive laws and policies including the PEMRA law which introduced private electronic media to Pakistan and the Freedom of Information Law. However, Javed Jabbar has never compromised on speaking his mind in meetings at the highest level that have invariably comprised of 'yes men'. Understandably, this trait has not endeared him to the high and mighty with hidden agendas, and he has had no problems in turning his back on otherwise very lucrative portfolios. ■

Pakistan: Dream, Nightmare, Vision was organized courtesy Octara and generously sponsored by UBL Fund Manager and TCS Worldwide Express, UAE.

"Politics is far too important to be left to politicians!"



Executive Committee Members of Dubai's Pakistan Professionals Wing with Javed Jabbar



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Bob Urichuck's Sales Success Seminar 2012

Globally acclaimed sales guru and motivator, renowned author, consummate Speaker of the Year (2000) and International Platinum Speaker since 1999, Bob Urichuck was back in Karachi after a lengthy absence since his last visit in 2007. Accompanying Bob on this trip was his son and successor, Dave Urichuck, on his first ever visit to Pakistan.

Canadians are a friendly lot and universally loved, but in these troubled times even they are running scared as evidenced by their discouraging travel advisories to their citizens where Pakistan is concerned. Bob and Dave were not

deterred however, and made the short hop between Dubai and Karachi, leaving family and friends back home holding their breaths and praying for their safety.

Bob is a 'Velocity Selling' expert, Certified Master Trainer (CMT) and Certified Sales Professional (CSP) who also trains and certifies others through the Canadian Professional Sales Association. A frequent radio and television guest and a contributor to publications worldwide, Bob is the author of *Online for Life: The 12 Disciplines to Living Your Dreams* and *Up Your Bottom Line: Featuring the ABC, 123 Sales Results System*.

"Who is the most important person in your life?" is what Bob began proceedings by asking, posing his question to a large assembly of business executives numbering over 100, of varying seniority, and drawn from 20 business houses representing a cross section of Pakistan's service and manufacturing sectors.

Believing in ones own capabilities and appreciating the special person living inside us should be our morning ritual, said Bob, implying that unless individuals learn to believe and have faith in their own





ability, creating a positive impact in the lives of their customers would not be possible.

"You are your worst critic" said Bob, shedding light on various personality traits of an individual as his own best friend, his personal caretaker, and also his worst opponent. Unless a person learns to respect the individual dwelling inside him, and sets the right examples for his audience, bringing about change will not be possible.

"Begin your day with a positive attitude," said Bob, and went on to stipulate that there was a down side to life, and before a desired outcome could emerge, one had to experience repeated rejection. Rejections are what in turn make an individual strong and rid one of the fears of losing. "Get ready to fail" said Bob, stressing that fear of failing is a subconscious state of mind that keeps an individual from taking risks. By allowing oneself the right to fail, an individual in turn opens doors to valuable learning opportunities. "Be imperfect" was another advice from the Sales Guru, and the reason given was to permit yourself enough space to improve and develop upon, in order to attain perfection.

The setting of goals is an important key to success, says Bob, and not just in sales but in every sphere of life. Listing goals and

forming categories helps in prioritizing goals in sequence, which in turn makes a person actually know the individual living inside him. This enables the individual to shape his dreams into reality. Writing down goals is important because putting them in black and white crystallizes them.

The seminar was lively and highly informative, and the day passed by too quickly. Bob Urchuck left the gathering with a simple yet very weighty thought. "Unless you are honest to yourself," he said, "you cannot be honest with others." Indeed. Thank you Bob and Dave for visiting us in Karachi. ■

"Unless you are honest to yourself you cannot be honest with others."



Report filed by CARA
(Current Affairs Research & Action)



The 12 Disciplines for Living your Dreams Online for Life

with Bob Urichuck

Canadian globetrotters Bob Urichuck and his son Dave were in Karachi recently, and after impressing over a 100 senior sales executives with their sales success talk, they followed it up a day later with a pep talk to a select audience on the need to discipline oneself in order to live one's dreams.

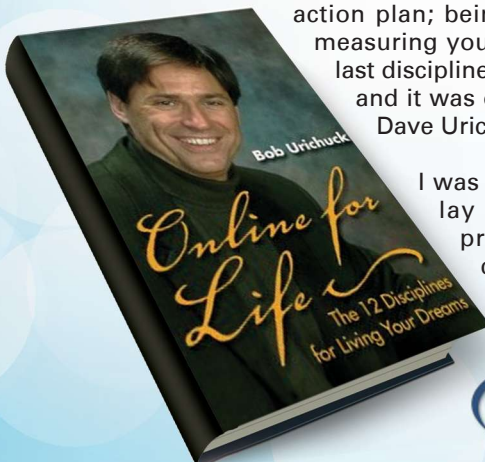
Bob has condensed his thoughts on the subject into a compact reader friendly 200 pages book developed as a 'personal companion' with room for penciling in a whole lot of personal data that would help one better understand oneself.

The book 'Online for Life, the 12 Disciplines for Living Your Dreams' begins with a quote from fabled athlete Jesse Owens which encapsulates the book's philosophy. "We all have our dreams, but in order to make these dreams into reality it takes an awful lot of determination, self-discipline and effort." This is followed up by a quote from Walt Disney. "All of your dreams can come true if you have the courage to pursue them."

There are plenty more such words of wisdom, and the weight of logic that they invariably carry is lightened by encouragement from the author to search within oneself for answers necessary for moving ahead.

Bob's 12 disciplines include knowing your rights; making a decision; taking control of your life; knowing yourself; knowing what you want out of life; grouping, categorizing, and prioritizing; identifying what you are prepared to give in exchange; creating a goal log book; committing to your action plan; being action oriented; monitoring and measuring your progress; and being thankful. The last discipline in Bob's view is the most important, and it was on the subject of being thankful that Dave Urichuck held forth.

I was struck by the 7th discipline. Therein lay the trap. "Identify what you are prepared to give in exchange." To convert his dreams into reality Hercules had to be chained before he became unchained! ■



Bob Urichuck
Management



Report filed by Adil Ahmad



Activating the Crisis Response



**“Employees
can be an organization’s
best ambassadors
during a crisis”
Jim Truscott**



The crisis response process is followed once a crisis has been declared or its potential has been recognized. Given the comprehensive nature of the activation process, it may take some time to complete. Once team members have been notified, they should redirect their office phones to the call center in order to ensure that information flows at all times.

Strategic teams need a quieter situation or breakaway rooms that are separate from the operations room. This is because the operations room is focused on managing any underlying event and thus is unsuitable as a location for brainstorming sessions and strategy formulation. Teams should be prepared to meet at an alternate site, or even virtually (using conference bridges and virtual crisis operations rooms in the cloud), in the event that the normal building is not available.

It is a normal practice to meet with business partners or government representatives at a venue specifically designated for that purpose. Meetings with partners and regulatory authorities should not be co-located with crisis team planning sessions, as they require separate

and permanent facilities.

The crisis leader may decide to conduct a combined briefing of all the teams, including staff, during the activation process. Such decisions depends upon the personal approach of the leader, who may want to brief the team, the call center, communications and HR support teams in a combined forum to ensure the accurate transfer of releasable information.

Should sensitive issues such as redundancy arise, a selective and private briefing of employees in one or more groups may also be required. Personnel issues may achieve an unwelcome prominence should the future of the organization itself be threatened.

Issues of a sensitive nature, such as employees’ personal circumstances, should always be dealt with personally by the crisis leader. Employees can be an organization’s best ambassadors during a crisis. If they are well-briefed with releasable information, they can be powerful and effective representatives. ■





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Zaroori Hai



Ramiz Allawala Tells all at TRG

“This vocation does not brook bad days, and training cuts the trainer no slack.”

It was a packed house at the Trainers Resource Group's 178 monthly Meeting, and event managers Torque were in a tizzy with happiness, raking it in! The big draw was Ramiz Allawala, on one of his frequent visits from Houston to Karachi, and speaking on his journey as a trainer.

Ramiz consults and trains widely on coaching, team performance, and leadership for hyper growth organizations. After running businesses in the USA, the Far East, and Pakistan, he founded Avista Leadership Training which highly influenced new thoughts and approaches to business and changing managerial performance.

Ramiz began proceedings with a disclaimer: He is not a guru. He is not even an expert. His opinions are just that – opinions, and not the truth. He will make mistakes. His ideas if applied could well backfire. He tried to be a trainer but wound up being a janitor, cleaning up the mess created by others. Ramiz's advice to all present was to live happily, positively, and gratefully.

His journey as a trainer has been rich and varied, and he made no secret of his main competitive advantage, that of being born into a family that was well heeled both materially and intellectually. Starting with his earliest childhood recollections in Attock Oil Refinery where he was born, Ramiz says he had the benefit of a family oriented community comprising very bright

people. Schooling in Karachi he found to be a horrible call, a dog-eat-dog highly competitive environment, from the trauma of which he was saved by his passion for swimming.

Ramiz's dad, the pioneer of oil refining in Pakistan Mr. Ahmad Allawala, ensured that Ramiz had free and unhindered access to his meetings-in-progress, much to the surprise of his professional colleagues. This led to Ramiz imbibing at a subconscious level learning that were far advanced of his age bracket. Being involved in the civil defense function during the 1971 India-Pakistan war left both a lasting impression and matured his leadership traits.

In school he learnt his first leadership lesson – get others to do your work for you! At Babson College in the USA he studied Society and Technology, and became a futurologist, with preempting future pitfalls becoming a default setting. Houston brought three mentors into his life that taught him to put himself out there and think big. That's also where he met Karen for the very first time in his life, whom he went on to marry.

Embracing risk taking was America's gift to him, says Ramiz. He has liquidated everything he owns, and says he feels free. Accumulating money is a vote of distrust in humanity, he says, and claims to have no bank account, no credit card, and no physical attachment.

As is to be expected, a number of people and experiences have impacted Ramiz Allawala's life and way of thinking. From the National Institute of Custom Training to USAID where American tax dollars trained him as a trainer; to his brush with leadership at Pak Suzuki and Wasim Haqqee; to the organizational culture at Kohinoor Chemicals; to R.D. Habib's words of wisdom that the business does not run the charity, instead the charity blesses and runs the business; to his Dad's philosophy that there should be one Canteen and Toilet for both Officers and Workers. These and many more shaped the man and trainer that Ramiz has become.

Ramiz confesses to being a travel addict, and says that one learns fastest by traveling. “There are multiple truths in this world, and one must learn to shed one's prejudices,” he says. After the financial meltdown ethics became a huge issue, and Ramiz's phone started ringing. But he was tired, he says, and began volunteering with schools and hospitals, turning from a go-getter to a go-giver. “It is a strange business that only works on giving.”

His parting advice was to lead an unusual life, and not fall in love with one's content. “Practice different roles and identities. This vocation does not brook bad days, and training cuts the trainer no slack.” TRG founding member Nusrat Ali presented the vote of thanks. ■

"Twitter allows you to follow the millions of interesting people whom you do not know. Facebook, on the other hand, limits your feed to a more restricted circle"

Tommy Wier



Leveraging Social Media

Users clicking onto videos links sent via Twitter spend significantly longer watching those videos than those arriving from Digg or Facebook, according to a new study by video stats site TubeMogul.

The methodology (below) seems fairly robust, so it may offer a real insight into current Twitter usage: On Twitter you can follow interesting people, not just your friends.

The disparity of Twitter vs Digg is quite striking, with people spending less than a minute on the Digg-referred video. Perhaps this is because a link recommended on Digg could be posted with a misleading headline by someone you do not know.

With Facebook, you are more likely to know the person posting the link, but maybe your friends don't post

interesting links. Facebook video links get one minute and 14 seconds of viewing.

For video links shared via Twitter, however, users spend a full minute and 38 seconds watching them. Why? Because Facebook focuses on who you know, while Twitter focuses on what you know.

Twitter allows you to follow the millions of interesting people whom you do not know. These people will share great information, but you may never meet them.

Facebook, on the other hand, limits your feed to a more restricted circle. This may be interesting for intimate news ("Maisie is getting engaged"), but the open nature of Twitter allows you to peruse the best written feeds in the world on any topic you like. ■



Extracting Efficiencies

With Ben Stevens

Through Equipment Reliability and Maintenance Improvement

Octara recently offered 2 Powerful Certificate Courses for Maintenance Professionals, 'KPIs for Successful Maintenance' and 'CMMS/EAM for Maintenance Improvement', each course spread over two days of intense interaction, with Ben Stevens as the Course Director.

Performance Management has become a critical issue around the world for almost every Maintenance organization. The measure of how well we are doing is frequently expressed by means of comparative KPIs. These are excellent tools, but ONLY if properly defined and used.

'KPIs for Successful Maintenance' was heavily based on many years of experience in working with companies around the world to help define and improve their performance – looking at the type of KPIs that should be used, plus their advantages and benefits. Ben Stevens focused on understanding the objectives and purpose of performance measurement; applying these learning to the selection of KPIs; understanding the process and dangers of KPI usage and being able to decide how KPIs can be used to build performance improvement for the organization. It also reviewed the step by step approach to their successful implementation.

As companies continue to look for more areas from which to squeeze out revenues and reduce expenses, enterprise asset management (EAM) and computerized maintenance management systems (CMMS) software continue to receive good press.

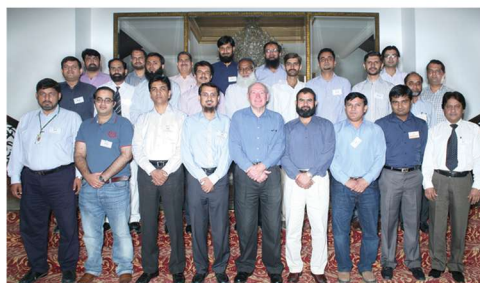


The workshop on 'CMMS/EAM for Maintenance Improvement' was geared towards understanding the structure and objectives of CMMS; learning the benefits, costs, objectives & shortcomings of CMMS and developing realistic objectives for the use of CMMS at workplace. Ben also highlighted how CMMS helps to build and maintain KPIs and how can you identify those best practices that are most applicable with a focus on their achievement. He also explained how the CMMS/EAM can be used to improve maintenance.

Ben Stevens is President of DATA TRAK SYSTEMS Inc, Ontario, a company dedicated to developing and selling products and services focused on training and consulting in the equipment reliability and maintenance improvement. He has been fully involved with the maintenance and reliability business for almost 25 years and has an experience in all aspects of Maintenance and Physical Asset Management and CMMS/EAM systems, built on a base of a blend of a post-graduate degree in economics, CFO and CAO positions in several manufacturing companies, entrepreneurial experience in the high tech sector and business development for one of the 5 big consultants. ■

Ben Stevens

will be visiting Pakistan on exclusive invitation from Octara in March 2013. For more information: info@octara.com





Transiting to Retirement with GRACE

“What I’ve learned over the years is how destructive your ego can become” – Leon Menezes

A few years ago, a young friend of mine who was CEO of an MNC, left service due to a global restructuring. I had a chat with him about life in transition and asked regarding what happened to all the invites one gets as a CEO. “Oh,” he replied, “they’ll dry up sooner rather than later. Don’t forget, it was my position that attracted the invites; as the incumbent, I just went along. But don’t worry, I’ll get used to it.”

Transitions are always difficult; they are even more so when you leave a prestigious position and you’ve become used to the fawning of juniors and others. Sooner or later we all have to move on, so how do we prepare for life in the other world? Well, apart from a variety of things we need to plan for, we will have had a good start if we’ve managed to keep our egos in check. What I’ve learned over the years is how destructive your ego can become. It trips us up frequently, causes relationship problems, and generally makes us insufferable.

How does my title help me when I’m in a traffic jam, or stuck in an elevator? And don’t forget, the Queen of England, the CEO of any company and the ordinary person go to the toilet the same way!

You don’t go into a transition (unless it’s suddenly forced on you) without a plan. And, you may well ask,

“How early should one plan for this?” In my opinion, the earlier the better but certainly around the time one gets to 40. You need to plan not just to take care of your financial obligations but also for what you’re going to do with the bags of time you’ll end up with.

Well, I’m at my own transition point now, moving on after nearly 40 years of the nine-to-five routine (it was often more like nine-to-whenever), and looking forward to flexibility, open space, and some ‘me-time.’ There’s lots to read, lots to do and many contributions to make.

Learning (self and helping others) has always been a big interest of mine and it’s something I wish to explore. In order to help others learn (notice I avoided the word “teach?”), I would have to study a lot myself and this is the exciting part: having to read up on new stuff and try and make sense of it before inflicting it on others is quite appealing.

The need to be busy, relevant, and of use to others is a critical component of life-after-work. If one had developed a healthy number of interests outside of work, the options to pursue would also be commensurate. And don’t forget, you must find things to do to keep you out of the hair of people not used to having you around. ■

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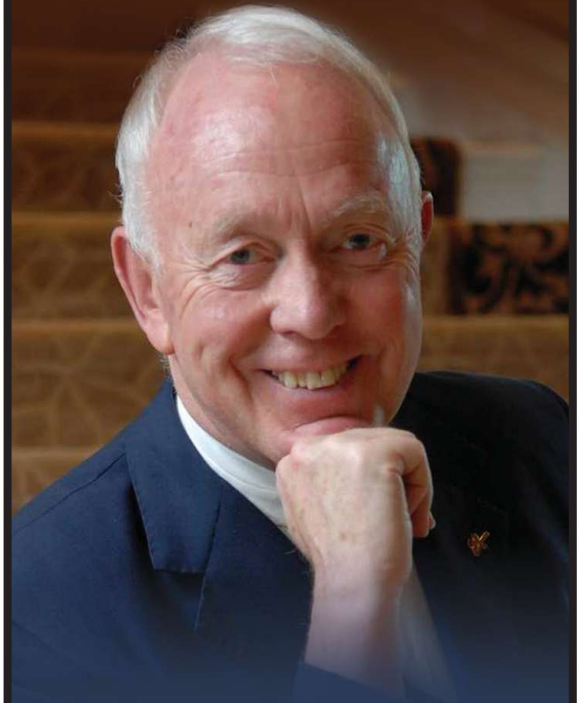
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