

Rebooting

Director Update by Steve Thompson-Martyn

In the last introduction I wrote back in February, we were looking at 2020 as a year during which we were expecting businesses to face into an exciting people agenda post the Brexit mayhem of 2019. Roll forward eight weeks and the picture seemingly before us is very different. But that is only true in part. As I write this intro, we are still not sure of what is to unfold but it is clear that business is keen to reboot as quickly as possible.

Throughout this last 4-5 weeks there have been a series of lessons being learned by us all. Many will change the way we approach work in the future but for me there have been a few key lessons to emerge that it is important to consider. In making these observations I am keen not to jump on a growing bandwagon of sage advice that has dominated many channels, instead just some simple observations of what we have seen in recent weeks.



- 1 The need to reintegrate colleagues sympathetically will be key. Many have been through all sorts of experiences and will return with a range of emotions of which fear and anxiety will be prevalent. Normal has changed and everyone will need time to find their places in our companies.
- 2 Continue the trust - we have moved so many colleagues to home working and in doing so have trusted all to work diligently and responsibly. Why would this change? By continuing the trust and acknowledging the professionalism displayed we can maintain the huge strides we have gained in building an agile workforce.
- 3 Consult effectively and sympathetically - as furlough comes to an end we are going to be faced with significant redundancies. These are not normal times and

consultation cannot be short circuited, it must be authentic, clear and honest. Consultation via remote platforms is working well and should be harnessed to minimise uncertainty.

- 4 Communicate, Communicate, Communicate - for the first time in a generation self-determination has been curbed and we have been reliant on conflicting advice from many. As we welcome colleagues back, we need to provide short but frequent comms to re-build onward confidence.

And, finally, remember and acknowledge all the leaders that have emerged and shone at all levels of the organisation through this period. My fervent hope is that when I prepare our summer newsletter we are once again talking about a more expansive people agenda.



Client Centre Enhancements

By Shaun Allred

Over the last few weeks I have been working with our Client Centre platform provider, Abintegro, on a number of additions and enhancements. This has been driven, to some extent, by both a need for congruence with our new corporate web site and an acknowledgement that the current job market has been impacted in a number of ways by the COVID-19 virus.

The Client Centre is now a far more immersive experience for our clients and that is reflected in the data usage for the first quarter of 2020. We have had a record number of users, logins and activities, and have also received some excellent feedback on the changes from a number of our clients. The new content includes very pertinent topics such as Remote Working, Coping with Challenges & Change and Wellbeing, Resilience & Mindset.

The Client Centre continues to add value to our outplacement service offering and in the current challenging climate is becoming an ever more used tool by our clients.

Webinars

At CDS we are always looking at ways in which we need to develop our service offering to anticipate and meet the ever changing needs of our clients. We also want to ensure that our online support caters for each individual's preferred learning style. So, we are pleased to announce that we have recently developed two webinars, which we have uploaded on to our client centre. The topics covered in these webinars are 'How to use LinkedIn as a Job Searcher', which was recorded as a live event, and 'Video Interviews'. The feedback from those clients that participated in the live webinar was very positive. We are now working on the development of our next live webinar which will be on 'Interview Skills'.

Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS)

Over the last decade there has been a significant growth in the number of businesses and organisations that use some form of software application to enable the electronic handling of recruitment, particularly in the sifting of CV's and application forms. Such systems filter automatically based on certain criteria, such as keywords and years of experience. So, given that there is often no human element involved in the initial sifting process of CV's how does this impact on the content and design of a modern CV used for job search purposes?

The advice that we have always given to our clients on tailoring their CV to the job they are applying for still holds true. Reading through the job advertisement and if available the job description, should help in identifying the key words that the CV should look to contain. But there are some trends, that I have noticed, that do not lend themselves to ATS applications.

- Images and logos: whilst there may be some visual attraction to including company logos in the career history section, most ATS applications don't recognise logos or any form of graphics.
- File format: I have often advised my clients to upload CV's on to job boards in PDF format. But most ATS applications will only recognise Word docs.
- Text boxes, tables and columns: most ATS applications cannot scan and decipher the information in these formats.
- Headers and footers: again, the information in these sections is not visible in most ATS applications.
- Standard headings: most ATS applications search for standard headings such as Personal Profile/ Personal Statement/ Career History/ Work Experience. So, don't deviate from these.





How Covid-19 is impacting on Samaritans

By Frances Mitchell

As a listening volunteer with Samaritans, Covid-19 has put more pressure on our services – more callers, fewer volunteers (about 30% are having to self-isolate) and a new helpline specifically dedicated to NHS workers has been quickly set up and is staffed by Samaritans working from home.

We are counted as key workers by the government and so are allowed to continue our shifts, 24/7, to provide emotional support to our callers. However, we are now no longer permitted to see clients face to face in our offices and we are having to maintain strict social distancing and hygiene rules when we are on shift, lots of wiping down of phones and keyboards, the offices have never been so clean!

We deal with a lot of callers suffering from mental health issues and loneliness and this has only increased over the past few weeks. We do still receive some calls from NHS workers as the dedicated line only operates from 7am to 11pm. Common strands here include feeling overwhelmed, under huge pressure and not able to cope. We don't offer solutions or advice, we don't judge, we provide emotional support, and never has this been more needed.

Covid-19 has also meant that we have had to put our fund-raising activities on hold, so if you would like to donate to Samaritans, please see the following link:

<https://www.samaritans.org/donate-now/>

Samaritans Bath

CDS Director Donna Thompson-Martyn is part of the leadership team at Bath and District Samaritans and in normal times is responsible for the outreach programme. During lockdown, whilst outreach opportunities have been limited, the focus has shifted to ensuring the home bound Samaritans population in and around Bath are kept connected by organising twice weekly virtual coffee catch ups.

There is also the usual regular contact with external agencies including foodbanks. Samaritans like every organisation needs to keep future focussed and Donna is also part of the team that are continuing to train and mentor the much needed pipeline of new people who are joining Samaritans.



We are very excited to present to you our new suite of At A Glance Guides for all CDS Services.



Following our rebrand and launch of our new website towards the end of last year, we wanted to ensure all of our collateral is as optimised and current for our corporate clients and those we provide direct services to.

Committed to supporting local business we once again teamed up with web and design creation agency Boson Web, who helped us replicate the look and feel produced for our website as well as ensuring our information was now in line with our website.

With this in mind we have created a suite of guides, showcasing our services and which we feel represent our brand, CDS personality and services offerings. We believe them to reflect our genuine care, ambition, passion and generosity and demonstrate our bespoke tailored programme offerings.

The working world is constantly evolving at a rapid pace and so is the way we are interacting with each other, never has this been more apparent, however we still feel a handout can be a very useful and powerful tool.

To support our environmental policy we plan on sending email versions of our guides as much as possible, where appropriate.

We hope you like our new handouts and find them useful for yourselves and your organisations.

If you would like us to send you any of our new guides, please email kate@careerds.co.uk

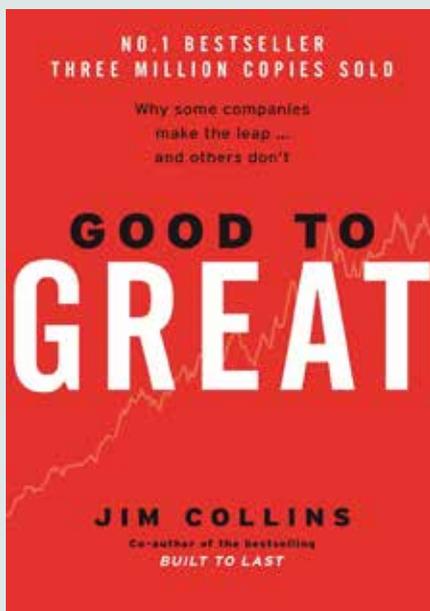
Are you at a Career crossroads? Do you need some help in these uncertain times?

Please get in touch with a member of the CDS team, we will be happy to help and advise.

BOOK REVIEW

Good to Great

by Jim Collins



This book review is a bit of a throw-back. In this period of lockdown I decided to revisit some of my business books on my bookshelf. So, I reached out to “Good to Great” by Jim Collins. The chapter that struck a chord for these challenging times is “Confront the Brutal Facts (Yet Never Lose Faith)”

It highlights that leadership is about creating a climate where the truth is heard and the brutal facts confronted. There is a huge difference between the opportunity to “have your say” and the opportunity to be heard.

Collins suggests four basic practices to create a culture where truth is heard ...

1. Lead with questions, not answers: having the humility to know that you do not have all the answers and then asking the questions that will lead to the best possible insights – “What’s on your mind?” “Can you tell me about that?” “Can you help me understand?”
2. Engage in dialogue and debate, not coercion: the good-to-great companies had a culture for creating intense dialogue. They didn’t use discussion as a sham process to let people “have their say” – the process was more like a heated constructive debate with people engaged in search of the best answer for the organisation.
3. Conduct autopsies, without blame: when you do this you go a long way toward creating a climate where the truth can be heard (this message is reiterated strongly in the book Black Box Thinking by Matthew Syed – an excellent read!)
4. Build “red-flag” mechanisms: the differentiator of good-to-great companies is not the access to good information - the key is about turning information into information that cannot be ignored.

The other concept Collins highlights is the Stockdale Paradox. Admiral Jim Stockdale was the highest ranking US military officer in a prisoner-of-war camp in the Vietnam War. Collins writes “The conversation with Admiral Stockdale stayed with me, and in fact had a profound influence on my own development. Life is unfair – sometimes to our advantage, sometimes to our disadvantage. We will experience disappointments and crushing events somewhere along the way, setbacks for which there is no “reason”, no one to blame. It might be disease; it might be injury; ... What separates people, Stockdale taught me, is not the presence or absence of difficulty, but how they deal with the inevitable difficulties of life.”

It seems to me we need to learn how to adopt the Stockdale Paradox in these challenging times so that we can also support others to never let one side overshadow the other ...

By Sara Penter

The Stockdale Paradox

Retain faith and hope that you will prevail in the end, regardless of the difficulties

AND at the same time

Confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they might be



Resilience

Building Leadership Resilience in Crisis Times



By CDS Executive Coach
Jill Garrett

Businessman and philanthropist Warren Buffett once said that, “Only when the tide goes out do you find out who is not wearing a bathing suit”. The COVID-19 pandemic requires leaders to demonstrate their resilience, maturity and wisdom in the face of crisis, more than most situations in living memory!

It also provides the impetus for leaders to see this as a learning opportunity like none they have had before, where they can grow, develop, test and strengthen themselves.

What is resilience?

Resilience is the ability to be strong in the face of difficulty and to come through hard situations stronger than ever. Leaders will always have to face difficult situations – it goes with the territory of the role. Resilience is built when we face the situation, (including our fears), keep pushing forward and then reflect on what we have learned that will help us to be even stronger when the next difficulty comes along – and it will! It has been said, “You can’t stop the waves, but you can learn to become a better surfer!”

Why is resilience so important in leadership?

When you board a flight, you are always told that in the event of an emergency you must, “Put on your own oxygen mask first”. This is a situation where people depend on leaders for strong, compassionate and courageous leadership, perhaps more than ever before in our generation.

People “catch and mirror” the behaviour of their leaders. As leaders show realism, optimism, a determination to keep going forward, compassion and concern for their colleagues and customers, their resilience, determination and commitment will “rub off” on their team. If leaders panic, their staff panic - your organisation, your colleagues and the people you serve, are depending on today’s leaders to show strength, kindness, courage, determination, and perseverance. These values are common requirements in leadership; they become even more crucial during this crisis.

Build resilience in your team and your customers

In a fast-moving crisis, it's important for leaders to communicate with compassion and with honesty — not just internally, but externally as well.

External customers will need a different approach to employees, but with both groups, leaders must focus on what is important to each group. For example, in the UK supermarkets have been emphasising things like cleaning trolley handles, social distance queueing, screens where staff and customers are protected, stocks that are (and are not) available, clarity about waiting times on-line customers should expect. This will give some reassurance to customers. Here the focus should be on safety and compassion rather than creating sales opportunities.

With the internal team, never let them doubt that you care about their safety and let them know about the steps that are being taken across your organisation/community to care for your people. Stress the practical things that are happening, working from home where possible, provision of protective equipment for front line staff, flexible working times for those trying to manage work and young families at home, the deep cleaning of work spaces and the provision of the latest information – remembering to let people know even when there is no new information!

With those who are working remotely, emphasise your concern for their emotional as well as their physical wellbeing at this time and plan regular team sessions where you can share together as well as update and inform. One of my clients has started a genius, “Gratitude on Toast”, session each Wednesday at 8.15am. Here the team are invited to Zoom with their breakfast; the talk is non-work with each person contributing the people, situations and things they are grateful for this week. Ideas like these are great to pass on if we are to use this opportunity to grow our connections and the depth of relationships.

Remote working is the perfect opportunity to run team learning sessions. People working in isolation are likely to enjoy opportunities to interact and learn together some of those things they never had time for when they were in the office!

By the middle of April, the logistics of home working will be clearer, people will have more established routines and could have more time; they will almost certainly want more interaction! I have advised some of my clients to put together remote learning sessions for late April/early May and to have a schedule of “Learning Together”



sessions planned so that the team can see continuity planning in action and know that their development is being invested in. Just because people are working in isolation, they do not need to be lonely and leaders can seize this opportunity to grow and deepen community at work.

How do we build resilience as leaders?

The tools and techniques are many, and because each leader is unique, different techniques work better for some than for others. What is set out below are some of the tools and techniques that research suggests are most important. Do look through these and be intentional about building your resilience at this difficult time.

Some techniques

- Building Physical Resilience- Leadership requires you to be mentally and emotionally equipped and the foundation for this is physical fitness. Daily exercise, sleep, recovery time and eating the right things are the basis of our physical resilience. Some people see exercise and recovery time as wasted time: the research shows just the opposite – when we recover our energy, we are more productive. Leadership is a long race, a marathon rather than just a sprint: you need to train and be physically fit to win it.
- Care, compassion and support to others – Human body chemistry is such that we are boosted when we know that we have made a positive difference to the life of another person. Your customers, those you serve, and your staff are



the community that you can impact positively every day. It will give you energy to be conscious of those who you want to benefit, (and potentially who are benefitting), from your determination, generosity and courage in the face of difficulties. You will be stronger when you do this.

- Purpose – The greater the clarity of purpose of your organisation, the more each staff member (and of course each leader), will feel energised and able to keep going in the face of difficulty. Courage does not mean we have no fear: it means that we keep moving forward despite our fears. Leaders need to keep communicating the purpose of the organisation to employees, and especially to tell the stories of lives impacted for good through the work they have done.

The numbers currently volunteering their time to help the vulnerable is testament to the fact that human beings are wired to want to make a difference: they are energised when they believe that they have contributed to something bigger than themselves. Knowing that what you do has meaning will build resilience and help us to come through this crisis stronger!



- Faith and spirituality, meditation and prayer. Modern neurological science indicates that prayer and meditation are proven to change the neuro-cortex and enable individuals to stay calmer in the face of pressure. This enables them to manage their minds and emotions more effectively, to cope better with anxiety and to be less stressed in the face of difficulty. Many know that their faith is a source of great strength and encouragement in the face of difficulties and this is a time where many will have the time and the space for prayer, meditation and deepening connection.

- People supporting you. Human beings are relational animals; having others who understand the situations we are facing, who connect with us and share with us in these situations helps to build resilience and increases determination. This could be another leader, your coach, a family member. Leaders can build strength when they resolve to, “never worry alone”.

- Even in crisis there are things you can control: know what you can and cannot control and do keep making choices that strengthen you and your people. We can choose to be kind, to help others, to speak up for what we believe to be right and to be supportive and helpful to our customers and our team, to be optimistic and to look for the good in people and situations. Everyone needs good news and encouragement in this situation. Leaders need to be encouragers and good news bringers and, amid black situations, to look for opportunities to shine light.

The resilience of leaders and of those they lead, has not been tested as strongly before in our generation. In the coming months, leaders will have a tremendous impact on the communities they lead and serve; their resilience is vital as we come through this crisis together and stronger. Now is our time to don those swimming costumes!

If you would like to find out more about our CDS Resilience Framework please get in touch with Sara Penter, Head of Coaching Practice, sara@careerds.co.uk.





Lockdown Reality

By Steve Thompson-Martyn



When I was asked initially to provide some insight into what I had been doing in lockdown I groaned a bit because this is a theme that everybody seems to have been adopting in recent weeks. I am writing this on April 30th having been at home now for seven weeks and, like for everybody, it has been way more of a journey than I had envisaged.

So, over the last seven weeks and for the next 4 or 5 weeks ahead of us, my biggest take out of this journey has been about balance. As a Libran I am meant to be blessed with a sense of balance but in my case this manifests itself more in indecision than balance.

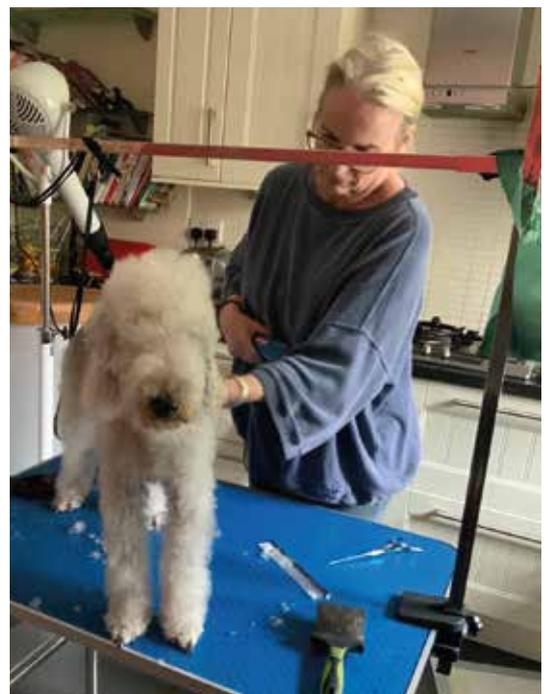
I had been aware for some months that my balance wasn't right. Too much work, travel, unsociable hours. Not enough exercise, time at home, leisure etc. so in the early days of lockdown, the novelty stage, it was great to throw myself

into long forgotten activities, including revisiting a room at home with strange equipment that doubles up as things to hang things on. During phase one this was just great fun for 3-4 weeks but as talk shifted to a new normal I found that I was once again having to really focus on balancing an elongating working day with the need to shut certain rooms down in the evening and weekends, just to ensure balance between home and work. And then over the last two weeks as perhaps the monotony of groundhog day has hit us all I have, for the first time in my adult life, had to work at balancing mental and physical health as you realise that the lines are blurred.



As we look to rebuild, I genuinely feel that in many ways this time has been a gift and I will continue to focus on balance. That said...I still haven't read a book or played my vinyls in this lockdown so please Mr Johnson give me another week!!!!

Hair issues not just for humans, novice dog groomer Frances also having to step up to the mark!





NEWS UPDATE

Coming Soon: We are launching our CDS Resilience Framework in May. The Framework includes a self-assessment diagnostic and practical tools and techniques that are geared to support individuals, teams and Line Managers to build greater levels of resilience. A pre-recorded taster webinar will be launched in May alongside a comprehensive At A Glance Guide.

Here now: At the beginning of May we revamped and relaunched our online Coaching Toolkit. The kit provides an extensive range of on-line resources – all geared



to support our clients and coachees, to explore, clarify and apply – assessments, tools and techniques to hone their personal and leadership effectiveness. Not only does the toolkit provide a range of CDS resources – tried and tested by

our coaches – individuals also have access to a suite of e-learning pathways including insights from Ashridge Business School. The e-learning pathway supports coachees and clients to access strategic business and commercial

resources, covering organisational challenges, strategic decision-making, leadership, and business and process management. The A-Z of other topics available range from Assertiveness ... Working Styles. If you are interested in finding out more about the toolkit please contact Sara Penter Head of Coaching sara@careerds.co.uk

IR 35 Update

IR35 changes were due to be implemented in April. In the run up to this implementation there was a growing unease amongst those who employed contractors and the contractor population on how these regulations would be interpreted. For many who were looking to set up as contractors the advice was sketchy and somewhat doom laden.

One of the more favourable bi-products of the Covid outbreak has been the sensible relaxation of the proposed changes to the IR35 regulations. The proposed changes were threatening to cause disruption in the way many self-employed individuals engaged with the corporate sector. The pause of at least 12 months should enable all stakeholders to further evaluate a more pragmatic and seamless way of potentially embracing these changes. That said the likely employment landscape for the next 18 months is likely to rely on the self-employed community in flexible variable roles to help businesses restart so it could be even longer before HMRC refocuses on this issue.

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Meet the team...



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