

‘RESET MINDSET 2020... Growing resilience, resourcefulness and results.’

An online presentation via Zoom at the UNIBA Forward Conference chaired and moderated by Mareen Hüffmeier on Friday 23rd October 2020.

TRIGGER NOTES by Marcus Child.

The qualities of outstanding performers in times of test, challenge and ambiguity :

SSTATE Management is the super power of high functioning individuals. Learning to channel fear into productive action; manufacturing confidence when the outcome is uncertain; staying cool-headed and acting with poise, grace and calmness when others are succumbing to pressure.

PPOSITIVITY. Staying bright sided, maintaining a can-do attitude, rational optimism... the Stockdale Paradox. Gritty faith and belief that you will prevail whilst grittily acknowledging and confronting the harsh reality you have to cope with.

AMBITION. Bold, daring and courageous goals, calls to adventure. We should be asking big questions of ourselves and our people...and we should be working with challenging destinations in mind. Can we build a stirring cause which will galvanise those in our ambit? Can we presuppose success in the minds of those we’re travelling with ... (Shackleton insisted the cameras were taken on the journey).

CONFIDENCE. From the latin root confidere meaning complete trust. Nobody achieves great things alone, we need others and we should put store in nourishing high trust relationships.

ENERGY. Charles Handy called it ‘doggedness’ in The New Alchemists.

Zest for life, exuberance, bags of energy to keep working, sustaining effort and generating ideas when you have to. It's the capacity to endure and it's also aura, it's palpable ... waves, vibes, a buzz which others are ignited, nourished and sustained by.

A. BELIEVE EVEN MORE IN...

PEOPLE...Inspiration is a contact sport. Know that you'll go further in a group than on your own. Believe that others around you will surprise themselves and you too. Travelling with others in life you'll learn faster. In the best teams colleagues give you alternative ways to think and perform. They demand your full involvement and best performances and you end up wanting to deliver better for them.

"Be predisposed to see the power in other people." Matthew Barzun, former US ambassador to UK speaking on Obama and the secret of leadership.

Spend time with people you admire and people who are better than you...it'll raise your game. Share what you know, your best practices and success recipes and others will share back and you'll learn more.

Back members of your team when they're struggling and there's a good chance they'll repay your trust in them in spades.

We make each other braver. We're in it together.

*"Individual commitment to a team effort – that is what makes a team work, a company work."
Vince Lombardi*

"If you want to go fast go alone, if you want to go far go together."

African Wisdom.

"You are the average of the five people you spend most of your time with."

PURPOSE...Get a scary goal that sets your heart racing and keep it front of mind.

Keep revisiting it, tell people about it, think about it before you go to sleep and when you wake up. Use triggers and anchors to keep it in focus and routinely remind yourself of it. Programme your mind for success by continually picturing what brilliant looks like. This will give you an unquenchable passion and unusual levels of endurance, resilience and resourcefulness.

"Working hard is definitely a talent and if you work hard all your life that's an amazing thing. People who've got the desire will do it." Sir Alex Ferguson

Manchester United scored 166 last minute goals during the course of Sir Alex Ferguson's tenure.

POSITIVITY...Get the habit of reframing your thoughts, language and responses so that you become an even more brightsided, enthusiastic and positive person. Choose your attitude, look for the good in people and situations. Ask yourself more frequently 'How can I make a positive difference here?' 'How can I help this person?' 'What's the learning here?' 'What's the most positive choice I can make here?'

Live hopefully. Worrying is like praying for something to go wrong. Cultivate your confidence. Notice the small wins. Thank people; pay due compliments; talk about the stuff you love. And yes, if you love it, put it on social media and share the love.

Be defiant...

"The leader is the merchant of hope." Napoleon Bonaparte.

"Dare to dream, for in that daring there is defiance to live beyond your circumstances." Su Williams.

Take bold action...

"The purpose of knowledge is action, not knowledge." Aristotle

"The best revenge is massive success." Einstein

B. SET YOUR STATE...BITTER OR BETTER?

When you feel good you tend to make good decisions. If you're ever in a bad place, give yourself some time.

"I played my best cricket when I was happiest." Kevin Pietersen

Mind the gap. You choose your state.

Nobody can make you feel anything by what they say, they can only invite a response from you.

You have the power to choose.

Choose HOPE...not blind optimism, rational optimism - Most of the time we live and work beneath our true full capacity.

C. BE 'PROPERLY SELFISH' ...OR GET LOST IN THE DARK WOOD.

Mother Theresa promoted the expressions

'Be properly selfish.' 'Be happy anyway.' 'Be successful anyway.'

Do it for yourself first. Once you've served yourself well you can better serve others. The best way to inspire others? Be inspired first.

As they announce on airlines... "In the event of a sudden loss of cabin pressure, masks will descend from the ceiling. Put your own mask on first and then, if you are travelling with small children, attend to theirs."

When you are in the best condition you can be, you can be brilliant for others.

Being overworked and knackered may sometimes seem heroic but it's not very helpful for others.

SAS mantra... 'Fatigue is not a badge of honour.'

"In the middle of the road of my life I arrived in a dark wood where the true way was wholly lost." This may be the price, according to Dante, of not being properly selfish. In Divina Commedia (1265-1321) he depicts a 13th century version of the mid-life crisis and the power of awakening while we still have time to make our lives truly meaningful.

When you lose something, you realise how precious it was after it has gone. Count blessings. Cherish what you have now. Remind others to stay awake. Actively invite others to hear the call to personal adventure.

Notice what nourishes you. Pay attention to what you pay attention to.

D. “THE MAIN THING IS TO KEEP THE MAIN THING THE MAIN THING.”

- Stephen Covey

What’s the main thing? – Your STATE. You take it into every encounter, every challenge you face. It affects the states of those alongside you and your outcomes.

Like a sportsperson in the height of a match, you can consciously set and reset your state.

Deliberately set a positive state before every meeting you go into, every situation you enter.

Do what you can to keep members of your team confident, positive and ambitious.

E. NOTICE THE JOY IN WHAT YOU DO.

*“We don’t stop playing because we get old, we get old because we stop playing.”
George Bernard Shaw*

Play to your strengths. Then you’ll go better, quicker, more resourcefully and more healthily. You will also pass on positivity and uplift.

Attitude is infectious. Make yours worth catching.

Keep the atmosphere light.

Happiness is momentum - it is nourished by a sense of progress towards that which we desire, even if that progress seems small or incremental.

F. LEAD YOUR TEAM DELIBERATELY ...be a sincere and authentic role model.

“The leader is the one who knows the way, goes the way and shows the way.” John C Maxwell.

...Remember that leader behaviour shapes culture.

The 3 big drivers of cultural behaviour are :

...Leader role-modelling and coaching

...What leaders attend to, measure, reward and control

...Leader reaction to critical incidents

...Remember that Informal Unconscious Transmissions are much more influential than Formal Conscious ones. i.e. – your dialy energy, tone, animation, enthusiasm, body language are much more influential than the less frequent targets you publish, emails you send or the stand-up pronouncements you make.

...Remember the insights from Bill Schutz in FIRO-B. As a leader, make high Inclusion, medium Control and high Openness your goal.

Inclusion makes team members feel significant and this feeling drives their commitment.

When you relinquish control and empower colleagues they feel capable and this drives their ownership.

Showing your sincere feelings to team members – thanking, praising, complimenting - helps them feel valued and this drives their engagement and loyalty.

G. DECIDE YOUR FUTURE HISTORY... ‘The goals you get are the goals you set.’

Make a vivid picture of future success for yourself in full sensoround and then set about making the picture come true.

What’s your picture for 2020 and for times beyond?

How clear and well-defined is it? How negotiable is it? What would it give you if it came true? What are you prepared to sacrifice to make it so? Is it audacious, stretching, courageous enough?

When you think about it, does it change your state? Does it excite you? Is it a compelling positive anchor?

A shared picture of success is potent. Can you elicit a democratically agreed picture with your team...with a captivating celebration attached?

Listen to some Desert Island Discs from the Radio4 archive. Bear Grylls, Cath Kidston, Denise Lewis, David Tennant, Tony Adams, David Beckham, Mary Berry, Tom Hanks are especially strong on ‘future history’ and achieving through adversity.

Imagine your future destination and keep it alive in your sub-conscious.

When you’ve taken the time and space and effort to decide what you want and write it down – and have signed your name against it, your commitment has already gained pace.

The more detailed and clear your goal is - in visual, auditory and kinaesthetic terms ie you can imagine what it will look, sound and feel like when you arrive - the more definite your subconscious is about what you want and what it needs to do to help you.

H. USE AND SHARE THE CONTROL CURVE.

Adapted from Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, ‘On Death and Dying’.

When people talk about life being a roller coaster they are connecting with Kubler-Ross’ curve which we may go sometimes go through repeatedly in quick succession.

1. Shock. “What!”

This is visceral, surprise. Deep inward feelings, we are hit in our nervous system. Our equilibrium is tested, we are out of control.

2. Denial, disbelief. “It can’t be!”

This may not last long yet we can’t compute the reality...this just cannot be!

3. Blame Others. “Who’s done this?”

As realisation dawns on us anger rises and we vent blame.

4. Blame Self. “It’s my fault...”

Our anger points inwards, we reproach ourselves.

5. Immobilised. “What’s the point?”

We may feel despair, disillusionment, depression, despondency. A sense of helplessness, grief, and an inner conversation debating ‘What’s the point?’

We struggle for control, wallow in the vale of tears.

We can’t decide whether our glass is half empty or half full...and even pity ourselves that it has been broken ever since we were a child.

6. Acceptance. “It is what it is.”

We see circumstances for what they are. We regain rational perspective and we begin to build plans, think about possible options and actions and our sense of hopefulness increases. We gain momentum rising towards the light.

7. Moving On, Re-energised, Setting new sights. “This is the best course of action and I’m in the driving seat.”

Back in control, we are now better equipped to deal with the future than we were before we entered the curve. It hasn’t destroyed us, we are stronger.

On the journey from ‘Shock’ to ‘Moving On’, be aware of the power of:

The health implications of remaining in Stage 5 for too long. Stage 5 is essential for some things. When we have lost someone we love, Kubler-Ross insists this is a necessary place for us to go. However, a day comes when we need to re-emerge from grief for our own good and for those around us. Life goes on. It won’t ever be the same again, it has altered into a new reality, we have to adjust and reset ourselves.

Significant others.

Support, empathy, suggestions and the exemplary behaviour of close friends and advisors has a huge influence on how quickly we regain control or continue to withdraw and hibernate.

Visualising and envisaging full recovery.

If we can generate a major definite purpose which drives our motivations and actions, if we can imagine and even obsess about what Stage 7 will look, sound and feel like when it comes we can be distracted from the degenerative self-pity that can overwhelm us.

Keeping Perspective.

Use painful learning and times of greatest challenge as proof, and positive triggers for future high performance.

We experience setbacks continuously through life...we burn the toast, have accidents, get punctures, fail exams, watch our team lose, lose jobs, get furloughed, get ill, get abandoned by partners, and lose loved ones.

We will bounce back from most of these things.

This curve depicts the grieving process. It’s for ‘On Death and Dying’ ...we don’t need to visit the vale of tears for smaller setbacks.

Sensitivity is essential yet we need to encourage others to keep learning from setbacks so their journey through the curve next time can be more effective, less painful and ultimately healthy.

Taking control.

The curve is all about the loss and regaining of control.

Between denial and anger is the place to take control.

The Mafia say 'Don't get mad, get even.'

The Buddha said 'The person who angers you conquers you.'

It's not easy catching ourselves before anger sets in, learning to accept quickly and channelling that energy into positive action is an art we may never totally perfect, yet is a tremendous skill to aim to master.

It sets us apart from those who lose their heads over the smallest things.

As leaders it enables us to act with composure, grace, calmness and rationality.

If we can maintain a cool state here we give ourselves advantage in competitive environments.

When you feel good, you make good decisions.

Clint Eastwood's father... "You either progress or decay."

When faced with a severe setback ask an early question... "How quickly can I recover from this? How soon can I be back to optimal performance?"

If it isn't fatal, it's merely inconvenient.

Pain is obligatory, suffering is optional.

Sometimes a question like...

"What's the opportunity here?" or

"What can I learn from this?"

"What options do I have?"

"What could I do first?" generates a fresh resourcefulness, a new cause or sense of purpose.

Bill Gates... "Life's not fair, get used to it!"

Mother Theresa... "Be properly selfish"... get yourself in the best mental, physical and spiritual shape you can be in so that you can serve others to the very best of your ability.

Remember the phrase used in military training... "Fatigue is not a badge of honour".

"This is a world of action and not for moping and droning in." Charles Dickens.

"There is no duty we so much underrate as the duty of being happy." Robert Louis Stevenson.

"I'm deeper than the shit I'm in." Iggy Pop

"Keep a daily limit on self-pity." Christopher Reeve.

I. PURPOSE IS THE BIG DRIVER OF RESILIENCE

5 FIBRES OF RESILIENCE.

EMOTIONAL, PHYSICAL, MENTAL, SOCIAL and PURPOSE-BASED/SPIRITUAL.

We can set monthly goals to improve our resilience in each of the fibres.

The key fibre is the purpose-based sense of being 'on a mission'. If you wish to grow your resilience, grow your sense of purpose...set goals here which absorb and excite you.

If you have a massive conviction about your purpose and you keep it front of mind, when you are going through setbacks and personal challenge, point 7 on the curve, 'Moving On' is so much easier to imagine and anticipate.

This is powerful medicine when we feel we might be losing our grip on things, losing self-confidence or the reassuring sense of being in control.

When we possess a major definite purpose we will, often unconsciously, develop the physical, emotional, mental and social resources we need to prevail.

Our own resilience cycle starts with personal purpose...and doing things 'on purpose'.

Remember how the different fibres of resilience are all interconnected.

They all contribute to our overall state and levels of resilience. So, for example, if you work hard on your physical fitness it will likely benefit your mental confidence, and your emotional strength.

J. THROW YOUR HEART OVER THE FENCE...and the rest will follow.

Wholeheartedness is the game changer.

Our spirit, ambition, purpose, belief... drives how effectively we learn and the energy levels we perform with.

Complacency is the enemy. When you get too comfortable you can fall asleep at the wheel.

The comfort zone is where dreams go to die. Ultimately it leads to repetition, boredom, stagnation.

"Expect poison from the standing water." William Blake

"Ports rot both ships and men." Horatio Nelson

Too many people transact. Managers look after what we know and do. Leadership is in the territory of the heart and spirit.

Surround yourself with positive people who will keep you wide awake by stirring you, challenging you, encouraging you, believing in you, setting you powerful examples, showing you how high a bar can be.

K. CREATE A TRIBE...GROW A CULTURE SYSTEMATICALLY.

Q - What is one of the biggest drivers of continuous habit-building and sustained repetitive practice which changes belief?

A - Being part of something bigger than ourselves.

It's so much easier to stick to a disciplined fitness regime when you are training with others towards a team goal.

Consider how religious faiths and cults can keep a group together with a collective continually reinforced belief. The components and mechanics of sustaining a collective, united purpose are evident. These are tools at the disposal of a leader.

As long as we seek to be a force for good, for constructive progress, such tools are worth real consideration as levers for creating alignment :

...The ultimate destination described is a place of infinite promise.

...Adherence to the path is systemically consolidated with examples from elders and thought leaders, values, commandments, a creed, parables, metaphors, contemporary stories of testimony and witness, celebrations, rituals, regular meetings, reminders, symbols and semiology.

...There is a deliberate stream of multi-sensory suggestions focused at the conscious and unconscious of the group to establish a unifying belief and aligned behaviour.

L. USE THE 3 LEVERS OF PERSONAL CHANGE AND REAL MOTIVATION.

The motivated, wholehearted, engaged team member has a self-talk which says :

1.) Benefit - **“I WANT”**

The size of the prize is bigger than the pain of the journey.

2.) Belief - **“I CAN”**

It is possible for me/us.

We have the wherewithal to succeed – the tools, plan, support, mindset and circumstances for out and out success.

3.) Pressure - **“I MUST.”**

Have enough Internal or External pressure to drive you on to deliver on your commitments.

Hemingway said, “Courage is grace under pressure.” Keats said we need ‘negative capability’ – the capacity to envisage how bad things could become were we not to take action – in order to make a truly significant impact on our circumstances.

M. MAKE YOUR GARDEN GROW.

“Start where you are, use what you have, do what you can.” Arthur Ashe

Voltaire proposed this in *Candide*.

Concentrate your positive efforts in ‘your garden’ – with those you love – in your family, those you work with and the people in your local community.

The first place to make a real positive difference is close to home, within your reach – focus on where you can have maximum impact where you can. Control the controllables.

N. THINK POSITIVE, SPEAK POSITIVE, GET POSITIVE.

*“We can complain because rose bushes have thorns or rejoice because thorn bushes have roses.”
Abraham Lincoln*

“Concentrate on success.” Clive Woodward

“Be thankful for what you have; you’ll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don’t have, you will never ever have enough.” Oprah Winfrey

Remember the life-giving, health-boosting power of a positive internal soundtrack.

Choose a positive soundtrack when you wake up and set a positive programme running as you get up. Keep your daily greeting cheerful, your mobile phone messages upbeat and your comments and observations uplifting to receive.

Describe the behaviour you want from others (rather than using embedded negative commands – such as “Don’t forget to...” “Don’t worry too much about...” etc.)

Remember the 5:1 ratio of positive: negative comments.

Pay compliments when you get a chance and practise using an energizing and sincere lexicon when sending emails.

Writing gives you a great opportunity to practise, test and exercise your positive word power. Beware the good mood hoovers.

Avoid drainers, be brightsided and radiate!

SELF TALK → STATE → PERFORMANCE

RECOGNISE, PRAISE, REWARD, COMPLIMENT.

Tail-walking in show pools by dolphins – in formation – was a sequence invented by dolphins.

They devised it in an environment where experimentation, innovation and risk-taking were rewarded and encouraged.

F.A.I.L.= First Action In Learning.

Play your part in nurturing confidence in your business.

“When things go wrong don’t go with them.” Elvis Presley.

O. PROMOTE AN “I’M OK – YOU’RE OK” ETHIC.

There are some astonishing side effects to be gained from growing an environment of respect, kindness, mutual participation and enjoyment.

Robert Waldinger, custodian of Harvard Study which began in 1938, ‘What makes a good life?’ concludes -

“Good relationships keep us happier and healthier.”

“Loneliness is toxic. Loneliness kills.”

The more socially connected we are to family, friends, community, the happier we are, the healthier we are and the longer we live.

“Warm relationships turn out to be protective.”

“High conflict marriages are worse for your health than divorce. Those most satisfied in their relationships at 50 were the healthiest at 80.”

It doesn’t mean we cannot disagree, argue or bicker from time to time.

It’s just that memories stay sharper for longer in people who feel they are in relationships where their partner ‘gets them’, believes in them, supports their dreams.

If we feel we can really count on others when we need them this is highly advantageous to our health.

“Good relationships protect our brains. Lean into relationships.” Robert Waldinger

P. ANCHOR YOUR DETERMINATION AND SENSE OF PURPOSE.

Find tactics to remind yourself of the power of positivity, your definite purpose and ‘future history’ for 2020 and beyond.

For example:

... A motto of the year.

... A list of ‘Goals For The Year’ written on a card, to go in your wallet, with your signature – to drive you to keep your word, stick to the promises you make yourself.

... Keep Counting. Make your goals as quantifiable as you can. If you can attribute numbers to more emotional goals you can count, record and ‘prove’ your progress as well as feel a sense of positive momentum that can keep you going.

... Polish up your front door into ‘Golden key’ to ensure you remind yourself to set your state before you greet loved ones at home after a full-on day.

... Identify your halfway line marker between work and home...the moment where you consciously and sub-consciously change modes.
... Record each night before sleep, the 3 most uplifting moments of the day.
... Get the habit of 'Last thought. Best thought' ...before you sleep.
... Start the day with an attitude of gratitude. Make the first email, text or phone call, one of thanks to someone for one thing they did the previous day.
...Keep an expensive favourite bottle of Champagne visible in your fridge as a daily suggestion of celebrations to come.
...Programme your best year yet – with loved ones – on a vibrant collage or vision board.
...Write a totally aspirational letter to yourself, redolent with goals across the span of your life and interests. Open it in a year's time.

Q. GET STARTED! THE TIME IS NOW.....

“Gather ye rosebuds while ye may”

Change happens instantly...in a heartbeat.

Preparation for change takes some people a long time of procrastination and analysis.

Best act with urgency. Rather than wait for perfection, act NOW and improve as you go.

'Progress, not perfection.'