



May 2007: The Business Management Edition

## The Basics: Do them, Do them well, Do them constantly

This edition of Keep Running focuses on the basics of business management: your people, your customers and control of your business.

**But don't think for one moment we've forgotten our clients in the public and voluntary sectors.**

The basics of your people, your clients and good governance dominate your agenda equally.

### So let's start with your people

How can you get the best from the people who make up your organisation? For all of the advanced thinking out there, a lot of good management comes down to the application of common sense. Treat people well and they tend to respond in kind.

Whilst we at Kent Trainers favour adapting your management style to the people you have and the challenges they face, there are some simple ways to keep most of your people motivated and performing well. Let's look at four fundamental human needs and how they affect your workplace.

#### Need 1: The Need of Purpose

All of us need to feel there is a reason for what we are doing. Do you remember what question you asked most often when you were a child? "Why?" Now you're an adult, you don't want to know the answer any less. We may just have become conditioned to stop asking, or stopped noticing when the answer is lame.

**Step 1:** Demonstrate meaning and show how the work matters.

#### Need 2: The Need for a Place

Nobody wants to be alone. We all want a place in society and this means two things: relationships first and foremost and, after that, respect. At work, most of us put a high value on friendships with colleagues. We also crave the respect of our peers and managers for who we are and what we contribute.

**Step 2:** Encourage collegial working and get to know and respect your colleagues.

#### Need 3: The Need of Certainty

Some people thrive on chaos and doubt. Most of us, however, find it unsettling; even frightening. Most of your colleagues work best with a sense of certainty about their role and what is expected of them.

**Step 3:** Set out a plan and ensure everyone understands their part in it.

#### Need 4: The Need of Clarity

Communication is the most valuable skill we can develop - especially for managers and leaders. What good is a purpose, a plan or respect without the means to communicate them?

**Step 4:** Communicate relentlessly and in a way that meets people's needs.

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Three courses coming up soon are:

1. [HR Essentials](#) on 7-8 June
2. [Managing Under-performance](#) on 19 June
3. [Motivational Techniques](#) on 28 June

## Your Customers pay Your Salary

Even if you work in the public or voluntary sector; without your clients, you have no job. The difference is about what your clients want.

This then becomes the driving force behind the customer or client cycle: **know what your clients want and need and expect**. Here's how to work the customer cycle.

#### Phase 1: Identify your clients

This is about knowing who you are. What is your organisation for? Determine who you serve and what you are offering them, and be wary of trying to be all things to all clients. Unless you're Tesco or Wal-mart, that is!

#### Phase 2: Attract your customers

Marketing is about creating interest from your potential customers. It isn't about selling - just as your CV is not about getting a job: it's to get you an interview.

#### Phase 3: Win your clients

The sales cycle is a whole volume in itself. (Watch out for The Sales Edition of Keep Running in the near future). The key to this step is to listen and observe carefully so you can learn their precise needs - then meet them.

#### Phase 4: Satisfy your customers

Rule 1 - Keep your promises. At phase 3 you will have offered to meet your customers' needs. If you fail to do so, you'd best have a back-up plan.

Rule 2 - Have a back-up plan, but plan never to need it.

[Complaints Handling](#) on 21 June

#### Phase 5: Retain your Clients

Of course, some readers from the voluntary and public sectors will want to do just the opposite.

For the rest of us, it pays to know that the things that satisfy us do not alone make us loyal customers. The satisfiers only matter when we get them wrong. Keeping customers loyal - better still, making them into fans who will promote you - takes more. Go beyond "good" and deliver "special".

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Three courses coming up soon are:

1. [Telesales & Selling by Phone](#) on 5 June
2. [Sales Team Management](#) on 26 June
3. [Customer Service Essentials](#) on 5 July

You might also like to download [The Customer Service Edition](#) (Nov 2006) of this newsletter.

## Governance and Control

Good governance and control amounts to three things:

1. Asking the right questions
2. Not being satisfied until you have a definite and verifiable answer
3. Dealing with whatever answer you get

This month's "Essential Ideas" feature deals with this in an insightful way.

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Three courses coming up soon are:

1. [Financial Planning \(Budgeting, Costing & Pricing\)](#) on 12 June
2. [Company Director - Understanding the Role](#) on 13 June
3. [Finance for Directors](#) on 14 June

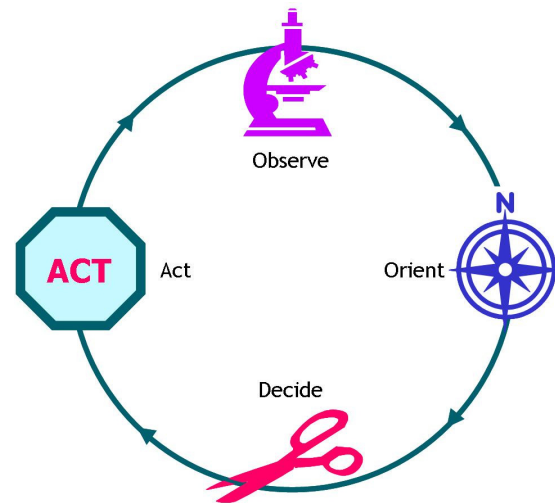
**STOP PRESS - STOP PRESS - STOP PRESS**  
Still places on [The Management Programme](#) - starting Friday 25 May.  
[Time Management](#) now **Sold Out** - next Course on 16 October or phone for returns.

## Essential Ideas

### John Boyd's OODA Loop

John Boyd was a US fighter pilot, yet his contribution to ideas was huge. He put forward the suggestion that, in battle, there is a four stage cycle that each participant follows: the OODA Loop.

If you can go around the cycle faster than your opponent, then you have an advantage. In business, read "the market" for opponent. In the voluntary and public sectors, think of "events".



First, **Observe** what's happening; with precision. Second, **Orient** yourself; "what does it mean?" Third, make a clear **Decision**, based on your analysis. Fourth, **Act** on your decision. Then, Observe the impact of your action ...

### The Project Management Equation: Fail to plan = Plan to Fail

Boyd's OODA Loop finds practical expression in the familiar "Monitor and Control Loop" that guides project managers through the delivery phase of their projects.

However, before you get to that stage, your priority must always be to build a robust plan. Few projects fail because their project manager's delivery skills are weak. Many fail because the project manager succumbs to the temptation to rush the planning stage and move too quickly to delivery - or worse, through lack of focus, they fail to plan adequately.

Without a plan, there is no way to orient yourself reliably. Your decisions will be flawed. Your project will be at risk.

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[Project Management](#) on 27 and 28 June