

## \*Introduction to TEAM TRANSITIONS - Executive leadership exercise

'Team Transitions' – an emotionally intelligent approach to achieving and sustaining team excellence, centred on achieving intent through prioritising investment in building valued and trusted relationships.

'Twelve ships with captains who would put aside their egos to work harmoniously and to synchronise their operations closely as equals are worth more than twenty four ships which might have skilful captains who would not or could not get along'

ADMIRAL LORD NELSON

The idea for 'Team Transitions' was inspired by the story of Eugene O'Kelly, who tells the story of his personal approach in dealing with his impending death from brain cancer in \*\*'Chasing Daylight: How My Forthcoming Death Transformed my Life'. Despite its message, Eugene O'Kelly described the verdict of his terminal condition as 'turning out to be a gift', because it inspired a new level of awareness of what was important in his life and a plan to invest time in 'Closing the circle' of his relationships.

On recognition of the inevitable outcome of his condition, focus turned to a heightened awareness of prioritising time investments according to the importance of the relationship, together with striving to achieve what he described as 'Perfect Moments' with the people involved. While there may appear to be no immediate connection with leadership and teamwork, Eugene O'Kelly's approach encapsulates leadership lessons both for closing team relationships and accelerating team effectiveness with a new or existing team.

Leaving one team and effectively unwinding the relationships involved, followed by rapidly achieving effective teamwork with the next is a challenge faced particularly by leaders who make this transition within relatively short timeframes. An experience common to the Armed Forces and the military officers involved.

'Team Transitions' is designed for leaders (military or otherwise) who seek to achieve both effective team 'closure' and inspiring team 'opening'. While the focus of the exercise is on you as a leader, the principle of consciously investing in relationships also applies to achieving team excellence when working with an existing team (or teams), and whether your role is as a leader or team member. Your starting point will also depend on your current situation and whether your aim is to improve teamwork within your existing team, or seek to achieve effective closure with your team before moving on to another post.

The exercise is designed to work together with MDP's 'Emotional Engagement', and provide a powerful approach to achieving effective team closure, inspirational team start up and ongoing team transformation.

\*\* Eugene O'Kelly was diagnosed on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2005, and died on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2005. 'Closing the Circle', an overview of how Eugene O'Kelly dealt with learning he had only three months to live, was the lead story in times2 published March 14<sup>th</sup> 2006. Link to article: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,7-2083997.html>  
'Chasing Daylight: How My Forthcoming Death Transformed my Life' by Eugene O'Kelly is published by The McGraw-Hill Companies Inc., and available via Amazon: <http://www.amazon.co.uk/exec/obidos/tg/stores/detail/-/books/0071471723/reviews/026-3837263-8959609>

Recommended reading for all leaders!

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