

The past month has seen some tremendous business announcements in Western Australia. Of course, how these will affect everyone day to day remains to be seen. You may already have an idea of how it will affect your business, particularly if you or your business is involved in contracts specifically relating to such initiatives as the Gorgon Project. But I can guarantee that there will continue to be surprises and challenges for everyone across the state.

In this edition of *Lamplighter Performance Consulting's* newsletter, we have some details on local events that may interest you, plus some of *Lamplighter's* own updates and information about our upcoming *Authentic Speaking*[®] workshops. I then address some principles of high performance for you to consider in regard to your own business or life.

Welcome to new readers. You are being invited to receive this newsletter as a part of our valued network. We welcome your feedback.

[Lamplighter's Performance Consulting website](#)

Previous newsletter recipients will already know that the new <http://www.authenticspeaking.com.au/> website is up and running. I'm pleased to let you know that our *Lamplighter* website has also been given a facelift, with further information and case studies in performance improvement for you at

www.lamplighter.com.au

We hope you find the information you find there valuable. Our Performance Consulting offers a unique, systematic approach to performance improvement for individuals and organisations - one based in the best in scientific and experiential evidence and our own research and experience in human performance improvement. Again, we will continue to add resources and case studies to the site to help you to achieve more. Both sites will also continue to undergo even greater transformations in a few months, as we continually improve - we practice what we preach. Please feel free to write and let me know what you think of the sites and to offer any suggestions you may have as we develop even better resources for you.

[Business Leadership and Networking Event](#)

Via Appia Networking are conducting a Speed Networking event: "**The Future of Business Leadership**" on the evening of **October 13** in Perth. Two guests, David Flanagan, MD of Atlas Iron and Damien Langley, Director of Student Edge, will be speaking during the night. Refreshments will be available. Bree and Rebecca from *Via Appia* create very comfortable and productive sessions, so it should be enjoyable and valuable for those who come. Visit the "Events" section of their website at <http://www.networkingwa.com.au/> if you would like more information or to register.

[Authentic Speaking Workshops](#)

Prime Minister Rudd is currently Australia's strongest voice internationally, as he should be in his position. Unfortunately, his recent widely publicised Labour caucus comments were not a flattering representation of the nation, nor do they appear to have been particularly effective. Public Speaking is such a vital skill and can be used to make or break your career,

your organisation and your relationships. If you'd like to learn how to speak with clarity, purpose, influence and in a way that connects with your audience, we have three open *Authentic Speaking*® workshops coming up:

1. **October 26-27**
2. **November 16-17**
3. **November 19-20**

There is an Early Bird Discount off our November workshops of \$150 (payment before October 1). Call 9288 1780 or email us to take advantage of this offer.

Authentic Speaking® offers the best in Public Speaking and Presenting Skills development. *Authentic Speaking*® principles apply not just in formal presentations, but in all manner of situations where communicating with people counts.

What separates high performers - "It's all about the starts and turns"

What really helps people and organisations to perform better than others under stress or crisis?

One of my research specialties is in the area of high performance. I've studied particularly gifted professionals to see what makes them so successful in their own field and these principles form part of the foundation for so much of our work at *Lamplighter*. One of the prime principles in cognitive functioning, for example, is that of patterning. Essentially, we can train our brains to handle massive amounts of stress and many tasks, by turning them into patterns and sequences that the brain and body can just run as one set of instructions - without us even thinking about it. This automaticity is one of the distinguishing characteristics of experts in a field or discipline. They train their thinking and skills to the extent that they can perform without even consciously thinking of how to perform a task.

This is what driving instructors try to get us all to do when we learn how to drive. As we learn, we are consciously paying attention to moving the steering wheel around, to turning our head to look, to pushing our foot down on the accelerator, etc. etc. As we learn, we have to pay attention to scores of different things. That's why it's so hard to manage at first. But as we learn, it all becomes automatic and we end up "just going for a drive". Sometimes this is called "flow" - and it's true of teams and organisations, as much as it is true of individuals. (It's also the reason why driving instructors have so many heart attacks - teaching us how to get into a "flow" as we pay attention to everything - at least, mine did.)

I was talking with Phil Glew of Glew Corporate Communications about this recently. During our conversation I used the analogy of a swimmer - the swimmer must learn how to generate that smooth flow in their strokes and get into a rhythm in order to race ahead. Phil broke in. Seems Phil has been a swimming coach for many years. He commented to me that he has observed over the years that once strong swimmers get to a certain level of competence, it is not just the strokes but something else that separates them from the pack: the starts and turns. He has measured this specifically to determine that this makes the difference between strong swimmers (assuming they don't have a supersuit, of course!).

Phil said he had noted how so often "it's all about the starts and the turns". How a swimmer trains for and handles these gives them the extra lead on the other competitors. In a business address I gave at the beginning of the Global Financial Crisis, I had likened this same principle to race car driving - you have to power through the turns, not hit the brakes, in order to come out in front of the competition. But that also means that you have to be highly trained and tuned and have a great support team.

The swimmer's success is such a great analogy for us all. It's the starts and turns in business and life that so often cause us difficulties. One of our clients recently went through a great example of this. We had been working with them on improving the organisation's overall performance. On a recent whole staff day (the MD is really committed to improving the company!), we also trained the staff in team principles and how to work together under pressure. Some of the performance principles I've mentioned underlay this training. But within a week or two of the staff day, the company hit one of its biggest crises in 10 years through a combination of factors.

At that point, it was all about handling the turns. The MD used the principles we had gone through in the training, communicating clearly with staff about this crisis, focusing their goals, setting up plans and how it would all be managed. The MD encouraged staff at every point. They had already trained and the MD gave them a flying start and supervised their daily turns and achievements. As a result, the whole company is performing admirably under a time of great stress. They will come out of this lap speeding ahead of their competition.

How ready are you for your starts and turns? How will you communicate about them when the time comes? How will you manage and perform well? Preparation can make all the difference.

If you have any examples you'd like to share, I'd welcome them.

Have a great weekend.

Many kind regards,

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