

Must-Do Tips No 17: Festive Festering (2005)

So we near the end of another year and the impending assault on the senses (and vital organs) that is Christmas and the New Year.

Hurricanes, rioting on the streets of France, David Blunkett (twice), and England cricket's Ashes triumph aside, down here in the microcosm of good business development and client care practice, we turn our thoughts to a few universal truths that have been learnt by or reinforced for us in 2005. Just three. From all at People Scope, have a good time.

Tip 1 - Change can be good!

In running Client Relationship Management (CRM) workshops and programmes as we do, we are struck again and again by the conservatively stultifying nature of some interrelationships between US and THEM. Usually, this means something along the lines of: "*Well, Young Mr Grace (Lead Partner for ACME Ltd. since the early 80s) has known the client for a very long time..*" - even though rational analysis shows that the firm's share of ACME's business has been static or in decline for some time and that, metaphorically, the firm is cruising to eventual oblivion with ACME. For firms brave enough to take this on, 99% of the time the change of leadership produces a revitalised approach and business improvement for both parties.

Tip 2 - When IS a relationship?..

In Business Development, as in many things, perception is everything. One of the most powerful changes in perception from which many professionals could benefit is about relationships. As in, when does your business relationship with an individual start? Our Yuletide money would have most talking about relatively near or at the beginning of a trading relationship, because that's how many transactionally-focused partner and associate folk see the world. **The relationship begins the moment you meet someone.** True, it may not go anywhere after that..or it may take weeks, months, and often years to progress along the path to eventual trading. But in order to achieve this progress, appropriate effort is required from the beginning rather than the traditional assertion we still hear too often that: "Well, if (s)he wants something, (s)he just has to call".

Tip 3 - Development not CPD

This is one for readers with a training and development interest (and those of you who want to see real positive changes in behaviour for your client-facing professionals). Sticking our Christmas turkey neck out, we would say that the majority of training and development conducted by professional firms in non-technical areas like selling still concentrates on **inputs** not **outputs**. In other words, there are no substantive links made between what participants do in the training room and what they do subsequently as a result. So don't be surprised if NOTHING is what you get from many for this investment. Still...it was worth a few CPD points wasn't it?

People Scope offers workshop programmes and consulting advice to professional firms on Client Care (CRM) and Business Development. For more information about our CRM work, hit 'Reply' and type **CRM**. For business development, hit 'Reply' and type **Business Development**. For more information generally about what we do, go to www.peoplescope.com.

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Avoiding Tender Traps
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Best regards.

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