



# CUTTINGS

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Compiled and edited by Geof Cox

## Leading Remote Teams

**N**ancy Settle-Murphy of Guided Insights offers some tips on how to influence people when you are remote and have no formal authority - a situation that many of us face in our working lives, and one that is becoming more and more common.

"Just because someone has been appointed to a team doesn't mean they will participate energetically. When you're leading a team of people over whom you have no direct authority, make the up-front investment to discuss ideas, goals, and challenges. As a result, you're far more likely to convince people to jump on board. And if they can't make the kind of commitment your project requires, it's better to know up front while there's time to do something about it."

**Pick up the phone.** Introduce yourself. Share your enthusiasm about the project. Let the team know how important this project is. What is your involvement, in terms of time, attention and activities. What challenges you face in pulling the team together. What ideas and guidance do they have?

**Do they have a passion for the project.** Is this a great opportunity or just another task? What benefits do they see? Speak about the benefits of from your viewpoint. Sow the seeds of enthusiasm.

**How much time and energy do they have?** What else are they doing?. How much time they think they can realistically devote to this project? Just because someone has been assigned a project doesn't mean they really have time to participate.

**Set expectations about the help you need.** Do you require intermittent input and feedback or a more time-consuming role on an ongoing basis? What is the potential difference between what you feel is required and what this person has to give? Do you need to find a replacement?

**What are their communication preferences and styles?** Observe how team members communicate. In writing? On the telephone? Do they like detail or "blue sky" thinking? Taking their language will reduce resistance. Use a range of communication methods.

**Recognise contributions at every opportunity.** Use multiple channels

to celebrate contributions and success. Inform team members' managers. Acknowledge suggestions. Thank people for ideas even if they cannot be implemented, and be sure people understand why some ideas are adopted and others are not.

**Invite influence over your project goals, strategies and tactics.** The project will benefit from diversity and different thinking. Allow healthy debate and dissenting views. Build time for strategic discussions.

**Limit meeting time.** Focus on running fewer interesting and productive meetings, where people have an opportunity to learn and contribute. Don't waste people's time. If people find meetings useful they will attend and contribute.

**Check in frequently.** Arrange time to meet 1:1 at scheduled intervals to find out how they're feeling and what they're thinking. Many people are reluctant to open up in group meetings. Encourage team members to build trust among each other through direct communication.

*Read the full article and more insights from Nancy's website at [www.guidedinsights.com](http://www.guidedinsights.com)*

## Admiral Sir Sandy Woodward

As I was finalising this edition, the death was announced of Admiral Sir Sandy Woodward, best remembered in Britain for leading the task force to the Falkland Islands in 1982.

He was also a teacher of one of the Royal Navy's most famous leadership programmes - the Perisher course for the selection and training of submarine commanders.

It was in this context that I worked with him in the aftermath of the Piper Alpha oil rig fire, when the course was used as a model for a command skills training programme for Offshore Installation Managers.

I introduced him to the Belbin Team Process Roles model. His reaction on seeing his profile (strong Creator/Driver) was: "I always knew

I was dangerous! I have ideas and I have the drive to implement them." So, he said that he had always recruited someone who would always question him as his second in command. This role in the Falklands conflict was filled by Rear Admiral Jeremy Larken, the leader of the design team - his team process role: strong Evaluator!

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*A collection of thought provokers and quotations...*

- ✂ "Look deep into nature, and you will understand everything better." *Albert Einstein*
- ✂ "At first dreams seem impossible, then improbable, then inevitable." *Christopher Reeve*
- ✂ "Love is the force that ignites the spirit and binds teams together." *Phil Jackson*
- ✂ "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." *Winston Churchill*
- ✂ "The power of imagination makes us infinite." *John Muir*
- ✂ "Better be wise by the misfortunes of others than by your own." *Aesop*
- ✂ "Our business is to be happy." *HH Dalai Lama*
- ✂ "A superior man is modest in his speech, but exceeds in his actions." *Confucius*
- ✂ "Do not fear going forward slowly; fear only to stand still." *Chinese Proverb*
- ✂ "It takes a lot of courage to show your dreams to someone else." *Erma Bombeck*
- ✂ "The ability to simplify means to eliminate the unnecessary so that the necessary may speak." *Hans Hofmann*
- ✂ "The best vision is insight." *Malcolm S. Forbes*
- ✂ "Nothing in life is to be feared. It is only to be understood." *Marie Curie*
- ✂ "Management is efficiency in climbing the ladder of success; leadership determines whether the ladder is leaning against the right wall." *Stephen Covey*
- ✂ "Stay committed to your decisions, but stay flexible in your approach." *Tom Robbins*
- ✂ "A little knowledge that acts, is worth infinitely more than much knowledge that is idle." *Khalil Gibran*
- ✂ "The first task of leadership is to build community" *Peter Block*
- ✂ "So much of what we call management consists in making it difficult for people to work." *Peter Drucker*

## The Emotional Intelligence Skills Employers Want

Daniel Goleman, writing on LinkedIn in July points out that the world's best employers are seeking to employ people who not only have good technical skills, but who also have emotional intelligence strengths.

He quotes Paul Wiseman, economics writer at the Associated Press, that companies also "want graduates with soft skills." The main ones quoted in the article:

**Working well on a team.** As one executive once told a McKinsey consultant, "I have never fired an engineer for bad engineering, but I have fired an engineer for lack of teamwork."

**Clear, effective communications.** This requires strong cognitive empathy, the ability to understand how the other person thinks. Of course, good listening skills are also important.

**Adapting well to change.** Such flexibility signifies good self-management.

**Smooth interactions with a wide variety of people.** This includes customers, clients and workmates from groups different than one's own, and from other cultures.

**Thinking clearly and solving problems under pressure.** A combination of self-awareness, focus, and quick stress recovery puts the brain in an optimal state for whatever cognitive abilities are needed.

Business schools are listening and building these skills into their courses, either by adding test to its admissions process like Yale or through adding EI to its curriculum.

Of course, it is also possible to learn EI when already in employment, emotional intelligence can also be learned. With my colleagues I have been teaching these skills even before Daniel Goleman coined the term Emotional Intelligence in 1995!

*Read more on Daniel Goleman's work at his website [www.danielgoleman.info](http://www.danielgoleman.info)*

*For more information on courses run by New Directions and Learning Consortium, go to our websites or sign up for one of the public courses on offer.*

## Public courses

Coming up in the next months:

### Getting Results Without Authority

A two day course in positive influencing skills aimed at people working in project or matrix structures where they need to get results without having any formal authority

17-18 September (London)

### Focus on Influence

A 3.5 day residential programme that engages participants in exploring how they interact with others and develop their skills in different situations. (Run through partners Learning Consortium)

21-24 October (Belgium / English)

18-21 November (Belgium / Dutch)

### Human Competency and Capability Development

A four day programme aimed at HR and L&D professionals (in particular in the Oil and Gas sector) which explores the processes and strategies for developing people. (Run with partners Strategies for Training and petroEDGE)

22-25 October (Kuala Lumpur)

### International Oil & Gas Executive Development Programme

A five day programme on strategic business skills covering financial management and leadership topics. (Run with partners Strategies for Training and petroEDGE)

28 Oct. - 1 Nov. (Kuala Lumpur)

\*\*\* [call for more information](#) \*\*\*

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