

Nine women can't have a baby in one month

Some problems can't be solved just by throwing more resources at them

"They've got to understand" is always spoken by a loser

It means "We have failed to convince..."

It's very nice to be clever, but even better to be effective

The best plans will fail if you can't deliver them

Don't believe your own propaganda

If you ever lose sight of the reality, you are surely doomed

You don't have to like office politics, but that's no excuse for losing

The risk of disdaining "the way people behave around here" is displacement

Everything is the way it is for a reason

Was it good then and still now? Good then but not now? Or always lousy?

People will act very precisely as you motivate them

Much more precisely, and probably quite differently, from what you expect

When you're locked in battle, you may just be a fly on the backside

If the people you're fighting have bigger problems, you'll have to wait your turn

When being good enough isn't good enough

Beware the perpetuation of mediocrity and those who rise without trace

Never say "but", only say "and"

The greatest tip ever for 1:1 conversations. Change your life today!

Beware the cross-eyed javelin thrower

He's not very accurate, but he sure as hell gets a lot of attention

Be clear about the ownership of problems

Other people's problems are their property: it's theft to take them without permission

Be clear about the ownership of silence

Don't feel responsibility to fill it if it doesn't belong to you

Just because someone has different knowledge doesn't make them stupid

It's possible, indeed often inevitable, to be ignorant – but not stupid

The old bull and the young bull [not for polite company]

Why score a quick hit when you can clear the board a little more slowly

He who is defensive generally has much to be defensive about

You've uncovered a weak spot and will need to proceed accordingly

The three tests of a leader: I'll follow you through fire if you pass

Do you actively seek out better people than you to work for you? How do you react when you run out of knowledge? Can people bring you bad news?

Have you created a robot or a child

Mission-critical question for creators of subsidiaries, joint ventures, consortia

There's no helicopter off the top of Everest

Once you've conquered the problem, it's as long and hard again to get down

Beware the light that shineth in the darkness

Is it the light at the end of the tunnel, or the light on the oncoming train

There are two sure ways to lose respect

Appearing too stupid to know there's a problem; or too scared to admit it

Cultivate the quality of mercy: there are more like them than like you

Impatience, like not suffering fools, are bad for your health and effectiveness

The sole purpose of a business communication is to put an idea which is clear in your mind clearly into somebody else's

If it doesn't arrive clearly, it's not the recipient's fault

For most of us, work is like fighting in a fog

It's cold, damp, unpleasant, completely unclear and directionless: please lead us

Friction is fine so long as it generates more light than heat

Don't hire clones, don't expect perpetual harmony; keep an eye on the balance

Experience consists of making the same mistake once only

Allow them to try and fail; insist that they learn rapidly

Beware straight-line thinking when there's an unbridgeable chasm

Sometimes you just can't get there from here, however close and easy it looks

Hiring an executive is like buying a tie (Henry Grunfeld, co-founder of Warburgs)

You don't buy one when you need one, you buy one when you see one you like

Ten year's experience is different from one year's experience ten times

Understand who has a future, and who may have a present for a very long time

No world class business ever shrank its way to greatness

Cutting costs is all very fine but at some point you have to grow

Don't get locked in the Task Tunnel

Happy boss above, happy team below; but what are your peers saying or doing?

Don't promise what you can't deliver

I's soooo tempting – and soooo stupid, in fact downright dangerous

It's only a good idea if your boss had it first

Cynical maybe, but do remember who's in a position to be grateful or resentful

Remember the Battle of Trafalgar

Don't fire all your shots in one go and expect the enemy to sink or surrender

Things Can't Go On Like This

They not only can, they almost certainly will: so stop moaning and do something

Keep your seatbelt lightly fastened

Good advice for local turbulence. Patience; courage. Don't rush for the exit

"Why" is always threatening

Use what, when, which, where, who or how – unless you really want to threaten

Nobody owns your life but you

So how come so many of us outsource management of our careers?