



# MITCHELL PHOENIX

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT TRAINING

### New Tricks

**How management training is first and foremost about developing managers' abilities in a limited number of crucial skills**

*"Governing Change highlights key areas for senior managers to work on and develop first class performance in" Philip Baker, Planning Director, Banks Developments*

Managing people is extremely challenging: every day managers are faced with a stream of problems to solve. It is not surprising that they seek help. New insights into the situations managers are commonly faced with are found in ancient texts like The Art of War, in observing the behaviour of lions and in the routines of top sports people.

The assumption behind using these kinds of training ideas is that what the managers are already doing is not working as well as expected and they need something new to provide them with a solution. Very often what these programmes bring us is valuable, but is limited to one or two fresh insights into the challenges of managing and leading people.

In fact, what we need is not something new, it is better performance in the key areas in which managers and leaders operate: planning, communication, delegation, performance management, running meetings, setting the culture of the organisation, and so on.

The situation is rather like that of an aspiring club tennis player who wins a day's tuition from Raphael Nadal's coach. The player boasts to his friends that he will trounce them all when he returns from that day's session, because Nadal's trainer will have shown him the 'killer move' that helps Nadal win his matches.

When he returns, however, he looks downcast and his friends ask him what is wrong. He replies that all he was taught all day was forehand, backhand, serve, volley and smash, with some fitness work thrown in. When he asked how Nadal wins all his matches, the trainer replied that he uses forehand, backhand, serve,

volley and smash. "The difference between you and him," said the coach, "is that he is better at forehand, backhand, serve, volley and smash than you are."

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