



**Want Career Success?**

**Then watch more football**

How soccer can help you succeed at work

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Dedicated to the 'team' at CCI (Co-counselling International) with whom I have learned so much about meeting my own and other people's needs, and achieving my goals

(See [www.co-counselling.org](http://www.co-counselling.org) for more information)

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# The Game Plan

**"It's a great job, apart from Saturday afternoon."**

*Jocky Scott, manager of struggling Dunfermline*

*Athletic in 1991*

Complete Jocky's sentence about your work; "It's a great job, apart from...."

Welcome back. If you were one of the many Britons who feel stressed in their job, you may have been away sometime. This book however is for every one. It's full of stories and quotes from the world of football. These will help you to get the best out of your job, both in terms of enjoyment and in getting on. The aim is for you to be able to say simply "It's a great job. Full stop."

Why pick football to look at your work life? Firstly, the game is about planning, working together and coping with pressure. These are issues that affect all of us. Secondly, people play to different rules in the stadium than outside it. Feelings and behaviour are more extreme. Great victories are won and terrible setbacks are suffered. Tribes of people cry, swear and cheer together. Everything is larger than life, so we see ourselves more clearly.

(Keep a note of your answer to the Jocky sentence. Look at it again in six months time. How have you tackled the "apart froms" since then?)

**The Latest Score:**

**Reviewing your career**

## "Simplicity is genius."

*Ron Greenwood*

Ron Greenwood won both the FA Cup and Cup Winners' Cup with West Ham. He later took England to the 1982 World Cup, where they were unbeaten. Keeping things simple worked for him. It's good advice to follow. Human beings have very simple needs. Some of these are physical, whilst others are mental and emotional.

In recent years British teams have been forced to copy foreign rivals to compete. They have improved the diets, exercise and relaxation habits of their players. Football has also long known the importance of touch. Not only with the magic sponge or massage, both players and fans hug much more than you normally see in the workplace. (And don't risk sexual harassment charges!)

Relaxation, exercise, touch and good food are basic to everyone's health and career. They don't just matter to footballers who use their bodies to make a living. Ninety-one million days are lost from work every year in the UK from sickness. Don't become another statistic.

***Does your job meet your physical needs? If it doesn't can you meet them outside of work?***

*The Sun:*

**"What have been the biggest thrills in your life?"**

*Neil Ruddock:*

**"Being at the birth of my son Joshua - I was suspended."**

Footballers are always being interviewed. They are often asked what has been the greatest moment of their lives. Before going on to talk about a particular match, they usually start with one phrase. It's "My greatest moment in football". However much glory they have had, they imply that other things are more important. This brings us back to looking at basic human needs.

Experts would say that for people to stay healthy they need to feel loved. Football reminds us though that this isn't just about romantic candle lit dinners. One Sunderland fanzine is called "A Love Supreme". Supporters are part of a big family and many feel they are more part of their club than the players. Most fans are more likely to divorce their partner than leave their club. This sense of belonging is very important, as humans are group animals. We need other people.

***Does your job meet your need to be part of something? Are you loved, liked, hated or simply ignored? Can you get support when you are stressed? If your answers are mainly "no", can you get your needs met elsewhere?***

**"It's in our own hands."**

*Said by every manager at some point*

Last day of the season. Hoping. Praying. Your trannie pressed to your ear. You'll only stay up if other results go your way. This is how it feels to be desperate.

People have a need to be in control of their own lives. This is another basic human need. It's as true in any job as in football. Stress is lower for people who decide how they do their own work. They are off sick less too.

***How much is what you do at work in your own hands? How do you feel about this? Have you ever thought about working for yourself?***

**"There have been better managers than me sacked,  
but now I am just a statistic - the 543rd manager to  
be sacked since the war."**

*David Pleat, leaving Leicester in 1991*

Fans and the media often criticise managers for changing clubs. They are also usually the first people to call for them to be sacked. A few bad results and the knives are out. Personally I think managers are right to think carefully about their own interests. Most organisations aren't there to meet the needs of the people who work for them. They have some other aim, be it winning the league or making money. So don't expect your bosses to help you get on. If they do that's a bonus. Take control of your own career. A first step is deciding what "getting on" means.

**"Being a footballer is what I do. It is not what I am."**

*Pat Nevin*

**"My life is my work. My work is my life."**

*Bill Shankly*

Here we have two very different views from two Scottish imports to the English game. Nevin was an international winger who played for Chelsea and Everton. Shankly was Liverpool's manager, famous as the man who started the Reds rise to greatness.

It's up to you to decide which view most suits you.

***What is your vision of the future?***

***Do you want your life to be about your career?***

***Are other things more important to you?***

The vital thing is to consciously make a choice. Then make decisions based around this. On the next few pages we will look at these issues in more detail.

**"Mike Varney, for 11 years the physiotherapist to Spurs ... has seen the combination of budding football star, pushy parent and lax teacher all too often result in an avoidable injury. One 9 year old he treated had soldiered through 8 games in 9 days. 'By the time he came to see me, he was unable to walk.' The boy had continued to play, despite a severe muscle strain, because his father had made him."**

*Richard Dixon, The TES (1.1.88.)*

***Does it feel like you are actually acting out someone else's dreams? Did you ever really want to try another career, but were talked out of it?***

It may still be possible to change. After all a number of players, such as Les Ferdinand, came into League football late.

**"The hardest job I've got is going home to be a good husband and father."**

*Graeme Souness.*

Souness

\* Managed Liverpool whilst he had heart problems

\* Was the coach at relegation threatened Southampton

\* Also worked in the pressure cooker atmospheres of Serie A and Galatasaray.

***Would you rate your home life as being your hardest job?***

In the UK we have one of the worst divorce rates in Europe - and work some of the longest hours. (Some leagues you just don't want to be top of.)

***What balance works best in your life? Do you want to make any changes?***

**"Football has given me riches, popularity and privileges, but I want even more. I live for indescribable emotions and football can give me those."**

*Gianluca Vialli*

Jimmy Hill got the maximum wage abolished in 1961. Ever since people have complained that footballers are only interested in the money. Their agents possibly are. Players themselves probably vary. Some are looking for success and others just for a chance to enjoy themselves. Some need the money to pay off debts like anybody else.

***How does money fit into your career plans? Do you want to earn a lot quickly and retire? Are you happy to get a low wage in a job you love? Is money more important to you than job satisfaction?***

There is no right answer, but the question itself is important. This is true at whatever stage you are in your career. Perhaps like a footballer you need an agent to help you. Try talking to a financial adviser if you haven't done so already.

**Bobby Moore, Bobby Charlton, Emllyn Hughes and Peter Shilton.**

Other than being England captains, what else do they all have in common?

These are all famous players who were never really as successful at management. They had all the skills needed to be good on the pitch, but not to become great managers. It's always tempting in any job to want to become the manager. Promotion brings with it status and money, but it may not always be a happy career choice.

***Are you doing a job where you enjoy using particular technical skills? How would you feel about stopping using them? If you feel OK about changing your role, do you think that you have the skills needed to become a good manager?***

Many of these skills are to do with working with people. We look at them in more detail later in the book. Other skills are often needed too, for example expertise with budgets and planning. ***Do you feel confident in these areas? How could you get experience or support if you don't?*** Sometimes of course people discover that management is what they are best at. Sven-Goran Eriksson, Ron Atkinson and Sir Alex Ferguson are all better known as managers than as players.

**Winning:  
Making a success of  
your career**

**"I'll tell the players to go out and enjoy themselves."**

*Joe Mercer, England caretaker manager 1974*

Footballers are sometimes asked "Which gives you more pleasure making love or scoring a goal?" Have you ever been asked which you enjoyed most, sex or work? Probably not. Yet many of us will spend around 80,000 hours in the job rather than on the job. So it's worth thinking about how to enjoy your work life more. You may be there just because you need the money. However there may be little things you can do to enjoy it more.

**"It will be over in a flash, so have a good look  
round and take it all in."**

*FA Cup Final cliché, (and not another sex comparison  
with work)*

It's Cup Final day. Dodgy team songs are in the charts and obscure  
celebrity fans are interviewed. At some point an ex-player offers advice  
to the current team. It's always about looking around and taking  
everything in.

It may not be original, but it is good advice. Lives and careers pass by  
more quickly than we imagine. The pace of modern life is frantic, and  
so it's easy to miss the good things going on around us. So become  
more aware of your senses. You probably will never hear people  
chanting your name, but you might enjoy the sound of bird song,  
breathe in the smell of coffee, smile at the changing of the seasons or  
discover a new awareness of your own body.

Life is made up of moments. Try and enjoy all the good bits. However  
big or small they are.

**"God didn't shine on him the way he shone on Johan Cruyff, Kenny Dalglish or George Best. Keegan made himself into a player by work, work, work."**

*Arthur Cox, a former manager of Special K*

For some people to enjoy work they have to reach the top.

*Is this you and have you the skills to get there?*

*If you haven't got the skills, do you want to follow Keegan's example?*

*What do you need to work, work, work on?*

*Thinking ahead, are there future skills you should be developing now?*

Keegan has taken time off during his management career to refresh his batteries. He's then come back stronger. So remember to relax in your way too. It might be hard getting to the top.

**"The World Cup has at last found its juvenile lead, its Leonardo Di Caprio. And this star is leaving us after a Titanic match. Michael Owen has everything to restore England's image which was becoming that of a simple factory of tattooed hooligans and alcoholics."**

*Editorial in France's Le Monde during the 1998*

*World Cup*

If you want to be a star in your own career you don't just need talent. Image and style count for a lot too.

***How do you check out on these issues? Does your image and style help your career? Do you want to do anything about your image?***

Get rid of your 1970s Graeme Souness perm and moustache for example.

***What is your style like? How do you act around people?***

Seventies Leeds player Norman Hunter had the nickname "Bite yer legs". His record as a hard man was useful as it probably won him many tackles even before he went on the pitch.

***Does your way of acting suit your job? If not do you want to alter how you are, change your work or simply live with it?***

**"Yes, he misses a few. But he gets in the right place to miss them."**

*Bill Shankly about Roger Hunt, his 1966 World Cup winning striker*

To be a winner at your work, you also need to be in the right place time after time. Sooner or later someone will notice you.

## **Belgium 0 England 1**

*(Platt 119)*

Still not convinced of the importance of getting yourself in the right place? It's seen after every international tournament. A player has a moment of brilliance. Next thing lots of clubs want to sign him. Remember the 1990 World Cup and Platt's last minute wonder goal. Do you really think he had gone to Serie A, if he'd scored it in a pre-season friendly? Against Ghent.

***How can you make sure that the people who matter notice you?***

***How can you make sure they keep noticing you?***

**"The new manager has given us unbelievable belief."**

*Paul Merson talking about Arsene Wenger*

### **Confidence 1**

If a team lacks confidence it's half way to losing. This is seen every Saturday first on the pitch and then in the league tables.

Self-belief is also important to getting what you want from your career. You have to believe that you are capable of getting what you want - and that you deserve to succeed.

You may have grown up being told you were no good. Every day write down 5 reasons why you will succeed. Then 5 more reasons why you deserve to be successful. Remember however not everyone can be Manchester United. Is success for you at the moment more like winning the Conference than the Premiership?

**"Now I know how Bobby Moore felt when he lifted  
the World Cup."**

*Iris Jones. Winner of "Lavatory Attendant of the Year"*

## **Confidence 2**

Flushed with success, I suppose.

You'll probably never lift the "Lavatory Attendant of the Year" award, never mind the World Cup. So you'll just have to give yourself your own winner's medals. Think about what you have achieved everyday. Tell yourself what you like about yourself. Build yourself up. You don't have to fool yourself or lie. It's not being big headed, it's the kind of thing sport psychologists might get footballers to do. It's good for them and for you.

## DO GIVE UP THE DAY JOB

- Shipshape Gary Pallister used to work at the docks.
- Bright spark Stuart Pearce was a Council electrician.
- Chris Waddle should be used to bang-er-ing them in.  
He was once a worker at a sausage seasoning  
factory.

## Confidence 3

Read this list when you need a boost.

Dreams can come true.

(I always wanted to write crap jokes about footballers for example.)

## **"If you're good enough, you're old enough"**

*As heard on Grandstand, The Big Match, Sky Sport,  
Five Live etc.*

## **Confidence 4**

Paul Allen was only 17 when he won the FA Cup with West Ham in 1980. Norman Whiteside was also only 17 when he played in the 1982 World Cup for Northern Ireland. Edson Arantes do Nascimento actually won the World Cup in 1958 when he was 17. (Bet the commentators were glad that he preferred to be called Pele.)

It is true that it's easier for young people to get to the top in sport than in other careers. Experience is in some ways less important. However energy, enthusiasm and new ways of looking at things are useful in any job. Richard Branson for example started Virgin at 22 and since then has gone on to own a record label, a chain of megastores and an airline. He also likes to support underdogs – or is it lost causes? Remember how Virgin used to sponsor Crystal Palace.

## **Age United**

- Roger Milla was 42 when he scored for Cameroon in the 1994 World Cup
- Stanley Matthews was 50 when he turned out for his last game in the old First Division
- Hugh Symons was still playing for a London Hospitals Old Boy side in 1999. He was 82

## **Confidence 5**

Feeling old and need a boost? Remember Hugh Symons. Life's just begun.

## Competing on a level playing field

- Racism was a big problem for many years in English football and people still have to fight against it today. However by the Nineties it was possible for Ruud Gullit to become manager of Chelsea and take them to FA Cup glory.
- Football is often said to be a man's game. Despite this Carolina Morace became the first female professional coach in Italian football in 1999.
- Andie Wilson played for Chelsea and was also an international bowler. He had lost the use of one arm in World War One.

## Confidence 6

You can do it. Don't let prejudice get you down. Things are changing. Dig deep into your own resources and get the support of friends or a union if necessary.

**Soccer School:**

**Learning to succeed**

**"And now the Northern Ireland manager Billy  
Bingham will have to put his thinking boots on."**

*BBC Commentator*

He got them to the '82 and '86 World Cups, so the boots obviously worked. Do you remember how school teachers, sometimes made you feel that your shoe size was bigger than your IQ? This was nonsense as humans are good at learning. In this part of the book we look at learning for work. Once again football has a lot to teach us. It is like a college course in creativity, thinking and other important skills. You may find the below useful.

"Dear Training Manager,  
Please pay for this member of staff to go to the Cup Final rather than night school. It'll be good for the organisation. (You should go too.)"

"Dear Tax Officer,  
Please give me back the VAT on this subscription to cable TV. I need to watch more football. This is vital to my work as a self-employed person. In the modern world things are changing all the time. My career success will depend on how well I can develop new skills, ideas and attitudes."

**What kind of intelligence do many great footballers have?**

- a) Musical intelligence. They sing beautifully on great records by Chas & Dave.
- b) Spatial intelligence. They see soccer like a chess game and have a real sense of where everybody is.
- c) Academic intelligence. They know the history of England from the 1066 Norman invasion to the 1966 pitch invasion.
- d) Mathematical intelligence. They can work out how much they earn per day without a calculator - to the nearest thousand pounds.

**Learning and Success 1**

The answer I was looking for was b), though the others may be right too for all I know. Footballers are often made out to be stupid. This isn't fair as some of them may be very bright indeed. Experts say that there are at least seven types of intelligence. These different ways of thinking include the academic, the musical, the mathematical and the spatial. Cantona had good spatial intelligence. Fans would talk about his vision. He has a great sense of where everybody was and what passes to make.

Just as there are different forms of intelligence, there are also different ways of learning. Some people prefer to see things. They may learn best from books or TV. Others prefer to hear information. CDs, lectures or conversations are good ways for them to learn. Still others like to touch things and are "hands on" learners. They may also like to write lots of notes. Not to read, just the act of writing helps them understand.

***How do you best learn? Is that how you actually spend most of your learning time?***

**"We were returning home from a match .... talking over the game .... trying to map out the moves leading to our goal .... I argued that if we could plan moves like that instead of just hoping for it to happen, we would score more often."**

*Arthur Rowe of Spurs on how the push-and-run style began in the 1949/50 season*

## **Learning and Success 2**

In 1950 Spurs won the Second Division and the following two seasons they were First Division champions and runners up. Learning from their successes sure paid off for Tottenham.

***Do you feel that you put enough time aside to think about your job?***

(And the good news is that a recent survey by BT showed that inspiration is most likely to come to people when they are travelling, relaxing at home or during sport. Book a ticket for that long-distance away game, put the match on or get the boots out. All on work time of course.)

**Australia beat Tonga 22 - 0 in a World Cup qualifier.**

**Afterwards the Tongan manager**

- a) Was beat up by home supporters
- b) Beat a hasty retreat and resigned
- c) Was upbeat
- d) Was described as a deadbeat by the Tongan FA and sacked?

**Learning and Success 3**

He was actually c) upbeat.

This was Tonga's first World Cup campaign and everything was new and exciting to them. They knew they had a lot to learn. When you are in new situations be gentle on yourself. Enjoy finding new things out about yourself and the world.

**"We use every stumbling block as a stepping stone."**

*Sam Hammam*

#### **Learning and Success 4**

Sam Hammam was owner of Wimbledon FC. They rose from outside of the professional leagues to win the FA Cup. If using every stumbling block as a stepping stone achieved this, I'll have some of it too.

Accept that everyone makes mistakes and welcome them as a chance to learn. You may even make the same mistake again, as change can be difficult. Just keep on thinking about how to get it right.

**"Football is a game you play with your brain."**

*Johan Cruyff*

**Learning and success 5**

***Are you having trouble solving a problem?***

To misquote Cruyff, play a football game with your brain.

Imagine that you are a team trying to solve the problem. The team is made up of:

- \* A sports psychologist
- \* A Belgian anti-hooligan riot policeman
- \* Pele
- \* A teenage female fan
- \* Pickles, the dog who found the stolen Jules Rimet World Cup

Think about how each one would come up with an answer. This may help you get a different view on the issue. Try it again if you want. This time with a team made up of work mates you admire. Alternatively make up a team of people in the same business as you, but with different jobs. So if you work for personnel have a team from accounts, design and sales. What ideas might they come up with?

**One game at a time:**

**Beating Stress**

**"This is a bloody awful job, but it is not going to turn me into a bloody awful person."**

*Graham Taylor (During his time as England manager)*

Around 270,000 people take time off work each day in the UK because of stress. Typical physical symptoms include headaches, back pain and being unable to sleep.

Other symptoms include anxiety, boredom, heavy drinking and in a small number of cases being compared unfavourably to a root vegetable.

***Is the list above familiar to you? Do you have a bloody awful job?***

***Is it just a stressful one that you love?***

Let football help you stop turning into a bloody awful person - or a turnip. Turn over to get advice from the Greatest Living Wise Man

*As Des Lynam says,*

**"If you can keep your head when all about you  
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,  
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,  
But make allowance for their doubting too...**

**If you can dream - and not make dreams your  
master;**

**If you can think - and not make thoughts your aim;**

**If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster**

**And treat those two impostors just the same...**

**Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,**

**And - which is more - you'll be a Man, my son!"**

OK Rudyard Kipling said it first. Des reads it very nicely though, on my copy of "The Best Footie Anthems in the World....Ever!"

Funny that Kippo, as we should probably call him, wrote a poem for an England World Cup campaign. It's better than "Back Home" by the 1970 World Cup Squad though. For a start it's a reminder that even a hundred odd years ago life was a challenge. So nobody needs to feel ashamed about stress, it's only human. Everybody feels pressured at times, particularly at work. Indeed 26% of UK employees have taken sick leave due to stress and 25,000 people leave their jobs each year because of it.

**"Footballers tend to be thrust from an ordinary background into an extraordinary world. There's no training for living such an atypical life. Hopefully, clubs are just beginning to realise that just paying a young man a lot of money is not the answer. You can't buy happiness."**

*Ian Cockerill, sports psychologist*

List all the players you can think of who have had problems with alcohol, drugs, gambling, the police, sex or relationships. Was lack of money the cause of these problems?

Being poor can be very stressful. Having money does take one set of worries away. But all the others remain: Is my marriage falling apart? Are the kids in with the wrong crowd? Do I look fat in this replica kit? Why isn't she talking to me? Can we really avoid the drop this season? Before looking at stress in more detail however, let's talk cash.

***What were your family's beliefs about money?***

***Are you still living by their rules?***

***Most importantly do you want to?***

Guus Hiddink was the Dutch manager in the 1998 World Cup. He deliberately gave bad refereeing decisions in training. This was to teach his players how to cope with stress.

There are only about 15 million Dutch. They produce great teams though. So perhaps Hiddink was on to something. He wanted his players to have more than just football skills. They needed to be able to cope when things went wrong. This doesn't happen by accident. It needs practice and the learning of new skills.

The Soccer School: Learning to succeed" section on pages 58-70 was also about anti-stress skills. It was about stopping things going wrong in the first place. Football coaches show the way in this approach. They call it tactics.

Club chairman also try to prevent stress: their own. But if they get it right fans will also not have to worry. Well run clubs are seldom relegated. If you work in a well run organisation your stress levels should be lower. Low stress depends on both you as an individual and the world around you.

**“I thought, why not bring Christmas forward? The players thought I had totally lost it. I ordered them all to turn up in Christmas gear. We had turkey, a visit from Father Christmas, the lot.”**

*Dave Bassett, who brought a new meaning to*

*“Season’s Greetings” when he noticed that his*

*Sheffield United side only seemed to start playing the second half of the season.*

**Stress and your behaviour 1**

*What would an early Christmas be in your job?*

*Think about when you are most successful and least stressed.*

*What causes it?*

*Can you do it more often?*

## Football:

The only job where your manager will ever train you in the tricks of time-wasting

## Stress and your behaviour 2

Football teaches you the value of time. There's always either too much of it or too little.

Too much as so many teams lose in the last few minutes: "Come on blow the whistle! They're on their last legs." Too late. One-nil.

Too little, because if it's your team needing to score, they always run out of time.

Work's the same. Too much time if you're bored. Too little if you're stressed and busy. ***Can you see any patterns in the way you treat time? Is time stressful because of your own actions or the way your organisation is run?***

Some people like to make a list at the beginning of the day. Put on it things that are important to do, as well as those that are urgent. Then add a treat for yourself and work out when the best time is to do everything.

## EUROPEAN CUP WINNERS:

- 1955/56: Real Madrid
- 1956/57: Real Madrid
- 1957/58: Real Madrid
- 1958/59: Real Madrid
- 1959/60: Real Madrid

## Stress and your behaviour

Facing stressful times ahead and not sure how to handle them? Be like Don Revie, who was so impressed by Real Madrid that he changed Leeds United's strip to look like them. The Yorkshire side went on to win promotion, the League and two European trophies.

Try modelling yourself on someone.

***Who do you think could handle the hard meeting you're going to?***

***Who could deal with that difficult customer?***

Think about what they would say, do and wear. Remember to stop behaving like them afterwards though. Particularly if you were pretending to be Vinnie Jones.

(Leeds aren't the only team to get their kit from foreign opposition.

Mighty Juventus' strip owes its existence to.... Notts County.)

**"Sometimes....there's nothing you can do; extra training, psychology, getting strippers in - none of it will help."**

*Dave Bassett when manager of Sheffield United*

#### **Stress and your behaviour 4**

Luck plays a part in football and life. So does talent. Other people may have more of both of them. David Bassett is right; sometimes we have done all we can. We can do no more. And it still isn't enough.

## "Que Sera Sera (Whatever Will Be)"

*Fans of Doris Day, Sheffield Wednesday etc*

## Stress and your thinking 1

When changing our behaviour doesn't reduce our stress, we may need to take a different tack: accepting things as they are.

"Que Sera Sera" isn't just a song to sing on the terraces. It's also for the work place too. Sometimes we just have to let go. Let what's going to happen, happen and find support to live with it.

## **Barcelona 4 - 0 Leeds United**

*(Leeds' first group game in the 2000/01 Champions' League.)*

## **Stress and your thinking 2**

Despite this defeat it was actually Leeds who got through to the semi-final. Indeed Barca went out early on. The motto for David O'Leary's men for the whole competition seemed to be "The Adventure Continues."

This shows us another way to think about failure. See it as a challenge. Use setbacks to spur you on to do better next time.

### ***What stresses are you struggling with in your career?***

Remember that in all adventures there are highs and lows. Think of other times when you struggled but eventually pulled through.

**"The easiest team for a manager to pick is the  
Hindsight XI."**

*Craig Brown (when managing Scotland)*

### **Stress and your thinking 3**

Thanks Craig. Often stress comes from living in the past too much.

Action replays in our head are only useful up to a point. Reflect, learn  
and move on.

**"I never predict anything and I never will."**

*Paul Gascoigne*

**Stress and your thinking 4**

Good advice from Gazza (Kind of). It's so very easy to worry about the future. Yes, it is useful to pre-plan, but then let go and live in the present, just like when you were a kid lost in kicking a ball about. Don't take worrying thoughts home with you. This isn't always easy, so try doing things that don't allow you to think, only react. I like table football or saving penalties in the park for this reason.

Take each game as it comes.

**"The only crises I can remember were Suez and the Bay of Pigs, when I thought my life might end because of nuclear war."**

*Roy Hodgson, when manager of relegation threatened Blackburn Rovers.*

### **Stress and your thinking 5**

"The End Of The World". This was the Sun's headline when England failed to qualify for the 1974 World Cup Finals. (It must have ended again in '78 and '94 as well in that case.) It's very easy when upset to lose a sense of perspective. Perhaps Roy Hodgson is more realistic though.

***Look at your working life in this light. Are you more like the Sun headline writer or the Blackburn manager?***

## **Sir Matt Busby, Duncan Edwards, Bobby Charlton and..... Roy Sutcliffe**

### **Stress and your thinking 6**

"Who the hell is Roy Sutcliffe?" you're asking. No one else has heard of him either, but it might have been very different....

Sir Matt was getting his great Busby Babes team together. Sutcliffe went for a trial and was told he'd done well. He waited and waited but never got the call for further trials with United. So instead he went to work for an engineering company.

Forty years later his mother gave him an old letter. Presumably it had got mislaid. It was inviting him back to Old Trafford. Perhaps he could have been a famous player along side Charlton, Law and Best. On the other hand maybe he would have died in the Munich Air Crash with Duncan Edwards and the others.

It's always difficult to tell whether particular incidents in our lives are for better or worse. We may be disappointed not to get a promotion. Then we end up doing something better. The trick is to remain positive and open to whatever comes up.

## Germany 1 England 5

*Who scored for England that day? Can you remember the goals?*

## Stress and your thinking 7

Think hard. Picture the goals going in and what was going on around you. Are you feeling happier than you were a few minutes ago? Feelings follow thoughts. If you think about something good, nice feelings should come too.

For non-English readers, you don't have to remember Michael Owen's hat-trick of course. You may want to think about a great holiday, rather than two fine goals by Gerrard and Heskey. In fact one piece of medical research showed that thinking about sex is a good way of coping with pain.

## Il Codino Divino

### Stress and your body 1

The Divine Ponytail, Roberto Baggio, is famous for many things. One is missing the penalty that lost Italy the World Cup. Another is for his religion. The meditation techniques he learnt from being a Buddhist will have helped him cope with the stress of defeat.

We store stress in the body. When our brains tell us something is stressful our bodies react. We get ready to fight back or to run away. This was really useful for our ancestors faced by fierce wild animals. Nowadays however even the hardest Serie A defender couldn't be described in quite that way. In everyday life in the workplace though we may still get attacked. We are told off or made fun of. But hitting out or turning tail are not good ideas. Instead we may sit on our feelings, keeping the stress in the body. This can make us unhappy and even ill. One way to cope with stress is to let the body relax. If like Baggio you like the idea of meditation check out a local centre or class. You don't have to be religious to learn the techniques. Otherwise try listening to gentle music. Lie down, relax your muscles and follow your breathing. Be calm.

## Gazza: England's alternative to Buddhism ?

## Stress and your body 2

Paul Gascoigne is famous even with people who don't watch soccer. Everybody knows that he wept during a big World Cup match. He got some stick for it, but hopefully he made it easier for other people to cry too.

Crying is good for you. When the body gets stressed it has its own way of recovering. One of them is tears, but others include shaking and making noise. These get rid of tensions and chemicals that have built up. If you can, listen to what your body is saying. If possible follow its advice. This doesn't mean hitting someone, but it could mean playing a game of squash instead. Crying at meetings may not be a good idea either. Never be afraid to cry on your own though. Research shows that most men and women feel better afterwards.

Which method of getting stress out of the body suits you best? Do you love the calm of Baggio and the Buddha? Is the noise and energy of Gazza's tears more your style? Of course you may like both of them.

**"It's a weird thing, 'You'll Never Walk Alone' being a big football fans' anthem, because it's from an old musical. I'd like to go down to Millwall and hear them sing 'How Do You Solve A Problem Like Maria?' "**

*Jo Brand*

### **Getting help with stress 1**

Weirdness is in the eye of the beholder. In parts of Africa witch doctors play a big role in soccer. Reading used Uri Geller, the spoon bender, one season and Glenn Hoddle was criticised for using Eileen Drewery, the faith healer. But these are all examples of the need to bring in outside experts sometimes. Most clubs though probably make do with chaplains and the occasional counsellor.

As Jo Brand points out fans also offer help; "You'll Never Walk Alone." I guess that's why they are called supporters. (Though not by managers when they are jeering them.)

***Who helps you with your problems?*** If some one as hard as your average Premiership defender benefits from 30,000 people singing his praises, don't tell me that you don't need a few people on your side. If you fancy professional support, ring NHS Direct on 08 45 46 47. They will tell you who can help. If you need some one to talk to now, ring the Samaritans on 08457 90 90 90. They take calls on all sorts of problems. (Sorry I haven't Uri Geller's number.)

## France:

- World Cup Winners 1998
- European Championship Winners 2000

## Getting help with stress 2

It's not by chance that France became double champions. They spent many years getting everything in place. In other sports Australia have also got organised and had great success.

If your job stresses you it may not be because of anything you are doing. Many work places are not well run. They are more like a poor pub side than world beaters. They need to improve. This would help you and them. Stress certainly isn't good for the individual. Neither is it good for getting the work done. Common problems include poor surroundings, unsafe equipment, no job description, too much work, bad communication and a lack of support. If these sound familiar get help from colleagues, management or your union.

And don't feel down. France invented both European club competition and the World Cup. Winning the European Cup took them almost forty years. Until 1998 the national side had never won the Mondial in over 65 years of trying. So if the French can get there in the end, you can.

**"John Gregory, the Aston Villa manager, admitted last night that he had dramatically changed his thinking over Stan Collymore, who for more than a month has been spending three days a week in a clinic, undergoing treatment for clinical depression... (H)e now sympathises with the player's problems."**

*Peter White, The Guardian. (10.3.99)*

Stress is not the only mental health worry people face at work. In any given year around 30% of workers have some kind of problem.

Depression is one of the most common. About 1 in 5 women and 1 in 10 men suffer from it at some point in their lives. At any time 1 in 20 adults will be seriously depressed.

See your doctor, or ring one of the numbers on page 108 if you are depressed. They will probably be able to help, unless it's over the state of your midfield.

**Team Talk:**

**Communication and  
conflict in a successful  
career**

**"Wherever you are, there will be the lazy bastard... there will be the diamond you'd love to take with you wherever you go, there will be the good players whose personality doesn't quite dovetail with your own... There will be the player who gets by, but doesn't really have the talent..."**

*Roy Hodgson on team members*

It's a cliché, but football is about team work and not just on the pitch. Roy Hodgson would surely agree how people in the club get on generally is important too.

How you deal with others is also crucial to your success, both at work and in life in general. In this section of the book we look at ways football can show you how to work with others more successfully. It will also help you enjoy this part of life more too.

See you over the page. Don't spend too much time thinking about which of your co-workers are the lazy bastards, which are the diamonds etc.

## **The national football team:**

11 players, 1 field, a ball and the happiness of millions of people

## **Understanding Conflict 1**

When you think about it following football doesn't make much sense. Why care about results? So why does research show that people feel better when their national team does well in the World Cup? (Readers in Scotland will have to take this on trust.)

Football reminds us that as humans we aren't logical a lot of the time. Feelings are also very important to us. Without them we wouldn't care about anything. The result of the match wouldn't matter. Neither would work or our lives generally.

Our feelings can also cause us problems. We get hurt by people and hurt them back. We feel depressed and unable to face the world. Emotions often stop us thinking straight, so we make bad decisions. To do well at work we need to be both emotional and logical. We have to be able to feel and to think. Like the best players we need both passion and ability.

***At work do you use your head or your heart most? How do you get on with other people because of this?***

Two Reading supporters made their first child a member of the official fan club - 3 months before it was born. The membership card included an ultra scan photograph of the foetus

## **Understanding Conflict 2**

From a very early age we learn to like certain things and hate others. Parents, teachers and friends all affect us. Other children however have other experiences. They grow up supporting different teams. Indeed their whole lives maybe different. When we meet as adults we may think that everyone should be like us. But if everyone supported Reading they would have nobody to play. It's good that we are not all the same.

*How are you like your family?*

*Are the people you meet at work different from those you grew up with?*

*How do you cope with difference?*

**"I don't think that we should play too much heed to rumours that his next acting role will be in a new TV sitcom called 'One Foot in the Crowd'."**

*Barry Norman after Eric Cantona's attack on a fan at Crystal Palace*

### **Understanding Conflict 3**

Ever wonder why kung fu replaced football as Eric's favourite sport that night? Or why you get so upset over nothing yourself? Perhaps it's like this....

Sometimes when we are small, people hurt our feelings. We often don't get a chance to get over this. The hurt stays with us. It may also stay linked to other things that happened at the same time. Imagine that as a child you are hurt by put downs playing for your school. You don't deal with the stress, so it stays with you.

Years later you are still upset by anyone who reminds you of the people who hurt you and by criticism in general. It's just that you've forgotten why. A new colleague is slightly critical of something you've done. Bang! You take it really hard. You're not listening to what he is really saying. You are just responding to the old hurt, which is still painful. We all do this sometimes. Some people feel bad. Others hit out. The trick is to see that the hurt is not to do with the present. Then deal with the real person in front of you now. (You may also want to get help with hurts from your past, n'est pas.)

***If all this rings true for you, what's your next step?***

**"I had rather regenerate England with the football  
elevens than with average members of Parliament."**

Who said this? Was it

- a) Ex-Prime Minister John Major
- b) Britain's 1908 Olympic winning football captain,  
Vivian Woodward
- c) 19th Century teacher and sports fan, Edward Bowen
- d) Bobby Moore's character in the film "Escape to  
Victory"?

### **Successful Conflict 1**

Whatever your own experience of football at school, it has always been more than just a game. It was in Victorian England that most of our favourite sports were invented. The quote on the opposite page, from 1884, was written by Edward Bowen, a schoolmaster at Harrow.

Soccer, rigger and cricket were all part of "Muscular Christianity". They weren't supposed to just be good for the body. They also taught boys the moral value of sportsmanship. Lessons about winning, losing and working together would be learnt.

In more recent times there has been similar interest in school sport. Does it teach about co-operation or competition? Is competition a good thing? Should teams be encouraged? Behind it is the issue of how to use sport to meet the needs of the work force.

The next few pages will look at what football can teach us about some of these questions. More importantly we will see how to deal with conflict and co-operation in our own careers.

**"One Gary Stevens, there's only one Gary**

**Stevens".**

*Sung by supporters - when both Gary Stevens were playing for England*

## **Successful Conflict 2**

In real life as in football you can't avoid competition and conflict. You can pretend, but it is still there. One reason for conflict is because resources are often limited. There is only one Michael Owen or David Beckham but everyone would like one. Players are fought over because of this.

Conflict may also happen because we all have different experiences. We see the world differently. Similarly no one, except perhaps occasionally a Malaysian betting syndicate, knows how the future will turn out. So again there is scope for conflict: Should we play 4-4-2 or a Christmas tree formation? Should we make this business decision or another one?

Conflicts are also often about feelings. This may be to do with getting your own back for past hurts. Jack Charlton got into trouble for this when he said that he had a little book with players' names in. These were people he wanted to get before he had hung up his boots.

***What conflicts do you have at work? Are they about who gets what? Are they about unknown things like the future? Are they about feelings?***

## MANCHESTER UNITED RELEGATED

### Successful Conflict 3

I said that we can't avoid conflict, but often we can avoid it being harmful. Conflict at work should be a good thing. Sharing different, conflicting views should lead to fresh ideas. New better ways of doing things should come from it. Conflict is the challenge of change and without it there would be no space shuttle, penicillin, internet or FIFA altering the rules every season. Old Etonians would still be FA Cup holders, David Beckham would earn 2/6 a week and everyone would agree that no foreign team could ever beat England.

Football history is littered with once good sides that didn't change. They stayed together too long, didn't bring in new players and were relegated. Some would say that's why Man United went into decline after winning the European Cup. Only six years after this they went down. (Will history ever repeat itself?)

***Is conflict at work painful for you? Do you feel that it's a chance to learn and to change? Is the lack of conflict, and thus change, painful?***

**"Always play a game with somebody, never against them. Always win a game, never beat an opponent."**

*Andrew Bailey, sports writer*

#### **Successful Conflict 4**

So how do we make conflict useful with as little pain as possible? This page begins to look at some of the answers. One, as Andrew Bailey says, is to treat people with respect. But there are others.

In the Seventies when Pele and Co. played in the US all matches ended with a winner. And a loser. In the rest of the world all-out warfare on the pitch could still end with everyone happy(ish). A draw. A point a piece. Sometimes work is about winners and losers. Promotion is one example of this. At other times a draw is the best option. I win and lose a bit and so do you, however this may lead to a second round of conflict if nothing has been really sorted out.

Another idea is to try for win-win. This means looking at what everybody in the conflict really wants. Then talking and talking to see what is possible.

Sometimes with conflicts it helps to bring an outsider in. Referees get a hard time from the media and the fans. But can you imagine a game without them? It'd be like Rollerball with stud marks.

***How are conflicts sorted out where you work? Could it be done better?***

**"Sharing sums up Liverpool better than anything else. I don't think I could have survived at any other club, because here I can go from the top to the bottom, talk to people."**

*Bob Paisley*

### **One-on-one 1**

Bob Paisley was one of the best managers ever. He won three European Cups and the League six times. I always wonder why he wasn't knighted like Sir Matt and Sir Alex. So if he says that sharing and talking to people is important, that's good enough for me. It should reduce the amount of harmful conflict.

Anfield had the famous boot room. This is not just a place where things could be talked over, it also gave the Liverpool organisation a structure so that people chatted. It made sharing a way of life and become part of the culture. Sharing is about feelings and about giving other people bits of information they need. It's about looking at the past, the present and the future. This is all part of team work and co-operation.

***Do you want to work for a happy and successful organisation? Do people talk about the things that matter where you work?***

For this to happen mean that time, space and importance have to be given to sharing.

**"Why do you think you were brought off? You were brought off because you weren't performing. It's not because we don't like you."**

*Gianluca Vialli to an upset Dan Petrescu while at Chelsea*

## **One-on-one 2**

Do you have a problem if conflict gets heated? Do you worry about falling out with people? Then follow GianLuca's example. Don't confuse the person and the problem. You can still like somebody and have a conflict with them. You can deal with things without falling out or hurting their feelings too much. Clearing the air might even bring you closer.

Other useful tips include

- \* Checking that you have understood what the person has just said
- \* Not blaming the other person
- \* Dealing with one problem at a time
- \* Being specific and clear. No waffling
- \* Trying for win-win

Perhaps you are the Dan Petrescu in a conflict. Most of the advice given already is for you too. Particularly remember the words though, "It's not because we don't like you." However even if you do think the conflict is a personal attack, still try and sort it out.

**"Conversation is a competitive sport in which the first person to draw breath is declared the listener."**

*(I don't know who said this. I bet they'd been watching the "Match of the Day" team though.)*

### **One-on-one 3**

Talking is not always the same as sharing. You also have to listen. But first do you want a good laugh? Look in the bargain bins in video shops. Find a tape of football cock-ups. Back passes leading to goals. Badly defended corners. Own goals. Philip Neville. (That last one's not so funny actually. I'm thinking of the last minute penalty in the Romania match. Lack of communication meant England going out of Euro 2000. Still all the best Phil, I'm not international class at anything.)

Sharing properly means less screw-ups and own goals in the job you do.

Listening is a skill:

- \* Let the other person have their say
- \* Don't wonder off in your head
- \* Think about what they said
- \* Note their tone and body language
- \* Check out that you have understood them

**"I felt I had let them (the England team) down desperately. I went round and apologised to them all one by one. Then, Tony Adams broke the silence. He shouted: 'Well done, everybody, you couldn't have done more.' That's when he came over to me and said that he still loved me."**

*David Beckham talking about his sending off in the 1998 World Cup*

#### **One-on-one 4**

We all make mistakes even superstars. It's often useful to say sorry.

- \* Sorry means we see the mistake. We can then learn from it
- \* Sorry may stop things becoming a sorry state of affairs
- \* Sorry can be the start of an important long talk
- \* Sorry might help someone else saying sorry too
- \* Accepting someone's "sorry" helps everyone share information and move on

***Is there anyone you should say sorry to at work?***

***Is there anybody you need to forgive?***

**"We were absolutely fantastic. We pulverised a championship-chasing team. We blitzed them. If our supporters live to be a hundred, they won't see a Leicester team put in that much effort again."**

*Who said this? What was the final score?*

**One-on-one 5:**

Martin O'Neil said this after Leicester had lost 4-2 to Chelsea. But again he is a great manager, so I'm happy to learn from his enthusiasm.

Football is a more passionate and exciting job than most of us have. Perhaps it's simpler to celebrate success and effort there. Many of us find it easier to criticise than congratulate. Fight this. If we start looking for the good things about other people, we will feel happier and they will too. Everybody may even start acting differently around each other.

***What do you like about the people you work with?***

***How can you let them know?***

# The Summariser

- **"It's not the winning. It's the taking part."**
- **"The game is about glory. Doing things in style."**
- **"Want career success? Then watch more football."**

Summarisers often come out with pat remarks, so here are three to get you going.

\* "It's not the winning. It's the taking part." The old idea of sport isn't a bad one. Your career is an ongoing thing, so enjoy it. Even try and enjoy the experience you gain from so-called failure. (But remember to celebrate your successes too. Especially the small ones, as there are lots of these every day, if you look for them.)

\* "The game is about glory. Doing things in style." Spurs' old double winning captain, Danny Blanchflower, was right. Style and image are important if you want career success. They help you get seen and get on.

\* "Want career success? Then watch more football." Soccer can teach us a lot of other things as well. For a start, looking after yourself is a must and not just your body but your mind too. Also it's important to learn to deal with stress, conflict and any lack of confidence. In fact learning generally is vital, so always be on the look out for new ideas.

**They think it's all over.**

**You just wish it was**

Peter Bonetti, ex-England keeper, opened a guest house and became postmaster on the island of Mull after he left football

You've read this book. You've thought about your career. Now you'd like to do a Bonetti and make a fresh start. Perhaps you can.

Bonetti, the Cat, made the 1966 World Cup winning squad. Gordon Banks kept him out of the first team of course. That wasn't why he had to sell stamps when he stopped playing however. Even the men who actually played didn't get a fortune, just £60 and a share of the £22,000 the FA gave out. So unlike today they had to find new careers after they finished playing. Roger Hunt went into the family lorry business and Ray Wilson became an undertaker.

If you are unhappy in your job or are sacked, don't give up. Find something different to do. Hopefully this book with life lessons from football will help you. If it doesn't perhaps you just need a different metaphor.

Anyone for tennis?

**Booked:**

**About the author**

## Liverpool 10 Wimbledon 0

*FA Cup Final 1988*

1966. Wembley. Perhaps the greatest game ever in English football.

Everton 3 Sheffield Wednesday 2. The Cup Final that year is one of my earliest memories, as my Dad's family stayed with us before the match.

My father was Tommy Burns. A name famous throughout soccer. The great Tommy Burns: captain and manager of Celtic and all that. He wasn't related to my Dad as far as I know.

I was never much good at sport at school. People nowadays however compare me with Zinedine Zidane. It's the lack of hair I think.

The idea for this book came from my work. Over the years I've written about stress and football for the NHS, taught thinking skills, run various assertive courses and helped both the public and workers change their lives. Sometimes I even take my own advice.

I've long had the dream of writing this book. I'm just hoping it's more successful than another dream I had. On the night before a more recent Cup Final. In May 1988.

**Booked Again:  
About the quotes  
and ideas**

The football side of this book I got from "4-4-2" and other publications, Colemanballs, my dodgy memory and the books below:

\* "The Virgin Book of Football Records 2" written by Jim Drewett and Alex Leith and published by Virgin

\* "Over the Moon, Brian", written by Alex Leith and published by Boxtree

\* "Cassell's Sports Quotations", written by David Pickering and published by Ted Smart

\* "Do I Not Like That!", written by Geoff Tibballs and published by Virgin

\* "The Book of Bizarre Football", written by Graham Sharpe and published by Robson Books

\* "The Book of Football Quotations", written by Phil Shaw and published by Mainstream Publishing

The Arthur Rowe quote on page 62 is taken from Phil Soar's "And the Spurs go Marching on", published by Hamlyn. Edward Bowen's quote on page 122 is from "The Return to Camelot", written by Mark Girouard and published by Yale UP

The career ideas also came via my dodgy memory. Many of them I have picked up along the way and so have no idea who thought of them first. Occasionally it may have even been me. However below is a list of books which I found helpful:

\* "Organisational Behaviour: an Introductory Text", written by David Buchanan and Andrzej Huczynski and published by Prentice Hall

\* "A Guide to Mental Health in the Workplace", by the Department of Health

\* "Mental Well-being in the Workplace", by Noleen Doherty and Shaun Tyson and published by Cranfield University

\* "Action on Stress at Work", written by Maggie Jee and Liz Reason and published by the Health Education Authority

\* "In Your Hands: NLP in ELT", written by Jane Revell and Susan Norman and published by Saffire Press

\* "The Image Factor; 101 Ways to Make a Professional Impact", written by Eleri Sampson and published by Kogan Page

I also found "Brainstorm: the Creativity Newsletter" and "Group Relations: a magazine for people in all fields working with groups and teams" useful.

I also drew heavily on my experience with CCI (Co-counselling International). If you are interested in personal development, check out their web site. Go to [www.co-counselling.org](http://www.co-counselling.org) or try my own site at [www.inspirationjukebox.com/page35.htm](http://www.inspirationjukebox.com/page35.htm)

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