



Arrows of desire

How can you find deep meaning at work and keep your bosses happy? Tobacco giants, Gallaher, have discovered how it's done.

The concept of 'one arrow, one life' means that, in the middle of a battle, if you have just one arrow don't waste it; use it well. Viewed from a different perspective, it also suggests that, although your target in life may seem a long way off today, in reality time passes quickly. In essence, this is an exhortation for people to engage in their lives with a renewed sense of urgency and purpose.

In the search for performance advantage, one fact has become crystal clear to those who lead businesses and manage people. Breakthrough results will never be achieved by simply telling people what to do. Such a micro-management approach only suppresses the energy of individuals and teams. People may comply with such commands but the inevitable companion to that compliance is a loss of initiative and motivation.

In contrast, the 'One Arrow' approach invites people to take responsibility for

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their lives and work. It requests them to bring their energy into their teams and to make an impact on what they care about. Unsurprisingly, this sort of message goes down well with those who feel that they have so much more to offer at work.

Paul Williams, the sales and marketing director at international tobacco manufacturers, Gallaher, in Ireland, explained what attracted his company to the One Arrow concept: "Gallaher realises that individual performance has to come from people being inspired in their lives and being given the chance to see how they might bring more motivation to work. So we've worked with the training consultancy, R&A, to design 'One Arrow', a

programme that included a number of physical and mental challenges which would put people in touch with what mattered to them."

'One Arrow' participants can expect physical challenges based, largely, around carefully designed ropes courses. Karen Stone, lead consultant with R&A, explained: "We use low ropes and high ropes activities because they are useful in helping individuals to reflect on what goes on for them and their teams in everyday working life. One Arrow is all about how you bring your vitality into work and that's what people get from working together on ropes exercises. Themes like communication, leadership, decision

Key points from 'One Arrow'

- Sit in the front row of your life
- Radiate possibility
- Choose your attitude
- Support one another joyfully
- Find a healthier way of living and working

making, ownership and trust are major issues when you are balancing on ropes up to 30 feet above the ground. It brings these issues to life because, although people are absolutely safe, they have a real sense of the impact it would have if they made a mistake. Importantly they also have a lot of fun on these exercises which, we believe, is a precondition for living a full and energetic life."

Williams said: "We've found that people on these programmes often get to deliver much more than they initially expect of themselves. When they are on the ropes, they don't want to let the team down; they go out of their way to support one another, and they take real care of each other. When, for example, you are leading a blindfolded colleague around or balancing on a tiny platform with three other colleagues, this is one of the outputs you get. And the behaviours that people exhibit at such times are exactly those that we want them to realise are also needed in the business."

One Arrow focuses on so-called 'limiting beliefs' that people have of themselves. Some participants consider the ropes courses 'unfamiliar territory'. Some participants find climbing uncomfortable and/or scary. However, it is an explicit objective of the trainers to get people into states where they may experience some discomfort and, in so doing, bump up against some of the limiting beliefs that they have. Both trainers and participants find that people, when they stop to reflect on what they are actually feeling at such times, often choose to go a step beyond their normal comfort zone. This has a significant positive impact on people's confidence and, potentially, on their business performance.

"One participant – an account manager – was going in to a major account believing that he had no chance of winning the business," said Stone. "With that attitude, the chances are that he would have been proved right. So we encouraged him to

choose a different attitude and to radiate possibility. The result was that he came out of that meeting with a major piece of business that he never expected to win."

In Gallaher Ireland, One Arrow has been especially important, given the company's recent history. A few years ago, Gallaher Ireland employed over 1,000 people across a ten acre site in Dublin. Now the manufacturing and distribution side of the business is delivered overseas and the Irish business operation is being run by fewer than 100 people in an office block in the city.

"People were dealing with some ghosts," confirmed Williams "and another of our objectives in running One Arrow was to get the salespeople and the internal teams together and get them to share new experiences together. In this respect, it has helped people to break out of their silos and there is now far more dialogue across the company."

Williams continued: "When we ran these programmes in the UK, the results were astonishing. We found that, after attending One Arrow, our salespeople were making, on average, one and a half times as many calls per day. Furthermore there was a significant jump in the distribution of our product and, overall, we estimated that the programme contributed to a five per cent improvement in performance across the company. The value of this sort of performance improvement translates into millions of pounds.

"In Ireland we have also been witnessing something similar. We've recently launched the Hamlet Miniatures brand and had set ourselves the target of 60 per cent

distribution across our network in eight weeks. With the help of One Arrow training, we have achieved 80 per cent distribution in five weeks. In financial terms we had a target of £40,000 a month for this product but are currently up to £120,000. The One Arrow programme has clearly had a lot to do with these results."

To sustain these results, Gallaher offers another outdoor experiential programme, 'Sailing to Success', which teaches participants how to skipper, crew and race a 36 foot ocean-going yacht. The focus is on developing personal leadership and responsibility and the course is designed to reveal how participants lead other people when they are under pressure and how they behave in such circumstances, both as individuals and as a team.

A further programme, currently under development, aims to help people recognise, enjoy and use the power of the 'white water' environment in which all business occurs. Stone explained: "White water is turbulent, exhilarating, fast, spectacular and unpredictable and is a powerful metaphor for business life today.

"In this programme we will be helping people to look at their behaviours, beliefs and capabilities and consider how all these need to be aligned if they are to achieve success. We're building on the messages that we delivered in One Arrow and highlighting ways for people to build on their skills and release their energy. It will be another course which challenges people to bring more of themselves into work and to enjoy themselves too."

By Anthony Landale

Gallaher believes that companies are judged not only by their financial success but also on the way they behave towards their workforce, with those they do business and within the communities in which they operate. They are committed to responsible behaviour and high ethical values in the way they conduct their business. The Group employs over 11,000 people, with manufacturing

plants in Austria, Kazakhstan, Poland, Romania, Russia, Sweden, Ukraine and the UK.

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