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Newsletter
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EDITORIAL

"Are you sure?" Most tennis players will tell you that this is amongst the most common query that was thrown at them during their career, more often while playing unsupervised club-level matches. A generous mind might infer questionable eyesight of an opponent while the nasty one would cast aspersions on their integrity. The rules of tennis are well documented and lines clearly marked. Yet, this question pops up persistently. Why so?

How many times have we seen professional players shoot the question at linesmen, chair umpires and even tournament referees? They challenge calls and sometimes cross the line (remember the Serena Williams incident at the US Open last year where she threatened a lineswoman?)

Now, let's juxtapose an incident from golf, which like tennis, is very much considered to be a gentleman (and ladies) game. Brian Davis told the truth, upheld his integrity and didn't once bother about forfeited \$411,000 in prize money.

Just to jog your memory, let me reconstruct the incident. Teeing off with first place at stake, Davis was in a hazard that had reed clusters all round. He struck the ball but felt something was wrong and instantly called a PGA official and suggested that he might have grazed one of the reeds on his backswing. Nobody had called it and officials hadn't seen anything amiss. His opponent hadn't protested. But, Davis thought he had seen it from the corner of his eye and came clean.

Only repeated slow-motions replay on a nearby TV monitor could the officials confirm the infraction - PGA Rule 13.4 -- which prohibits moving any "impediment" with the start of a player's back swing. This meant a two stroke penalty which effectively ended Davis's dream of a first PGA event.

Davis's honest acceptance ended up overshadowing the tournament. His actions made bigger news than the actual victor. Intriguingly all the media attention came his way because he just did what he was supposed to do. He played the game by the rules.

So, does it mean that in today's day and age, Davis's behavior was an exception to the norm? So when one does the right thing in the right way, it becomes big news. And so we have a scenario where doing the right thing becomes the exception.

In your experience, do we play by the rules in the corporate world? Please [mail me](#) your thoughts.

ISEC Updates – We've been busy!

For ISEC, April 23 and 24 were red-letter days as the School certified the first batch of Level-1 Mentor Coaches. The two-day program was conducted at Royal Orchid Hotel in Bangalore and facilitated by ISEC Founder-Director Krishna Kumar and Richard Winfield, NLP Master Practitioner and Principal Consultant – Brefi Group, UK.

Participants in the program were an eclectic mix of corporate executives and executives from sectors like Information Technology, public relations, energy management, corporate communication and heavy engineering. This provided an added to the knowledge sharing and ideation process that formed the highlight of the two-day program.



(ISEC Founder-Director Krishna Kumar and Brefi Group Principal Consultant Richard Winfield with the first batch of ISEC students who were certified in April 2010)

We give below some comments received from the participants on completion of the program.

- *It is a must for someone who is willing to improve. A very good foundational experience, good for even those who are not going to take up coaching as a career and good self learning tool.*
- *I enjoyed learning to be a coach and it not only helps other(s) perform better but myself too!*
- *The program is a fantastic tool to leapfrog self, business and relationships manifold in a short duration of time. A true life skill learning!*
- *If you are even remotely thinking of going into "coaching", call these guys!*

This 12 hour program, comfortably spread over two days equips the participant with the basic coaching skills that also enable them to coach their teams. It also, it acts as a stepping stone to the ISEC Coach Certifications programs-LEVEL 2, 3 and 4. For further details about the programs please look up

http://www.isecindia.in/ISEC_Certi_Prog.pdf

The next Level One, Mentor Coach program will be held in Bangalore on 23 & 24 July 2010.

Coaching Notes: Occam's Razor

Based on an extract from Gregory David Robert's website www.shantaram.com

Occam's Razor is named after William of Occam (1285 - 1349), who was an English Franciscan monk and a very influential thinker. Among many other interesting propositions, Occam argued that any kind of problem that we're trying to solve or investigate "should be stated in its most basic terms."

The principle states that the explanation of any phenomenon should make as few assumptions as possible, eliminating those that make no difference in the observable predictions of the explanatory hypothesis or theory. This is often paraphrased as "All other things being equal, the simplest solution is the best."

What William of Occam was getting at was that when we're exercising our minds in trying to work out a problem



we should try to eliminate everything that's not strictly relevant or necessary from any statement of the problem - and from every attempt to find its solution. In other words, we should try to get down to the most essential elements involved in the problem and its solution before we even start to discuss it.

Now, the part of this idea that I want to concentrate on, is the part that involves the procedures involved in seeking solutions to problems.

I'll give you a silly example, as a way of explaining precisely what I mean by this tool. Let's suppose that you make a cup of milky tea - without sugar - and leave the room for a few minutes, with the cup of hot tea resting on a table. Then, when you return, you sip the tea to discover that it is very sweet. One possible explanation (among myriad) for this strange turn of events, is that someone came into the room while you were away, and sugared the tea. Another explanation (I'm not saying it's sensible) is that ancient Greek mythical figures, known as Centaurs, entered the room through a spatio-temporal distortion and performed a sorcerer's ritual over the tea cup, resulting in a sweetening of the tea.

Now, if we take a good look at this admittedly silly example, the fact is that I can't actually prove to you that Centaurs didn't come into the room and perform their sorcery, thereby sweetening the tea. What I can tell you is that if we develop a healthy suspicion of explanations that are more complex than they need to be, or involve more elements than they need to - and if we make it a habit to seek out the simplest explanations of things, whenever they actually serve to explain the things - we'll be more often right than wrong.

Work with this tool as often as you can, and do your best to make it an intellectual habit to apply Occam's Razor. Actually say the words, in your mind and in your discussions with your friends and colleagues: "If we apply Occam's Razor, we can see pretty clearly that the explanation you're providing is much more complicated than we need ..." Use it in everything, from an analysis of the reasons why nations go to war, to the reasons put forward for economic "rationalisation" within societies. With practice, the tool will serve you well, and become one of the handiest in your management toolkit.

CIO Leadership Summit

ISEC Founder-Director Krishna Kumar was invited to conduct the INNER COACH program for 30 CIOs drawn from leading corporate organizations as a part of their CIO Leadership Summit organised by the International Data Group (IDG) at the Angsana Spa & Resort, Bangalore on 15th May, 2010. We thought of sharing a few pictures of the event with our readers:



Post-workshop, many CIOs expressed both surprise and interest in discovering that considerable learning's could be transferred from the field of sports to the corporate arena to improve executive performance.

General

We have pleasure in informing you that ISEC (Level One) Mentor Coach, Rajnarayan, has kindly agreed to be the Editor of the ISEC Newsletter. The two decades of journalistic and corporate experience that Raj will bring to our newsletter is sure to add value to our readers.

If you liked reading this newsletter and would like to read previous issues, please visit

www.isecindia.in/newsletters_articles.htm

With warm regards,

Krishna Kumar

Executive Coach & Founder-Director, ISEC