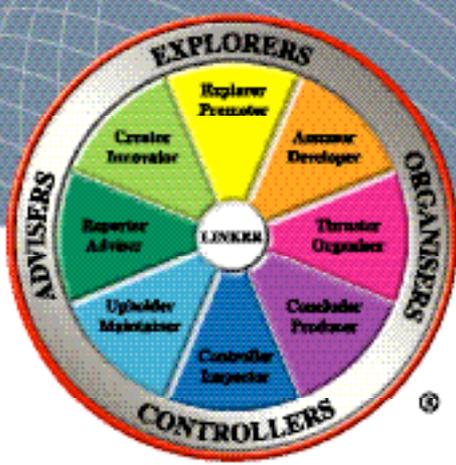


CASE STUDY



BASE CAMP

The Team Management Profile and the Royal Marines 2006 Polar Quest Expedition



We'd like to take you on an adventure - in more senses than one. This is the first of several articles charting a project from beginning to end. In this instalment, the project has decided on its vision and plans. None of the 'staff' have filled in the Team Management Profile, because they haven't been recruited yet.

"IF YOU'VE GOT A STRONG TEAM YOU CAN OVERCOME ANY HURDLE"

Captain Sean Chapple knows a lot about teamwork. He joined the Royal Marines in 1984. "From the first day you're trained in the buddy-buddy system. You join as a member of a team, not as an individual. When you wake up on active service you check that your mates are OK, that their equipment is in working order."

And since 1987 when he led an expedition to climb Mount Kenya he's put teams together every couple of years for exploits ranging from the Grand Canyon Ironman Challenge to a 4 man circumnavigation of the principal East African States.

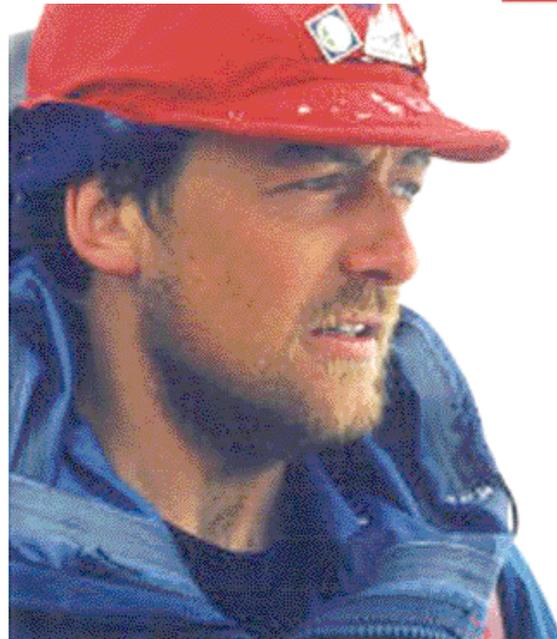
Next year Sean leads two teams to both Poles in a project called Polar Quest.

POLAR QUEST

March 2006: an eight strong party will ski 300 miles to the Magnetic North Pole, a trip that will take 30 days. The team will include novice and junior members of the naval services. Members of the independent Exmouth Community College expedition will fly to meet the team at the North Pole.

November 2006: An experienced six strong party will cover the 1400 mile return journey to the geographic South Pole - a 65-day trek.

Adventure training is part of the Royal Marines' ethos; it's seen as instilling qualities of personal courage, mutual dependence and leadership. Sean experienced the latter first-hand when he was leading the 1998 Polar North Exhibition and equipment failure forced him to



Captain Sean Chapple - leader of the 2006 Polar Quest, a gruelling 96-day expedition to both Poles

make a critical decision: "Should we turn back or go on? We decided to turn back. Safety was more important than achievement. Understanding when to change course is a key leadership skill. People like Ernest Shackleton are a source of inspiration in this respect."

THE SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE...

...is what motivates Sean, but he sees this latest project as involving much more than this. "I approach each expedition as a start-up business. There's no manual, no pot of gold, no staff, just a blank sheet of paper. I have to move from detailed organisation to realisation - and the downside isn't financial loss but, potentially, injury or death." Asked if what he's doing has any relevance to more conventional organisations, he says an emphatic "Yes. Watching out for each other, finding your limits, having the courage of your convictions and trusting decision-makers are common to any successful venture."

BASE CAMP - 2006 POLAR QUEST

Even the process of organising the expeditions – moving from a key presentation to getting the right staff – will strike a chord with other managers.

In July 2004, Sean gave a half-hour presentation to the Royal Marines Major Expeditions Committee. It stressed the benefits to the members of the expedition as well as the benefits to the service and wider society.

“My vision is to provide an opportunity for youth and serving members of the Naval service to join a major Polar expedition and through communications technologies allow others to experience the adventure and interact with team members from the comfort of their classroom, home or office.”

Sean had developed a very specific mission: “to promote the spirit of adventure through interactive and commemorative ski-treks to the Polar Regions in 2006”. Commemorative events for earlier British polar explorers will be held on both expeditions. The interactive element is Polar Watch. This uses cutting-edge technology to allow the outside world to follow the teams from training to their return on an interactive website.

Approval for the scheme came in the following month and since then Sean has been organising the project at the same time as doing his regular job. This includes raising the money, 90% of which has to be gained through business sponsorship. Then there's recruitment...

“We're looking for teamwork plus effective intelligence.” The recruitment drive started in November last year and culminated in a weekend shortly after we talked to Sean. 200+ naval services applications were sifted down to a short list of 50 who went through a hugely strenuous programme. No-one was forced to do anything, not even the Saturday 4.30am gym circuit, the first session of a 17-hour day. Assessors used the Marines huge experience, a checklist and frequent meetings to evaluate the candidates against set criteria.

“We were looking for self-starters; people who could motivate themselves and think on their feet. We gave them very little guidance and watched how they set about solving problems. We were starting with people who had gone through basic military training, so we assumed some basic levels of fitness and discipline. We looked for exceptional qualities of teamwork and motivation. Rank didn't play a part. Relevant experience did. The trip to the South Pole will be longer, more arduous and more dangerous than the one to the North Pole so we need more experienced members for that leg. But the whole idea is to give people the chance of an adventure, to test themselves against the unknown.”

Fitness also played a role, but Sean's opinion is... “You can make someone fit but changing character is less easy”



Man-hauling equipment and food over the ice will require a high level of teamwork

...so, an in-depth understanding of character and how characters fit together is crucial to success. Which is where the Team Management Profile is going to fit in.

Sean looked at a number of different instruments. Why did he choose the Team Management Profile? “I had it administered to me, read my report and swapped it with a colleague. I also asked my wife to look at it. It's astonishingly accurate and insightful. There were one or two issues I didn't recognise about myself but my colleague and wife said they were spot on.”

Some candidates will be suspicious of these sorts of instruments but Sean feels the Profile is very good at



Adventure training is part of the Royal Marines' ethos

overcoming anxiety at being judged. "It's not job specific for a start. That's a strength. You don't have to translate it into military vocabulary. It directly addresses concerns everyone shares." Finally Sean found a number of competing instruments too simplistic: "Our work is founded on teamwork. We have huge experience of how people work together in sometimes extreme circumstances. The Team Management Profile acknowledges that complexity but makes it accessible."

What are we going to see in future reports from Polar Quest? How is the instrument going to be used?

"Initially we'll use it to set up sub-groups to handle discrete areas like fund-raising and logistics. For instance we have to raise £500,000 and work out what weight of equipment and food we're going to have to



An in-depth understanding of character and how characters fit together is crucial to success

man-haul across the ice by the beginning of next year. Each sub group has to work effectively together. We're still working out the details of our training but look at it this way. Every expedition member has to do their full time job during the planning stage: when they're on the expedition they are given the time off but contribute 30% of their salary to costs. We'll only have team meetings every six weeks and our first cold weather training is in October. Between now and March we have to keep motivation high, weld a strong team, make provision for drop-outs. I'm going to need something that makes that process manageable and effective. Watch this space." And finally, is Sean prepared to say what his team roles are, given the huge range of tasks he undertakes? "I'm a major role Assessor-Developer. My related roles are Thruster-Organiser and," Sean grins, "Explorer-Promoter."

THE ROYAL MARINES AND THEIR TRAINING CENTRE

The Royal Marines are the UK's 'go anywhere' amphibious forces and form part of the Government's rapid reaction force. There are 4,800 Marines, supported by 1600 personnel from the Royal Navy, Army and RAF.

The Commando Training Centre Royal Marines at Lympstone, Devon is where all Royal Marines are selected, going through the 34 week basic training course which is reputed to be one of the toughest in the world. All ranks go through their basic training together creating a unique atmosphere quite different from the Army and many organisations where managers are trained separately from other staff. The Centre has paid a lot of attention to advice and counselling services in the past few years.

TMSDI is a sponsor of Polar Quest. To keep up with developments see www.polarquest.co.uk.

In our next article we'll look at how the team's training has gone and where they used the Team Management Profile to help them move towards their goals.

2005 Workshop Dates for Accreditation in the Margerison-McCann Profiles

Team Management Profile £975 + VAT

7 & 8 June

5 & 6 July

9 & 10 August

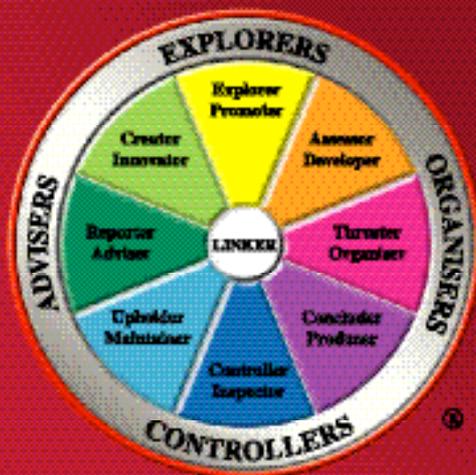
13 & 14 September

11 & 12 October

8 & 9 November

6 & 7 December

All workshops are held at the York Marriott Hotel.



Accreditation 360 Plus £495 + VAT

Linking Skills Profile, Team Performance Profile & Opportunity Orientation Profile (QO₂)

9 June

7 July

11 August

15 September

13 October

10 November

8 December

All workshops are held at the York Marriott Hotel.



Both workshops available on an in-company basis. Please contact us for further information and to discuss your requirements.

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