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Commentary:

Notwithstanding the issues about how to distinguish the leadership – or should I say, leading – from the managing in Jenkins' stimulus article, I'd like to concentrate on the issues that it struck for me. Crucially, - and this is me nailing my colours to the wall – I am drawn to what the account says about positive behaviour change. These issues are generic because they play out equally for leaders and managers, for teachers and coaches, for experts and novices. My central point throughout this piece is to highlight that the quality of any performance is the result of what was repeated in the run-up and delivered during the 'main event'.

In a part of the account I see much to support the implication of W. Edward Deming's idea that that 94% of all business problems originate in the system, with only 6% people-driven. That says as much about what to do as what *not* to do (https://www.deming.org/). The accounts around Paul McGinley's approach also sit well with the contemporary interest in managing environments to establish positive 'choice architecture' [1]. It also seems to align with the recent evidence showing that high performing work groups are populated by individuals who create (i) positive energy, (ii) engagement and (iii) exploration of ideas, in their conversations [2].

From the outset it is important to recognise that my account is offered based on the inherent limitations of Jenkins' account. The most obvious of these is that it relies on accounts that are riven by the cognitive biases associated with second-hand and retrospective justifications that we all use to explain winning. That said, and looking beyond these limitations, the quotes and snippets that are provided continually highlight the value of repetition in human learning. In this case, positive repetition, delivered through routines that the players often just had to go along with, continued to be refined through experience of the competition. This process was begun early and continued throughout the process of securing victory. For reasons I will elucidate, the likelihood is that a similar process – who knows about the outcome? - will characterise Europe's next Ryder Cup campaign.

A first feature of repetition lie's in McGinley's intention to build on a tradition of success. This is a simple idea; it involves repeating what's good that's gone before. The effects of serial winning – in this case, winning the Ryder Cup - has been summarised in the recent text, 'The Winner Effect' [3]. The successful 2012 team successfully inducted players who were new to this format. Importantly, the European team – with eight wins in 10 competitions - seems to have acquired and refined strong habits of winning. For the European players this has also provided them with ample leadership prototypes [4] for orchestrating success in subsequent events. With little to match this in their armoury, the US team will take some time to acquire such positivity around their processes. For that reason, if for no other, it will be interesting to see how long their 'new broom' approach, announced February 2015, will take to bear fruit.

At the same time, routine was the order of the day. Routines, which are the ultimate in repetition, build confidence when they have been associated with previous success, while also creating an overall sense of purpose. When individuals experience a sense of purpose, they find it easier to handle the normal ups-and-downs of any achievement scenario. For them repeating daily routines represented what, in modern educational terms, might be labelled as 'dispersed learning' wherein learning is consolidated and expanded by regular repetition. In the way McGinley ran the GB camp,

novices were not only learning about the required behaviours of competition play but also were caught up in the positive emotional energy brought by the notion of personal progress [5]. Equally, experienced players were quickly promoted to important roles and shown how to deliver that role in every match. The regular meetings, daily reflections and acknowledgement of being part of a bigger overall 'movement' around European golf bear a striking similarity to many of the features of Action Learning [6].

This whole process allowed the overall *chef de mission* to focus on managing the situation. At the same time, and this managed the possibility that boredom might result from repetition, the captain added new dimensions to show that there were new things to learn for all the 'senior' people in that team. These new things were learned and refined by regular repetition in team meetings, in social gatherings and in personal interactions. This 'prototype' process, which builds on what already seems to work, seems – to me at least – to draw more on design science as on the other sciences we might want to imagine are important in implementation.

Another perspective on routine relates to the way in which communication was handled. In particular players, vice-captains and the captain were gathered to be inducted into key communication points that related to ways-of-being during the tournament (e.g., 'This is the best day of your life'). I am always impressed when groups have well developed 'routines of reflection'. In their end-of-day meetings campaign messages were not only repeated but also individualised to help each player through that campaign.

These gatherings are important for many reasons beyond sharing 'official' messages. On the one hand they support sharing, collegiality and relatedness; this helps to handle the intensive emotionality that accompanies high stakes events like the Ryder Cup. Building positive emotional bonds – even if only for a transitory period – helps players to retain focus, assess risk more accurately and be better self-regulators. When individuals repeatedly share experiences, especially those involving positivity, these beneficial effects radiate in a positive spiral to help others [7]. Equally, these gatherings represent important opportunities to reflect on the day's event and to extract key learning that helps all players to develop. Importantly, this process capitalises on the repetition inherent to reflection; in many ways learning is most enhanced by the first period of repetition, since this arrests the greatest proportion of lost recall [7].

My final point relates to the widely reported post-competition comments of Paul Azinger. Wrongly, in my view, these seem to have been used to label him as a sore loser. His comments have a directness that is both refreshing and important. They more than adequately fleshen the bones of my paraphrasing of what Bob Sutton, doyen of management science, commented [9] about ineffective managers/leaders; they don't notice what others do. Like the many media pundits around him, Azinger was giving voice to what many of them could see. If he was frustrated by the end of the 2012 campaign, there appeared to be no timely way for him to vent his concerns during the tournament; for anyone focused on winning, what could be more maddening?.

Now that the US response – in preparation for the 2016 Ryder Cup - has been announced, we have a better way of making more direct (albeit very indirect) comparisons of the most potent ingredients of Ryder Cup success. The US response already seems to centre on is the establishment of new, more functional, routines. If I understand it correctly, their newly-announced 11-man panel has

already appointed their captain (and one vice-captain, so far); he comes with a reputation for being player-centred and personable. The new captain also signalled the growth he experienced from participating in six defeats, one as captain, by commenting '"I am here with the same goal as in 2012 but not as the same captain," (http://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/0/golf/31615990).

With an eye on the importance of establishing routines and habits around effectiveness and future success, Love also noted, 'What we accomplish in 2016 at Hazeltine must serve as the foundation for future USA Ryder Cup teams.' To me, all this seems to signal a renewed attention on the US's routines and practices, i.e., what they repeat. The challenge for them is to maintain the most functional practices and behaviours so that the players and managers acquire them as habits. The process will take time, since learning science shows that the development of habits hinges on how well repetition is ingrained into the 'organisational habits' of the team and its accolytes.

So, it's game on for 2016 in a way we've never seen before.

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