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A name shift

The "Touchwood Ethics" name and website are being phased out. The new business name for Glenn Martin's ethics work is "Ethics and Values in Business". The new website has been created and is at www.ethicsandvalues.com.au. The Touchwood Ethics website is still functional, but I will eventually move material across to the new site.

Ethics book launches

The big news is that I have published my ethics book. It's called *Ethics and Human Values in the Workplace*. After trying numerous publishers and being told the standard "It's not part of our current focus", I decided not to waste any more time, and self-published it.

You can read more about the book on the new website. I haven't conquered e-commerce yet, but will make the move as soon as I can. At the moment, you can obtain the book by ordering it from me. There is an order form on the website at <http://www.twethics.com/ethicsandvalues/EthicsBrochure1.pdf>.

And yes, there is a book launch. The book is being launched at the 9th Australian Publishers and Authors Bookshow at Leichhardt Town Hall on Sunday 18 November at 11.30am. Alastair Rylatt, author of *Winning the Knowledge Game*, will be launching the book. See the Ethics and Values website for further details.

Two more books

At the same time as completing the ethics book, I was putting together two collections of poems and stories, and I have self-published these too. The two books, *Flames in the Open* and *Love and Armour*, declare that life exists beyond the bottom line. These books may be a different kind of work to the ethics book, but I've decided not to try to keep them apart.

It seems that many other people writing in the realm of management literature are finding the need to bring the different parts of their life and work together too. The management "guru" Tom Peters spoke in Sydney recently at the Australian Institute of Management Conference. He described enterprises as "no less than cathedrals in which the full and awesome power of the imagination and spirit and native entrepreneurial flair of diverse individuals is unleashed".

Glenn's poetry books assert that life has to be lived as one piece, not work and personal life in two separate boxes. The poems in each book traverse over 20 years of experiences. The stories are slices of autobiography. Each story is about what was happening at the time each poem was written. The stories don't seek to explain the poems, but I hope they illuminate them in some way.

I have developed a second website to present the poetry books, at www.glenmartin.com.au. You can order these books too. The order form is at <http://www.twethics.com/glenmartin/articles/poemsorderform.pdf>.

Robyn Mailman, an old friend from Horseshoe Creek days, is going to be launching the poetry books at the Bookshow.

Trust and engagement

I recently wrote a paper for CCH Australia on employee engagement and retention. I am also speaking at a local government conference in November for human resource practitioners, on the topic of the future of HR. The theme of trust loomed in both contexts. Organisations that are more productive – and profitable – are distinguished by having a high level of trust among managers and workers in the workplace.

Here's an extract from the CCH paper.

What is the value of trust in the workplace?

A study by Watson Wyatt found that employee trust levels and corporate performance are closely linked. The rate of three-year total returns to shareholders was almost three times higher at companies with high trust levels than at companies with low trust levels. Companies with the highest employee trust scores posted 42% higher shareholder returns.

Other studies have found that when employees distrust the organisation, they:

- contribute less effort to the job
- are more cynical about the company's plans and promises
- are absent more often
- are more likely to leave when the opportunity arises.
- work less safely.

Trust levels in organisations are higher when line managers are competent, fair, and concerned about having and deploying the right resources, and willing to go to bat for the unit when the need arises. Trust is high when employees are seen as collaborative and cooperative throughout the organisation, and they believe that they and their immediate colleagues have been well-matched and well-trained, and their manager coaches them in the work facing them.

Managers have to operate at a higher level of trustworthiness than might be expected of "ordinary people", because their example has more impact. An environment of trust is not attained instantly; it is built on a succession of experiences that validate and reinforce the shared commitment to trust.

Employee engagement is based on the foundation of trust. This must be established first. When people start to trust each other's actions, then it is possible for them to share ideas and to unleash their enthusiasm.

How can managers cultivate trust in the workplace? Below is a set of guidelines for building trust in a team.

Managers' guidelines for building trust

1. Articulate the values that are important and communicate them to all.
2. Make it practical – not just “We value integrity” but “Sales staff will not make promises to customers on which the company cannot deliver”. Be as specific as possible for the context.
3. Model the values through your own behaviour.
4. Elicit staff participation in the workplace, and involvement in discussion and decisions.
5. Insist on consistent behaviour. Do not excuse unethical conduct.
6. Reward behaviour that reflects the values, formally where appropriate (eg material rewards), and informally (appreciation and acknowledgment).
7. Acknowledge and work through issues that are difficult or unclear.
8. Make work roles clear and accountable so that conflicts of interest are less likely.
9. Recognise the work conditions and climate that give rise to poor conduct or performance.
10. Keep relationships and responsibilities professional but personal.

Feedback

Let Glenn know what you think of the newsletter and the website. It's all part of the endeavour to bring an ethical perspective to business, one that enables people to work with integrity and organisations to operate with high principles.

Ethics and Values in Business is operated by Glenn Martin and based in Sydney, Australia.

Glenn is available to write, speak, train or consult on ethical issues in organisations.

You are invited to visit Glenn's websites:

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