

Personal Book Review

Title: Whale Done!
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Reviewer: Bert Verdonck
Language: English

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Setting

A book about the power of positive relationships

Problem

Most people are focusing on catching people doing things wrong (GOTcha) instead of catching people doing things right (Whale Done!).

Summary & Notes

The story starts with a show by the killer whales in SeaWorld, San Diego. How can those 10,000 pound animals perform a show with a series of astonishing, acrobatic leaps and dives?

The trainer explains:

1. Build trust
2. Accentuate the positive
3. When mistakes occur, redirect the energy

The ABC's of performance:

A = Activator

B = Behavior

C = Consequence

Whatever gets the performance going

The performance that occurs

Your response to the performance

4 kinds of consequences:

1. No response
2. Negative response
3. Redirection
4. Positive response

Redirection response:

- Describe the error or problem as soon as possible, clearly and without blame
- Show its negative impact
- If appropriate, take the blame for not making the task clear
- Go over the task in detail and make sure it is clearly understood
- Express your continuing trust and confidence in the person

Praise progress, it's a moving target!

The Whale Done response:

- Praise people immediately
- Be specific about what they did right or almost right
- Share your positive feelings about what they did
- Encourage them to keep up the good work

GOTcha Catching people doing things wrong
Whale Done! Catching people doing thing *right*

Tip: Wake up and say something positive when everything is going well!

Put this on your wall: Catch me doing something right

Emphasize the positive in my relationships

When you accentuate the positive you'll begin to pay attention to what you do or say AFTER people perform.

You reward progress = any movement in the desired direction

Any new business improvement today whether it's a technology or a service innovation or a pricing strategy becomes instantly known and copied by the competition.

Only real competitive edge is your relationship with your people and with your customers.

A Whale Done! response is a good start, but after a while it may ring hollow. Knowing particular things that motivate and compel each person helps you add power to their motivation.

Never assume you know what motivates a person.

Whale Done! only works when you're sincere and honest.

It never hurts to toot your own horn once in a while.

If you catch yourself doing things right, everything in your life will improve – especially your relationships – that's because it is fun to be around someone who likes himself.

If you don't hire people on a performance review curve, why grade them on one?

What I like about this book

Ken is using the story of the whales to set the tone. You feel humble immediately in the presence of the animals and how they are trained. In fact you are learning as you are reading, but are hardly noticing that you are learning. It reads easily and within hours you'll finish this book. You are left with good vibes and a motivation to take immediate action (or at least I was!).

Why you should read it

If you are looking for a change in behavior, be it your own or that of your team, read this book! It makes you think about what you can achieve just by focusing on the positive instead of the negative... It is down-to-earth and gives you practical ideas on improving your actions towards others.