



Can lockdown set you free?

We ran a couple of online storytelling sessions last week and we asked everyone to tell us how their working lives had changed since lockdown.

The overall feedback slipped into two camps.

1. The pace of work had slowed – the benefit being, everyone had more time to think, an opportunity for some self-reflection and time to clear their head.
2. In order to cut back on interruptions from zoom and the like, people were making their own judgements and completing a piece of work before seeking feedback.

There is no doubt that everyone misses the human contact.

But it appears that some isolation benefits us - in our personal well-being and our effectiveness in our jobs.

Lockdown can set you free

Teams v Zoom

There's a lot of talk about Zoom and Team fatigue and we used both last week. We found Teams didn't cut it as far as bringing a group together.

With Teams we could only ever see 3 of our group of 8 - it was like having people outside the room who popped their heads in occasionally.

With Zoom we were all together and exchanged thoughts and ideas.

We now have a Zoom Business account so we can chat and coach for as long as is needed.

Contact us for a trial session- info@speakersco.co.uk

Necessity is the mother of invention....

This current pandemic has highlighted how 'inventiveness comes out of necessity'.

From the homemakers of PPE, masks and gowns, to the collaboration of high tech engineering companies to make respirators, we have seen hundreds of examples.

All of us have shown imagination in our cooking and entertainment with quizzes, plays and musical collaborations.

Libby Purves (a keen yachts woman) in a recent article wrote about some advice she was given by a sailor about when a piece of equipment fails when you're far from land:

"Think not what it looked like, think what it did."

Interestingly, universities often say that their students in arriving in their first year have little or no practical experience – everything they've learnt has been 'in theory'.

Imagination is more important than knowledge

Time Management

We've only ever done a Time Management course once at the request of a client who wouldn't take "no" for an answer.

We learned a lot from one delegate in particular – a female director.

She had just returned from maternity leave and now found no issues in controlling her day. She said she always had a to-do list - but now it's more realistic and she completed it daily.

She told her team and her clients that she was only available certain hours. She had fewer meetings - and they were now very structured and focused. However, she never missed her child's bedtime. (We could have ended the Time Management session right there!)

We were reminded of this when listening to parents talk about juggling work and childcare - particularly with under 10's. Their days during lockdown are full-on and you only understand the pressures if you're living through it. We think they should be applauded.

Let's give a clap for the parents.

The Age of the Image

If you want to watch a TV series which drives home why images are more powerful than words – watch on **BBC i-Player: The Age of the Image** <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episodes/m000fzmc/age-of-the-image>

It's worth remembering that the wiring from our brains to our eyes is 25 times more powerful than our brains to our ears.

But if you can go that extra mile and involve your audience, then as the old saying goes:

"Tell me and I will forget. Show me and I may remember. Involve me and I'll understand."

Self-Improvement everywhere

In March the Times newspaper offered a series of improvement articles from how to 'Understand Physics', 'Learning a Language' to "How to write well". We enjoyed the latter so much that we bought the book from Connells publishing (£6.99 – info@connellguides.com)

Writing is the second most important thing we learn at school after how to get along with others – and it helps with that too.

So what did we learn? It's a book full of tips and things to do and not to do.

One we liked was "Make it sing".

Truman Capote the American writer said: "To me, the greatest pleasure of writing is not what it's about, but the inner music that words make."

So create a sentence that burns with energy and builds with all the impetus of a crescendo, the roll of the drums, the crash of the cymbals – sounds that say **listen to this, it is important.**

Find your rhythm

Writing it on a Blackboard

A class of 9 year olds had just returned to school after the holidays. Their teacher asked each pupil if they had been away on a family trip.

One boy said: "We visited Nan in Wythenshawe".

"Can you come up and write that on the white board please?" The teacher asked.

The boy paused for a moment and then replied: "Actually, she lives in Hull".

Good luck - stay safe & stay well

Barry Graham & Sally Clare

