



SAVE TIME, MONEY & MOTIVATION WITH **POWER** MEETINGS

USING THE MOST POWERFUL TOOL TO
EXPERIENCE THE MOST EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

Designed By Martin Murphy

The **POWER** Coach

Introduction

When I was a junior consultant one of my earlier Mentors gave me some valuable feedback. He told me that he'd noticed that I always seemed to have my head in a book. It was true, I was thirsty for knowledge believing that *'the next book'* might hold some magic keys that would open doors to the next level of success.

My Mentor on the other hand preferred a different approach that he shared with me.

"Martin" he said, "You're always reading. You know lots more 'stuff' than me, but I have a few tools that I can apply to every situation. The beauty of this is that I can read situations quickly, then propose an appropriate solution that the client can take ownership of and easily implement."

I took this feedback on board and over the next few years studied a broad spectrum of philosophies and subjects looking for the underlying principles that linked everything together. One obvious source of this type of wisdom is nature. Another is the research on the peak performance state known as *'flow'*. Psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi puts it this way:

"Control of consciousness determines the quality of life"

From my research and learning I developed a few simple tools and models which people can use to effectively achieve greater meaning and success in their life and work.

I love working with successful entrepreneurs, innovators and mavericks because they have the ability to transform the world. They solve meaningful problems and, like Apple, have created great tools and services which advance humankind.

But starting a business is tough and it's even tougher doing it alone. People are complex creatures and an expanding team has the potential to experience growing pains. Just as every business needs new skills to excel in the digital age, entrepreneurial leaders trying to achieve exceptional goals, also need new skills to unlock the potential within their growing team.

We live in an interdependent world although we don't often acknowledge this. As such, one person can change the world, but they'll need the help of the whole world to achieve it.

I believe that creating a business that is inspired by purpose, fueled by passion and which becomes a platform for developing its people, is what creates a truly remarkable organisation. An organisation that attracts talent and opportunities, that contributes to society, is profitable, builds equity and is a pleasure to work with.

The first thing that's important when building a team is to get them working effectively together. Leaders often have to overcome the potential for conflicting

views between the various personalities of the team. Friction can easily surface in meetings.

I don't know how many hours you or your people spend in meetings, but one statistic I came across was that the majority of people spend 16 hours a week in work related meetings. From anecdotal evidence, about a quarter of that time is wasted.

What could you do with 4 hours per week multiplied by the number of people in your team? Now take that figure and multiply it by the numbers of weeks your organisation works per year. Then multiply that number with the amount of money you pay your people per hour.

Other random statistics on meetings:

- ✚ **91% people daydream in meetings, some even sleep! (think parliament)**
- ✚ **Parkinson's *Bike Shed Effect* means triviality rules. Employees are scared to discuss complex issues which might lead to blame**
- ✚ **Less than 5% of companies surveyed by Harvard Business Review have a process for getting the best out of top management meetings**
- ✚ **According to *Industry Week* 30% of time spent in meetings is wasted. *3M Meeting Network* came to the same figure in their separate research.**
- ✚ ***Microsoft* & the *New York Times* collaborated on a study to find that employees only really worked 3 days a week with meetings heading up the list of time wasters**
- ✚ **Neuroscience research has led to the insight that unproductive meetings deplete finite cognitive resources, leaving little energy for other work**

The **POWER** Meeting System

The **POWER** Meeting System achieves many goals for you. It activates the team's collective intelligence, teasing out the best ideas from even the quietest members of your team. Moreover; this system will increase *flow* states within your organisation and continued use of the tool, puts you on the path to excellence.

This will lead to:

- ✚ **More time for work on tasks leading to greater productivity**
- ✚ **Money saved and increased profits**
- ✚ **Increased engagement and greater alignment of the team**
- ✚ **Better decision making**
- ✚ **Increased confidence which can lead to self-managing ACE teams**
- ✚ **Less requirement for leaders to micro-manage**
- ✚ **Reduction in frustration, boredom and staff turnover**
- ✚ **Builds equity in your business**
- ✚ **Uncovers new revenue streams e.g. one client increased turnover by £100,000 in one fifteen minute **POWER** meeting**

Regular use of the system as part of your innovation process will create better ideas which will not only save you money, but also uncover emergent assets, markets and new products.

Moreover, when people are in *flow* states, they're more able to creatively solve problems, developing autonomy, engagement, empowerment, job satisfaction and equity within the business. Does that sound like a great tool to you?

Chapter One

The Foundation

"...from one thing, know ten thousand things" Musashi

Myamoto Musashi was one of the most skilled Japanese Samurai swordsmen in history. Musashi excelled in combat to the point that he defeated sixty opponents during his career before retreating to a cave to write his book on strategy 'Go Rin No Sho' (The Book of Five Rings).

One of his most famous principles was a philosophy that if you understand the underlying principles of life or 'The Way', one can know everything about the universe.

It is a common theme amongst martial artists and military strategists. Sun Tzu proposed:

"If you know heaven and you know earth, then you make your victory complete"

And an uncomplicated approach plays a big part just as my Mentor had shown me and as Einstein believed:

"All things must be made as simple as possible, but not simpler"

And Bruce Lee:

"I fear not the man who has practiced 10,000 kicks once, but I fear the man who has practiced one kick 10,000 times."

Knowing the 'way' is the ability to see and accept reality or life, as it really is when it really matters. There is nothing stupid about simplicity, in fact its key to success.

"K.I.S.S. Keep It Sublimely Simple"

But before introducing you to *The POWER Meeting System*, you'll first need to understand the foundation of wisdom that underpins it.

"Our outer world is a merciless reflection of our inner world".

The system is based on our own evolutionary life cycle. We started off as monkey-like creatures. Then we became more social creatures, living in larger groups for protection, specializing our skillsets to complement the group's overall capacity and developing the ability to communicate.

Then in history, we began to see the emergence of individuals who thought differently. They were independent thinkers who had innovative ideas about life and the world we live in. We know them today as Buddha, Jesus, Lau Tzu and Confucius to name but a few. There were many more, but despite their appearance at different times and locations, they all thought in a similar way. We generally describe them as wise people who were liberated from ego and believed in interdependence. These people were hugely inspirational leaders, cared for others and made a big impact on the world.

"I'm in three minds about this!"

We've probably all had the situation when you thought you should be doing one thing but felt like doing the opposite. That's because those three or more evolutionary personalities are encapsulated within you and still influence your behaviour today. They usually want different outcomes and are often in conflict. They see the world through different viewpoints

Our inner monkey is the more instinctive, ego-driven, pain or pleasure motivated part of us. It will want to move away from anything perceived as painful and live a more hedonistic lifestyle.

Our inner judge is the social-centric, status driven part of us. The inner judge gives meaning to the feelings we experience. Whatever the monkey *feels*, the judge will justify, why you're right to *think* that way too. It motivates us to look good by doing good or the 'right things', in front of our society peers.

These two minds make up our personality. The monkey is feeling focused and the judge is thinking focused. Some of us are extroverted and others of us introverted. There are four categories: Thinking, Feeling, Extraverted and Introverted and they can be an infinite possibilities of mix within us. So we're all different thankfully.

There is also the inner guru personality. It being the quieter aspect of ourselves, it is often overruled by the emotional inner monkey or the talkative inner judge. This is why wisdom often feels counterintuitive at first. But people who do work on this side of themselves can tap into an incredible source of genius.

Our best ideas don't often come from the conscious thinking process, they arrive when we're in altered states such as out walking in nature, relaxed and filled with endorphins. Or busy doing something subconsciously such as driving. When doing a repetitive task in a relaxed fashion, it allows our inner guru to wonder somewhat aimlessly making different connections in the brain. This activity paradoxically, allows us to come up with some remarkable solutions.

Think about Newton sitting under the tree discovering the theory of gravity when an apple fell on his head. Or Einstein dreaming about riding on light beams and arriving at the theory of relativity.

Just to recap on our evolutionary personalities:

Inner Monkey	Inner Judge	Inner Guru
Ego Centric	Social Centric	Universal Centric
Feeling Focussed	Thinking Focussed	Observing
Instinctive	Status driven	Counter intuitive
Intuitive	Communicates	Learning
Flight/Fight	Creates meaning from	Quiet
Motivation	sensory messages	Wisdom
	Inner Critic	Collective intelligence

As well as these evolutionary personalities, we've also got the different stages and roles in life we've lived through which also influence our thinking. So given the right circumstances, we can revert to an earlier form of ourselves, a more juvenile stage for instance and act as we did then. You might have realized this when you go visit your parents. A parental trigger might influence your behaviour to reflect that of being a teenager again.

If a manager acts like a parent to a subordinate, the manager may find themselves facing a stropy rebellious teenager, cleverly disguised as an employee.

All these encapsulated personalities make us very complex creatures indeed. When you bring several people into a meeting, you in effect, bring all their evolutionary and life history with them. But there is more to consider too.

The Big Four

Nowadays psychologists talk about the 'Big Five' types of personality but originally, Carl Jung's archetypal personality types stemmed from four dichotomies, thinking-feeling, sensing-intuitive, extravert-introvert and judging-perceiving.

From these four trait teams, you can create 16 possible permutations of personality types, with some researchers defining even more distinctions.

Modern day psychologists have added neuroticism into the mix.

These are the people who have a high level of moodiness, fear, anxiety, jealousy and other traits which can often lead to higher levels of mental illness. For this tool we can leave out neurotics because being moody isn't going to enhance creative ability in meetings!

Colours are often used to represent the four different personalities. We'll look at these and the universal purpose driven mind, which is represented as purple. The word **POWER** is an acronym for the process we use in *The POWER Meeting System*. With practice you'll recognise the personality descriptions that are common to every personality style. The first thing we need to learn is to effectively understand these four basic personality types.

Champions

The Champion personalities are extraverted, feeling type people. They're often creative problem solvers, coming up with lots of new ideas. They are enthusiastic at the innovation stage, finding themselves starting many projects, but not so good at completing them. A bit like the circus clown spinning lots of plates in the air. Champions are sociable, expressive, and enthusiastic, constantly looking out for the possibilities. They're usually the last ones to leave a party because they fear they may miss out on something. They're great team players, but value their independence. They have a bias for following the leader and group -think.

Developer

Developer personalities are the opposite of Champions in that they're introverted thinking types. Blue's quieter and deliberate demeanor can sometimes irritate

yellows. Developers like to do a job properly the first time. They prefer the tried and tested and are good at spotting patterns. They're careful and if pushed will become even more determined to go slowly and carefully. They maintain high standards for their work, often preferring to work alone so they can focus deeply. They have a tendency towards confirmation bias and pattern recognition.

Facilitators

Facilitator personalities are quieter feeling types, especially around people they've first met. These empathic people are great at reading other people's feelings, able to make others in their company feel comfortable quickly. This makes them excellent listeners and counsellors. When learning something new they prefer to be allowed time to become 'familiar' with the new information. They often need a bit more time to become confident with new tasks. With their giving nature, others may inadvertently take advantage of them. This can make the Facilitator to feel that they don't get as much back from their relationships as they put in. They are the glue that keep teams together, disliking conflict. They'll rarely put forward suggestions for fear of upsetting others or feeling foolish. They have a bias for stability and inertia.

Drivers

Drivers are fast moving, thinking extroverted types. They're good at getting things done through others and achieving projects quickly. These task orientated types who often assert themselves into positions of leadership or work as entrepreneurs. They're competitive and intuitive, jumping to conclusions quickly when facing problems and filling in the blanks as they go. With Drivers it is about getting the job done and done now so they can move onto the next challenge. They enjoy the status that achievement brings. Drivers have a bias for fast action and over-confidence.

Meeting of opposites

Of course these archetypes are generalisations. We contain all of these elements within us and use an infinite mix daily. Just not purposely.

To add to the complexity and challenges inherent in meetings, the parts of our personality that we don't like to use, we 'disown'. One of the ego's jobs is to separate ourselves from others. We believe 'others' are not like us and we have a tendency to dislike our own disowned parts when we recognise them in others. We can form negative opinions of others when really it's actually a part of us we dislike.

Complicated to say the least as meetings are rooms full of egos driven by competing biases. Not only that but our environment and skill set can also influence the way we behave. The important point to remember is that evolution gave us these personality types for a reason. We need the strengths of each of these personalities at different times and under different circumstances. None is 'better' than the other, they've all got their place.

Introducing **FLOW** states

I've mentioned *Flow* states earlier, so I'll explain a little more about what they actually are.

In his seminal work, '*Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*', psychologist Csíkszentmihályi, outlined the theory that people are happiest when they are in a state of flow. Csíkszentmihályi describes *Flow* as:

"...being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is involved, and you're using your skills to the utmost."

A lot of research into *flow* states originates from the world of extreme athletes. Now I'm not suggesting that meetings are an extreme sport –although perhaps they should be regarded as such - but some of the attributes needed in extreme sports are also transferable to making meetings more effective.

One of the main benefits for sports teams in *Flow* is that the 'sense of self' in the team players diminishes making them act as a more cohesive unit. Neuroscientists call this phenomena, which involves temporarily closing down the frontal cortex, where the sense of self operates; hypo transient frontalis.

You may have seen this with a murmuration of Starlings or a shoal of fish and the way they collectively move. It's as though there is a heightened connection and rapport. The biologist Rupert Sheldrake calls these cohesive communication fields within animals; Morphic Fields.

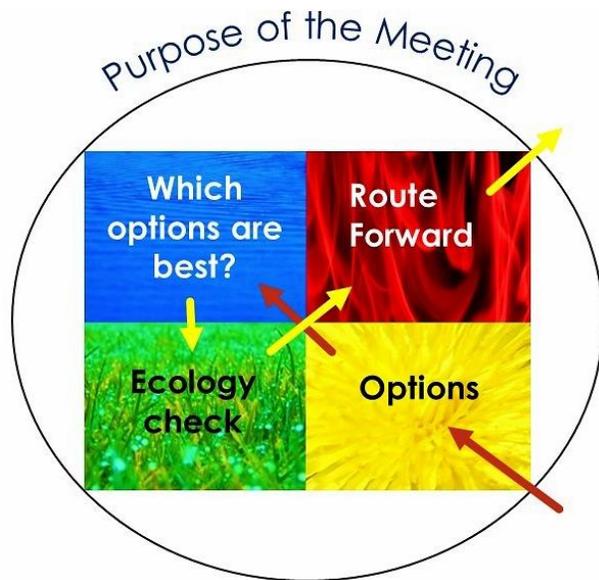
The biggest challenge in meetings is that in the beginning everybody is acting as an individual. Some status driven egos are competing for limelight, whilst others are trying to maintain harmony. Some egos are competing for change, whilst others are competing for the tried and tested. Whatever the subject being discussed, there will often be dichotomies of opinions and biases. This is healthy but only if it is managed in a way that leads to productive outcomes.

Mostly though, it doesn't. This is where *The POWER Meeting System* helps by introducing a field of mutual understanding and heightened rapport. Now all you've got to do is understand the process and implement it.

The **POWER** Meeting System

Imagine the diagram to the right represent the four personalities we've described earlier. The red represents the Drivers, the blue the Developers, the green the Facilitators and the yellow the Champions.

Around the template is the purpose. This is the template for *The **POWER** Meeting System*



As mentioned earlier, when teams move together in *Flow* they achieve better outcomes. Japanese construction workers experience fewer injuries at work, when they do some exercise together in the morning. All of the workers moving together, sets up a deep rapport, as if the act of simultaneous movement connects them into a single team and this reduces the number of workplace injuries they suffer.

With *The **POWER** Meeting System*, the attendees in the meeting will move through the various personality viewpoints as one. Once everybody is aware of their own personality and the general attributes of the other personalities, they can then 'act as if' they are each of the other personalities in a predetermined sequence. It's as if they are moving as a wave through the various stages in *Flow*. They can begin to think and feel as each separate personality would. This also means exponents can think as personalities who are not even attending the meeting.

As a general rule it pays to keep meetings limited to a small number, for the sake of management and efficiency. All systems have an optimum size. Experience will give you an idea of the number of people that's most effective to facilitate **POWER** meetings with your team but people can usually work optimally in teams of between four and ten people.

Step one

The purpose of the meeting will be given in advance along with the logistical administration such as when and where the meeting will take place. This gives people time to come up with ideas on their own which they can contribute when the appropriate time arrives within the meeting. This is an important phase because it allows time for wisdom to percolate up from the subconscious often whilst the attendee is engaged in other activities. Wisdom often arrives as insights or intuitions when the three minds are aligned in a certain fashion. I call this process:

Calm – Control – Connect

This is a *Flow* state where you allow your body to relax – Calm the inner monkey. Focus your mind onto something mundane or a single point of focus - Control, and eventually insights and intuitions will rise up as you tap into a deeper source of wisdom - Connect.

Step two

The meeting begins as the team come together in a room. You'll need a flip chart, paper and a [timer](#). On the diagram above the arrow pointing into the yellow box from outside, symbolizes the forming of the meeting.

Somebody is chosen as a facilitator. I've found this an excellent opportunity to give some of the junior or quieter members of your team a chance to become more self-confident in being in the leader role. The facilitator will act in the Facilitator position during the meeting. The Facilitator is there to act as a time-

keeper and recorder of ideas and notes. The Facilitator is also there to ensure people stick to the parameters of the phases. So if somebody starts acting as a blue developer for instance when the team is in yellow Champion, the Facilitator can marshal their behaviour.

Step Three

The purpose and desired outcome of the meeting is presented by the person calling the meeting. The time allowed for the meeting is given. It pays to keep them short as paradoxically, people can often be more creative when they're under time constraints. Then whatever the whole time for the meeting is, it is then divided up into five segments. These represent the time slots that will be spent 'acting as if' they are each colour phase.

Step Four

Everybody brainstorms their own solutions privately. This individual process is almost like a warm up to get the team into the creativity zone. The act of being creative is a trigger for entering a *flow* state and leads to heightened creativity.

Step Five

The Facilitator asks for all the ideas, and as in traditional brainstorming, the crazy ideas are included. In this yellow Champion zone everybody acts creatively, looking for opportunities with no censoring allowed. So a blue Developer would have to forget their inclination to criticise ideas as each is presented, moreover; they would have to put forward their own ideas as a Champion.

All members of the meeting must 'be' in an affirmative enthusiastic headspace. Ask people to try looking upwards as this can sometimes help visually creative people come up with bigger ideas. Situations look more optimistic when you're looking up.

Step Six

After the allotted Champion phase, the Facilitator would ask everybody to switch their states to that of the blue Developer mindset. In the Developer zone, the team taps into their own Developer personality and critiques the ideas presented looking for weaknesses. Now is the time for everybody to think logically and in detail at the ideas presented. Eventually filtering the suggestions for the most plausible solution presented. The beauty of the time allotment here is that it forces everybody to focus deeply and with a sense of urgency. A feeling of urgency and the act of becoming focussed are also triggers for *flow* states.

Step Seven

Having facilitated the uncovering of the optimum solution from a logical Developer perspective, the Facilitator then asks everybody to move into the green Facilitator state. In this phase, everybody looks at the ecological impact of the solution.

As has been mentioned earlier, people are complex creatures and what might be a logical solution isn't necessarily going to be adopted by the people the solution will affect. The meeting room and actual situation are two different contexts just as the laboratory and *real world* are. When it comes to finding solutions, you've got to consider the wider influences and repercussions and possible resistance points. This is one of the most fundamental challenges humankind faces which is to see the situations and challenges we face in an ecologically and environmentally integrated perspective. Mostly decisions in societies and human systems are led from the Developer/Driver thinking perspective which doesn't take into account the feelings of the people involved or the systemic implications influencing the situation.

This is one reason why '*old world*' economics hasn't been very effective at predicting emotional behaviour. Behavioural economics should really have been

called emotional economics, because it's the complexities of the inner monkey's emotions that make sometimes logical solutions unworkable in real life.

In the Facilitator phase attendees look at how the solution will affect everybody concerned. What support will be needed and what complexities could undermine the solution moving forward. A **POWER** meeting I was in recently came up with a logical idea that timekeeping would be a good solution to the challenge they faced, but as soon as it moved into green, everybody realized this idea could cripple motivation. By discussing the complexities, it also allows the Facilitator side of our personality, through deep listening to people expressing their feelings, to become really *familiar* with the solution and the effects on the people involved. Deep listening is a trigger for *flow* states.

Step Eight

Now the Facilitator asks the team to move into the red, Route Forward zone. In this phase people can be assigned specific responsibilities for results and have some measures of accountability. At this point and if it is appropriate, another meeting can be planned for the team to evaluate the outcomes. By doing this the team accept that there is a need to be open to pivoting should they learn something new about the situation.

Like walking down a corridor with lots of doors, the important thing is to walk down the corridor and look behind the doors, not get caught in analysis paralysis and endless discussions wondering which door to take.

If a solution hasn't been arrived at then the next step would be to arrange a future meeting while further research is carried out. This phase would be used to determine the information needed and who will do the research. It also gives people a chance to go away and allow wisdom to percolate up from the

unconscious mind or environment. Team members may come up with novel solutions when driving home or when they're out walking.

What you don't want people doing is spending time in a room when they've really not got a clear idea about what to do next. Don't be afraid to let the meeting break up as long as there is a time set to reconvene at a later date. Wisdom sometimes takes time to appear on our horizons.

Conclusion

Although *The POWER Meeting System* model is fairly easy to use with a bit of practice; as one academic and change agent within large corporate companies observed:

"It's a simple but very profound tool"

Making a commitment to use *The POWER Meeting System* will impact other areas as it will improve people's self-awareness and lead to a deeper understanding of other's viewpoints and concerns. As Sun Tzu espoused:

'If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles'

The reason you won't fear the battles is because there will be less of them. Your meetings in time, will become much more effective and the very acting of being adaptable, will cultivate mental agility in the team.

This type of integrated thinking can also be applied to many other tasks such as decision making, innovation and communication. If you would like to learn more about this then get in touch. These tools are primarily designed to give power to the individuals facing the clients and for organisations that want to create agile, creative and enterprising teams. This can free up the leader to be able to individuate psychologically from the team and business to engage in high leverage activities. If you would like your team to truly understand this amazing

tool and embed within your culture, contact me for a conversation about how you can introduce more flow and increase your results and profitability.

DEVELOPING YOUR ORGANISATION'S **MISSION-POWER** PROFILE

If your business is developing into a larger team and you're beginning to experience fast growth, then you have the opportunity to harness the full potential of your team by developing the organisation's **M-POWER** profile.



Like an iceberg most of what drives your business is hidden beneath the waterline. As Harvard Business Review surmised, roughly 70% of employees don't know what the strategy of their business is. This is also what we find when we do

diagnostic research with new clients. If you're experiencing fast growth then you also have the potential to grow into trouble and as the reasons are often hidden from view, you'll not see it coming even though it appears to be in plain sight.

Before you can develop peak performing teams and organisations leader's need to overcome the leader wall. This is when the energy an entrepreneur uses, shifts to that of an inspirational leader. It is a different kind of fuel just like a marathon runner who has hit the 'wall' in running, it takes a different mindset and developing the organisation's **M-POWER** profile; allows you to do this. This

"What we've learnt about ourselves and each other whilst working with Martin has been the making of our team. We've grown from 15 to 35 inspired people who are contributing massively to our growth and our place as a 'key player' in the industry"
Jon Woodall MD, Space 48

will create agile, creative and enterprising teams who can drive your business through accelerated success.

THE ELITE TEAM PROGRAMMES

The purpose of the ELITE Team programme is to take successful entrepreneurs, innovators and managers within growing businesses and transform them into inspirational leaders. If you are a high achiever wanting to become a 'key player' in your industry whilst inspiring your business to become a peak performance organisation, then this programme is for you.

The programme consists of masterclasses and coaching support, focussing on key leadership skills necessary for accelerated business success.

Why should you learn?

Life doesn't move in straight lines as all human systems, including businesses, evolve along the *Universal Life Cycle*. The path from start-up to peak performance business is interspersed with transitional phases. Navigating the path successfully requires mental agility and specific skills at different stages. Moreover; using the same behaviours that got you where you are now, will slow you to a frustrating crawl moving forward because of systemic resistance.

The ELITE Team Leaders programme is a results oriented approach which helps leaders recognise and achieve their true potential. By identifying and removing barriers behavioural shifts occur. With the accountability we provide through regular **POWER** coaching you'll experience sustained increases in business performance.

You'll learn how to inspire passion and tap into the potential of your team. The programme also covers the skills of rapport building, managing team dynamics and influencing your way to greater success with stakeholders.

There is a shift happening in the world of business. It pays to be a creative monopoly, making competition unnecessary. You'll achieve this by becoming an

innovative and inspiring leader in your industry. As a *key player* you'll also find you begin to attract unexpected opportunities for leveraging accelerated growth.

"We are what we believe we are. Working with Martin has reaffirmed my belief that we are faced with limitless possibility and the only limits are the ones that we place upon ourselves."

Malcolm McClean, Social Entrepreneur & Author: "Bear Hunt – Earn your living by doing what you love!"

The programme is for people who want to make waves in their industry. Business leaders wanting to develop high performing teams who bring inspiration to their brand. Who want to develop incredible focus and commitment.

So if you are driven to make a difference, to make a contribution and achieve at the highest levels or maybe you have a compelling drive to create a legacy, then the ELITE Team Leader programme will give you the leading edge skills required to achieve your ambitions.

**Contact me Martin on: Tel: +44 (0) 7733 121 967 and I'll explain more
or email: ask@martinmurphy.coach**