

# impact

August 2020 | Issue 2

A Leadership Magazine

**EQ**

Reflections on the importance  
of Emotional Intelligence

## **A WINNING MINDSET**

Learning from the competitive  
world of sports

## **TAKE A BREAK**

Eight tips to make your  
time off count

## **A STORY**

Sometimes all it takes is a  
weekend break





# hello

Great to see you here - welcome!

This issue of impact has a holiday/vacation theme and brings you a collection of our published articles on the importance of self-leadership and allowing time to relax and recharge. It also includes a story about how much difference a weekend break can make.

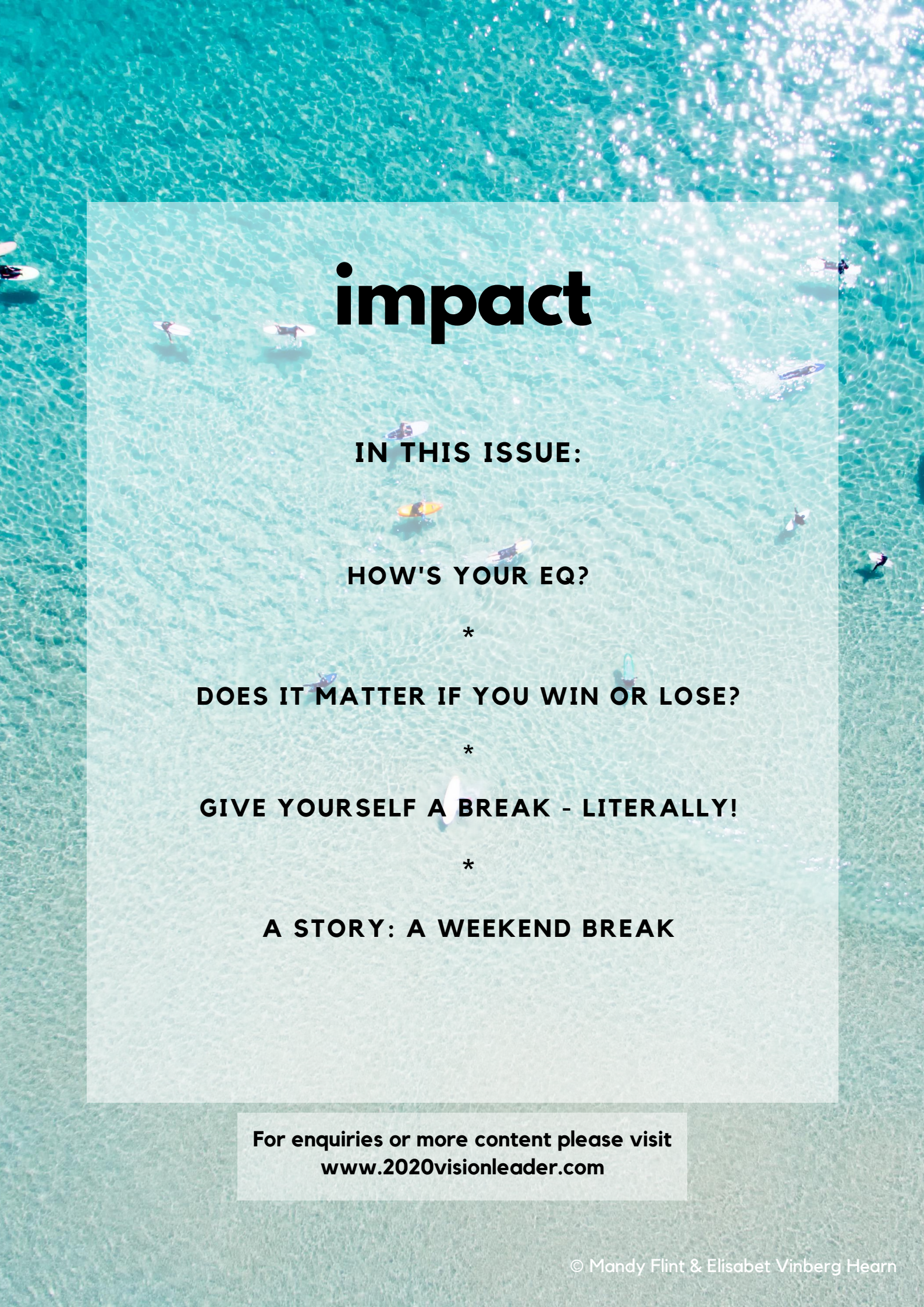
So pull up a sun lounger, read and relax.  
You deserve it.

Happy reading!



**Mandy Flint & Elisabet Vinberg Hearn**



An aerial photograph of a beach with turquoise water. Several surfers are visible, some standing on their boards and others in the water. The water is clear and shows the sandy bottom. The overall tone is bright and summery.

# **impact**

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# HOW'S YOUR EQ?

Emotional Intelligence matters. We all have EQ -  
and we have the ability to create more of it

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

***No one cares how much you know,  
until they know how much you care.***

— Theodore Roosevelt

What is EQ? And what does it mean to have Emotional Intelligence?

You could say that EQ is the ability to understand and manage yourself (thoughts, feelings, reactions etc) so that you can communicate with and relate to others — which also includes the ability to “get people”, to see and value other people, to take care of how you impact others, to understand social settings — and much more. Emotional intelligence is about being intelligent with people — yourself and others.

And when it comes to EQ in leadership it's the same thing — it's to connect with people in such a way that they bring the best of themselves to work, being as engaged as they can be, feeling important and wanting to do a great job. Imagine a leader who makes you feel good about yourself, someone who believes in you, who spends time with you and makes you feel like you are important.

There's nothing new about emotional intelligence (EQ), it's always been there, although the term “EQ” or “Emotional Intelligence” is only a few decades old.

Now what do you think — wasn't great leadership always about emotional intelligence? Don't we all remember those leaders we've had (and we hope that you, like us, have had at least one!) who were about more than the job — more than the technical abilities, more than just a “goal achiever”. Someone who just made you want to go to work. Someone who connected with you and your colleagues and who made you see that work could be fun.

When we first became leaders, in the early 90's, there were no great attempts to try to help leaders be just that — people who lead. I might have learned the technicalities of the job as a manager, but I found it very difficult to deal with the difficult situations. A lot of it was gut instinct and either you had it or you didn't.

Leadership development has come a long way since the early 90's but

sadly very few leadership development activities, even to this day, have the desired effect.

Not because they are bad, but because they rarely change behaviours. And that's what leadership comes down to, behaviours.

Or as Maya Angelou so eloquently said:

*"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel"*

We all have emotional intelligence (in different ways) and we can create more of it. It's all about our behaviours and how they affect others.

Leadership is changing fast. And emotional intelligence is climbing to the top of desired leadership abilities. We keep seeing that people with high EQ are moving faster in their careers than others.

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Yes, emotional intelligence matters greatly. It's so much more than a nice-to-have - it may be classified as a "soft skill" but the effects can be hard-hitting - positively and negatively.

*75 percent of careers are derailed for reasons related to emotional competencies, including inability to handle interpersonal problems; unsatisfactory team leadership during times of difficulty or conflict; or inability to adapt to change or elicit trust.*

Center for Creative Leadership

Watch this space — emotional intelligence will continue to grow in importance.

And that's good, for people and for sustainable businesses.

**“IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THAT EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IS NOT THE OPPOSITE OF INTELLIGENCE, IT IS NOT THE TRIUMPH OF HEART OVER HEAD — IT IS THE UNIQUE INTERSECTION OF BOTH.”**

*David Caruso*



**THE ONLY WAY TO CHANGE SOMEONE'S MIND IS TO CONNECT WITH THEM FROM THE HEART.**

*Rasheed Ogunlaru*





# DOES IT MATTER IF YOU WIN OR LOSE?

What we can learn from the world of sports when it comes to developing a winning mindset

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

The 2020 Olympics have sadly had to be postponed until 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

But we vividly remember the feeling of the last Olympics, how we were met each morning by the latest news reports from Brazil about medals won and lost overnight in the Olympics. We saw overjoyed faces and all sorts of expressions of elation mixed with the disappointed look of knowing that you didn't quite get there.

There's something very immediate about sports, it's then and there, it's in the moment – years and years of hard work come together in that one moment – the moment of truth – will my hard work pay off?

And if I don't win, it will be so disappointing of course. Just like anywhere else in life. You've probably experienced the same at some point – in school, in sports, at work.

It's OK – disappointing results, as painful as they can be, are also the source of great success. Just look at the Olympics again!

The real champions are extremely focused on what they want to achieve and at the same time they are able to let go of that expectation (and not let it become something that they start worrying about NOT achieving) and just give it their all.

They are also strong enough to brush themselves off if they don't win, because they know they did their best then and there, and look for what they can tweak in their performance for next time. They have resilience.

They are very well aware that they will lose at times, but they don't let it get them down, they use it to propel themselves into greatness.

They use the moment of truth to think: ***Sometimes you win, sometimes you learn*** - and how cool is that thinking! They are able to turn EVERY single result into something useful.

***Success = getting up more times than you fall down.***

Just like how it was when we learnt to walk as kids. Imagine if we had given up and thought "nah, I'll never make it"....

So does it matter if you win or lose?

You could argue that it doesn't, as you win either way – either in that precise moment or over time.

It's all a mind's game – your mind – how you choose to look at your results.

So, let's promise each other something – if it's important enough to us, then let's take every result as useful feedback, and try again.

When we do that, that's when every moment becomes important.

What do you say? Ready to practise a winning mindset?





# GIVE YOURSELF A BREAK - LITERALLY!

How to make your time off really count

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

Being able to relax properly on holiday largely comes down to leaving work at work.

Here are some tips for how to do that and how to relax generally:

- Plan for being away from work. Hand over what you can/need to.
- Make sure people know you're away and whom to contact in your absence.
- Plan for your return to work. Before you go, write down what you need to do when you get back so you can let it go and not keep thinking about it.
- Don't read emails on holiday. Use an away message which prompts people to contact whom ever you've handed over to in your absence OR if they absolutely need you, to text you on your mobile (so you don't need to check emails).
- Know yourself. Do things that help you relax and recharge. Do it your way - if you need to be on your own, do that. If you need adrenaline-filled adventures, do that! Don't just do what you think others expect of you - if it's not what you want, it can make you resentful and stressed.

- Sleep! Create the best circumstances for a good night's sleep. Don't drink coffee too late, don't read/watch depressing news before you go to bed. Maybe even take a nap if/when you can.
- If at all possible, have at least two weeks off in a row. It can take a few days just to wind down, so one week may not be enough to really relax and recharge.
- Allow your mind to relax by thinking of nothing. This can be quite hard to do as our minds are always going, but one simple way of doing this is to just focus on your breath for 10 minutes. Just notice how you breathe in and out - and whenever over thoughts show up, just imagine watching them float away as if on a cloud, and keep focusing on your breath.

Us people rarely live in the moment - we're either busy thinking about what we've done or what we should do next - and hence miss out on the opportunity of making the most of the moment.

Some of the most successful people we've observed over the years are not those that are always "on" but those who can really focus while at work and equally really focus on being off when they're off.

Working all hours is not a recipe for success.

So our key advice is this:

**Be in the moment! This is where it's all happening. Be 100% present at any time.**

Wherever you are, give that moment, that person you're with, your full attention. You'll feel much more satisfied with the results you get and that in itself gives you a sense of peace and relaxation.

And finally, don't have such high expectations of everything you should do while on holiday. Give yourself a break - literally!





# A STORY: A WEEKEND BREAK

A short story about how a weekend break can  
bring new energy and new perspective

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

Stephen and Alice were speeding down the motorway towards the south coast. Stephen's parents were celebrating their wedding anniversary and the whole family was invited. Stephen was looking forward to the welcome break and to get away from the stresses and pressures of work. He also hadn't seen his sister for 6 months. His mum had told him that she had a new boyfriend who was also coming along, and Stephen was curious. It was quite unusual for Emma to bring boyfriends home. Was this a special one?

He became aware of Alice looking at him. He turned to her and asked: "Excited about the weekend?"

"Yes, I am. I enjoy seeing your family. You looked deep in thought though. What are you thinking about? Not work I hope?"

"No, I wasn't actually. I was thinking about this new boyfriend of Emma's. Have you heard much about him? You talked to Emma last week."

"Yes, Emma mentioned that he's someone you know. You went to school together apparently."

"Who is he? What's his name?"

"I don't know. I didn't ask. I guess you'll find out when we see him tomorrow."

"Yeah, I guess."

"So what are we doing today?"

Well, you and I are going out for dinner tonight as mum and dad are meeting with friends. So I've booked a table at this new restaurant –I think you'll like it. It'll be just you and me".

"Great" Alice gazed out the window, smiling softly at the view of the South Downs – she never tired of the sight of the rolling countryside that was the Downs.

The South Downs' chalk hills runs along part of the south-eastern coast of England. Large parts of it are unpopulated and attract many tourists interested in outdoor life. The South Downs National Park is known as one of "Britain's Breathing Spaces" and anyone who's visited this area will recognize that description.

Alice reminisced how Stephen and her had walked the Downs around Devil's Dyke earlier that spring. It always surprised her how close to London all this wonderful landscape was and how the undulating hills almost spilled into the sea. On that particular day, the clouds had hung close to the hilltops and a bright gap had appeared in the sky in between the Downs and the clouds, and all of a sudden the whole landscape became brighter, the colours more intense.

Something caught Alice's eye high in the sky. A kite soared above, it caught the wind, floating on the thermals, looking like a big, proud bird.

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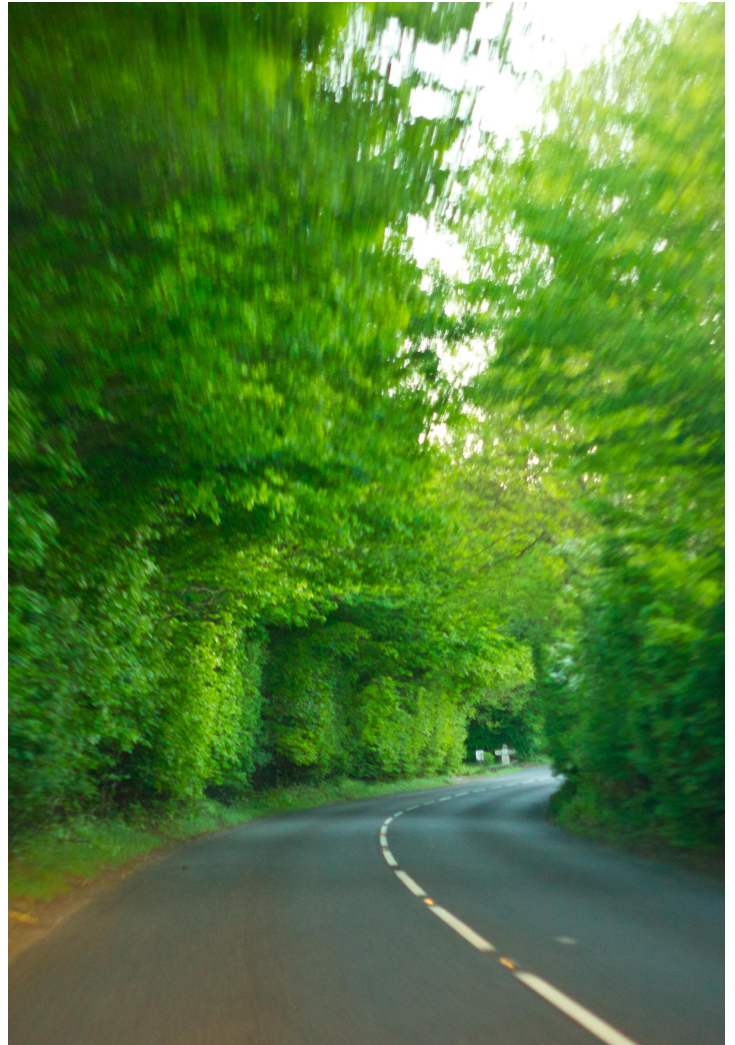
Alice imagined what it would be like to float so freely above the green patchwork quilt landscape, with the vivid colours ranging from emerald to moss green.

With some reluctance she turned her attention back to Stephen.

"I'm glad you talked to me about what's happening for you at work. This is not the kind of thing you should have to worry about on your own. I know you don't want to talk about work now, but I've had another thought that I wanted to share with you. I just read an article about the difference between problem focus and solution focus, and how it's possible to be *fortunate*, meaning that fortune is not something that just happens to you – you can create your own fortune, your own success by focusing on the solution. I read that there is some process that can help teams too, but I don't know the details of it. It wasn't until afterwards that I thought about you and your team. I need to find that article again."

"Sounds interesting. I want to find a solution".

"I have a good feeling about this weekend. Maybe you'll find some inspiration for this solution you're after. Getting away for a while can sometimes just make things fall into place."



## ANALYSIS

The weekend story continues with Stephen meeting his sister's new boyfriend who happens to be one of his close childhood friends with whom he had lost contact over the years. They spend time together, catching up, but also talking about work and his old friend shares some insights he's had which strikes a cord with Stephen. He returns home with renewed energy, bustling with new ideas for how to deal with the challenges he faces at work.

What this story reminds us of is how we can think and think and think about something, but unless we find the opportunity for new perspective, very little change is achieved. If nothing changes, nothing changes. If something changes, something changes. That change can be a change of scene (going somewhere different), or a chance meeting (running into someone we haven't seen for a while), seeking out someone for their advice, doing something that requires us to be fully concentrated and not think about the challenge we want to solve (like windsurfing or riding).

When you give yourself the gift of a break from the routine, you give yourself the chance to recharge, relax, rethink, reconnect, re-inspire, reengage, reinvent, reinvigorate and rediscover how many options there may be.

In Stephen's case, that weekend meant the beginning of a new approach to his team leadership and the successes it gave them. What great things have you discovered, realised or reinvented when you've recharged, relaxed, had a rethink, reconnected, been re-inspired and reinvigorated? And have you given yourself a chance to do that lately?

**This story is an excerpt from "The Team Formula: A Leadership Tale of a Team who found their Way", MX Publishing 2013**

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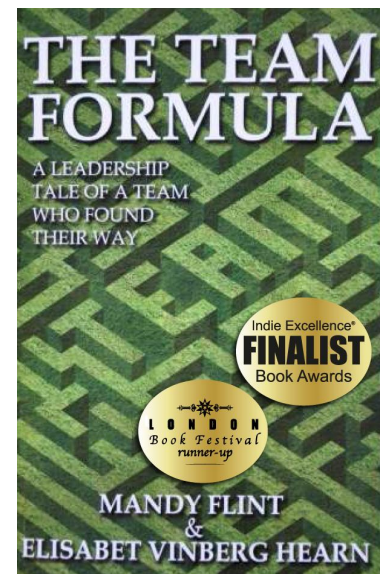
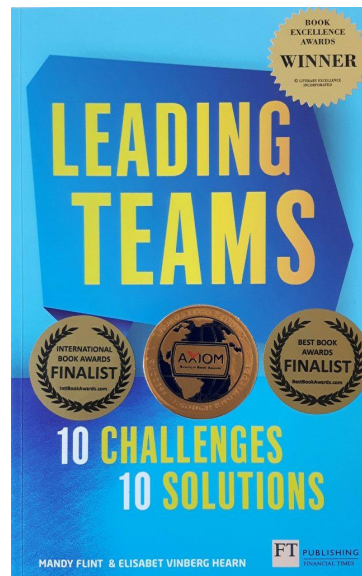
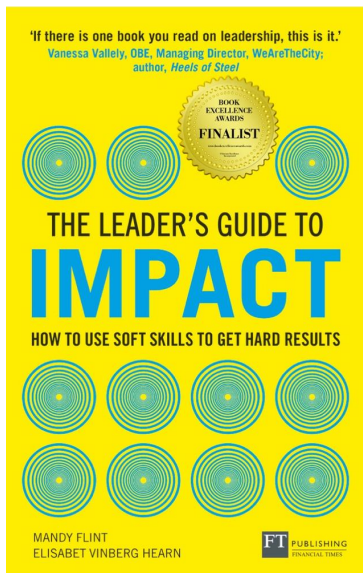


# CHECK OUT OUR AWARD-WINNING BOOKS ON LEADERSHIP

## NEWSFLASH!

**2 new book awards for  
The Leader's Guide to  
Impact in the International  
Book Awards July 2020**

**Finalist: Management &  
Leadership category  
Finalist: Careers category**



**"NEVER PUT OFF TILL TOMORROW THE  
BOOK YOU CAN READ TODAY."**

*Holbrook Jackson*



A full-page photograph of a sunset over the ocean. The sun is a bright, glowing orb in the center of the horizon, casting a long, shimmering reflection down the center of the water. The sky is a gradient of warm colors, from pale yellow near the horizon to a soft blue at the top. The ocean has gentle waves with white foam washing onto a wide, sandy beach. A series of footprints, likely from a person walking away from the camera, leads from the foreground towards the water's edge, following the path of the sun's reflection. The footprints are deep and distinct in the golden sand.

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