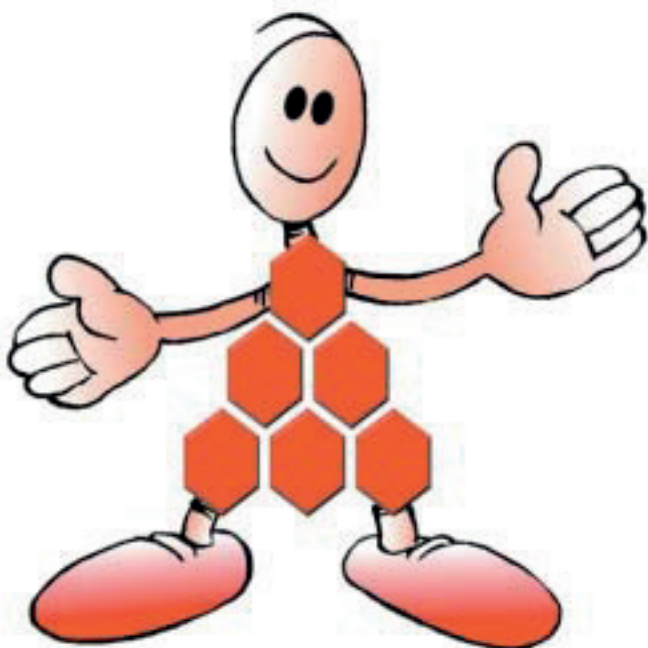


**the company**  
**bible**



**the company**  
**bible**



a publication of **Katoen Natie**

**A different and better corporation:  
our people make the difference!**

concept: Fernand Huts & Paul Demeyere  
layout & illustrations: Dicky

# Foreword

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Note: for reasons of legibility, it was decided to use only the masculine form for nouns referring to persons, personal pronouns and possessive pronouns.

Dear Employees,

A company consists of a group of people who are jointly engaged in a commercial activity with the aim of creating surplus value and generating profit. In other words, the mission of an enterprise is basically very simple.

For an organisation, it is of crucial importance to maintain this straightforwardness and simple cleverness throughout its evolution and growth.

Common sense, systematic cost-consciousness, and an avoidance of complicated systems and theories are the basis of good management.

Our company and our mutual collaboration patterns are suffused with this message. It is our inspiration, our philosophy, our culture.

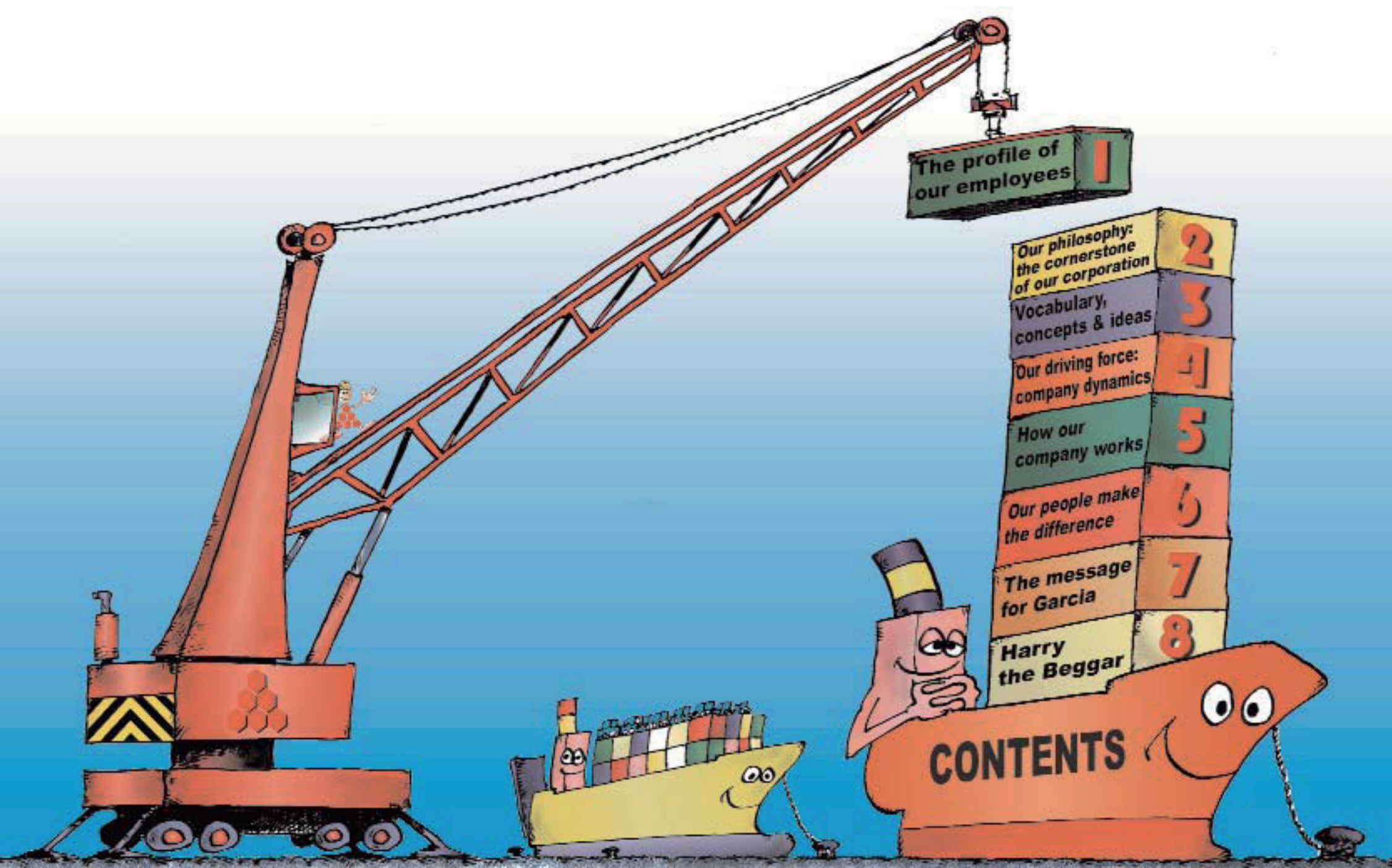
The Group Bible describes what our enterprise is, how it works, how its people think and what they feel.

We hope that everyone will be able to identify with its ideas and will take pleasure in applying them in their professional life.

Enjoy using this Bible!

Fernand and Karine Huts





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# The profile of our employees

*Customer-friendly*

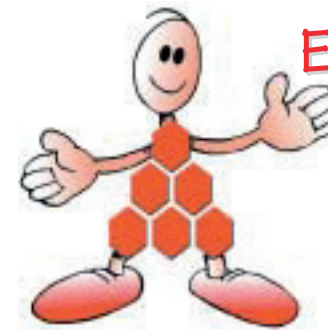
*Economical*

*Eager to learn*

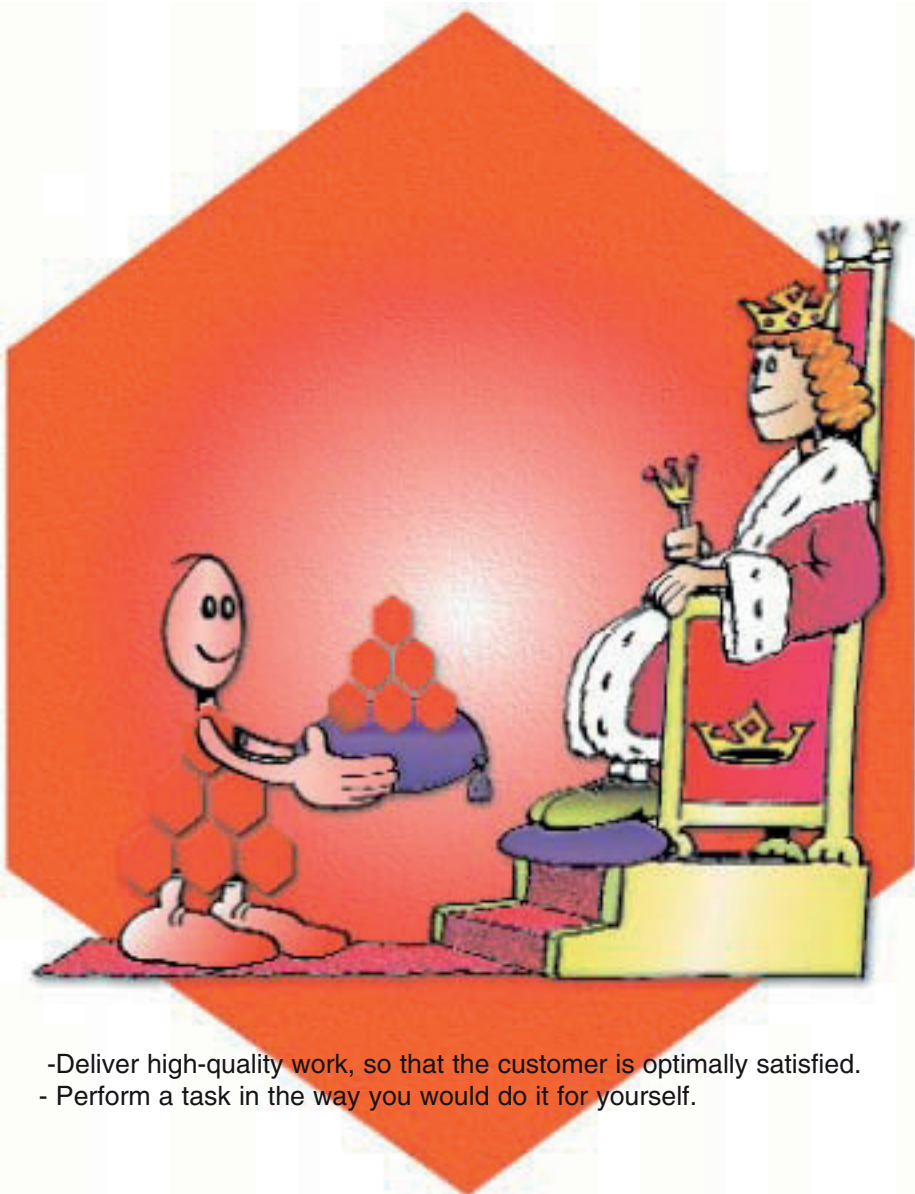
*Motivated*

*Innovative*

*Responsible*

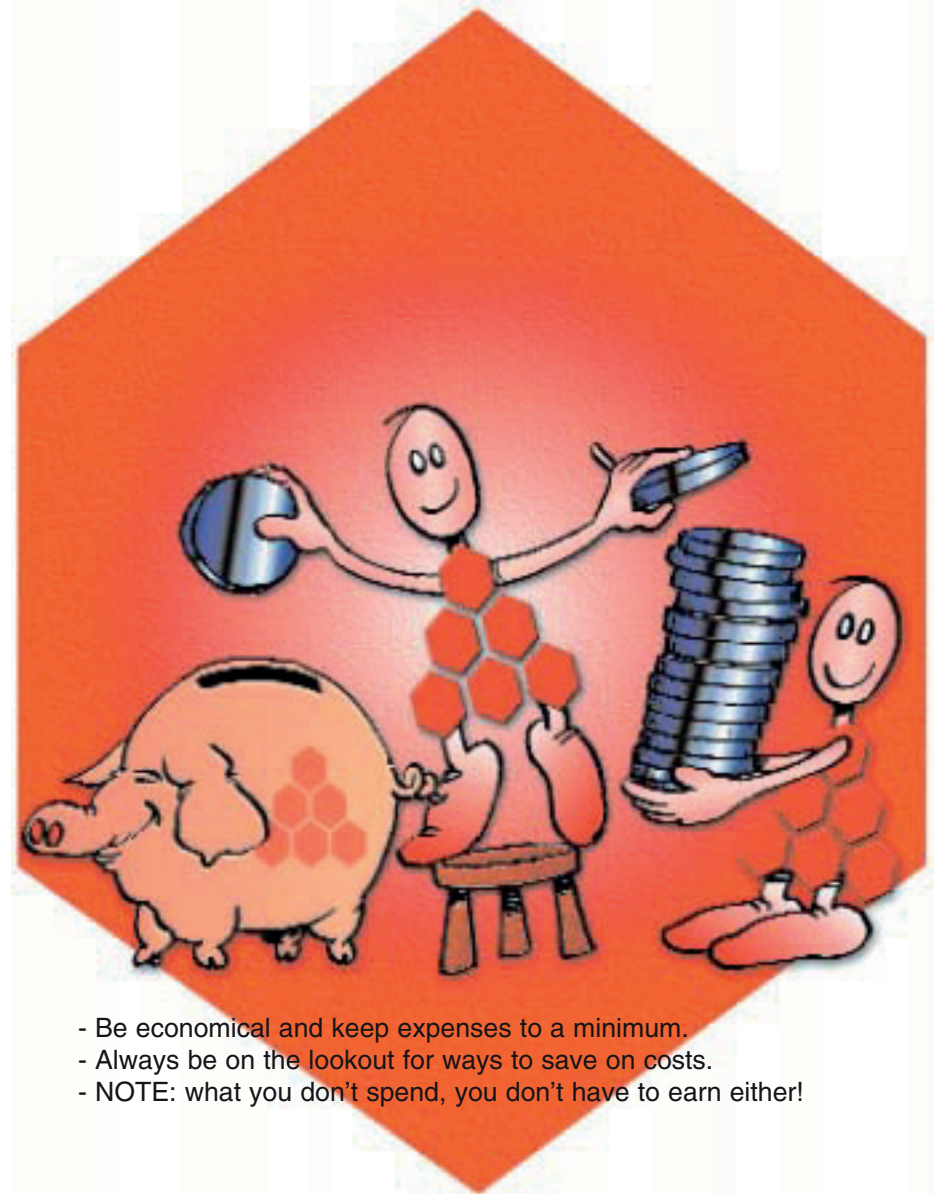


# Customer-friendly



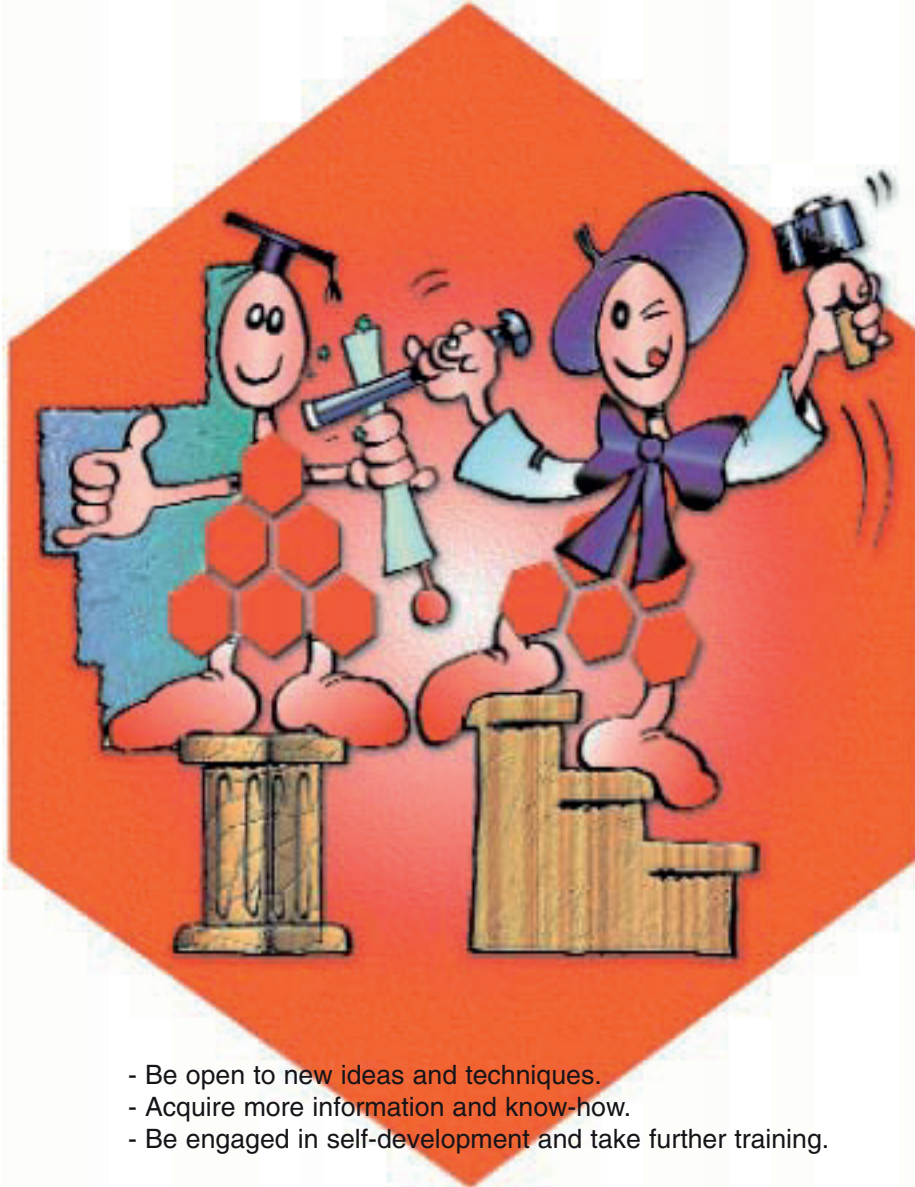
- Deliver high-quality work, so that the customer is optimally satisfied.
- Perform a task in the way you would do it for yourself.

# Economical



- Be economical and keep expenses to a minimum.
- Always be on the lookout for ways to save on costs.
- NOTE: what you don't spend, you don't have to earn either!

# Eager to learn



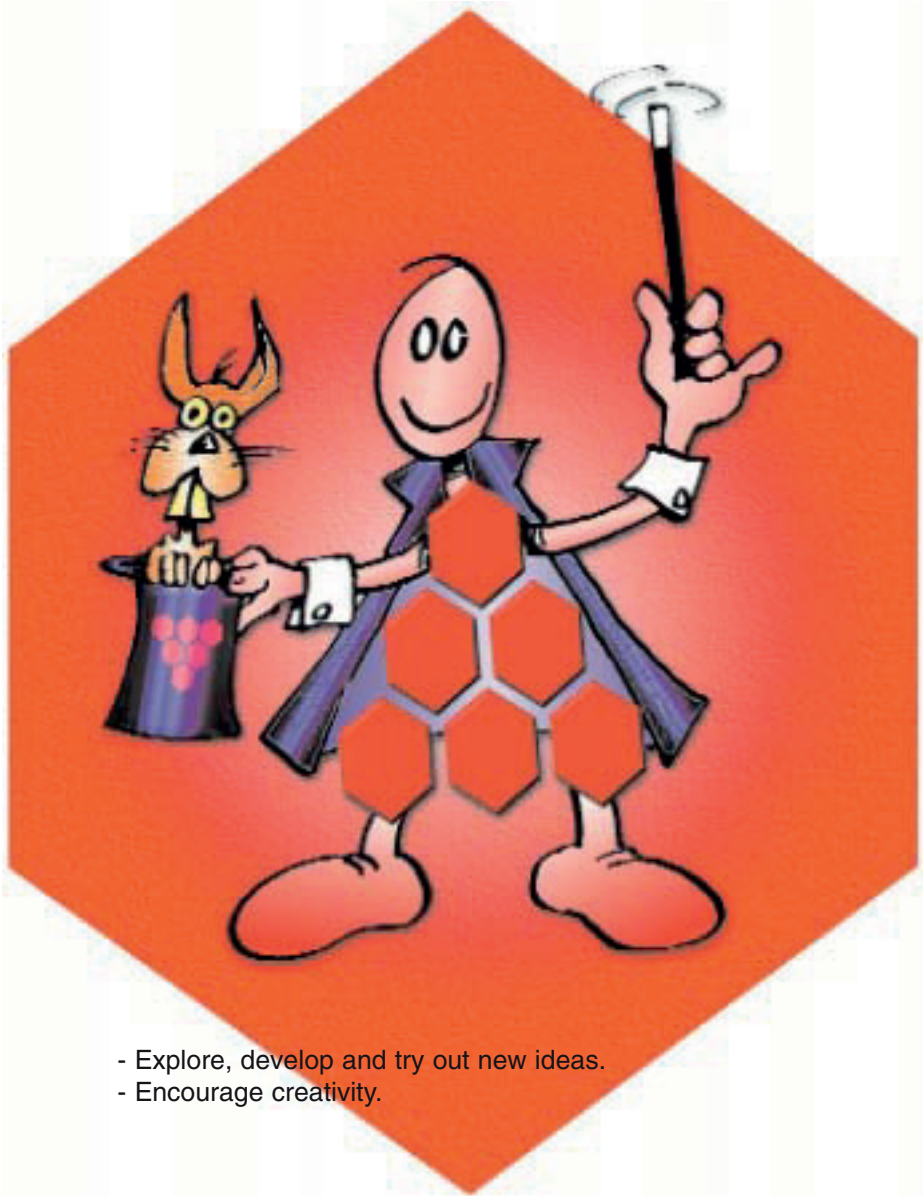
- Be open to new ideas and techniques.
- Acquire more information and know-how.
- Be engaged in self-development and take further training.

# Motivated



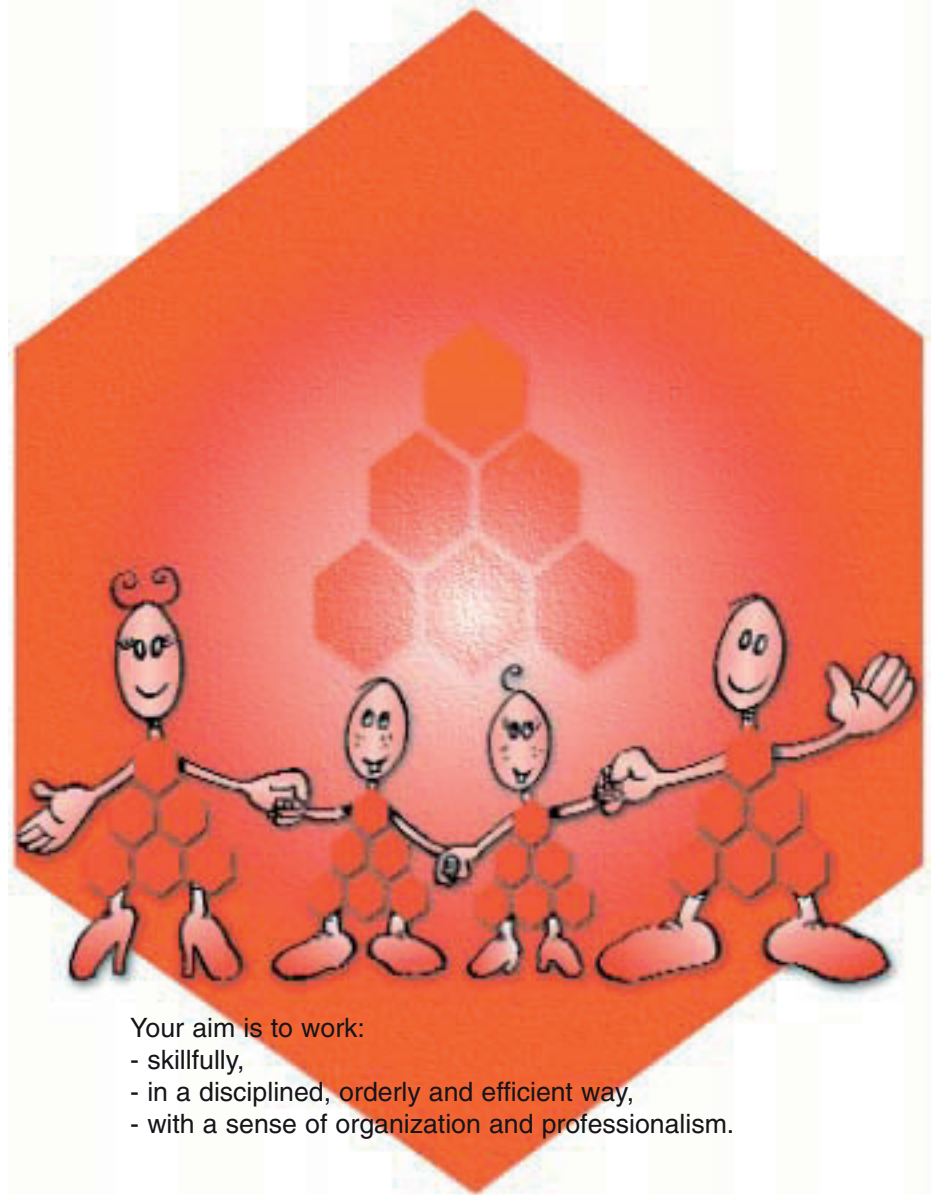
- Draw on all your talents, knowledge and skills, and put all your energy and enthusiasm into doing your work in the best possible way.

# Creative



- Explore, develop and try out new ideas.
- Encourage creativity.

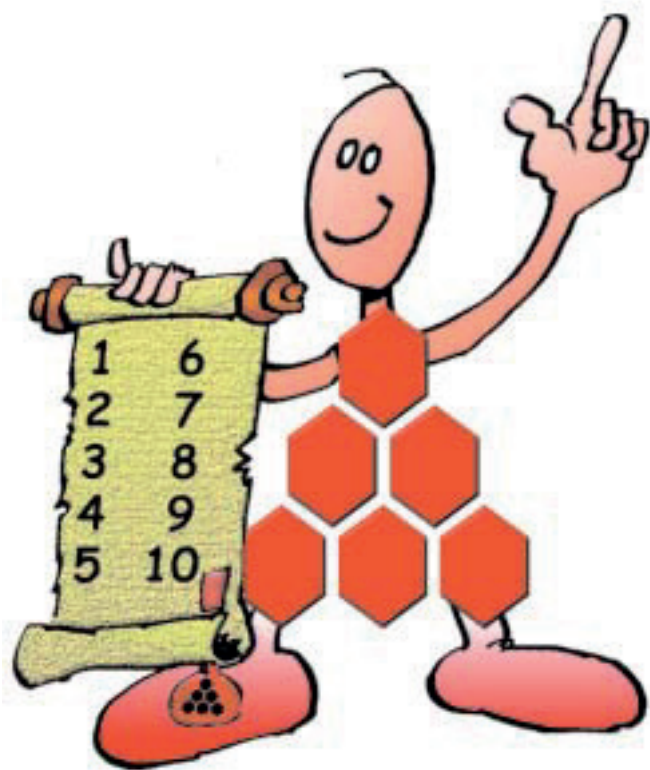
# Responsible



Your aim is to work:

- skillfully,
- in a disciplined, orderly and efficient way,
- with a sense of organization and professionalism.





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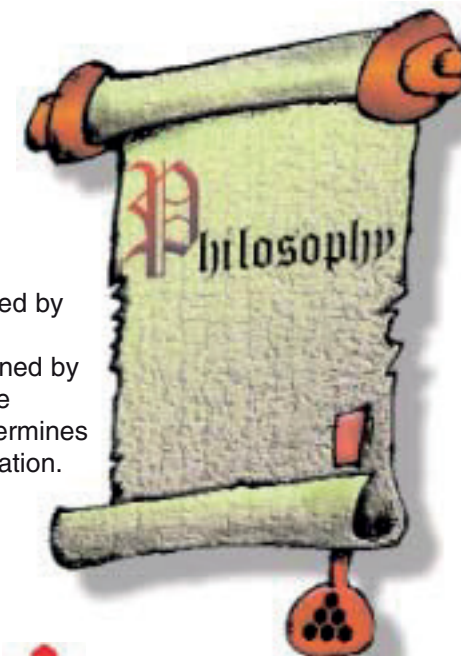
## Our philosophy: the cornerstone of our corporation

### 1. We believe

in our philosophy and company culture.

Both thinking and acting within our corporation (or one of our companies) are ruled by a number of basic principles. We call these basic principles the corporate (or company) philosophy. It is important that everyone is familiar with this philosophy.

Each decision and every action, whoever takes it, must be inspired by the corporate philosophy. Our corporate culture is determined by the attitude and principles of the management, and in turn, it determines the future success of the corporation.



2. We believe

that "the cobbler should stick to his shoemaking".  
The corporation's range of activities is engineering and the handling of goods:  
**'Cargo handling is our business'**.



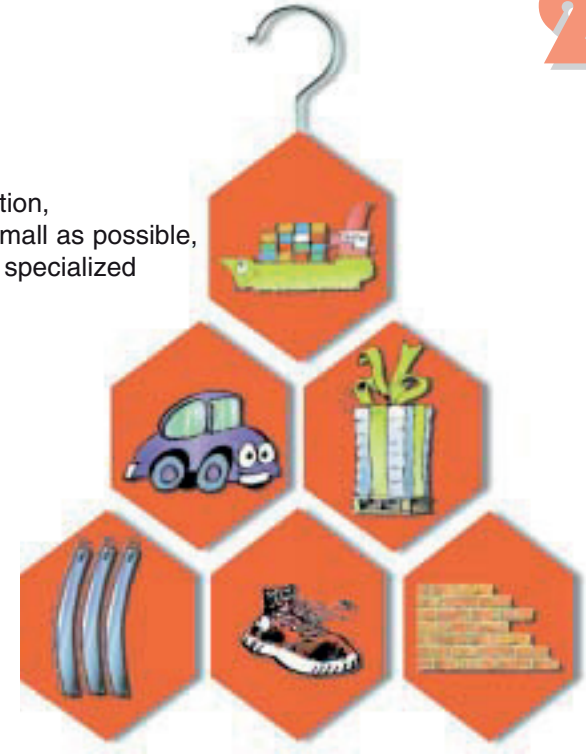
3. We believe

that our primary responsibility is to serve the customer: our products and services must be excellent at all times.  
We believe in the high quality of our services.  
We must continue to strive towards optimizing our services, and keeping costs down.  
We must tailor our services to the needs of the customer.



4. We believe

in teamwork based on:  
- a decentralized organization,  
- a central unit that is as small as possible,  
- small and independently specialized company units,  
- flexible structures.



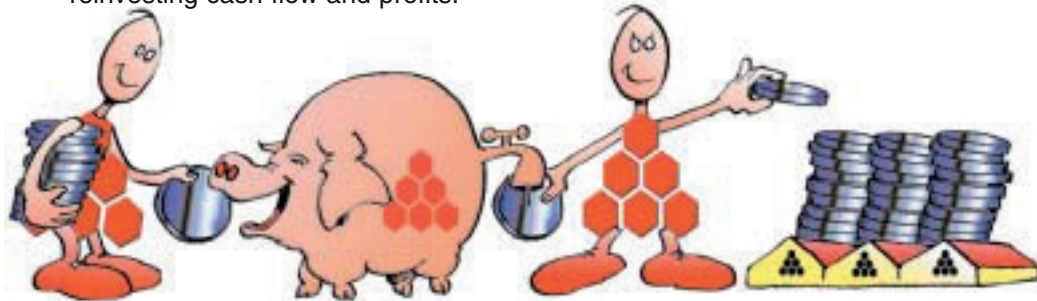
5. We believe

in controlled growth and progress through:  
- diversification,  
- differentiation (niche theory),  
- specialization,  
- growth area development,  
- snowball effect.



6. We believe

- in conserving our financial strength through:
- maintaining our capital and reserves,
  - spreading activities over various units and areas of specialization,
  - cost control and thrift,
  - future-oriented and market-oriented investments,
  - managing the flow of financial information as one of the main resources for steering the company,
  - ensuring the sound financial structure of each individual company,
  - ensuring the profitability of each individual company,
  - reinvesting cash flow and profits.



7. We believe

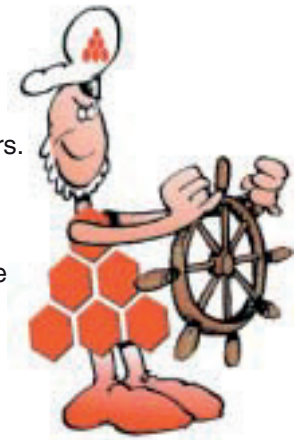
- in the great importance of accurate and fast information and communication. This comprises both the flow of information and communication within the company and between the company and the customers or third parties. Information and communication are organized in such a way that they meet the demands of:
- speed
  - accuracy
  - availability
  - comprehensiveness
  - friendliness



We abhor the practice of keeping corporate information to oneself with the aim of gaining more power or protecting one's job. Information must be available to everyone within the company. There must be no walls around the information.

8. We believe

in management science and in our managers. Our managers must keep abreast of developments in the field of management systems and techniques by means of continuous training. Our enterprises must be led efficiently, using the best management techniques.



9. We believe

in leadership. We expect our executives to be leaders for their company, branch or section. True leadership supports and leads to entrepreneurialship.



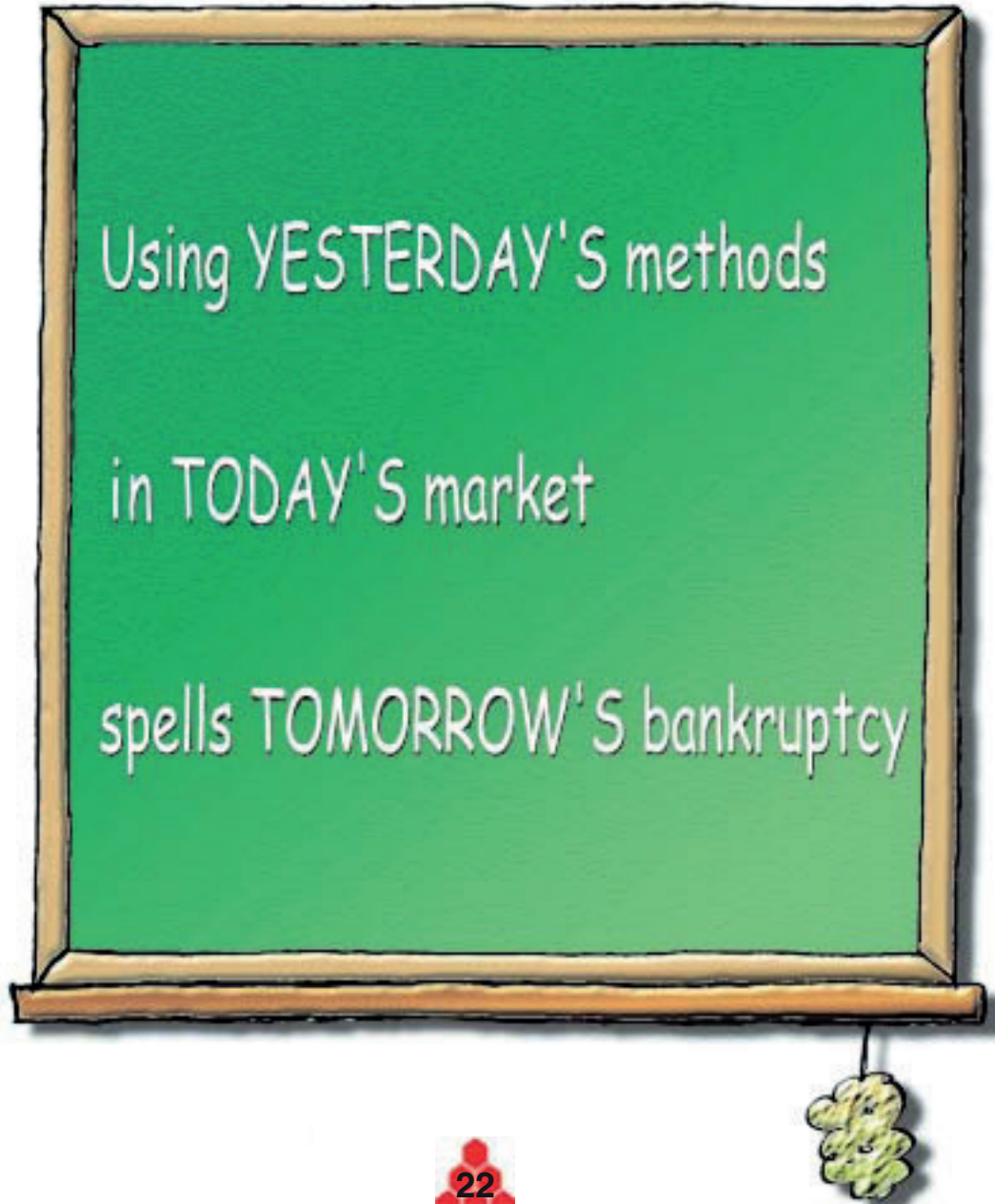
10. We believe

that our company is different and better "because our people make the difference". We have great faith in our employees. We believe in their:

- dedication and perseverance,
- ideas and proposals,
- enthusiasm and spirit of enterprise,
- dynamism and initiative,
- competence and skill,
- customer-friendliness.

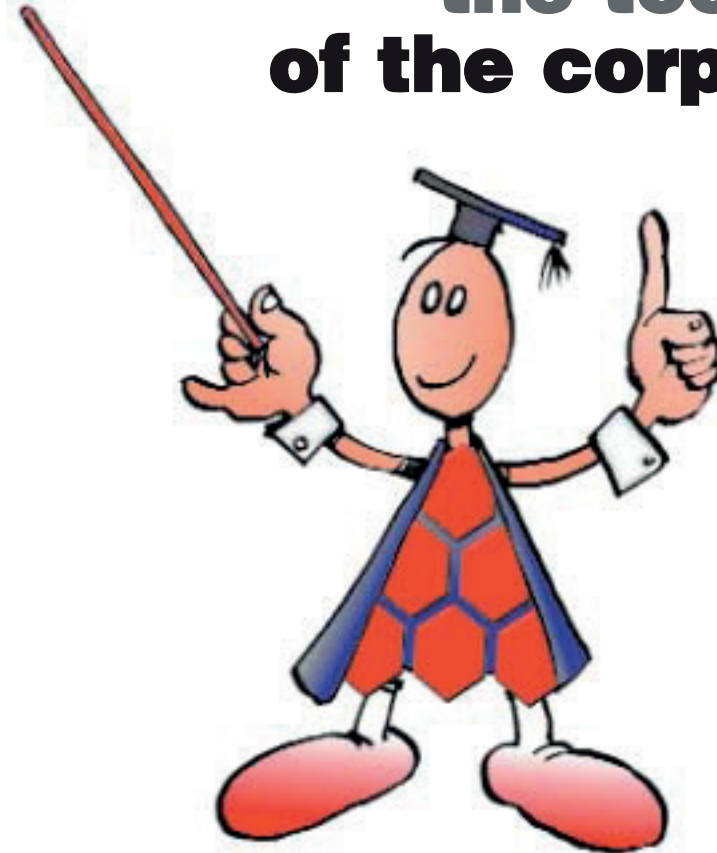


‘ OUR PEOPLE MAKE THE DIFFERENCE ‘

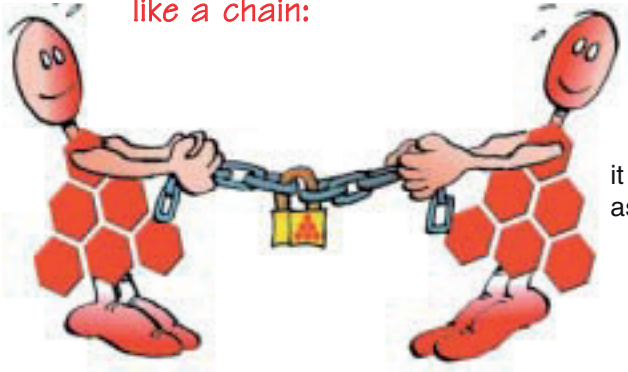


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**Vocabulary,  
concepts &  
ideas:  
the tools  
of the corporation**



An organization is like a chain:



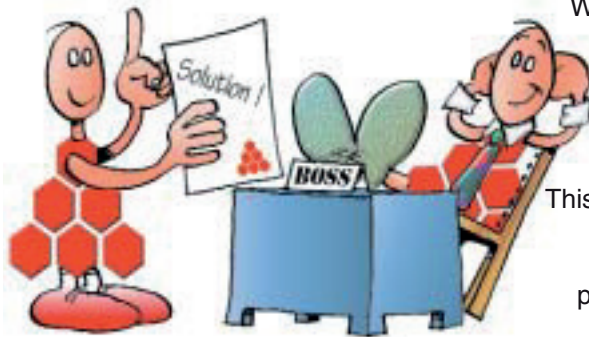
it is only as strong as its weakest link.

outside information

Many documents, reports and information (which the company needs) can be found outside the company. Even though the documents and information are there for the taking, people frequently don't make the effort to look for it. For instance, they prefer to create their own reports, or they continue working without the data they need.



difficulties

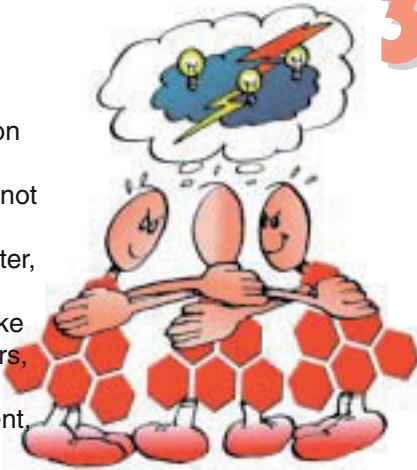


When you have a problem and you want to discuss it with your superior, you should first define the problem in detail and come up with a series of solutions. This will make it easier for him to make a decision. In other words: never take a problem to your boss, instead, go with a list of alternatives.

brainstorming

This technique of creative thinking is based on six principles:

1. there should be no criticism whatsoever, not even shrugs, laughter, etc.,
2. the wilder, the better; the stranger, the better,
3. the more, the better,
4. the participants should join forces and take up lines of thinking proposed by the others,
5. the participants must forget all restraints and all ties with their personal environment,
6. a beverage or some music can help to stimulate the participants.



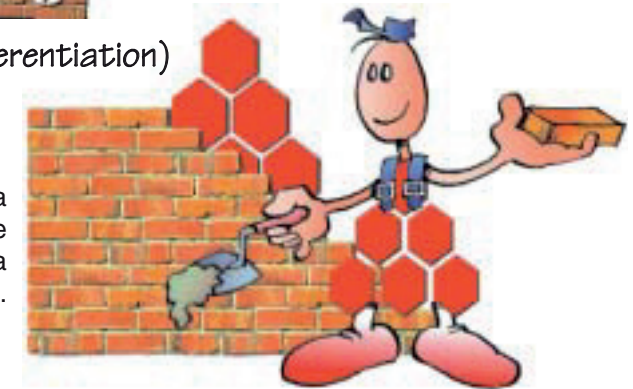
image



A wall built around a company that makes it unique and distinguishes it from other companies.

trademark (differentiation)

A wall built around a product that has the effect of creating a "quasi-monopoly".



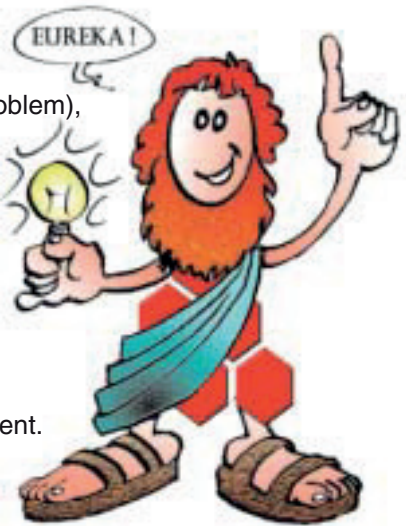
the company's goal



To create surplus value  
(all the rest is bullshit).

problem-solving (ways of thinking)

1. detecting and recognizing symptoms,
2. describing the symptoms clearly,
- 2b. waiting before reacting (studying the problem),
3. gathering information,
4. describing the problem,
5. describing the frame of reference,
6. drawing up criteria for a decision,
7. developing alternatives,  
taking the framework into account,
8. developing respective strategies,
- 8b. choosing a solution,
9. implementing the chosen solution,
10. control, assessment, follow-up, adjustment.



the marketing "minus one" decision



Before deciding to develop or launch a new product, a company must find:

- the man,
- the pusher,
- the spokesman,
- the supporter,
- the product gladiator.

Only when a product gladiator has been found, does a marketing philosophy have a chance of success:

*"first the gladiator, then the marketing"  
"without a gladiator,  
no amount of marketing will work".*

the creativity "plus one" action

- creativity : thinking up new ideas
- innovation: carrying out new ideas

An idea is worthless unless something is done with it. Creativity must be followed by action, by innovation.



*beginnings*



A new product is developed by one of the corporation's companies. There, it is cherished and tended. Safe and warm, it grows. When it is fully-developed, it begins its own life, with the help of its creator.

*Going to the front and checking the front lines.*



A company is made by its employees, services, and products in the front lines.

That is where the action is, that is where things happen. The management must visit this front regularly. Good management must be based on a thorough knowledge of, and insight into, the situation at the front. Managers are there for the front lines, not the other way round.

*listening:*

the first skill

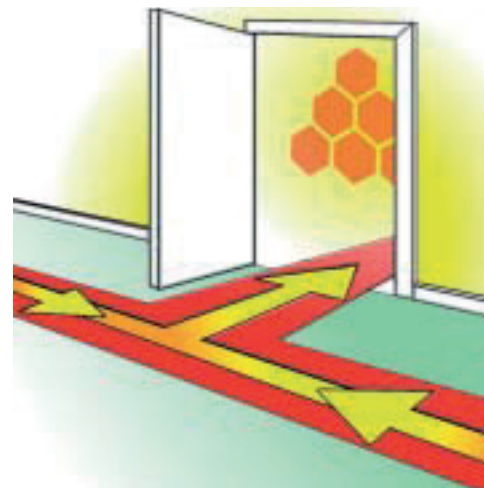
*asking questions:*

the second skill of every manager

When providing services and improving them, all ideas can be useful.



*the open door*



Every manager must be accessible to everyone who has something to say.

*Handling complaints.*

All customer complaints must be investigated at two levels:

- (a) the deeper causes of the complaint, the factors within the company that led to the complaint, must be identified as soon as possible;
- (b) if the complaint is justified, action must be taken immediately to meet the customer's demands.



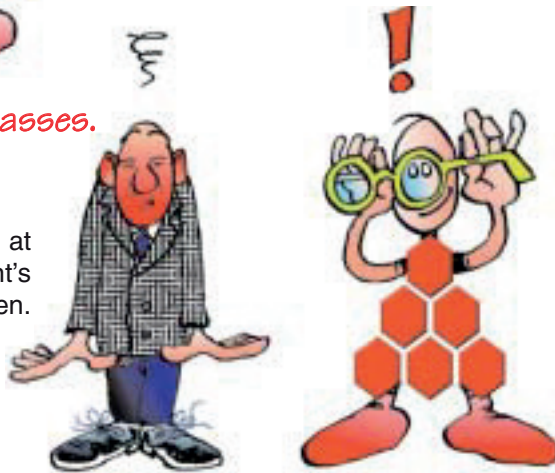
*'cut your losses'*

Our corporation has employees who love enterprise, innovation and action. In any enterprise there are certain risks. Things can go wrong. When the loss would be too great, we must apply the "cut your losses" principle.



*Wear someone else's glasses.*

It is good to try looking at things through your opponent's glasses every so often.



*'too many chiefs, no more indians'*



This rule applies to companies that have lost energy, soul and leadership: too many directors, too many meetings, too much bureaucracy, no action, weak front lines.

*Things are never as bad as they seem.*

Keeping this in mind should help us to:  
a) refrain from panicking and from reacting too quickly when a major problem comes up;  
b) take our time to look at a major problem calmly and from a distance.



*leadership*



Motivating employees to reach their highest level of dedication, achievement and creativity; and then giving them opportunities, the freedom and room to grow.

*baby*

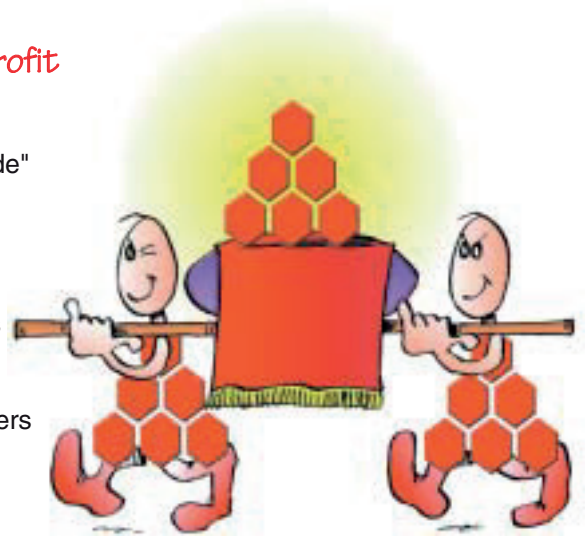


The creation, development, division, project, company, idea, etc. of a manager.



*cost-effectiveness, profit*

These are not financial concepts. Essentially, they reflect the "attitude" of all employees of the company. Cost-effectiveness is everyone's concern. All employees of the company contribute to it. Cost-effectiveness is not realized by the financial department, but is the result of general attitude, for which managers must set the example.



*'If you cannot beat them, join them.'*

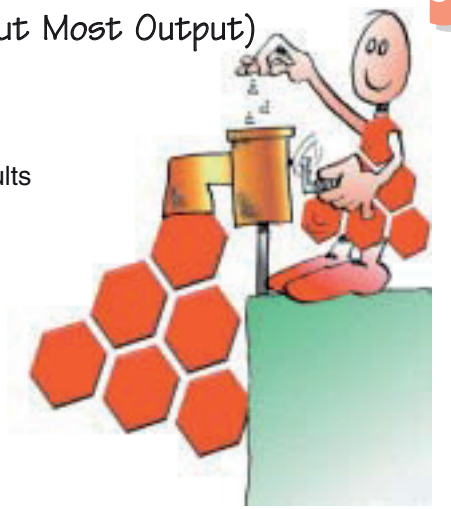
Wrong decisions and policy mistakes cannot be avoided, and will happen now and then. They should give us a clue about the right direction, and we must consider them as lessons for the future. When projects or initiatives fail, we must back up the employees concerned. The employees that have "failed" must be given new tasks and challenges.



*the safety net*

*the 'LIMO' principle (Least Input Most Output)*

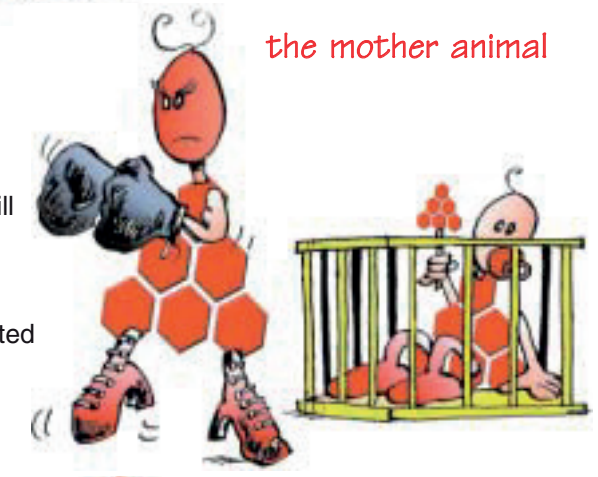
Achieving the greatest possible results with as few recourses as possible.



*Achilles' heel*

Avoid a direct attack on your competitors. Keep clear of their strong points: hit them in their weakest spot. Use tactics, surprise attacks, and surrounding movements.

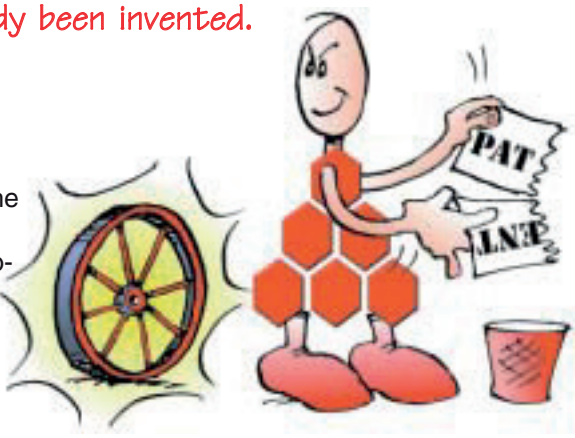
Just as mother animals will put up a fierce struggle when their young are threatened, managers will be the most highly motivated where their "baby" is concerned.



*the mother animal*

### The wheel has already been invented.

The principles of management have been applied ever since the first organizations were set up. Management literature and theories seem to reinvent the wheel over and over again, but in fact, it is still the same wheel.



### 'baggers'

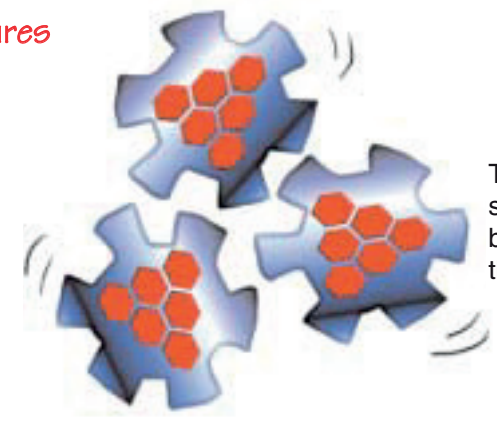
- Bagger: a person who puts the customers' supermarket purchases in bags.
- Single bagger: a bagger who uses only one bag and carelessly stuffs the items into it, accompanied by much sighing and moaning.
- Double bagger: a bagger who will reinforce the bag with an extra bag if necessary, who packs the purchases neatly and meticulously, and who has a smile and a kind word for each customer.

### 'Sitzfleisch' ('couch potato')

It is impossible to run a company, division or unit sitting on your behind. You can't run things from behind a desk. 'Sitzfleisch' is for bureaucrats and has no place in our organization.



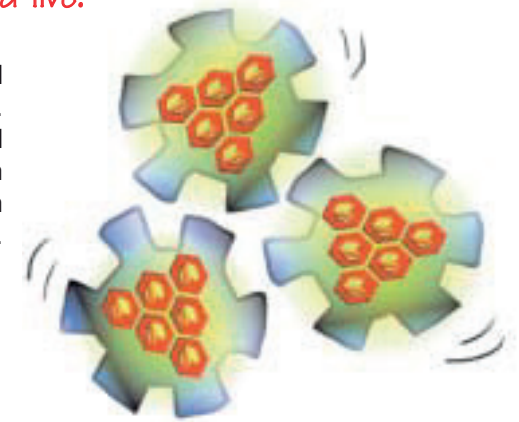
### procedures



The company does not serve its procedures, but the procedures serve the company.

### Procedures should live.

Procedures have to be geared to the particular company unit. They must be very flexible and changeable, so that they can be adjusted to suit the evolution of the company unit.



### Avoid uniformity in the procedures.

- Procedures suffocate the organization if they are uniformly applied to the whole group.
- Each product, each part of a company, each company of the corporation must have its own procedures.

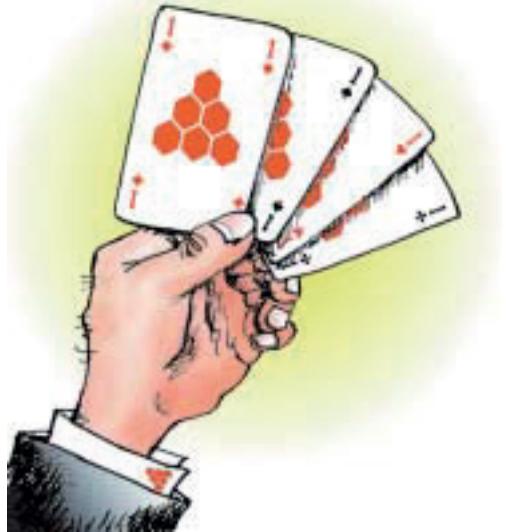


### hidden potential

Hidden potential is the difference between what an employee does and what he or she could do.

The components of hidden potential are:

- talent,
- skill,
- energy,
- emotion.



As far as the eye of the master can see.



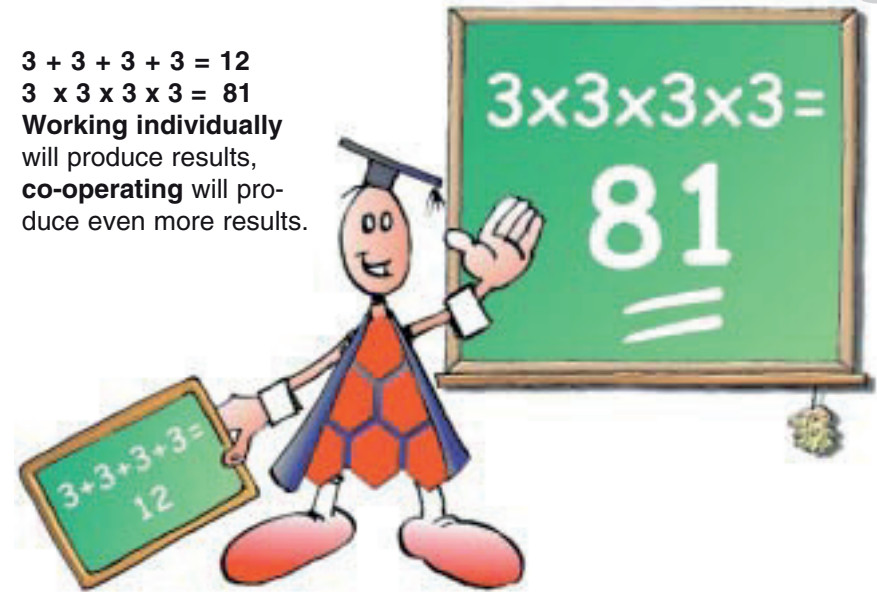
Expansion of the corporation must always remain within range of **"the eye"** of its management. The accounts department and control and management systems have to be sufficiently developed to cope with growth. Especially when the corporation becomes more international, **"the eye of the master"** has to be sharp enough to monitor expansion.

### the '12/81-effect

$$3 + 3 + 3 + 3 = 12$$

$$3 \times 3 \times 3 \times 3 = 81$$

**Working individually** will produce results, **co-operating** will produce even more results.



### the "captain of the ship" syndrome



This is the erroneous belief that the man at the top takes all responsibility. Everyone in the company has plenty of freedom to make decisions and must also take the responsibility for those decisions.

sparks

- a terrific hunch,
- a creative flash,
- a brilliant proposition.



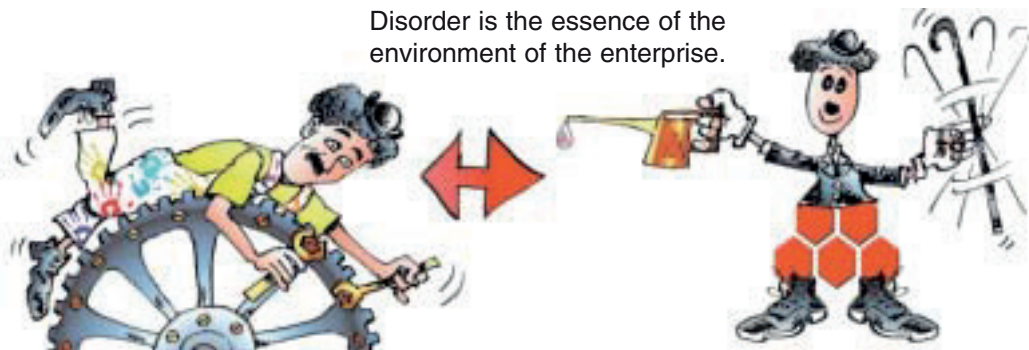
spark file



This is where all these sparks, ideas, articles, and schemes are filed that may be of use to the managers.

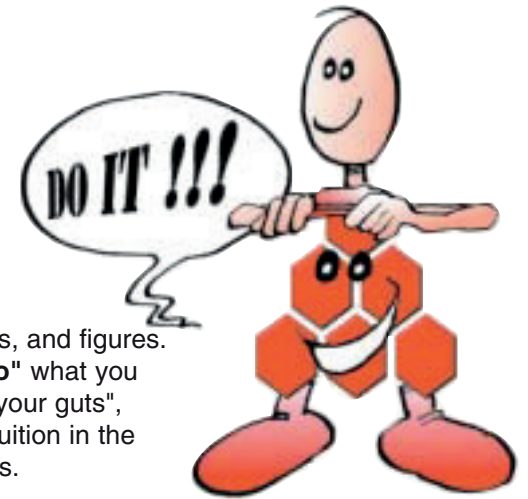
disorder

Disorder is the essence of the environment of the enterprise.

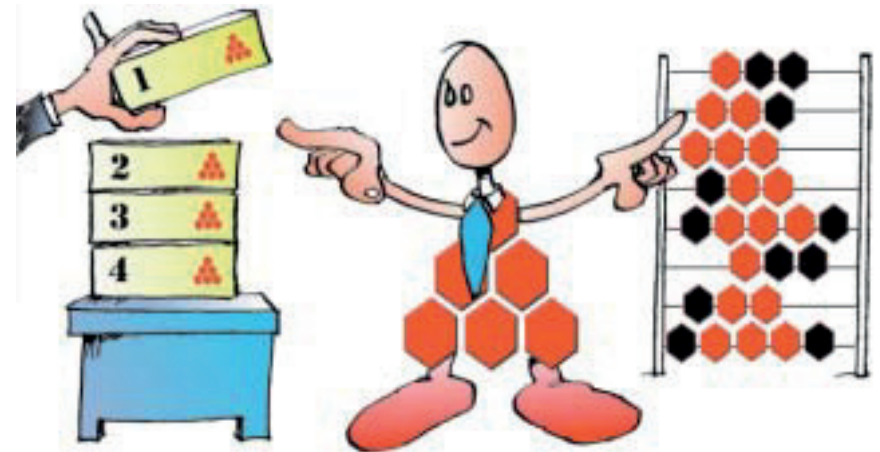


guts

Gather information, facts, and figures. Analyze them. Then "do" what you "feel" is right: "go with your guts", combine reason and intuition in the decision-making process.



Giving account.



A superior has to delegate responsibilities and give room to his team members, so that they can take decisions. He has to assess the results and account for them.

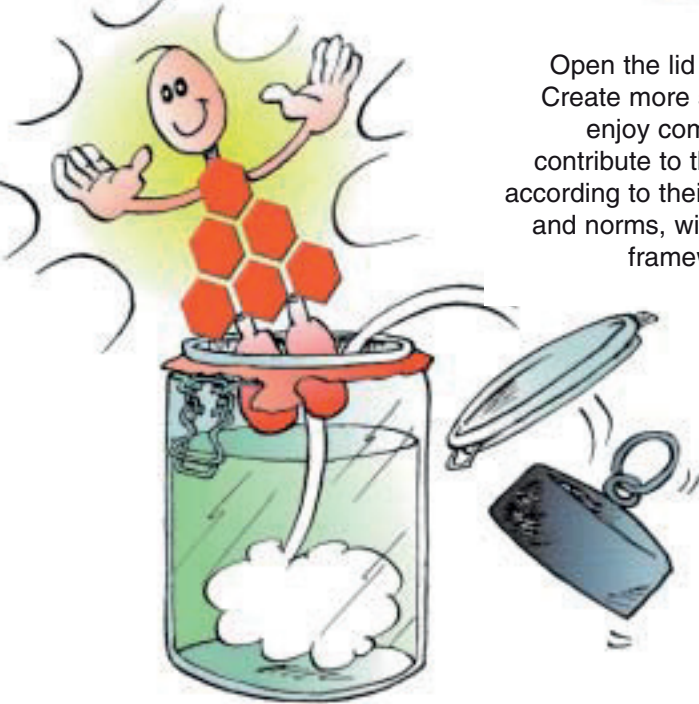
### 3 suppression in "glass jar" structures

Many structures and systems suppress the hidden potential of employees, so they cannot flourish. This hidden potential is kept tightly in a jar under a solid lid.



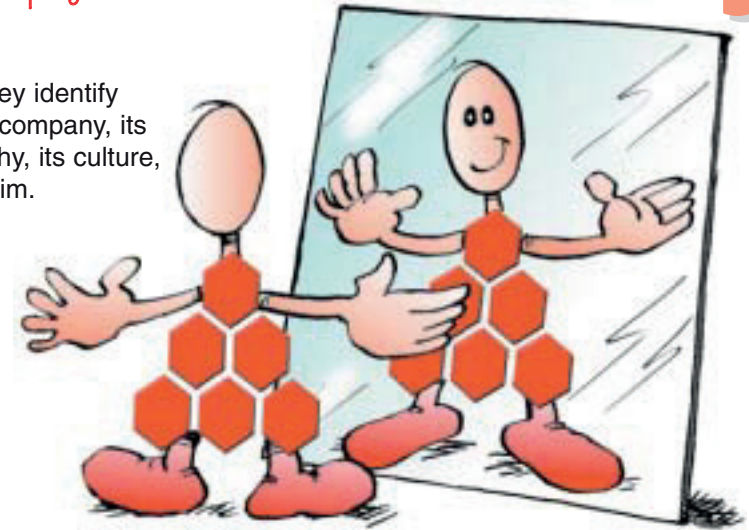
### Releasing the hidden potential.

Open the lid and get rid of the jar. Create more space, so employees enjoy coming to work, and can contribute to the company's growth according to their own personal ideas and norms, within the philosophical framework of the company.



### When are employees dedicated?

When they identify with the company, its philosophy, its culture, and its aim.



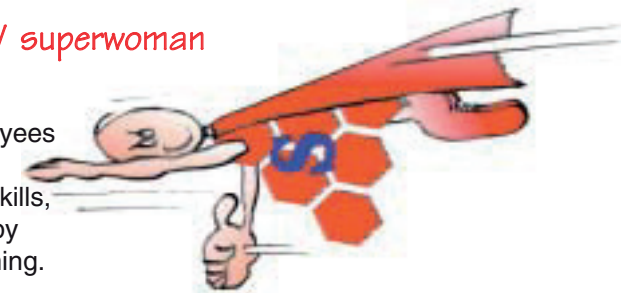
### Winning the gold medal.

The difference between standard performance and top achievement is that the employee has released and used his hidden potential.



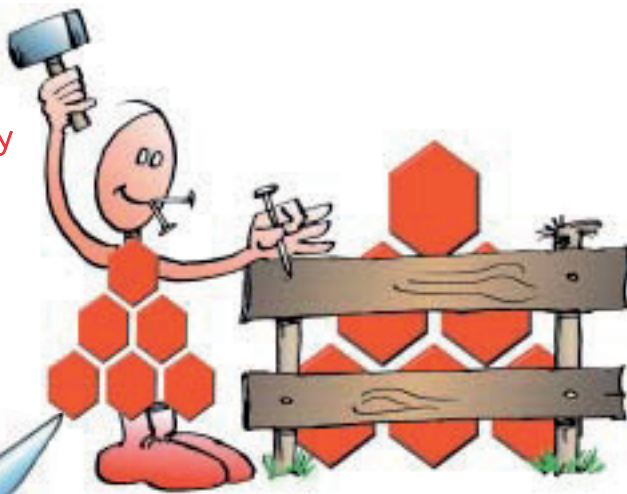
### superman/ superwoman

These are devoted employees who spare no effort in developing their talents, skills, and energy to the fullest by means of continuous training.

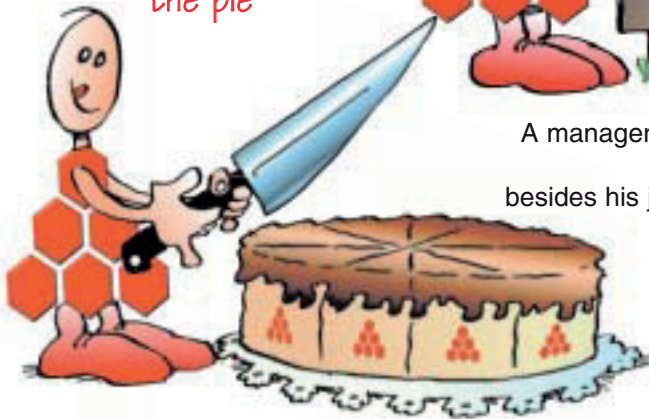


Marking one's territory

Everyone has to create a territory of their own. Avoid wasting energy on territorial conflicts.



the pie



A manager's pie should be cut into equal portions: besides his job, a manager also needs to achieve balance in other areas of life: family life, hobbies, friends, etc.

playing = running the company



'The difference between men and boys is only the size of their toys'.

the art of war

*"To attack the enemy's strategy is of supreme importance in war."*

*"The supreme excellence in war is to attack the enemy's plans."*

*"A victorious army wins its victories before seeking battle."*

*"The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting."*



Katoen Natie 'listens'.



When an important customer pays a visit, our people should make a point of listening to the customer in order to find out whether we meet his demands, and whether he has any suggestions to make concerning our products or services.

balance



The keys to success are:

- communication,
- moderation,
- patience,
- adaptability,
- decisiveness,
- confidence,
- the ability to think along unconventional lines,
- social responsibility,
- happiness.

The importance of these factors lies in their interaction (some may even contradict others). They play a role in every decision.

From the combination of all these factors springs **balance**.

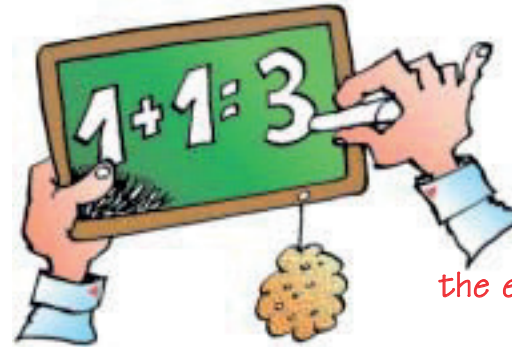
the sacred belief

fire

He who has a sacred belief in what he does and wants, will succeed.



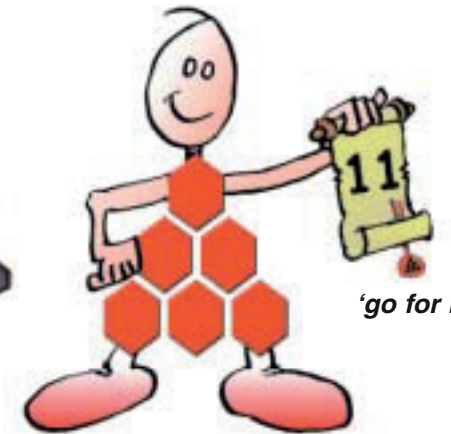
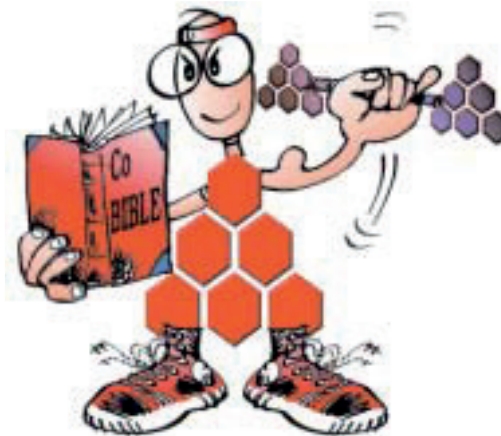
the formula for surplus value



$$\begin{aligned} & \text{revenue} \\ & - (\text{purchases} + \text{costs}) \\ \hline & = \text{surplus value} \end{aligned}$$

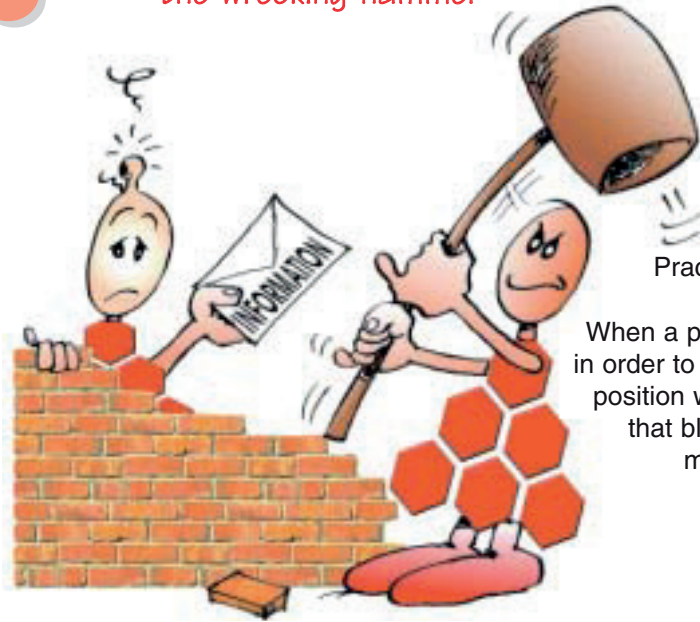
the eleventh commandment

training



'go for it'

the wrecking hammer



Practical and useful information has to be accessible. When a person withholds information in order to protect or reinforce his own position within the company, the wall that blocks the flow of information must be demolished at once.

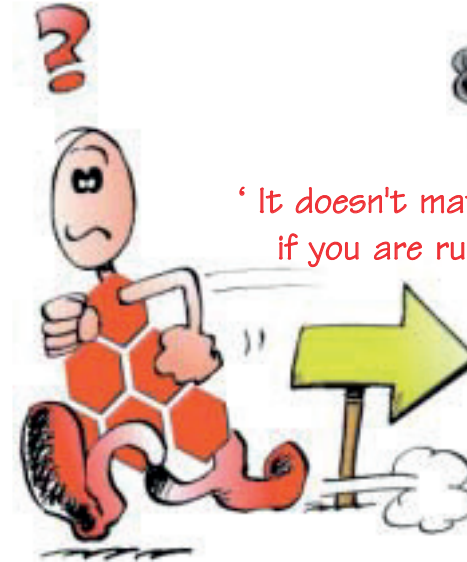
figures



In a meeting, or in a discussion, always ask for numerical data. Always start with the figures. Figures are concrete expressions of reality, they are a "means to an end", an aid to making decisions.

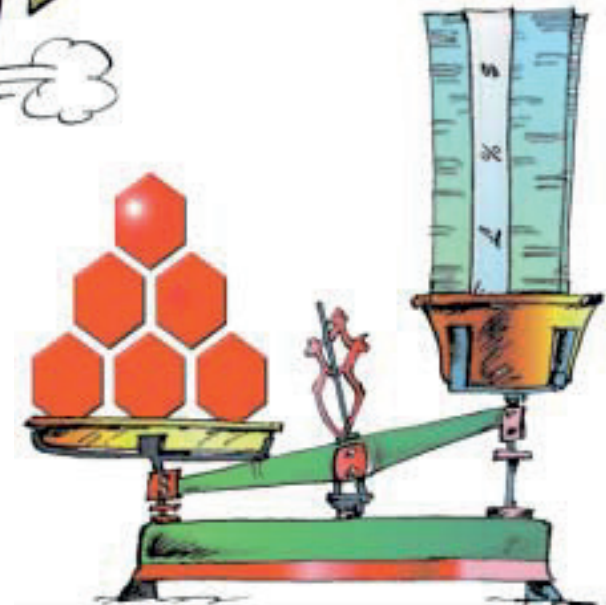
Work should be fun.

Working means personal development.

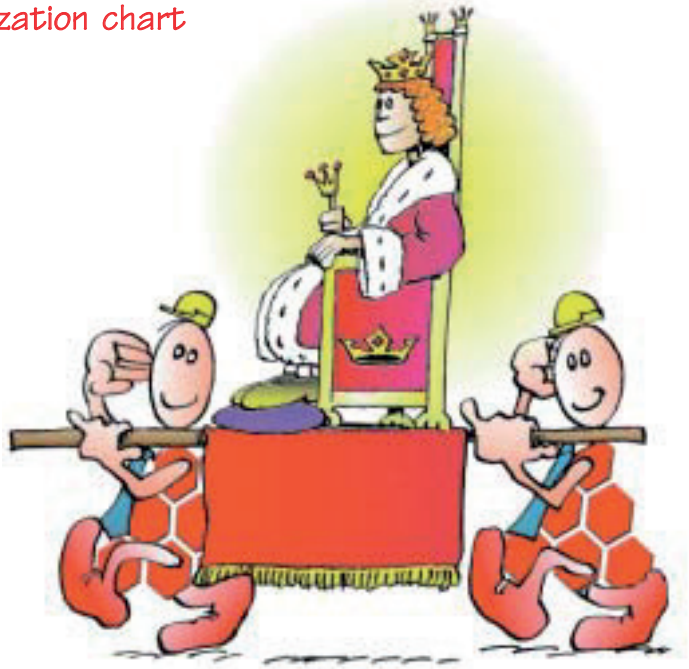


'It doesn't matter how fast you run if you are running in the wrong direction.'

Give value for money.

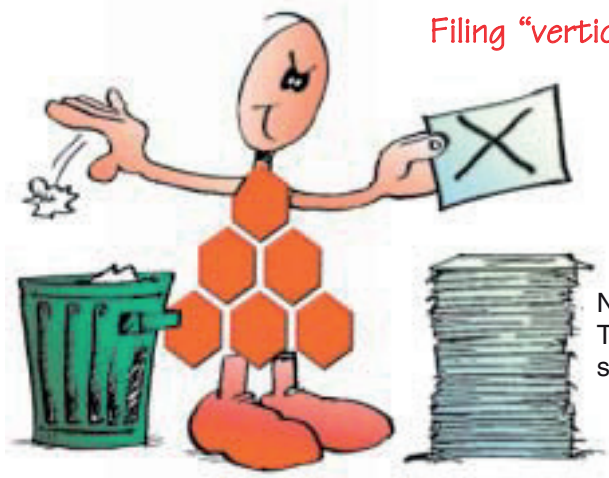






The company structure must be geared to the customers' needs and demands. Customers don't care who the director or the president are, or who the soldiers are. They are interested in a quick and efficient solution to their problems.

Filing "vertically".



Not all papers need to be kept. The wastepaper basket is a solution.

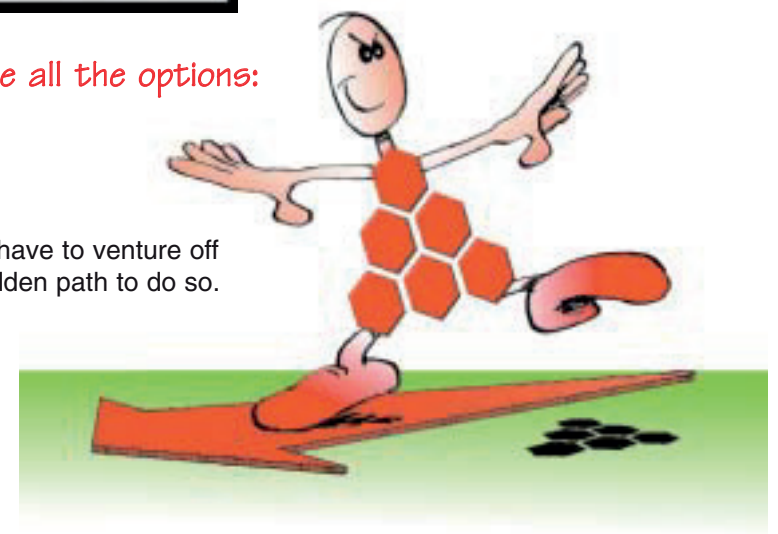
failure



"Most people fail because they shoot themselves in the foot".

Investigate all the options:

even if you have to venture off the well-trodden path to do so.



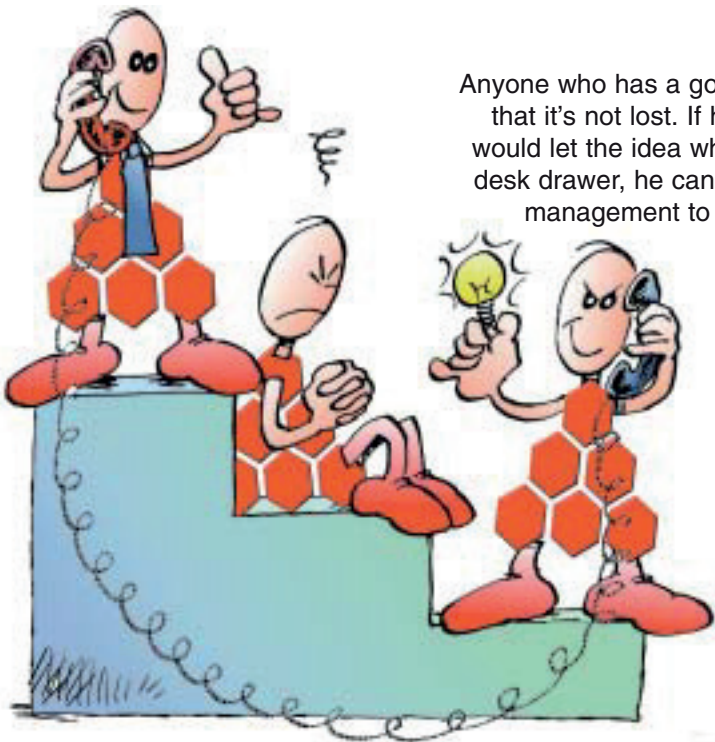
"All is fluctuation"

**"Nothing is,  
everything is becoming."**  
(Heraclitus, 500 BC)

The most important characteristics of our 'Umwelt' (environment) are its continual changes and the speed and unpredictability of changes.



hotline

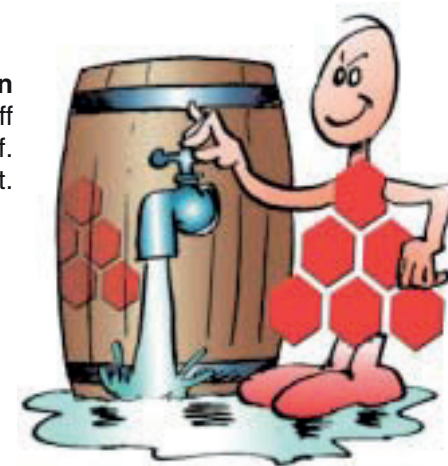


Anyone who has a good idea must see that it's not lost. If he thinks his boss would let the idea wither and die in a desk drawer, he can go straight to top management to tell them about it.

the tap of hidden potential

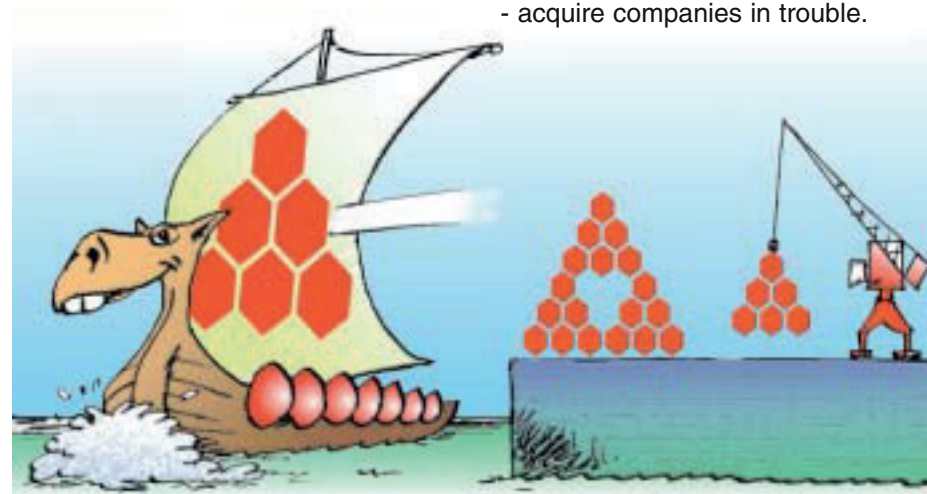
**dedication**

NOTE: the tap is turned on and off by the employee himself. Nobody else can do that.



growth strategy:

- develop new products,
- enter into niche markets,
- acquire companies in trouble.

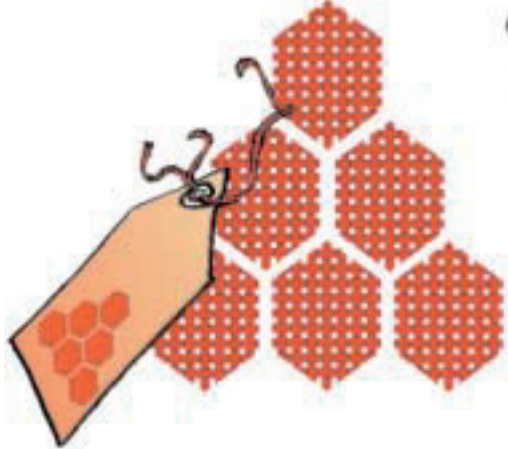


## order and discipline

These are the starting points for organizing our daily routines and our work.



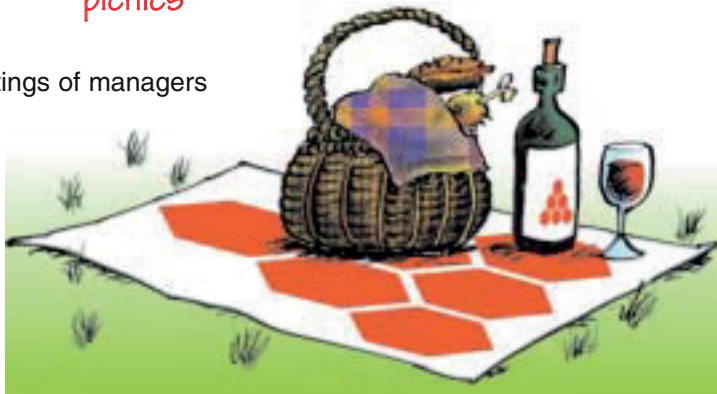
### a fabric versus a chain



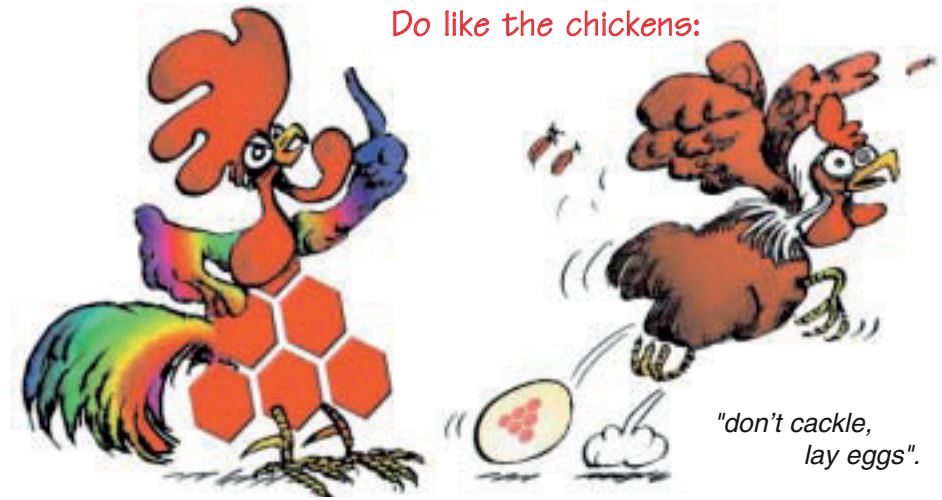
The structure of our management and flow of information is more like fabric than like a chain. We believe in networks and in interweaving.

### picnics

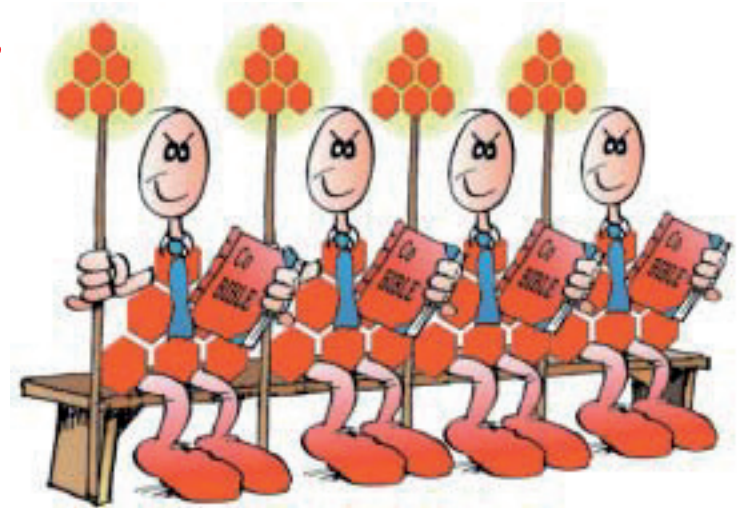
informal meetings of managers



## Do like the chickens:



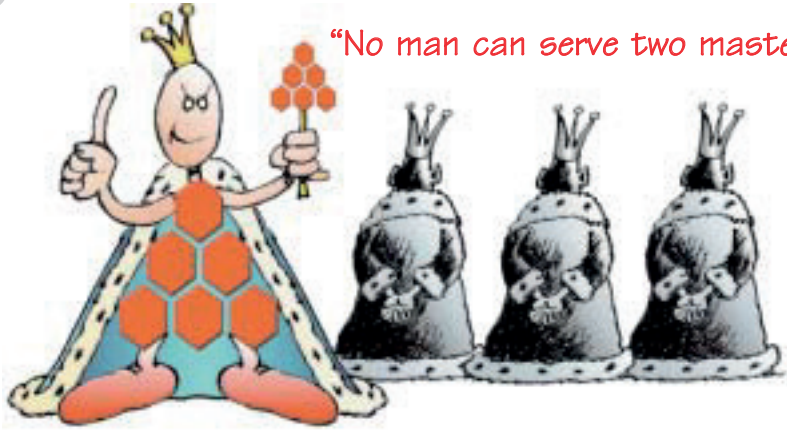
### reserve troops



In a growing company, managers always have their hands full. Still, we must make sure to post one or more skillful managers to our reserves, to be called to action when:

- (a) serious problems suddenly arise,
- (b) new products are launched,
- (c) or companies are acquired.

In the meantime, reserve troops can be trained and can gain experience in realizing projects, in anticipation of their future responsibilities.

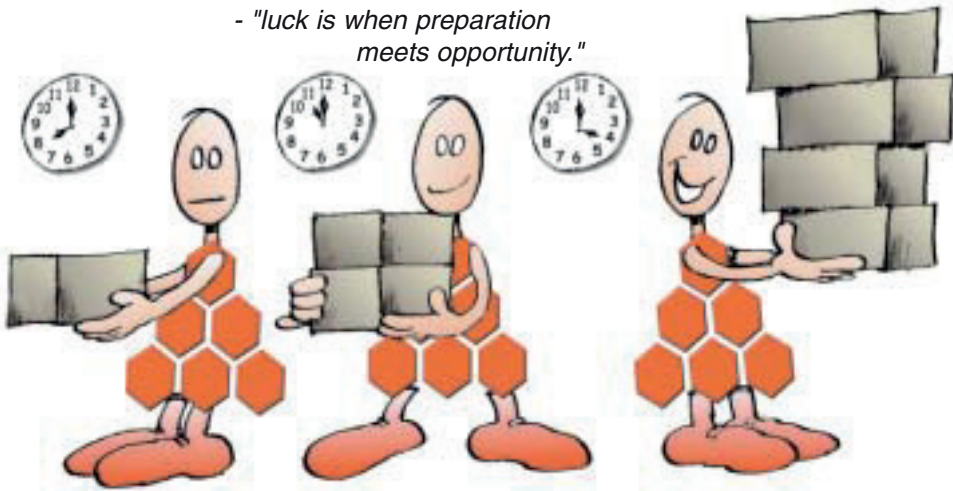


*"No man can serve two masters."*

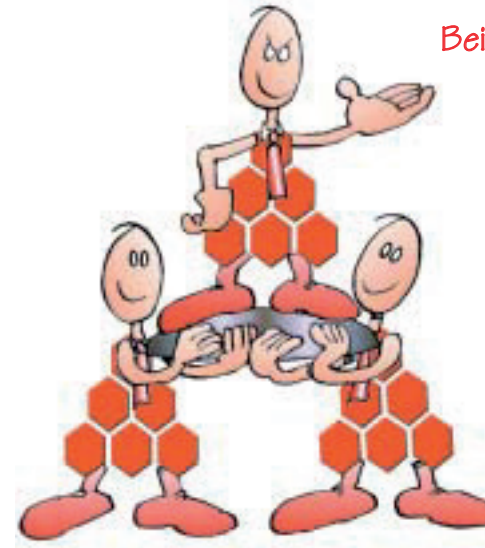
Every employee is expected to be fully committed to the company and loyal to its philosophy. This excludes taking a second job, working for another company, teaching, organizing lectures for third parties, sitting on boards of other companies, etc.

**luck:**

- *"the harder you work, the luckier you get."*
- *"luck is when preparation meets opportunity."*



*Being the boss.*



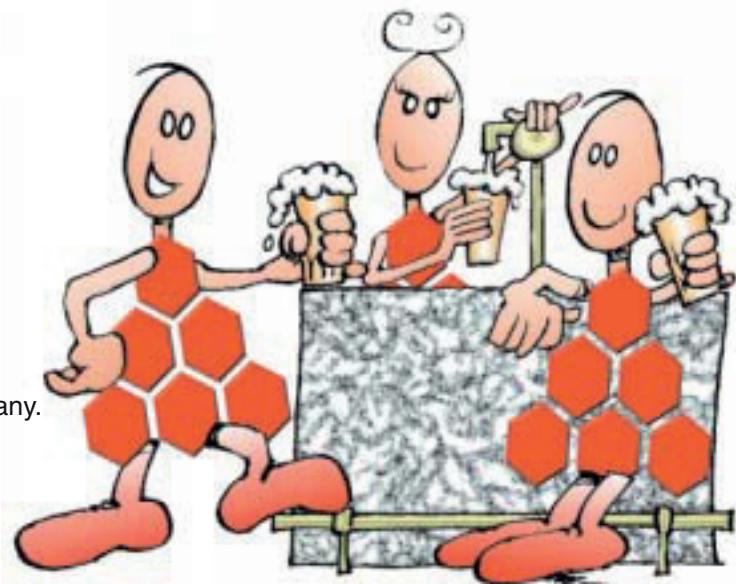
You are the boss only when your people recognize you as their boss, and never just because your title or your business card says so. You have to earn being a boss by showing commitment and leadership.

*exemplary function*



If you expect your team members to be economical, fly economy class yourself.

Socializing:



is an ideal way to stimulate communication within the company.

Don't reinvent plumbing.



Don't waste efforts on problems that others have solved before you.



positive attitude and drive

'Willing people make failing systems work, unwilling people make working systems fail.'

training and education

After "filling the kettle", you must certainly not forget to turn on the fire.





KATOEN NATIE

**Our driving force:  
company dynamics:  
be active -  
make decisions**

CREATIVITY



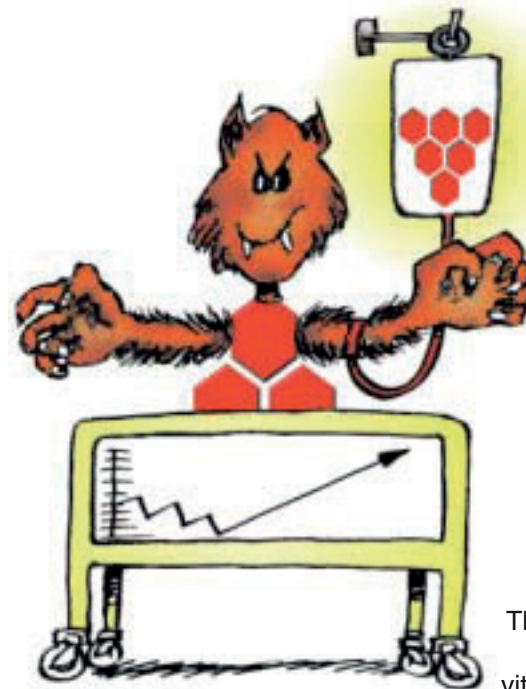
A brilliant new idea can help the enterprise make progress and stay a step ahead of competitors. It has to be led towards its realization with "wolves blood".

## COMMON SENSE



Common sense must be the basis for every decision and every action taken. No amount of management technique, rules or books can keep a company going if the members of the enterprise don't have sound common sense and apply down-to-earth logic.

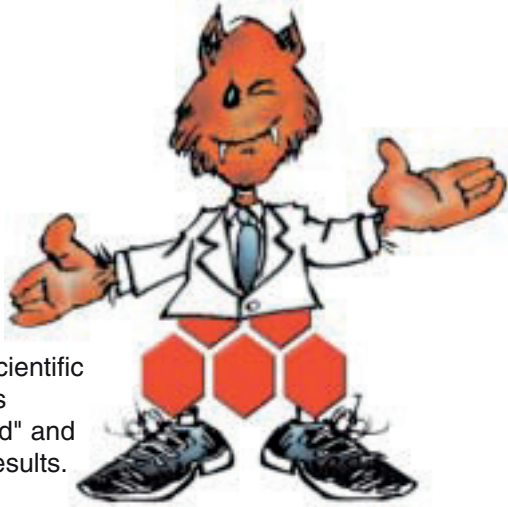
## "WOLVES BLOOD"(\*)



The urge to achieve, to get ahead, to innovate and to succeed. The vital dynamism, the urge, the spirit, the energetic will to persist and achieve results.

(\*) Why "wolves blood" instead of, e.g., "tiger blood"?  
Wolves live in packs, tigers are solitary.

### MANAGEMENT



An orderly, systematic, and scientific working method, which allows common sense, "wolves blood" and creativity to yield maximum results.

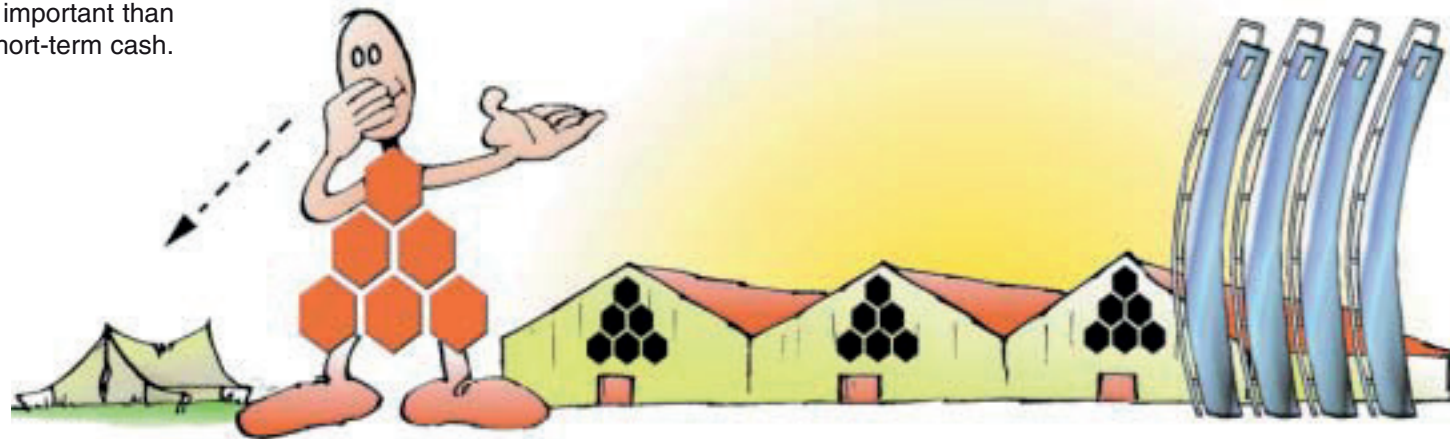
### SURPLUS VALUE VERSUS PROFIT



We are not in business to make a profit. Our business is to create surplus value.

### LONG TERM VERSUS SHORT TERM

Long-term cash flow is more important than short-term cash.







**KATOEN NATIE**

**5**

# How our company works

## *basic principle*

The basic principle is to master the art of being great, but acting small. The organization and structure of our corporation are aimed at two essential goals:

1. to minimize the disadvantages (weaknesses) of a large company while preserving the advantages (strengths) of a large company,
2. to minimize the disadvantages (weaknesses) of a small company while preserving the advantages (strengths) of a small company.

Combining the strengths of a small company with a large corporation creates leverage for the cost-effectiveness of our various companies.

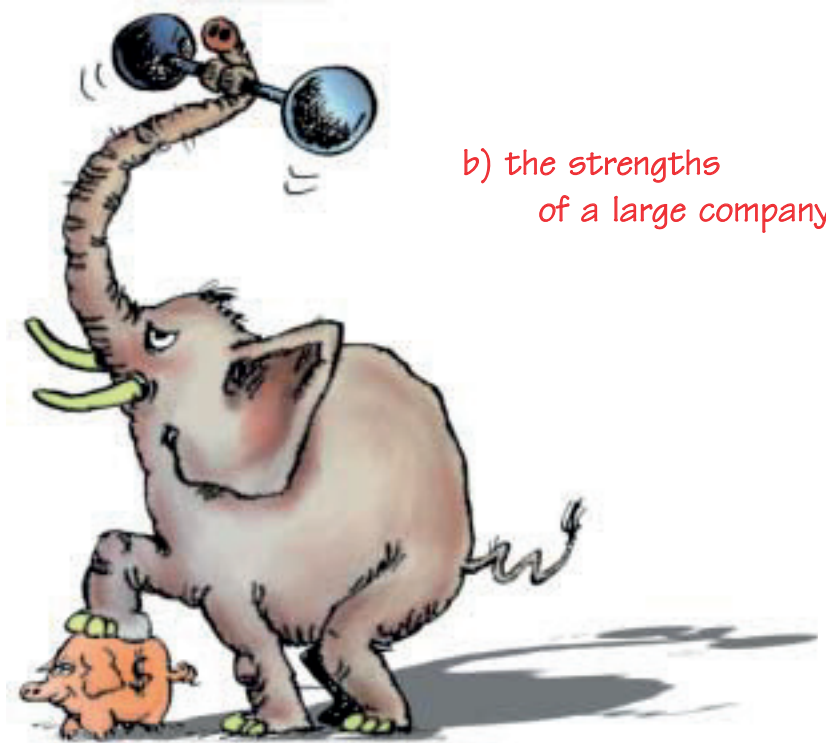
# large company

## a) the weaknesses of a large company



- slow and difficult flow of information,
- anonymous relationships,
- the need for procedures and structures,
- certain departments lack a customer-centered attitude,
- lack of clarity for top management,
- nonchalance in both commercial and operational management,
- a more politicized management,
- less cost-awareness,
- bureaucracy,
- longer lines of decision, slower decision-making,
- complacency,
- lack of motivation among executives and employees,
- expensive overhead structures.

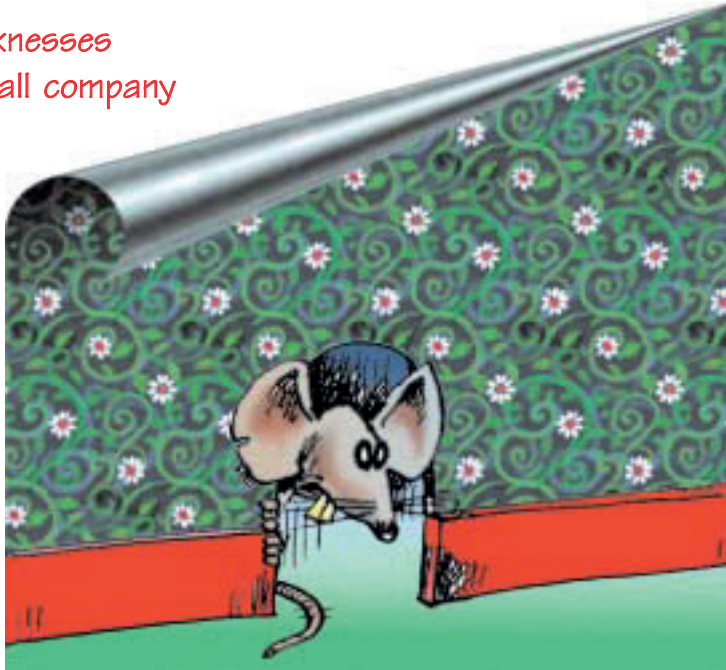
## b) the strengths of a large company



- stability,
- averaging risk,
- economies of scale,
- good image,
- full service package,
- the possibility of putting more pressure on suppliers,
- synergy,
- specialization of the staff,
- staff: motivation through prestige, opportunities for promotion, job rotation, etc.,
- greater financial strength,
- diversification,
- political power,
- elaborate systems,
- good control through financial systems.

# 5 small company

## a) the weaknesses of a small company



- smaller financial capacity,
- unknown or even no image,
- limited market and high thresholds,
- more dependent on the market,
- more dependent on the customer,
- a smaller buffer,
- need for multidisciplinary people,
- training and education are more difficult,
- success depends on the individuals.

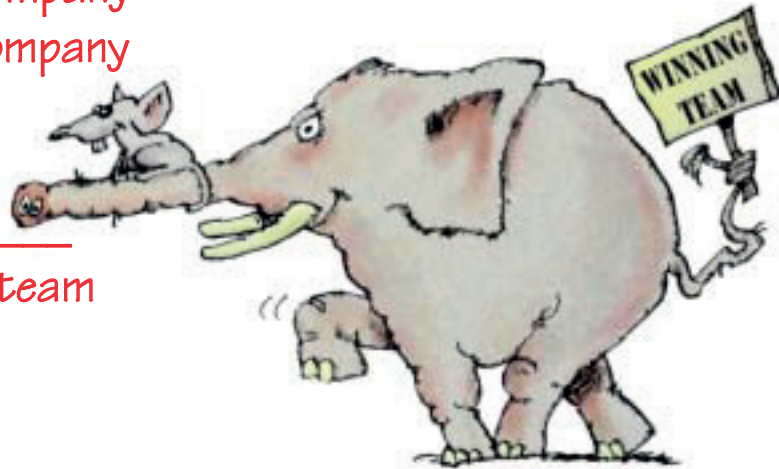
## b) the strengths of a small company



- specialization,
- flexibility and adaptability,
- dynamism,
- accessibility,
- the name covers the activity,
- simplicity of the figures,
- all-round managers,
- more empathy, which leads to greater commitment of the staff and management,
- personalized contacts with the customer,
- short lines of authority and decision,
- less overhead,
- greater satisfaction – less frustration,
- fewer systems,
- control through physical presence.

large company  
+ small company

= winning team



THE INDEPENDENT BASIC UNITS FORM THE FOUNDATION OF THE GROUP.

Why:

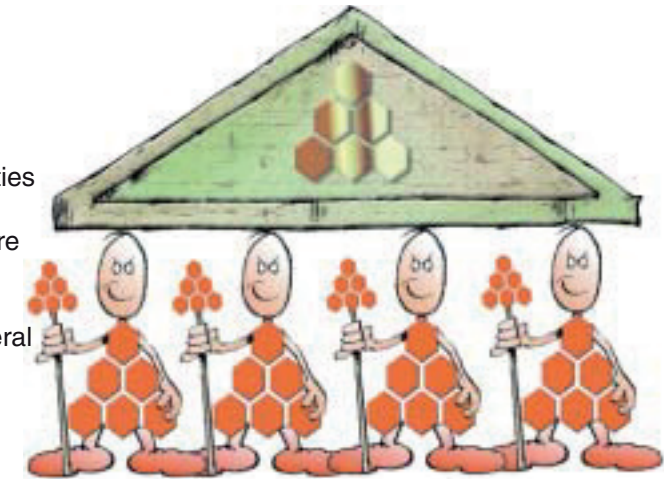


- customer and market oriented,
- high degree of specialization,
- flexibility and adaptability due to short lines of decision,
- dynamism,
- pleasant work atmosphere.

THE COMPANY UNITS ARE SUPPORTED BY THE GROUP.

Why:

- image, strength,
- averaging risk,
- stability,
- financial strength,
- commercial opportunities and prestige,
- development and future opportunities for the employees,
- interaction in the general departments.



THE GROUP SEES TO THE COHERENCE OF THE ENTIRETY,  
IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:



- corporate culture and philosophy,
- strategy and policy,
- financial follow-up and investments,
- communication and IT development.

## THE STRUCTURE OF THE GROUP

### 1. the companies



### 2. the growth areas



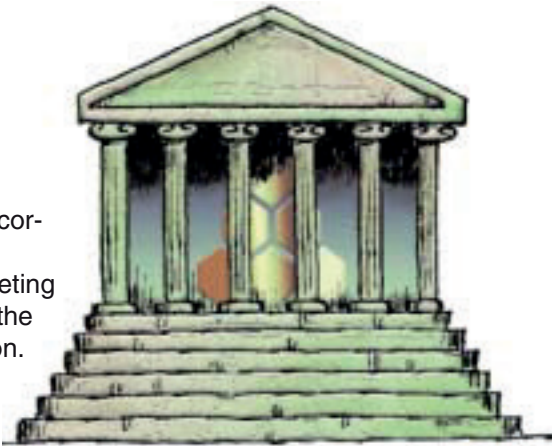
A growth area is a cell within an existing company that can develop into an independent company unit.

A growth area has:

- a product warrior,
- a product,
- a market.

### 3. the corporation

The total of all the companies. They are held together by the corporation's board of directors. The corporate board is the meeting place of the philosophers and the top managers of the corporation.



### 4. the star manager

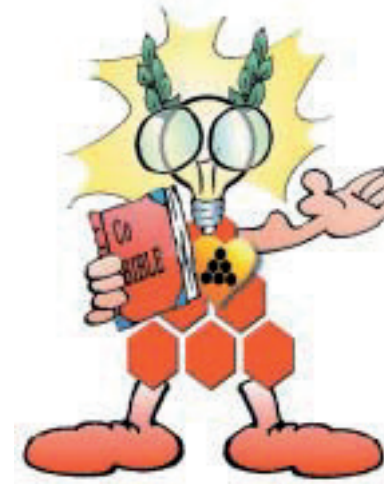
A person who is a manager with one of the companies, but who also co-ordinates the activities of a number of companies of the corporation within his area of specialization.



### 5. the philosopher

A person who is a manager with one of the companies, who, by his creativity, ideas, commitment, insight, knowledge, leadership, spirit of enterprise, and loyalty, makes a great contribution to the strength of the corporation.

*It is important to stress that the corporation does not consider it expedient to establish a central body at present.*





KATOEN NATIE

## Our people make the difference

*The most important factors in a company are the people. Although they are not expressed on the balance sheet, they are the major asset of the company.*

*The company must have an open and clear policy with respect to all its employees.*

*the foundation of our policy:*

- 1. Straightforwardness:** the company must always be straightforward with its employees, and never "fool" them. The company must respect its employees.
- 2. One of the aims of every company** should be to ensure that its employees feel good and enjoy doing their job. They have to be proud of their job.
- 3. Every person must be paid** according to his commitment and contribution, never according to seniority.
- 4. The company should aspire** to keeping everyone at work and avoiding dismissals.
- 5. Employees may be dismissed** in case of a lack of commitment and performance.
- 6. When there are vacancies,** priority must be given to internal promotion. The company should only recruit new employees when a vacancy cannot be filled internally.
- 7. Nepotism will have no place within the company.** Jobs and tasks will be assigned on the basis of capabilities, commitment, motivation, and achievement.

KATOEN NATIE



## The message for Garcia



In 1899, in Cuba, during the Spanish-American war, Garcia, a Cuban general, found himself and his troops surrounded by the enemy. Garcia was forced to withdraw deep into the jungle. Nobody knew where he had gone. There was no communication whatsoever with the outside world. But the president of the United States, McKinley, had to reach him at all cost, and urgently...

I know a man who will find Garcia. His name is Rowan.

**What to do?**  
One of the president's men knew how to get word to Garcia.



The president summoned Rowan, and handed him a letter, saying:

Give this letter to general Garcia and bring his reply back to me!

Yes, Mister President, at your service!



We will not go into the details here of how Rowan wrapped the letter in oilcloth and tied it to his chest, how he arrived on Cuban soil in total darkness after a four-day journey in a sloop, how he vanished into the jungle, on foot, and spent three weeks behind enemy lines, and how he accomplished his mission...







What is important to us, is what Rowan said when he received the letter from the president: "Yes, Mister President, at your service!" That was all!

He didn't ask stupid questions!

Yes, Mister president, at your service!

- Where is Garcia?
- How do I get to the island?
- Should I hire a boat or buy one?
- How should I go about finding a person who is hiding in the jungle and taking great care that nobody knows his whereabouts?
- How do I get behind enemy lines without being exposed?
- Where do I get the money to pay for the trip?



McKinley gave Rowan an assignment, and left the solution to all problems to him. McKinley knew very well that he could not possibly foresee the situations which Rowan would encounter.





KATOEN NATIE

# Harry, the Beggar on the Bridge over the Thames

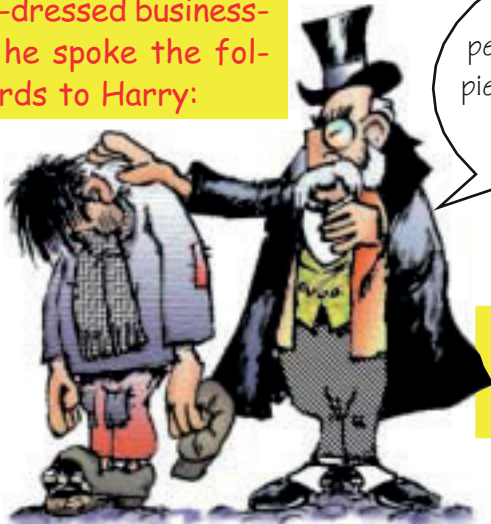


The story of Harry, the beggar on the bridge over the Thames, is a story about success.

A young unemployed man, who will be called Harry, was standing on the bridge over the Thames in London. The economic crisis was at its height. Harry had tried everything, but to no avail. He couldn't get a job anywhere, and there was only one option left to keep himself from starving to death: to go begging on the bridge over the Thames.



One day, a man tapped Harry on the shoulder. It was a well-dressed businessman, and he spoke the following words to Harry:



Young man, I won't give you a penny, but instead, I'll give a piece of good advice, which is worth gold: **Make yourself usefull!**

And without further ado, the businessman went on his way.

It is easy to imagine what Harry must have thought:

Make myself useful? Haven't I tried everything? Didn't I go knocking on the doors of all the employment offices, and hear the same answer every time? **"We don't have a job for you!"** Make myself useful... that's what I want, isn't it? If only I could! If only there was someone who needed me.



While Harry was sunk in thought and meditating on the meaning of "making oneself useful", an old woman crossed the bridge. She was pulling a cart, loaded with crates. The old woman kept having to stop to rearrange the crates, which were threatening to fall off the cart on both sides. That was when a thought flashed through Harry's mind:



Make myself useful! Wouldn't this be a good start? I realize now that all I've ever done was look for a job. I've never tried to make myself useful.

No sooner said than done. Harry walked up to the woman and started to help her pull the cart, all the while checking the two sides of the cart and rearranging the crates so that they wouldn't fall off.



After a short while, the old woman stood still and spoke to him.

Do you think she thanked Harry, moved by so much helpfulness? Sadly, quite the contrary. The old lady sent him off!

WHY?



Selfless concern for the wellbeing of others is just about the last thing people expect from their fellow beings. Sad but true!



However, Harry did not lose heart. He managed to reassure the old lady and said:

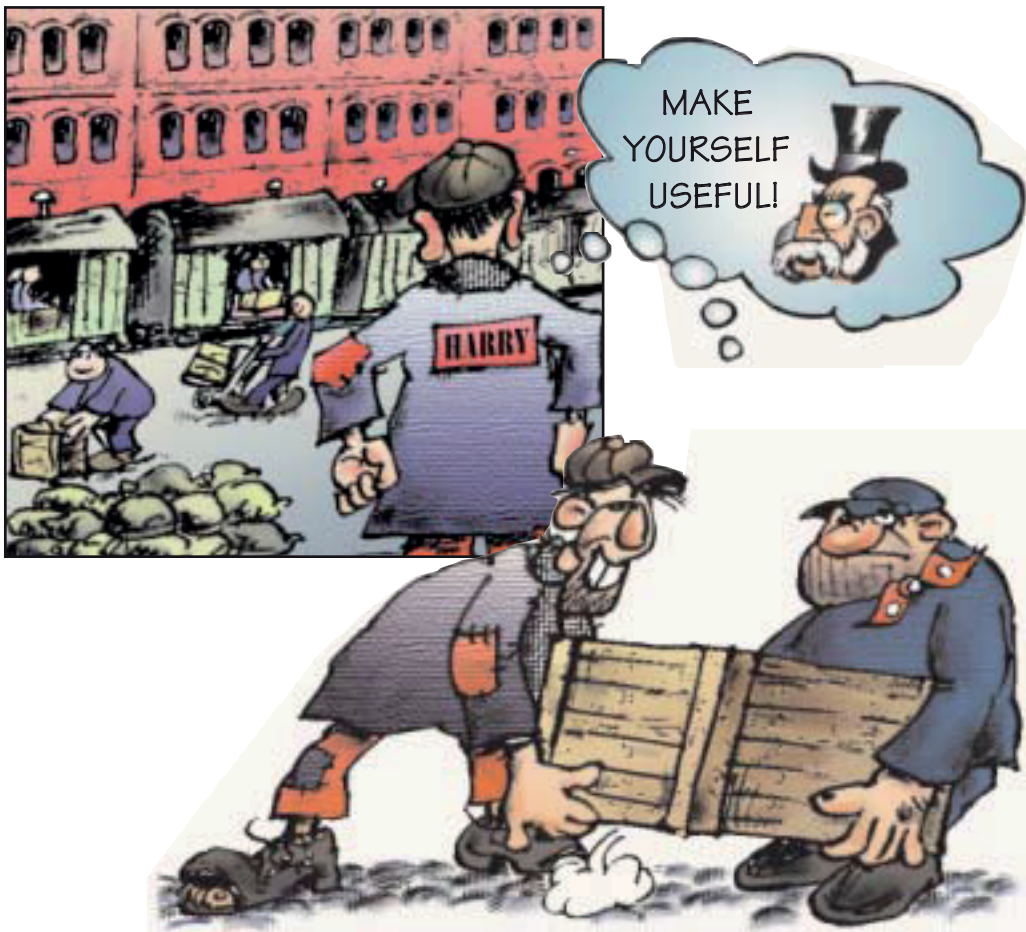
I'm not asking you for money. I happened to be heading in the same direction and I wanted to make myself useful, that's all.



Finally, he persuaded the old lady. They arrived at a warehouse, where Harry helped to unload the crates.



In the warehouse, Harry saw workers loading train wagons. When he saw one of the workers was having trouble with a heavy crate, he gave him a hand, still heeding the advice he had been given by the businessman.



After a while, a foreman walked by. He spotted the unfamiliar face among the workers, and reprimanded our young friend with the following words:



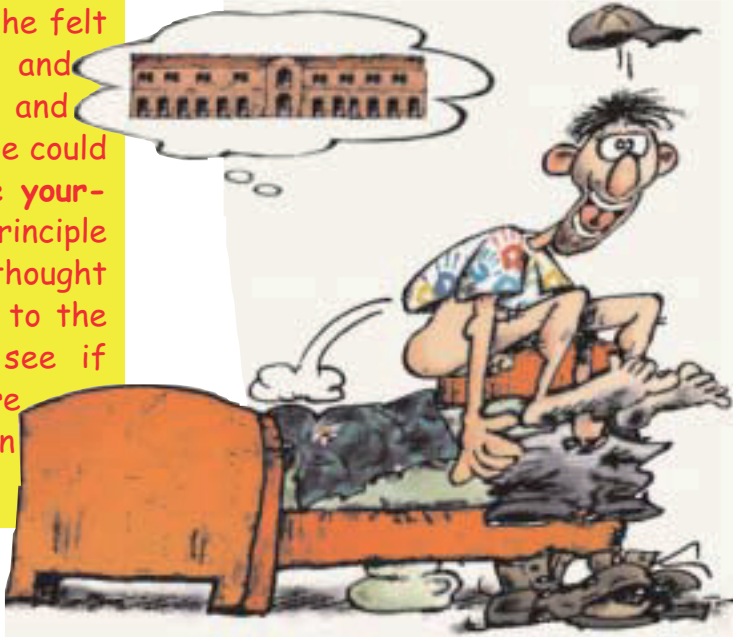
But then something made him give Harry another look and ask him:





Wrapped in thought, and a little surprised at what had happened, Harry headed for home. He had not had so much money for a long time. The principle had produced its first proof.

The next day, when Harry woke up, he felt energetic and enterprising, and wondered how he could apply the "make yourself useful" principle again. His first thought was to go back to the warehouse to see if the workers were loading train wagons again.



Sadly, when he got there, he found the place empty.



In the weeks that followed, he went by the warehouse every day, just in case. Sometimes, he was allowed to help, ...

.....even if it was only for a few hours.

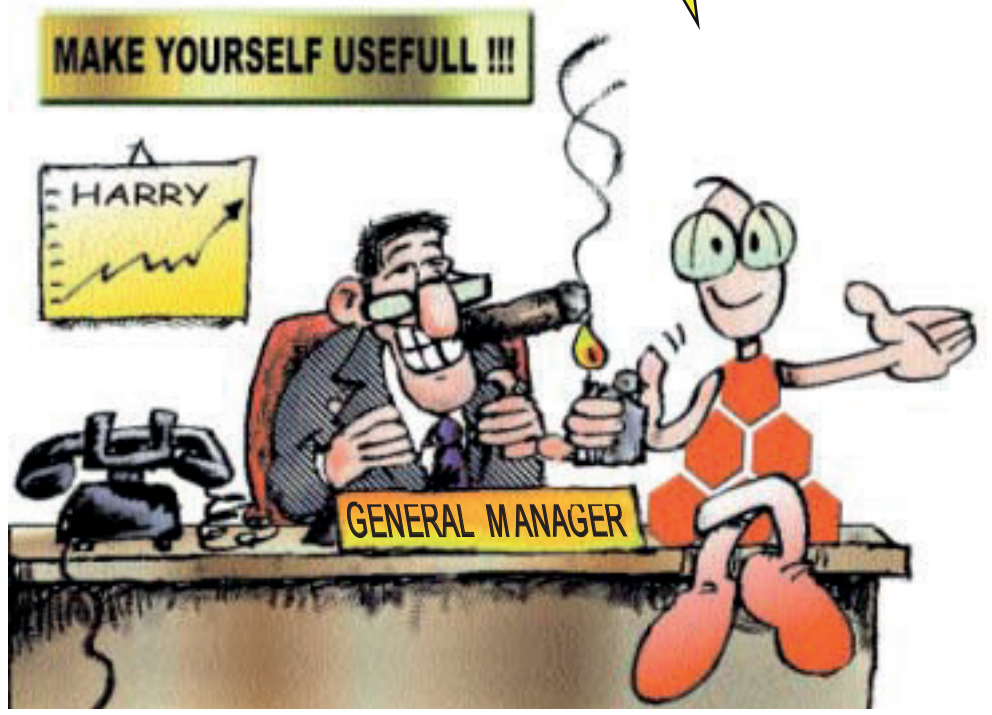


One day, the foreman came up to him and told him that one of the workers had died. Would he replace him? Harry did not have to think twice. Even now, as a worker, he still lives by the principle:

**MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL IN ALL SITUATIONS AT ALL TIMES!**



We probably don't need to tell you the rest of the story. It shouldn't be a surprise to you to hear that Harry, once a beggar on the bridge over the Thames, has made a nice career in the company to which he found his way in by wanting to make himself useful. He used the same key - making himself useful - to open the doors to his successive offices: first floor manager, then manager, and now general manager.

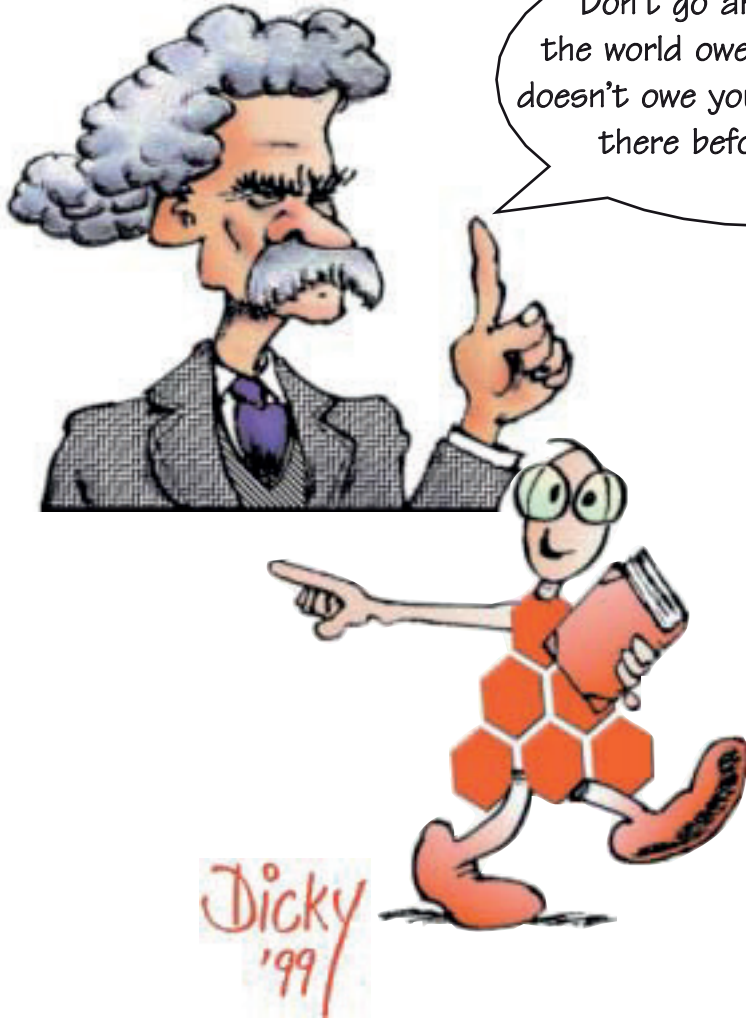


## THE MORAL OF THIS STORY ?

"Let's make ourselves useful  
before someone asks us to."

Mark Twain said :

Don't go around thinking  
the world owes you a living. It  
doesn't owe you anything: it was  
there before you were!



One thing is for sure:

**IT'S ALREADY QUITE AN ACHIEVEMENT  
TO CARRY OUT A TASK PROPERLY.**

But if we aspire to making ourselves useful to  
others, in all circumstances and at all times, we develop  
an immeasurable strength.

Don't you think there's a difference between the  
future prospects of people who make themselves  
useful and people who put their own  
interests first?



