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## Interesting Quotes

*“People often say that motivation doesn’t last. Well, neither does bathing. That’s why we recommend it daily.”*

— Zig Ziglar

## 1. Welcome Note from the Editor

Dear readers,

During hard times such as the ones we are currently living in, we tend to believe it’s impossible to survive without a loss of some degree. On the other hand, more than any other time, difficult economic phases create pressure to optimize resources and results. But then again, how can one achieve optimization of their human resources when instead of incentives to increase their morale all there is to offer is restructuring, pressure and the fact that we need to change and adapt to the new reality? Let’s leave behind the old modus operandi and change the way we approach employee engagement.

You know what the good news is? There will always be change, conflict, challenges, disagreements, discomfort and frustration in the workplace. As it turns out, humans can’t be happy and engaged without struggle and friction. So, stop trying to create a perfect workplace, because without obstacles and mistakes, we never feel a sense of accomplishment or growth. And that’s how it is on both a personal and professional level.

Instead of going after a utopia, empower your people to make them thrive. It’s better for them and for the company. Insist on personal accountability. Allow employees to see themselves as architects of their own circumstances, not victims. Challenge them to take on more responsibility, and hold them accountable for the results. By replacing a sense of entitlement with a sense of empowerment, you make them bulletproof – capable of handling anything that comes along.

However, this recipe will never work if you miss the core ingredient; your people need to know you care about their growth and development and that you are not taking advantage of the current situation to benefit!

*Yota Tsiokri*

*Coordinator of the Publications and Communication Committee*

## 2. Bright Idea

### **Leadership is a Conversation**

#### ***How to improve employee engagement and alignment in today’s flatter, more networked organizations***

Smart leaders today, engage with employees in a way that resembles an ordinary person-to-person conversation more than it does a series of commands from on high. Furthermore, they initiate practices and foster cultural norms that instill a conversational sensibility throughout their organisations. Operational flexibility, high levels of employee engagement, strong strategic alignment are thus achieved. A model of leadership called Organisational Conversation has been formed and carries the following elements and significance:

**Intimacy** – How leaders relate to employees: Leaders emphasize listening to employees rather than just speaking to them. Employees engage in a bottom-up exchange of ideas.

**Interactivity** – How leaders use communication channels: Leaders use social media to facilitate two-way communication. Employees interact with colleagues through blogs and discussion forums.

**Inclusion** – How leaders develop organisational content: Leaders involve employees in telling the company story. Employees act as brand ambassadors and thought-leaders.

**Intentionality** – How leaders convey strategy: Leaders build their messaging around company strategy. Employees take part in creating strategy via specially designed communication vehicles, in a cross-organisational conversation.

*Bright Idea Adapted from «Leadership is a Conversation»  
by Boris Groysberg and Michael Slind, Harvard Business Review (June 2012)*

### 3. HR in Black & White

#### €340 million Government injection to boost the economy

During a Press Conference on 11/12/13 the President of the Cyprus Republic, Mr Anastassiades and the Labour Minister, Mrs. Zeta Emilianidou declared 10 measures worth €340 million, starting as soon as January 2014 and hoping to bring 7,500 unemployed in the labour market so that 2,000 families and a significant number of businesses can benefit. The measures are based around the 4 pillars of Small-Medium Enterprises, the unemployed youth, the hospitality industry and social cohesion and aim to reinforce employment and combat social exclusion through “helicopter money” whereby EU and Cyprus Government funds (with the cost split between the two) will be injected to these sectors to restart the economy in the short-term as no doubt time is required for a full recovery, as the President clarified.

More specifically the following measures were announced:

- SMEs. Establishment of an Enterprising Fund with capital worth €150 million coming from the European Investment Bank and another €150 million coming from national resources. The Fund will provide banks with financing in order for them to allot loans to SMEs at competitive rates.
- Subsidy scheme for employment in retail businesses employing 1-4 people. The companies will receive a 70% subsidy of the payroll cost of an existing employee for 10 months of employment with a commitment from the employer of continuing the employment for a further 2 months without subsidization. The scheme budget is €7 million and hopes to assist 1,000 businesses.
- Subsidy scheme for provision of training combined with employment in retail businesses employing 1-49 people. This aims to benefit 1,000 unemployed in receipt of the unemployment benefit who are placed in businesses for a period of 1 month for practice while continuing to receive the benefit. The businesses will receive a 50% subsidy of the person’s salary for a period of 6 months with the commitment of additional employment of 2 months. The Scheme will cost €3 million.
- Curbing of youth unemployment. There are two schemes aiming to provide work experience and labour market induction to 5,000 young unemployed. The first one is a repetition of the introduction of young degree holders in businesses, whereby their practical experience will be for 6 months and 2,500 young graduates up to the age of 35 are expected to benefit from a benefit of €500 and payment of their social insurance contributions. €8.5 million will be paid through this Scheme. The second one involves the placement of young unemployed graduates of Secondary Education mainly for gaining work experience, based on the same terms and conditions as the first scheme and it also targets to assist 2,500 youngsters through an additional injection of €8.5 million.
- Provision of care to low income pensioners. Unemployed people will be trained in order to provide care to about 1,000 elderly pensioners in their own homes. This scheme will cost €1.8 million.
- Subsidization of Childcare Services. The Scheme addresses long term unemployed and low income employees. The support will either take the form of subsidy of the kindergarten costs or in the provision of care by enlisted unemployed who will be trained in child care. It will cost €4 million and hopes to assist 1,000 families.
- Emergency Training Scheme to full-time or part-time hotel industry employees during the winter months. The Scheme aims to improve staff professional skills and upgrading the tourist product while maintaining the operation of more tourist units during the winter. The employer will provide them with a benefit equivalent to their salary. For every participating unit the government will pay for every employee an amount equivalent to the unemployment benefit.
- Professional training and development programme for newly hired unemployed in hotels. Unemployed of over 12 consecutive months who have not worked in the industry and the entire tourist unit will be allowed to participate and the training will last for 2 months. The unemployed will receive a monthly benefit of €500 and compensation will be given to the businesses for the cost of organizing and implementing the programmes, including the cost of trainers. The Scheme budget amounts to €2 million and it aims at achieving the employment of 1,500 unemployed.
- Subsidy for 180 social businesses. The government wants to help business who provide social protection, social services, health services, education, agricultural production and home crafts to vulnerable population groups at very low cost by investing €6 million with maximum amount €30,000 for their first year of operation.

## **The shrinking of the Cypriot economy is being decelerated**

During the third quarter of 2013, the shrinking of the Cypriot economy seems to be moving slower compared to the second quarter of the year. The data published by the Cyprus Statistical Service fail to meet the Troika's estimations. At the same time, the liquidation support of the banking system that includes the Central and European Central Bank was stable at the 11.5 billion Euros during the month of October.

The Cypriot economy is moving towards a more hopeful future compared to the Troika judgment during the third quarter of 2013. According to new data of the Statistical Service, the economy dwindled during the third quarter of the year by 5.7% in an annual basis, against the shrinking of 5.8% which occurred in the second quarter of 2013, while foreign lenders expect, for the 2013 recession by 7.7% against 8.7%, that was the previous assessment according to the approved memorandum.

On quarter base, the economy dropped by 0.8% versus 1.8% from the previous year compared with the second quarter of 2013. At the same time, according to data published by Eurostat, the economy of the Eurozone shrank by 0.4% compared to the third quarter of 2012, while the European commission increased by 0.1%.

Based on the restructuring plan that was approved by the Bank of Cyprus management, the emergency liquidity is expected to be reduced and reach two billion by 2017.

Source: <http://www.antliwo.com/oikonomia/2013/11/14/epinradynsh-ths-yfeshs-sthn-kypro-to-g-t/>

<http://www.mof.gov.cy/mof/cystat/statistics.nsf/All/6351B14AE13B6E02C2257BB400451317?OpenDocument&sub=1&sel=1&e=&print>

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## **Enforcement of additional increase in the Social Insurance Fund contribution percentage by 1% in addition to the increase foreseen on 1.1.2014.**

Due to the Cyprus government's application to the European Support Mechanism with the aim of dealing with the risks the Cyprus is faced with, it was deemed necessary for a number of amendments to be made to the 2010 Social Insurance Law. One of these amendments states that as of 1st of January 2014 an additional 1% increase will be contributed to the Social Insurance fund in addition to the 1% increase that is already foreseen by the existing law on 1.1.2014. More specifically, employers and employees will both pay increased contributions of 1% each as of 1.1.2014, while the self-employed employees and the optionally insured will pay an additional 2%.

Source: [http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/mlsi.nsf/index\\_gr/index\\_gr?OpenDocument](http://www.mlsi.gov.cy/mlsi/mlsi.nsf/index_gr/index_gr?OpenDocument)

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## **Young Entrepreneurship – SUPPORT MEASURES | Cyprus**

The aim of the programme is to develop, support and encourage the entrepreneurship of young people between the ages of 20 - 39, who wish to engage in the sectors of manufacturing and/or in specific activities in commerce, services and tourism. Among the aims of this programme, is also the creation of new modern viable enterprises, the development of innovative projects, new technologies and new products, as well as the support of services that enhance quality and promote the development of tourism. The scheme concerns men and women who had not had any previous business activity in any sector, for a period of 12 months before the date of submission of their proposal. Eligible candidates may participate in only one proposal and their participation must equal a percentage of 75%, at least, of the total share / corporate capital.

Successful candidates must register a limited company, whilst all shareholders must be employees of the company. The employees of the new enterprise must attend a special training and development programme organised and subsidised by the Human Resource Development Authority of Cyprus on issues such as entrepreneurship, operational programming, economic planning, firms' law and marketing. The percentage of the government grant is 50% of the approved budget, while funding must comply with the De minimis rule. The programme is applied on a yearly basis and proposals must be submitted within a specified period of time at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism.

The rationale of this measure is to promote entrepreneurship in special social groups such as young men and women as a means to eliminate unemployment.

More information about the plan available at:

<http://erawatch.jrc.ec.europa.eu/erawatch/opencms/system/modules/com.everis.erawatch.template/pages/exportTypesToHtml.jsp?contentid=aae24543-9094-11e0-a33b-3b1a37daf5b5&country=Cyprus&option=PDF>

[http://erawatch.jrc.ec.europa.eu/erawatch/opencms/information/country\\_pages/cy/supportmeasure/support\\_mig\\_0013](http://erawatch.jrc.ec.europa.eu/erawatch/opencms/information/country_pages/cy/supportmeasure/support_mig_0013)

## 4. HR on Screen



### **We Bought a Zoo (2011)**

Released in Theatres: **December 23, 2011**

Genre: **Drama**

Director: **Cameron Crowe**

Distributor: **Twentieth Century Fox (USA/UK)**

### **Summary**

The story picks up after the wife of Benjamin Mee (Matt Damon) dies. He is struggling with a teenage son facing expulsion from school, and is desperate to rescue his family by instilling a sense of courage and adventure in his children. Benjamin decides his family needs a fresh start, so he and his two children move to the most unlikely of places: a zoo. The zoo is in need of renovation and Benjamin sets about the work with the head keeper, Kelly (Scarlett Johansson), and the rest of the zoo staff. With the help of the staff, and with many misadventures along the way, the family works to return the dilapidated zoo to its former wonder and glory. It is important to note that the movie is inspired by real events.

### **Key Themes**

“We Bought a Zoo” is a heartfelt and inspiring film about how a man, with no experience with animals or with running a business, buys a failed zoo. What he has is a vision, a mental image of what could be. He is convinced that the place, being outdoors in nature, and working with animals will be good medicine for his children. The family deal with each other’s pain through conflict followed by teamwork and the eventual embrace of their new adventure.

Benjamin is an inspirational figure, who unites, inspires and motivates others. The zoo staff is at first sceptical about his plans but then is lifted by his high energy and enthusiasm for re-opening the zoo. When the energy of the staff is deflated due to the fact that Benjamin is running out of money, he announces that the money had come through, and promises that he would work himself to the bone if they stuck with him. “We’re with you” is the response of the staff. Watching the movie, most of us can think of visionary leaders who gain respect and trust and increase a sense of optimism and hope in followers.

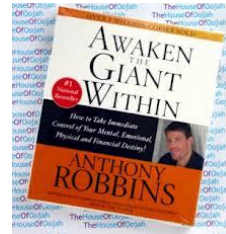
The value of teamwork is highlighted. Benjamin commits to the vision despite the challenges they face: an overcritical inspector, a depleted bank account, a diminishing morale, a disengaged teenager and a hard decision of what to do with the old tiger. This vision helps him to integrate and align others’ efforts. Family and staff members work diligently to rebuild this rundown zoo so that the animals will be saved and the public can once again enjoy the beautiful grounds that house so many animals. If they try hard enough, they can even beat the tough inspector who wants their zoo to fail; they all have the same enemy. The team celebrates small successes, something that contributes toward improving morale and increasing productivity.

### **Inspiration from the movie**

*“You know, sometimes all you need is twenty seconds of insane courage. Just literally twenty seconds of just embarrassing bravery. And I promise you, something great will come of it.”* (Benjamin Mee)

*Contributed by Elena Hanna*

## 5. Book Review



### **“AWAKEN THE GIANT WITHIN”**

By: **Anthony Robbins**

ISBN: **0743409388**

Lately, we all hear the word “Crisis” several times almost every day. Even if we don’t actually hear it we can see the impact that it has on our daily lives. So in my search to find a way out of this crisis, I stumbled upon the book “Awaken the Giant Within” by Anthony Robbins. I believe that it is one of the best and most comprehensive books on personal development and a must-read for everyone who is having financial or any kind of problems. The message that Tony wants to pass around is that: we all possess the power and control to shape our lives so that we can think, feel and do whatever we want to do. The book illustrates that everything begins within our own minds so if we can control our minds we can control our lives as well. It is well written and easy to read and as a reader you have the feeling that the author speaks to you directly. He does a good job detailing the steps and the techniques that you have to use so that you can create and implement a success plan.

A few tips from the book are the following:

- Decision making is a skill that improves with practice. Good practice to develop that skill is to start making decisions and follow them through.
- Behaviors are based on our beliefs and value systems so changing our beliefs can change our behaviors and by extension the results of our actions.
- Changing the questions that we place ourselves and to others change the responses that we get from our minds and from others. So start asking positive questions in order to get positive answers.

So grab that book from your nearest library or bookstore and make a life shift to realize your dreams. It will provide a mental place to visit when doubts cloud your mind and worries conquer you. You will not only feel good but it will show you that there is light at the end of the tunnel and everything will be ok at the end, as always. I strongly recommend this book as it shifted my life and I can finally say that I am living my dream. But be mindful that simply reading the book is not enough. You must study and most of all apply all those wonderful skills that you will learn by reading it in order to fulfill your dream, whatever that may be.

Personally, I can’t say that I apply everything that I learned from reading it but I made a promise to myself to make the most of it so I applied many of the skills that have helped me to redirect my mind for success.

*Contributed by Adonis Anastasiou*

## 6. Makes you think!



## 7. HR Forthcoming Events

### CYPRUS:

**16 January 2014**

#### **Rightsizing the Business in Times of Crisis**

Time: 09:00 – 12:00

Venue: Limassol, exact place will be confirmed

Instructors: Panayiotis Thrasyvoulou and Natasa Iacovides

Participation Fee: €25 for member, €50 for non – members

Programme Description: The workshop focuses on: 1) Downsizing Vs Rightsizing, 2) Encouraging transparency and fairness, 3) Handling the legal implications, 4) Handling Unions, 5) The design of a strategic communication plan aiming at the management of change and managing those resisting to change, 6) How to handle the remaining staff (the “survivor syndrome”), 7) Balancing the need to cut costs with operational effectiveness

**January 2014**

#### **Presentation Skills Workshop**

Date: will be confirmed

Time: 16:30 - 18:00

Venue: Nicosia, University of Cyprus

Instructor: Pamos Stylianou

Participation Fee: Free Entrance – Open to all students

Programme Description: the course is addressed to students and aims at teaching the essentials of preparing, designing and delivering presentations

**23 January 2014**

#### **CyHRMA’s Annual Party**

### INTERNATIONAL:

**17<sup>th</sup> January 2014**

EAPM Executive Committee Meeting, Lisbon, Portugal

**10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

43<sup>rd</sup> IFTDO World Conference and Exhibition, Dubai, UAE

**15<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> October 2014**

15<sup>th</sup> WFPMA World Human Resource Management Congress, Santiago, Chile

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