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Hi everyone

Welcome to the first newsletter for 2012!

I'm looking forward to the year ahead with new products and programs in the pipeline. So stay tuned ...

The Chinese New Year has begun and the celebrations for the Year of the Dragon are underway.

If you're in Sydney and you're planning to go to the Dragon Boat racing at Darling Harbour this weekend then come by the [Mavericks](#) tent and say *hi*. I'll be there for my favourite regatta of the dragon boating season.



This month's article - [Three Essential Qualities of High-Performing Teams](#) - provides some simple strategies to ensure that your team performs at its best.

As always I welcome your feedback and suggestions.

Until next time
Maria



PS: A warm welcome to my new subscribers!

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About Infinite Growth

[Infinite Growth](#) delivers [workshops](#) and [coaching sessions](#) for individuals and teams in:

- [Presentation skills](#)
- [Business writing](#)
- Communicating effectively with [clients](#) and [colleagues](#)

Infinite Growth also offers [Communication Packages](#) and a [Self-Study Business Writing Program](#).

[Contact Maria](#) to book a complimentary session to discuss your business communication needs.

Three Essential Qualities of High-Performing Teams

There are many parallels in life. Our experiences in one area of our life can often assist other areas.

Being part of a sports team brings experiences and lessons that can be readily applied to the business world.

Here are three essential qualities that have been highlighted to me through my involvement with dragon boat racing.

Does your team demonstrate these three qualities?

1. Stay focused

Our coaches often say to us to focus to the front of the boat rather than in the boat. By focusing our energy in the direction that we want to head in we're able to work together as a team. If we lose our focus and look elsewhere then the power in the boat is diminished.

Remaining focused ensures that the team makes it to the finish line in the shortest possible time - something that's definitely desired in a race against other teams.

How does this work in a business environment?

In a business environment it's important to be clear as to the goals that need to be achieved and focus as a team to achieve those goals. If the team loses focus then there's less chance of meeting targets and making it to the 'finish line'.

High performing teams are clear as to their goals and remain focused to achieve those goals.

2. Have a positive, 'can do' mindset

Having a positive, 'can do' mindset can be the difference between achieving your goals and losing direction.

It's easy to doubt ourselves. We're often our own worst enemies and self-criticism can have an effect on what we believe we can achieve. If we believe we can, we usually can. If we believe we can't, then that's true too.

In a boat race, the adrenalin is pumping through the body and the physical side of making it to the finish line in the least possible time is exhausting. Breaking through the mental barriers and pain associated with the race can be the difference between succeeding and giving up.

Each person in the boat has a [specific role](#). The coaches have placed each person in their seat according to what they believe that person can contribute to the team in the race. It's important that each person also believes that they can fulfil their role.

How a mindset can affect a work team

In a work team each member has a specific role in order for that team to perform at its best. No matter what the project is that you're undertaking as a team, you need to believe that you can achieve the requirements of your role.

If you feel that you don't have the necessary skills then find ways of learning those skills - ask for assistance, coaching, mentoring or undertake a program in a specific area to improve your skill set - so that you can meet your team's goals.

The end result is that you'll achieve those goals as well as increase your own confidence by stepping up to the challenge that was placed before you.

To quote Emily Guay: 'Believe in yourself and you will be unstoppable.'

Imagine being part of an unstoppable team!

3. Encourage and support each other

Before we begin a race we pat each other on the back to wish each other the best for a great race.

At the end of the race, as we're gasping for air after giving our all, we congratulate each other on our efforts (no matter where we've come in the race) as well as acknowledge the other teams, It's all part of good sportsmanship.

Good sportsmanship in the workplace

In a work environment it's important to have open communication so that each member of the team feels supported. If a task seems too difficult, a simple word of encouragement can often be the difference between feeling disheartened or giving up on finding a solution to a problem.

Working together with encouragement and support makes for a pleasant work environment which in turn ensures that team goals are met. If people enjoy being in their work environment then they're more likely to step up to any challenges given to them.

What do you notice about people who enjoy where they work? They have a positive attitude to their work. Absenteeism is low and morale is high.

In turn, a high-performing team provides exceptional service to their clients. Satisfied clients and team members who enjoy their work ensure that the company's goals are met.

Encouraging and supporting each other has long term benefits for your team.

How does your team measure up to these three qualities?

[Share your views by leaving a comment.](#)

Does your team perform at its best?

[Effective communication](#) is an essential component in achieving both team and business goals. Infinite Growth assists teams and leaders to identify their strengths and deal with their challenges.

[Contact Maria](#) or reply to this email to discuss how Infinite Growth can assist your team.

If you know someone who could benefit from this newsletter feel free to forward it to them.

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