



THOUGHTS OF THE ALCHEMIST

You are NOT paid To be happy

"You are paid money to do a job and if you do it well, you will get extra rewards. If you do not, then you will be out the door." This is Big Brother speaking or just someone from HR (only joking or am I.....).

In the world of Presales and Bidding, we want everyone to be having fun. We want the to love being in the game of sales. Enthusiastic about winning the deal. Eager to help their friends. Proud to produce wild and wacky ideas that usually are wild and wacky, but sometimes will make the difference.

"Chief Alchemist to the HR floor, NOW!" Not my first trip, I find the use of words such as "I love this bid", to be outside of New—Speak. *"Welcome to the presales office, please leave your heart in the locker by the door."*

Bids are about having fun; they are hard, and we want our team to take it personally. We need their full commitment. We want their brains sparking on all 16 cylinders. That is the difference between winning and losing.

If we do not make it fun, then it is painful. If we do not enjoy it, then our minds wander to happier thoughts. I really do not care about how the rest of the company need to behave in the office, I want my bid rooms to be playrooms. We are playing the game that matters to the company.

If people work better when they listen to music, put the headphones on and rock out. If the brain is on a strike, go to the soft seating area and play a game. If writing is hard, go read a book. If the office is closing in on you, go for a walk.

We are not paying our teams for their hours; we are not even paying them for their job description. We pay them to have the great ideas that make us win.

I once asked my boss, *"What would you prefer, me to work 365 days a year, doing what I am meant to, or me coming in one day a year and winning a deal that doubles the size of the company?"* Silly question, I know, but serious intent. A quiet Bid Office is a graveyard, and no one wins a deal when they are zombies.

Our brains work best when we are enjoying ourselves, we perform best when we feel that we are valued and a part of the team. This is what we want from our bid teams, it just takes a bit of bravery to break the rules of the old school to make it happen.

Bid Managers, get up from your desk, park your problems, and walk round the room (or video call your team members), do not talk about their tasks, read their body language. Ask them, if they are OK, they are not like themselves today. Find out their personal problems and make sure they have the time to solve these. They are no good to you trying to write the proposal section when their mind is only thinking about the loved one who is sick.

If the moon in the office is tense, then break it. Find your way. I put on my music, on the speakers and start dancing to Ring of Fire. Trust me, no one is tense after that. They are in hysterics.

I am fine with this; I do not mind the team thinking me mad; I do not care. *I say laugh with me or laugh at me, I do not care if you are laughing!*