

The use and misuse of emotion. Section 5: the inspiration business.

5.6c.

# The moody leader

My friend and former business partner Alan Clayton is bipolar, so for most of his life he's had to cope with dramatic mood swings, from manic euphoria to deep depression. Mostly, he manages pretty well and our business prospers in the process, because as his mood moves his creativity rises from merely exceptional to frequent brilliance. Creative people know well the necessity of managing their moods so employ a variety of means, legal and otherwise, to cultivate the right mental temperament or disposition that for them generates the most exceptional creativity. As well as being one of the most creative, effective individuals I've ever worked with, Alan is leader of several successful businesses and an internationally recognised inspirational speaker and storyteller.

Rather obviously, one person's mood can affect another's, very significantly. No doubt, an individual can alter the mood of an entire team, audience, or conference. At a football match, if one person starts singing, soon other voices will join in till they become a throng. Like or loathe her, Margaret Thatcher's mood could transform everyone in her political party. Freddie Mercury, Bruce Springsteen and others could change the mood of a packed stadium just with a shouted phrase or by strumming a few chords. When she refused to give up her seat on that bus in Montgomery, Alabama in 1955, Rosa Parks changed the mood of a whole people. Political leaders work hard to excel at such things. Gandhi, Lincoln, Churchill and Hitler, when they spoke, could change the mood of an entire nation.

Churchill and Hitler are interesting as nowadays they'd both be identified as bipolar or, as it was previously called, manic depressive. Only Hitler, however, was diagnosed. Churchill may or may not have diagnosed himself as depressive but he certainly self-medicated by drinking large amounts of alcohol on a daily basis.

Hitler it seems was a massive hypochondriac. His personal physician, Dr Morell, considered his leader to be afflicted with so many medical ailments that he prescribed immense doses of drugs for daily consumption, including a range of amphetamines so vast they must have left the Fuehrer on a permanent high. Cocaine, caffeine, morphine, strychnine and many other potent drugs formed part of his daily diet. Which may explain Hitler's frequent outbursts of rage and the extreme mania he evinced in his public presentations.

Churchill, by contrast, always sounded determined but calm to the point of gloomy, promising us nothing but blood, toil, tears and sweat plus long months of struggle and suffering.

It's interesting to think what might have happened if either or both had managed their moods differently.

A highly creative brilliant communicator excels at times of change. When everything's steady and settled, an efficient but stable manager or administrator will be better for the job, whatever it is.

Emotions, moods and feelings clearly affect and govern our lives, day in and day out. And there's still much to learn in this vastly complex field. For this book I'll restrict my focus to how emotional storytelling helps us get our messages through, and makes them stick.

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