

# VERNON CRESSWELL

## *Natural Teamwork Lessons from Nature*

### From Bushveld to Boardroom

#### TALK MORE THIS YEAR!

Many people are saying that 2009 is going to be a tough year.... That may be true - but I do believe it will be a year where average teams get shown up by great teams. Effective communication during difficult times can make a huge difference to the performance of your team. Great teams have team mates who constantly talk to each other. I'm a firm believer that good communication increases commitment and connects people, and this in turn fuels action...

There is no doubt that humans rose to the top of the food chain partly because of their ability to communicate better than other animals. We use words that have a variety of meanings, which can be rearranged to produce an almost infinite number of utterances, which in turn are open to interpretation. We can sit down, talk and strategise - something that may be critical to face some of the challenges we face this year. But I think we have become placid communicators. We take for granted the fact that we are supposedly expert communicators, and the result is that we often communicate less effectively than we should.



*A territorial male lion making it well understood that he is in the area and intends sticking around for a while!*



*Animals are capable of making a large variety of sounds that are not produced by the vocal cords. Many crickets, locusts and beetles communicate by rubbing the serrated edge of their hind legs against the raised or hardened spots on their bodies.*

Whether you are presenting your business strategy for the next year to a large audience, or simply having a one-on-one meeting with a colleague to agree upon a revised marketing or product-pricing initiative, it is critical that you articulate yourself well. This is especially true for what I believe will be a difficult year ahead. Clear and unambiguous vocal communication is a very effective tool for animals - why not for us?

If you really want people to perform at the highest level, then get them talking. I believe that communication is probably the most important trait of a great leader, and it undoubtedly fosters better team development.

All the best for 2009 and may we talk more...

**BOOK VERNON CRESSWELL TODAY!**

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EXCITING BOOK

### NATURAL TEAMWORK

ATTAIN BUSINESS SUCCESS

using lessons from nature



Vernon is the author of a truly remarkable book entitled "Natural Teamwork" which contains many wonderful examples of teamwork in nature - supported with beautiful colour pictures to illustrate each example. The book is an ideal corporate gift or handout at his talk or workshop

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Sound communication in the animal kingdom tends to be clear and unambiguous. Sound signals can be changed quickly and are often turned on and off abruptly - as such they can transmit a great deal of valuable information. The vast majority of sound communication in the animal world is through vocal calls. These calls identify danger, attract mates, maintain contact and determine location. Spotted hyenas are reputed to use 15 different calls to communicate with each other. Frogs are wonderful vocal communicators and a lion's call can be heard up to 10 kilometres away.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Sexing hyenas is usually very difficult - this is because the female's genitals look very similar to that of the male! The females are larger than the males and tend to be more aggressive - in fact various studies have revealed that female foetuses are exposed to high levels of testosterone - the hormone that provides masculine development. So while it often looks like a female's genitalia replicates that of the male, it is not actually the case.



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