

BUSINESS EYE

Encourage your team to hit goals

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We are feeling a bit flush following the weekend's 6-1 victory in the World Cup against those mighty Titans of world football, Panama, after earlier scraping a victory against the undoubtable giants of Tunisia.

Harry Kane is the new Messiah and Gareth Southgate taught him everything he knows. So, I guess that makes Mr Southgate God for a week.

Not a bad rise from the depths of his missed penalty in the Euro 96 semi final against Germany. It's amazing

how even the slightest success is all we need to switch over to living in hope, to completely overlook our past failures and to ignore the problems in our midst in favour of dreaming of what might just be this time around.

Donald Trump may be plunging the world into chaos, destabilising the Western Alliance, and launching simultaneous trade wars with China, Europe, Mexico and Canada but at least he had a nice cup of tea with a tyrannical despot, so the sun is out. We are all energised by hope.

Listening to the football pundits on the Beeb, the talk is all "maintaining momentum". There are lessons here for those of us who run businesses. First and foremost, what makes our teams feel good is not so much how well or badly things are going in general but which of the many options are focussed upon. Focus on what's wrong and the disaster it could spell, and your team will pass the ball

around safely with the keeper in fear and lose to Brazil. Focus on running at the opposition with the ball despite your defensive weaknesses and you inspire hope and reserves of energy you never knew were there that will see you frighten the Germans.

There is always something wrong and there are always pockets of great performance and progress, so the trick is to encourage more of what's going right, yet how often do you say to your team 'keep it up, let's do more of that'. It's far too easy to go first to what is wrong.

When you visit a successful business you always find they are improving all aspects of every process all the time, they are not driven by fear but by the potential a better solution offers.

"Great work, let's do more of that" are useful words of encouragement in your business tool box that should be taken out and used at least once a day.



Businesses can learn lessons from the world of football