The Zen Series
We boil at different degrees
Ralph Waldo Emerson
The business environment is more competitive than ever before. As a result, the demands on teams are more challenging. While pressure promotes performance, it can also lead to an imbalance between what people think they can do and what their managers expect them to do. When this happens, people suffer from stress, which can negatively impact both their performance and their health.
Assertiveness is different from aggression. It is saying what you think and what you want without violating the rights of the people around you. Although assertiveness is essential in business, many people find it difficult to be assertive.

Confidence
Conflict is an inherent part of the communication process and is often unavoidable. But who says conflict should always lead to the failure of relationships? In fact, conflict may be the source of significant advances in many projects or situations that without conflict would have remained static or unproductive.

When conflict is viewed from this productive perspective, communication can flourish when conflict is managed in harmony, taking into account all perspectives, including the emotional ups and downs. Managing conflict means ensuring that common goals are whilst maintaining respect for all parties involved.
We all know that the Dark Art of Delegation is an essential management skill, but what is it, really? Delegation is often so mis-understood that when work is “delegated” it is in fact “dumped”. Delegation is not simply the process of passing work from one person to another. Nor even is it simply a managerial function of distributing work to a team (that is Workflow Management). It is a process that moves from discussion, planning and agreement, to execution support and delivery, through to follow-up and assessment. And the whole process is carried out within a framework of motivational, sustainable and consensual interaction.
Almost everyone complains about having too much work at some time. Then someone says “C’est la crise,” and we all get on with it. But not everyone believes they have too much work. Some people have what seems to be an almost magical ability to deal with whatever is thrown at them. These people are not all little Harry Potters, they are simply good at organising, planning and managing their time.

The key is to distinguish between what is important and what is not, so that the focus can be on those things which are most likely to produce the best and most appropriate results. Time management and planning includes organisation and the use of efficient working styles.
Effectiveness and efficiency are not the same thing. Management Guru Peter Drucker said notably, “There is nothing so useless as doing efficiently that which should not be done at all.” And he’s right. Doing your job well is more than just doing it right. True effectiveness and efficiency comes from having complete control over your self-organisation, proper prior planning and objective setting, having mastery of all the tools at your disposal, and making sure that what you want to happen does happen.