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## Muldoon's Rules: There's No Failure, Only Feedback



**My first job was as Francis Xavier Muldoon's personal assistant. Muldoon was advertising manager for *Woman*, the largest-circulation weekly magazine in the U.K. It was the mid-sixties, in England, and my new boss had risen from nowhere to the top of an incredibly competitive business in just three years. Francis Xavier Muldoon was what you might call socially gifted.**

What made Muldoon's gift work was "The Gospel According to Muldoon."

"The Gospel According to Muldoon" began with the following: "First impressions set the tone for success more often than class, credentials, education, or what you paid for lunch." In fact, we usually decide within the first two seconds of meeting someone new just how we'll

respond to him or her. But don't feel too smug about that—in the same instant, that person is deciding how to respond to you. (By the way, if you're wondering about the other eighty-eight seconds, they are used to confirm and cement the relationship and set up the way you'll communicate from this point on.)

Muldoon's observations were always alarmingly simple: "When people like you, they see the best in you. When they don't, they tend to see the worst. It's common sense, really. If a client likes you, she'll probably interpret your leaping about as enthusiasm, but if she doesn't like you, she'll probably think your jumping around proves you're an idiot."

He was right. An interviewer who likes you might interpret your gentle nature as considerate, while one who doesn't like you might label you as weak. A manager who likes you will find your self-confidence gutsy; one who doesn't will consider you arrogant. One person's genius is another person's jackass. It all depends on how you are reflected in the other person's imagination. "Capture the imagination and you capture the heart," was also part of the Muldoon Gospel, "because life, any way you look at it, right from day one, is about behavior. Imagination triggers emotion, emotion triggers attitude, and attitude drives behavior."

I'd never met anyone like Francis Xavier Muldoon. I'd moved to London from the north of England because

I wanted to be in the middle of exciting things—even though I never really stopped to think what that meant until I got there. I soon realized I was turned on by people who were making things happen. One problem with Muldoon, though, was that for the longest time, I didn't know whether he was a genius or a lunatic.

Muldoon was a genius, but it took a while to figure out what made him so effective. In fact, some of what I had to do for him didn't seem to make any sense at all—at first. My first truly mad assignment for F. X. was to lick, stick, and scribble on the front of 2,467 assorted envelopes and stuff them into an enormous cloth sack. The next afternoon I accompanied the maestro on a sales call to the office of the managing director of a mail-order supply company on Oxford Street. Muldoon looked marvelous—dapper, confident, and happy—and I, with my sack, looked like a grave robber on my way back from collecting a body.

We were shown into the director's office. Francis Xavier Muldoon greeted the prospective client as if they were old friends—almost brothers. He introduced me as his assistant and our host signaled us to sit.

We took our chairs in front of his oversized antique banker's desk. Almost immediately, Francis Xavier smiled and spoke. "With your permission, I have something for you."

"Please, go ahead," said the director, nodding a vague approval.

“Nick here will show you,” said Muldoon. That was my cue. Without missing a beat, and armed with a dutiful grimace, I spread a large green canvas sheet on the floor and dumped the entire contents of the sack in the center of it. There were so many envelopes they tumbled onto the floor and against the chairs.

As the dumbfounded man sat there staring at the enormous heap of correspondence, Muldoon, in his gentle yet precise voice, proclaimed, “This is the kind of response you can expect when you advertise with *Woman* magazine.” He paused long enough to get the man’s attention; then, looking him directly in the eye, Muldoon said, “Two thousand four hundred and sixty-seven responses landed on the desk of one of your competitors in just one day as a direct result of advertising with us. We can do the same for you.”

Time expired so far? About ninety seconds.

In the cab on the way back to the office, with a twenty-six-week advertising contract in his briefcase and all 2,467 envelopes stuffed safely back in their sack, Muldoon decided it was time for me to learn a little more about “The Gospel According to Muldoon.”

“So what do you think happened back there?” he asked.

“You’d never met the man before?” I asked.

"I hadn't."

"But you were like old friends."

"It certainly felt that way, didn't it?" Muldoon smiled and turned toward me. "Do you have any idea why?"

"He's probably heard of you."

"Can't count on that. I'll tell you what, you sit over there in the jump seat facing me and I'll explain what was going on."

A London taxicab looks a lot like a big, black tin cracker box on wheels, but it is roomy and well suited to the comfortable conveyance of people and luggage. In the back there is a bench seat facing forward and two spring-loaded jump seats facing backward. I pushed down the jump seat in front of him and slid onto it. I'm quite tall, so I sat with my elbows resting on my knees, my right hand clutching my left wrist. I'm sure that my face showed just how puzzled and curious I was.

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**The cheapest,  
most effective way to  
connect with others is  
to look them in the eye.**

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Muldoon was looking out the window at the drizzle falling on the people coming out of the subway station at Marble Arch. He turned to face me and adjusted the way he was sitting, then he grinned enthusiastically and looked me straight in the eye. He held up a finger. "Muldoon's

Rule Number One: *When you meet someone, look them in the eye and smile.*” He nodded once, and waited for me to acknowledge. I nodded back. Up came a second finger. “Muldoon’s Rule Number Two: *When you want them to feel like they already know you, be a chameleon.*” I frowned. He caught it and changed the two fingers into a full hand, indicating I should wait, then reduced it to three fingers. “Muldoon’s Rule Number Three: *Capture the imagination, and you capture the heart.*”

I sat back. I could tell he hadn’t finished. He sat back as well.

“How many times a day do you deal with people who don’t acknowledge your presence—who don’t look at you?”

“Dozens, I suppose,” I replied.

“Dozens of wasted opportunities. The single cheapest, easiest, and most effective way to maximize the connection between yourself and other people—your customers, colleagues, the receptionist back there, this cabdriver—is to look them in the eye and smile. Do you know why?”

“Because it says you are honest and interested in them.” I had a feeling as soon as I said it that this wasn’t going to be enough.

“Yes, good, very good. But there’s more to it than that. How seriously would you take your favorite TV newscaster if he delivered the nightly news with his head down, reading off printed notes or looking out the window?”

“I don't think I'd take him very seriously.” That seemed pretty obvious.

“And his message?”

“I'd probably lose interest unless I was forcing myself.”

“Your message goes where your voice goes, and your voice goes where your eyes send it. How do you feel when you meet someone and they don't give you eye contact? How do you feel when they *do*? How do you feel when you are talking with someone and his or her eyes make contact with someone or something else?”

Eye contact is one of the most important nonverbal channels we have for communication. We've all heard that the eyes are the “windows to the soul,” but they are also the windows to the sale. That's because eye contact sends the unconscious signal that trust is in the air. The eyes also answer critical questions when we're trying to connect: Is he paying attention to what I'm saying? Does this person find me attractive? Does this person like me? In social and workplace situations, subtle differences in eye contact can speak volumes. For example, when someone's eyes are narrowed and his head lowered and turned slightly to one side, and he is still maintaining eye contact, that can signal an invitation to discuss something very private, even intimate. The eyes can signal a feeling of superiority (when the head is raised) or hostility (when

EXERCISE

## Eye Color

For one day, make a mental note of the color of the eyes of every person you meet. You don't have to remember the color, just take notice. That's it. Couldn't be simpler. Yet this simple exercise alone will massively increase self-confidence, eye contact, and rapport skills without your doing anything intimidating.

An amusing variation of this exercise to build rapport with customers is to tell your frontline staff you are doing a survey to find out if you serve more blue-eyed or brown-eyed customers, and just watch them hop to it. This works wonders in restaurants, banks, and hotels.

There's even a version of this for kids. It involves a small bribe—excuse me, reward. Tell your children you'll give them two bucks, or an extra hour at the pool hall, or a trip to Paris, or whatever if they come home from school tomorrow and tell you the eye color of all their teachers.

a gaze is level and unwavering). Conversely, looking away can imply weakness and avoidance. So, when you are discussing something that's important to you, be aware of what your eyes are telling your audience.

Muldoon looked straight into me and spoke softly and slowly: "Eyes radiate authority and give direction and focus and meaning to your message." He stared me down. I looked away. "Got it?" he inquired.

“Yes.” I nodded vigorously.

“Well, smile then,” he said. I faked a grin. “What’s that?” he asked.

“I can’t smile on demand,” I said.

“A vanity case, are you? Afraid you’ll look silly?”

“Stupid, more like,” I said.

“Well, you’d better learn,” he said. “The eyes aren’t the only social cue we have to offer. The quickest way to put your best face forward is with a smile. Smile and the world smiles with you. Smile and you’re saying, ‘I’m approachable,’ ‘I’m happy,’ and, ‘I’m confident.’ You can’t afford to let vanity get in the way of success.”

I’d known him for only three days, but in those three days I’d seen Francis Xavier Muldoon stir up a sales team, talk strategic planning with the editorial staff, and make a sale in ninety seconds. But now, motoring back to the office in the cab, it seemed like I’d known him all my life. The reason: Muldoon’s Rule Number Two.

“How do you feel?” he asked.

“Good,” I answered, and he raised his eyebrow slightly. “No, actually I feel terrific.”

“I know,” he said, then continued. “Do you know how I know?”

“I’m grinning and nodding and learning great stuff. It’s obvious.”

EXERCISE

## How to Smile

The quickest way to put your best face forward is with a smile. Smiles signal approachability, happiness, and confidence. Professional models have tricks to help them get in the mood and smile. Here's my favorite. Put your face about ten inches in front of a mirror. Look yourself right in the eye and say the word "great" in as many different ways as you can: angry, loud, soft, sexy, like Jerry Lewis. . . . Keep going. Eventually you'll crack up. Repeat the exercise once a day for three days.

The next time you're going to meet someone, say "great" under your breath three times and you'll be smiling.

"Yes, but there's more to it than that. Look how you're sitting." I gazed down. I was leaning against the side of the cab with my right shoulder, my arms folded, and my chin almost touching my left collarbone.

"Now look how I'm sitting." I hadn't been aware of it before, but now that he'd drawn my attention to it, I saw that he was sitting in exactly the same way I was. I could have been looking in a mirror.

"Do you know what people do when they get along well, from a behavioral point of view?" I decided it was best just to shake my head as if to say no. He did the same: just shook his head as if to say no. "They become like

each other. They start to sit the same way and talk in the same tone of voice. Today at the mail-order house, when the client tilted his head, mine tilted a little too. When he showed tension, I showed tension. When he relaxed, I relaxed. I changed my behaviors, attitudes, and expressions to suit the demands of the occasion—all to fit in.”

“Like a chameleon?”

“And right now I’m doing the same with you—and you never consciously noticed. Even so, it made you feel comfortable and relaxed.”

“That’s why it seemed like you knew each other,” I said. I was catching on.

Muldoon was right. We instinctively know how to fit in. We know how to be chameleons because we’ve been doing it all our lives. We learn by copying. If I smile at you, it’s human nature for you to smile back. In much the same way, if I say “Good morning,” there’s a strong chance you’ll respond in kind. This is a function of our natural predisposition to synchronize and reciprocate behavior. It’s called limbic synchrony, and it’s hardwired into the human brain.

As we grow and develop, our behavior is influenced by those around us. We learn our social graces by copying the manners of those with whom we eat and socialize. Rhythms are synchronized, behaviors are synchronized,

and even knowledge is synchronized. When we see someone copying what we do, it can be flattering. When we hear someone say something we've said, we're happy because we know they are learning what we intend them to learn. We like people who are like us. They have learned the same things we have, and it feels comfortable and familiar.

We have been synchronizing ourselves—responding to emotional and physical feedback—since birth. A baby's body rhythms are synchronized with her mother's, a

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**We have been unconsciously synchronizing ourselves with others since birth. Now is the time to start doing it consciously.**

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toddler's moods are influenced by his playmates, a teenager aligns her tastes with her peers', and an adult's views and preferences become remarkably defined by his friends. We like and feel comfortable with people who *are* like us. When you say, "I like you," chances are that what you are really saying is, "I am like you."

Synchronizing makes us feel as if we're all cut from the same cloth, part of the same group. If someone is doing the same thing we are—acting, dressing, or speaking like us—our mind tells us that they *are* like us. Want the big picture? You don't shout in church or whisper at a ball

game. It's that simple: We are most successful when we adapt ourselves to the occasion.

Muldoon was telling me that when we consciously adapt our behaviors, attitudes, and expressions to the people we meet, they feel comfortable. We seem familiar, and so they like us.

Today, the people most likely to get ahead are the ones who get to know and understand lots of people within their company and their industry or business. They create diverse networks within their company because they connect to so many people that they become almost indispensable. These are the people who get promoted, not necessarily because they're doing the best work but because their work is widely known and their contributions are so broadly recognized. These are the chameleons.

Rush hour was upon us. Our cab was at a standstill and it looked like it would be at least another half hour before we got back to the office. It was getting dark.

"Are you hungry?" Muldoon asked.

"No, not remotely." I wasn't interested in food right now because I wanted to hear more. I was waiting to hear more about Rule Number Three. Muldoon suddenly turned and pointed out the back window. "Can you see that huge, old-fashioned streetlamp on the corner of that brick building?" I had to crouch a little, but I saw it.

“What about it?” I asked.

“I was there last night. That’s Bentleys; it’s a favorite after-work watering hole for journalists and advertising folk. I had dinner there with a couple of friends. The food’s fabulous.”

“To start, I ordered the spinach soufflé, with anchovy sauce drizzled into the center. It came with warm chunks of homemade bread. The bread was crunchy and the soufflé melted in my mouth. For the main course I had a peppercorn steak with creamy mashed potatoes and baby peas. To finish, I had the crêpes Suzette with an excellent vintage brandy.”

Who said I wasn’t hungry? Two minutes ago I wasn’t, but now I was starving. I wanted that steak and mash so badly I was drooling. The more I thought about it, the more I wanted it. I could see it, hear it, feel it, taste it, and smell it.

“I think you just convinced me—I’m hungry!”

“No, I just played with your imagination to trigger your emotions—or in this case, your appetite.” He smiled.

A light went on in my head. “The same way our client’s imagination was triggered! When we dropped the huge sack of envelopes on his floor, he could imagine his dreams of successful advertising coming true.”

Muldoon just nodded, then reached over and lifted his briefcase onto his lap. I thought he was going to show me

something, but he just took out a slim folder and began to study what was inside it.

Riding backward in the cab's jump seat wasn't doing much to help my rumbling stomach, and anyway I'm well over six feet tall and the jump seat was not made for tall guys. After a minute or so, I waddled over to my original seat, next to him. He was completely engrossed, so I slid down in the seat, stretched out my legs, and stared out the window.

I glanced at Muldoon and wondered, What's the rest of his life like? Here's a guy who must be twice my age—I was almost twenty-one—who can probably turn his hand to anything. He's confident, he's calm, and he's charming. Everything he says seems so obvious—how come I never thought of it before? *Of course* you feel validated and connected when people look you in the eye. *Of course* you feel comfortable, connected, and respectful with people who are just like you. And without any doubt at all, the imagination is the key to the emotions. After all, the imagination is where most of us live—when we're not imagining the future, we're fantasizing about the past.

The glass partition separating us from the driver suddenly slid open. "Sorry, guys. Looks like there's been a punch-up or something up in front. Shouldn't take long now, though."

“Thanks for the news,” I said sarcastically.

“Not my fault, gov.” The driver slammed the partition shut. The cabbie was right. It wasn’t his fault. My stomach was making me cranky.

“That’s fine, thanks for letting us know,” Muldoon said loudly as he shot me a pained expression.

“Nice first impression. What do you want from the man—confrontation or cooperation?” It was clear that Muldoon had at least one more lesson to teach tonight. “What do you think will get us there faster—your treating him with respect or threatening to beat his brains out?”

“It’s okay,” he said, chuckling at the embarrassment written all over my face.

“Sooner or later, every successful person realizes that to get what you want from other people, they have to *want* to help you. There are only six ways you can get people to do things: by law, with money, by emotional force, physical force, the lure of physical beauty, or by persuasion. Of these, persuasion is the most efficient—it’s the next level in the game. Work it out for yourself. Persuasion is more powerful, frequently quicker, usually cheaper, and yields more effective results than legal pressure, financial indulgence, emotional duress, physical force, or beauty. The problem is that if you blow your first impression, as you just did, you take persuasion off the table. You’ll end up having to resort to one of those other ways to take

control of the situation. The cabbie doesn't like you now, and he'll lump you in with all the other jerks who talk to cabbies like that."

Sir Winston Churchill called persuasion "the worst form of social control except for all the others." Aristotle posited that for persuasion to be truly effective, three elements must be present: trust, logic, and emotion. In modern terms that means that to be convincing, you need to make a good first impression by establishing trust through attitude (body language, voice tone) and personal packaging; you have to present your case with indisputable logic; and you've got to give a tug to the emotions to complete the process. It doesn't matter whether you're selling advertising space, recommending the Pinot Noir over the Burgundy, or giving the State of the Union address. You must make your audience trust you, you must make sense, and you've got to move them. To be convincing, you must communicate all that—and do it quickly.

But what exactly do we mean by communication? If I want one of my suppliers to do something for me by a certain date and they don't do it, then my communication has failed. Am I 100 percent responsible for whether my communication succeeds or fails? Yes. In business and life, the measure of effective communication lies in the response it gets. So, what do I do if my supplier fails to deliver

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**Defining what you want is the critical first step in almost any situation.**

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the goods? I could ask him what happened, and he could promise not to let it happen again. But what if he fails again? I could ask more often, or rant and rave, or plead. Or I could change what I do, do something different—even change suppliers. Then, if I don't get my desired outcome, I could change my tack again until I got what I wanted. Futility is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.

Here's a fact of life: All behavior is a feedback loop. You want something, you try for it. If you fail, you can try the same thing again; or you can figure out what the first try taught you (feedback), redesign your strategy, and then try again. Get more feedback from your second try, and keep changing and refining until you get what you want. Try and refine, try and refine. There is no failure, only feedback. The formula then becomes: Know what you want (in *positive* terms—"I want collaboration," not "I don't want squabbling"), find out what you're getting, and change what you're doing until you get what you want.

"See that sign over there?" Muldoon said, pointing out the side window at a Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant. "Just look inside; it's packed. They have outlets all over the world, and they are successful because they have convinced people to go there to eat. They are a global

brand because they deliver predictable nourishment conveniently and at fair value—and they keep their promise. The very nature of branding is that you make a promise to your customers and you keep it.”

“And once they have you by the imagination, they’ve got you?”

“Exactly. By convincing, but not by coercion or intimidation. They never force anyone to eat there. Coercion is about getting people to do what you want them to; convincing is about getting them to *want* to do what you want them to do. It’s how you tap into people’s dreams and link your products or services or causes to the realization of their dreams—it’s how you make them see it, hear it, feel it, and want it.” Muldoon was on a roll. This was all great, but my hunger pangs were back again.

He paused and looked around for a moment. “See that restaurant back there?” We’d hardly moved in the last five minutes.

“Yes?”

“Look at it. It will help you remember the three aspects of successful communication. *KFC—know* what you want, *find out* what you’re getting, and *change* what you do until you get what you want.”

I knew precisely what I wanted right now—food—and staring at a chicken restaurant wasn’t helping. Why was he doing this to me?

“Okay, I’m looking, but I have to say I don’t see how it’s going to help me.”

But suddenly I got it: Muldoon was testing me. He’d made me hungry on purpose by cranking up my imagination. Then he’d pointed out a restaurant and told me that it was clean and convenient. Then he told me to know what I want, find out what I’m getting, and change what I do until I get what I want. And now he’s waiting to see what I’ll do about it.

“Mr. Muldoon.”

“Frank.”

“Frank, I’m starving.”

He grinned. “I know. So, what are you going to do about it?”

I turned to look through the windshield—we were jammed right in the middle of the rush-hour traffic. We weren’t going to make it back to the office before closing. When I turned back to Muldoon, he tugged up on the door handle and pushed it open with his elbow. “See you tomorrow.” He stayed put.

This was my moment of truth, and logic and emotion at the very least were on my side. I grinned my biggest goofy grin, collected the bag of envelopes, and stepped past him out into the real world. Before he closed the door, he beckoned me closer with an Irish twinkle in his eye. I leaned forward and rain ran down my neck, but I kept

on grinning. "Today I taught you technique. Next time I'll teach you substance. You've done well."

The traffic cleared and the cab pulled away. At that moment, only one thought went through my mind: I'd have gladly traded the pepper steak and mash for an umbrella and a raincoat. My dinner that night was fried chicken, lots of it.

Many years later I had cause to think back to that moment in the warm rain among the lights of London, when I was famished yet brimming with enthusiasm and overflowing with "The Gospel According to Muldoon." It was when I read in *The Wall Street Journal* one morning that Kentucky Fried Chicken had changed its name to KFC.

**K:** Know what you want.

**F:** Find out what you're getting.

**C:** Change what you do until you get what you want.

Do you know what you want? In the movie *Wall Street*, Charlie Sheen's character, Bud Fox, has had it with his situation as a stockbroker with his back always against the wall. So he figures out what he does want: power, riches, and excitement. He thinks that if he can land the ruthless financier Gordon Gekko's account, life will be perfect. He sets about getting an appointment, only to be turned down flat by Gekko's secretary. Instead of trying harder, louder, and more belligerently, he changes what

he's doing and focuses, for a while, on softening her up with gifts and sweet talk. When that doesn't work, he changes what he's doing again, this time studying Gekko in such detail that he can almost read Gekko's mind. Then he connives a few moments alone with Gekko in a public place and makes him an offer he can't resist. It pays off. He ends up working for Gekko and getting what he wants. In this case, though, he gets far more than he wants. Nevertheless, *KFC* worked for him.

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**Unless you put *KFC* to work, you'll continue to get what you've always been getting.**

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Whether you're a dentist or a heavy-metal singer, a Realtor or the world's biggest manufacturer of feather mattresses, an enterprising MBA student or a fund-raiser for a small community church school, unless you put *KFC* to work for you, you'll keep on getting what you've always been getting. And those who do understand the principles of *KFC* will zoom right past you.

The directors of a small elementary school in Ontario wanted to move out of the church basement they'd been borrowing and into a building of their own. They'd held fund-raisers before, but those hadn't amounted to much, and were dependent on support mainly from the students' families and alumni. Next, they tried silent

EXERCISE

## Do You Know What You Want?

Here's something you can try at work.

Notice three small, concrete things you don't like, or don't want to happen, at your workplace. *I don't want to overhear other people on the phone, because it's distracting. I can't handle it when I don't get consensus at marketing meetings. I don't like it when customers are impatient.* Now take your problem—the negative—and imagine it as a positive desire. *I want a quiet place to work where I can concentrate. I want to learn more about what motivates my colleagues. I want to instill calm in other people.*

Once you know what you want, be creative and flexible and try out possible solutions. If overhearing other people is distracting, get a headset and earplugs. If that doesn't work, pinpoint who distracts you most and negotiate some repositioning. If that doesn't work, tell your boss you'll be more productive in a quiet environment and see what she can do. Get all the feedback you can, and on the basis of that, change what you do until you get what you want.

auctions—selling off goods and services solicited from local businesses—but they still weren't raising enough money. Out of tried-and-true ideas, they decided to change what they had been doing and try something completely

**EXERCISE**

## **How Will You Know When You've Got It?**

Close your eyes and create a “future memory.” Pick a specific and reasonable moment in time. What will it look like, sound like, feel like, smell like, and taste like? You’ll learn later in the book that the raw language of the brain comes from the senses—pictures, sounds, and feelings. The infinite organizing power of your subconscious mind can better serve you when it can see, hear, and feel what you want, rather than being programmed with abstract, unspecific verbal goals. After all, which would work better—saying “I want happiness,” or “I’ll be happy and more productive when it’s quiet where I work”? The latter, of course. It’s much easier and more effective to show your subconscious what you mean by telling it specifically how achieving your goal will look, sound, and feel.

different. The fund-raising committee enlisted the help of some local professionals—entrepreneurs, a PR agency, a golfer, and a few merchants—to look at their options. At the meeting they decided how much money they wanted and what was reasonable to expect. They decided that their goal would be \$25,000 in the first year, and at least \$3,000 more per year for the next ten years.

What came out of the meeting was the school's first annual golf tournament. They wanted it not only to raise money but also to make enough of a splash that more people would become aware of the school. So, they called it Whole-in-One Golf Tournament, highlighting the school's mission—to educate the whole child—as well as the tournament. They knew they wouldn't succeed if this were just another golf tournament, so they figured out how to make it look unique and professional, rather than like a glorified bake sale. They convinced the captain of the fire department and the police chief to take part. But these two distinguished gents weren't enough to generate big-time interest, so they, in turn, convinced some of the local celebrities, including a famous rock musician who lived in the area, to take part. When twelve local merchants each offered prizes worth a minimum of a thousand dollars to anyone who got a hole in one, the fund-raisers knew that they'd made it.

From the day they started fund-raising, this group knew what they wanted; over the years, they found out what they were getting; and they changed what they were doing until they got what they wanted. Because they adhered to the *KFC* model, the tournament exceeded its goals in the first year. The directors gained feedback from the event and are already looking at a promising “second annual event.”



## 90-Second Summary

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### “The Gospel According to Muldoon”

First impressions set the tone for success more than any other factor.

- **Look people in the eye and smile.** Your message goes where your voice goes, and your voice goes where your eyes send it. Eye contact engenders trust. Smiling makes you appear happy and confident. Say “great” to yourself three times and get in the mood.
- **Fit in—become a chameleon.** We feel comfortable and relaxed with people who are like us. Synchronize your body language with others’ to achieve an immediate connection.
- **Capture the imagination and you capture the heart.** Use sensory-rich language and images so others can see, hear, feel, and sometimes even smell and taste what you mean.

### Being Convincing

Convincing is about getting others to *want* to do what you want them to do. For it to be effective, three elements must be present: a trusting first impression, indisputable logic, and a tug at the emotions.

- **Trust.** Trust can precede you implicitly in your title (“general manager”), your credentials, or your reputation. It is earned at first contact through attitude (body language, voice tone) and personal packaging.
- **Logic.** Your position, presentation, or point must make sense.
- **Emotion.** Your argument must appeal to the imagination, and thus to the emotions.

Appeal to all three levels so the person, group, or audience feels: *I trust you, you make sense, and you move me.* Trust must come first.

## **KFC**

The meaning of communication lies in the response it gets. You are 100 percent responsible for whether your communication succeeds or fails. **KFC** is the formula for successful communication.

- **K: Know what you want.** Define what you want in positive terms, and preferably in the present tense.
- **F: Find out what you're getting.** Pay attention to all the feedback you get and learn from it so you can determine what is moving you toward your goal and what is distracting you from it.

- **C: Change what you do until you get what you want.**

It's futile to do the same thing over and over and expect different results. If you don't get what you want, try different approaches, sometimes radically different, until you do get what you want.