

forum interactive

Alison's account

From: Alison.Banks@CCOMPA.ac.uk
To: Joan.Masters@tideresearch.co.uk
Date: 6th October 2008
Subject: who stole my cheese?

Thanks for your message of Friday, I'd meant to give you a ring last week but as you'll soon see the shit has really hit the fan here and I was working late most nights. I'm afraid I can't tell you just yet but suffice to say that everyone's reeling from some Big News. As soon as I can tell you I will.

The coaching is going well. I've had two more people (both from admin) inquiring about it. I'm always surprised how suspicious people are – well the academics anyway. It's still only Paul. I have to say though, I know you think a lot of him (as do I) but sometimes I'm not sure whether he's really got the hang of what coaching is all about. He does do rather a lot of talking. And his eye contact is pretty poor. Do you remember that phrase you came back with from that Leadership conference you went to down in Birmingham? They talked about people being 'glassy eyed' or 'clear eyed' and when people are glassy eyed it's like they're not really with you, their mind is elsewhere?? That's what it feels like with Paul sometimes. It's like I don't really need to be there – he just uses me as a sounding board (a silent one). I should probably start challenging him more but I'm very conscious of the need to build trust. I want him to really trust me. People really listen to him and if he gets a positive experience from this process then that's really important – I need to keep my eye on the bigger picture.

He gave an important presentation to the ED meeting this morning (it's about this Big News that I can't tell you yet). We used our session last week to practice. I'd suggested that he use the mission statement to set the context, really get them all going, rallying round the need to breathe fresh air through the College. His performance was really polished. I was very impressed. But somehow it left me cold. He sounded passionate but somehow I didn't believe it. It was a performance. You know that way when someone says the right things but..... glassy eyed. We'll see.

Anyway, sorry, do you remember that game about "who's got my cheese" – we had the stuff here I remember. I really want to try it out with at a session I'm doing next week as part of this engagement exercise. Was it yours? Did you take it with you? Don't worry if you did, I just need to get another set.

I really hope you make it up here in November, the wind and rain have been horrendous the last few days but they tell me it's going to get better soon. Meanwhile I'm here in my office sitting on a hot water bottle!!!!

Cheerio
Alison

(Esther Walker, Forum Interactive, esther@foruminteractive.co.uk)