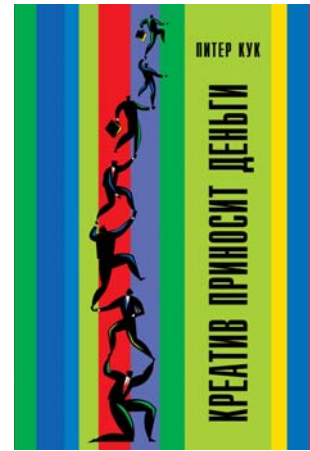


BLOG entry - 07 December 2007

Manchester, Minsk, Moscow...

I've just had another 'Spinal Tap in Business' experience... I was due to speak at an international conference in Minsk alongside people like Peter Senge, Rosabeth Moss Kanter and Alvin Toffler. I agreed to do this because a publisher has just translated my 1st book 'Best Practice Creativity' into Russian. I said I'd help with the launch in any way but stressed how important it was to start early as I was quite busy around the weekend of the event itself. Here's the Russian cover.



I asked that my travel agent be paid up front for flights / visas – 8 weeks passed, many e-mails were exchanged, but no money arrived. Finally it did about 5 days away from the conference, but we still had no visas or tickets, despite asking many times. A surprise was launched at this time – the 'organisers' asked if I could travel on to Moscow as they had already arranged an appearance on Moscow State TV, a Radio show and a book launch in Moscow's most prestigious book store (none of this had been mentioned). I obliged, politely pointing out that we still did not have travel tickets or essential papers for visas etc.

The relevant papers did not arrive and I was told by the Diplomatic Service that it was unlikely I would be allowed to board the plane, yet still the 'organisers' said 'it would be alright on the night'. Finally, I discovered that they had put me on a sleeper train from Minsk to Moscow overnight. Now, I'm a big fan of sleeper trains, having once travelled on the Trans Siberian Express. This was a special kind of sleeper though... It had become common practice for passengers to be gassed on these trains and have their possessions stolen.

I faced an awkward dilemma: I had no visas, I faced a possible gassing on the journey and might end up in a Gulag due to not having the correct papers. Should I stay or should I go? Eventually it was decided for me, when Czech airlines refused to board me on their plane.

I begun to wonder whether I would face a similar situation on arrival as the ['album launch'](#) sequence from 'This is Spinal Tap' where the

band turn up for an album signing to find no-one there? Artie Fufkin eat your heart out! So, I had a wet weekend in Manchester instead – and I have no story to tell about being gassed on a sleeper train from Minsk to Moscow! :- (A great disappointment all round.

Aside from that a number of new articles have appeared:

[Got the Workplace Blooze](#) - a lite article on motivational theory and practice

[Lessons from the World Tour - Part 2](#) - [The Evening Standard](#) also published a piece on this

And we've been quite busy with conference work - One for the NHS Innovation Institute, another for Pfizer and a series of Leadership events for Marley Extrusions.

Finally we have a new member of staff - Magdalena Rotszdejn from Poland. Magda is assisting us with business development and is as keen as mustard! She even has a Polish version of the book to promote!



All the best

Peter aka the Dean