introduction

Imagine the possibilities when everyone in your organisation thinks and acts as one big team.

This proposition is based on the experience that most organisations (both big and small) are populated by little kingdoms that don't collaborate with each other. Call them what you like—'silos', 'stovepipes' or 'fiefdoms'—they are enemy number one of the business world because they add to costs, irritate customers, frustrate employees, derail mergers and alliances, and are the root cause of countless lost opportunities.

Ironically, it is not the silos themselves that are the problem but rather the inability of organisations, or more particularly the people in them, to foster teamwork across boundaries.

In an increasingly networked world, there is much to be said for giving business units the sort of focus that comes from being a silo; however, few, if any, can genuinely succeed without the ability to open the doors and windows of their silo to collaborate with others on problems and opportunities.

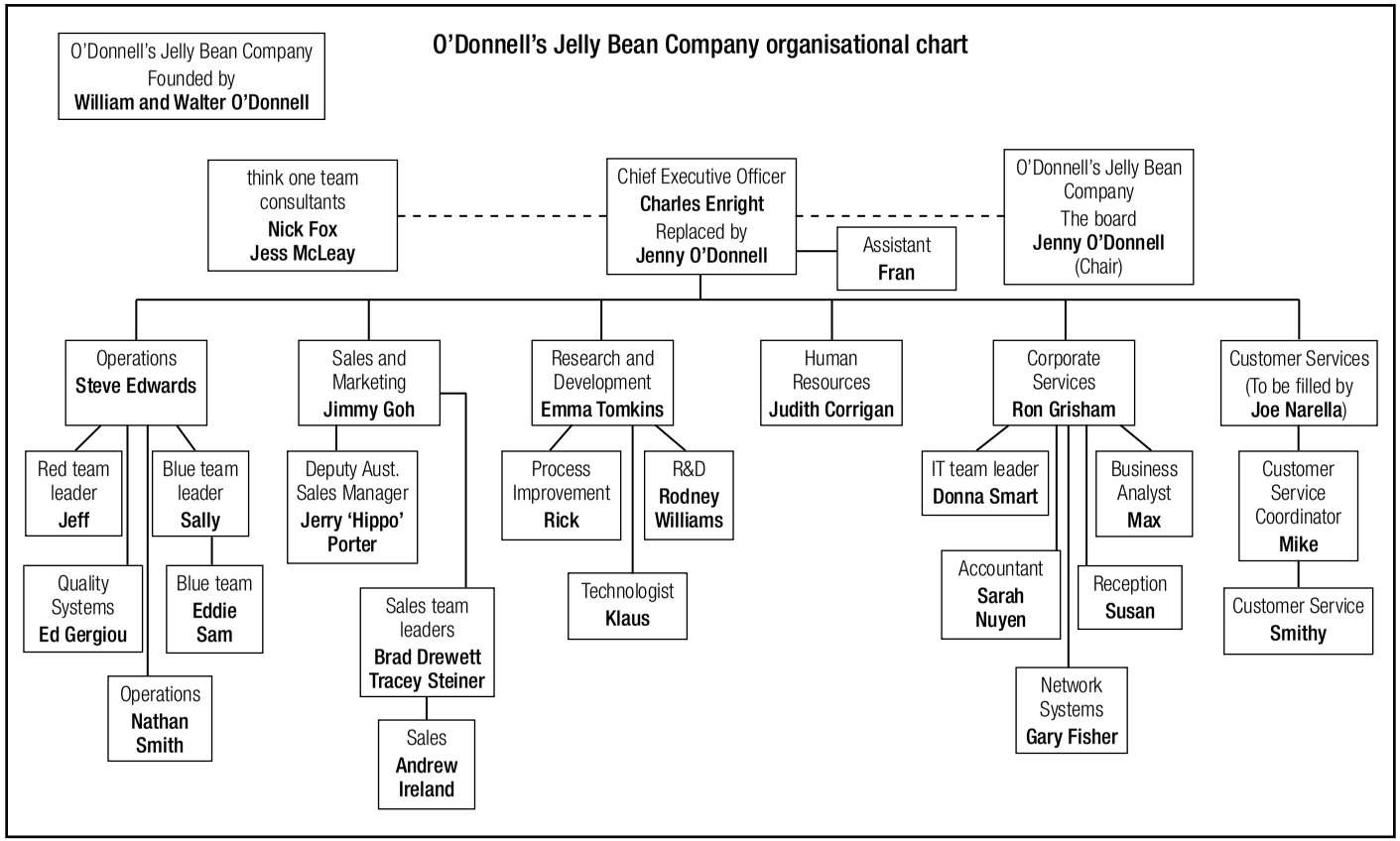
This book and the related think one team™ program have been specifically designed to help you, and everyone in your organisation, to create and sustain the teamwork across boundaries that will enable you to experience the rewards of working as one team.

Beginning with the fable of the big jelly bean team you will join one company's engaging, enlightening and at times funny journey from silo-afflicted to one team. From its experiences you will learn the five practices that define the difference between 'think silos' and 'think one team', and see what these practices mean for leaders and employees across an organisation.

From the vivid story a think one team™ model is built, which you will find easy to understand and apply to your organisation. This model will give you a language to share across the business, and lots of ideas for thinking and acting as one team.

It is important to stress that 'think one team' means being accountable, having clear boundaries and allowing for specialisation. It is not a call to make your business one big department because that will create the poison of bureaucracy. Rather, it is a simple yet powerful message to build the effective and enduring partnerships needed among the people of your organisation to successfully implement the business strategy.

Think one team is a both a mantra and a philosophy of work because it offers a more productive and enjoyable way to live and work.


O'Donnell's Jelly Bean Company organisational chart
O'Donnell's Jelly Bean Company
Founded by
William and Walter O'Donnell
think one team consultants
Nick Fox
Jess McLeay
Chief Executive Officer
Charles Enright
Replaced by
Jenny O'Donnell
Assistant
Fran
O'Donnell's Jelly Bean Company
The board
Jenny O'Donnell
(Chair)
Operations
Steve Edwards
Red team leader
Jeff
Blue team leader
Sally
Quality Systems
Ed Gergiou
Blue team
Eddie
Sam
Operations
Nathan Smith
Sales and Marketing
Jimmy Goh
Deputy Aust. Sales Manager
Jerry 'Hippo' Porter
Sales team leaders
Brad Drewett
Tracey Steiner
Sales
Andrew Ireland
Research and Development
Emma Tomkins
Process Improvement
Rick
R&D
Rodney Williams
Technologist
Klaus
Human Resources
Judith Corrigan
Corporate Services
Ron Grisham
IT team leader
Donna Smart
Business Analyst
Max
Accountant
Sarah Nuyen
Reception
Susan
Network Systems
Gary Fisher
Customer Services
(To be filled by
Joe Narella)
Customer Service Coordinator
Mike
Customer Service
Smithy

the story of the big jelly bean team

Once upon a time, in a now-fashionable inner-city district of Sydney, Australia, a business called O'Donnell's Jelly Bean Company became the market leader in the confectionery industry.

Founded by brothers William and Walter O'Donnell on their return from the Second World War, O'Donnell's Jelly Bean Company was enormously proud of its fifty-year-plus history, its role as an employer of people from the local community and its profitability. Most of all, however, the people of O'Donnell's Jelly Bean Company were proud of its products.

It had been that way since William and Walter produced the first jelly beans in the kitchen of their home in Birchmore Street and sold them to children in the

neighbouring streets. 'O'Donnell's', as the business came to be affectionately known, produced the best-looking, best-tasting and best-value jelly beans that money could buy. Any kid who lived near Birchmore Street could tell you that money spent on those monster-sized O'Donnell's jelly beans was a far superior investment to the bland fare at the local store, which carried all the 'brand' lollies. Importantly, an O'Donnell's jelly bean commanded a greater price when on-sold at school. Many children doubled their pocket money by investing in a few of those precious jelly beans and then selling them for a handsome profit at recess. The fame and profitability of William and Walter's jelly beans spread through the schools across the city and in a few months a small manufacturing plant was created at a site that has since grown to accommodate the nearly 500 employees of O'Donnell's Jelly Bean Company.

When you bought 'the real McCoy jelly bean', as Walter loved to call it, you could choose between the three colours (red, blue and black) that O'Donnell's now manufactures in a gleaming, state-of-the-art factory. The enormous jelly beans (about the size of a bird's egg) were sold in clear cellophane packs of five, ten or fifteen containing the one colour of the customer's choice. The first jelly bean ever sold by William and Walter was red, so the teams on the red production line were suitably proud that not only did they produce the lowest cost jelly bean but also that theirs was the original 'real McCoy jelly bean'. The blue jelly bean has always been the most attractive with its sky-blue coating and light-blue inside giving what the blue production teams called 'the sapphire look'. Last but never least was the black jelly bean, which if you asked the black production teams was the most popular choice of customers, the source of much media coverage and clearly a 'better bean'.

O'Donnell's never sold a pack of jelly beans with the three colours combined.

Why? There were three simple reasons and they had stood the test of time.

First, to sell them separately enticed customers to buy more than one pack, and the sales figures supported this view. Many a shopkeeper would tell the story of a mother and her children engaged in passionate debate over the need to buy 'a packet of each' so that the full range of O'Donnell's taste sensations could be enjoyed.

Second, William and Walter always believed that the unique flavours of the three beans would be lost if you put them together in a sealed packet.

Finally, no-one needed to put those jelly beans together because year on year the company grew in revenue, profits and employees.

Until, as they have a habit of doing, things changed.

g'day

They say that Sydney has the most beautiful harbour in the world and it sure looks like it from the left-side window seat as you fly into Kingsford Smith International Airport from the west. The Opera House and 'Coat Hanger' bridge are closer than I'd remembered, and more boats are now sprinkled across the sparkling bays and inlets.

As a forty-something surfer I always think 'sharks' when I see that harbour. Did you know that more people have been attacked by sharks in Sydney Harbour than any other place in Australia? With over four million people living under our flight path I guess that's a lot of potential swimmers and shark bait.

Five years on the road is a long time. Last year I flew the equivalent of twenty times around the planet. Mostly New York to London return, spiced up with the occasional whirlwind trip to Shanghai and Dubai. Leading a consulting outfit is fun but high-demand on everyone and everything.

My speciality is big teams. Not those little departmental teams but whole organisations and big joint ventures — corporations, governments, sporting clubs and associations, universities and even symphony orchestras. If they really want to unleash the phenomenal power that comes from being one big team, then my team will help them to create the teamwork across boundaries that will make it happen.

Australia is home. Not Sydney, actually. I'm originally from Adelaide, a rather English city of parks, hills and stunning beaches. Best place in the world to live. I'll be spending time there getting our next generation of products together ready to take on the greatest of challenges — engaging corporate China to think one team.

I'm Nick Fox. I love jelly beans, Indian food, beaches and the awesome power of big teams.

This story is my way of sharing a few insights from the road about what might just happen to you and your organisation when everyone from the boss to the newest employee lives and breathes the mantra 'think one team'.

chapter 1

real conversations

Tuesday, 8.58 am. The executive team of O'Donnell's Jelly Bean Company assembled for what promised to be anything but the usual 9 am executive meeting.

Walking to the boardroom from their plush offices, the team members crossed a foyer dominated (tastefully) by two identical displays of three two-metre-tall crystal cylinders on either side of the automatic glass entry doors. Each cylinder was full to the brim with those monster O'Donnell's jelly beans—red closest to the street, then black, then blue.

As you enter the O'Donnell's building those jelly bean cylinders escort you like a guard of honour towards Susan, the ever-smiling receptionist. An inconspicuous glass lid sits firmly atop each cylinder to ensure that no-one samples from the display. Floor lights project upwards to complete the striking effect.

By 9 am everyone was seated. Cups of coffee and bottles of water sat on coasters to protect the lush wood-grained table, the compulsory three dishes of jelly beans in the middle of the expansive table and papers at the ready.

Like most businesses, the O'Donnell's executive team was made up of the heads of each of the six key divisions:

- Operations (covering manufacturing and logistics)
- Sales and Marketing
- Research and Development
- Human Resources
- Corporate Services (finance, information systems and administration)
- Customer Services (currently without a head of the division).

The other member of the team, Charles Enright, was appointed Chief Executive Officer less than three years ago through the Sydney old boys' network after an unspectacular reign as head of a brand retailer. The position had become available due to the sudden death of the previous CEO, and Charles's employer had been delighted to give an all-too-glowing reference to a local headhunter who then convinced the O'Donnell's board to offer him the job.

An accountant by profession and with no experience in the confectionery industry, Charles was rumoured to have confirmed more than once to his Saturday golf colleagues that 'O'Donnell's is lucky to have me'. No-one needed the rumour to confirm Charles's arrogance.

Since Charles's arrival O'Donnell's executive meetings had been tediously predictable, with each manager reporting on successes in his or her areas of responsibility and some

general discussion about low-level issues such as car spaces and office layout. Anything remotely controversial or strategic (if it was discussed at all) was left to one-on-one meetings behind closed doors with Charles or, if necessary, between the individual members. 'If it ain't broke don't fix it' was a Charles mantra that no-one dared publicly challenge, although, ironically, most people thought of Charles as the most broken thing in the company.

That all began to change early last year when the multinational Jellicoe Candy Corp parachuted into O'Donnell's most important markets, dropping sales by over 25 per cent in just six months. Now, twelve months later, the sales graphs were still heading south and only the cost savings from the first round of bitter redundancies temporarily halted the slide in profitability.

Everyone waited for Charles to open what was expected to be an unpleasant and depressing couple of hours.

He began in a sharp, aggressive tone, with eyes fixed on the table ahead of him, addressing the room rather than his team members in person.

'Yesterday's board meeting was the most difficult in all of my time at O'Donnell's. The board is clearly of the view that the attempts to resolve the downslide of the past year have not been successful and unless this quarter's budget is achieved we will have to cut 25 per cent of costs across the company. I'm personally insulted by the situation and expect this executive team to find answers or heads will roll.'

No-one spoke. For Steve Edwards, head of Operations and the newest (and most articulate) member of the team, it wasn't what he had expected on joining O'Donnell's six months ago, but the business challenge didn't particularly faze him. This was a good business, with good people and good products that were just hitting a few speed bumps.

What concerned him much more than the numbers was Charles's leadership style and its impact right through the business. Steve had seen executives 'burn the furniture' to make the figures look good. Invariably they killed the culture and the company in the process. Charles was a furniture burner if ever he'd seen one.

Steve would bide his time. There were things that could be done, and after three years in a bigger and more complex job in London he more than anyone else in the room actually looked forward to the challenge.

Never one to miss a chance to push his agenda, Ron Grisham, head of Corporate Services and self-appointed 'finance guru', took the opportunity while others were deep in thought to run through the numbers to support Charles.

'Our sales are down over 30 per cent and despite some productivity improvements in Operations I can't see an upside. My view is that we cut now and not wait until the April board meeting.'

Ron looked to Charles for a nod of approval. It wasn't there.

Jimmy Goh, the energetic head of Sales and Marketing, gazed at Ron with a mixture of contempt and anger. This wasn't the moment to tackle Ron's relentless pessimism but he was angry enough to take him on anyway. Just in time, Charles's clipped manner broke his thoughts.

'Jimmy, what's your view?'

A Singaporean national with a Harvard MBA, Jimmy's energy and track record of success with confectionery companies in the United States and Asia earned him respect from all but Ron. As he replied to Charles's question, more than one member of the team was pondering whether Jimmy might soon jump ship for another company with better prospects.

'We've revamped the advertising and PR campaign to be ready for launch early next month, and the customer loyalty program is being upgraded, so I anticipate about a 20 per cent revenue increase on the back of that in the US, Australia and Asia.'

He paused for a moment to gather his thoughts.

'The sales teams are up to the challenge, and if we can improve the teamwork between Sales and Operations, and IT delivers on the customer loyalty platform, I'm confident that we'll claw back what we've lost in market share, and be ahead again within twelve months. I think we need to be careful not to overreact, particularly as the financial information we're getting is way out of date and I think we're already trending upwards.'

'With due respect, Jimmy,' began Ron, running his hands through his thinning grey hair and bristling at the suggestion that his financial information was out of date, 'you haven't got within a mile of any of your sales forecasts for over a year, so why should we believe this one?'

Jimmy leaned forward and looked him squarely in the eyes. 'If you understood the market instead of looking out the back window and telling us where we've already been, you'd know that forecasting over the past twelve months has been impossible because we've had a unique set of circumstances. What do you want me to do? Demotivate the sales teams by setting the bar at a level that you and your super-slow bean counters think we can achieve?'

Ron was no match intellectually for Jimmy and certainly not in a verbal sparring match. He knew enough not to take on Jimmy in this situation. He'd deal one-on-one with Charles and get those cuts in the sales and marketing budget that were long overdue.

Watching all of this unfold was Emma Tomkins, head of Research and Development, and the quietest member of the executive team. She joined O'Donnell's as a food technologist fresh from university and was appointed to her current role two years ago. Emma had been a superb number two in R&D, and very strong in project management and scientific rigour. A clever and insightful scientist, no-one was surprised when Emma, at the age of thirty-two, was appointed to the executive position, although to this day she preferred delving into an experiment rather than leading her small team of highly qualified chemists and technologists. Emma sketched three-dimensional diagrams on the pad in front of her, hoping that someone else would break the silence.

'Charles, are you saying that the board has given us a quarter to turn this around?' enquired Judith Corrigan, Human Resources Executive. She wasn't going to let the meeting deteriorate into a slanging match and, like Steve, she'd seen plenty of worse situations than this during her twenty years in HR and consulting.

'Well, yes', he answered cautiously. 'The Chair and I expect a detailed strategy presented at the next board meeting to address the financial situation. She has also asked me to meet her separately this morning to go over our three-month interim strategy.'

Despite Charles's reputation of dismissing anyone who overstepped their authority or disagreed with him in public, Judith was determined to press forward with her point of view. 'Okay, we seem to have two options: either we do as Ron suggests and start working on more reductions now or we back Jimmy to lift the sales performance.' Not waiting for a reply, she turned to Steve. 'You've led a company that

hit a hurdle and then picked itself up again. What do you suggest?'

Steve was taken aback that Judith had tossed the ball to him. He'd only been in the job a few months and apart from the newness he was acutely aware that Charles seemed threatened by his experience, which had been in a similar job to the one that Charles had failed in prior to joining O'Donnell's.

All eyes focused on him, wondering whether he'd been tossed a ball or a hand grenade. It was a moment for leadership and Steve was both a natural and a well-developed leader.

He turned respectfully to Charles. 'Can I have a few minutes to work us through some ideas that I think are important?'

Charles couldn't refuse without looking weak. 'Just a few minutes, we have a lot to cover', was his muted attempt at keeping the upstart Steve Edwards under control.

real conversations

If you really want to know how a business is travelling don't go to the boardroom, go to the staff canteen.

People in boardrooms can lose connection with what actually makes the organisation tick. They miss the conversations, the emotional moments and the open tensions. Things are often controlled in boardrooms because of status and agendas. Steve knows that, but he's courageous and skilful enough to take the risk and bring a dose of harsh reality to Charles, Ron and his colleagues that they'll never get from a set of accountant's figures.

But first to the canteen and to the conversations that tell us what is really happening in O'Donnells.

the staff canteen

Meanwhile in the canteen staff milled around the coffee machines, while two eager players pounded a table tennis ball at each other in the far corner of the long rectangular room.

Production had started at 6.30 am so Jeff, Sally (team leaders in the red and blue production teams, respectively) and Mike (the Customer Service Coordinator) were more than ready for a strong cup of coffee and a biscuit. They had joined O'Donnell's on the same day five years ago and had kept in touch through a shared interest in tennis, which they played most Tuesday evenings in summer for the social club.

Mike and Jeff strolled halfway to the table tennis players and sat at one of the thirty or so round laminated tables.

'How're things?' asked Sally, pulling up a chair and reaching for the sugar pourer.

Jeff put down his coffee mug. 'Pretty crap, actually. We're way down on production volume and everyone's scared that more redundancies are around the corner.'

'Yeah, same with us, although I hear that Sales is forecasting a big jump next month', Sally offered optimistically.

'That would be the same forecast they got wrong last month', added Mike sarcastically. The others nodded unenthusiastically in agreement, although both knew that Mike was a sniper who enjoyed spreading gossip, particularly if it was bad news. And they weren't about to be proven wrong by his next comment.

'I hear it's going to be a council of war at the exec meeting today. Davo from finance reckons that Ronnie Grisham's going to nail Jimmy about the forecasts and has you guys in his sights for some serious slash and burn.' He paused to

smirk before adding, 'At least it would be good if something came out of an exec meeting instead of the secret club just keeping it all to themselves'.

Sally and Jeff could only agree with his last point. While their new boss, Steve Edwards, seemed to be making every attempt to keep them updated on what was happening, there had rarely been anything that showed them where the company was heading. It was just small-picture stuff about their own department and mostly negatives about everyone else. 'Like putting a jigsaw together when there's no picture', Jeff had remarked at a recent meeting.

They sat quietly for a few moments. Sally's thoughts were on the mess-up with materials that she would have to fix when she went back to work. The Purchasing Department had decided that it could get a great price on red colouring, so without consulting with the production teams it had spent the entire monthly budget on red colouring. Now blue can't meet its targets for the week, while red is oversupplied and, as Jeff said, slowing down.

Mike didn't know it yet, but three of O'Donnell's customers, including the biggest specialist confectionery chain, were expecting the blue jelly beans for in-store promotions and would be on his case within twenty-four hours. Fortunately for Mike he knew a way to put the heat back on Sally and the IT Department even though he'd promised yesterday that everything was running to plan.

'Better get going', announced Jeff standing and heading towards the dishwasher, and passing two staff members who were furtively polishing their resumes, which they would forward to local recruiters in the next week.

'See you', Sally and Mike replied together, before making their way back to work.

current reality

Back at the executive meeting Steve stood and strode to the electronic whiteboard that hung on the far wall of the boardroom. Unclipping a black marker pen he drew a straight line down the middle of the board, dividing it into two equal columns. At the top of the left column he wrote 'Old model' and on the right-hand side 'Current reality'.

Turning to face the team, Steve began with an open question: 'What are the key ideas that drive our business?'

Emma's scientific mind immediately wanted to clarify exactly what Steve was after.

'Do you mean, like Nike's core idea is to produce shoes that make people winners and McDonald's is to mass-produce fast food?'

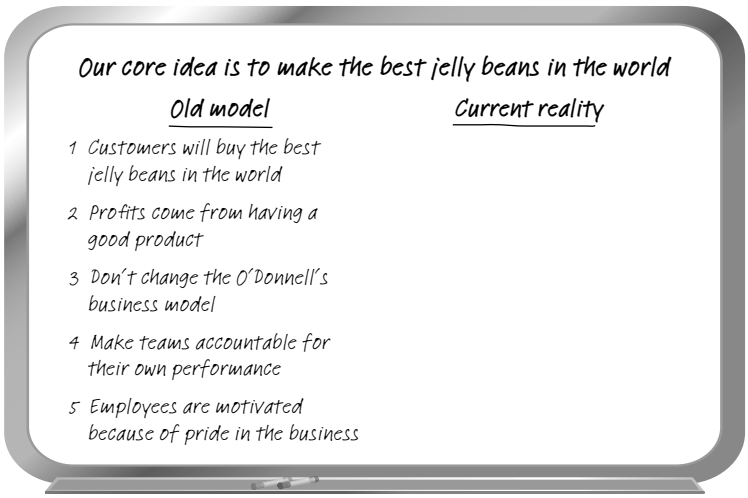
'Exactly', replied Steve with an encouraging smile. 'Successful businesses have a core idea and then lots of related ideas that support it. I'm interested to know what you think ours are.'

'We make jelly beans', offered Ron, not quite understanding where this was heading but wanting to control it if he could. Judith nodded and then added, 'Quite right, and I'd add that we aim to make the best jelly beans in the world'.

Steve jotted a summary of Judith's words in the 'Old model' column and turned again to the team. 'Fine, I think we'd all agree with that idea. So, what are some of the other ideas that tell us how to go about achieving that?'

After twenty minutes of increasingly lively discussion (during which Charles added just one brief comment but Steve certainly had his full attention), and some writing and rubbing out on the whiteboard, a list of five points sat

underneath the statement, 'Our core idea is to make the best jelly beans in the world'. Those points were:



Steve scratched his chin and smiled as he looked at the list. 'If William and Walter were here today, I think they'd wholeheartedly agree that these are five compelling reasons why the business has been so successful for over fifty years. Do you agree?'

Everyone nodded, except Jimmy who had been uncharacteristically quiet since his run-in with Ron.

Steve pointed to the 'Old model' list. 'Unfortunately, like most business ideas these were right for the past, but they are all wrong now.'

Charles was furious at Steve's criticisms. With blood pressure rising, his mind was yelling, 'How dare you tell us what is wrong with a successful business that you virtually walked into yesterday!'

He now understood why he'd been so resentful when Jenny O'Donnell, the board Chair and daughter of William, had recommended Steve for the Operations job. 'Steve the upstart' was taking over the meeting and the team. This would stop as soon as Charles got him into his office on his own.

open and honest

O'Donnell's is a great example of a business that doesn't have open, honest and constructive debate at the senior management level.

Instead of tackling the tough issues, they have leaders like Charles who use their status to aggressively stifle debate and others like Emma who avoid conflict at all costs.

Having the courage and skills to tackle the tough, constructive conversations is one of the first and most important steps in creating the united leadership, which is the foundation on which big teams flourish.

Sensing an opportunity to ingratiate himself with Charles, Ron began to object but Steve cut across him determined not to let the moment be lost. 'Just a minute, Ron, please let me finish my line of thinking and then we can fully debate it.'

Charles noticeably turned his body away as Steve started writing in the 'Current reality' column. Ron fumed, Emma wished the meeting would finish and Judith wondered just how this leadership team could ever be united enough to pull the company out of the looming crisis.

When Steve had finished, the whiteboard looked like this:

Our core idea is to make the best jelly beans in the world

Old model	Current reality
1 Customers will buy the best jelly beans in the world	1 Customers are buying other products instead of ours
2 Profits come from having a good product	2 We are unprofitable
3 Don't change the O'Donnell business model	3 Our business model is broken
4 Make teams accountable for their own performance	4 We are many teams not one team
5 Employees are motivated because of pride in the business	5 Employees are confused and demotivated

Even Charles tuned in as Steve slid onto the chair at the end of the table and spoke quietly and sincerely to the team.

'I joined this team six months ago because I liked what I'd heard about the culture of O'Donnell's and its potential. In that time I haven't seen anything to suggest that O'Donnell's doesn't have a great future, but we have to create that future, because the world has changed and we can't just let things drift along as they are.

'There is no doubt that the last batch of redundancies and the other cuts were needed, and in my opinion, without those we would have slid even further. But it doesn't address the real reasons this company is in danger of failing completely.'

Charles bristled and glowed a deep red colour as Steve continued in a calm but assertive tone.

'There are two things that this company does not do and they are killing us.

'The first is teamwork. We aren't a team. From this executive team through to every operational team, we compete against each other for budgets, for resources and for recognition. We work in little teams with our own agendas and we protect our own turf at all costs. Just go to a Sales and Operations meeting or a project review and you'll see that we don't really collaborate with each other, we don't constructively challenge each other and we don't work as partners towards shared goals.

'The second is communication. We rarely listen to each other and we certainly don't listen to customers and understand what they really want. We just make our brilliant jelly beans and try to convince everyone that all is fine. But the reality is that people are not buying our jelly beans and we don't seem to be learning from that.

'It seems to me that we have two paths. We can wither away slowly in our departmental teams and silos or we can get rid of the roadblocks to communication and teamwork that we are putting in our own way. If we take the second path, I genuinely believe that we can become a greater company than William and Walter ever conceived, but it will demand united leadership from this executive team and a new culture of teamwork across O'Donnell's.'

Steve had said everything that he wanted to say and a bit more. Silence hung in the room as each executive took in the personal and business implications of his message. They also wondered how and when Charles would react.

Charles's immediate need was to take back control, but he wouldn't risk tackling Steve head on in the meeting. 'Steve, thank you', he muttered bluntly, packing up his papers and bringing the meeting to a premature halt. 'You've given us much to think about and that's what I'd like to do. I have a meeting with Jenny O'Donnell at 11 am so Steve you and I

will meet in my office at 1 pm. We'll reconvene this executive meeting at 3 pm.'

Charles expected to have Steve's resignation to announce by that time.

Ron followed Charles out the door, while Judith congratulated Steve on his presentation. Emma and Jimmy left separately, each deep in thought about their own careers.

arrogance hides something

The best leaders have long passed the stage where they need to strut arrogantly around the business. Arrogance is usually a sign of low emotional intelligence or lack of confidence—or both.

Either way, a business is never going to fulfil its potential if that is the way of the people in charge. They'll soon find that everyone just strokes their ego and lets them do all the thinking. That might work in the short term but it's a recipe for disaster in anything but a one-person business.

When the time comes to choose new leaders at all levels, look for humility and self-confidence, backed by a drive to get things done. Steer clear of people who constantly need their tyres pumped up. They're likely to go flat just when you hit the toughest terrain.

jumping ship

Shortly after the meeting ended, Jimmy hesitated, then quietly knocked on the door before entering Charles's office. He had planned this moment for later in the week but events were gaining momentum and he wasn't comfortable keeping the news from Charles while such important issues were being discussed. He respected Charles for his financial skills

but found his ego overpowering. Not surprisingly Jimmy was much more concerned about bailing out on his team and colleagues than the self-centred CEO who had rarely commanded loyalty from anyone in his business career.

Standing in front of Charles's desk, and in a subdued but definite tone, Jimmy explained the approach by a headhunter and the job offer that was simply too good to refuse. He hadn't been looking for another job but sometimes things just happen. What Charles didn't know, and Jimmy couldn't tell him, was that two of his top account executives were almost certainly leaving with him.

Charles slumped into the leather chair behind his desk. 'Where are you going?'

Jimmy shook his head. 'Sorry but I've signed a confidentiality agreement, which means that I can't disclose it until I start there in six weeks' time.'

Charles shrugged, not really caring where Jimmy was going. If he'd known that it was Jellicoe Candy there wasn't much he could have done, but he would have demanded that Jimmy leave immediately.

'I'll have to tell the executive team this afternoon', Charles announced sombrely. 'Sure, that's your call', replied Jimmy, feeling the urge to apologise but knowing that it didn't make sense to say you are sorry for something that you really want to do.

a new o'donnell

Jenny O'Donnell served five years on O'Donnell's board before succeeding her Uncle Walter as Chair on his passing twelve months ago. A lawyer and Chief Executive of one of Sydney's better known legal practices, this was her first

experience as a chair, although many years specialising in corporation law was an excellent grounding.

There were three rules that Jenny lived her life by:

- Be clear about your intentions.
- Act decisively with courage.
- Give and expect respect.

They were what her father had drummed into her from her earliest years and they hung on her office wall as a daily reminder. These three principles had helped William survive the war and build a successful business. For Jenny, they would guide her to rebuild what William and Walter first created.

Charles had seen the plaque on Jenny O'Donnell's wall but taken no notice of it. Had he reflected on the three rules he might have better understood what she was about to tell him.

Jenny arrived a few minutes early and chatted briefly to Susan at reception before being ushered into Charles's office. Their meetings were always slightly formal affairs. Charles was of the era that didn't take easily to reporting to a woman, and certainly not to one whom he believed inherited the role, not earned it. Jenny, by contrast, gave and expected respect, which never seemed easy with Charles.

'Charles, the board held an extraordinary meeting last evening to discuss the company's situation.' Charles was stunned by the news that the board had met without him. 'We have not taken this decision lightly, but we have made the decision to seek your immediate resignation.'

Jenny waited for a reaction. Charles went bright red and was soon gasping for breath.

Charles would recover from the panic attack, although being carried by ambulance stretcher across the foyer watched by startled employees wasn't what either he or Jenny would have wanted. That was perhaps the only thing on which they agreed, as Jenny sat quietly in the now-vacant chief executive's office and pondered the next steps in her plan to revive O'Donnell's.