

# HOW TO COORDINATE ACTION

“A sloppy request will always get a slippery commitment.”

Alan Sieler

## What is Work?

When you think about work, what is the essence of work?

Alan Sieler, author of *Coaching to the Human Soul*, describes the essence of work as, “The coordination of action between at least two people, in which someone (a performer) takes action to address what’s important to another (requester), according to certain standards and within a specified time frame.”

If it is that simple, why then are so many of our requests of others, not satisfactorily completed? Leaders typically claim they make around 50 requests of others a day and on average, only

50%-60% of their requests, are satisfactorily completed. Why may this be so?

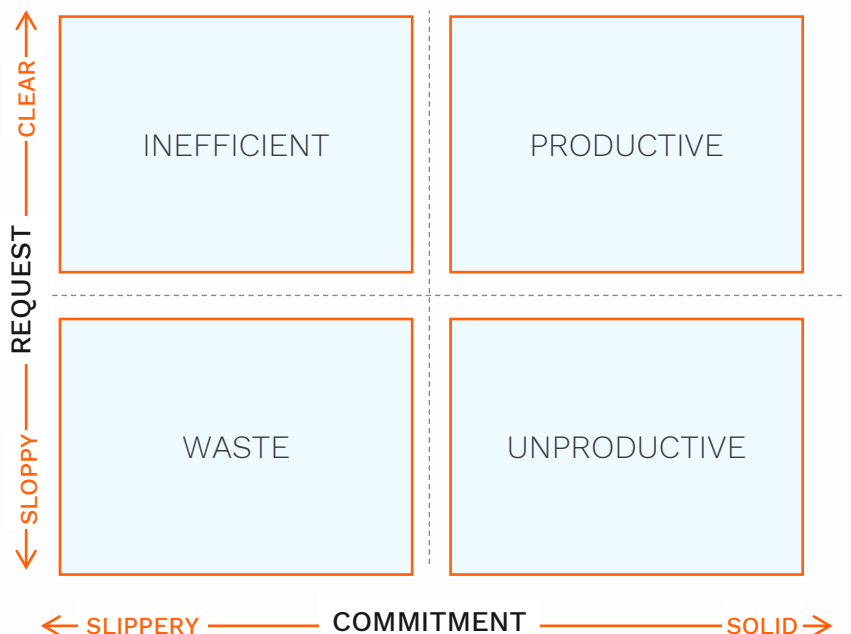
Think about the consequences of 40%-50% of one’s requests not being satisfactorily actioned. Think about the cost associated with the wasted time and effort having to repeat requests and others redo the work? One of the largest hidden organisation costs and the unspoken culprit of organisational waste, are sloppy requests.

## Avoid “sloppy requests”

As we transition to a ‘blended’ working arrangement with team members rotating between half working-from-home (WFH) and the other half working-from-office (WFO), the quality of our requests and commitments to one another, are essential to coordinate action and get done what is most important.

To avoid making ‘sloppy requests’, ensure you:

1. Be specific about what needs to be achieved
2. Clearly explain the nature of actions to be performed
3. Set time frame within which completion is required
4. Specify the criteria to be used to assess success
5. Test ‘performers’ understanding of what has been requested and identify any concerns



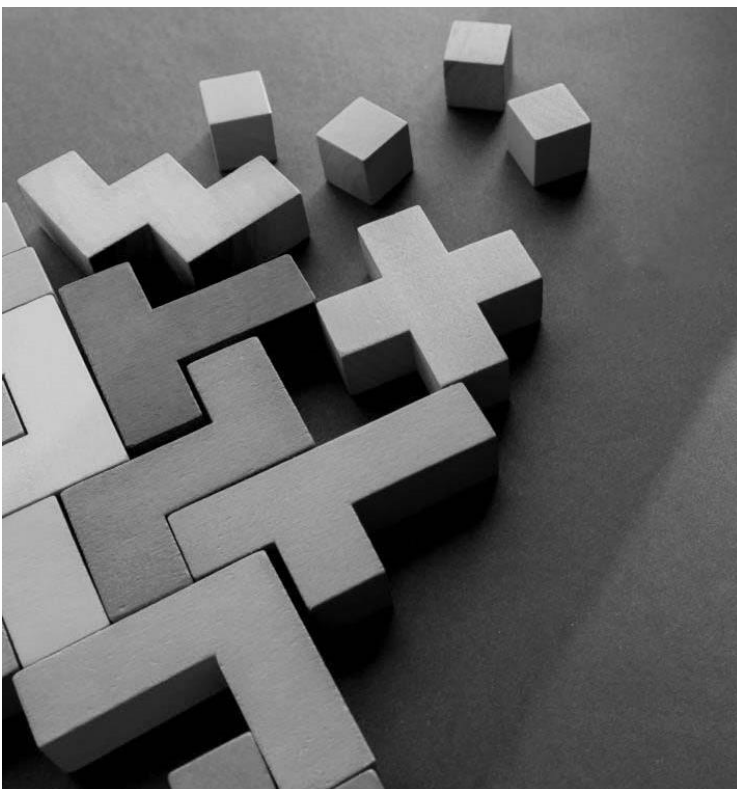
## First step

How often do we say yes to a request when we know the most appropriate response ought to have been, 'no' - with a legitimate reason?

As much as it is the requester's responsibility to make an effective request, there is an even greater responsibility on the performer to not give a 'slippery commitment'. Remember, a request + acceptance = a promise. We all know the consequences of a broken promise!

Before next saying 'yes' to a request, consider which of the following responses is most appropriate and legitimate:

1. Yes – with integrity
2. No – with a legitimate reason
3. A counter-offer – e.g. 'I can't do it today but could by 4.00pm tomorrow'
4. Commit to commit – e.g. 'could I think about it and get back to you at 09h00 tomorrow?'
5. 'Slippery commitment' – remember you are not only letting the other down but more so, yourself!



## How to Coordinate Action – Masterclass overview

**Part 1:** Why we make sloppy requests and give slippery commitments?:

- Understanding how we come to make sloppy requests.
- The organisational impact of sloppy requests and slippery commitments.
- The “Commitment Cycle” – an introduction to the 4 stages to effectively make and manage commitments.

**Part 2:** How to coordinate action by securing greater cooperation and commitment:

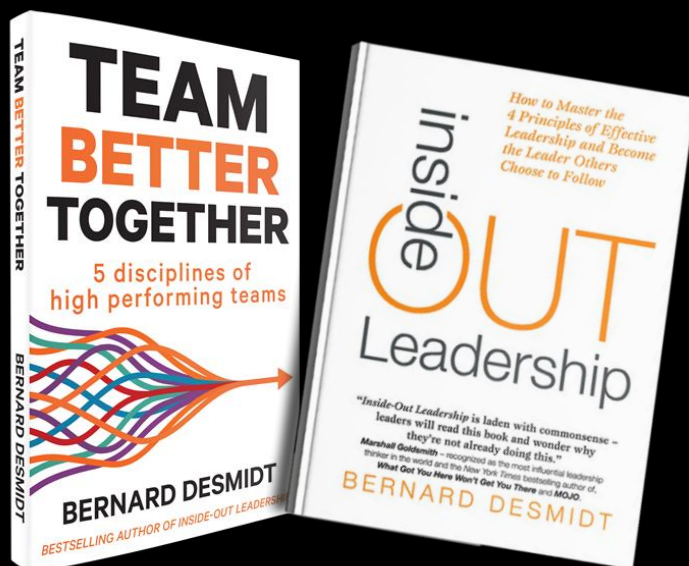
- Applying the “Commitment Cycle” to real work and life situations.
- How to master the conversations in all 4 stages and avoid the risk of miscommunication and misunderstanding.
- How to create a super-productive work environment and build greater accountability to do more great work.

## This Masterclass will help to...

- Be more productive with one's own and others' time
- Be less 'busy' and more productive doing more great work
- Build an achievement and performance focused culture
- Not say 'yes' to requests when the most responsible response is, 'no'
- Coordinate action whilst teaming together and apart
- Lead and work with greater fulfilment and impact



As an accomplished coach, trainer, facilitator, speaker and author, Bernard works with leaders and leadership teams to unlock the power in teams and access the collective capacity and capability to achieve the greatest things possible.



## What clients have to say about Bernard's workshops:

"Bernard is a very courageous person who has stretched and challenged all of us to go places where we could not have imagined let alone gotten there on our own. It was an eye-opening experience and Bernard provided a safe environment where judgement is suspended, and open and frank discussion could take place. It was a very humbling experience."

### Cath Jules (CEO - Criterion Conferences)

"...the greatest and unique aspect that Bernard brought to the program – that I have rarely seen in any other facilitator – is his ability to enable people to think, feel and speak freely without fear of repercussion."

### Sean Dempsey (CEO - Plan Partners)

"...Bernard has both an engaging and challenging facilitating style which encourages thinking and discussion. Our leaders are bright smart people and I knew they needed someone who had a strong presence, whose material was thought provoking and up-to-date and who could move our leaders forward on their leadership journey..."

### Linda Smith (Manager – People & Culture, ISPT)

"...Bernard's programs look at leading through deeper self-knowledge; how this informs how you lead; the impact you have on the people you lead; and the effect this has on others."

### Suzanne Shepherd (Group Executive – Human Resources, McMillan Shakespeare Group)

To discover more about the Masterclass workshops,  
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