

How to be a (successful) zookeeper

In a recent Glacier webinar, keynote and motivational speaker and author, Nigel Risner, helped us understand the four animal types (lions, elephants, dolphins and monkeys) that make up our teams, and the importance of the interplay between them for successful business communication.

Which animal are you?

Lions are determined, demanding, competitive, strong-willed and purposeful.

Elephants are cautious, deliberate, precise, questioning, formal.

Dolphins are caring, encouraging, sharing, patient, relaxed.

Monkeys are sociable, dynamic, demonstrative, enthusiastic, persuasive.

Importantly, which of these animals do you have on your team and what traits do you need to be their zookeeper?

Making an IMPACT

Nigel lists six actions that could help you win at what you do and win at leading your team.

I = Be In

If you're in the room, be in the room. If you're not listening, you'll miss communication nuances and you'll miss what's *not* being said.

M = Model off the best

It's okay to copy others' styles or ideas, if it will improve your business. And the ones you copy from don't even have to be in your industry.

P = Show passion

Be passionate about what you do. Spell 'enjoy' as 'in joy'. If you're not in joy about what you do, find another job.

A = Act

Inspire people, not just with the words you use but the actions you take. Play an active part in motivating the people around you by what you do.

C = Communicate (according to your animals)

Know which animals are represented on your team, and amongst the stakeholders you engage with. Once you understand the animal, you'll understand how they communicate. Effective communication means adjusting your style for the animal you're interacting with. While elephants love graphs, numbers and spreadsheets, monkeys love stories, pictures and the exchange of ideas. Dolphins like to see your human side and lions appreciate brevity.

T = Trust

Trust yourself as a leader, and as a zookeeper building trust with the animals in your care requires understanding, deep listening and open communication.

[Back to Glacier Outlook 2022 webinar page](#)

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