



Why we're aiming high for everyone at Solomons...

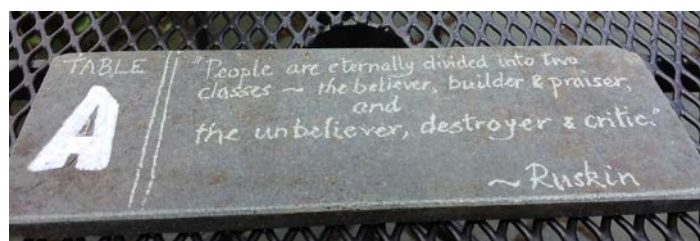
Two weekends ago, up here in Cumbria on what was an idyllic, sunny, summer's day, Dominic and I were enjoying a lovely lunch at the picturesque café situated overlooking Lake Coniston on the site of John Ruskin's former home, Brantwood.

It was one of the very best days of this year, and eating *'al fresco'*, whilst taking in one of those spectacular, far reaching, lake district views that make you marvel at what nature can do, felt an absolute privilege. Could a day like this be any better?

Whilst waiting for my lovely lunch to arrive, I noticed a small slate on the table which read:

"People are eternally divided into two classes – the believer, builder & praiser, the unbeliever, destroyer & critic."

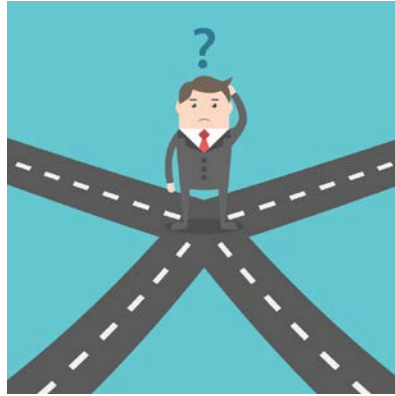
John Ruskin



Pretty powerful quote to ponder over lunch – and one which gets you thinking hard about which class your attitude and outlook and which class you might fall in from time to time, and also one which reminded me of my own Grandmother. Her class, as far as my sister and I were concerned, was always the former. Whatever we expressed an interest in doing, no matter how much of a fad, or how poorly thought through, she was always, always a believer.

She gave unconditional support for whatever dreams we may have had at a particular moment in time, and invariably wanted an update on how far we had come towards our dream goal – even when we ourselves had long forgotten the fleeting childhood ambition to be a singer, an artist, a designer...nothing was beyond reach or ridiculous, and everything was full of potential. She believed in fact, that we were full of potential, to achieve whatever we wanted, and in reality, not many

people think like that. Many a parent of course believes in their child's potential, and is vocal in doing so, but maybe not quite so many help to build their child's dreams if that dream might not quite seem the right path to take – the parent's job is to protect the child and ensure that he/she achieves the best they possibly can. But sometimes the grandparent is able to indulge in simply encouraging a child to follow whatever path will make them happiest, without the worry of considering the better paths that may be followed to wealth and security.



Sometimes people just need a bit of encouragement to follow their dreams and aspirations, to help set them on the right path, and that is what we are aiming to do at Solomons with our wonderful Talent Coaching team. Now I'm not trying to say that the Solomons Talent Team are there to act as supportive grandparents to our people, but what I am saying is that sometimes, as adults, we can from time to time need to feel that someone believes in us and can help us build towards our goals. And as adults, getting a pat on the back for a job well done can also be something of a rare occurrence. Yet all of these things can really help to build confidence and a sense of job satisfaction.

Over the last few years we've been working extremely hard at Solomons, to show our people that we really do value them and what they can bring to our company as individuals. We have entered and achieved a number of awards over the last few years, culminating in achieving Investors in People Gold in December last year. We are, of course, very proud of these achievements, but when you take a step back, what really matters is that we are truly helping to support people in Solomons to be the best they can be. Not just from a mentoring perspective, but also to ensure that the business can be the best it can be too – giving real value and commitment to our clients and striving to achieve project and strategic objectives.



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

Gold
Until 2019



That's why this year, not only have we invested heavily in innumerable professional, academic and CPD courses for our technical delivery team, but we have also invested in our Board and our Talent Team to equip them to better support, encourage and mentor our teams. Everyone needs encouragement and support from time to time to get over a hump, or a sounding board to try out an idea on, and that is what the Talent Team at Solomons is there to do. At a time when many companies are restricting budgets for training and development, we have hit a record breaking

spend this year with our internal fastrack QS development programme, senior management training and a myriad of academic and professional personnel development programmes. Our Talent Team, Victoria Clements and Dawn Powell, have undertaken post grad courses with the respected Lancaster institution CETAD, to hone their coaching skills and support our teams. You can read more about their aims and impacts in their personal blogs, but this radical approach at Solomons is clearly making a difference to the personal professional development of our people, and it is clear that it is something many of the team have found stimulating and empowering. Fingers crossed these new approaches will have a lasting impact on our business and one which demonstrates the real value of this significant investment in developing our people to the next level, building our high performing team and allowing us to bring in the next generation of talent to continue the cycle.

But for now, our talent team have a new mantra “believer, builder, praiser” – a great thought to start and finish each day with, and also to keep us on the right track...

Kerry Doig – Strategic Director

Solomons Europe