

# How to Be Brilliant

## Bonus Chapters

*Change your ways in 90 days!*

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- To sign up to our FREE '**90 Days of Brilliance**' newsletter, where we guide you through '90 Days of Massive Action' with weekly e-mails, then copy and paste this link into your address bar:  
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If you wish to contact us directly, please use the information below:

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We always welcome feedback to Michael's books and material. If you wish to send a review for *How to Be Brilliant*, e-mail [info@michaelheppell.com](mailto:info@michaelheppell.com) and title it 'How to Be Brilliant Review'.

# Brilliance into Action

## The Bonus Chapter

Congratulations on completing our new How to Be Brilliant (2nd Edition) and for looking for more ideas, concepts and plans to help you on the journey to Brilliance. This bonus chapter is made up of some of the bits which didn't make it into the book, ideas from some of the members' newsletters we send out and some ideas which I've been teaching on my courses and thought you may appreciate.

I'm writing it in the manner of short stories, Brill Bits and newsletter style items. Rachael Stock my editor at Pearson / Prentice Hall would slap me silly for whacking it all together like this but this is between me and you, so here we go...

This first idea was one of the most amazing things I did in my life and I have to share with you. You can do more for your journey to Brilliance by doing this than almost any other.

## Find a mentor - This builds on what you have read on page 99

I don't mean a mate who you chat with now and then. I mean a person who will really push you and ask all the hard questions.

Once you find the right person, schedule a series of appointments with them, starting with a meeting where you will outline your plan to be Brilliant and find out if they can help. This is my criteria for finding a Brilliant Mentor.

- 1) Someone you admire and like. Your relationship won't work unless you highly respect, like and admire this person. You don't have to be friends or even know them personally.
- 2) Find a person who will push you. You don't need a mentor who will tell you that you are doing a good job. Prof. John MacBeath, who is one of my mentors, recently spent 2 days dissecting every part of my live seminar. He challenged my thinking, dismissed my theories and shook his head. I listened, learned and defended the course and at the end of our discussion he told me he thought it was the best programme of its kind!
- 3) Don't chicken! Once you decide on your amazing mentor don't put off asking them. We have all done it - thought about it then not taken the action. Remember Massive Action = Massive Results.
- 4) Be clear with your request. Mentors will do mentoring as long they know what is expected of them. Ask for a specific length of time. Even if you don't take the time, communicate with them and use some of their time. Mentors go rusty!
- 5) Take a gift (but get creative!). The very first time you meet your new mentor give them a gift. Make it memorable. Not tacky, not expensive (unless you want me to be your mentor!) and make it something that will last. Mentors like the idea of mentoring. Often they are at a stage in their lives where they want to give something back (contribution) and will use the gift as an opportunity to talk about what they are doing for their new project, (you). That must be good for your development!

## Brill Bit

You have seven days to find a mentor. You don't need to have met with them but you must identify them. Ask them for help and have a first appointment scheduled.

## Tell me what I want to hear

Putting your mentor to one side for a moment, have you noticed when you have conversations people rarely think about what you want to hear. Here follows an actual situation which happened to me recently at my local (and could be cheaper!) garage.



“It’s serious. Your car needs a new differential”

“We are talking thousands not hundreds”

“We can’t do the work for a few days”

That’s just what I wanted to hear. NOT! The receptionist in the garage was just doing her job but she could have learnt so much from the technician (remember when they were called mechanics) who diagnosed the problem a few moments earlier.

“Mr. Heppell, I’ve got some good news. We’ve caught the problem before it had a serious impact on your car. It’s a new diff’ that’s needed. It’s not a big job to fit it, so we will see if we can get you booked in as soon as possible”.

“How much will it cost?”

“To be honest, it’s not a cheap part but you have a really nice car and you look like a guy who wants things done right”.

So the Technician told me the **same message** as the receptionist and made me feel happy that my family and I are not in imminent danger. I felt reassured that my car would be back on the road soon.

Fifteen minutes later the harbinger of doom gives the **same message** and does all she can to make me feel low!

Question is what are you saying to your customers, colleagues, friends, family members .....? Is it Brilliant or bog standard?

### Brill Bit

It's time to focus on telling people news in a way that you would want to hear it. It's not about lying, exaggeration or distortion. It's about giving people information in a positive way, in a way that you would find acceptable. In fact, let's forget "acceptable"; what about communicating in a way, which is Brilliant! You will feel awesome. The people around you will feel great and, who knows, you may just get what you are looking for a little bit faster.

Just as you feel you're getting this Brilliance stuff together you hear something that makes you wish you knew when you were 10...

## The Brightest & The Best

My good friend, Prof. John MacBeath, Chair of Leadership at Cambridge University told me this amazing story which I would like to share with you now.

On a recent visit to the United States John was working in a school helping them with the implementation of some of their progressive education plans. At the end of his time in the school a 12-year-old boy introduced himself and handed John his business card - Curtis L. Taylor, Dynatronics Ltd. It read 'For all your Internet, IT and development needs'.

John was intrigued by this and asked the boy to describe his business. His claim to fame was that he wrote the school's development plan and presented it to the senior staff who were now using it as a basis for future development. Astounded, John went to see the Principal of the school to check if it was true. The Principal confirmed that indeed this young entrepreneur had written the development plan, they were using it and he'd also offered to conduct a 2-day intensive training programme for all the staff to show them how to apply the ideas, get best value for the school and move up to the next level. "That's amazing" said John. "Are you going to use him?" The Principal replied, "We would love to but we can't afford him!"

I deliberately haven't named the school as maybe the temptation to headhunt this 12 year old for your organisation could be too great! It also made me ask some questions. How often do we deliberately search out the youngest, brightest and best in ourselves? How often do we put ourselves forward with a desire to write the plan, develop the resource and teach it to others?

When I first wrote about Curtis in one of our ezines I received an email from someone who complained that this was no way for a 12 year old to behave! Talk about missing the point of the story.

### Brill Bit

Here's a thought - if we lightened up a little, might we get a little more out of life....

## Then a policeman fell over...

I was working in London recently. I enjoy the occasional visit as it makes me realise how lucky I am to live in rural Northumberland. Then there is a side to me which loves the hustle and bustle of the big smoke!

What I could like a lot more about London is the people. Of course I'm only referring to the 'moaney faced sods' who bustle along the ever busier pavements.

I was walking past Harrods, admiring the window displays which had been part created by a friend of mine who runs 'The Smoke Company' specialising in making effects. Just as I got to the end of the store I noticed a policeman sauntering towards me. He was a big man, and walked with an air of confidence. Suddenly, and for no apparent reason, he tripped and fell. It was one of those moments when everything goes into slow motion.



Obviously there was a concern that he may have hurt himself but as quickly as he plummeted, he leapt to his feet and we (there must have been about 40 people who saw this happen) were faced with the terrible dilemma - who would be first to laugh. Thankfully the bubbly bobby saw the funny side, and seeing the size of his audience he took a dramatic bow.

He laughed. I laughed. We all laughed. In fact, I laughed all day. There's just something strangely funny about a policeman falling down flat, leaping to his feet and taking a bow. A couple of miles up the road at Covent Garden he would have received an ovation and a pile of loose change from the onlookers.

So, when you make a fool of yourself do you laugh? When things aren't going exactly according to plan can you squeeze out a giggle? Laughter Therapy has been proven to help people overcome depression, heal faster and avoid disease. Watch the Robin Williams film Patch Adams and see how he manages to find fun in every given situation - even during his lowest moments.

### Brill Bit

Yes, there is a serious side to life - most of us are very good at that part. Here's your homework. Laugh yourself silly. Don't wait for a moment - create one.

Finally a word of warning; if we get a call from your local police station saying you are being held for tripping up a police officer, looking to get a cheap laugh because you are having one of those days - we'll deny all knowledge.....

And once we've finished laughing it will probably be a good opportunity to practice...

## Quality Recovery Time

I wrote this just before going on a holiday and chilling for a week on a beach in a beautiful resort on the north coast of Menorca. Why? Because we all love holidays! But holidays are only a part of true quality recovery time.

When athletes want to attain peak performance they would obviously warm up before the race, match or event, but more and more so you will see athletes warming down and the day after a major event they experience something known as quality recovery time. Basically this means they plan their time around the rejuvenation of their muscles, cardio system and physiology.

We often invest masses of energy preparing for a big deal, presentation, promotion, interview or significant event in our working lives. When we execute the necessary actions it feels amazing, especially when we start to get the results we desire. But without our own quality recovery time we become frustrated, stressed and full of anxiety. When we are in this state we cannot possibly be performing at our peak.

So why not take a holiday every day. 'I haven't got the time', I hear you cry. 'I've got a business to run, a team to manage, a boss to please or a target to hit'. But we can all find 10 or 15 minutes a day when we can focus on relaxing correctly and rejuvenating our systems. Some call it meditation, some call it mental programming; it's just a chance to chill, but there are some rules. Relaxation does not include watching Eastenders or Coronation Street. That, believe it or not, is entertainment. Relaxation does involve closing your eyes (but not going off to sleep), controlling your breathing and focusing on positive outcomes and visualisations.

For those of you who think that only hippies do this, here's a list of people who are known to practice techniques like this on a regular basis.

Jack Welch, of General Electric fame  
Tony Blair  
Alan Shearer  
Richard Branson (well, some hippies!)  
Steven Redgrave  
James Dyson  
Winston Churchill  
Thomas Edison

When I recorded my audio training programme "How To Be Brilliant" I included a bonus CD that just focused on this important subject. I've had more people comment on the power of relaxation than any other individual section of the programme.

### Brill Bit

**This message is not to step up; it's to sit down and relax. Take a deep breath and..... relax.....**

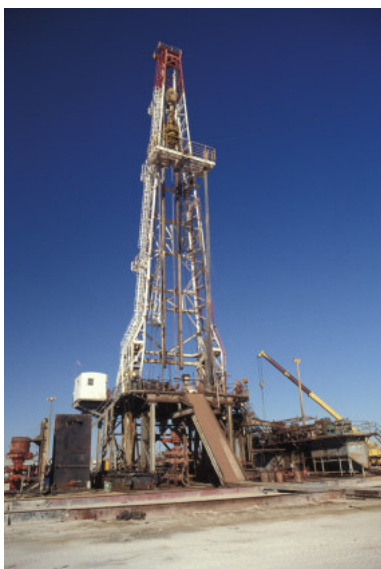
I often get requests from people to help them find something new. They are dissatisfied, for many reasons, with their current lot. My first question tends to be, 'What could you do to make your current situation better?' Often we don't realise what simple action we may

be able to take to make our current circumstance better instantly.

Here's a story which was told to me by my great friend Ian Smith. There's a message in here for all of us.

## Spindle Top

There was an old farmer in the deep south of America who struggled every day to make ends meet. One day they started to drill for oil in the communities surrounding his land. He was approached by the oil company but refused them permission to drill on his land thinking his neighbours and fellow farmers would consider him to be desperate and willing to give up his core business for a chance of a small quick return. He repeatedly said no.



However, the oil companies kept asking him and eventually, after a particular bad harvest, he agreed. The test holes showed good signs and they drilled a hole which was known as Spindle Top.

Normally, when they strike oil it blows the top off the derrick but when Spindle Top struck oil it blew the derrick to bits. It was the biggest find of oil in American history. The farmer became a multi-millionaire!

Here's the message. The farmer was already a multi-millionaire. He had been walking across millions of pounds of assets. His Father and his Father's Father had been walking across millions of pounds worth of assets. The difference was somebody made the effort to drill for oil and take it to market.

So what is your spindle top? What secret Brilliant stream of incredible income lies beneath you just waiting to be drilled and taken to market?

By now I'm hoping that this bonus chapter will be encouraging you to ask some big questions. Or even some little, but important, questions.

Have you ever been stuck in a traffic jam and thought what do all these people do? Where are they going? Who do they work for? What are their lives?

Have you ever flown over your city perhaps on business, going on holiday or coming home, and thought the same?

What if you were to ask a different question - How can I touch the lives of all these people through my products or service, my contribution to society, my desire to make a difference? Immediately by asking a different question you will be given a whole range of choices.

Our ability to think great thoughts often lies dormant in the basement of our imagination. The company goal of Michael Heppell Limited is 'To Positively Influence 1 Million Lives'. I constantly ask myself the question "How can we do this more effectively, more efficiently and with lots of fun?" As soon as I started to ask 'how can I reach a million people?', incredible things started to happen.

So, ask the big question and you will get big results. Take massive action and you will get massive results.

Sometimes we don't need to ask the question we just need to listen to what is happening around us.

Have you ever had somebody give you incredibly honest and fair feedback and you felt yourself becoming defensive? It's easy isn't it? To defend the way you have done something, an old habit or a belief system. To be Brilliant at taking feedback, and more importantly, use it constructively is a major step in putting Brilliance into Action.

When I wrote "How To Be Brilliant" (2nd Ed.) I was very lucky in that my editor had many examples of best sellers under her belt and knew how to make a book readable, enjoyable, and most importantly, popular throughout the planet. I was so proud to finish the book and send down the manuscript. So when I opened my e-mails and found a 4-page report on everything that 'could be better', my initial reaction, like most people, was to think about the work involved in making all the changes, to be precious about some of the ideas and to ask what do they know about personal development training?

However, my goal is to be a Brilliant writer as well as a Brilliant presenter and teacher, so I started to read the feedback in a different way choosing to get excited about every observation. I was taken back to my childhood when I would spend time writing a wonderful story for English and it would come back covered in red ink and often with the words "See me" at the bottom of the page. Do you remember that sinking feeling when that happens to you? Well we're adults now but it doesn't take away the fact that we have an emotional response to criticism.

Sometimes, when we receive criticism, we cover it up by saying things like "Oh you spotted my deliberate mistake" or "It was meant to be like that", when really we should take criticism the same way as we receive a gift - thank the person for it, look carefully to see if the gift serves us, and if necessary, use it or throw it in the bin. Sometimes people give unnecessary criticism but often it is based on some degree of truth.

I would like to introduce you to a few people who have struck me as Brilliant recently? I think it's about time I introduced you to Harry.

Whilst working in Melbourne Australia and having just left the amazing city of Sydney, I met Harry. Sydney has many extraordinary places and people and generally a Brilliant attitude amongst its citizens. I was tempted to write about some of the great experiences of Bondi or the Bridge - but that was before I met Harry!

Harry Nicolaides, until recently, was the concierge at Rydges Hotel in Melbourne. He's famous! Why? Well if you haven't guessed by now, he is Brilliant. As a 'concierge' goes you would expect them to know how to get from one side of the city to another, how to acquire tickets at a minute's notice or to be able to give tips on a great night out. Harry does all this and a whole lot more.



My producer and I were walking through reception when Harry appeared. He was looking

very dapper in an expensive suit and silk tie; in fact you would be right to mistake him as the Manager. After an introduction, Harry started to ask us questions. Every question helps him to complete his internal filing system on the needs of his guests. Within a few minutes he had arranged car hire, recommended a two hour whistle stop city tour, produced

complimentary tickets for some of the top attractions and given an inside track on our client for the next day. Wow! Fantastic job, but that was just the beginning.

Later that day, my producer left the hotel to begin working with a local technical crew, setting up the venue for the next day. Harry enquired of my whereabouts and was told I was on the rooftop enjoying some sun and relaxing in the pool (it's a tough life training!). 10 minutes later, a waiter arrived by the poolside with a complimentary copy of Harry's book, 'Concierge Confidential' and a cold beer. An outstanding job and was that book impressive! It was filled with stories from Harry's encyclopedia of 5\* service knowledge. I read and laughed over the requests from some of his guests (and how he achieved them)! I was astounded at how he performed beyond the call of duty with even the most mundane of tasks.

Perhaps the best of all was his creativity in the pursuit of Brilliance! What would you do when a guest needs an ostrich feather for her hat on the day of the Melbourne Cup and every avenue appears closed? Harry called his friend at the zoo, a feather was produced, and the generous and surprised ostrich donor was left with a sore bum! Wonderful!

When an important guest arrived the day before he was due to make an important speech, Harry noticed, on his arrival, he had a dreadful cold. Before the VIP had reached his room, Harry had arranged for cough mixture to be placed in the guests' bathroom.

Here's the big question I ask and you should, too - 'What are you doing to Be Brilliant with your customers, colleagues, family and friends right now?' I know Harry is working at it because Brilliance is a habit for the world's greatest concierge.

However you don't have to go to Melbourne to experience Brilliance. Have you met Simon? I met Simon whilst flying on low cost airline Easyjet to Newcastle recently. Simon was class. Greeting every passenger, kneeling down to talk to kids and ensuring everyone was seated.

But Simon came in to his own once he got on the microphone.....

In a wonderful perky voice he announced, "Welcome to this Easyjet flight to Geordieland". Most people cheered but there were one or two groans. Quick as a flash he said, "Don't worry we will get the Mackams home too" (Mackams are people from Sunderland 20 miles south).

He then went on to say "Please put all items in the overhead lockers. The only things that should be on the floor when we take off are your feet and the carpet". This was closely followed by my favourite, "Please turn off any electrical items, especially mobile phones, as they could interfere with the aircraft's navigation systems and the last thing we want to do tonight is end up in Carlisle".

Once we were off the ground they did a quick drinks trolley run where Simon offered everyone a 'cocktail of their choice'. The chancer sitting next to me asked if he could have a pina colada. "No problem at all sir, but it may taste a bit like lager and tonic". And once

again everyone howled.

When we landed at Newcastle, Simon was ready for his grand finale and did the whole welcome in the style of Lily Savage. I had to write it down as it was so good. Get a hard Liverpudlian accent in your head and read on, it went a bit like this: “Hello ladies and gentlemen and welcome to Liverpool. Please don’t even think about getting out of your seats until the plane has come to a complete standstill and that light has gone off. I’m watchin’. Please be careful taking any items out of the overhead lockers because after a landing like that they’re bound to have moved!”

“It’s cold and damp in Newcastle tonight - for a change - so be careful as you go down the steps as they could be a bit slippy, love. The last thing we want is you going A over T. Please make sure you take all items with you but don’t worry if you forget anything because me and the girls are going to a car booty on Sunday and we’re looking for a bit of extra tat. We realise that you have a choice of airlines. I can’t believe you chose Easyjet but as you did I have to say on behalf of all the crew, we appreciate your custom”. Then it happened. For the first time ever on a plane that hadn’t been saved by a brave pilot from certain disaster, everybody burst into applause.

Simon created magic moments for everyone on the plane and what did it cost? Nothing.

Brilliance costs nothing in most cases other than a desire to step up and put the energy into making the effort.

Brilliance, Being Brilliant, Brill Bits are just hooks to hang an extraordinary quality of life onto. It’s not for everyone. I get asked by people, “What if you don’t want to be Brilliant, what if you’re happy with things just the way they are?” I used to argue about the benefits of Brilliance and the amazing results but now I just say, ‘Don’t read the book’.

So what about you now? You’ve read the book, you’ve read the bonus chapter. How would you like to spend two days with me on a live "How to Be Brilliant" seminar? If you would like to know more simply call our office on +44 (0) 191 487 4040, we’d love to share more.

Finally, we are looking for stories of Brilliance all the time. If you have one to share send an email to me at [michaelsdesk@michaelheppell.com](mailto:michaelsdesk@michaelheppell.com)

Thank you for requesting this bonus chapter.

Be Brilliant!

Michael Heppell