



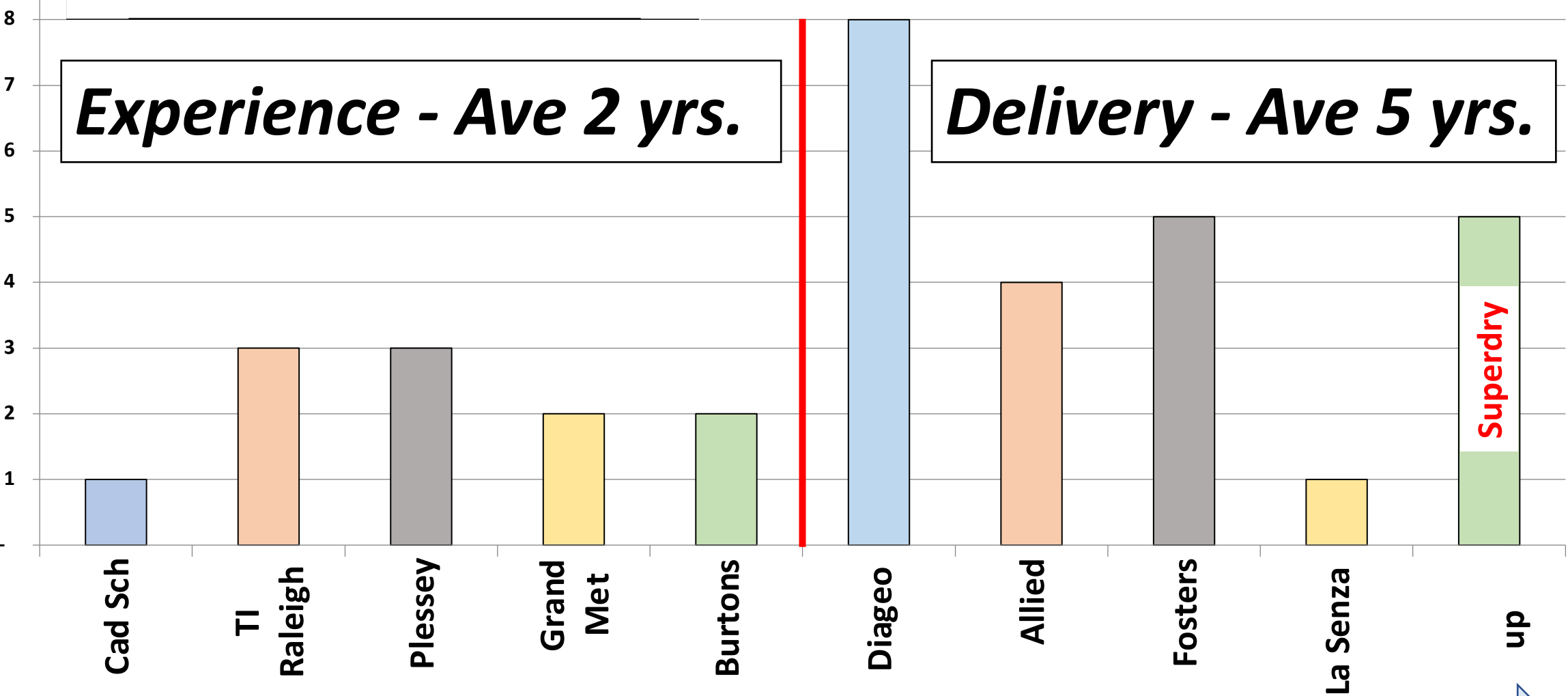
**The Unseen Battle -
Bullied in the Boardroom**



Chas Howes



Career Separated into Two Distinct Parts



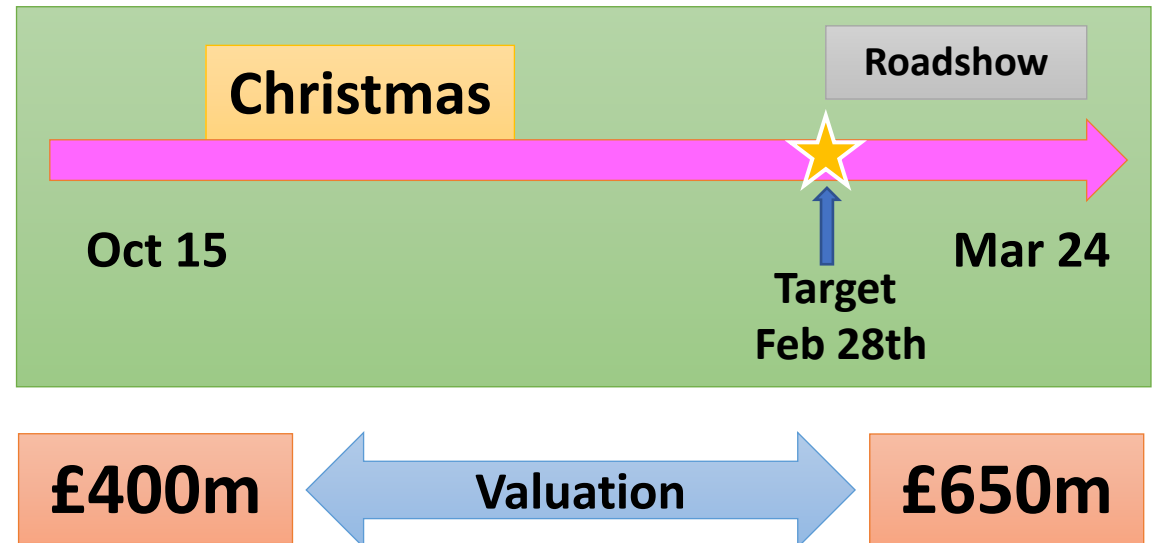
Increasing risk, sacrifice, and reward, but less control

Listing on the London Stock Exchange

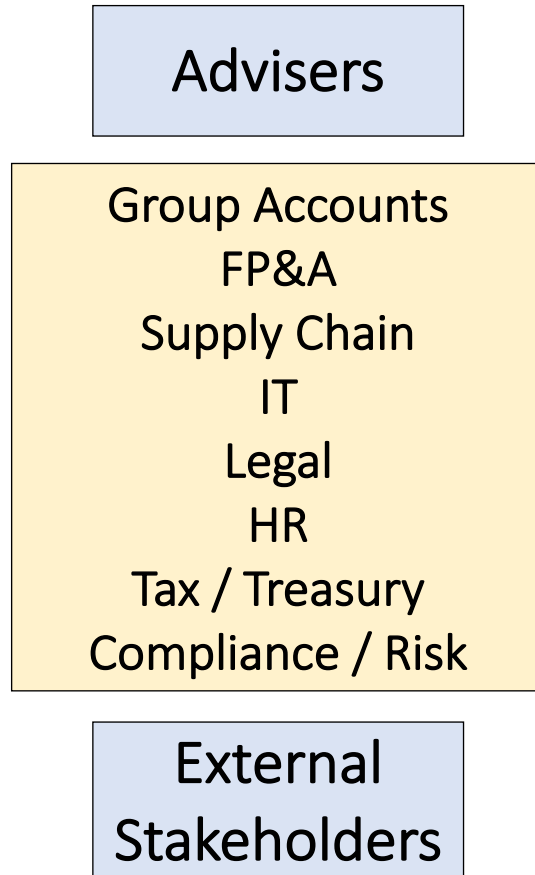
October 15th 2009,
10:22am, car park.....



How much time did we have?



Don't take on too much, rather, create the environment for others to flourish



CFO
Superdry

Trust employees to do their job, ensure them of my support

- **Recruit, reward, retain the best - look for softer skills**
- **Set Behaviour expectations**

“let them sink, but don't let them drown!!”

What Changed After Listing on the Stock Market - Board Structure and Number of Stakeholders

Resources

Board Structure
Pre-Listing

Board Structure
Post-Listing

Resources

Lawyer
Fox
Williams

Julian
Dunkerton
CEO

Non-Exec
Chair
Marketing

Julian
Dunkerton
CEO

London Stock
Exchange

Reporting
Accountant

Company
Secretary

Bank
HSBC

Theo
Karpathios
Wholesale

James
Holder
Design

Chas
Howes
Finance

Non-Exec
Retail /
Finance

Stock Broker
Seymour
Pierce

Large Enough
Finance Team

Financial PR
College Hill

Lawyer
BPE
Solicitors

Chas
Howes
Finance

Diane
Savory
COO

Non-Exec
Online

Non-Exec
Finance

Stock Broker
Merrill Lynch

Due diligence
Accountants

Banks (HSBC/
Barclays)

Auditor

Non-Exec
Supply
Chain

Non-Exec
Finance

City Analyst

Valuation
Accountants

Press /
Newspapers

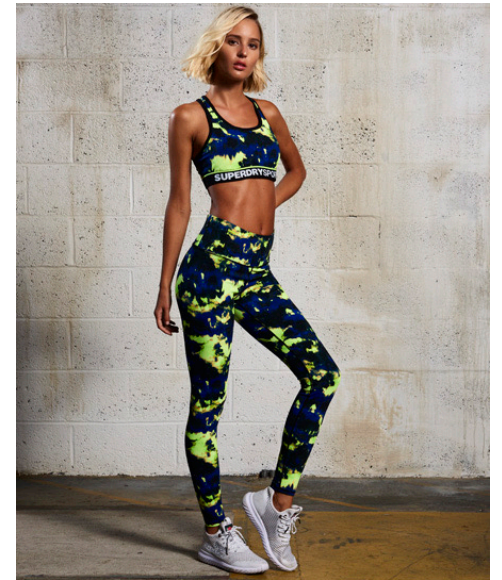
What Changed After Listing on the Stock Market – *Board Behaviour*

Before Listing

- Cooperative
- Friendly
- Business like
- Trusting
- Informal
- Challenging
- Commercial
- Respectful

After Listing

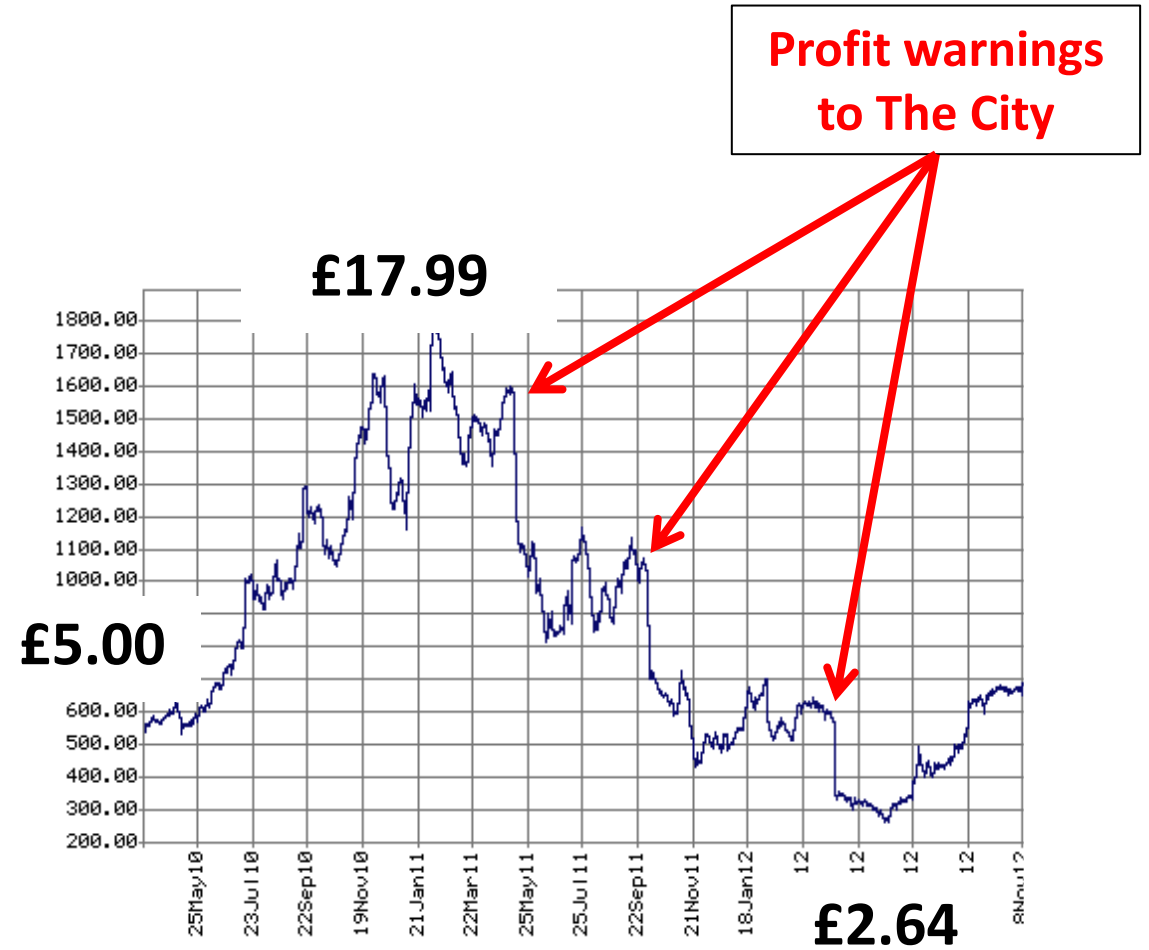
- Meetings behind closed doors
- External pressure for performance
- Shareholder focus
- Aggressive / Bullying
- Challenging
- Point scoring
- Throwing grenades
- Booing from the stands



Behaviour filters down the organisation

Life won't always go perfectly

Fired !!



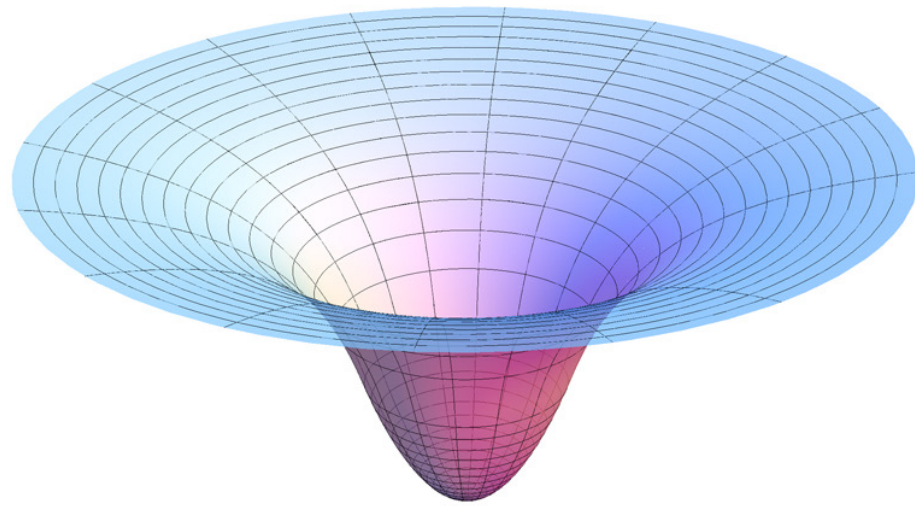
Press /
Newspapers



“There have been
arithmetic errors
in the forecast
.....”

.... but I had
resigned 9
months earlier
due to my wife’s
critical health
condition

Over the next 5 years I disappeared into a black hole of depression



Gravity Well



Christmas 2016
Diagnosed with Clinical Depression

Road to Recovery Lasted a further 6 Years

..... *It's definitely not new 'New Year's Resolutions'*

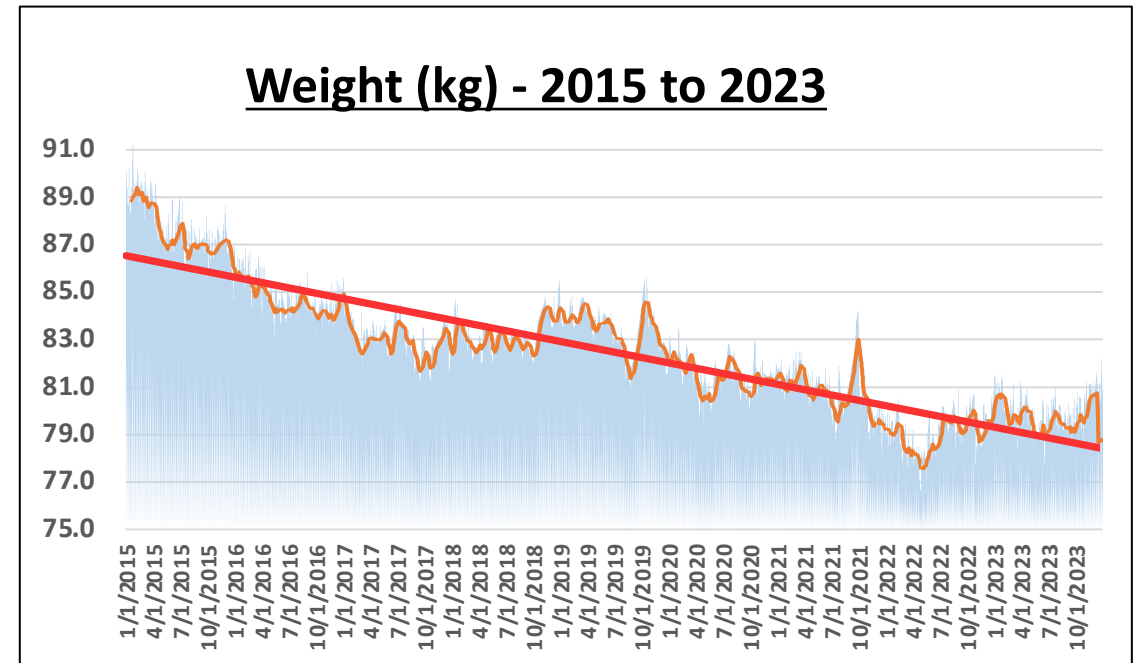
- “Look to Yourself, It’s Inside You” - Hamlet
 - You may discover things you don’t like
 - There is no magic bullet
- Therapy frames the discovery
 - Sceptical at First
 - Childhood – prep and boarding school
 - People pleaser – can’t say no
 - Manage the micro-seconds
- Decision
 - Discover the things you can, and want to do, to change your lifestyle

Road to Recovery Lasted a further 6 Years

“Just one Thing” – Dr Moseley
BBC Radio 4 Podcast

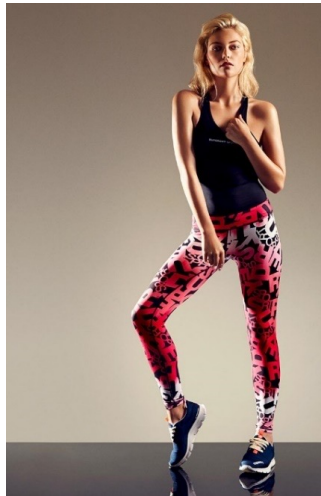


Measured and monitored



Road to Recovery Lasted a further 6 Years

- Medication – relief?
 - BBC Radio 4 Ramblings (*The Highest Hill in the Cotswolds*)
 - Eat well, exercise more
 - Cider making
 - Drumming
 - Stopped drinking
 - Planted trees
 - Art lessons
- Jam Jar – Alistair Campbell
 - Habit Stack – Dr Alex George
 - Five Wells – Andy Salkeld
 - NHS 5 Steps to Emotional Wellbeing

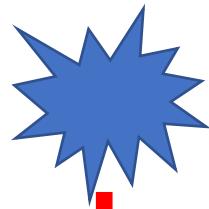


What I discovered

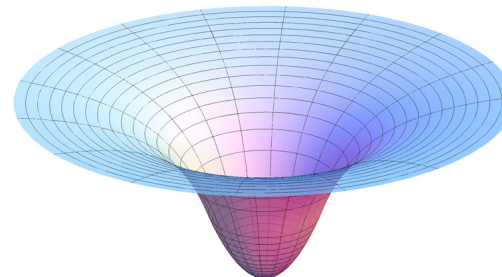
THE PROCESS

Exposure	Someone identifies a vulnerability publicly
↓	
Defence	Stress → attack
↓	
Anger	Lose control
↓	
Guilt	I have done something bad Inversely correlated with shame
↓	
Shame	I am bad! Highly correlated with being bullied.
↓	
Apology	But vulnerability is courage.

THE SWITCH



Depression
- 1 hour to
3 months



THE ANSWER

- Recognise my response once vulnerability is exposed
- Intervene and correct myself in the microsecond
 - I am vulnerable, not weak, and that's OK
- Don't shame myself, offer compassion
- Accept myself

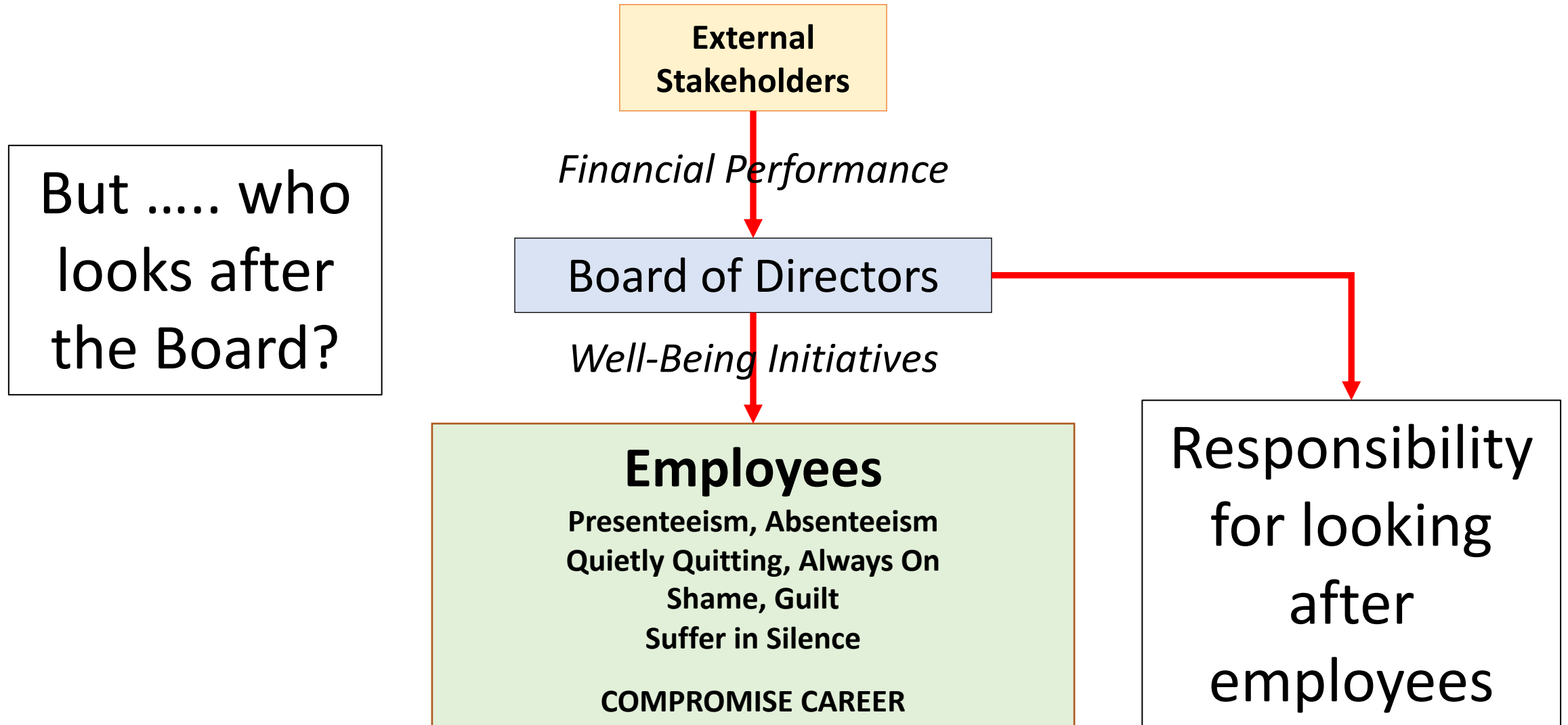
Someone Needs to Break The Stigma

Opening a conversation at work, it's not easy

<u>Condition</u>	<u>Language</u>	<u>Permission</u>	<u>Judgement</u>	<u>Reaction</u>
Broken leg - Visible	Shared	Given	Support Empathy Kindness	Compassion
Mental Health - Invisible	None	Difficult	Self-indulgent Lazy Dangerous	Shame

The Dilemma of Career Building with Depression Remains

To come out ... Or not to come out ... etc



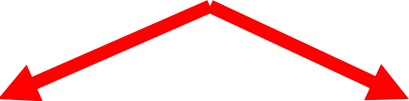
Board Behaviour



Top-down influence and power



Accepted Culture



Careers made by bullying, abusing power and being mean

Male, white, wealthy
Learned behaviour themselves
Avoid looking weak
Gender, diversity, equality

Bullying

Mental health issues
Relationship issues
Financial crisis

Compassion

Supported
Listened to
Treated with respect
Work-life balance

Boardroom Culture is generally not keeping pace with wider conversations

The Business Case is Compelling



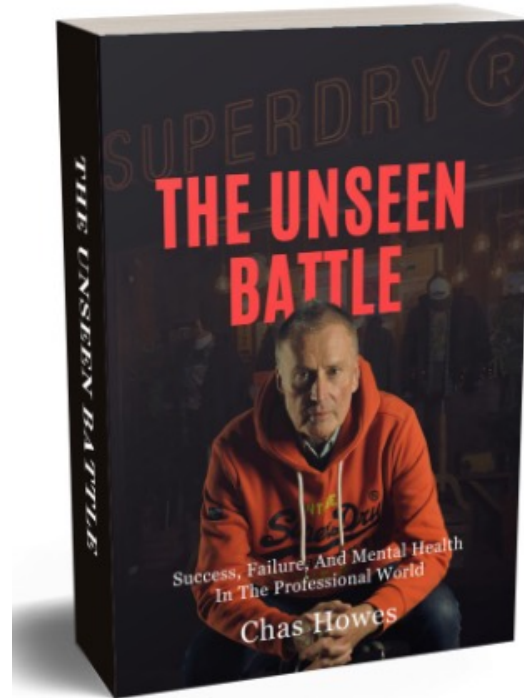
- 2019 National Statistics
 - **Mental health** costs the UK Government c.4% GDP (**£26bn**) due to **NHS** costs, benefits claims and lower tax revenues
 - **57% of all working days lost** was due to mental health (presenteeism, absenteeism, staff turnover, always on), costing employers c.**£44bn**
 - In addition, lost output costs c.£99bn
- Stevenson and Farmer Report (2017)
 - 15% people at work have symptoms of an existing mental health problem
 - **Businesses can get a 5x to 10x return for investing in improved mental health**
- CIPD
 - Good mental health and good management go hand I hand
 - **Those with good mental health are 12% more productive**
- NHS
 - At any point 1 in 6, 16–64-year-olds have a mental health problem
 - There's a proven link between effective leadership and getting enough sleep
 - 9 out of 10 people with mental health issues have experienced stigma and discrimination

To Create Psychologically Safe Work Environments Giving Permission and Language to Talk Freely About Mental Health

1) - Event Speaking



2) - Book / Audio Book



3) – Radio Show



JUST NOT GOOD ENOUGH
WITH CHAS HOWES



Putting mental health at the heart of good business



Blog

READ MORE



My Story

READ MORE



Radio

READ MORE



Ramblings

READ MORE

MY STORY MY BOOK SPEAKING RADIO RAMBLINGS RESOUR

THE UNSEEN BATTLE
Success, Failure, And Mental Health In The
Professional World

MY BOOK

Change Needs a Spark



Antonio Horta-Osoiro



What is Your Plastic Bag Moment

Persuade a FTSE350 CEO to discuss their mental health publicly



**The Unseen Battle -
Bullied in the Boardroom**



Chas Howes

