



Aiwakai Karate do

Corporate Karate?

'I have a strange favour to ask you' was the way a telephone conversation started between Carl Jorgeson, Development Officer for Hartlepool Wadokai Karate Club and Andrew Drummond, the training Manager for Hartlepool based Garlands Call Centre.

Andrew asked Carl to visit Garlands and help in their management training program but the brief given was a little unusual. 'We want you to pretend to be like the bad guy Sensei from the Karate Kid movie'. The session didn't last more than 30 minutes, but it was a great way to build links between Karate and one of the biggest Private Employers in the North East.

The press release covers the outline of the training program.

Press Release

Call Centre managers learn black belt leadership

Tees Valley and South Tyneside, UK, 18th September 2009. Outsourced customer contact specialists Garlands Call Centres have called on the services of local karate association Hartlepool Wadokai to inspire its managers to lead by example.

It's all part of an intensive leadership and cultural change program called 'Soul Train' that's designed to set new performance benchmarks to raise quality and set Garlands apart from its competitors. Since the program was introduced in August, 30 Directors, Managers, Coaches and Trainers have been through the training - that's designed not just to instill a powerful winning mindset but also to deliver easy-to-use tools and techniques to improve management and coaching skills, and enhance communication skills. The Soul Train programme was designed by Results International PLC and developed to meet Garlands' needs.

A key element of the program is an exercise called 'Karate Levers', and it was the idea of Garlands training manager Andrew Drummond and Results International Business Coach Dave Evans to invite Carl Jorgeson, a karate master from the Hartlepool Wadokai, to Garlands last Friday to judge the group's progress and give a practical demonstration of the principles being taught.

"You can imagine the look on people's faces when an actual black-belt turned up to put our group through its paces" said Andrew Drummond. "We wanted people to demonstrate the techniques they'd learnt in a real live situation and we gave Carl a brief to exhibit some of the behaviours of the karate instructor from the 80s movie Karate Kid! It was hugely entertaining – but with a hard business message as well. It was all about visualising success, and about the importance of speed, working to goals, and aiming beyond immediate targets."

"The principles of good leadership are very similar to those taught in karate" explains Carl Jorgeson. "To complete a business task successfully you need to visualise success and have goals beyond what you're trying to do – just like you do when undertaking a move, such as throwing a punch, in karate. There's a difference between a strong punch and an effective punch, like in business, there's a difference between getting a job done and getting it done right."

"We've been delighted by the impact the Soul Train program had had on inspiring our managers to be better leaders" says Steve Norman, Business Development Director at Garlands. "We are confident that this learning will now be communicated and coached throughout the organisation to improve the results we achieve for all our clients."

For more information on the Hartlepool Wadokai, go to www.hartlepoolwadokai.com