

Lessons learnt from the world's toughest yacht race



The BT Global Challenge, dubbed the Worlds toughest yacht race, was an event without parallel, which pitted ordinary people from all walks of life against the toughest conditions known to humans.

14 identical 67ft Ocean going yachts crewed by a team of 14 people sailed against the prevailing winds, currents and tides in what was referred to as the impossible voyage. More people had been in space than had sailed the wrong way round the world.

What made the event unique is that 70% of the crew had never sailed in their lives, and the volunteers were placed in teams without any personal choice. There was no screening or other forms of personality testing normal in most organisations to ensure cultural and personality suitability. It was in effect a worst case scenario for team building but as such the best possible case study.

Humphrey Walters took part in this race as he was seeking a case study which gave extreme examples of teamwork, leadership and motivation which he wanted to study in order to establish what are the critical components essential for survival and high performance in this ultimate challenge.

He wrote a best selling management book entitled "Global Challenge" leadership lessons from the worlds toughest yacht race. This is now widely read for those seeking new insights into leadership and teambuilding at a high level.

The leadership and management lessons behind this extraordinary event are vividly told by Humphrey and the lessons are easily adaptable to the tough environments most of us face although in a less extreme form.

