

FINANCIAL TIMES

“And for my next nick!”

Why magicians are teaching the police some tricks of the trade

Companies have tried many things in their quest to train and motivate staff: games, adventure activities, team-building exercises. Now they're resorting to magic.

Michael Vincent, a former magician of the year, recently performed a range of card tricks and illusions in front of an audience of police chief superintendents. The two five-hour courses cost £3,000 and were intended to boost confidence, encourage leadership skills and to help the police build better relations with the public.

Magic can be useful in the private sector too. James Freedman, a former sleight-of-hand-artist who is the

managing director of Magic Management Marketing and Training, says that many sales techniques are based on tricks “known by every magician”. His company uses “magical thinking” to help clients including Clarins, Guinness, Coca-Cola and Debenhams to communicate.

Magic Management designs training programmes, ranging from single half-hour motivational speeches to two-week residential courses. Recently, the company was asked to help design point of sale and pack material for a client – because, as Freedman explains, who better than a magician to get people to look in a particular direction?

“There's no such thing as real magic,” he adds. “But magic isn't just pulling a rabbit out of a hat; it can have an important function. Magic takes place in the mind of the audience. So does marketing and training.”
www.magicmanagement.com



Edited by Paul Mungo

the loop*

Lies, damned lies, and statistics No 92: Percentage of computer users who have inadvertently sent embarrassing or incriminating e-mails to the wrong person: 60

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