

# The old one-two

Terry Burns of furniture supplier NuTrend found new skills and confidence through a fellow football fan, Design Link's Mike Stevenson

## Mike on Terry

I met Terry around 14 years ago when I was doing some work for Hibernian Football Club. He was already a successful business person and, as we struck up a friendship, I could see he had tremendous potential in terms of developing those business skills.

This didn't begin as a mentor relationship but as our friendship evolved, we worked together on a number of projects.

I once helped him in preparing a wedding speech, something he was very nervous about, and I think he saw me as someone who could help because of my wider life experience.

A few years ago I was chairman of a business network group and asked him along to give a one-minute presentation

about his business. From that time, when Terry was again apprehensive about speaking to a large group of people, I've encouraged and supported him in learning elements of public speaking, such as how to craft a message or to use humour to create an impact.

Terry has grown in confidence so much since then that he is now chairman of that network himself. He came along to a couple of workshops I run through Talking Up for Change ([www.talkupchange.co.uk](http://www.talkupchange.co.uk)), which is an organisation I founded to inspire confidence and ambition in Scottish organisations and businesses.

Terry says it was this experience that inspired him to become involved in helping young people in a South African

township.

Ten years ago Terry would have told you what he couldn't do; now it's about what he can do. It's great he feels I've helped him on this path.

Mentoring doesn't always have to be a structured process or relationship. At many times in my life, I've been helped or supported in a non-directive way. I left school early and worked in a variety of jobs from labouring to wine corkage.

A site foreman in London was my first mentor, as he valued what I did. Whenever there was something new, he showed me how to do it first. It's easy to preach but to show you can do it yourself is so much more powerful.

I'm very much an experiential learner and I think Terry is the same. I also work as a motivational speaker and I







think, in a sense, Terry has also motivated me.

It's worked both ways, as I've realised I had an ability to inspire.

#### **Terry on Mike**

Mike was doing the marketing and design for Hibs when I met him. He was the first programme editor to actually put fans on the front of the programme, rather than the players. So when I saw him, I walked up to him, shook his hand and said: "Can I be your pal?"

We both laughed, but it was the start of a friendship. I first got Mike to create the corporate ID and design for my furniture company. As I got to know him, I realised just how much of a motivator he was, how he always focused on the positives.

I can talk for Scotland, but I was still a bit intimidated about standing in front of 35 fellow business people.

With Mike's help, I pushed myself on. Three years after giving that talk, I'm now chairman of the group. For me, that's a massive achievement.

I thought Mike's Talk Up Change was a fantastic idea, and after getting involved I've grown even more in terms of self-belief. We can take our ideas not just nationwide, but worldwide.

Having become involved with coaching at Spartans football club, Mike's inspirational influence had certainly rubbed off on me, and I came up with the idea of taking the team to a South African township. I also spoke to local secondary school James Gillespie High about their involvement in an

exchange scheme with South African students.

Last summer, Spartans went on a hugely successful 10-day trip to South Africa. Through that, I'm now patron of a school in one of the townships and we are now fund-raising to build a soup kitchen there.

We're also in negotiations about setting up that exchange programme and want to extend it to schools throughout Edinburgh.

All this is through my meeting Mike. I've learned that if you've got imagination, you can do great things ■

*For more information on mentoring or becoming a mentor please contact [employer@determinedtosucceed.co.uk](mailto:employer@determinedtosucceed.co.uk) or call 0141 242 5977*