

## Once Upon a Time

It was resolved to have a boat race between a Japanese team and a team representing HRI. Both teams practised long and hard to reach their peak performance. On the big day they were as ready as they could be. The Japanese won by a mile.

Afterwards the HRI team became very discouraged by the result and morale sagged. Senior management decided that the reason for the crushing defeat had to be found and a working party was set up to investigate the problem and recommend appropriate action.

Their conclusion was that the Japanese team had eight people rowing and one person steering, whereas the HRI team had eight people steering and one person rowing.

Senior management immediately hired a consultancy company to do a study on the team's structure. Millions of pounds and several months later they concluded that 'too many people were steering and not enough rowing'.

To prevent losing to the Japanese next year, the team structure was changed to three 'Assistant Steering Managers', three 'Steering Managers', one 'Executive Steering Manager' and a 'Director of Steering Services'. A performance and appraisal system was set up to give the person rowing the boat more incentive to work harder.

The next year the Japanese won by two miles. HRI laid off the rower for poor performance, sold off all the paddles, cancelled all capital investment for new equipment and halted development of a new canoe. The money saved was used to fund higher than average pay awards to senior management.

A MESSAGE FOR US ALL!?