

## The Philosophy of Budgerigaring

Birdman just loves management theories. Heaven knows why he married someone who likes to study. And he loves it even better when I've read a book with a new theory and spend the next few weeks filling him on all the little details. He gets this vacant look on his face and tunes right out.

I'm sure women all over the world are familiar with this blank look. You know the eyes glaze over and they say yes when they should be saying no. Then six weeks later they look you straight in the face and swear that you never told them anything. Even though you had spent hours going over the minute details of whatever it was they weren't interested in enough to listen to until it suddenly involved them having to do it.

Why I am telling you all this? I have just started the most interesting course of study, which instead of exciting Birdman with, I thought I might just share it with you.

Funny enough Birdman has used some of this stuff when he first got into the birds. He started off with an old cage aviary with 18 birds. First he set himself a vision. He envisaged a proper aviary with good quality birds. He knew his vision was realistic and achievable. So he worked out how to get the aviary built, set some goals and within 12 months the new aviary was a reality. He had achieved part of his vision.

At the same time he set himself some goals for achieving the good quality he wanted for his birds. He made a commitment to continuous learning. He read every book and magazine on budgies that he could get hold of. I never even knew they had magazines on Budgerigars until he brought home Budgerigar World from England, Budgerigar from New South Wales and Cage and Aviary from the newsagents. He was truly a global reader. I was amazed. I wasn't even sure that he could read anything but the sports section of the Sunday Mail until the budgie obsession.

Not only did he read but also he asked questions. He asked old breeders or should I say breeders who were experienced and had a good track record of producing good quality birds. The questions were probably endless until he found the answers to his growing questions. He still reads and he still asks questions. He has a commitment to continuous learning to improve his knowledge of budgies.

He worked out his philosophy and had me print up these words. Quality not Quantity. He keeps them on the wall of the aviary. He also has pinned up on the aviary wall all the qualities that make up a champion bird. i.e. overall size, facial width, depth of mask, frontal rise, back skull, solid shoulders, good backline and stands off the perch. He is committed to quality and never loses sight of his vision. To achieve his vision he set some S.M.A.R.T. goals i.e. Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time referenced. He revises his goals every now and then and makes sure they are still relevant and linked to his vision of achieving quality.

Total Quality Management. He uses the best feed, the best medicine, the best cages, the latest information and the best methods of breeding (within financial constraints). He is committed to a process of continual improvement. Little by little achieving some success. Sometimes he has setbacks but overall it is a gradual uphill improvement. Nothing breeds success like success. So achievable goals that link to the next achievement is definitely the way to go.

Somewhere down the track, like all breeders he is hoping for a bird that will win the Nationals. Just don't tell him he achieved it by using a theory that is written up in a management textbook. It might upset his Constitution. And my lecturer will be oh so pleased to see what I've learnt from 140 hours of lectures and four assignments so far. Mind you I don't think I'll get a distinction if I submit this Hens Tales as one of my assignments. Happy envisioning. Until next time.

*Debby Gower.*