

## Rugby to Real Estate - Leadership Skills Learnt

Tuesday 18 October 2016, Trowers & Hamblins, Bunhill Row, London EC1

Host: Christina Sigliano, JLL  
Chair: Jennie Gubbins, Trowers & Hamblins  
Speakers: Tim Rodber, The Instant Group  
Matt Dawson, The Instant Group

This was a special evening arranged for CoreNet members only. Two of England's rugby stars were here to tell us how their sporting careers had influenced their working life and how we can make use, in our own working lives, of some of the lessons they had learnt. And while this is a serious subject, in their double act they managed to treat it in a typically lighthearted way.

The evening lead off with **Christina Sigliano**, who heads up CoreNet UK's programmes committee and who, having reminded us of a few upcoming events and pointed out other programme committee members present, introduced **Jennie Gubbins**, senior partner of our hosts Trowers & Hamblins.



Jennie gave us a brief outline of Trowers & Hamblins, an international law firm with 157 partners and a large (60% of firm) corporate real estate practice. She also gave us a little quiz - photos of cities - before introducing the main event of the evening.

**Tim Rodber** and **Matt Dawson**, respectively ceo and director of The Instant Group, are rugby buddies from the early 1990s when both played for Northampton Saints and then toured with England and the British and Irish Lions. Tim joined the army before his rugby career, Matt has added participation in *A Question of Sport*, *Celebrity Master Chef*, and *Strictly Come Dancing* to his cv and moonlights as a presenter on *Radio Five Live's* weekly rugby programme. The closeness of their long association, evident from the constant banter between the two, provided a seamless stream of teasing and anecdotes to illustrate their message.

Gleaned from his army training (he was a captain in the Green Howards) and his rugby career, Tim's four 'critical things' are:

- \* Know Yourself - by which he means in business especially you need to confront personal issues
- \* Know your Market - ie understand your customers, their needs and wants
- \* Know how to Make Money - most important this: managing your expenses
- \* Understand the Culture - of your team: most successful teams are successful because they have unity



And, Matt added, success drives success - goals achieved by the team lead to more goals, but building team spirit is not easy. Then understanding change, they said, is equally important - alongside the impact provided by IT and globalisation, currently Brexit is providing another bump in the road. Real estate professionals need to be organised and ready for the next trend. Learn the lessons, they said, build your team and drive it forward.

The Q&A brought out lessons learned from rugby: the importance of real communication (not just emailing across the desk), knowing as much as possible about your opposition, discipline, being brave and leading, making decisions quickly, and managing, mentoring and developing your team.

Wrapping up, Jennie gave her thanks to the pair for an entertaining and illuminating evening before inviting us all to carry on the discussion over a drink and a canapé. And very delicious too.

*Matt Dawson regularly writes a blog - you may be interested in his views....*

<http://www.theinstantgroup.com/en-gb/news/2016/10/co-working-has-become-hot-news-of-late-and-why-not/>

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