



# Best Business

## Carte Blanche feature

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*"Africa's 60 minutes"*

Transcript available at: <http://www.cartelblanche.co.za/Display/Display.asp?Id=3121>

Edited video clip at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=56SgBbF5rrk>



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**Producer :** Odette Quesnel, Nicola de Chaud

**Presenter :** Derek Watts

**Researcher :** Penny Peppa

**Genre :** Business and Financial, General Interest

Frank is one of our most valued employees here at Grey White & Associates. For 15 years he has enthusiastically clocked in on time. His motto: "If you're not early, you're late". From nine to five every day Frank keeps our clients happy. He even punches away at his own reports, making him most popular with the girls in the typing pool.

Dr Graeme Codrington (Futurist, TomorrowToday): "When my father started working, there was an expectation that you got a good job at a big company and stayed there."

That is very much a thing of the past, says trend spotter and futurist Graeme Codrington.

Graeme: "There has been a massive shift globally around the world. The shift has been that companies no longer provide security."

But they are providing all kinds of other things.

Derek Watts (Carte Blanche presenter): "Some top companies are giving corporate South Africa a wake up as they give new meaning to the nine to five working day."

At Hollard Insurance, employees are literally climbing the walls. Only, here it's a good thing. It's partly why Hollard is rated the best insurance company to work for in the Deloitte's Financial Mail Best Companies survey.

Paolo Cavallieri (CEO, Hollard Insurance): "We attract people that share the same families that we have. Like for example that we do spend a lot of time in life in the office, so lets make sure it is a fun place to be."

CEO Paolo Cavallieri has invested heavily in his staff's well being. Benefits include on-site physiotherapists, doctors, nurses and a fully equipped gym.

Linda Scott (IT Hollard Insurance) [in company gym]: "On Tuesdays and Thursdays we do 'bums and tums'."

Derek: "If you didn't have this facility, would you go to a gym?"

Linda: "No."

Hitting the gym every day are Hollard heroes Ramon Di Clemente and Donavon Cech. As Olympic rowers going for gold, they need to take a lot of time off work to train; their biggest supporter... the boss.

Paolo: "In the last six years they have won silver and bronze every year without fail, but never gold. So we have become very choosy now, and with them we are going for gold in China."

A racing car enthusiast and former Olympic rower himself, Paolo is driven to win – which is what drives the work ethic at Hollard.

Paolo: "We are in business and ultimately we need to make sure we are winning. That is critical, I think."

Derek: "Now, there seems to be a conflict here, because the demands are increasing in the corporate world and yet we are talking about a softer environment."

Graeme: "There is a paradox. But the paradox is between talented people who genuinely want to graft hard and working environments that respect the fact that someone who is putting in that much effort needs to be protected."

Graeme, who works from home, says it's about work-life balance.

Jane Codrington: "I enjoy the fact that he can watch us and that he is there."

But, wife, Jane says it's really important to set firm boundaries.

Jane: "He is also quite good at shutting his study door. The girls are good at knowing that when he's on the phone, they pretty much shouldn't disturb him. Every day is different and it's all about juggling really."

This juggling act is a corporate trend, which is being fast tracked internationally by one of the wealthiest men in the United States. The CEO of software giant, S.A.S. - Dr Jim Goodnight

Dr Jim Goodnight (CEO, SAS): "What we produce comes out of our people's minds. And those people drive right out of the front gate every night at five o'clock. These are my assets driving away and it is my job to get them back."

With more than 10 000 employees in 424 offices worldwide, SAS boasts a staff turnover of less than 4% which saves the company about a hundred million dollars a year.

Jim: "We pay competitive salaries and we are quite competitive in all the ways we need to be. But then we also throw in additional benefits."

Massages, gyms and daycare, and 35-hour working weeks are features at most S.A.S

offices.

Bill Hoggarth (MD, SAS South Africa): "We certainly believe that looking after our folks enables them to be closely committed to the goals of our organisation."

SAS headquarters in the US boasts Montessori schools for almost a thousand children, a medical centre, basketball courts, swimming pool, hairdressers, and even life skills training.

Jim: "We have about five professionals whose job it is to do things like give seminars on how to raise your kids and what happens when your child goes off to school."

Graeme: "One of the biggest things that impacts on people's effectiveness in the workplace is if they get divorced. So doesn't it just make financial sense, if no other sense, to a company to spend some time protecting the marriages of their staff?"

Derek: "You mean just from a mercenary point of view?"

Graeme: "You could argue that is actually a mercenary thing to be nice, because it is a case of saying: well hang on, if your teenage kids are going wild you are going to take your eye off the ball at the office. So actually it is in our best interests to keep your marriage intact, to help you connect with your kids and make sure you don't have a heart attack by the age of 55."

And some companies bring on the goodies.

Darren Cronje (Art Director, Net#work BBDO): "Strawberry pops in the morning. Chocolate and popcorn - you can't forget about the popcorn. I think food is actually quite a big incentive here."

Derek: "Net#work BBDO has been voted by their staff as the best advertising agency to work for, which is surprising when you look at their motto. The sign when you walk in here says the three things we care about the most is the work, the work and the work."

Mike Schalit (Chief Creative Officer, Net#work BBDO): "Exactly, exactly, exactly."

But bosses Mike Schalit and Abdulla Miya believe that people do their best work when they're having fun.

Mike: "You have to find a balance where you can give the guys the opportunity to be creative and also to keep them here, because they are working here most of the time anyway. They are long hours we put in here for our clients, so we at least want to make them pleasurable."

Darren: "There is a lot of late working at night and stuff. But it sort of balances out when you can play ping pong."

Abdulla Miya (Managing Director, Net#work BBDO): "One of the things we have often said here at the agency is that we don't pay you to come to work, we pay you to work."

Which means work doesn't have to happen behind a desk between nine and five.

Xolisa Radebe (Copywriter - Net#work BBDO): "That idea that you can only work between four walls... you can leave your office where you think you can be creatively inspired."

Derek: "Which could be the local pub?"

Xolisa: "Sometimes."

Things are a lot less casual over at S.A Breweries.

Tony van Kralingen (Managing Director, SAB): "It's a hard performance culture. Like in the Merchant of Venice, we demand our pound of flesh."

Even so, CEO Tony van Kralingen says there's good reason why Breweries constantly makes it onto the top ten best companies list.

Tony: "We invest a huge amount in training. On average each one of our employees - we have eight thousand - will get eight days of training a year."

That's three times the international benchmark for skills development.

Graeme: "SAB, Anglo-American have always had a great reputation. Not necessarily because they have all of the amenities, but what they do have is CV building ability."

So if you want a big career, this is your kind of company.

Clifford Raphiri (Manufacturing Director, SAB): "At the brewery each person never clocks out because you are always engaged. You're thinking about work after hours, you know, you never clock out."

Here work-life balance is not a corporate priority.

Tony: "You make a choice about what you want. You can't work nine to five and expect work not to interfere in your social or personal life and then have a huge career. Because what comes with work is a bit more commitment and time."

While flexi-time helps some staff cope with family needs, you won't find the kids coming into work. The picture is quite different over at one of the companies that trains brewery managers. Here youngsters are welcome.

Jules Newton (Managing Director, Avovision): "One of them is my own teenager and to know that he is here doing his homework, studying instead of roaming the streets unsupervised, is a very powerful de-stressor for me."

Avovision bosses Jules Newton and Elaine Sampson teach top companies how to stay ahead of the game by meeting the emotional needs of their staff.

Elaine Sampson (Operations Director, Avovision): "I think now people want to feel fulfilled in the workplace. It is not enough just to produce; it has got to add value to their lives."

Graeme: "People are looking for: Am I being personally developed? Is my manager mentoring and coaching me? Am I being challenged? Can I express my creativity? Do I like getting up in the morning? Do I like who I am in this workspace?"

Even the workspace is changing. As technology develops, the office as we know it could also become a thing of the past.

Graeme's company, for example, employs about 30 people – none of them have an office to go to.

Graeme: "We all work from home. We all have laptops and cell phones and that is where the office is - wherever the laptops and cell phones are."

The 'work away from the office' mentality is embraced by Anton Musgrave, Executive Director of leading wealth management company, Citadel.

Anton Musgrave, (Executive Director, Citadel): "If you can achieve the desired and mutually agreed level of output and still reduce your golf handicap, then fantastic, we're happy for you."

In other words, get the job done and it's okay that you're not in the office.

Anton: "Business traditionally doesn't trust enough. Business somehow thinks that by controlling and developing a sense of ownership over an individual that you in fact own them. And the reality is of course that you don't. And they will be sitting there shovelling paper, but their minds - which is the most important part - will be on the golf course, or the burst geyser at home or on the cricket pitch with their nine-year-old playing his first match for the C-team."

So this captain of business lets home come to work.

Anton: "People respond amazingly well to the fact that you trust them, to the fact that you empower them and you set them free. And with that freedom and that empowerment comes a huge sense of responsibility and accountability."

The bottom line is that it's all about the bottom line.

Graeme: "It comes down more and more these days to who you are. And if who you are is who you hire, then your ability to attract and employ talented people is your most important competitive advantage in the 21<sup>st</sup> century."