



# *Gorilla in the Midst*

Auditing to Add Value

## SAMPLE PAGES

### The Guide

to the video for facilitators and self study

Produced by  
Nicholas & Smith Pty Ltd

Nicholas & Smith Pty Ltd ABN 19 002 762 307  
PO Box 2006 Rose Bay North NSW 2030, Australia  
Phone (61 2) 9664 6755 Fax (61 2) 9664 8455  
email [info@nicholasandsmith.com](mailto:info@nicholasandsmith.com)  
[www.nicholasandsmith.com](http://www.nicholasandsmith.com)

# Contents

<b>Part 1 - Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
• Reproduction and transmission rights	3
• Background to video resource	3
• Who this video resource is for	4
• Objectives of video resource	4
• What the package contains	4
• The symbols in this guide	5
<b>Part 2 - The Big Picture</b>	<b>6</b>
• Why Gorilla in the Midst?	6
• Systems thinking	7
• Adding value	9
<b>Part 3 - Characteristics of Effective Auditors</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Part 4 - Audit Process</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Part 5 - Personal Traits</b>	<b>13</b>
• Desirable traits	13
• Dark side traits	18
<b>Part 6 - Power</b>	<b>21</b>
• Knowledge power versus authority power	21
• How to Build Knowledge	23
<b>Part 7 - Influence</b>	<b>24</b>
• <b>Building Relationships</b>	<b>26</b>
1. Understanding them and their environment	26
2. Communication	28
3. Give to receive	36
4. Get commitment	38
5. Maintain trust	39
• <b>Rational Persuasion</b>	<b>41</b>

# Part 1 - Introduction

## **Reproduction, transmission and licence rights**

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## **Background to video resource**

The auditing role has changed significantly and much is expected of auditors. The trend is towards auditing outcomes rather than only compliance. The focus is on adding value to management system audits and to the business overall. This is exemplified in new and revised international standards and in industry standards being adopted worldwide by business.

To be able to investigate and collect the quality of evidence which ensures an effective audit, auditors must have a broad range of business knowledge and skills. They may also require specialist or technical knowledge in a particular field such as aerospace, health management and so on.

How well auditors perform in their role is dependent on the auditor's behavioural traits and their influencing skills. This requires auditors to have an insight into their own behaviours and an appreciation of any dark side traits or derailment behaviours that may cause them to fail in their auditing role.

## Who this video resource is for

- **Auditors**
- **Organisations** which use standards such as ISO 9001:2000, ISO 14001, and management systems within Health and Safety, HACCP, Aged and Health Care, GMP and other international and industry standards and codes of practice.
- **Consultants** and trainers.

This video and guide is designed for use by a facilitator during a group training session or by an individual manager, supervisor or auditor for self-paced learning. The guide summarises the key points from the video. It contains questions and exercises to build upon these points and reinforce the main concepts.

## Objectives of video resource

This program is a resource to help auditors and business managers to:

- Understand the purpose of auditing and its contribution to the business performance of organisations.
- Appreciate the wide range of business skills needed to undertake an effective audit.
- Gain an insight into their personal attributes and their audit behaviours, with reference to specific desirable behaviours and dark side traits which can cause an auditor to succeed or fail in their role.
- Understand the terms 'power and influence' and how an auditor uses influence to add value to the business, through the audit process.

## What the package contains

The package consists of a video and guide to help facilitators run a successful training session. It can also be used by managers and supervisors in self-paced learning. It includes:

- Video
- CDROM containing:
  - ⇒ Guide for facilitator or for self paced learning
  - ⇒ Slide Presentation in Microsoft PowerPoint

This guide and slide presentation are designed to be used with the video program. They allow the facilitator to build on the material delivered in the video and to tailor the program for staff by editing the guide and slides and adding specific examples from their organisation.

## **The symbols in this guide**



**Points raised in the video**



**Complete the activity**

## Part 2 - The Big Picture

### Why Gorilla in the Midst?

Recent studies at Harvard University found that people can miss significant visual events when their attention is narrowly focused. In one experiment, subjects were asked to view basketball on screen and to count the number of passes made by each basketball team. The researchers then sent a person dressed in a gorilla suit through the court, for about 8 seconds. Nearly all observers got the pass count right but 50% missed seeing the gorilla. They term this phenomena inattentional blindness.

This concept is used in the video to introduce the key point that auditors too can miss significant events in terms of a business and its outcomes when their attention is too narrowly focused, for example on documentation detail rather than the intent of the document. Auditors need to have a broad view of the business and its objectives in order to perform their role.

Refer PowerPoint Slide 1



### Video Interviews

*When people are concentrating on factual information it's certainly common for the majority of people to focus closely on the detail they are working with and it's a relatively tall order to ask someone to see the bigger picture.*



Comment on whether you think people tend to focus on detail or is it more natural for people to look at the big picture?

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At your workplace, can you give a 'real' example (not necessarily from an auditing situation) which shows the downside of not being able to connect detail to the bigger picture?

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## **Systems Thinking**

A business is not managed as a collection of independent parts or processes. It is managed as a system. So for auditors, a broader view is necessary. It's not the trees, it's the forest.

The type of questions you might ask yourself to help you think in terms of systems include:

- What are the organisation's goals and objectives?
- How is the system helping to achieve these goals?
- What are the critical success factors of a particular process?
- What about the future? Will this process continue to support the customer, considering the changing customer needs?



## Video Interviews

*When I am auditing I find it's very important to understand the bigger picture and that gives me an understanding of the system that's actually being audited. When I audit I am sampling small parts of a bigger system and (so) there's a risk that I'll miss opportunities or improvements that could actually exist within the organisation.*

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*A good example of that is if you are auditing an accounts department they may have a really good procedure for issuing credits within the department to customers however from the customers point of view that procedure may be absolutely terrible.*

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*I know I am thinking of systems and auditing systems when I'm considering the organisation's goals, considering its objectives and when I'm considering how the customer links into how the organisation operates.*

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What does systems thinking mean to you?

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## Adding value

Much has changed in the role and function of the auditor. Auditing is no longer a matter of merely checking and ticking. Effective auditors are about more than compliance. They are about evaluating outcomes to improve business performance. The auditor’s goal is to find which parts of the business are working for the organisation and its stakeholders, and which parts are not. It’s about taking a wider view. It’s about auditing to add value.



### Video Interviews

*Our standards now such as ISO 9001:2000 are a lot less prescriptive than they were and they tend to focus a lot more on outcomes rather than simply compliance with a whole series of procedures. The requirement is there to see whether processes are working in an effective manner. For example it does require a business to have an effective internal communication process. It doesn’t require a procedure but you need to talk to people, look at information flows, look at notice boards, look at the culture of the organisation to be able to assess whether the internal communication system is effective.*



## Part 3 - Characteristics of effective auditors

### **1. Audit Process**

Effective auditors know how to plan and structure an audit, and how to report findings.

### **2. Personal Traits**

Effective auditors have an insight into their own personality – their desirable traits as well as their dark side traits.

### **3. Power**

Effective auditors demonstrate a particular type of power, which is a product of their business knowledge and experience.

### **4. Influence**

Effective auditors have the ability to build relationships and persuade people to share information and act on findings.

Refer PowerPoint Slide 2