

The two hour check-in queue.

Last month we sneaked in a short holiday. On the return journey six or seven bus loads of passengers arrived to check-in for our flight at the same time. It soon became apparent that the three check-in desks were extremely inefficient and the average processing time per couple or party was between four and five minutes. It was now 6.30am and the flight was due to leave at 9.00am. So, a quick calculation made us realise that the flight was unlikely to take off on time and we were in for a long wait in the queue. As we queued we noticed very different responses by those around us. Some people went to the coffee shop and had a nice breakfast while the queue went down. Some struck up conversation with their next door neighbours in the queue and made new friends. Others stewed in rage and got more and more wound up as time progressed. In the end we were all processed and everyone got the plane, even if it did take off a few minutes late.

On the plane we reflected on the wide range of responses that were chosen to the same event. Clearly, different responses had achieved very different outcomes. Sometimes this is written in the form of an equation: **event + response = outcome**.

How often do we choose our response to events?

Are we aware of our emotional responses to events?

How often do we blame events for our outcomes?

How often do we reflect on what we did well and what we could do different in future so that we learn from the past? As the saying goes: "If you always do what you always did, you'll always get what you always got." We may not be able to get perfect outcomes for ourselves every time but we can always benefit from the learning.

Food for thought?

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