**A Tiger is Always 5 Minutes Early**

The “5 minutes before parade” thing … yes, still guilty after all these years. How many other Veteran Tigers are doing the same? It is a habit born of military service that will carry you well in Civvy Street so do not abandon it. Punctuality and precise adherence to time are at the centre of British military operations and doctrine. Being on time for clients, colleagues and superiors will gain you respect; being late is (still) unacceptable.

Your punctuality says a lot about you. The reason for meeting times and deadlines is to allow for coordination of effort, to minimise waste and to set expectations. It is not uncommon for people to be late for meetings, or deadlines, indeed it can sometimes seem like an epidemic in Civvy Street. The reality remains, though, that being late and keeping others waiting is:

* **Inconsiderate**

Being late can show a lack of consideration and respect for others and highlights poor time management.

* **Big-Timing**

Intentionally being late is about power. Veterans are leaders and leaders lead by good example.

* **Poor for Your Credibility**

Missing a meeting or deadline reflects on your trustworthiness. If you cannot be relied upon to be on time, how could you possibly have credibility for greater responsibility and promotion?

* **Bad for The Bottom Line**

Sauntering in ten minutes late just wastes other peoples’ time, and your company’s money.

* **Muddled**

If you cannot manage time, what other parts of your life are on the edge of disaster? Being late can indicate that you are disorganised.

* **A Poor reflection**

Some liken being busy with status. However the successful know that is rubbish. Having a perpetually hectic schedule just shows your inability to prioritise or say “no” – neither are endearing traits.

* **Megalomaniacal**

Most grow out of this before the age of ten. However, there are those who sincerely believe they are the centre of the universe. Narcissism is not attractive. Arbitrarily it is decided not to do the thing you committed to at the very last minute. Seriously?

Sometimes an actual emergency happens, or an unforeseen incident transpires that can make you late. If it happens, give an account of the cause, treat it seriously, always apologise, assure that it will not happen again.

All Veterans will have differing daily routines, many will be in full-time employment, and some will be running businesses. No matter what, the element of timeliness learnt as a Tiger incorporated into civilian life can make a Veteran’s life better. A planned routine and excellent time management are crucial to demonstrating those qualities of a Veteran.  Infect your colleagues with this.

Approach time management like a triage situation. Assess importance as well as the likelihood of a positive outcome.

Five Minutes Early Is on Time; On Time Is Late; Late Is Unacceptable.