

Leadership lessons from 12 Angry Men – lesson 2



This second lesson “Be prepared” is quite possibly a precursor of the previous lesson “Stand up and be counted”; it’s the being prepared that, maybe, stops you getting shot down.

This scene is an excellent example, not only of being prepared, but also of the use of “Kairos” (the right or opportune moment)

Juror n°8 asks for the knife to be brought in, fully knowing that he has exactly the same knife in his pocket. He lets juror n°4 open and manipulate the knife but says nothing about the knife in his pocket.

He simply questions the possibility of the existence of a second knife and lets the tension build up to the point where juror n°3 (the “nemesis” of juror n°8) becomes excited; it’s at this moment that he stands up (having been seated up till now) and produces the second knife.

Of course, he could have shown the second knife earlier and it would undoubtedly have had an impact; however, by waiting and changing his body position, he creates not only an intellectual impact but also an emotional impact – and we all know that an emotional impact creates a longer lasting memory than an intellectual impact

