

# Motivating your Mind Inspiring your Spirit

2014 E-BOOK





# Welcome

December 2013

## Dear Reader

This e-book has been compiled from the generous contributions of over 90 Australian, Asian, European, New Zealand, South African and United States authors, industry experts, CEO's, CFO's, Company Directors and business owners we have known and worked with in the professional education and MICE\* industry.

Together, these e-book contributors have over 2600 years of business experience and 4400 years of people experience. Some younger, some more experienced, yet all exceptionally talented, intelligent and gifted in their areas of expertise.

None of our contributors were paid for their articles **nor** were they charged a fee to be involved. There is immeasurable value from each co-author's contribution. I deeply appreciate their time and knowledge they have given to this joint venture project.

## E-book Purpose

This e-book was created for readers to enjoy. I trust the stories, tips, ideas, insights and case studies can benefit you at a business, professional or personal education level to be of help in your future development.

As a complimentary gift and 'added value' benefit from our network of contributors, this e book is **FREE** to you as the reader. As the reader, feel free to send this e-book to colleagues, business associates, friends or whoever you feel would enjoy the content via email, social media links or in having a bite of lunch or chat with someone whose company you enjoy.

## Special Thanks

To **Monika Newman**, owner of **Absolutely Virtual** based in Sydney, Australia. Thank you for saying '**YES**' as our 2014 e-book designer, project coordinator and administrator with our worldwide contributors to help create this e-book.

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## Thank you to each of our contributors

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I have worked alongside many of you at client events, at MICE \* industry functions or known of you through our mutual experts in the cities in which we interact and countries that we have crossed paths during our travels.

Most of you are members of a professional association or organisation we have been a part of over many years. We have either served in a volunteer role together or in similar leadership or Director Roles, hence I understand the ethics and character virtues you bring to this e-book through your contribution and collaboration.

**Thank you** for your gift in giving to our readers and our mutual audiences around the world with your article(s).

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\*MICE = Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Events



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## Further Contact

Each contributing author has their own particular area of expertise in business and life.

If you want any further information, feel free to contact them individually using their details as listed on their page or in their bio.

## ACRONYM Meanings

**CPAE:** Council of Peers Award of Excellence is awarded through the National Speakers Association (United States) in which less than 150 speakers worldwide have been awarded this distinction by a council of their peers.

**CSP:** Certified Speaking Professional is awarded by the National Speakers Association (United States or Australia). There are approximately 700 speakers worldwide who have earned this distinction after meeting a rigorous amount of criteria and independent audit of their commercial work over a 5 year period.

**CSP Global:** An award through the Global Speakers Federation of which there are currently two dozen inaugural award winners since December 2003.

**PM:** Professional Member is awarded through different National Speaker Association Chapter for those who have meet a minimum criteria of standards as during a two year period.

**Educational Institution, Professional Association or Non Profit Organizational Body, Government Award (Appointment).**

PhD, MBA, M.Com, MBE, B. Sci., B. Com, MICD, MASA, CEO, MD, AM, AFAIM, JP, FCIM, FCLIT, GAICD, VA, M. App. Sci., B. Ed. (Hons), CFP, ALB, CRM,

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During the last 18 years I have been fortunate enough to look inside over 265 organisations in 20 different countries and 30 different industries to see firsthand how companies can create a passion based culture.

Firstly what does a passion based culture look like? It is where the majority of the people in your business are engaged, enthused and energised. They believe in the purpose of your business and prepared to add value beyond their pay packet to achieve the goals and objectives of the business?

What we have discovered is that most businesses fall into three categories.

They are either in survival mode, in other words not getting ahead or going backwards. The second type of business is successful at what they do; they are good at what they do and are making money. The final group are great at what they do, in other words they have become significant in their market place. Recognized by their clients, community and companies they work with and their colleagues at being great at what they do in their fields. To be significant at what you do you need to create a team of loyal, passionate people.

Here are the 4 Steps ...

**Have a Big Reason:** Your people want to work with and for someone who has a bigger reason than just profits. They need a bigger reason and why? They need to do work that is meaningful, matters and makes a difference. You have to sell the story and purpose of your business. The majority of people want to belong to a company who have a purpose, a plan and are passionate about achieving it. So you too need to have a clear direction, write out a manifesto of what you want to be famous for and what you stand for.

**Define Your DNA:** Every business has a culture, sometimes created by choice however most of the time created by chance. You want to create a culture that brings the best out in your people. So it is critical to identify your DNA, in other words what you stand for, what is acceptable, what is not acceptable and what is not negotiable. If you could have the perfect team culture that would naturally create passionate, proactive and productive people, what would you have to do?

**Create Progress:** All too often an environment is created where people are too focused on creating perfection, rather than making progress. Too many people within businesses are avoiding making a decision for the fear of being wrong. So what do they do? They defer, avoid, procrastinate and attend another meeting. Get your people focused on measuring progress, not perfection. Have them implement 1% improvements to everything they do and your business will evolve and grow and your people will become excited about moving forward.

**Assist Your People to Define Their Dreams:** Most people spend most of their life earning a living; very few people desire a life. For most people days blend into weeks, weeks merge into months and months collide to create years. Rarely do people stop and think about what is important, what matters and what is most important to them and for the people who mean the world to them.

The greatest gift you can give them is the opportunity to clarify their goals and then the permission to pursue their passion.



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2014 – The Year of the Horse. When I picture a horse in my mind, I envision grace and might. Two words which are very contradictory in meaning.

Just after the Lehman Brothers bank collapse in September of 2008, I set up an online training company. It was then I realised my own e-business could also be described as ‘*contradictory*’.

It wasn't the best time to launch a brand new business. After all, who would be foolish enough to set up a new ‘on line’ business when the biggest global financial crash since The Great Depression of 1929 had just hit?

You can imagine the naysayers and doubters were thick on the ground. Everyone (*and I mean everyone*), thought I was mad, stupid, didn't know what I was doing, would fall flat on my face. Now after more than five years, the site and business are still going strong, but it's what the on line business has led to that's amazed everyone, including myself.

At the half way point, to help me further in the world of on line business and e-commerce, I brought on a mentor. He saw the potential in what I was doing. He not only helped me leverage part of my business, he invested financially in it. How's that for faith, belief and support?

I'm regularly approached by experts locally and internationally who want to submit articles and e-books to our site including content from videos, DVD training companies, magazines, television and radio.

These people want to be part of what I have created including an invitation to take part in a 36 hour UK webinar aiming to get into the Guinness Book of World Records ... how amazing and humbling is that?

So here are tips for you to embrace 2014:

- Believe in **YOU** and what you are doing with every fibre of your being.
- There's no ‘right’ time. If it feels right, it IS the right time.
- NEVER, EVER give up. For me, turning back or giving up wasn't an option.
- You are here on this earth for a purpose. No-one has the right to take that away from you or demand of you to give up your dream.
- Surround yourself with people who support you. If they don't support you then love them in a different way and ask advice from people who ‘get’ you.
- You will meet the exact people you need to get you where you want to go.
- The Universe supports you 100% to do what you are here to do.

I still meet naysayers. Two weeks ago I had meetings with two different business promoters. One told me I'd wasted five years and the other wants to get his incubator team behind me to take my business to a stratospheric level! Guess who I'm going to align myself with? No contest.

So here are a few quotes if your business (like mine) feels a bit contradictory:

*“When we are motivated by goals that have deep meaning, by dreams that need completion, by pure love that needs expressing, then we truly live life”* Greg Anderson

*“If you think your purpose on earth is complete, if you are alive, it isn't.”* Richard Bach

My title is a quote from John Paul Getty, one of the worlds' first self-made billionaires.



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In his book, "Start with Why", Simon Sinek shares a familiar story:

**"Consider the story of two stonemasons, you walk up to the first mason and ask "Do you like your job?"**

He looks up at you and replies, *"I've been building this wall for as long as I can remember. The work is monotonous. I work in the scorching hot sun all day. The stones are heavy and lifting them all day can be backbreaking. I'm not sure if this project will be completed in my lifetime. But it's a job. It pays the bills."*

**You thank him for his time and walk on.**

About thirty feet away, you walk up to a second stone mason and ask him the same question. He looks up and replies, *"I love my job. I'm building a cathedral. Sure I've been working on this wall for as long as I can remember and yes, the work is sometimes monotonous. I work in the scorching hot sun all day.*

*The stones are heavy and lifting them day after day can be backbreaking. I'm not even sure if this project will be completed in my lifetime. But I'm building a cathedral."*

**How does this story compare to your life?**

What is significant about this story is the meaning that each man gave to the work that he was doing. The first stonemason saw it merely as a job – he was miserable doing it and the wages he earned was only a means to an end. The other saw his job in a different light. The meaning he gave it was the complete opposite to the first stonemason as he stated his purpose!

We face challenges of all kinds, whether you are a refugee fleeing to find a better life in another country, parents facing the prospect of losing their child to some life-threatening disease or a business owner facing financial catastrophe. What meaning do you give to the problems you face? Are you a reflection of the first stone mason or the second?

Economic uncertainty, the crazy, bus-i-ness of work and life, negative influences, past experiences and conditioning can precipitate an emotional state at any given moment; which may trigger reactive responses.

We are emotional beings - there is no doubt. We are so distracted by many individual situations that can get us acutely overwhelmed. It affects our thought process and our emotional state. How can we change this? Try the following:

1. **Change the meaning that you give a particular challenge you face.**
2. **Dig deeper within yourself to expand your purpose within this meaning.**
3. **If things are not going your way, ask yourself this question, "What else could this mean?"**

It is an exercise that will help you discover truth, meaning and an inspiration for yourself.

A lack of purpose can affect our self-worth. We need to remind ourselves that we are innately worthy of love, happiness, abundance. However many of us consistently perceive ourselves to be unworthy.

*"A person's worth is contingent upon who he or she is, not upon what he or she does, or how much he or she has. The worth of a person or a thing or an idea is in being, not in doing, not in having." - Alice Mary Hilton*



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With 2013 behind us and a fresh year ahead, 'reflection time' is at hand.

Firstly, reflect on the past 12 months and what worked well? What would you prefer to not repeat? Knowing how you performed against your 2013 goals or aspirations is amongst the most powerful '*motivational meetings*' a person can have with themselves. Perhaps calling this a personal EKG to establish a 'base line' of the last 12 months makes more sense.

If you haven't done this before, it may be an awaking time of more clarity. If you didn't set any measurable goals, 2014 can be your starting point to fine tune your future.

Goals can be personal, family, health, educational or creative like singing, painting or charity work if that's important to you. So get out your laptop, iPad, or notebook and jot down your past. It doesn't need to be a '*War & Peace*' novel, just review, clean up what didn't work and get refocused. Honestly, I'm on this same path. I was so busy from the start of 2013; I never defined my strategy or deployed it very well. Yes, 2013 was a good, but I want 2014 to be great.

In reflection, I have assessed that I have been blessed with **tenacity, talented friends** and **great family support**.

**Tenacity:** Google's definition is '*strength but not often the best approach - without focus you can kill yourself trying*'. I have used this approach at times when told, '*because of my age, I would not be able to achieve that management position*'. Yes this **was** a red flag to a bull; yet I did learn valuable lessons with this approach which earned me career promotions and country leadership roles.

**Professional / Personal Friends:** No need for Google - these are your 'trusted friends'. We need people who inspire us and can offer strength during challenging business times. Perhaps those who can see gaps at a distance, can offer 'training, strategy or encouragement' and believe in you.

I have a close girl friend named Carolyn. She lives in the North Sydney area, owns a successful executive consulting practice and over many years, has been very helpful to me. She doesn't solve my business issues yet she offers varied approaches in which she lets me decide what is best for me.

Her monthly inspirational messages via e mail and video are brief, yet powerful. A recent topic she posted was on '*The Secret to Raising Self Esteem*' and hit the mark for me that week. It also gave me tips I could use to help a colleague in my company who needed some support and ideas.

**Inspirational Mentors:** Madonna, Julia Roberts, Dame Judi Dench and public figures like Michelle Obama can be inspiring. Known for re-inventing herself and pushing the envelope in her industry, Madonna was the 2012 to 2013 highest paid female entertainer worldwide (again) earning well over \$130 million.

Julia and Judi have been in iconic movie roles and defining performances in their long careers while Michelle's dress sense and style is her own. She doesn't wait for the latest trends; she sets them. Comfortable with her decisions, once saying when told fashion guru Oscar de la Renta questioned her fashion sense, she responded ... what does he know?

**Family / Close Friends:** In this area I am blessed as I have the love and respect from people who I care about. They encourage me to improve, be me and I help them whenever I can if they need me for something.

Assess your past, design your future and know what you want to achieve...time to get cracking on the year ahead.

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It's 6am and your alarm is persistently pulsating on the nightstand beside your bed. It's time to rise and shine! **But wait.**



As you wake up, embracing the following **7 habits** can help you achieve significant success.

**1. Spiritual-Eyes:** First and foremost, wake up with Spiritual-Eyes! This simply means to wake up with a grateful heart. Before you roll out of bed or even open your eyes, you can say something like, "Thank you God for returning my soul to me today. Great is the faith you must have in me. Please help me make a positive impact today!"

**2. Meditate and Memorize:** As a Christian, I meditate on and memorize a short verse from the Bible. If you are of another faith, you might read your Holy Book or you might even select great motivational material from today's thinkers like Brian Tracy, Ken Blanchard or Nido Qubein or from late greats like Charlie "Tremendous" Jones, Jim Rohn or Zig Ziglar. Whatever you choose be consistent in meditating and memorizing on a daily basis.

**3. Educate and Exercise:** My book, "**Walking, Living, and Learning!**" was written to encourage people to combine exercise and personal development. Simply download audio books or podcasts to your phone or MP3 player and then walk 30 to 60 minutes a day while listening.

Walking can prevent or even reverse some types of sicknesses and diseases and we both understand the importance of personal development, don't we? Generate more physical and mental energy for your day with education and exercise!

**4. Energize:** After walking, energize your body with a healthy breakfast!

Experts agree that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Ensure you energize your body right by feeding yourself like a champion! Fruits, fibre, whole grains and protein are all important to help you get started right!

**5. Strategize:** George Bernard Shaw said, "Few people think more than two or three times a year, I have made an international reputation for myself by thinking once or twice a week."

Imagine what you can do by thinking and strategizing each day! As you strategize you can create and review your;

- Daily to do list
- Project to do list
- Long term goals list



**6. Prioritize:** Even Superman can't do EVERYTHING!

Once you strategize, take time to prioritize your one to three most important tasks for the day. You might start by asking yourself; "If I could only accomplish one thing today - what REALLY needs to get done?"

**7. Visualize:** It's almost time to get to work, but before you start, close your eyes and visualize yourself as the confident, successful, productive person that you are!

See yourself accomplishing every one of your priorities and making a real difference for your company, clients and community!

See yourself as the person you were meant to be, because in fact that ancient Proverb is still true, "*As a man thinks in his heart, so is he!*"

As you wake up with Spiritual-Eyes and then Meditate & Memorize, Educate and Exercise, Energize, Strategize, Prioritize and then Visualize, you will definitely mesmerize others as you go throughout your day, career & life!

**Al Argo** speaks internationally for businesses, associations, conferences and ministries. His topics include Positive Impact Leadership, How to Achieve Super Sales Success and Biblical Financial Freedom. Follow [@al\\_argo](https://twitter.com/al_argo) and tweet the words **#argo2014** for your chance to win a FREE copy of "**Walking, Living, Learning!**" Contact: [al@argoglobal.biz](mailto:al@argoglobal.biz)  
Phone: 1 25 2654 2746 | <http://www.argoglobal.biz/>



Technology is changing so fast these days.

Almost daily we wake up to an improvement, an innovation or a development of some kind. The challenge for many of us is to embrace the change. If we can see the opportunity in these embellishments we can be ready to learn and rather than feel overwhelmed we can feel excited. The upside of a digital world is - it levels the playing field and gives every business access to the same tools.

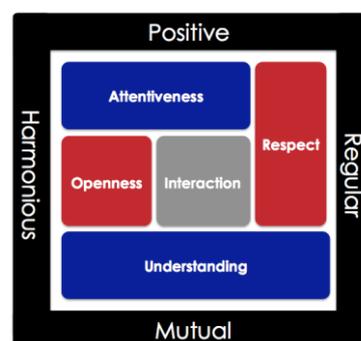
### So how will you embrace opportunity in 2014?

It's time to claim your space online. It's time to stand out, be recognised and attract all the clients you need. Here are five things you can do to ensure you're standing out online.

1. **Be Clear:** You are an expert. You must know exactly what you want to be known for, what problems you solve and you have to give yourself permission to expose your knowledge. You have to believe you are "the" expert your prospects are looking for then embrace it, live it and speak it with complete clarity.
2. **Speak with Authority:** Every time you say something – verbally or in written form – you must say it with conviction, authenticity and confidence. Your prospects are searching on the internet for the right person to solve their problem. They have endless options and need your assistance to make a decision whether you're the right person to work with them. Don't be afraid to stand out for them.
3. **Focus on Rapport:** Consumers make buying decisions in a very different way today. However there is one thing that hasn't changed and probably never will - **people buy people**. Buyers have to know, like and trust the person selling. That means we have to establish rapport and work towards a relationship.

In the offline world we build rapport naturally. Eye contact, shaking hands, exchanging smiles and friendly gestures – we use these physical interactions to establish connection and mutual understanding.

Building rapport online can be more difficult. However the principles remain the same. When we communicate with openness, respect, understanding and attentiveness, regularly, in a mutually beneficial and positive manner – rapport builds.



4. **Appear Everywhere:** Use social media to get to know your prospects. Spend time in their circles and engage in the conversations they're having. Not only can you use social media to create your profiles and build exposure for your brand and your products or services, but you can also learn about your prospects. You can converse with them – rather than speaking at them or to them. "Pop up" everywhere. When people are exposed to you and enjoy your input, curiosity will get the better of them and they'll come looking for more information.
5. **Be LIKEable:** Don't be too professional. You must be congruent with your brand but bear in mind that consumers want to get to know you – as a person. Network as though you're offline. If you would chat about a topic or event in general conversation then it's okay to bring it up online too. Be conversational and always responsive. Encourage visitors to *stay in touch* – rather than *subscribe to your newsletter!*

Embrace the internet and be empowered knowing you have access to everything you need to reach your prospects.



**Francine Bishop** is the author of **Social Media Evolution** and head trainer at **Mayvin Training**. Her focus is on helping businesses to use the internet to attract leads and convert to customers. Visit [www.socialmediaevolution.com.au](http://www.socialmediaevolution.com.au) to download **Chapter 1 of Social Media Evolution**, a no nonsense strategy to attract customers to your regional business. Francine can be reached via email [francine@mayvintraining.com.au](mailto:francine@mayvintraining.com.au) | [www.mayvintraining.com.au](http://www.mayvintraining.com.au)

Business people are moving to webinars as a key enabler of communication across states and countries. Meetings can be boring at the best of times or even more so when the presenter is in another country or region listening to you on the phone via teleconference or watching you on the web.

How can you get people to pay attention when you can't see them? The answer is it's essential you make the technology secondary to your human connections and communicate your message as if you're in the room with your audience.

Here are my top **10 tips** for you to be great in this area in 2014 and beyond:

- 1. Identify your purpose:** What do you want to accomplish with this meeting? Have you chosen the right type of media for communicating the message? Is a webinar or teleconference the best way to update your colleagues?
- 2. Learn how to use the software:** Most of us don't have any coaching before we have to log in and get started, and invariably technological glitches ruin people's focus. Learn to use the software so you can focus on the message
- 3. Send the agenda in advance:** Send your agenda in advance, be specific about who should talk about each item. Mix it up so people from different countries and regions are communicating every few minutes – this gives people very little time to switch off (or put you on 'mute' and go to the toilet!)
- 4. Include a seating plan in the agenda and interact with attendees:** A client of mine (a VP in a well-known IT company) always submits a seating plan with his agenda. Seating was around one huge virtual board table. Although people were in different countries and regions he sat them around the table as if they were all sitting at the same table. During his meetings he refers to people by name and their position around the table. For example he says: "Fred – at the head of the table", then he says what he wants to say. He found because people were being asked to sit in a certain chair – they did! Better still – they didn't get up!
- 5. Create compelling content:** What do you need to say to shift your audience from their current state, to your desired state? Stick to only essential content.
- 6. Create stimulating slides:** Slides can reinforce your key messages when designed well – keep them simple and use mainly appropriate images from a photo library such as: [www.istockphoto.com](http://www.istockphoto.com)
- 7. Warm up your voice:** When presenting online it's critical we have clear, crisp articulation, rich resonant tonality and strong vocal power, a variety of speed, volume and pitch. Learn how to warp up your voice so you sound as credible and believable as possible when you speak.
- 8. Sharpen up your presentation skills:** In particular tap into your personal store of charisma through communicating your emotional objectives. There will be opportunity for your audience to be concerned, relieved, optimistic and compelled at different times in your message – make sure your voice reflects the correct emotion so your audience knows how to feel at different times.
- 9. Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse:** Exceptional presenters rehearse – even in this forum. Jump online and practice the whole presentation (ideally with someone who can give you some feedback on how you sound).
- 10. Make it interactive:** The best way to stop people putting you on mute and doing their 'real' work is to keep them interacting throughout. Ask lots of questions.
- 11. BONUS TIP - Get their sign-off!** And make sure that every attendee signs to say they attended the meeting, understood the content, participated to the best of their ability and will action the relevant action items. **Happy Presenting!**

**Michelle Bowden** CSP is Sydney based and author of **How to Present: the ultimate guide to presenting your ideas and influencing people using techniques that actually work** (Wiley), and **STOP! Your PowerPoint is Killing Me!** For further tips and techniques to dramatically improve the way you communicate, present and influence please visit [www.michellebowden.com.au](http://www.michellebowden.com.au)



It turns out the adage *'what doesn't kill you makes you stronger'* is true.

In 1977, Ilya Prigogine was awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his work in the field of Thermodynamics.

The second law of thermodynamics states when things are left alone in our universe, they will eventually go to disorder and chaos. For example, when a tree falls in the forest, it will eventually rot and decay. Over time it will go into more disorder, then chaos.

Studies show, however, that nature eventually creates order from this chaos. Prigogine found that as we increase the energy or pressure beyond the object's ability to hold that pressure (threshold), the object begins to vibrate to the point it can't take it anymore. Then something amazing happens – it evolves into a more complex structure than its original form.

To explain further, the tree that fell in the forest will be covered by soil and decays. From the pressure of earth, over time, the tree turns to coal. If pressure is continually added, the coal turns to diamond, a structure many times stronger than the tree or the coal and able to withstand an increased amount of pressure. This process is irreversible, totally unpredictable and a result unrecognisable from the original form.

Humans are subjected to stress and problems, this is part of life. Often people go to great lengths to avoid, deny or distract themselves from the pressure. However, allowing you to embrace challenges and hardships means there is growth and liberation beyond the disorder and chaos.

In nature when pressure is added (perturbation) and the organism starts to evolve, it releases energy, usually in the form of heat. When pressure is placed on humans, the energy released is called emotion. These are known as fear, anger, frustration, joy etc. If we do not allow the emotion to release, growth stops and the process of natural evolution is halted.

The phrase, *'no pain, no gain'* also has meaning here. If you want yourself or your team to evolve, you must add pressure within a supportive environment. As business owners, entrepreneurs and managers, we must acknowledge the emotion coming up, as a sign of disorder and chaos occurring while holding the pressure firmly with kindness and understanding for a transformation to occur.

Think about some of the break-thru moments in your life. They are most often when you were in the depths of despair, frustration or anger and when you were at what you thought was rock bottom, you pushed on and made a decision that moved you forward and made you stronger.

Have you ever noticed the closer you get to a deadline, the more productive you start to be? A colleague once promised \$10,000 of his own money (which he didn't have) to each team member if he did not achieve his goal. The pressure of losing face was so great, he achieved his target quickly.

Many times from within the emotional state it is challenging to see the lesson to be learned.

Twentieth century philosopher, Buckminster Fuller, is quoted as saying, *"You will never be given a task that you cannot handle"* and also, *"Your reward in life for learning the lesson is a bigger lesson."*

Embrace 'perturbation' in your life and business. Be strong enough to hold the boundaries for others and allow the emotion to help transform learning for all. During 2014 when 'stuff' hits the fan, let it.



**Karen Boyes CSP** is an international speaker based in New Zealand who has the rare ability to leave her audience buzzing. Her practical solutions for learning, teaching, studying, living, working, communicating and growing more effectively makes her a great choice as a conference speaker and workshop leader. Contact: **+64 4 528 9969** or [Karen@spectrumeducation.com](mailto:Karen@spectrumeducation.com) or <http://spectrumeducation.com/>



Is your business really perceived as different from your competition? Do you stand out from the crowd or just blend in with the norm?

Too often in business, people copy what everyone else is doing, be it products, services, the way they advertise or the appearance of their business. Everyone ends up looking the same and no one stands out.

Do you know how your poor customers feel? Confused and frustrated!

After all, most major buying decisions are difficult and they need all the help they can get. Customers often don't know what to buy

or who to buy from. The result? Either the customer ends up buying on price or may even decide it's all too hard and not buy at all.

Then there are the thousands of businesses with fantastic ideas, products and services that no one ever gets to hear about. These are the best-kept secrets in business. But unfortunately they remain that way and the idea, product and business becomes extinct.

**Is your business a best-kept secret?** If your potential customers don't know why you are different and what you actually have to offer, how can they buy?

**So what is the answer?** You must stand out from the crowd;

**Dare to be different;** Do things that get your business talked about in a positive way ... get noticed. The principles of marketing haven't changed. It is still critical to get the right message to the right person which means really understanding the target market and then following the well-used AIDA formula, grab their Attention, build their Interest and Desire and then have a call to Action. These fundamentals are just as important to your website and social media as they were to the more traditional forms of promotion, advertising or branding such as television, radio, print media or brochures.

If you take a look at individuals and businesses that have been very successful, you will normally find that what they are actually offering is nothing really different or better than their competitors. In fact in a lot of cases their products or services may be inferior.

**What makes them successful?** They have the ability to get noticed, to stand out, to grab the attention of the people that really matter; their customers and potential customers. Whilst this can often be done through clever advertising that makes you stand out, it can also be accomplished through regular publicity in the various forms of media to attract interest and gain more market coverage in your business area.

**Creativity and daring to be different are the real keys to success.** Noted for his eccentricity, Australian retail multi-millionaire and adventurer Dick Smith promoted his electronic business in the 1970's by towing a fake iceberg into Sydney Harbour and followed this up with other unique events. None of them had anything to do with electronics but these events attracted massive television and print media coverage nationally and internationally.

Yes, doing such things does mean we need to step out of our comfort zones and feel a bit uncomfortable, but you will reap rewards for such boldness and find a crowd following you as Billionaire Sir Richard Branson continues to show all of us after more than 45 years in business.

Take the leap today, dare to be different and watch our business and 2014 grow!

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Before you even start with a planning session for the year ahead, take out that original business plan and turn to the page that relates to your company values.

You'll find that they are probably pretty close to your personal values, but are they aligned with the values of those who work with or for you?

Staff may come and go over the years, but your *Values* and your *Value Proposition* should remain the same. It's a timely reminder as we get into 'The Year of the Horse', that these two things are different, yet are related.

Your values are the code by which you live and make decisions by in your business and your life. If yours is a small serviced based business such as a consultancy, there may in fact be no difference in these. An example of a set of business values might include things like Excellence, Simplicity and Innovation or Fun, Efficiency and Convenience.

I believe that *honesty* and *integrity* are a given in any organisation ... so don't list these as 'core values'.

Your Value Proposition is the offer you make to your clients or customers to assure them of what they are buying (or buying into) when they do business with you.

For example, '*tailored financial solutions*' might be the value proposition of a banking, investment or even a budgeting organisation, where they custom create a solution for their clients based on what their clients actually need. Compare this to '*out of the box solutions*' that another company in the same industry might propose as their Value Proposition if they are focused on a standardised set of options for clients.

Going back to the issue of values as being the lynchpin of any business plan, checking to see if your people, products and services are still aligned with those is *vital* important for the *vitality* of your company!

The reason for this is that if you have people out of alignment with your company values and your products and services no longer meet the criteria of your value proposition, then everything will feel like it simply doesn't fit!

A mismatch of these leads to being unable to demonstrate absolute integrity when you are selling and delivering on what you say you stand for and what you can create. Being out of integrity is really hard work! It means you have to try that much harder to convince others that you love and respect the company and will stand behind what you are offering them.

### Let's look at an example of this

If your values are Excellence, Simplicity and Innovation (like Apple), yet your staff like to take shortcuts and deliver substandard ideas for development, then the products that are created are not at that ideal.

If your value proposition (i.e., for vacuum cleaning products) is that *it's guaranteed to suck harder* and the quality is such that your warranties are taking a pounding with higher than acceptable repair claims, then maybe you need to review what is actually going on with the people, production and quality assurance programs in your company.

Your *Values* and *Value Proposition* will determine what you most need to be focused on in the year ahead. Each year, consider what's working and what's not working around your values and your value proposition. Then and only if everything is superb in those areas, move on to other things as part of your annual review.

This might sound easy and yet it can be the most challenging and most rewarding business planning you have ever done.



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The Golden Rule for networking is *“It’s not about me, it’s about YOU”*.

I cringe thinking back when I first started to network and thought of myself as being someone who could really ‘work the room’. I was so busy telling everyone what I did without taking the time to first learn about the person I had just met.

Go to every network event with the attitude of contributing to others. Ask questions about the other person, show an interest, keep eye contact and please never look around the room for someone more interesting. Remember this; you may think this person might not be a potential client for you; however you don’t know who they know and who they might refer to you!

Not everyone is outgoing, some people are dreadfully shy and going to a networking event is like pulling teeth for them. If you are shy, there are a number of ways to get chatting:

- Ring the organizers to see if someone can meet you and introduce you to other people
- Introduce yourself and then ask questions about the other person
- Make sure you are up to date with current affairs and news
- Network in your industry so you meet like-minded people
- Get out of your own way - seriously! Just do it
- Stand by yourself- someone will come to you
- Approach someone who is standing alone
- Spend more time listening



If you're in sales you will no doubt have an elevator pitch. This is your first impression to get across what you do and how you help people in 30 seconds. I have given a formula below on crafting an elevator pitch and have used myself to explain how I crafted my own elevator pitch.

**Here is mine:**

My name is Deb Carr. I help Small Business and Media Personalities build their profiles through social media, my networks and media. I do this by teaching them social media, scanning for PR opportunities, radio interviews and helping them create blogs. I’m looking to connect with anyone who needs to have the WOW factor online.

My name is .....

I’m .....

*Consider sharing your company name, your personal brand, role or specialty*

I help .....

*Who/what kind of clients do you like to work with?*

To .....

*State your value proposition: What value you create for people?*

I do this by .....

*What kinds of problems do you help solve for them and how?*

I’m looking to meet .....

*Specifically who would you like to connect with (optional depending on the circumstances?)*

**Remember:**

- First impressions count! If you're at a professional networking session, look professional!
- A proper handshake can make or break your first impression. A handshake that's too limp or weak can show as a sign of weakness or lack of self-confidence, whilst one that's too strong can convey aggressiveness. A well-executed handshake is one that conveys self-confidence, trust and a genuine interest in the other party.
- Always check you have ample business cards with you. It’s a good idea to write a note on a business card that is given to you with important details to remember about the person you just met.
- Be a good listener.



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Having literally made hundreds of thousands of telephone sales calls in my 35 plus years of promoting world class speakers like Tom Hopkins, the late Jim Rohn, Anthony Robbins, Brian Tracy, Dr Deepak Chopra and my own public workshops, I find telephone follow-up calls as the most important part of the selling process to get right.

Whenever you mail information or quotes out, only 1% on average will call you back these days. It is vital that you follow-up everything you post or email out or you will miss an opportunity to gain business from 20 to 25% of your prospects.

If you haven't done this, then I challenge you to call everyone you did quotes for in 2013 to see if you can revive them.

You will be amazed how many people did not go with a competitor and did nothing. So often you can revive their interest to do business with you. On previous trials of this method I have revived 25% of my formerly considered "dead quotes".

## SEVEN TECHNIQUES FOR A PROFESSIONAL FOLLOW-UP CALL

1. Always introduce yourself with your name and company name. Don't assume they will recall you from the last call.
2. Do not ask "Did you get the quote?" or "Did you get the information?" You never want to start a call with a closed question because it shuts off any hope of moving forward into a conversation.
3. The customer could be saying they did not get the information, just to get rid of you. What you could do is answer with "That's okay, if you are online now, we could run through the information together on the website" or "That's okay, are you sure it is not sitting in your in-tray? If it is, we could run through it together over the phone and I can answer any questions you might have."
4. Clients are busy and distracted when your call comes in so refer to the problem, opportunity or concern that they might have had and then ask an open-ended question like "I'm curious, what would we have to change to make it of interest to you?" By doing that you may get the customer into a conversation about what he is looking for. Alternatively say this:-
5. Instead of an open-ended question at the end of the last 2 examples, you could say "Let's take a minute to go through what I sent you to see if it makes sense for us to precede further."
6. Find a talking point to reinforce them going with you by giving an example of another customer who had the same situation or problem as they have had.
7. Do a trial close to test the ground before you ask for the order like "How do you see your company benefiting from our offer?" "How much do you think you could save by using us?" Imagine if this could attract 20% more business, it might be worth considering, mightn't it? (i.e., use an open-ended question or a tie down question).

Having made tens of millions in revenue for my employers and being successfully self-employed for over two decades, I recommend you utilise these *seven techniques* and you will be one of the top 2 % of business people using the telephone to the best advantage in your industry.



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Most of my business weeks are a mixture of meetings, conference presentations, coaching sessions and workshops with space to write, plan and make new contacts. By the end of the week there have been changes that include additions, cancellations and sometimes a no show. Does that sound familiar?

All those changes interfere with our productivity and performance. For some people it means even earlier starts, while others find themselves working late into the night or long before dawn to catch up on emails or similar.

During winter in New Zealand, an early morning walk along the beach in the dark doesn't excite me, so I look for opportunities later in the day. That doesn't happen so often because of client commitments. One day I had a meeting just ten minutes away from my office. As the day dawned I could see how clear it was and decided that a walk before the meeting would be perfect. Then a client called me for some assistance and so I cancelled my walk!

I arrived a little early at the café for my meeting and sensed my client may have forgotten. I called her and I could hear the stress in her voice. She was a long way from the café and so I suggested we reschedule to meet later that day. I could hear her relief. As I drove back to my office with my coffee I decided to drive down to the beach. The day was stunning, the sky brilliant blue, as was the sea. I quietly thanked my client for forgetting our meeting.

I used the meeting time as reflective time for me. Within minutes the creative juices were flowing. I had some insights, and ideas started to flow as I sat on a bench and embraced life. I thought about why we make mistakes, forget appointments or ignore them, as I did with myself earlier in the day. Life is sometimes like being in a pressure cooker.

We live in a world of fast, quick, instant – NOW! Pressure cooking is efficient; however, I know that lamb shanks cooked slowly in a casserole have a much more intense flavour and texture than in the pressure cooker. The old saying of 'putting it on the back burner' is useful to remember. When we leave something alone it is not uncommon for a new idea, solution or brilliant insight to occur. It feels effortless.

If we are always demanding immediate answers from our clients or staff, we may not get the best quality ones and it feels effortful. The quality of thinking is not available until the person is aware that they just need to slow down their minds for a moment and create the head space for insights to occur.

I did not waste the 'no show' time and the rest of the day was highly productive. The rescheduled meeting with the busy business owner was beside an open fire at a local hotel. We had a deep conversation of getting her staff in virtual offices to take personal responsibility. I listened to her talking about the challenges she has and her dreams for her business and as I offered her some ways we could work together she was grateful, relaxed and it felt effortless. In just thirty minutes her world had started to look different.

The shift from feeling **EFFORTFUL to EFFORTLESS**...some tips for you in 2014....

**Slowing down** can mean less mistakes and being much more productive.

**Listen to employees**, ask good questions, rather than telling them what to do.

**Time for reflection** is valuable for me and business.

**Gilly Chater** speaks, facilitates, writes and coaches leaders to become more insightful, more productive and to create healthy high performance cultures. An award winning President of the Auckland Chapter of the National Speakers Association of New Zealand 2012 to 2013, Gilly was voted by industry peers as '2012 Inspirational Speaker of the Year'. Contact her at [gilly@gillychater.com](mailto:gilly@gillychater.com) or [www.gillychater.com](http://www.gillychater.com) or phone +64 9 425 4540



There is so much discussion as to what comes first.

A client had been working with a counsellor to reduce her stress levels. The change in diet and getting her into better eating habits was the recommendation by the counsellor, and as my client quoted *"Healthy body means healthy mind"*. When I suggested to her the opposite, *"healthy mind, healthy body"*, it raised her curiosity. She wanted to know more.

Think about an occasion when you went to your fridge late at night because you thought you were hungry. There on the shelf is a large slice of your favourite rich chocolate dessert – *'ah, leftovers needing to be eaten', 'just one more small piece won't hurt' or 'I'll keep it for tomorrow I'm not really hungry'*. Your decision may be random, yet if you are fully conscious and alert to your thoughts would you eat the dessert or not? The decision will relate to your state of mind in that moment. And you may change your mind several times.

A colleague said to me that she hadn't been happy for several months. I took her to mean this literally. *"Every moment of day"* I asked? *"Have you not laughed and felt happy at any time in six months?"* She laughed and said *"Oh no I didn't mean that, of course I've had happy moments"*.

Thought is the most powerful asset we have. What's not so commonly understood is what underlies our experience of life is due to our thoughts in the moment. A clear mind can create space for new insights about leadership and being the best leader you can be in the work environment, as a parent, as a partner, spouse or leader in your community.

### **State of mind is temporary**

Whether a positive or negative thought, it's not long before another one comes along – FACT! That is the point.... our thoughts change all the time and we have between 50 to 80,000 thoughts a day. Some thoughts we pay a lot of attention to, while others we ignore. The more you leave those thoughts alone the healthier your thinking will be. It's ok to feel frustrated, but remember that feeling is coming from your thinking about the situation or person.

We all have a Personal Feedback System (PFS) to let us know why we feel in a certain way. It's always the same because. It comes from the way we are thinking about something or someone, in that moment.

### **Beating yourself up is a waste of time**

Ruminating about what we could have done, and didn't do, keeps us stuck. Failure is ok. Some of the most successful people tell us how many times they have failed. Be compassionate with yourself and others. Get clear about what you want to achieve now. A new moment is a new opportunity.

### **Insights are the precursor to change**

Never underestimate a realisation or 'aha' moment. It can be simple yet also profound. This is true for everyone. As a leader, it's important to remember everyone has the capacity to have insights and change their mind... just like you.

The debate continues as to which comes first – a healthy mind or a healthy body - because we live in a world of separate realities. Think of it this way. Thought first then everything else follows. Change your thought and you may eat the chocolate dessert or change your mind again and leave it for the next day.

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Or phone +64 9 425 4540



Psychometric tests are frequently used to find a suitable job or career and are based on sound psychological questions.

However, with books now available to show you how to answer the questions to get the job, perhaps something more intuitive to find the 'real person' and best match would be even more valuable. A trusted method of recognizing people's talents, qualities and needs can identify an individual's qualities and skills learned, within the framework of psychology 'of our time', but the **Intuitive Quotient (InQ)** is often missed.

**InQ** describes the full potential of an employee's talents. Knowing where your innate talents lie, even those that you haven't developed in life yet, is a key step to recognizing how to know one self and create collaborations with others for mutual success.

To achieve best results, winning performances and a better bottom line, every business, organization or service group needs the **nine human essences** within a pool of talent, all working together.

These Human Essences range from **Integrator** (planners), **Catalyst** (team builders) to an **Overseer** (accountants) and link with other operational sections identified as the **Constructor** (practical builders), **Organizer** (communicators) and **Caregiver** (for frontline service). Then the **Visionary** (marketing), **Leader** (management) and **Educator** (training) make up the nine essential parts and roles.

Modern science has taught us to go beyond theories and recognize patterns to advance our education and discoveries.

**Albert Einstein** said, "*The intellect has little to do on the road to discovery, there comes a leap of consciousness, call it intuition or what you will and the solution comes to you and you don't know how or why*". A man who was very intelligent said he received knowledge from what he called the 'collective consciousness'. He not only proceeded to understand with a very high intellectual Intelligence (IQ), he had the wisdom to not change '*the solution*' before he tried to understand it.

This is where changes in science from proving a theory to be right or wrong moved to recognizing patterns that gave results.

I've studied the symbols of numbers since the 1980s to reveal the psychological hidden secrets, often misunderstood by many for over two and a half thousand years. **Pythagoras** a Greek philosopher (580-500BC) had a high IQ and high InQ, and much of his intuitive discoveries, as history has shown, were not written down.

I've researched and discovered many layers to the psychological aspects of human understanding, beyond the intellectual realm into the patterns of metaphysics with proven results. While science has found space, matter and energy to be the most basic parts of our existence, the vibrational patterns that make up our differences are also predictable and reliable.

A psychological maxim of our time, "*It's not about finding yourself, it's about creating yourself.*" What do you think? True or false? I believe to first know self is to be able to fully create self and then to understand others better.

Identifying and understanding your 'unique vibrational patterns' or those of others you may be considering employing, can be discovered with great accuracy through the symbols of numbers.

Add to this, your 'free will' to choose how you develop your innate and accentuated gifts, links the patterns to make your best decisions in 2014 for your personal and business life.

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**Business and social success needs assertive behaviours**

Can you 'speak up' and share your ideas clearly, calmly and honestly and in turn respectfully listen to others who may have different ideas, opinions and points of view (P.O.V)? The best negotiators, teachers, managers, leaders, parents, Drs ... have learnt these skills and demonstrate them daily.

**Assertiveness: Empathy & Advocacy under an umbrella of Respect**

When things are going smoothly and the pressure is off it is easier to listen empathetically and 'hear' the other person, reflect what you see, hear and feel and calmly express your P.O.V. However when pressure builds, deadlines loom, expectations are not met ... your internal stress 'thermometer' may begin to rise and you **aggressively** shout, demand or blame others.



Or maybe you behave **passively** in response to the stress of disagreements, conflicting demands and confrontation. Do you avoid, shut down or 'run away'? Are you unable to stand up, express your P.O.V and say No?

Or maybe your response is **passive-aggressive**? Perhaps you drag your feet when you don't want to do something rather than say an assertive 'No'. If you feel someone has taken advantage of you do you find a way to 'even the score'. Or maybe you use sarcasm, sulk or talk about others behind their backs?

These Aggressive, Passive and Passive Aggressive behaviours are unhelpful and stressful and can make life more difficult for you in your business and social relationships.

**Assertiveness** is a fourth style of behaviour. You respond rather than react. You have mastered the self-confidence, authenticity and empathy of assertiveness, aided by your 'tool kit' of assertive skills to stay cool, calm and collected even when the world around you is falling apart. You can express your opinions in an open, honest and appropriate manner. You can ask others for help and say No to others requests and negotiate a compromise, or better still find a mutual win-win solution.

**Do you recognize yourself**, your colleagues, family and friends in any of these four behaviour types? We all have a repertoire of behaviours that we first learned as a child. And as we grow we add more behaviours from our family, peers, colleagues, the TV and the movies as we seek to find role models, some good and others less so.

**Do your behaviours serve you well?**

Learning assertive conversation skills are key to achieving success however you measure this. Using 'appropriate' assertive skills for the situation gives you freedom to be more effective in all areas of your life.

**How do you behave assertively?**

Remember your **ABCs**.

**A = Attitude** - check your mind is open and positive.

**B = Breathe** to release stress, anxiety and get oxygen to your brain.

**C = Centre** yourself and become calm.

**Add the 3Rs:** Resourceful, Respectful and Respond (*rather than react*) and you are well on your way to handling situations without being forceful or defensive. You can respectfully ask for what you want, say no to what you don't want and help others get what they want too.

**Yvonne Collier** CSP is an accomplished trainer, facilitator, coach and author. An award winning speaker, Yvonne was 2004 to 2005 NSW & ACT President of the National Speakers Association of Australia and five years as a NSAA Board Member. Each month since 1997 she has conducted assertive skills workshops for Sydney University Centre for Continuing Education and in-house training in people skills.

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With 2014 being the Year of the Horse, I like what Steven Farmer says about those with horses as their guides: ***“You’re much more powerful than you think you are”***.

The horse depicts strength and stamina alongside grace, sensitivity and patience. It can be wild and free as well as precise, guided and groomed. Let these be the characteristics that lead you to having the best year of your life!

For me, achieving this rare combination of character traits is easier with the *4weeks2success* program. It is *the* simplest way for me to keep on track, hit and exceed my targets, month after month. How does it work? Well, I am glad that you are curious ... let me explain by telling you a short story of how I started using *4weeks2success*.

I was in pain for 10 years! I mean a lot of pain. I had seen specialists in the United States, Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) doctors in Beijing China, a slew of chiropractors and acupuncturists and yet the pain continued. I had a shooting pain from my left butt cheek all the way down to my toes when I sat, walked and slept.

One day, a Chinese student working at an acupuncture clinic gave me a book. She said, *“I think you need to read this. Do what it says and the pain will go away.”* I was thrilled and skeptical all at the same time. So, I read the book. Then, I did what it said. It prescribed a four week challenge and worked. I have been pain free since 2010.

I’ve used the *4weeks2success* program on my health, fitness, my relationship with my husband and my work as a trainer, author and professional speaker. Whatever you want to become more successful at, excel at it for four weeks!

Here are the steps:

1. **Choose a challenge – it must be specific.** The one I used for my diet was to eliminate all animal products. For my fitness was doing a plank. In my relationship with my husband, it was giving him “words of affirmation”.
2. **Pick a start date.** You don’t have to start at the beginning of the week or month ... just pick a day and start.
3. **Plug in your “rest” days.** Rest days are the 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 26<sup>th</sup> days during those four weeks. You do not have to take your rest day. I didn’t use the rest day for my words of affirmation challenge with my husband or with my diet. For the plank, I did!

Accelerate your success! It should get harder and harder for you to do as the weeks go by so build this into the four weeks at the beginning.

For my relationship challenge, it was built in because I needed to be clever about *how* I would deliver my affirmation and *what* I would say. Every day it got harder to be 100% genuine.

With my diet, each day posed a new challenge in finding new recipes and exploring new foods I had never eaten before.

With the plank challenge, I increased the time I held a plank from twenty seconds to four minutes and thirty seconds over the four week period.

Remember, ***“You’re much more powerful than you think you are”***.



**Lindley Craig** is a trainer, speaker, author and 1-on-1 coach based in Singapore. Her next book is called ***“Raise Your Bar”***. Contact [lindley@allinthemind.asia](mailto:lindley@allinthemind.asia) or +65 8387 3219. Receive 50% off our *4weeks2success* coaching program by mentioning this e-book – go to <http://www.allinthemind.asia> under the “1-on-1

## **JULIE CROSS** Hello Fear, I feel you ... Now get out of my Way!

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I have a son 'Living with Autism', and we accept that if there is a label, it must be real and it does come with challenges, but I get even more surprised by how many people are 'Living with Fear'.

It is not a recognised disorder, no medication is prescribed, yet fear can certainly immobilize people and prevent them from living their best and enjoying a very bright life!

Did you know that in 2014 there will be new friends not made, songs not sung, dances not danced, dreams not realised and goals not achieved?

There will be laughs not laughed, questions not asked, speeches not made, plans not laid, parties not attended, rooms not entered into, there will be opinions not stated and status updates not written!

There will be sales not achieved, jobs not applied for, hairstyles never tried, sequins never worn, poems never penned sex not had, love not experienced, places not travelled, adventures not had, mistakes not made and failures not learned from.

Why do we let fear have that kind of control over us and our life? And at the end of life I am fairly certain that we will not say, 'I am so glad I never got on the dance floor that night' or 'I'm so glad I never travelled to India like I always wanted too' or 'I'm so glad I never lived my purpose, followed my dream or fulfilled my vision'.

What are we scared of? What? For many it seems it is the fear of failure or making a mistake and the only reason we would fear this is because we place more importance on the opinion of the people around us than our own opinion of ourselves.

When we look at a baby, we see a miracle with unlimited possibilities. We see perfection and beauty and it is easy to dream a big dream for this baby. Well you were that baby and people looked at you and saw the same thing. We just grew up that's all!

When you first tried to walk, you fell over a number of times before you got it right. Perhaps you hit your head, hurt yourself more than once and yet you persisted until you got it right. Not once did you think of giving up or labelling it a 'failure', you just knew you had to keep correcting, getting stronger until you got it right. You just walked right through the fear without giving it a thought!

So, let's remember what we already know!

Next time fear stops by, let's go to the mirror and look at it and say to ourselves;

*"Fear, I see you, I feel you but I am moving through you, because what I think of myself is far more important than what other people think. I have one life to live and I am not getting out of here alive, so get the hell out of my way because I've got some living to do!"*

Go for it ... introduce your fears to courage and then let courage allow your new life to shine!

**Julie Cross PM** is a keynote speaker based near Brisbane, Australia who mentors within organisations inspiring individuals to be their best by taking action to get the results they want. Described as an inspirational entertainer with a life changing and empowering message, Julie has been acknowledged by mentors and peers with numerous awards from the National Speakers Association of Australia. [www.juliecross.com.au](http://www.juliecross.com.au)  
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Research conducted in the UK<sup>i</sup> suggests the mere presence of a mobile phone in another room affects our ability to connect with those who are in our presence. Also affected are trust and the perception of empathy—fundamental building blocks for relationships, personal or business.

We've become an '*instant response society*' addicted to knowing what is going on in our extended world at any given time.

Technological advancements since the 'mobile' phone was first introduced now make smart phones an indispensable part of life and possibly our identity. Nomophobia, the fear of being out of mobile phone contact is on the rise and is destined to become one of the most prevalent anxiety-based phobias for generations who have never known a time without everything instantly in the palm of their hand.

When we send an email to an employee, colleague or business associate, we expect a prompt if not immediate response no matter what time or day it is. This then changes the dynamics of our lives and relationships and work-life balance is less about keeping the two separate and more about managing work as it inserts itself into our private lives.

There is an insatiable amount of communication and information exchanged instantly and as the UK research indicates, simply moving one's mobile phone out of sight or turning it off, doesn't mean attentiveness and focus is achieved with those around us; addiction overrides these strategies.

What is considered 'urgent' these days would not have been considered urgent a decade ago when we weren't contactable for every minute of the day. Before the Internet and smart phones, work issues would simply have to wait until you learned about them when you arrived at the office the next morning. Anything that rolled off the fax machine over the weekend stayed there until Monday morning. The portable nature of our business and issues today however means we can deal with urgent issues anytime and anywhere without for example, leaving our family on a Sunday morning. But it's not the mobility that is at issue; it is the expanding definition of 'urgent' and our need to constantly know what is going on.

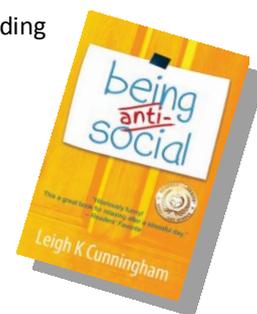
Even on holidays we still check messages and emails and respond to them. Some are able to manage this by only checking twice a day—in the morning and evening. However, one then tends to spend the rest of the day thinking about what was in the morning mailbox. It's difficult to remember a time when 'holiday' really did mean an extended period away from work and life's demands. Those holidaying with you, children, might come to accept this divided attention as normal and perhaps it will not matter—they have their own portable devices to entertain.

Our new world is one of endless distraction and divided focus. Boredom is replaced with overdrive and for the most part, we're engaged with a device or a social network and less so with real people. Relationships (personal, work and business) are ended this way, via email, tweet or text message and the less we have to deal with face-to-face, the better.

In hindsight, many of us might mourn the passing of our grandparents' era.



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<sup>i</sup> Helen Lee Lin, *Scientific American*, *How Your Cell Phone Hurts Your Relationships*.  
<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=how-your-cell-phone-hurts-your-relationships>

If you're like most entrepreneurs, you probably started your business dreaming about the lifestyle and the rewards you would enjoy.

Within a very short time, you probably found yourself working longer and harder than you ever did as an employee.

It doesn't have to be this way ... 2014 could be **your** year to have a business and a life that you really enjoy.

Following are **5 Steps to Business Freedom** that you can take, just like business owner and sales leader, Paul did who went from bringing in 78% of the business revenue, dropped to 6% yet empowered his team to double their sales revenues.

With his extra time, he has refocused and even improved his golf with a reduced handicap to scratch (zero).

### **1. Be open to doing things differently**

When I first met Paul he was used to being in control. If his team didn't deliver, he showed no mercy. He didn't understand that he too was responsible for supporting and empowering the team to be and do better. Paul was a quick learner and an even faster action taker. As he changed his beliefs about what his team could achieve, he became more comfortable and skilled at delegating. He learned to be a better leader. He became what John Maxwell describes as *"the type of person others trust to take them where they want to go"*.

### **2. Identify WHO does WHAT, WHEN and WHY**

Paul began to get an understanding of the systems and processes in his business. With this new awareness he was able to identify gaps in customer service and opportunities to improve efficiency and productivity. He was also able to separate his business into a number of divisions, then to drill down in each division in which every team member understood their place within the entire organisation.

### **3. Create your Infrastructure Wizard**

Once he identified who did what and when, he then created his Infrastructure Wizard by labelling the various roles for each division. With the Infrastructure Wizard he was able to see the relationships and the complexity of his business. No wonder he was stressed before yet now, he had clarity about the roles (*not the people*) that were needed to perform the work.

### **4. Be Clear with your expectations for each role**

The next step was fairly easy. Once the roles were clear, he worked with the team to create clear expectations of what was required to perform to what standard in each role. The role descriptions were documented, which made it much easier for his team to understand what they needed to do to succeed. With this clarity, Paul found it easier to lead, supervise and hold the team accountable.

### **5. Document the critical processes and systems**

The final step was to document the critical processes. Ask yourself, which processes and way of doing things are not negotiable? Which tasks **MUST** be done a certain way to a certain standard? These are your critical tasks. You can document them in a variety of ways. The best way is the way that suits you and your team and your business. It doesn't really matter, as long as they are easy to understand and accessible.

That's the **5 Steps to Business Freedom**.

Follow the steps above and 2014 will be a great year to have a business and a life that you can really enjoy.

**Shirley Dalton** is The Business Systemizer™ and former COO of a national educational firm that grew from 250 to 700 franchises worldwide during her tenure. Based 90 minutes north of Sydney, call her on + 61 402 281 146 or [shirley@daltonbusinesssystems.com.au](mailto:shirley@daltonbusinesssystems.com.au) | [www.daltonbusinesssystems.com.au](http://www.daltonbusinesssystems.com.au). Visit <http://bit.ly/1gY00Lo> to receive a **complimentary** diagnosis of your business and an individual Business Action Plan so you can have a business and a life.



At school you were taught that if you were good, did what you were told and worked hard, your education would get you a job. Then at work, if you did what the boss wanted you to do and put in the hours, you may be promoted and a few would make it all the way to the top. For the last 150 years that worked well, but the rules have changed.

Now, successful organisations need people who know which rules to break to create value. There's a need for more focus on thinking differently, being creative and leading. The trouble is school didn't teach you how to do that well. In fact, you were taught the opposite; do what you're told and give the right answer - if you had different ideas, it was best to keep them to yourself.

The school system was created in 1870 to support the increasing demand for factory workers. For what seemed like forever, organisations needed compliant workers to deliver their plans and the schools delivered them. But the businesses of today need different skills. If your job can be broken down into a series of steps (and it probably can) then you can be replaced. There is already someone willing to do your job for less money.

You were also told you needed to be good at everything and to fix your weaknesses. Now we know that great leaders aren't good at everything, but instead are outstanding in a few key areas. Would you put Usain Bolt in the Olympic marathon to give him a development opportunity, or tell Ronaldo to be the goalkeeper for the World Cup Final? Managers in sport create a team based on playing to the strengths of the individuals within it. So why do managers in organisations insist on developing weaknesses that their staff have, in skills that don't matter? It kills passion and takes people away from what they're best at.



During times of economic challenge, when there is more to do, with less resources, we need people playing to their strengths not wasting time trying to be good at skills that they'll never need to use.

As a result of the Industrial Revolution's needs, maths languages and science were the only things that mattered and school reflected that. Now more than ever, we also need creativity, diversity, curiosity and humanity.

The safe world is ending, where being good and working hard is enough to pay the mortgage. There are no safe jobs any more. There is, however, a new world emerging that is far more exciting and enjoyable. A world where you get to use the skills you are best at and perform to your full potential in areas that matter most to you.

Your industry is experiencing massive change, your job and organisation is not safe, so you need to play to your strengths to stay ahead.

***The paradox of work in the new world: the only way to be safe, is to avoid playing it safe.***

Visit [www.sliding-doors.com.au](http://www.sliding-doors.com.au) to keep reading and check out the new book '**Breaking Good**' and for more information on how to play to your strengths.

**Simon Davie** is leading change and enabling organisations to do more with less, through increasing self-awareness and application of key strengths. A leadership coach at a leading University and Business school and Director of **Sliding Doors** he supports organisations experiencing change from large media companies to small non-profits. If you enjoyed reading this article, you might like to sign up for more here [www.simondavie.com](http://www.simondavie.com)



When the mind is so weary it winds its way to shut down, the flesh so weak that energy is fleeting and the heart so heavy it loses hope, this heralds in a shadow that is a dark night of the soul.

Aside from the day-to-day business ups and downs, there are times where you or someone you deal with might be undergoing maximum stress levels, yet it's not always obvious. Once overcome however, it is an opportunity to recognise the depth of your strength and your emotional resilience which helps propel you through future challenges and /or to support others around you.

Sometimes people feel hopeless, helpless and worthless when to the outside world they have health, wealth and people close around them. Life is not always what it seems on the outside and it is only from the inside that you can overcome.

You can do that by tapping into the core of who you are, that still place of ultimate strength that no one or nothing can sever. What do you face now and what are you carrying around that is gone or things that happened in the past? Isn't it just too much to carry? Image your improved capacity to create momentum in 2014 if you weren't carrying that extra weight?

When you bring past memories to mind you are experiencing them now! You re-present them to yourself, maybe as a movie, a recording, or a feeling. You get to control the picture, its colour, the sound, the volume, the intensity and location of the feeling. Just noticing is often enough to change your response. Or send them away when they come fleeting, not with force but with kindness ... *"Oh there you are again memory ... off you go for now, I will bring you back if I need you!"*

As well as living in the here and now, the way to emotional resilience is threefold: be clear about what is ultimately important to you; be aware of the constraints and opportunities and alert for constant changes; and be flexible in your pursuit of what's important. As you think of someone you know who has been to the brink and back, look for these signs and you will get a real sense of how these elements play out in the real world.

Personally I think of Stephen Hawking, British theoretical physicist, cosmologist and author. Hawking has a motor neurone disease. He is almost entirely paralysed and communicates through a speech-generating device. He might appear to the outsider to be trapped and yet he explores the wonders of the universe, it is his compulsion and his passion.

He accepts he cannot move - he accepts he needs assistance, yet he continues exploring the stars and perceives his opportunity to study and search to be expansive and wondrous as he writes books, produces films and narrates them.

Stephen Hawking thrives and produces prolific work despite these obstacles. He has a clear idea of what is important, knows only too well the constraints and the opportunities within his environment, yet flexes his mind at will. He lives in the now with the wonders of the future in his brilliant mind, inspiration in his hope-filled heart and with a determined instinct to prevail ... now that is emotional resilience and courage we can all learn from.



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Why is it that some business owners seem really successful? Then there are the business owners that struggle *every single year*. **The key is to become Financially Well Organised.**

Here are 10 fundamental priorities you need to achieve to ensure your business is successful into and beyond 2014.

**Tip #1 – Use the right business structure:** Choosing the right business structure gives you asset protection, flexible profit distribution and allows you to pay the correct tax. Is your current business structure offering all this?

**Tip #2 – Structure your salary the correct way:** Doing so stops money leakage, such as payroll tax, workers compensation and superannuation. Simply by changing the way you receive your pay could save your business money, as well as receiving more cash in your pocket each week!

**Tip #3 – Achieve the best profit that you can:** Set a profit plan for your business, using a bottom-up approach, where you set your desired level of profit and then add in your overheads and direct costs. The balance is what you need to sell for the year to make the profit you want.

**Tip #4 – Measure the key numbers:** This is really simple! How did your actual sales for the month go versus budget? How did your gross profit and net profit go versus budget? Also look at the key non-financial numbers in your business. Know where you want to go and then track against it each month. Only when you start tracking will your numbers improve!

**Tip #5 – Know where your cash is:** Cash is king! You know the pressure your business is under when cash is tight. The critical “cash lock up” areas of your business are; debtors, creditors and stock turn. Review these areas and make improvements.

**Tip #6 – Pay yourself first:** Schedule your payments weekly – wages, dividends and super, so that they happen irrespective of business distractions. For whatever reason, when the money comes directly out of your bank you don't seem to miss it.

**Tip #7 – Structure Your Debt Correctly:** The principles are simply: 1) Reduce non-deductible debt first like your home loan, 2) Non-deductible loans should be principal and interest to get rid of them as fast as possible and 3) Deductible loans should be interest only until all non-deductible debt is repaid like your business loan, investment property or share loan.

**Tip #8 – Consciously Support Your Superannuation:** Consciously know how much you will need to retire on and have a plan to make sure you're working towards this amount. Have you considered a self-managed super fund? This works well if you like to control your own investments, or want to invest in property by using your superannuation. Super is the first step in your wealth creation plan.

**Tip #9 – Get Yourself Covered:** Get the right levels of insurance in place. Have you considered income protection, life insurance or key man insurances? What would happen to your business and to your family if something happened to you or your business partner? Make sure you are covered properly. Do you know how long your business can survive without you?

**Tip #10 – A Planned Retirement:** Plan for your retirement. Use a combination of superannuation and other investments. Make sure you are accumulating smartly, so that you're not “leaking” your hard-earned super in fees or taxes. Tax effective structures are available and used well, they make a huge difference to the amount you have to fund your retirement. It's never too early to start planning for your retirement.

These are 10 things you can do in your business to make it **Financially Well Organized** and *be the best business it can be*.



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There is one absolute certainty for your business in 2014 ... you and the people you engage will be the most important assets and the keys to your success. Yeah, that's obvious!

But in the pace of modern business it's easy to forget that people's well-being is the essential ingredient for living the life they want. Our effectiveness personally and professionally, depends largely on our well-being, attitude and how we feel.

They are prerequisites for sustained high performance. Statistics abound that on average, we don't look after ourselves as well as we could or should and it costs us big time! Medibank Private research suggests that Australian business is losing more than \$30 billion annually due to poor employee health directly or in presenteeism.

Think about that figure – it is nearly the cost of the proposed Australian National Broadband Network lost every year!

Your well-being will be the make or break of your business and everything else you value. Looking after and getting the most out of ourselves, personally and professionally, is usually about the small stuff. Easy, sustainable actions within reach of all of us, actions that simply allow us to live the life we want to live.

**2014 will be a busy and demanding year ... for most of us, we like it that way. So don't forget your most important asset in the year ahead .... YOU!**

Try this: Lock in a twenty minute meeting with the most important person in your life -YOU! Find a quiet time and place, make yourself a cup of coffee, tea, pour a wine or beer then ponder the following questions with a pen, pad or iPad.

**What do you value the most in your life?** Think about it. What aspects of your life are most important to you? Are they health, family, relationships, finance, environment, making a difference, vacations, car, etc.?

On the left side of a page write down the four or five most important aspects of your life. To the right of each point give it a rating out of ten. How well are you achieving in that part of your life? How satisfied are you with your balance out of 10?

**What is the important stuff in your life that you are putting off until tomorrow?** In particular what are the relatively easy things you can or should be doing? The things that you know will help you live the life you want to live. Write down the three to five things that you have been putting off "until tomorrow".

**Who are the most important people in your life?** Write down their names. Okay, now invest a few minutes considering what you have written. It's a good platform for what you might do next. Does it bring to mind goals you might set for yourself for 2014? If so, then write them down.

Take it a step further and check out the link below - it's free. You will find a quirky and quite personal method of embedding the goals in your life. It also includes some simple examples (*re: exercise, relationships, alcohol*) -- you'll get the drift. Enjoy. [www.thehealthpresenter.com/goal-speech.pdf](http://www.thehealthpresenter.com/goal-speech.pdf)

That page is for a workshop not advertised on our website. The workshops are only offered as an option after my seminars "Live Well – Be Your Best" or "Live Well to Sell Well". This page is not a reflection of the content of those seminars.

Lastly, a bunch of health tips for you to enjoy your year ahead - [www.thehealthpresenter.com/tips.pdf](http://www.thehealthpresenter.com/tips.pdf)

**Rob Edwards** CSP is The Health Presenter. His conference and in-house seminars create memorable moments that motivate people to look after their most important asset. Rob can be contacted at: **+61 2 8003 4143** or e-mail [rob.e@thehealthpresenter.com](mailto:rob.e@thehealthpresenter.com) or visit [www.thehealthpresenter.com](http://www.thehealthpresenter.com) or Rob's other passion at [www.iitime.org](http://www.iitime.org)



Picture the scene. You are taking an important client to your favourite restaurant for dinner. Your personal assistant has phoned to make a reservation. You know you'll be shown to your table-of-choice. This is exciting! You can't wait!

As you drive into the familiar well-lit parking area, your conversation with Maggie is good. The 'perfect gentleman', you open the car door for her and lead her towards the welcoming entrance to the restaurant. Familiar faces come forward and greet you warmly by name.

The atmosphere is perfect, the temperature exactly right. The background aroma is appealing, not too dominant. The lighting is just right with candles providing a soft glow. You are proud that you have chosen this restaurant for an important relationship-building exercise. You glance around, people deeply engaged in conversation are smiling and the atmosphere is professional and yet congenial.

The beautiful white starched table-cloths and napkins form a background to the shining silverware and sparkling glasses. You order wine and your guest is invited to study the food menu. You know exactly what you are going to eat.

You always order the same because it is so good. Your mind is churning and you want to say: 'Hurry up Maggie, I'm hungry!' But you politely wait for the maître-d to describe the specials and you give her time to study the menu.

You chat and at the appropriate time, the food arrives. You politely wait for her to pick up her cutlery and to start eating. You eagerly await her approval of the food. But ... as she picks up her fork to start eating, you notice that there is a single grain of rice stuck to her fork!

At the moment you notice that single grain of rice, she does, too. She looks at it in horror and doesn't quite know what to do. She has been given a dirty fork, one that has been in some-one else's mouth before being half-washed and put back on the table. Where else has that grain of rice been? No-one wants to eat recycled rice!

Do you think your guest enjoyed the rest of the meal? Were you proud of your choice of restaurant? What did that one grain of rice do for your ego? The good times you'd had at this restaurant most probably paled into insignificance. '*How dare they not wash their forks properly*' was likely the thought that went through your mind. You possibly felt cheated, betrayed, let down.

All it takes is a single negative event to destroy a reputation that perhaps has taken years to build.

Attention to detail is important if we intend being the person of choice, the team of choice or the organisation of choice. Positive relationships help to provide the platform for an 'absence of malice'. In other words, we may give the restaurateur the 'benefit of the doubt' when things do go wrong.

The grain of rice is a wonderful metaphor for all aspects of the way we conduct ourselves and our businesses.

Everything else can be 100% perfect. Yet one grain of rice in the wrong place can create a negative impression that can undo years of hard work. **My question to you is this:** What can you do to make sure that your forks are properly cleaned? Every grain of rice needs to be in the right place. Pay attention to detail!

**Brenda Eckstein** is a bestselling author, speaker, leading trainer and executive coach based South Africa. She was first female (Honorary) President of the Pietermaritzburg Chamber of Commerce (*pop. 500,000*). A veteran professional member of the NSW Chapter of NSA of Australia (NSW), she attends when working in Sydney. She has published two books, 'Networking Tactics' and 'ABCs of Effective Networking'. Visit [www.strategy-leadership.com](http://www.strategy-leadership.com) or call her on mobile +27 82 499 3311 or e mail [brenda@strategy-leadership.com](mailto:brenda@strategy-leadership.com)



# TRACY ELPHINSTONE Do you REALLY Need a Copywriter?

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While I am at networking events or just after introducing myself, I get a question somewhat like 'Elf Editing ... humm – so why would we need a copywriter in business?'

In which I enjoy sharing idea and tips because many business owners think that because they are not in advertising, they don't need a copywriter.

If you think about it, anything you have tried to write for your business, whether it's a brochure, website content or a seminar promotion, you've probably tried to market it from your point of view, what you think is great about your business.

And, as we all know, it's really hard to write about 'us' because it just doesn't come naturally. A copywriter actually writes about everyone else. A copywriter writes what people want to know about your business, not necessarily about what you think you want to say.

The late advertising industry pioneer Shirley Polykoff created an infamous 1956 campaign for a tiny division of Bristol-Myers called Clairol with the catch phrase "*Does she ... or doesn't she?*" – it helped Clairol become a worldwide brand.

Shirley used to say; "**Copy is a direct conversation with the consumer.**"

When we are writing copy, we are trying to sell an idea, a business concept, a service or product by speaking to a target market. We want to persuade or, in effect, 'hypnotise', people to buy our product or service. We want to persuade them that they simply can't use any other product or business for the same purpose.

To do this, we need to identify and understand our clients or target market. We need to find what they find painful or pleasurable. An example could be a removalist business; they could target the 'pain' of a family who had four boxes of crockery and a glass table broken in their last move. They would firstly remind them of the experience and then promote their removalist business by assuring the reader that they treat their possessions with care and respect and they guarantee not to throw their clients' boxes under heavy furniture or have them rolling around loose in the back of a truck.

Conversely, we could find a reader's pleasure point. For example, a florist could possibly market towards men, with the concept, 'imagine the huge smile on your girlfriend's face when she receives this gorgeous bouquet of roses at work on her birthday', etc.

So, while selling or promoting your product or service is, to a degree, important, it is often more important to target what your clients can relate to on an emotional level and persuade them they simply must use your product or service and why.

And that's often the sticking point for business owners when they sit down to write the copy to promote their business. They sit there and think, 'It's really hard to blow my own trumpet.' What they really need to be thinking, however, is, 'What problems do my clients face and how do I solve those problems for them?' Once those points are identified, the inspiration begins to flow.

In essence, good copywriting is really about getting into your clients' head and using the most appropriate words and writing style to make them pick up the phone and call you.

## Tips for great business writing:

- Ask yourself, 'Who is my target market?'
- Use a language and tone that suits your target market (so, if you have a dog grooming business, don't try to sound like an insurance broker).
- Avoid using **your** opinion in your writing — remember it's all about your clients!
- Make sure you use the correct version of a word (e.g. your/you're, they're/there/their, passed/past, affect/effect).
- Draft and redraft and finally...**always proofread!**

**Tracy Elphinstone** with Elf Editing is a veteran copywriter who provides specialist writing and editing services to help businesses gain a professional edge on their competitors. Based near Sutherland (South of Sydney), contact Tracy at **+61 416 191 084** or at [info@elfediting.com.au](mailto:info@elfediting.com.au) or [www.elfediting.com.au](http://www.elfediting.com.au)



When I left school and started looking for a job, I was repeatedly told - 'It's a *bad* time to find a job.' It was and it took time and effort. When I decided to find a job in sales; I was repeatedly told, 'It's a *bad* time to find a job in sales.' It was and it took time and effort. When I decided to start my own business in 1993; I was told; 'It's a *bad* time to start a new business.' It was and it took time and *lots* of effort.

When has it ever been a **good** time to find a job, or start a business, or find new customers, or sell more of your product or service? 2014 will be a challenge for many people and many businesses.

So, if you want to excel in 2014, then what you need is **BRAIN ENERGY** and **BODY ENERGY**!

## 1. Build your Brain Energy.

Imagine you've been rejected for a bank loan or turned down for promotion or a potential customer has rejected your proposal.

If you reacted with, '*Oh no, not again; these people are a real pain! They're making a big mistake. What am I going to do now?*'

This sort of reaction drains your brain of energy; it adds to stress levels and destroys self-motivation.

Get the thinking part of your brain working and say to yourself:

*'I'll make an appointment today with a better bank'*

*'I'll show my employer how good I really am or I'll find a new job'*

*'I'll phone the next potential customer on my list right now'*

Your level of success is a direct result of how you talk to yourself. Listen to the self-talk that goes on in your head and ask: '*Is what I'm saying allowing me to be confident, on top and going for it? If so – great! or Is it holding me back and stopping me from achieving my goals?*'

If this is the case – **STOP IT**, change the program! Talk to yourself in a positive way, that's what your subconscious will focus on and you'll have lots of brain energy

## 2. Build your Body Energy

If we eat too much or eat the wrong things, smoke too much or drink too much alcohol, then our body is in danger of breaking down.

If you want more body energy, then you're going to have to do some exercise. If you do more exercise, you *will* have more energy.

You may think you don't have the time. You may also be the type that doesn't want to go to the gym and lift heavy things or leap about in an aerobics class; however, you need to take some exercise that makes you sweat a little.

Start to think how you can make your exercise enjoyable. Don't try and kill yourself on a bike or a rowing machine. If that's your thing then fine, but please don't make it a chore, plug into the sound system and catch up with what's on TV.

If you're not into exercise, then ensure you have other activities outside of your workplace and make them fun. Too many people are going home and slumping in front of the TV. Successful people don't do that.

***"Look after your Body and Brain and you will excel in 2014"***



**Alan Fairweather**, The Motivation Doctor is an international speaker based in the United Kingdom yet often overseas with clients in Singapore, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines. He has authored three successful books on sales, management and leadership. Connect with Alan at [www.themotivationdoctor.com](http://www.themotivationdoctor.com) | [alan@themotivationdoctor.com](mailto:alan@themotivationdoctor.com)

As you gallop on your Horse into 2014 you will feel the exhilaration of the wind against your face and the freedom of movement. But be sure to ask yourself: **Where am I going?** And **why so fast?**

Let me share with you three paradoxical ideas which may help you pause and bring focus and clarity to your goals and direction:

### 1. Go fast but don't hurry

You've seen it in the best athletes. You've seen it in experienced professionals. Years of practice in your field creates an elegance, an efficiency of movement and action, a quickness that is simply right and rightly simple. What may take hours for a novice to complete can be done in seconds by a trained professional. There is beauty in the movement. Some authors call it being "*in the zone*" or having "*flow*". A good speaker has it with a seemingly effortless presentation that looks so natural that others may say it is just his or her talent. But we know better: it is practice, persistence and trust.

Educator Dr. Moshe Feldenkrais used the phrase when helping a disabled young girl walk with crutches. We want to get somewhere fast, but hurry creates panic, clumsiness and loss of control.

The hurry comes from stress. In a study of overworked U.S. employees, 20% said they made careless mistakes on the job, whereas of those who felt they were not overloaded, less than 1% said they made careless mistakes. If we can reduce our stress we will perform more effectively and focussed, which leads me to the second paradoxical suggestion:

### 2. Slow down to speed up

Time has its way of moving too fast for us. We run out of time, waste time and keep losing time. We try to pack in too much during the workday and end up feeling exhausted rather than uplifted, frustrated rather than energised, resigned rather than motivated. Can this change?

Think about how it feels when you are really immersed in something: a fascinating novel, a challenge at work, your passionate hobby, or even watching children at play. What happens? You look at your watch and are shocked how much time has passed. When you are deeply involved in what highly interests you, your internal clock slows down.

So to slow down time at work you want to create the space to reflect, think and plan. This allows you to delve into and explore what really interests you in your job so you can then deliver and express what can really make a difference. When you take time to plan, the execution of your plans will be quicker.

I suggest you make appointments with yourself, write the times and dates in your calendar, and then show up! You can meet with yourself in your office, a meeting room, or at the nearby coffee shop or hotel lobby, a place where you can be alone without interruptions. You will be able to turn grindfulness into mindfulness and be a more effective leader in the process. You can also:

### 3. Close your eyes to see more clearly

Visualisation is a simple and powerful tool to imagine your next steps, your goals, your visions. Breathe slowly, close your eyes, picture yourself in action and let the future emerge before you. This will prepare you for the challenges ahead.



**Bob Feldman** is a corporate trainer, executive coach, professional speaker and actor from Chicago who lives and works in Singapore. He helps you deepen your process of exploration for inner purpose, passion and peace, and for outward expression, energy and engagement. Website: [www.bobfeldman.net](http://www.bobfeldman.net) | Email: [mail@bobfeldman.net](mailto:mail@bobfeldman.net)

Since 2008 I have evaluated more than 1500 presentations delivered by executives, salespeople and the C-suite. I've come to the conclusion there are nine distinctions you need to internalise and act on for you to become a world-class presenter.

**1. Get to the point!**

Your audience is living in a world of dramatic distraction where everything around them is competing for their attention. You cannot afford to be long-winded. Cut the fluff and get to the core of your message fast.

**2. Less is more**

It is not about how much information you can give. It is about how much information your audience can receive and remember. No one will ever complain that your presentation is too short. But you can be assured that they will complain if your presentation is too long.

**3. Sell the WHY first**

Context is more important than the content. Your audience won't be open to hear the 'what' and the 'how' until they are sold by the 'why'. Start by answering the 'whys in your audience's heads: 'Why should I care?', 'Why is this important to me?' and 'Why does your message matter?'

**4. Every presentation is a persuasion opportunity**

A presentation is a lousy way of dumping information at your audience. It will be faster if they read. Instead, your role is to persuade your audience to change their preferences or their perspectives. Your words, your slides and your props are merely tools to help you achieve the above objective.

**5. Your audience is king**

They did not come to your presentation to exalt you. They came to find out what you can do for them. Success as a presenter means that you help them solve their most pressing problems, you share insights that will make their lives better and most importantly, you leave them better than before.

**6. Connect before you influence**

People buy people first. Before your audience buys your idea, your product or your service, they have to first buy you. Only when they like you, trust you and believe in you, will they buy what you are saying. So before you attempt to influence, first connect by speaking their lingo. Even better, show them that you are on their side.

**7. Help your audience see what you say**

Words have the power to motivate change and inspire results only when your audience can see what you say in their minds. It is the visual images you paint in their minds that rouse their emotions and energise them into action.

**8. Facts tell but stories sell**

Stories are real. They are easy to tell and relate. They are memorable. They are emotional. They give third party credibility. And above it all, stories have the power to move people into action. Perhaps that's why the late Bill Gove summarised the essence of public speaking into six words: Tell a story, make a point.

**9. Be authentic**

your audience will choose an authentic speaker over a polished speaker every single time. Make sure you believe every single word that you say and most importantly walk the talk. Ultimately what is going to give weight to your presentation are not your stories or your slides. It is you.



**CHARISMA**  
ACADEMY  
- win with people -

Eric Feng has invested the last three years helping executives, salespeople and C-suite present with more clarity, confidence and charisma. His book on presentation skills "**Get To The**

**Point®**" has sold over 12,000 copies to date. Recently, Eric hosted a high profile business event graced by Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands. Go to [www.ericfeng.com](http://www.ericfeng.com) for more resources on public speaking.



## The Business of Change



Speaking at the New Eyes Book Launch at Saïd Business School, Oxford

### A personal journey of how

When I was growing up, I was told to study hard, get a good job and climb the ranks. Sound familiar? I did it. I succeeded on those terms - a successful executive, a published author, my own business. This was not without cost. I had burned out, my health had suffered as had relationships. I asked myself 'was this the only way? Could I find more exciting, powerful, fun alternatives?'

2013 was the Year of the Snake. For me, it's been a journey to find the courage to do what I love. **Do you do what you love?**

It began with subtle clues, most of which I missed. I noticed I was telling myself: 'I should do this,' or 'I cannot do that'. Something inside of me wanted to do something, but the 'nots'

and the 'shoulds' had me locked into a professional path created long ago.

The clues got more direct. Things began to go wrong. Great clients no longer needing me, invoices paid late.

It took a while for me to pay attention. I did notice it when the Universe's baseball bat came out. Have you ever felt one of these in your life?

I had denied all this. After all, things do go wrong on occasion. 'It's normal', I said to myself. I was asked if I felt that I was in flow. 'Clearly not', I replied. I realized I had a choice: to operate in the space of struggle or to consciously focus on creating flow. To actually do what I love.

When I started to show up, I found three parts were needed to have the courage to do what you love. **Where are you in your journey?**

### Getting Clear:

I found layers coming up and then falling away. Insecurities, doubts and fears came up. Even *thinking* about doing something different was a trigger. I handled judgments that others close to me would make if I started something different. I developed techniques to admit to myself what my dreams were.

### Building Confidence:

As I began to get hints of what I loved, I began to play with them, a new style of facilitating, a more powerful way of focusing leaders, deliberately creating light and laughter, painting for the first time in seven years. What do you love? One fear that came up was money in which I had to see the financial side of a different life work yet I built my confidence in doing what I love.

### Creating Courageously:

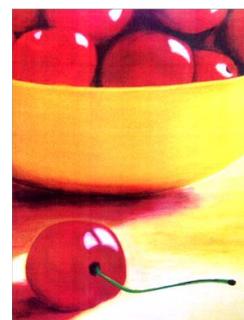
I facilitated a group of 90 Certified Public Accountants a few weeks ago who laughed, learned and loved the process. I'm showing up as me - showing my real hair colour ...Oh fun.

Creating art - selling my art - holding my space - expressing my strengths and vulnerabilities

I am doing what I love with courage.

**Enter 2014, the Year of the Horse and do what you love!**

## The Art of Change



Art work by Joanne Flinn

**Joanne Flinn** is the only artist who uses the powerful Platinum process to integrate presence, living fully, attitude, timing, insight, nerve, uniqueness and money. She uses this powerful process in art, in business and while facilitating, training and keynote speaking. Based in Singapore, she can be reached at **+65 9789 3147** or visit [www.jflinn.com](http://www.jflinn.com)

Most people in today's business environment are searching for a winning edge.

The role and performance expectation of highly paid CEO's, GM's and company executives are filled with deadlines to raise revenue or to make tough decisions to reduce costs.

The price of success can be laced with anxiety, depression and feelings of heaviness. Have you got the right insights, methods and strategy to be relevant and beat your competition?

**Gain Your Edge:** A clear mind, healthy self-esteem and fit body can help to ensure your success.

Sports Psychologists, Olympic coaches and professional fitness experts know that exercise helps release endorphins in our brain that help reduce stress and pain.

Short and long term benefits of exercise include:

- Strengthening your bones and muscle groups
- Reducing feelings of depression, anxiety, pressure or guilt
- Helping our brain think clearly, solve problems and execute
- Decreasing risks associated with cardiovascular disease and diabetes
- Improving short and long term memory plus a feeling of freshness



**The Appetite to Succeed:** In every thriving city sports facility, clean parks, open fields, running and cycling trails can be found nearby. Exercise methods have moved way beyond the confines of '**just going to the gym**'. Self-defence classes, mixed martial arts (MMA), yoga and tai chi centres are quickly growing in popularity.

Even the term '**fight club**' which Brad Pitt popularized in the 1999 hit movie of the same name is no longer associated with characters with obsessed personalities or violent pasts.

Achievers have learnt that life and work circumstances can be similar to a fight for survival. To survive and thrive in the today's business world, individuals must hone their intuition, instinct and strategies.

This develops from one's mind to directing their body to seize opportunity while still recognizing risks, adapting to challenges or in avoiding dangers.

Such circumstances in today's business world are somewhat similar to the earliest Olympic Games where the Greeks introduced Pankration hybrid fighting to the masses.

A combination of wrestling and boxing, it laid the foundations of what is known today as **Mixed Martial Arts or MMA** and one of the fastest growing sports in the world today.

Two high profile and successful individuals on how exercise and business work hand in hand share the following as a perspective on gaining their edge:

Stuart Pearce, a senior executive in a leading Fortune 100 I.T. firm says, "*my rugby days showed me how taking hits, recovering from them and to keep on moving forward is part of everyday life. Having a sharp mind, with a can do attitude is one of the key aspects of having a successful career.*"

Jason Quek, Head Instructor of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Singapore says, "*It's not about the size of your opponent but your ability to create opportunities and seize it to secure victory.*"

When an individual pursues success and personal achievement, it shows who they are. Investing the time to strengthen ones weaknesses suggests that they are willing to change and improve to become happier in their lives.

This is one reason many people admire athletes or have sporting heroes. Their progressive sportsmanship in a game or an amazing defense in a caged ring or the ability to recover from a humbling defeat has been developed from a focused mind and a strong physique working in sync to succeed when it really counts.



**Corden Fu** is a corporate fitness trainer based in Singapore. Since 2003, he's helped hundreds of clients create an edge through fitness and performance goals. A fitness industry advocate since 1998, he loves his wife, family, friends, windsurfing and SE Asia weekends. Call Corden at **+65 8183 3858** or go to [www.pt.com.sg/our-personal-trainers/personal-trainer-profiles/corden](http://www.pt.com.sg/our-personal-trainers/personal-trainer-profiles/corden)

Being able to successfully navigate and lead a team through organisational change or upheaval is a valuable skill for managers, one that requires a delicate balance of authority and emotional intelligence.

Change has the potential to evoke the full spectrum of reactions from staff – from positive exuberance and excitement to negativity, obstinacy, even depression in which many people find organisational change difficult to deal with.

Left unmanaged, their inability to cope can have a lasting negative impact, not just on their own work and engagement level, but also on the performance and job satisfaction of their co-workers.

So as a manager, what can you do when someone in your workforce is struggling to cope with change?

Having joined the AIM V / T team during a period of great change and development (new CEO and new CBD headquarters) my change management skills, strategies and plans were put to the test during 2013.

While the team have been very welcoming and enthusiastic to embrace the challenges we face and learn of the benefits these shifts and direction will bring to everyone, some individuals can be slow to get on board for a variety of reasons.

Below are five change management tips I've found to be both practical and effective to make progress and move forward.

1. **Get the vision right:** Make sure you have a very clear vision of what you expect the change to achieve. Revisit and reinforce the long-range objectives regularly. Don't lose sight of them until you get there.
2. **Communicate:** Always be open and consistent with your communication around change. Clearly explain the reasons behind the change, why it's happening, how it will affect the long-term goals and performance of the organisation, and what impact it will have. Ensure your team is up to date with new developments.
3. **Listen:** Acknowledge that change can be difficult to deal with and be prepared to listen to people's reservations, fears and concerns. Staff are often nervous there will no longer be a role for them or that they won't be able to perform as well if their role changes, particularly if the change is one that involved cutbacks or re-structuring. Being able to see their place in the bigger picture is often all it takes to change their outlook and settle nerves.
4. **Offer a new perspective:** Give staff the tools to see change in a positive light. Focus on potential improvements and benefits to help them get a balanced perspective on the pros and cons of organizational or policy change.
5. **Be firm:** Ultimately, individuals can resist or embrace change. If they insist on adopting a negative attitude, it can be damaging to the whole team. When you have tried all of the above and they still can't get on board, it may be time for them to embrace change and growth by moving on with an adjustment in their career path.

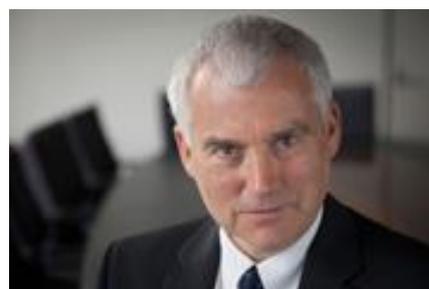
The key insights I have found are in delivering in these five areas and keep measuring the impact while making adjustments.

Consider the words of one of our great leaders and WWII victory architects, Sir Winston Churchill who said ***"However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results"***.

Checking in by regularly monitoring your team and business progress will provide you growth and new success in 2014.

**Tony Gleeson** is CEO Australian Institute of Management (Victoria & Tasmania) and has held senior roles with Deloitte, PricewaterhouseCoopers and CPA Australia. His expertise in technology enablement, process improvement and general management strategy combined with his passion for educational design and development ensures he and his AIM team will lead AIM V / T into an exciting era of change and opportunity.

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What do Jesus, Confucius, Lincoln, and many of history's greatest leaders have in common? They were all accomplished storytellers! They used stories to explain their ideas to their audience and win followers.

Modern day supersalesmen such as Steve Jobs also mastered the art of the story.

In his landmark study of leadership, Harvard Professor Howard Gardner found that *"the key to leadership ... is effective communication of a story."*

Stories are an excellent way to connect with people, to make complex ideas easier to understand and to make your message memorable.

But telling stories is more than just a folksy way to relate to others. It is a powerful and persuasive vehicle that top leaders use to get their message across with maximum impact and minimum resistance.

Generally speaking, leaders in business and government value facts, data, logic and reason. Yet when presented with facts, people try to make sense of them through critical evaluations. They look for flaws in your argument. As a result, using only facts and logical arguments can put your audience in a confrontational state of mind.

Storytelling, on the other hand, combines facts plus emotions. When people become emotionally invested in a story, they aren't looking for ways to shoot it down. By packaging your message into a story, you can introduce your message to your audience without hitting them over the head with it.

We all know that telling a relevant story is a great way to make a point or teach a lesson. This is the most common purpose stories serve. But stories can do so much more! You can use stories to:

**Introduce yourself.** The right story can position you the way *you* wish to be perceived, rather than allowing others to define you. Stories can help you build rapport with your audience and establish credibility. Truly great leaders are driven by their purpose and a story is a powerful way to tell others what you stand for.

This is the most important story you will tell as a leader. And you will tell it over and over again. Doesn't it make sense to craft a reliable story to introduce yourself and learn how to tell it well?

**Promote your brand.** In addition to introducing and positioning yourself, you can use stories to introduce and position your company and brand. Some of the world's most highly regarded companies have great brands in part because they have great stories. We know their stories and these stories shape the way we feel about these companies. How many small businessmen would love to have a story like Nike, Apple, or Starbucks? Many do, they just don't realize it!

**Transmit key organizational values.** Every organization has a socialization process. The right stories can help members feel like they belong far better than a list of core values on a poster hanging on the wall. The right story can also sell customers on your core values.

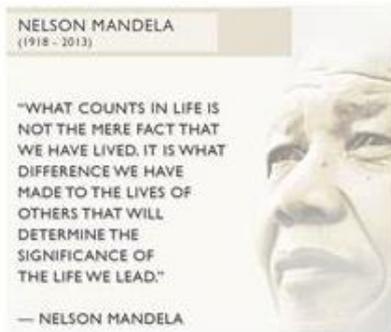
For example, nearly every company in the world claims "customer focused" as a core value, but as customers we know that is rarely our experience. A compelling story of your company delivering an extraordinary customer experience means a lot more than an empty promise.

**Communicate your vision.** This is what makes or breaks a leader. Ronald Reagan, Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. all excelled at articulating a clear vision for the future and they did it with stories.

These are just a few of the purposes stories can serve and there are many others. By harnessing the power of stories, you will be much more persuasive in 2014.



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Nelson Mandela had a Long Walk to Freedom and a short time for leadership. But in that short time, he did not only create a future for all South Africans, but impacted the world. To honour his legacy we must try to decipher his secret and move from being funeral spectators to become actors, following his lead.

What is the Mandela secret? How did it happen that he is held in higher esteem than any other political leader in present day history? What made him the next level leader towering above other good leaders? Dictators get whole populations to serve them, bad leaders rig elections just to cling to power to serve their own interests. They even use money and resources of the state to enrich themselves. Good leaders really try to serve their own people – but it

remains 'us' versus 'them'. But excellent, next level leaders, such as Nelson Mandela, try to create a future for all, not only for their own kind.

To be a 'next-level'-leader like Mandela, you must understand and live the Mandela secret. The secret of Mandela lays interestingly enough in (i) the fact that he really was a free man. Not only politically free, or freed from prison. Yes, he had a Long Walk to Freedom (title of his autobiography) - being released after 27 years in prison. But he was already a free man in prison. His real freedom lay in the fact that he was free from hatred, the bondages of the past, and the negative residual of personal pain that was inflicted on him and free from vengeance.

All of this was possible because he embraced the concept of forgiveness. Because of this he could lead in a pro-active way, not a re-active way. He did not try to get back at people or get even, but moved beyond that to even embrace the very people who imprisoned him. (ii) Because he didn't carry any baggage, he could do the extraordinary. Ordinary people love their neighbour (their own kind). Extraordinary people also love their enemies.

In this regard Nelson Mandela, a Methodist Christian, followed the lead of his leader, Jesus Christ, who preached 2000 years ago that we must love our neighbours AND love our enemies. Only 'next level leaders' can do this. They are a rare breed. In South Africa we call these kinds of leaders 'rainmakers' – they bring good things to all people under the sun. (ii) A third aspect is that Nelson Mandela was willing to change his mind (his paradigms) about issues as he went along. He wasn't dogmatic but rather pragmatic. He had the wisdom and discernment to know when to stand fast (fight) and when to give way (make peace).



**Dr Gustav Gous with Mandela**  
Mandela, Nelson Mandela's Grandson & chief of the Madiba tribe

How can we honour his legacy? Be inspired by Nelson Mandela's life well lived, we must act: First be transformed, and then lead to transform.

1. First transform yourself: Identify your own prisons and walk free.
2. Then transform the world as a free pro-active leader.



"What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead."

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela  
1918 - 2013



The greatest favour you can do to yourself, the people around you and the world is to become baggage free. Name your own prisons. Then break free. The most important prisons to break free from are: prejudice, paradigms (political, business, ideological, etc.), personal pain, the past, habits (even addictions), fundamentalism, greed, negative thinking, etc.

Use your position to make the world a better place. In doing so, Mandela's death will not only stir up emotion but also result in action. Nelson Mandela had a long walk to freedom - you too must do your personal 'short' walk to freedom. **This is in my mind the best way to honour his legacy because only**

**free leaders can lead people to a better place.**

Read my full blog on this topic: <http://gustavgous.blogspot.com/2013/06/call-to-action-nelson-mandelas-life-and.html>

**Dr Gustav Gous** CSP, PhD is a founding member of the Professional Speakers Association of South Africa and National President 2009 to 2010. Based in Pretoria, Dr Gous heads up Short Walk Seminars Pty Ltd staging 'Short Walk to Freedom' Leadership Programs on Robben Island (Cape Town) where Nelson Mandela was incarcerated for 18 of his 27 years. Contact details: [gustav@gustavgous.co.za](mailto:gustav@gustavgous.co.za) or phone +278 2565 7451 or visit [www.gustavgous.co.za](http://www.gustavgous.co.za)

How many people do you know who you regard as winners in the 'Game of Life'?

I'm not just talking about the games of finance or sport or politics or social standing, because all of these are only aspects of a bigger game called 'Life'.

There are many people who don't have a life while they are making a living. Their lives are all work and no play or all play and no work - they don't have the satisfaction of making a meaningful contribution. Some get it right in the fame game or the money game yet lose their families or they win the trophies or medals but lose their souls.

Answering the question: *"What surprises you most about humanity?"* the Dalai Lama answered: *"Man. Because he sacrifices his health in order to make money. Then he sacrifices money to recuperate his health. And then he is so anxious about the future, he does not enjoy the present; the result being that he does not live in the present or the future; he lives as though he is never going to die, and then dies having never really lived."* Everybody must therefore wake up to the challenge to really live 100% - to get a life while you are still alive.

Informal research on "Get a Life" workshops on different continents revealed that the average answer to the stated question - *"How many people do you know that you regard as winners in the Game of Life?"*, is as low as only two or perhaps three people from every given list of Facebook 'friends'.

It underlines what existentialist philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre said: *"Everything has been figured out except how to live"*.

The more important question is not *"How many people do you know ..."*, but *"Are you one of the people on the list?"* If I ask all your close friends or social media friends, would they nominate your name as one of the people who can be regarded as a winner in the game of life?

Will people hire you not only for your professional skill, but also as a life example? My call to action is: Make sure that you are one of those rare people who really have a life. Obviously it takes focussed effort - it doesn't come by itself. A healthy, structured "Get-a-life in 40 day challenge is a great wake up ... Why **"Get-a-life?"** ... because so few people have one.

Why 40 days? It takes time to plan and effort to design a good life. Day 41 is actually the most important as it symbolizes the rest of your life and an implementation of the plan which is not the only thing to do, yet it is a great place to start!

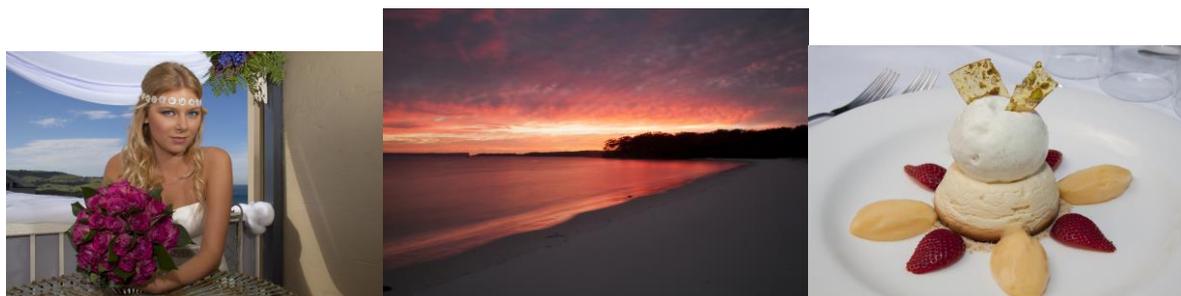
We ask seven important questions in this process ... why? Because Socrates, the wisest of all philosophers taught us that we can lead people to wisdom through strategically placed questions.

I personally live by the following dictum from The Message: *"Don't compare you with others. Each of you must take responsibility for doing the creative best you can with your own life."* Letter to the Galatians 6:3-4 (MSG).

Whatever you do in 2014 ... just make sure that you get a life first!



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Some people are very handy with technology and carry a smart phone or instant camera with them all the time. Memories are important and that is why NEG photography has the catch cry of “*Capture the Moments that Matter*”.

But what about those moments when you want to use more than an instant or snap shot camera? You could contract NEG photography to take the images for you or perhaps you may like to do it yourself? If so, here are some great tips and quick pointers I have learnt from my experiences over the years.

Let’s say you have a DSLR (*Digital Single-Lens Reflex*) camera and don’t know much about it. First step is for you is to read your manual - don’t just glance at it and put it down. As you are reading up on each function of your camera, actually put it into practise. Pick a subject and take a photo.

Every DSLR has a mode dial with several settings. Each setting optimises one function on your camera. They normally are:

1. **P – Program;** it sets the exposure (*shutter speed and aperture*) automatically.
2. **TV - Shutter-priority;** for action shots. TV stands for time value; freeze action or create a blur.
3. **AV - Aperture-value;** adjusts depth of field, which is how much blur you want behind and in front of your subject.
4. **M - Manual Exposure;** you can set the shutter speed and aperture as you like.
5. **A-Dep - Automatic depth of field.** Understand what each function is so you know when shooting a subject you can get the best shot possible.

Another setting you will need to understand is ISO which is the measurement of how sensitive a digital camera's sensor is to light. The speed or light sensitivity of a digital camera's sensor is rated in ISO numbers...the lower the number, the slower the response to light.

Higher ISO numbers also increase the amount of “noise” in your image. When shooting at ISO 100, the image darker / shadowing sections will appear dark and smooth. ISO 6400 looks like the image has a layer of sand over the top.

Finally, don’t forget about the focus. Ensure that you have what you want to photograph, in focus; otherwise you will be disappointed with the result. Most DLSR cameras have nine multi-focus points in a lens. There is normally a feature on your camera to select one of the nine should you need to.

Combining ISO, TV, AV and correct focus will give you an image to start with. This will require practice and there are many other aspects that professional photographers use to gain the perfect image. For beginners, you have to start somewhere and hopefully this quick overview will assist you in taking some images that you will be proud of.

Photography is an art! The way I see it, as long as you are operating the camera to gain the image that you want, there is no wrong image. It’s up to your interpretation of what you want to capture (this is your style)....enjoy your 2014.



**Nardia Guillaumier** is based near Sydney with NEG photography. Time to “capture the moments that matter” with energy, professionalism and efficient service to gain beautiful and natural images with a wide variety of disciplines. View our creations at [www.negphotography.com.au](http://www.negphotography.com.au) or email [info@negphotography.com.au](mailto:info@negphotography.com.au) or phone Nardia at +61 417 465 257

Life doesn't always go according to plan.

No matter how hard we focus, plan and strategise, the unexpected can happen to throw us off our path.

It is during these challenging times that can become the crossroads to your success and may need to make a **B.R.A.V.E.** decision.

I faced a life changing moment in 1998 when my husband of 10 years said to me *"I want to become a woman"*.

My world stopped and went silent. I knew that I had to make a life changing decision that would affect not just me, but our three beautiful young children and also my husband and that was when my B.R.A.V.E. decision making process was born.

**B = BELIEFS:** What do you say to yourself – what is your self-belief?

The most important words you will ever hear are the words you say to yourself, yet so many people define themselves by what other people think. I knew what other people thought about my situation, but it wasn't going to define me.

**R = RATIONAL:** Open your mind to the information you need to make the right decision, even information that may go against your entrenched beliefs - don't censor your mind. I went to the transgendered community to find the answers I needed.

**A = AUTHENTIC:** Be true to yourself - make the decision that YOU need to make, not a decision that other people *expect* you to make! Many people were telling me what they thought I should do, but I had to be true to myself.

**V = VALUES:** Often when we face major decisions, we have to satisfy our highest values and let the others go. Define your values. My highest values at that time were my children and my relationship.

**E = EMOTION:** Your emotional thinking is very strong, yet it's not the place to make major decisions. You can imagine my emotions - from anger and confusion to sadness and emptiness.

I worked through this process, went back to my husband and told him that I would stand by him, one day at a time but that our *'marriage was over'*. I was losing a husband, but gaining a sister - it's not the same! The kids were losing their Dad, but gaining an Aunt - definitely not the same!

We redefined in our relationship and lived for another seven years as a very unconventional, yet happy, family. Then in 2005 something changed - my values.

Values guide our decisions and that was when we finally separated and got divorced.

Sometime later I met my new husband on an internet dating site called 'Find Someone'. True story, he was looking for a car at the time on another site, saw the link to 'Find Someone' and my new chapter began.

I continue to use this process in all aspects of my life. I share this with my audiences and clients to help them through challenging times, difficult decisions, through the pain when life doesn't go according to plan.

2014 may bring challenges to you....if you want to grow, gain strength and continue to be successful, be B.R.A.V.E.



**Linda Guirey** is a highly respected expert on Life Choices. An inspiring and compelling international speaker, trainer and coach who transforms people and organisations from the inside out, Linda was voted **"Best Speaker 2012"** at the Corporate Event's People's Choice Awards. [www.lindaguirey.co.nz](http://www.lindaguirey.co.nz) | [linda@lindaguirey.co.nz](mailto:linda@lindaguirey.co.nz)

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Imagine launching your business or a product name, only to find in six months, two years or even five years later you get a letter from a competitor's lawyer to say stop using that brand as it belongs to their client.

Being on the receiving end of a 'cease and desist letter' can be a devastating, emotional and expensive experience. It does happen every day and often it is due to a lack of knowledge and right research **not** being done in advance.

Having a trademark is not normally at the top of the "to do" list when one is first starting out in business because it didn't seem important in the scheme of things. That's what many business owners think until they become embroiled in a brand name dispute and their business is threatened.

The fact is that if you are relying on a business name or company name registration, **then you don't own the brand name**. Trademark registration is the best method to gain ownership of your brand and stop a competitor from copying you. Asking a few questions early in the process of selecting a brand can save you thousands of dollars and months or years of stress!

#### What Can I Trademark?

You can register a trademark for a company name, logo, the name of a product or service, a tag line, a slogan or even sounds and smells! The main thing to remember is that a trademark is your "**badge of origin**" letting the marketplace know that a particular product or service is yours.

#### Why Should You Trademark Your Brand?

It makes sense for manufacturers and business owners to trademark the name of their products and / or services as it gives them exclusive rights in a legal sense to use, license and sell their intellectual property in the country in which they register that brand.

You can use the trademark registration as a basis to sue a competitor for trademark infringement if they use your brand.

Registering a trademark protects your property rights for a period of 10 years in most countries around the world and often without any further cost in that 10 year period. That registration can be renewed for an indefinite time period in 10 year increments provided the right procedures are followed and renewal fees paid to the relevant Trademarks Office.

#### 5 Tips to Consider when deciding on a Brand for your Business

- ✓ Select a name that is unique to your industry and does not describe what you do or what the product does.
- ✓ Do the right research **BEFORE** taking a brand to the marketplace to avoid being sued for trademark infringement.
- ✓ Make sure the brand can be registered as a trademark to ensure you own the brand to stop a competitor from copying you and trading upon your reputation.
- ✓ Use the correct symbol when marketing your brand, i.e., the letters <sup>TM</sup> for an unregistered brand and <sup>®</sup> once the brand is registered as a trademark - this lets the others in the marketplace know you value your brand.
- ✓ Conduct marketplace searches of your brand regularly to ensure a competitor has not commenced using your brand to enforce your rights should you need to do so.

**Suzanne Harrington** is a Trademark Specialist at Pinnacle TMS and #1 Amazon Best Selling Author of '**Trademarking Your Business**' based in Sydney, Australia. Her 20 plus years of experience enables her assist businesses of all sizes to avoid business identity theft. Contact her via email at [Suzanne.harrington@pinnacletms.com.au](mailto:Suzanne.harrington@pinnacletms.com.au) or at <http://www.pinnacletms.com.au> and download a free chapter of her newest book.



Business video is cheap TV mini-ads to market you and what you do. Watching is quicker than reading online.

But, 'Where do I start?' "Isn't it expensive?" "Me on camera – eeeek." Any of these excuses ring a bell? Now, you know excuses *can* be overcome and with some simple tips, you CAN be the confident, credible and charismatic YOU on video!

### What's Important in Video?

Good picture quality and sound are a must. If you can justify it, 'Go Pro' with video. But DIY style smartphone videos, edited in YouTube can also work for you. Most of all people want to see a confident and congruent presenter on camera. People want a real person they can connect to and to see how they can help us from their video.

### Confidence on Camera

Talking to a machine is not a normal thing to do! Live feedback feeds our performance. On camera, there is none. Great – you're free to do and say what you want! So present with conviction, passion, make an Emotional Connection.

So who do you need to be in your video to sell the show? Personable, approachable, believable, enthusiastic, passionate, enlightening, excitable, energetic, cheeky, beguiling, and bold and the list of adjectives can go on.

Decide how you want to be perceived by the viewer. Why should they watch? What's in it for them (WIIFM)? What do you want them to do as a result of watching?

The machine drains 30% of our energy the moment we press record so energize the impact with your conviction.

Connect to your viewer *through* the camera lens not *at* it. Imagine the camera as a real person that is fascinated, engaged and enthused as you tell your story. Confidence on camera is all about connecting to someone *real*.

### Your One Minute Story

- Plan your story yet be flexible. You can always film another video if you don't get it all in or done.
- Grab the interest in the first 3 to 7 seconds – challenge, implore or entice your viewers.
- Intrigue and convince by questioning the *why*, *what* and *how* you can help viewers improve their world or make their lives better, richer, easier or more fulfilling.
- Finally, capture with an easy 'Call to Action'.

**TIP:** You may have a serious business but don't be TOO serious. Viewers want to **like** you - help them with your **SMILE!**

### Be FLAWSOME!

- Always rehearse ON CAMERA as your first "Take" maybe great and the most spontaneous.
- No one knows if you 'go wrong' unless you visually or vocally *show* it through your distracting habits.
- You're the expert in your field - have the courage to continue through your Flaws awesomely!
- Keep going to the end!

### Learn from You

- Watch yourself. See what you like, notice distractions and change them.
- If you're really not happy as the face of your business, be the voice instead.
- In time, you'll learn to like yourself and objectively appreciate how good you are.

I learnt years ago from a wonderful lady in Australia that Confidence + Credibility + Charisma Connects through the Camera.

Learn to enjoy it - **"Stuff up with Confidence and get over it!"**



**Lottie Hearn** is Ireland's Video Coach with her company [Press Play Presentations](http://www.pressplaypresentations.com).

Lottie loves to empower and inspire **"Confidence on Camera"** which is the working title for her 2014 book, in a co-preneuring, DIY, self-enabling way.



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Here's something to shock the socks off any business owner: more than 70 percent of Australian workers are disengaged at work. That means most employees are unmotivated and couldn't care less about their employers' mission. And it's costing our economy around \$54.8 billion each year.

Do your people like coming to work? And are they treated well? Building a better business is all about keeping your top talent happy, so they stick around and sing your praises. That's good for business and your brand, because greater productivity means greater profitability.

### What makes a great workplace?

Skills shortage or not, a workplace with a great culture will always thrive. An awesome work environment is one where:

- People are respected and valued
- People feel good about going to work
- Managers seek feedback from their teams and implement great ideas
- People can take ownership of their goals and career progression



### How to create a winning work culture

Transforming your business into a great place to work isn't hard. So it's surprising that so many workers are unhappy.

Here are 5 top tips to turn frowns into smiles:

1. **Seek feedback:** Use an anonymous survey, such as the STAR Workplace program, to identify issues and provide your people with a confidential platform to share their suggestions and struggles. If you don't ask, you won't know.
2. **Collaborate on culture:** Get your people involved in crafting a clear and compelling company culture. They're then more likely to see work as a place to satisfy their purpose in life. And when workers' objectives align with the company culture, their attitude and output soars.
3. **Add great perks:** Do your people want weekly yoga classes? More social dinners? A relaxing retreat area or more salary sacrificing options? Ask what would make work a better place to be and then action it.
4. **Start a mentor program:** Ensure your workers don't feel forgotten. Team them up with a mentor who can check in to see what's motivating or frustrating them. Offer training and development to add to their skill set. Valued workers are happier, healthier and more productive workers.
5. **Celebrate:** Whether it's a birthday, work anniversary or hitting individual or team targets, celebrate it. We all like to feel significant and appreciated for our efforts. Then if your staff enjoy coming to work and consider their colleagues as friends, you're well on your way to creating a knockout company culture.



**Karen Hillen** is an employee relations specialist and a Certified HR Coach with a Diploma in Human Resource Management. Karen offers insights into creating a positive and productive workplace. With empathy and professionalism, Karen and GTK can help you navigate your HR processes, so that your people and your business thrive. Sydney, Australia based. email: [Karen@gtkhumanresources.com.au](mailto:Karen@gtkhumanresources.com.au) or visit [gtkhumanresources.com.au](http://gtkhumanresources.com.au)



When it comes to building long-term relationships with clients, it's very similar to building long-term friendships.

In school, children are encouraged to make new friends by talking with others, inviting them to play and being "nice" to them. In many business situations, clients often become more than clients. They become friends ... not necessarily the kind you would invite to non-business gatherings, but people you truly care about and who care about you.

There is a feature in a local newspaper where readers are invited to review their favorite restaurant. The articles are wonderful publicity for the restaurants. One of the key elements I see repeated is that patrons know the names of the owners, hosts and / or servers. And, many of the restaurant workers know something about them as well. They know if the guests prefer coffee or tea with breakfast. They may even remember their favorite meal, asking if they want "the usual."

Put yourself in the seats of those guests for a moment. How would it make you feel to have your favorites automatically placed before you without having to explain your preferences? It would make you feel at home or as if you're at the home of a good friend ... someone who knows you well and wants you to have what you want. That type of response is the ideal when it comes to serving your clients' needs and it can be created no matter what your product or service is.

You may think you're in the business of selling automotive services, home remodelling or repairs, printing services, financial services, tutoring or signage, but you're not.

Even if your products are sold only to other businesses, the business doesn't make the buying decision. A person does. You are in the *people business*. Learning to make people feel important and cared about will help you make both the initial sale and long-term sales over the course of your career.

Maybe you sell tires, not breakfast. Even so, you should introduce yourself to each client and give your name. Use your clients' names in conversation during the sales process. Inquire about the use of the vehicle. Does the client have young children or a teenage driver? If so, safety will be an important issue to discuss with them. Do they have a home where some off-road driving is involved? Or, do they travel for business and need highway tires? All of these answers help you lead them to the best choice for them. Keeping a record of their answers will help you build long-term relationships.

No matter what your business is, every client should receive your best care during the sales process and after. During the initial sale, get them talking and take good notes. Enter the information into your client database.

My colleague Harvey Mackay (CPAE) has a long list of details he requires his salespeople to gather about clients over time. This includes not just information required to do business, but a few personal details such as birthdays, whether or not they're married, children's names, and whether or not they have pets. That information is used to make contacts and to start conversations with clients after the initial sale.

People like to do business with people who are like them, who demonstrate that they care about them beyond making the sale and who keep them in mind when something new that might be of interest to them comes along. That type of treatment makes clients feel important. They come to rely on businesses and salespeople they know they can trust to have their needs and interests at heart.

**Tom Hopkins** CPAE, world renowned expert and sales authority based in Scottsdale Arizona. Author of 17 bestselling books including '*How to Master the Art of Selling*' and '*Selling for Dummies*' with over two million copies sold worldwide. Mr Hopkins simple, yet powerful strategies have proven effective across international markets and economic conditions. His blog contains a wonderful introduction to his ideas, practices and services. + 408 949 0786 [www.tomhopkins.com/blog](http://www.tomhopkins.com/blog) | <http://www.tomhopkins.com/index.shtml>



There are countless of examples of Corporations that refused to see the risk to their market dominant positions. The one that comes easily to mind is Kodak.

Steve Sasson, the Kodak engineer who invented the first digital camera in 1975, reported the initial corporate response to his invention was *"it was filmless photography, so management's reaction was, 'that's cute - but don't tell anyone about it'."*

Vince Barabba was head of market intelligence in 1981 at Kodak. In Barabba's book, *"The Decision Loom: A Design for Interactive Decision-Making in Organizations,"* he recounts how he conducted extensive research that looked at the core technologies and likely adoption curves and trends in the photographic industry.

The results lead to a conclusion that adoption of digital photography would be minimal and non-threatening for about 10 years. Barabba left Kodak in 1985 as little was done to prepare for the oncoming disruption. Nothing much changed in the years that followed and Kodak became irrelevant in the photographic industry.

A more recent case study in avoiding reality is the Blockbuster and Netflix story. This is a study of two businesses in the same industry targeting the same market. Netflix looked at its customers and catered to their changing needs. Firstly by offering a postal service to deliver and retrieve the rentals from their customers, then by adopting technologies that removed all barriers to their customers allowing Netflix users to stream their desired entertainment to any device in their home.

Blockbuster held on fiercely to its business model despite changing needs of its customer base allowing Netflix to gain a tremendous foothold. Blockbuster, once the world leader, will close its last rental store in the United States in 2014.

The business world is littered with similar examples. So what is the key lesson? How do you as a business professional spot these potential disruptions to your business?

Here are 5 tips that I have learned and used to enhance my career.

1. **Research new technologies that are being created:** New technologies may not be available commercially for several years but they will eventually disrupt the market. The clearest example of this is the rise of 3D printing. Industrial 3D printers are changing the way we think about and interact with manufacturing.
2. **Consider what the next generation of customers need:** Don't just cater to the existing customers of your business. The Netflix generation of consumer consumes entertainment in a very different way than the Blockbuster generation of consumer. Cater to the next generation of consumers for your business.
3. **Don't be afraid to experiment with a new channel:** Kickstarter.com is changing the funding model for entrepreneurs. Peer to peer lending models are creating a new paradigm for investors and potential threat for financial institutions.
4. **Remember that your competitors aren't just in your industry:** There was a time when you owned a watch to tell the time; a Walkman to listen to music; a Gameboy for entertainment; a mobile phone; and a computer to access your emails. Now all these items have been replaced by one device. Who saw it coming? Apple and Sony Ericsson. Look at how consumers consume - learn how to spot trends in behavioural change or at least, employ professionals that can.
5. **Take time to stop and look at WHY your business exists:** Sometimes we do what we do because we've always done it. Take a breath and ask yourself how does your business benefit your customers? How can you increase the benefit to your customers? Is your business / product relevant to your customers? Most importantly, are your customers benefiting and relevant to your business? You will be surprised at what you tell yourself when no one is listening.

So remember that if you don't see the risk coming, believe that it still exists! Don't believe it ... think about these ... Vacuum Tubes, RCA, Film, Kodak, Fax Machines, Laser Disc, Blockbuster, Carbon Paper, Newspapers, CRT Monitors, Transistor Radios.

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**"Sales" is now a dirty word** and many people dislike the idea they have to become this, often distrusted individual to achieve their business goals and end up with a definite internal conflict.

Customers are also a more complicated and educated breed these days. Even consultative selling has become a well-known practice. They have a "sales shutter" that comes up when they sense they are being sold. The same happens if they sense that you are not being genuine. People instinctively know when you are being false (perceived as lying) and will disconnect and distrust you.

In addition the internet has made the world transparent. Over 90% of people will check you, your company or your product out at a very early stage. This means they will have an expectation of you before you even meet – and you need to meet or exceed it.

So what works now?

There are many things but amongst the most important is to **Be Genuine**. Be you! As Judy Garland said *"Always be a first rate version of yourself and not a second rate version of someone else."*

In an age where we are so transparent, being professionally vulnerable and telling the truth will help swing the pendulum of credibility back in your favour. For example, if you are a bastard – be a bastard. People know how to handle that and will buy for the right reasons. But a bastard trying to be nice will cause a very strong feeling of 'that's just wrong!'



**The 3% Principle:** I meet many people who are in sales by necessity yet do not want to be (especially in New Zealand).

Technical people like engineers, accountants, trades people and those in franchisees who are good at what they do, yet find sales challenging. They are great at uncovering needs, building relationships and producing excellent solutions; but not good at finalising the deal. The 3% principal is about them telling the customer that 97% of the time they build or provide the service asked for at an amazingly high standard and work tirelessly to make the client happy. This aspect is what they gain satisfaction from and the client loves it.

But 3% of the time they have to convince the client that they should use them and this is what they are not good at. They are not a smooth sales person and if it's OK with the client, could they simply work together to create a solution? The client will need to provide feedback and the sales person will keep going until the client gets what they want.

At that stage, they may ask the customer if they want one, but it won't be smooth because they are not a 'sales person'.

It is an open and honest approach that finds favour with the majority of users and recipients alike. In one case we saw engineers of one company increase sales 38% in three months because this idea did not sound like 'selling'. It was just conversation!

Feedback from the clients shows they are very happy with this arrangement as they did not want to be 'sold'. Our approach makes all the difference but the most important thing is for us to be comfortable in what we are doing and if we are not, our customers aren't.



**Bill James** CSP, helps you find the business, opens the door and makes the connection to the sale. His ideas are easy to understand and implement. Bill is President of National Speakers Association of New Zealand and voted Speaker of the Year 2012-2103.

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For decades, those in sales have been told to keep control and steer the client, yet in today's business environment, clients are savvy and resistant to 'being sold'. In 2014, it's time to break the mould.

Your sales process will have natural breaks, points where you pause before moving on to the next portion of the conversation. At these break points, simply ask the client for permission to continue. **Simple!**

You will find that your clients will almost always hand control straight back to you. They either acknowledge acceptance of what has been said or hand control back to you or they bring something up (an objection) that has been missed.

Either way they feel involved, in control and we must find all the objections before we can move on. It is all in how you communicate with your client. The simplest way to demonstrate this is to look at a few examples.

Simply use questions more: *"Thanks for making the time to see me. Let me tell you how we work."* could be *"Thanks for making the time to see me. Would it be okay if I tell you how we work?"*

Or *"That is very interesting. What I'd like to do now is ..."* could become, *"That is very interesting. If it's okay with you, what I would like to do now is ..."*



You achieve a number of good outcomes with simple questions:

- 1. No hard sell.** Selling today is about leading clients to conclusions they feel they have reached themselves with your guidance. The simple act of handing control back to a client allows them to be an active partner in the sales process. They feel they lead the conversation and are actively making the decisions.
- 2. Form relationships.** By giving control back and involving your client, you actually deepen the relationship with them significantly.
- 3. Reduce fears – yours!** Many sales people fear saying the wrong thing. Asking permission gives you reinforcement that you are on the right track.
- 4. Allow objections.** Uncovering objections can be difficult, especially for those with less experience. Asking permission periodically allows your client to interpret what they have just heard and voice their concerns or questions. We all know we need to uncover and solve them.
- 5. Closing the sale.** By asking permission and building the relationship the close is much more natural and assumptive. It just flows.
- 6. Give Control — Gain the Sale.** Therefore use asking permission as a way of rounding out that process, uncovering the objections, cementing the relationship and making sure the client is completely happy with everything before moving on. Tick the box for each step of your sales process until you reach the end.

You can be confident you have done a great job, uncovered and dealt with any concerns and developed a relationship, all leading to far easier business completion and into the future.

So remember, give a little, get a lot.



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It was another sunrise in a new city in South East Asia and I was certainly getting around. I had been told to report to the head office of a major insurance company in another country to meet their Chief Information Officer as a project was in trouble.

I had caught a very early morning flight to take advantage of the time-zone difference and caught a taxi to their CBD office to meet my contacts. They seemed nervous about the situation I was about to be in as we launched into the CIO's office for a 9 am meeting with very little understanding of the problem.

First signs were not promising. They escorted me to the top floor, took me to the office and stood diffidently outside. Their CIO was on the phone talking quickly and angrily.

Something else was also not going right as he gestured to me to sit down and so I did. He kept on talking on the phone in a very angry and agitated manner for the next ten minutes with no further acknowledgement of my presence.

*"This is going to be interesting"* I thought. There was nothing else I could do, so I just sat and waited. My mind was neutral. Let's deal with things as they are and not speculate.

He finally put down the phone, rose slowly to his feet, clutching his back and not really acknowledging me said, *"My back is killing me, I'm going in for an operation on Friday and just holding out until then."*

I nodded. I don't think I smiled. I just understood that here was someone in immense physical pain and somehow, he knew. He started walking slowly around the room, talking a bit to himself which carried on for five minutes. I just sat there ... neutrally.

Then he suddenly came over to the low table where I was, grabbed a piece a paper and started drawing up a diagram.

*"The trouble as I see it is this:"* He then drew up a diagram of the stakeholders, who was a supporter, who wasn't, then circled one and said *"The problem is, this guy is the customer, but he does not own the result. He's just sitting back and sniping. It's politics. He's got to have some skin in the game and he's got to contribute some resources so we get his requirements clear. His department has to show some ownership. I'll talk to the CEO about it ... it's the only way it's going to happen."*

Then he turned to me directly, and said *"Thank you, thank you for being such a help. I am really grateful that I can go have my operation knowing we can sort this out. I know you will have to do a report; I want you to stay here for the next two weeks to get the details sorted. I'll get the actions underway. Go and work with the team to get them on the right track. But I am so pleased to clear this up."*

With this he shook my hand, and showed me the door. I swear, in the entire meeting, I said not a word. We use the **CALM** approach with our clients and this is a great example:

- Understand the real **CAUSE** of the problem.
- Be **AWARE** of why it occurred.
- **LET GO** of whatever is in the way.
- Know how **MOOD** or emotion guides us.

Sometimes it's best to just keep CALM, listen and let things sort themselves out.

**Mark Jamieson**, MBA is a speaker, author, trainer and coach who helps organisations attain clarity, insight and focus in their work. His newest book is entitled, **"It's Just Your Thinking: from mindless busyness to mindful business."** Based in Singapore, contact him at [mark.j@twistedthinking.asia](mailto:mark.j@twistedthinking.asia) or [www.twistedthinking.asia/CALM](http://www.twistedthinking.asia/CALM)



Are there any health benefits from thinking funny thoughts?

The short and easy answer is yes, yet almost all of us tend to do the opposite. In fact, most of us are not aware of our own thought habits. Stop slipping into negative thought patterns and start enjoying benefits from positive thoughts and especially laughter.

Like me, you may have heard the saying, *“laughter is the best medicine”*. Advances in neuroscience continue to affirm the effectiveness of humor in bolstering overall health. So think about it: When was the last time you laughed? How did laughter make you feel? Did you feel good, happy or maybe a sense of relief?

Another adage: We reap what we sow. In neuroscience terms, the more we think a certain way, the more we will think that way – positive or negative. This happens because the neural pathways involved in specific thought or a specific way of thinking are different to others and the more you think a specific way, the more ingrained that pattern of thinking will become.

That is, the neural pathway becomes more efficient and the brain will naturally default to that thinking in times of stress, low energy, or idleness. This is what we refer to as ‘thought habits’. And thoughts dictate feelings, so the more negative you think, the more negative you feel. And as we have learned from health experts, negative feelings (i.e., stress) are detrimental to your health. Conversely, positive thoughts result in positive feelings.

But what happens when we encounter a stress-filled situation that can’t just be ‘thought’ away?

**One solution:** Think of the actions in the past that you took which resulted in positive outcomes. In other words, challenge yourself by twisting your perception until you get a favorable result.

As an example, I found myself on a crowded bus with very tense people, heading to the Google office in Singapore for a celebration on a typical work day. There was an interesting and loud elderly gentleman occupying a seat on the bus talking to himself. Later he added more drama by bursting into song in short intervals, causing a real nuisance, disturbing the peace and quiet on the bus.

No one interrupted him as he continued to conduct his own symphony. Frowns and tension were visible. As someone who enjoys making light of almost any situation, I did the only ‘reasonable’ thing I could: I sang an old nursery song. The result was a sea of laughter that shifted the entire mood on the bus and transforming tension to laughter.

The act of laughing itself is powerful, regenerative and helps us stay healthy. In fact, researchers around the world don’t underestimate the effects of laughter and considered in the management of multiple chronic diseases, stress and depression.

While we laugh, the adrenaline in our bodies becomes active, making our hearts beat faster, stimulating blood-flow and positively affecting our respiratory systems. Laughing assists to produce serotonin which helps our brain reduce stress.

So the next time you are faced with a perceivably stressful situation, try reframing the situation.

Look at the situation differently, put it into perspective, drop in some humor, break tension to get yourself or others laughing. This will help you, your employees and family members to be happier and healthier and you will be giving them one of the greatest ‘free gifts’ you can give to anyone.



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Free download of chapter one of ‘Ram Up Your Laughter’ at  
<http://ramitup.com/ram/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/000002149-sample.pdf>

This is a story about manifestation. There's a bit to it ... so stay with me.

For the past couple of years, I've been vaguely thinking about getting a new home. Our current home is just too small for our teenage children and us. But for the past few years, I've been hugely busy at work so my dreams of one day finding my ideal home remained on the back burner.

Around 18 months ago, I read some material about clearing space for new things to arrive in your life. At the time we had a storage locker full of furniture from when I met my husband and we joined houses. I decided to clear this out so we could stop the ridiculous monthly storage fees and literally, to get our house in order. One thing led to another.

The stored bedroom suite was nicer than the one in our home so we arranged to sell the old one and put the newer one in. We decided to paint the bedroom during the change-over. We then thought it would be a good opportunity to re-carpet while the bedroom was empty. And if we re-carpeted the bedroom, why not also re-carpet the other areas to match? And paint them too before the new carpet went in. All up, it turned into a major re-sprucing of the house. We cleared all our unwanted belongings and finally felt organized enough to move, if the opportunity arose. This was December 2012.

Then in late December, browsing the real estate sites, I noticed a house that looked divine. We couldn't get to the openings as we were holidaying over Xmas, so I arranged a special inspection the day of our arrival back home in January. When we turned up, the agent informed us the house had been placed under contract the night before, but encouraged us to look through anyway in case the contract fell through. The house was divine and the contract didn't fall through. We missed out on the house of my dreams by one day!

I kept the brochure. It became my constant night-time companion. I would pore over it each night and see myself living in this house. I got attached. I couldn't help myself – the brochure was like a drug to me, so much so that my husband called it the 'Sharon porn' and although he loved the house too, to 'get over it'. About 10 months later, whilst clearing up, I decided to clear my bedside. But I couldn't let go of the brochure. I tucked it away, yet again, to be secretly perused and admired.

Not three weeks later, browsing at real estate online, I saw *our* house ... for sale again! It had come back onto the market. All up, it took three emotional weeks of wrestling with the real estate agent, before we secured the property. We will be moved into it on 9 February 2014.

**I decided in January I wanted this particular house.** Just over a year later, we will move in. 2013 started by clearing space, getting rid of unwanted things and making room to for changes in our life. 2013 has finished with the manifestation of my (our) dream home.



What do *you* want in 2014....I mean REALLY, REALLY, **REALLY WANT?**

What do you need to clear to make space for it? What actions will you take to begin the clearing process? How committed will you remain to your goals? What will you manifest in 2014? Decide now and do what it takes to make it happen.



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Reinvention is a magical word. It's about keeping the good stuff and adding and creating new stuff that is even better.

Reinvention by definition brings *'something back into existence or popularity after a period of neglect'* or *'radically changing the appearance, form, or presentation of something or somebody'*.

How can you bring back into your life those things you value that you've neglected or redesign your life to make it what you really want?

Here are **10 focus areas** for reinventing YOU in 2014.

- 1. Reflection:** Find time to sit under a tree to ponder and plan. Use the KISS format: What's working that you want to **K**ee; What can you learn from, tweak and **I**mprove; What isn't working that you need to **S**top doing; and What could you **S**tart doing that is innovative and can make a difference in your world?
- 2. Passion:** Consider what electrifies and excites you. How can you add more of this to your year? Add dedicated time for this activity to your calendar now so you can start and stay strong in the year ahead.
- 3. Clarity:** Think deeply about what you want. Create a hardcopy and online notebook to journal your ideas and plans for 2014. Good ideas come and go so quickly - make sure you capture them immediately.
- 4. Values:** What do you want to stand for over the next year? Decide what you will commit to. Use these values to filter your decisions and resolve issues. If *'family'* is one of your top values, you'll make a different decision when faced with the exciting job that involves a huge travel days away from home to the one made if *'career progression'* was top of your list.
- 5. Goals:** Decide your transformational goal for the year. What do you want to look back on at the end of the year with pride? My goal last year was to change my home space. We started by renovating our existing home and finished 2013 by purchasing a new home. *'Oh, What a Feeling'* to place a big TICK in the box next to these goals.
- 6. Actions:** What do you want to become known for? Your actions are observed by others and create your reputation. Create a set of *'trademark behaviours'* that define you. For example, do you want to be known as the person who is *'always interested to check in on how things are going'* or the person who *'never says hi'*?
- 7. Focus:** How will you maintain focus when things get busy? Determine a strategy in advance to make sure you don't get distracted. For my fitness goal, I get my workout gear ready the night before and place my alarm away from the bed to get me up and out the door early.
- 8. Fun and Frivolity:** What do you enjoy that you've not done in a while? Go to a comedy festival, arrange a winery tour with friends, set a dinner date with your partner. Arrange things to look forward to doing each month.
- 9. Celebration:** It's common to beat ourselves up for what we haven't done. What will you do to reward yourself for all the things you **do** that make a difference to your life or others?
- 10. Gratitude:** Be grateful for all the wonderful people and the amazing circumstances in your life. We live in a privileged, abundant world. Stop comparing yourself to others. Take time to look around to see what you do have. Enjoy and be grateful for being you.

I have **GOOD NEWS** ... most these 10 focus areas are free (or very low cost) and doable - just get started and see where it takes you in this Year of the Horse ... I look forward to hearing about your progress.



Sharon Kaibel **CSP** has been based in beautiful Adelaide for 40 years and the first female CSP in South Australia. Sharon helps business owners and staff make more sales, be great leaders and speak confidently in front of others. Contact her at 0411 690 838 or [sharon@sharonkaibel.com](mailto:sharon@sharonkaibel.com) or visit [www.sharonkaibel.com](http://www.sharonkaibel.com)

Almost everyone I have spoken to agrees that they had a better memory when they were in secondary school.

As days and years go by and life gets busier and more complicated, most people feel their memory and brainpower deteriorating. Is there a way in which we can get our brains into top gear and make them work better? Oh, yes!

Imagine that your brain has two pipes fitted onto it. One of these pipes is the 'input pipe' and the other the 'output pipe'. Every day when you read books, magazines, billboards and marketing flyers or attend meetings, training programmes and seminars or watch TV, the input pipe of your brain is super active.

Information is constantly going into your brain at a rapid pace day in and day out, whether you like it or not. Now, let's look at the activity of your brain's output pipe. It's incredibly low by any standards. Have a look at these scenarios.

- Your friend asks you the name of the restaurant you went to last month. You can't recall it quickly. What do you do? Visit a food review website and search for the name.
- Someone asks you for a sales figure for the last week (or other work-related information). What do you do? You log into your computer and search for the data.
- You want to talk about an interesting piece of research you read last week, but can't recall some critical facts. What do you do? Go online and 'Google' it.

In many similar situations, where we want to recall something, most people simply use Google or look into their Smartphone or some other external memory device. We do not give any work to the recall faculty of our brain; instead we rely on the 'output pipe' of the external memory device. As a result of this, the brain's output pipe gets clogged.

***You must have heard of the 'use it or lose it' adage when talking about brainpower.***

That's so true because the more exercise you give to your brain, the sharper it gets.

Let's go back to your school days. Why was your memory so good back then? Because your brain's output pipe was very active. You had to prepare for your weekly, monthly and half-yearly tests. During the test, you had to give work to your output pipe. Since your brain's input and output pipes were very active, you had a good memory.

So, how do you start using your brain's output pipe and thereby boost your brainpower? Simple, here are a few ways:

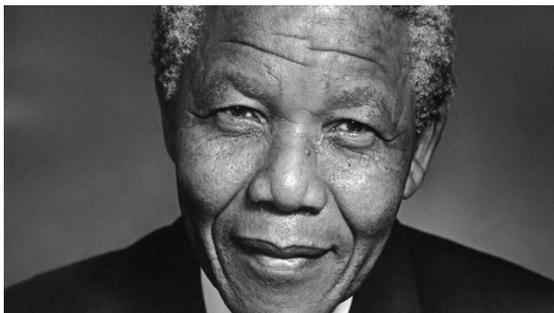
1. Look at the address book in your phone and identify the five most important telephone numbers. Remember these numbers. If you can't remember all five numbers in a day, you can remember one telephone number a day. You can easily do that, can't you?
2. Write a list of the ten critical bits of information you need to remember at work. Commit them to your memory.
3. Finally, give work to your 'memory muscles'. It's so easy to store everything on your Smartphone or tablet computer these days. However, understand that if you don't commit things to memory on a regular basis, your natural memory ability will decline. You will tend to be more absentminded and will experience more frequent mind-blocks.

I am not saying you have to remember everything in your brain. That is unnecessary and will lead to stress. However, if you become a slave to your phone, iPad, personal pc, home or work computer, your brain will become lazy.

Your memory is like a muscle ... the more you exercise it, the stronger it becomes. Look for new opportunities where you can use your brain's output pipe along your journey throughout 2014.



**Nishant Kasibhatla** CSP is a Guinness World Record Holder and only Grand Master of Memory based in Singapore. A professional speaker and corporate trainer since 1997, Nishant has conducted programs in 16 countries across 4 continents on Peak Mental Performance and served as 2009 to 2010 President of the Asia Professional Speakers Association in Singapore. Visit <http://www.RememberNishant.com>



On 5 December 2013, we lost one of the most powerful role models of many generations.

Nelson Mandela once said, “When a man is denied the right to live the life he believes in, he has no choice but to become an outlaw.”

I believe our basic right is to live with purpose. Yes, purpose: *why* we do what we do: whether to gain freedom, time for friends and family, live our extraordinary dreams, or to make the world a better place. If it requires us to be an outlaw, then so be it.

With 2014 upon us, I invite you to look back and re-examine life and business. Where have you been? Where are you now? And, where are you going?

### HERE ARE FOUR STEPS TO GET THE MOST OUT OF 2014:

1. **CLARITY:** For over ten years, I’ve been fortunate to achieve every dream I ever wanted. I get to tick more off [my bucket list](#) while coaching ‘wondering’ women to lead wondrous careers and businesses. Curious what the magic formula is? It’s having clarity on what we want to achieve.

*Dr. Steve Maraboli says, “People who lack the clarity, courage, or determination to follow their own dreams will often find ways to discourage yours. Live your truth and don't ever stop!”*

In 2014, what do you want to achieve, where do you want to go (and who with)? What experiences do you crave?

2. **INTENTION:** is a commitment to yourself. When you put an aim to your dreams, you’re putting your desires into verbs. Before getting out of bed each morning, I intend to have a fabulous day. It works every time! I translate the clarity on what I want to achieve into intention, and create a daily routine to remind myself.

How can you create a frame of mind, set intentions for your life and business?

- Find triggers that motivate your goals (i.e., a visual, song or mental image)
- Set a daily routine of thinking about this for five minutes.

3. **MINDSET:** This year is a new start to make things happen yet it’s going to be hard without the right mindset that supports, not jeopardises, your intentions. A right mindset is congruent with your value system, desires and actions.

It’s a balancing act. But the key is to believe in yourself and your abilities and to be REAL.

Golden Globe winning actor Will Smith said, “As soon as you say it, now you just made that real”. Remember, it might be real, but don’t get pre-occupied and forget. Once you are clear, are you making the space to remember?

4. **SUPPORT:** Encourage, lift and strengthen one another. I’m grateful for my amazing friends, family, mentors, colleagues, clients and the most supportive mother in the world. A large part of my personal and business success would not have been possible without this support system (Thank You!).

What about you? Your career, dream, *life* is tough. When it doesn’t work out as planned, having people who push you to achieve is priceless. Surround yourself with *accountability partners* for life and business - people who simply lift you up!



**Yasmine Khater** is the founder of Transpiral.org and based in Singapore taking wondering women to wondrous careers and businesses. She is the author of the forthcoming book called Wonder Women’s Guide Asia in which she interviews 50 Powerful Women. Contact [info@transpiral.org](mailto:info@transpiral.org) | <http://www.transpiral.org/>

Do you find there are some people you get along with straight away? Are there others you find very frustrating or annoying? And have you ever wondered why you ‘click’ with some people and others drive you crazy? Read on and find out why.

Most people would agree the assertion that good relationships create the foundation for success, but how do we build relationships with people we don’t seem to get along with? In the words of Stephen Covey we need to ‘Seek first to understand then be understood.’

Human behaviour is very complex, but in simple terms psychologists have been able to identify patterns of behaviour. Recognising these patterns helps us understand what makes people ‘tick’, and what we need to do to communicate effectively with them.

These patterns can be represented as four characters that guide our behaviour - a bit like the devil and angel on each shoulder that ‘whisper’ in our ear. One or two of these characters often ‘shines’ more brightly than the others and becomes our dominant sub-personality. You ‘click’ with people like you, and those who are not can drive you crazy! Knowledge of these characters within yourself and others will help you ‘click’ with others by understanding what makes them ‘tick’.

So, if you want to ‘click’ with ...

Left Brain	Right Brain
 <p><b>BLUE Analysers</b></p> <p>✓ Explain the logic behind your words and actions, and back it up with data if needed.</p> <p><b>BE LOGICAL</b></p>	 <p><b>YELLOW Players</b></p> <p>✓ Make it fun, exciting and energetic for them.</p> <p><b>MAKE IT FUN</b></p>
 <p><b>GREEN Safekeepers</b></p> <p>✓ Be clear, organised and punctual, and take into account possible risks.</p> <p><b>BE ORGANISED</b></p>	 <p><b>RED Carers</b></p> <p>✓ Be friendly and genuine, express your feelings, and show empathy for others.</p> <p><b>SHOW EMPATHY</b></p>



Human behaviour is, of course, much more complex than four colourful characters, but the **Click! Colours™** are a great start to help you build relationships and boost success by understanding people who are not like you.

**David Koutsoukis** CSP is former President of the National Speakers Association of Australia. Based in Perth WA, he is co-author of ‘**Click! Why you click with some people and others drive you crazy!**’ and runs Click! Colours workshops and accreditation is in Australia, Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines, Indonesia, India and Hong Kong. Contact David direct [david@clickcolours.net](mailto:david@clickcolours.net) | [www.clickcolours.net](http://www.clickcolours.net)



The below model was developed in conjunction with hundreds of sport, fitness and health businesses we work with. However, it is equally applicable across most industries.

**The Cost of Trust:** Essentially no one is going to buy your product or service if they don't trust you. I like the New York cartoon caption, *"On the Internet no one knows you're a dog."*

Or more aptly, no one knows you're a very nice organisation. Simple enough: no trust, no sales. And of course the converse is true. When people do trust you they go way beyond just being customers. There is no advocacy without trust.

Trust is fundamental to Capitalism. As a business owner investing time to understand how to create and deepen trust is a wise investment. Understand that trust does have a cost. What are you prepared to pay to gain the trust of your prospects so that you can take the relationship to the next level?

**The Power of Easy:** I love one of billionaire Richard Branson's sayings, *"Complexity is your enemy. Any fool can make something complicated. It is hard to make something simple"*.

In Internet Marketing parlance, professionals refer to the ease of 'on boarding' your prospect. How easy is it for someone to start a relationship with you? In many cases business people are in a hurry to 'marry' the customer and forget to 'flirt' or date them first.

Your product may need a complex registration or setup process, but perhaps you can create a pre-product first? What is the absolutely easiest way that someone could start a relationship with your brand? How could you make it even easier? Where is the risk for them in starting the relationship and could you reduce or take that risk completely away?

**The Value of Free:** I had a business partner many years ago that despised the concept of giving anything away for free. To him it diminished value in our company, tarnished the brand and was an 'easy out' option compared to actually selling our products and services.

All pretty compelling reasons for not giving things away and yet my own thinking changed a full 180 degrees. Free trials, whether of a fitness service, software or anything else, are one of the most effective ways to build trust in your prospects' minds. Even if they don't become customers, once they have used the service they can become advocates or raving fans.

**The Future:** There can be a huge gap between knowing this philosophically and implementing it effectively. Just because you give something away for free doesn't mean people will use it. And when they do, a failure to manage expectations can upset even the best laid plans.

Yet, I can't imagine a future where your clients would ever choose the opposite of the three pillars of this model.

To get a glimpse of the future it's worth looking at the fast growing mobile app market. 90% of apps make their money from in app purchases. Free and simple to download, use it, build trust and then generate revenue.

Getting there takes time and persistence, but constantly striving to give away more value creates more trust and making life simpler should result in many more customers through the door of your business in 2014.



**Callum Laing** is the founder and CEO of **Fitness-Buffer**, an aggregated fitness services company that serves the employees of clients in 11 countries. Callum has built, bought or sold more than half a dozen businesses across multiple industries and two continents. He, his wife and two children live in Singapore.

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As we crest 2014, who are some of the most prominent '**Power Couples**' as leaders in media, retail business, entertainment and communications in Australia and the South Pacific?

Not in any particular order yet with wealth as a bench mark, some are billionaires from their own enterprises, while others are multi-millionaires through talent, innovation, creativity, foresight and years of effort.

They have all survived recessions and thrived the boom times and become 'power couples'.

- Gerry Harvey & Katie Page
- Lachlan & Sarah Murdoch
- David Gyngell & Leila McKinnon
- Andrew Denton & Jennifer Byrne

These couples didn't rely on luck to become successful. They were considerate of their partners and created a better future for each other along their journey.

While they may not have had a specific list of rules they followed, power couples have found a formula that sustains one another. They are respectful of each other's wants, needs desires and when it comes to decisions that can impact each other.

From my research over many years, I've listed key areas or principles that can underpin a strong, loving, respectful and successful relationship for couples.

**ACCEPTANCE:** A good relationship has acceptance because we fall in love for a variety of reasons. Be yourself, accept who your partner is and don't try to force change on them.

**FAITHFULLNESS:** Unless you and your partner have made a 'unique couples pact', cheating can lead to unrecoverable heart ache and create a powerless or stalled relationship.

Even worldly '**Power Couples**' like John and Jackie Kennedy or Bill and Hillary Clinton found their formula for sustaining their long yet trying marriages. In spite of the whispers, grapevines, secret services, lies, truth, politics and media during their years in the public domain, both marriages survived repeated unfaithful times and they prospered as a 'couple'.

**JOY:** Let them do what they love doing that creates their happiness. If your partner has always played football, tennis, golf, hockey, surfed or likes to fish, hunt or go to the movies with 'the girls', then let them.

Human beings need to expel non-sexual energy or passion into interests outside their own relationship that can generate new experiences and stories to share with each other.

**CONGRUENCY:** If you promise to do something or be someplace, then do it or be there. Our word does mean something to those we love most. Integrity, ethics, honour and courtesy are cornerstones of healthy relationships and power couples.

**Avoid Jealousy, Gossip and Negative Thinking:** Humans are emotional beings who have the power of choice. This is what makes us unique from the animal and insect worlds. We can choose to be above or below the line of good or poor thinking and communication habits. Power couples focus on building momentums and then keep growing them.

**Listen ... really listen:** When your partner wants to talk, ask them do they want a 'listener or an adviser', that way you know which role is expected of you. There are times to let someone 'get it off their chest' and then other times to offer a different perspective, tip or honest comment with support and love as the basis for that feedback.

**What floats their boat?** Girls and woman love to be appreciated, being told 'thank you', commenting on their appearance, how good the meal was, acknowledging things that they do. Guys want to be accepted for who they are, acknowledged for deeds done and told they are the centre of the (ir) universe.



**RESPECT:** Aretha Franklin got it right when she sang out '**R.E.S.P.E.C.T.**' in 1967. Her song became an anthem for woman worldwide. Respect starts from within, yet goes out from there to reach the far corners in relationships and in our lives.

**Toni Langford** has a Diploma of Applied Holistic Counselling and her passion is working with couples keeping it simple as the key to great communication. (**The KISS principal**).

For counselling insights call Toni at **02 8090 4122** or **0414 718 338** or email

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You must have heard someone say, “**Now is the time to be online**”.

As a business owner do you ever wonder what does that really mean?

Yes, taking your business online can be very rewarding. With the right strategy and understanding of what you are trying to achieve, it can be highly profitable. Using the Internet to market your business online gives your business a competitive edge, a wider access to your target audience and generally reduces marketing and advertising budgets.

Statistics and research confirm that many customers will look first on the Internet for information about what they want.

Many customers will do this to find a shop or restaurant nearby (*even if they know the item they want*), so it's important that local businesses increase their online marketing to reach and 'capture' new shoppers and lookers.

A website is a logical place to begin your online marketing. Your domain name (*the words that make up your web address*) should tell customers what your business does rather than trying to create a brand name. This will aid being found in the Internet Search Engine Results.

Whilst the look and feel of a website should be appropriate to the overall image you want to create for your business, it should always look professional. Additionally, your website should be easy to navigate and all of the links should work.

It's important when marketing online, that you are clear in describing your company, the products and services you offer and that you provide contact information. Don't try to be all things to all people - know your target audience and what they want and give it to them. When you do this, you will make it really easy for your customer to make a buying decision or contact you if they have more questions.

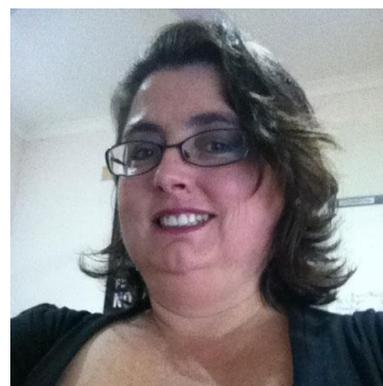
Once you get people to your website, you can start building your brand recognition. Building name recognition (branding) online can be done by using Social networking (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn etc.), paid search engine advertising (pay per click), and banner advertising on other websites.

Also submitting your information to online trade organization directories and even by registering with web map services as a local business that will be displayed on maps searched in your area are some more options.

Some of the best information about marketing your business online has not changed in many years and follows the same basic principles as marketing your business offline. Marketing your business online requires you to have a clear plan, research your market, product and competition and of course, excellent customer service.

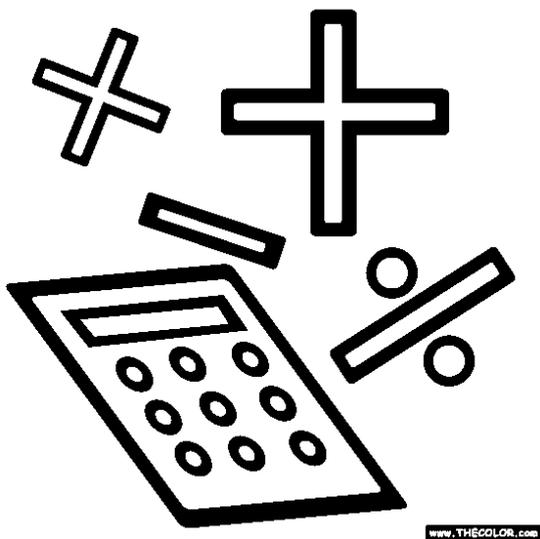
So is '**now the time to be online**'? As 7 billion people worldwide each day grows more to 'click and view' and move away from driving to brick and mortar shops or to malls, now could be a great time for your business to grow online.

**Charly Leetham** is an International award winning Online Business Implementation Expert who helps small businesses harness the Internet as a channel to market in the most cost effective way. Based near the Capital of Australia in Canberra, Charly provides services to solopreneurs and small businesses who want to promote their businesses, products and services online. Follow her on twitter [@charlyjl](https://twitter.com/charlyjl) or visit [www.AskCharlyLeetham.com](http://www.AskCharlyLeetham.com)



**How to do more with less, out serve your competition and earn customer loyalty**

The ubiquitous, nondescript simple calculator may have something useful to teach us about achieving success. I am referring to the four basic command keystrokes built into every calculator: *addition, subtraction, multiplication and equal*.



**Four Strokes of Success**

**1. Addition:** Think of this as adding to what your competitors are not currently doing and offering it as a solution, product or service. For example, when I was staying at the Four Seasons Hotel Jakarta, they delivered complimentary hot tea or coffee to my room as part of their morning call service.

Exceptional organisations go the extra mile to make their customers happy. Out serve your competition by adding some unexpected extra value to build goodwill and loyalty with your customers. Small things can make a big difference.

**2. Subtraction:** Can you do more with less? What can you do to streamline your operational processes to increase efficiency and reduce turnaround time? For example, I visited a restaurant recently and the staff took my order using an iPad. The restaurant is doing this to reduce staffing requirements and it actually helped to reduce the order lead time too thereby increasing customer satisfaction.

What can you eliminate in your processes to cut down on avoidable expenses, lead time and increase customer satisfaction?

**3. Multiplication:** Can you multiply results without multiplying your efforts proportionately? If you can, you are effective in using leverage. Ways to help you leverage include collaborating with joint venture partners to tap into their networks, relationships, resources, expertise or time. Do not attempt to do it all alone because time is money.

Take advantage of an increasingly connected global village by collaborating with partners and crowd sourcing where you can to accelerate your progress.

**4. Equal:** I take the “equal” keystroke to mean sameness, consistency and reliability. Think of MacDonald’s. They make it a point to ensure that their French fries are of the same gold standard where ever in the world you buy them. The Golden Arches is a symbol of sameness in quality worldwide. We feel assured of their consistency in product and service. With this, we grow to trust the brand. So make it a point to be consistent in the results you achieve, including the way your various functions and departments interact to serve customers.

It’s no point having great marketing when the follow up and aftersales service is poor. Consistency in quality in everything you do is necessary to build trust and customer loyalty.

**Conclusion**

There you have it...four master strokes to stay ahead of the game and leave your competition behind. Be creative. Involve and engage your team in a facilitated session to brainstorm specific tactics for each of these strategies. Encourage the team to think out of the box and maximise the potential of your team’s collective wisdom.

Question and challenge existing ways of doing things within your company and your industry. To quote the late CEO of Apple, Steve Jobs, possess the attitude of **“Stay hungry, stay foolish”**.

**James Leong** is CEO of Visions. One Consulting Pte Ltd. He has been featured in the Singapore Business Review as one of ten most influential professional speakers in Singapore. James specialises in simplifying complicated financial and accounting concepts through his flagship programme **“Finance for Non-finance Managers”**. Email [jamesleong@visions1.com.sg](mailto:jamesleong@visions1.com.sg) | [www.visions1.com.sg](http://www.visions1.com.sg)



Have you known the experience of having been away from your home town for a few months or years and when you return ... friends, family say “*you’ve changed*”!

Of course you changed. You grew up while you were away. You learnt to think for yourself, make decisions, be responsible for your choices and accountable for their outcomes. It is called experience. While you were away, you also began to forge a path towards your dreams, discover your strengths, your true life purpose and not the path others wanted you to take.

If you were a bit like me, when you returned to your home town, you may not have fit into the life you once had or knew.

Some of your friends had made new friends, got married, had children, found new careers, moved to new neighbourhood, built different paths into social, cultural, community or business circles and that part of their life has taken on a life of its own ... and you may not be partially or fully included in that part of their lives anyway ... you may feel excluded.

Seeds of negativity or doubt may have started to grow and developed into reality.

- I want life to be just like it was, when I ...
- I liked you just the way you were then ...
- I yearn to feel accepted again ...
- I want to have the body size, weight and shape I had when I ...

Most people in their lifetime have ‘*an awakening*’... it’s at that time, like the caterpillar going through the chrysalis stage; the person emerges like a new butterfly. While you were sleeping, going to university, doing the ‘gap year’ backpacking in Europe, North or South America, you were growing up and changing with each new experience.

Imagine the butterfly that leaves the cocoon community as a caterpillar and one day flies in and says, ‘*hello, I’m the one you called caterpillar!*’ Bewilderment would set in as there is no resemblance to its old self ... the Caterpillar has developed.

It’s not possible for things to be like it was. In reality, it’s not possible to turn back time. Once the caterpillar transformed, dried its wings and revealed its true self, not a hint of the former self was evident. The hidden DNA colours unfolded, it had a new life to fulfil.

As a living organism, you and I have colours and creativity, talents and abilities, habits and behaviours hidden in our DNA waiting for the moment when those emotions and abilities will be developed and expressed. We remember the good, the difficult, the misunderstood parts of our self-mastery development!

As time moves forward we cannot be held captive to our past or like an undeveloped caterpillar we emotionally shrivel and die. By nature’s design we grow to evolve.

A butterfly does not see all of its own colours, but we the observer admire its entirety as it silently enters and leaves our field of vision, we often wish it would stay a little longer; if we could turn back time and capture that pure beauty for just another moment.

Each butterfly goes through a process to fulfil its purpose, to show all its colours – nothing is hidden in the transparency of its fully extended DNA!

If you have been reluctant to reveal your full potential; if you have spent a year just nudging your intelligences, now is the time to move beyond any structures of regret and leap out of your chrysalis to engage 2014 with new freedom and wings.

**Sylvia Marina** is a keynote speaker and human behaviour specialist based in Perth. In 2013, she was invited to present her signature keynote ‘*Transforming DNA Memories*’ across Australia, New Zealand, Spain, Austria, Russia and USA. A Fellow (Hon) of the Australian Kinesiology Association, President and Honorary Life Member of Business Swap International, she is an Executive Director of Business Women Today and authored three bestselling books.

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I was feeding my horses the other day which can be quite stressful for both horses and humans, especially if the horses have no respect for you. It reminded me that being a Leader and showing consistency is so important especially for your own safety and wellbeing.

All my horses respect me because I have consistently shown them on a daily basis that I am their leader.

**Consistency is the key to being a great leader.** It is important to have a consistent approach to everything that you do in your business and personal life. Being the year of the horse it's fitting to say that leadership and horses go hand in hand.

It is so important for me as an owner and trainer of three horses to be a great leader. If I don't show them that I am worthy of their respect, trust and attention our relationship is going to be a very unhappy one and potentially can lead to dangerous situations; such as being disrespectful, hard to lead, bucking, kicking, rearing and biting to name a few.

This also transfers into our relationships with other people. We need to show others that we are a great leader, that we are worthy of their respect, their time and their money.

**So how long does it take to become a great leader?** Well when it comes to horses it could be as little as five minutes as long as you know the principles and have the right intentions with no hidden agendas.



Yesterday I was helping a friend with her horse Scotty. He had recently given her son quite a scare when he was out riding by rearing then bolting off. It was the first time that I had met Scotty who at first snorted, then walked away from me. I calmly kept approaching him with the intention that I was going to move his feet. (This is what horses do to each other to show the other horse that they are the leader).

After a few minutes of moving Scotty's feet to get him to run around, he started to show signs of giving me respect and attention. Soon he was following me around the arena. I spent about 10 minutes on the ground with him before riding.

If Scotty was to do the same thing tomorrow then I would apply the same technique. Again being consistent builds trust and respect.

You can be a great leader by being open, honest, calm, consistent and **you can start today**. It is not hard. It wasn't hard for me to gain Scotty's respect because I understood how horses communicate which is all about body language.

People that we lead need to know they can rely on us and take them through difficult and great times. It's not ok to say something and then do something totally different later. They will see you as weak and will lose interest fast. You have heard this before: **"Actions speak louder than words"**.

Ensure that you take a consistent approach, be honest, open, calm and you will be a great leader in the *Year of the Horse!*



**Therese Markou** is a bestselling author, keynote speaker and Senior Executive who shares her story of endurance, resilience, rebuilding and branding at client engagements worldwide. Winner of numerous awards from Toastmasters international, she has been a leader in numerous community and government organisations. Email: [therese@markou.com.au](mailto:therese@markou.com.au) or connect at [LinkedIn](#).

# KEN MARSLEW Life Begins at the End of your Comfort Zone®

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*Enough Is Enough* Anti Violence Movement Inc. was born out of tragedy.

Following the murder of university student Michael Marslew, his father Ken, saw a need for a holistic community approach to reforming society's attitude towards violence through understanding, education and practical strategies. Enough Is Enough established itself in the highest ideals of human behaviour.

## **Life begins at the end of your comfort zone ®**

What does that mean? Well, we live in a comfort zone and it is uncomfortable when we either step out of it by choice or we are thrust out of it by chance. When we are in that place, not a lot really happens! It is when we get challenged or get uncomfortable, real opportunities are there. At the time, we don't see them because we are struggling to get comfortable again.

When we can turn negatives into positives, good things happen. Remember, you cannot change what has happened, you can change the way you think about it.

Often we get challenges in life that can appear to be insurmountable and overwhelming: work challenges, unexpected change, personal relationships, loss, injury, perceived negative situations.

Some people ask *"Why? Why do these things happen to me?"* What happens when you ask the wrong questions? Yes! You get the wrong answer. When you ask the wrong question, you get negative feedback.

Scientific research has proven we speak to ourselves approximately 6000 times a day. If we keep filling ourselves with negative stuff, we operate from a place of negativity.

What, then, do you think is the right question to ask yourself? **"What can I learn from what just happened?"** When you gather the courage to ask yourself this question, you get positive feedback.

So in the most difficult times, we can take positive messages from the most difficult situations. We need courage and the right self-talk and we can live positively outside our comfort zone. That is where you make a difference in your own life and that of others.

2014, The Year of the Horse ... make it a thoroughbred year, not a horse's a\*\*e year!

*"Change is the greatest constant we have in life; embrace it with positive intention in every aspect"*

Ken Marslew



**Ken Marslew** AM JP AFAIM CEO of Enough is Enough. Ken has been given a pass mark from the University of Life from hundreds of thousands of people and two titles bestowed along the way have been *'The Peace Warrior'* and *'The Change Master'*. Sydney based Ken can be reached at **+61 2 9542 4029** | [Support@enoughisenough.org.au](mailto:Support@enoughisenough.org.au) | <http://enoughisenough.org.au/>

Like it or not, you have a reputation, a personal one and a professional one. All the messages you put out on the Internet, in person, on paper, combine to form a brand image to all who cross your path. Networking is not just about the face-value of the person you shake hands with - it is the reputation and image that surrounds them.

These days your image can and will follow you. It is logged, documented, diarised, collated and *Googled*. In the future your grandchildren will be able to Google you. Your children, or your parents, may be doing it now!

These days, your professional reputation and image is a lot more than just what you wear and how you come across. It is about the entire package. Your actions, reactions and integrity are under constant scrutiny.

With the rise of social media and increase in communicative tools, managing your reputation is now critical. Your online reputation could be affecting your real-world reputation in ways you aren't even aware of. Conversations that you thought were deleted can still be accessed with the correct link or search phrase. Google never forgets.

It's no good espousing virtues that don't align with daily activities. There is no "**what happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas**" in Google's world. Here are some ideas to bring your online and offline profiles into alignment.

### 1. Mind your language

Social media has **changed the way we communicate**. Many conversations rely on words only with **no signals** to indicate mood. You may write your message while smiling and laughing but without that facial expression to go with it the message could result in a **completely different outcome**. Icons and punctuation such as exclamation marks can be very useful but don't rely on these, change your language to suit the mood instead.

### 2. Hold off on the Send button

Appropriate communication is just as important as the message itself. **Always read back your message** and even sit on it for 5 minutes before sending to make sure it comes across in the most appropriate way. We have all been at the brunt of an email fired off in anger, either by us or to us, so this strategy can save us from future problems! Set your email manager to send every half hour rather than immediately and you will mostly have the chance to review your words if necessary.

### 3. Is your message consistent?

Check out your social media profiles and make sure they are congruent. There is a different tone that goes with different platforms but your ethos and modus operandi should marry.

### 4. Watch your spelling

Finally, and at the risk of sounding like your high school English teacher, **spelling is now more important than ever**. Yes, many conversations on mobiles and on Twitter rely on abbreviations such as gr8, r u ok? and lol but these abbreviations **do not have a place** on platforms such as LinkedIn, email, blogs or even facebook.

When you communicate using only words, those words need to be **correct, appropriate and grammatically sound**.

### 5. Post only what's important

Every post, every comment and every picture all contribute to a profile of what you are all about. Make sure you are proud of every post. No exceptions.

### 6. Update your CV

Make a yearly habit to update your CV. Once you have established where you're going that year, take the time to check all your online and face to face activities. Are they in alignment? If not, what needs to change?

*You never know just who may be watching.*

Kim McGuinness is founder of **Network Central**, supporting women in management since 1999 and [www.networkingmentor.com.au](http://www.networkingmentor.com.au). Kim is a leading speaker, trainer, MC and often consults to firms looking for a more connected workforce. For more information go to: [www.kimmcguinness.com](http://www.kimmcguinness.com) or [www.networkcentral.com.au](http://www.networkcentral.com.au) | [kim@networkcentral.com.au](mailto:kim@networkcentral.com.au)



# MALCOLM McLEOD Signatures and what they Say about you

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*I can tell your personality from your handwriting.*

## Change your Signature – Change your Life

Your signature is how you present yourself to others. On the other hand, your handwriting shows what you're *really* like.

If there's inconsistency between your signature and handwriting, there's a gap between how others see you and what you're really like.

"Your signature is a metaphor for how you are treating life and how life is treating you. Does your signature reflect who you are, or more importantly the person you want to grow into?"

## Boost your Self-belief

Remember when you were at school and the teacher would say "This is important, underline it!" Underlining your signature says, "This is me, this is who I am, I back myself, I believe in myself". Underlining insulates you against life joy stealers. NB: make sure it's underlined, not slashing through the signature!

## Action Steps

### The 3 Basic Signature Styles

#### 1. *The Scribbled Signature*

This signature reflects a person with a fast mind. Their hand can't keep up with their brain, a person who doesn't live in the 'NOW'. It says 'My time is more important than yours, you work out what the signature says'.

#### 2. *The first initial and surname Signature*

These people tend to sit on the fence emotionally and only give a tease of what they're about. Nice people though.

#### 3. *The Full Legible Name Signature*

Our heroes! These people are willing to share their world (if their signature is like the rest of their handwriting). Every time their signature is a work of art. Non-verbally this sends the message 'You can trust me'.

## The Best Signature!

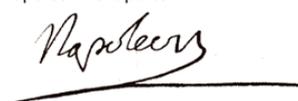
Create and adopt a full name signature with an underline that is readable and consistent with the rest of your writing.

John Hancock



Second President of the First National Government of the United States - 1775 to 1777

Napoleon Bonaparte



Emperor of France 1804 - 1814

Oprah Winfrey



First black female billionaire

## Make your mark, sign your way to greatness ...

The pen is mightier than the sword and the pen, my friend, is in your hand. Each time you write your signature make it a Zen moment, sign with poise, clarity and relevant elegance. This shows respect to the people you are communicating to, to your ancestors and to yourself.



### Malcolm McLeod CSP – The Team Building King and The Handwriting Guy

Corporate Conference MC, Conference Keynotes, Indoor and Outdoor Teambuilding, Change Facilitation

[www.motivationworldwide.com](http://www.motivationworldwide.com) | [mm@motivationworldwide.com](mailto:mm@motivationworldwide.com) | 1800 249 351

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=mwM1o5PRVBA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mwM1o5PRVBA)

[www.twitter.com/Handwritingguru](https://www.twitter.com/Handwritingguru)

[www.facebook.com/pages/Handwriting-Guy/112419715438814](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Handwriting-Guy/112419715438814)

“Asia Rising” is one of the most significant developments that will impact transport and logistics in 2014. We will witness an exciting cocktail of new business opportunities in Asia, driving massive increases in trade flows, impacting logistics networks and supply chain ecosystems.

Notwithstanding the recent *WTO global agreement* achieved in Bali, three major multilateral trade agreements will come into play during 2014 to drive substantial progress in facilitating and empowering growth in international trade for all Asian economies.

AEC – preparation for the regional economic integration of Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam into a single ASEAN Economic Community from 2015, will harmonise tariff-free flows of goods, services, people and funds across ten jurisdictions comprising 600 million people.

TPP - the Trans Pacific Partnership will provide Asian economies - Australia, Brunei, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore and Vietnam – with preferential-tariff multi-lateral access to Canada, Chile, Mexico, Peru and USA markets.

RCEP – the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership joins the ten ASEAN nations together with trading partners Australia, China, India, Japan, Korea and New Zealand, forming a trading block containing almost half the world’s population, with USD21 trillion GDP and 27% of global trade.

The resulting opening of markets in 2014 will coincide with a massive influx of new and increasingly middle-class consumers, spurred by increasing economic prosperity across the whole spectrum, converging with the very efficient and well established local Asian production bases of significant proportions of the world’s consumer goods.

OECD estimate that by 2030, the world’s middle class population will increase to 4.9 billion people, some 3.1 billion more than in 2010. Asia will deliver 85 per cent of this growth – around 2.6 billion new middle class consumers, whose spending will account for almost two-thirds of middle class spending globally.

China is experiencing dramatic shifts in its economy. Multinational companies initially came to China to capitalise on the abundant supply of low-cost labour and incentives to establish operations in Special Economic Zones. They are now just as - if not more - interested in the opportunity to sell products to the huge and rapidly expanding Chinese consumer market – “they came for the workers, and stay for the shoppers.”

At the same time, urbanisation is accelerating. Across Asia, during the next decade some 500 million people will have access to electricity in their homes for the first time, driving exponential demand for a whole range of consumer household products. China alone is forecast to create more than 200 new cities with a population greater than 1 million people by 2025.

Asia comprises a diverse range of economies across the continuum of emerging, developing and developed markets, with widely varying levels of sophistication and maturity in their supply chain and logistics landscapes. In addition to geographic, economic and political complexities, there are significant challenges resulting from developing regulatory environments, inadequate infrastructure and talent shortages.

However, with informed insights from experienced business partners providing deeper understanding about the region, companies can benefit from both production and consumption opportunities across the region.

Businesses should therefore embrace the complexity and actively engage the knowledge and networks required to overcome the challenges and capitalise on the smorgasbord of new business opportunities.

**Mark Millar** MBA, FCIM, FCILT, GAICD leverages 25 years global business experience that provides value for clients with their business strategies in Asia. As a speaker, moderator, MC and conference chairman at over 300 events in 22 countries, Mark works closely with clients to enhance their delegate experience and deliver unprecedented value with his knowledge and energy. [mark@markmillar.com](mailto:mark@markmillar.com)



Within the Business-to-Business (B2B) Services Sector, sales and marketing practices have some specific nuances that business development practitioners should seek to continually develop as an integral component of their competitive advantage.

Regardless of which side of the table you are sitting - buyer or seller, service provider or customer - the key part of any successful business arrangement is agreeing and defining the services that are going to be provided - and the related service level expectations.

Sounds simple, but some of the biggest challenges in service provider relationships revolve around reaching a clear and common understanding of what each of the parties expect to deliver - and to be delivered - in return for the price being paid. The process of clearly defining the services and the agreed performance levels at which those services will be provided requires skilled and mature professionals in order to reach that much sought-after goal - the win-win agreement.

### **International Best Practices**

Managing your outsourced service provider entails a portfolio of expertise and disciplines, harnessed within two key frameworks that clearly document the agreed services and performance expectations - the SOW (scope of work) and the SLA (service level agreement), both of which are developed on the basis of mutual agreement and form the commercial basis of the outsourcing arrangement.

The Scope of Work (SOW) defines the activities being outsourced; clearly outlining the requirements and expectations from both parties and must be carefully crafted to encompass all the activities involved in the outsourcing arrangement.

The Service Level Agreement (SLA) defines performance measurements and expectations. These are best defined through a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) that are both meaningful (not micro detail) and aligned to the business objectives.

Within your company's extended ecosystem, the outsourced service provider should be considered an extension of your business, a partner used for delegation not abdication, managed through collaborative B2B relationship management methodologies and continuous improvement processes.

### **Three additional P's of Services Marketing**

By nature of becoming outsourced, the business activities concerned are subsequently purchased as services and therefore become subject to the critical success factors of services businesses. Over and above the traditional four P's of Marketing - Product, Price, Promotion and Place - Services businesses involve an additional three P's:

**Physical Evidence** - the results, the deliverables - typically measured through key performance indicators

**People** - the personnel that are involved in delivering the services

**Process** - the processes used for effective delivery of the services

In the context of delivering services, prior experience is a very powerful means to evaluate alternative providers - think about restaurants, schools or hair dressers. Successful service delivery manifests itself through these three P's of Services - the Physical results, the Processes and the People.

As you do not yet have any prior experience of the service providers being evaluated, you should place considerable emphasis on those that do - existing customers as client references plus market references from former customers and industry advisors. In the context of references in service businesses, I like to use my simple litmus test of customer satisfaction, just two key questions: Would you buy again? And would you recommend?

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We are different. All of us are very different!

You like to sit and think - but your partner likes to talk, non-stop. Your daughter must have everything neat'n'tidy – but her brother couldn't care less. You're a born get-up-and-goer but you're married to someone who has never got up and gone anywhere without being pushed. Why?

You declare in frustration that you're opposites, that you're like chalk and cheese and that you just can't figure it out! And this is just home, what about our workplaces? We hire great talent only to discover how difficult they work with others.

Could it be something about how we're wired? I think so. Hippocrates knew we were all different, pre-packaged with a particular frame of reference. Personalities are formed in our DNA. Knowing who we are and who others are, helps us to relate to them according to their worldview.

The Four Primary Personalities: **Playful** desire - **FUN**  
**Precise** desire - **Get it right**  
**Peaceful** desire - **no conflict**  
**Powerful** desire - **now!**

Most often a blend of two, but operate primarily from one. *“No one is better – just different”*. This is not about categorisation of people, yet a business tool to help us relate more effectively.

**How to identify each type:**

**Playful Loud** - extrovert, relationally strong, stylish, demonstrative, social

**Precise Quiet** - assessing, poised, behaved, classic, self-contained and procedurally strong

**Peaceful Relaxed** - listens, no real clothing style other than comfort, not impacted by externals, therefore internally strong

**Powerful Active** - externally strong, decisive, adventurous and rises to challenges.

Four personalities identified - so now what? Well each type has different emotional needs. Yes we filter most of our decisions through this tank. If we adapt our style to the style of those we speak to, it will be easier on our relationships.

**Needs**

**Playful** needs Attention, Affection, Approval, Acceptance

**Precise** needs Space, Silence, Sensitivity, Support

**Peaceful** needs Credit for what they do appreciation for all that they have done and Loyalty from others.

In observing a disruption at an airport, an airline staff member used this tool. After the delayed announcement, the **Playful** spoke loud enough to be heard across the lounge “Lady, can you please open the bar!” She was ready to make new friends and maximise her time by enjoying the moment – the bar opened!

The **Powerful** types were up at the service desk within seconds, invading the staff member’s personal space, demanding more updates NOW! The staff member let them know what she could do for them and arranged a conference call so they could still be involved in the proposed meetings for the day.

The **Precise** waited patiently and opened his laptop to check, the weather, diary and logistics on how things could work now that there was change. He was ushered into a quiet meeting room where he could work away until they had an update.

Now the **Peaceful** (who don't like confrontation) just waited and the airline staff expressed how much she appreciated his patience and willingness to wait - then explained what was to happen next. Peacefuls want to be known as the human being. It's the Powerful that want to be known as the human machine.

It's important to have this understanding to get closer with our families at home and be more effective and productive with those whom we work with, Most importantly, respect those who look at things differently. We all have strengths; yet let us embrace the diversity. Go try it.....it really works.



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Recently a fellow professional speaker spoke to an audience of about 70. It was an interesting presentation. I enjoyed it. However, two members of the host organisation were not enchanted. One of them said to me, "OMG! It's the same presentation I've heard twice. Nothing new!" I wonder how many others felt that way.

It got me thinking. Each time we present or redeliver a service, we're-earning our stripes again. It calls to question our willingness to learn, unlearn and relearn new ways to improve our client's condition. It dawned on me that whenever we fail to add value or raise our service level, we undermine our accreditations and certifications. Ouch! Think about that!

It takes a lot of effort to create an engaging programme, let alone earn a professional accreditation. That notwithstanding, our accreditations and past reputation by itself does not solve any problems. It does not help the client improve; our new perspectives do. I believe we get rehired because of our past performance; however the past alone is not enough.

Therefore, it is not enough to replay the same canned presentation over and over. Like music, we must do remixes otherwise the audience does not need the artist of the man behind the music to be there in person. We must come with new instruments and different beats to spice things up.

My commencement speaker in 1997, Professor Victor Anomah Ngu, (a former Queen's surgeon) said something that still echoes in my mind today. He said, "A degree is a piece of paper. Only ***the man-behind-the-paper*** can make a difference."

Professor Ngu's words continue to remind me that my clients don't care what academic papers or certifications I have. There are lots of people with similar degrees, but not all deliver the same content. Thus, our clients do care more about what the man-behind-the paper brings.

As we go about our lives as educators, knowledge brokers or professionals in 2014, we must constantly ask ourselves what new ideas, insights, tools, strategies and perspectives we bring along to improve the lives of those we meet in the boardrooms and training rooms?

Whether you are an educator or not, whether you serve a few or a lot of people, whether you live in the countryside or city, you'll definitely have to interact with other people in 2014. Well, if you are a hermit who lives in a cave, ignore this idea. Otherwise, consider those you serve. If you do a great job, you as a person will be remembered, not your certification!

If we do this consistently, we will be able to transform the complaints of the critics into positive emotions. When that happens, our clients will enjoy the presence of the-man-behind-the high-paper. That's the magic of having an artist perform live and not play the recorded music.



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Last time I looked, Amazon had 270,956 books listed on the topic of success.

That's an awful lot of wisdom by a lot of clever (and some not so clever) people. However, there were less than 2,000 books listed on the topic of failure and even fewer on how it can be avoided. Yet far more people fail than ever succeed. Ironically the reason for their failure can often be traced to jumping aboard the latest success fad without thinking first.

Here are five fads to avoid on your way to success:

**Diversification:** Trying to do too many things in too many markets is a recipe for failure that even some of the world's biggest companies have made. Decide what you have the capability of doing well and focus on that.

**Differentiation:** I am constantly surprised by how many people spend so much time on what I call "majoring in minors". Worrying about the smallest details on business name, logo colour, web site design and product packaging in an effort to differentiate yourself is usually a waste of time - and sometimes trying to create artificial differences can make it even harder for customers to make the decision to buy.

What customers really want are quality products, reliable services and fair value for money. Concentrate firstly on meeting these basic needs and lastly on trying to make you look different with a clever name or packaging.

**Do-It-Yourself:** There are almost as many books on do-it-yourself website development, marketing, bookkeeping and self-help generally as there are on success.

Trying to do everything yourself and not asking for, or being willing to pay for, specialist advice or help is a sure fire way to fail. The most successful companies and people seek out the best advice and support that they can afford.

**Multi-Tasking:** This is perhaps the greatest myth of the 21st century. We can only ever do one thing well at any one time but we can certainly do lots of things poorly all at the same time. Set aside time for important tasks -turn off the phone, get off of your email and shut off the TV while you do things.

**The Magic Bullet:** Back in the 1970s Douglas Adam created a comic sci-fi radio serial called *The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy*. The hero was in search of the *Answer to the Ultimate Question of Life, the Universe and Everything*. It takes an enormous computer 7.5 million years to come up with the answer which turned out to be, **42!**

Meaningless? No more so than the latest panacea to whatever ails you or your business. Whether it is the latest diet or exercise equipment which promises to remove those extra inches in 14 days, or *The Secret* which promises a no-effort way to get whatever you want, the only thing you can be sure of is that it won't be the magic bullet you were hoping for.

That piece of exercise equipment you bought probably will work. It won't if you leave it gathering dust in the corner and only if you cut out some of those unhealthy eating habits as well. And the Law of Attraction of Rhonda Byrne's *Secret*, in the film and book of the same name, also has a lot going for it – but not in isolation.

Unfortunately there are no short-cuts to success. Hopping on the latest success bandwagon can be a fast track to failure.

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Stressed out and unable to focus?

Most of us wrongly believe that stress comes from having too much to do. In fact, most stress comes from not finishing what we have started or in allowing distractions to get in the way of what's really important.

In January 2013 one of my clients came to me with stress overload. She is a Chief Operating Officer who felt unfulfilled working in a demanding industry, has two school age children and was living her life in crisis management mode.

However, by September she had achieved several of her most cherished goals - some of which had eluded her for years.

She had written and been offered a publishing contract for her first novel. She had completed a dream tour of Europe with her children. She has taken on a stronger leadership role in her company and as a bonus, her health has improved!

The difference in her past and present was not more time but more **FOCUS**. Yes, goal setting is important, but knowing how to identify the **right** goals and what you need to do to commit to them, is the real secret to achieving focus.

## The Secret to Finding and Maintaining FOCUS

*In the beginning is the end ...*

**S:** Honour your **STORY**. Everyone's life story has a beginning, middle and an end. Many motivation exercises ask us to vision our future but without some continuity, this is nothing but daydreaming. Accepting where you have come from, knowing where you are now and where you want to go is the start of focus. Within your past, you'll find the seeds for future success.

**U:** **UNDERSTAND** your values, your strengths, what you really want in life and how you are motivated. This is crucial to setting the right goals for you. Otherwise you will fail to achieve your goals or wonder why if you achieve them, why you still feel unsatisfied.

**C:** **CHALLENGE** your current goals against your story and your values. Ask yourself some tough questions. Do I really want this? Why? What would I be prepared to do or give up to achieve it? How would I feel if I didn't do this now? This is spring cleaning time. Throw out all those goals that don't pass the challenge test and set new ones if required.

**O:** Identify **OPPORTUNITIES** to achieve our goals. Put down as many ideas as you can. You might do this as a mind map, a collage or in some other visual way. You might want to involve others to help you as your support and success team to help keep you on track.

**F:** Now map your path to the **FUTURE**. Establish your action plan with a timeline of achievable steps to reach your goals.

My client didn't take time off work to write her book. She prioritised her time to make it happen and started to exercise so she had the energy required to reach her goals. She didn't rush out to borrow the money to go on her dream holiday. She involved her family in the planning, budgeted to get them there and sought help to maintain her focus.

What could **you** achieve in 2014 if **you** were more focused? **You** will be amazed at what **you** can achieve when **you** are.

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# THOMAS MURRELL    How to Start a Presentation Confidently

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The most common question I'm asked as an MC, professional speaker or executive speech coach is, "*How do you start a presentation confidently?*" My answer, "*It's all in the preparation and the first seven seconds.*"

There are common mistakes novice and even experienced presenters make even if it is a three minute impromptu speech, a 45 minute keynote or two day training session.

Over my 30 year career, here are my public speaking tips on how to start a presentation confidently.

**1. Do not apologize at the beginning:** This is the "I'm sorry" beginning and a trait common amongst nervous speakers. They are trapped in a downward spiral of poor self-belief and have an urge to apologize at the very beginning of a speech when it is most critical to exude confidence.

Common apologies I hear are: "*I'm sorry I don't have much time so I will rush through this*", "*I'm sorry I have a lot of PowerPoint slides and not much time*". "*I'm sorry I didn't have much time to prepare for this speech*". "*I'm sorry I got called in to speak at late notice*". "*I'm sorry I'm having trouble with the technology*"

It is a natural defence mechanism to apologize and I find this especially prevalent amongst Australian speakers. No matter what is happening in the background the audience doesn't really care. All they want is for the speaker to succeed and for them to have a positive experience.

**2. Don't Tell a Joke:** I was recently at networking breakfast when one event speaker told a very bad joke that was rude, off colour and lacked humour. After his short speech came a deathly silence. No one clapped, yet there was applause for every other speaker that morning at this business event.

Unless you are a professional comedian, don't tell a joke at the beginning of a speech. Jokes often contain an "ism" - sexism, racism, and ageism as the risk in offending a person in your audience is high and not worth it.

**3. Avoid Fake and Phoney Engagement:** This is usually done by an emerging "motivational" speaker who has watched too many 1980 or 90's speakers who used to start off with "*So how are you today?*" When the audience fails to respond, they would continue in a louder voice with an inane and annoying "*I can't hear you!*" and what ensues is normally an immediate dislike of the presenter by the audience.

**4. Avoid the "Hands up if you have ever..." technique:** Yes, I encourage audience interaction but this is a very poor audience engagement technique in the beginning of a speech. Leave this one to the primary school teachers where it suits the context of engaging with five to ten year olds perfectly when asking them questions.

**5. Avoid Gratuitous Thank yous:** "You are a wonderful audience." "It's great to be here." "Thanks for that terrific introduction." Sure compliment your audience if it is appropriate and adds value to your speech. Just start your speech strongly - don't waste time on super fluffs.

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Are you stretched to the maximum just running your business and no time to promote or market your business? Maybe it's time to consider the benefits of outsourcing to be more productive in the year ahead.

Virtual support (as in using a Virtual Assistant - VA), can save you money as you pay for the services and hours that you need. You may ask, "Why can't I just use a Temp Agency? You can, but agencies will require you to hire someone for a certain amount of hours a day, using virtual support you determine the hours you need.

Because VAs choose their own work hours they are generally able to provide a more flexible service. Working with a VA you know that you will be dealing with the same person who will get to know your work processes and procedures and your business.

In Australia and with statistics applying equally worldwide, Small Businesses are failing at an alarming rate and one of the reasons cited for this is [lack of experience](#). In using a VA you are dealing with someone who understands the needs of business. As successful business owners in their own right they have a background in administration support and can be a guide in many areas of business.

If you're an SME or solopreneur it just makes sense to have someone assist you in your business and not having to do it all yourself. Let's face it, the backend stuff of business is not the most interesting for people and it is not the reason they went into business in the first place. To run an effective, efficient and profitable business this needs to be taken care of. Hence, it makes good 'business sense' to do what you love to do while someone else takes care of the back office as they say.

## What sorts of tasks can you outsource?

Listed below are some examples of tasks, functions or jobs that can be outsourced:

- Data entry
- Accounts
- Reception Services
- Diary Management
- Appointment Setting
- Website Updates
- Proofreading
- Editing
- Copywriting
- Desktop Publishing
- Blog posts
- e-book creation
- Author Support
- e-newsletters
- PowerPoint creation
- Event management
- Virtual Events
- Website Updates
- Internet Marketing
- Internet Research
- Project Management
- Press Release creation
- Submitting Press Releases
- Media Monitoring
- Digital Transcription
- Client Liaison
- Video production & editing
- Social Media Support

## How do you go about sourcing a VA?

There are many places you can go to research for a VA. While being frugal up front is wise, you can get top value for even a few hours a week or month near or far from your place of work.

Offshore providers may have good rates, yet these are not normally VA's. They are employees of large outsourcing companies who more than likely are paying a meagre minimum wage. Using these services can be disadvantageous because the workers are not business owners themselves and may not understand your culture or clients.

## Minimum Ramp up Time

Generally there is a learning curve of a few days between a VA and a new client business. However the breakeven point with time savings and added value service quickly surfaces after reviewing the list of needs as listed above.

The best place to start is to source local VA organisations online in your city or country. Check their databases for compatible VAs who have the skills to match your business needs. As is often said, the best time to get started to save time with less headaches was yesterday. Like the Nike slogan suggests, **'Just Do It'** and make 2014 an even better year for your business.

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Are you using video in your online marketing? If not, why not?

According to Cisco, it's predicted that video will account for [69% of all online traffic by 2017](#) with [93% of video marketing professionals using online video](#) in 2013.

### **Why should you be using video?**

Connection is vital in an online environment. Video allows us to stand out and engage on a more personal level with our audience because we are automatically attracted to faces as opposed to images and voice.

Through video we can convey emotions using body language, facial expressions and voice. It allows our authenticity to shine through helping to build rapport and increasing our persuasive powers with others.

Most people watch video content before reading text. They will stay longer on websites which incorporate video because it deepens their engagement. If you aren't using video you're missing out as 100 million internet users watch online video each day.

YouTube is the biggest search engine after Google. Google ranks video higher than any other content increasing Search Engine Optimisation. Using video will give you an edge over your competitors but despite the fact that video is very popular there are still not many businesses using it or using it effectively.

### **In what situations are videos most effective?**

In today's world economy video allows you to harness the power of the internet to spread your firms' global message.

Video is very influential as a promotional tool for events, products and services. In the education and training field it's used to deliver courses and provide information. In a corporate environment it can serve as an introduction to company products, its philosophy and mission statement. Video can be an introduction of you or your staff to the viewer, thereby personalising the experience and increasing your reach at a deeper level of emotional connection.

### **What is the best way to start adding video to your marketing plan?**

Start off with your "Why"? Define your goals and be clear on what these are. For example, you might want to promote an event, educate, entertain or engage as many people as possible to convert viewers into sales or perhaps build a list. If list building is your aim you need to give the audience a reason to sign up. Or your video could be to simply show gratitude to your connections and to keep in touch.

Once you have determined your "why" you can develop a script and build your story. The script can be as basic or detailed as you like but a one page bullet point document may be all you require. Once you have your script you can develop the flow and feel of the video, i.e., who is your target audience? Does it need your corporate branding, what location would be best suited to your video? Will you film in your office or a more casual feel at a beach or outdoors location?

Are you planning on videoing an event to repurpose later, if so do you may need to get participants to sign a disclaimer for permission to film them? Do you propose a series of videos or just a "one off"? Where will you host the video; on your website, YouTube or another platform, free or paid hosting? There are many questions that arise and these same questions have prevented many people from adopting video. But it will become evident that if you are not participating in online video, you may be missing out on a huge marketing opportunity for you or your company.

There are many "how to" video learning tools on the internet or you can start off by using your iPhone or Android phone and a purpose built microphone then practice, practice, practice! Remember that the quality of your audio is important.

People will forgive poor quality video but not poor quality audio! The time to get started on video is now. To read some very interesting statistics on Video Marketing click [ReelSEO](#) for their free and in depth report.

In conclusion, one hundred hours of video is uploaded to [YouTube](#) every minute of every day and that's not counting other online platforms.

Will your video be part of that rising figure in 2014 and if not, why not?

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Living and working in our fast paced world demands superior skills to lead, motivate and inspire those around us.

What is also significant is being able to care for stakeholder relationships with the same urgency as caring for the financials.

Organisations are built on solid foundations and strong networks which build in net profits. There is no doubt that these ingredients contribute to abundance, success and personal happiness. If you are serious about lifting the bar (and not your blood pressure), make 2014 a year you have control over and enjoy rather than being swept up by its frenetic pace.

Here are 88 easy yet proven ways to make 2014 happen in three word phrases.

1. *Accept people more*
2. *Eliminate the obsolete*
3. *Find mastermind groups*
4. *Judge people less*
5. *Ask for help*
6. *Enjoy laugh love*
7. *Stop talking earlier*
8. *Ask honest questions*
9. *Activate lapsed memberships*
10. *Start listening more*
11. *Give honest answers*
12. *Recognise true effort*
13. *Give feedback often*
14. *Discuss others' expectations*
15. *experience cultural activities*
16. *Ask for feedback*
17. *Laugh out loud*
18. *Display empathy openly*
19. *Be more enquiring*
20. *Encourage diversity actively*
21. *Create conversation booths*
22. *Be genuinely curious*
23. *Create innovative environments*
24. *Play to enjoy*
25. *Engage in conversations*
26. *Lead with empathy*
27. *Always talk straight*
28. *Network more widely*
29. *Employ creative people*
30. *Inspire and motivate*
31. *Visit clients regularly*
32. *Stand aside willingly*
33. *Influence and persuade*
34. *Stay there longer*
35. *Review processes regularly*
36. *Read different genres*
37. *Build your database*
38. *Create memorable meetings*
39. *Listen more openly*
40. *Mine your database*
41. *Rotate meeting chairmen*
42. *Get yourself centred*
43. *Stay in touch*
44. *Don't miss lunch*
45. *Know your message*
46. *Get in touch*
47. *Walk at lunchtimes*
48. *Gratitude is contagious*
49. *Be open minded*
50. *Initiate creative opportunity*
51. *Thank you matters*
52. *Block nay sayers*
53. *Develop learning circles*
54. *Define your vision*
55. *Encourage innovative thinking*
56. *Showcase employee interests*
57. *Listen to remember*
58. *Encourage disruptive thinking*
59. *Network with passion*
60. *Make visions relevant*
61. *Be present mentally*
62. *Write interesting blogs*
63. *Choose your battles*
64. *Be present physically*
65. *Photograph staff days*
66. *create strong purpose*
67. *Keep energy positive*
68. *Educate on diversity*
69. *Share results openly*
70. *Check negative behaviours*
71. *Exercise mind body*
72. *suspend judgement willingly*
73. *Check your habits*
74. *Attend to details*
75. *Create memorable experiences*
76. *Seek other perspectives*
77. *Encourage positive deadlines*
78. *Retain top talent*
79. *Get others involved*
80. *Adjust workload timeframes*
81. *Measure on outcomes*
82. *Discuss your expectations*
83. *Daydream at work*
84. *Demand high standards*
85. *Set ground rules*
86. *Have breakfast meetings*
87. *Build company belonging*
88. *Be more relevant*

“When planning for a year, plant corn  
When planning for a decade, plant trees  
When planning for life, train and educate people”

*Chinese Proverb*

**Ricky Nowak** CSP is passionate about developing authentic corporate leaders and teams. She guides leaders to influence with integrity and inspire with purpose. An accomplished author, International Speaker and presenter, her solid reputation with CEO, CFO and CIO professionals and business leaders to help them achieve success is well documented.

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In 2009 the so called Global Financial Crisis (GFC) almost flattened my main business.

Almost overnight our market condensed by 60%. What was a vibrant profitable business with 28 years of growth employing around 500 Australians, suddenly turned toxic. Red ink appeared everywhere. We quickly consumed our ability to borrow from the Bank and then they said enough ... fix it.

It's was from this background, motivated by the fear of losing everything, I started experimenting, teaching myself GlobalSourcing or outsourcing overseas. What I now realise is there is a massive change affecting the business world. The connectivity of the internet and globalisation effect of cloud computing mean you can employ anywhere in the world that represents "value".

I joined a worldwide organisation of Entrepreneurs (EO). I moved around the world studying the trends and reasoning of leading edge businesses. My choice was the Philippines - same time zone as Western Australia and an American colony for about 50 years that used an American education speaking in English. This country has embraced GlobalSourcing where you can employ a well-educated loyal administrative worker for about \$1000 a week less than an equivalent Australian worker.

For many years I had employed individuals both full and part time in the same manner as ODesk and Freelancer. These sites have huge numbers of workers, many terribly over promise and under deliver, while a few are brilliant.

**MikesManilaTours.com**  
Getting business right in the Philippines

My studies and various visitations around the world introduced me to the predominately corporate practice of outsourcing a "part" of their processes. Typically they use a service provider who specializes in this. These "part processes" are very structured, so they systemise and script their workers to the nth degree. Wherever I witnessed small to medium businesses trying this, the results ultimately were disastrous.

What I noticed was the lack of knowledge sharing between workers. Whilst large corporates are systemised to the nth degree, when it comes to Entrepreneurial SME businesses there needs to be more tacit knowledge sharing, more creative solution finding. This can really only come from a "team" - all in one office environment.

The logical solution is to incorporate a legal entity in a foreign country, then lease premises and employ in the traditional way. This exposes you to all sorts of local business cultures that we find difficult if not impossible to deal with. The solution I found was **Seat or Staff Leasing**.

These businesses provide office space, with a desk, computer, internet access and IT support. They help find the type of workers you want, let you interview a short list and select suitable staff and then legally employ them. It doesn't matter if you only want one worker or hundreds. Many also provide ongoing managing support to assist with overcoming the employment culture differences.

Across my various business interests I currently have 35 Filipino who are a fantastic, productive staff in my Manila office.

This move saved the jobs of a few hundred of my core Australian based workers. Within 6 months our **red ink** was replaced with healthy profits and new growth.

GlobalSourcing is changing the cost and productivity parameters of many industries. If your margins are being squeezed and / or your marketing has become ineffective, then you need to consider GlobalSourcing.

My journey has not been without its mishaps and learning experiences. I discovered a few hours "consulting" was ineffective so I now regularly run Business Learning Tours in Manila.



**Mike O'Hagan** has built huge businesses in Australia and is CEO of **MikesManilaTours.com** because many Australian Businesses get outsourcing wrong. Mike runs Business Learning tours for any sized business showing what works and what doesn't. Contact us at [www.mikesmanilatours.com](http://www.mikesmanilatours.com) in Manila Philippines.

You would have heard that great definition of insanity: *“Doing what you did yesterday and expecting a different outcome.”*

I agree – it’s crazy! We need to DO different to BE different. We need to Evolve! The BEST Question is: Who do we need to Become, to exist easily and successfully in the World we choose to Create?

And how do I get my Team to come along with me? Well ... here are this behavioural scientist’s answers:

1. Understand that Evolution hurts. There is an inbuilt part of our brain which is absolutely dedicated to preserving homeostasis – the status quo. Anything that threatens current comfort is resisted. This clever reptilian brain is just trying to protect us from imbalance. It hasn’t realized we’re in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and if we DON’T evolve we’ll die.
2. Remember that when it’s somebody else’s idea it will be resisted. We resent that other people seem to feel they know what’s good for us more than we do, right? Unfortunately many improvement initiatives are initially inspired by an external source. Ask your team – do we share the same goals? Are we happy for this to become OUR idea? How can you authentically take ownership to do it YOUR way?
3. Recognise that as we evolve, other people in our lives might become uncomfortable, wanting things to stay the same. So if we embrace any change, we may not be able to embrace them anymore. That could need some negotiation with them.
4. Realise that if you want me to change or evolve, it actually shakes my self-concept to the core. I form my identity, my worldview, my core belief system which drives all my responses, behaviours and actions, quite early in my life. It creates my orientation. If anything happens to alter that, I become a displaced person. Even if it’s only momentary, it requires an adjustment on my part. That’s hard work. If I have to do it too often, I can become quite disoriented and dysfunctional. How can I possibly perform at my peak if I don’t know who I am?
5. And some of your people will like things just the way they are. Maybe they’re not perfect. But if we change things, they could be worse!

These reactions are common. They’re almost universal. They can get in the way of almost every improvement you want to implement in your business or your personal life. What do you need to do to manage them?

#### Use the BEST© Evolution Formula:

- |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>Build the vision.</b>    | Get it strong, big, bright, clear, moving, real. Discuss all the positive effects. Know the value. Ensure there is 100% ownership and support.   |
| <b>Establish the power.</b> | We are very powerful. We can stay and grow, or we can run and hide. We can choose to make a difference and we can choose to be different. We own our responses.                          |
| <b>Select an action.</b>    | Any action is better than none. Action provides feedback. The whole process may not be clear – and probably can’t be. We won’t know all the answers in advance.                          |
| <b>Take a step.</b>         | With courage, acknowledging any risk and ensuring its safe. With encouragement. Every step takes us somewhere. Check the results with the vision and keep walking the <b>BEST</b> Steps. |

Success strategies are simple. Think of how we order our food! You know what you want. You assume you can have it. You ask for it, or go and get it. You know that you will have it and it arrives.

Let’s use the same process for a Successful Evolution throughout 2014.

**Catherine Palin-Brinkworth**, CSP Global, Masters Applied Science, Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management, Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, 2003 to 2004 Global Speakers Federation International President. A renowned business speaker, facilitator, author and mentor, Catherine has built countless high performing teams and leaders. For a no obligation chat, phone her at **+61 419 221 916** or visit [www.catherinepalinbrinkworth.com](http://www.catherinepalinbrinkworth.com)



- 1. Write down your goals**  
It becomes easier to know where your priorities lie and stay focused when seductive time stealers try to lure you away. It will help you use the most powerful time management tool you have – the use of ‘NO’ – politely.
- 2. In order to go faster, first you must go slower**  
Regularly invest in process improvement. Examples: templates, system improvements, better delegation, outsourcing, business and personal development. The initial slowness is rapidly recouped and the time saved is long-term.
- 3. Put aside ‘red’ time – and be unavailable**  
Block out at least one chunk (a minimum) of an hour of uninterrupted time each day for high-value work. Switch everything off, don’t get distracted and focus. Get off-site if you have to. You’ll achieve much more by blocking.
- 4. Don’t major in minor things**  
With your daily list, don’t start on easy tasks - you’ll get bogged down in minutiae. Instead, handle at one or two high-value activities first. It releases energy, reduces stress and you’ll be surprised how many other items still get done.
- 5. Schedule in regular Sanity Gaps every 6 to 8 weeks**  
Book in recharge times, turn off the phone and don’t take work with you. To raise productivity levels, sometimes you need to take a step back, to move forward. Take time to relax and catch up on things (and people) that you’ve missed.
- 6. Do it NOW**  
Instead of thinking it – do it! Create momentum, make the first move and the rest will follow. A proactive mindset is required to complete tasks on time. This helps keep your mind in the present. Putting off things to do in the future can lead to procrastination- the unproductive kind.
- 7. Don’t do the ‘one last thing’ as it will make you late.** Listen to your intuition! You might need that extra time to focus on what needs to be done. By not doing the ‘one last thing’ you’ll be able to avoid rushing the next item on your to-do list and prevent possible errors.
- 8. Become a walking question mark**  
Constantly ask: ‘How can I improve this activity?’ A danger is to fall into ‘comfort zones’ and we don’t like to change. Known as the ‘it’s how we do it round here’ mindset, welcome the chance to improve with good questions.
- 9. Eliminate clutter**  
Do yourself a favour – clear up as you go. The feeling of freedom is its own reward. A messy desk filled with stacks of paper and folders can add to your stress levels at work. Research shows that a tidy environment can increase focus, making you more efficient and also applies to a clean home, car, office, room, purse or briefcase.
- 10. Delegate as fast as you can**  
If you’re doing work that someone else could do at a lower pay rate than you’d like to be paid, you’re restricting your income opportunities. Consider the lost opportunity cost of getting bogged down in the wrong activities. Look at ways to outsource low value areas in your professional and personal life that can benefit you immensely more in 2014.

**Robyn Pearce** CSP is known as the Time Queen. She runs an international time management and productivity business in New Zealand helping people find ‘more time’. A multi award winning speaker, Robyn was country President of the National Speakers Association of New Zealand 2002 to 2003 and Global Speakers Federation International President 2006 to 2007. Contact Robyn at [www.gettingagrip.com](http://www.gettingagrip.com) or by calling **+64 3 351 2140**



Way back in the 20th century I used to run workshops to teach people how to find stuff on the Internet. There was no Google and the leading search engines included Yahoo, Alta Vista and Ask Jeeves. My workshop participants had to find the answers to questions such as the time in Toronto, the weather forecast for London and the current performances at the Sydney Opera House.

In 1998, it wasn't easy to find these answers quickly on the Internet! They had to decide which search engine to use, what words to type in and how to then drill down through the results to find the answer.

***Then Google came along and destroyed my business***

Now, you can find the answers to all these questions by simply typing them – word for word – into Google. As a result, Google completely wiped out that part of my business.

***Has Google destroyed your business as well?***

I was lucky because I *knew* my workshops had become irrelevant. But many businesses are limping along, knowing something has made their life more difficult, but not knowing what or why. You might not realise that Google or another online service has changed your business forever.

Here are just a few examples ...

***1. Leadership speaker:***

You're a leadership speaker and trainer, helping organisations with their new and emerging leaders and managers. But now, instead of booking you to run another workshop, a client uses their internal L&D people to run a workshop, where participants watch TED.com videos and facilitate a discussion about implementing their ideas.

***2. Customer service trainer***

You offer customer service training for front-line staff. But the Internet has made it easier for your clients to outsource or offshore services – and suddenly the audience for your workshops has disappeared.

***3. Real estate agent***

You've been attractive to vendors because potential buyers come to you to see what's available. But now, with online real estate sites, buyers are no longer automatically beating a path to your door. Suddenly, you've become a lot less attractive to vendors, who are increasingly turning to private listings.

***4. Travel agent***

You give your clients your expertise and insights about the best ways to travel, best places to stay, and how to make the most of their experience in an unfamiliar place. But they can now find this on Google, Trip Advisor, Expedia and other online services. What's more, they are increasingly making their own bookings as well.

***Could this be happening to you?***

When faced with these scenarios, some business owners say, "Ah, yes, but ..." followed by a reason why they are different, their clients are more loyal, or their business is indispensable. *Don't fall into this trap!*

I'm not sharing this to depress you, but to inspire you. See, here's the point:

***If the Internet can disrupt your business, why can't YOU?***

These examples also create opportunities for you – as long as you're willing to look at your offerings differently. Don't just be a speaker, trainer or service provider, genuinely understand your customers and clients and be willing to solve their problems and help them achieve their goals.

***Don't ignore the threat – or the opportunity***

It's easy to do what you've always done, blissfully unaware that the Internet is going to pull the carpet out from under you.

Ignorance isn't bliss; it's bankruptcy.

**Gihan Perera** is a futurist and an expert in helping leaders understand how the Internet has changed their world. Forbes magazine rates him the **#5** social media influencer in the world in his area of expertise. Visit [GihanPerera.com](http://GihanPerera.com) for more about his speaking, consulting and mentoring services.



Marketing is much more than advertising and selling.

It truly is a science which must be understood fully to be utilized properly. Every business should put thought into an integrated marketing plan as it is critical to the success of your business.

Marketing is a science and for best possible results, you need to blend your strategies with some creativity and sprinkle some “magic” into the process. Together, your marketing campaign will create desire, generate leads, drive sales and bring cash into the business.

In difficult times, many businesses stop marketing activities but this can be a great time to focus on your marketing. Why? Because most of your competitors are doing less and the market is less cluttered. You may even pick up better prices if you're using advertising as part of your strategy.

**So what is marketing?** Marketing is derived from the Latin “Mercatus” – “bought or marketable”. “A series of activities designed to make the customer buy your products or services”. Marketing involves research, advertising, promotion, pricing, selling, public relations, merchandising, packaging, distribution, service and positioning.

Is your marketing integrated? With today's technology, you can be just a few clicks away from customers and while you can control marketing strategies, you can't control what people say about you on social media! The good news is you can get notifications on what people say and respond accordingly to win trust and win more customers.

A recent National Australia Bank survey showed online retail grew 29% versus 2.5% growth in brick and mortar retailers.

Whether starting up a new business or running a well-established organisation, a professional and functional website is a firm financial asset. It will bring you advantages no other business tool can. Whether you are selling products or simply services, smart businesses know that their website is a first place their potential clients will go to 'check them out'.

These days, it is not about whether your business should have a web site or not, it is about how you get the most out of your web site such as selling and accepting payment online, customer database, business process automation and more.

In the year ahead, keep asking yourself, what marketing tools can you use to grow your business and you probably will.

### ONLINE

Email marketing, Domain names, Websites, Social media (LinkedIn, Facebook, etc.), email signature, SEO, YouTube, article marketing, newsletter, Google Ad, PPC, Blogging, etc.

### OFFLINE

Logo, stationery, signage, flyers, brochures, postcards, newsletters, newspaper advertising, sponsorships, publicity, banners, QR Codes, expos, etc.

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As a leader (or parent), an essential part of your role is to assign tasks to your team, provide necessary resources and hold them accountable for the result. One vital step of the task assignment process is frequently left out, is critical to having the task completed safely, to specification, on time and on budget and is ... ?

Without this step you are encouraging a team member to plough on and do the best they can, albeit off-track, or come back to you seeking more information. If they plough on without it, they will probably not provide the outcome you were looking for. If they come back to you, you may be busy. They wait! You both get frustrated. When they do get to you, you might say “*But I haven’t got time to explain that! I just want you to do it! Isn’t that what I pay you for?*”

Without this step trust is undermined, people become disengaged, rework is generated, costs rise, standards drop. Everyone is frustrated and put under increasing scrutiny and pressure. We know, all things being equal, that people will embrace accountability when their work is clear and has meaning.

What is this missing step? **CONTEXT** - the background to the task; the “**Why**”. The context frames the meaning behind the task being assigned.

*If you placed a plank of wood on the ground and said to your team that you would give \$50 to anyone who walks the length of this plank, who would do it? Almost everyone will ... it's an easy \$50!*

*What if you took this same plank and placed it between 2 buildings, up on the twelfth floor? \$50 to anyone who will walk across the plank! Would they do it? Not a chance.*

*Okay ... now the other building is on fire and their child is lying unconscious at the other end of that plank and the flames will reach them in just a few moments. Would they go across the plank now? Most would say yes.*

*So what is the difference? It's the same danger, the same variables pretty much, but the difference is ... why.*

Neuroscience research confirms that we are driven by one key motivating principle:

### **To Minimize Risk and Maximize Reward**

From an evolutionary standpoint we are wired to pick any signs of physical threat in our environment to help us react quickly, with the fight, flight, freeze response, to ensure our survival. That type of response was very appropriate 20,000 years ago when the threat was a tiger.

Today, however, we are unlikely to face such a threat. Today the threats are more symbolic and more frequent, such as a dismissive boss, ambiguous instructions, being criticized in front of your peers and being micromanaged, but still generate the same fight, flight, freeze response.

High levels of stress show up in a negative attitude and behaviour and become contagious, spreading rapidly like a virus through the team. Therefore, it is critical that, in assigning tasks, you provide good context and an opportunity for questions to be answered, creating greater shared understanding and clarity, in the process addressing the human needs of fairness and certainty.

Clarifying the impact on others (the team, other business units, the customer, values, and reputation), if the task isn't completed as agreed, also provides further understanding.

As a leader or parent, providing greater **Certainty** and **Autonomy** to your colleagues, you **Relate** better; treating them **equitably** (fairly) you enhance their **Reputation** (status) and your own.

By being a **CARER** as a leader, providing more meaning and context behind the work you assign, reduces threat and stress while encouraging people to be highly engaged, to take pride in their work and to go the extra mile.

In return, you will receive greater productivity, satisfaction and personal and team well-being.

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Give me an organisational challenge or a difficult managerial action, I'm on it! But simple things like deciding what to cook for dinner or what to wear? I can mess around for ages on those.

More importantly, I can definitely make big business decisions but in some areas I simply procrastinate, eg: writing articles like these!

**Do you have something that turns you into an expert on finding ways to avoid doing it?** With my writing, I will start and then get willingly side-tracked, distracted, busy doing anything except writing. Then I get frustrated for not doing what I intended to do.

I know I am not lazy, inefficient or lack drive. So why do I find myself running in search of anything else to do rather than the thing I should be doing?

**Fear of not being perfect:** Some authors suggest that procrastination is a time management issue. But I think it comes from fear, e.g., fear of failure, fear of success, fear of loss of autonomy, fear of attachment.

**Fear is the common thread:** For me, it is the fear of not being perfect. Isn't that ridiculous? Yet my perfectionism has been (and still is) the biggest personal challenge in my life. It stops me doing things.

And as one person told me: *The terrible outcome of being a procrastinator is it means your mind is going 24/7 and this leads to high anxiety and endless stress.* She continued: *I don't think I fear failure as I am happy to try new things and give things a go (which always risk failure!). But I never seem to be able to complete things and I think fear of success is exactly what it is - because deep down I don't believe I deserve it.*

**Where does it come from?** In a nutshell, it's our amygdala in our brain's limbic system. It's what I call The Almond Effect®.

Our amygdala is there to keep us safe from things that could harm us. But our brain's 'risk detector' does not distinguish between non-life threatening risks and purely psychological risks. So e.g., the fear of imperfect writing is a risk in that it gambles with our ego.

**Procrastination** (i.e., avoidance) is one of the fight or flight mechanisms we use to deal with perceived threats. For example, who have you avoided this week because you thought it would be a hassle if you saw them?

**How to stop procrastinating:** Now some of you reading this article will likely belong to the 'socks' school of thought i.e., just pull your socks up and get over it. Easy to say if you're not a perfectionist! If only it worked like that. Behaviours built up over decades don't miraculously change overnight.

In my experience, the best way to deal with it is to **just start**. I love the phrase: *'feel the fear and do it anyway!'* Or just think of the Nike slogan *'Just Do It'* designed by adman Dan Weiden over 25 years ago. That phrase has become so common that its application is universal in a whole range of situations not just sport.

**What about at work? Encouraging others to stop procrastinating during change:** The best strategy is obvious but rarely used: coax, encourage, support and acknowledge.

Set up the opportunity for resisters, recalcitrants, doubters and procrastinators to try out the new ways of doing things in the development stage before you fully implement the changes. It can work wonders. If you encourage, support and recognize their achievements you usually turn your most reluctant participants into advocates. *Just do it!*

With over 25 years' practical experience of leading change, **Anne Riches CSP** shows managers and leaders worldwide how to plan, communicate and implement change that works. As a result, leaders nationally and internationally, have minimized interruption to productivity, prevented costly budget and time blowouts and decreased time consuming resistance to change

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Giving makes us feel good, there is no doubt about it.

Why else would dozens and dozens of Billionaires be involved with so much philanthropy and people like Bills Gates and Oprah Winfrey dedicating so much time and money to giving their wealth away?

Studies, using fMRI brain scans have shown that the parts of the brain that light up when you receive money burn even brighter when you donate money. Giving a gift, volunteering or spending time developing another person makes you feel good.

But are there tangible benefits when you mentor others or help someone? The research says yes.

McKinsey & Company found that the single best predictor of team effectiveness was the amount of assistance their members gave each other. If you want to have a high performing team, investing in coaching, teaching and helping them is the way to go.

Gallup's studies show that you feel stronger, more energetic and motivated after you assist and make a difference to others. They point out a link exists between altruism and longevity.

The Catalyst report found that amongst other tangible benefits of mentoring, high potentials (people with MBAs employed in management roles) who developed others earned \$25,075 more in 2008 to -2010 and enjoyed greater career growth.

In 2014 and beyond, if you want a culture that:

- Gets work done faster;
- Enables people to solve problems;
- Rewards people who develop others;
- Reduces poor performance due to overload;
- Ensures customers feel their needs are top priority;
- Transfers knowledge and expertise to new employees...then

**Better get mentoring ...**

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Did you happen to see the 1998 hit movie 'Sliding Doors' in which Academy Award winning actress Gwyneth Paltrow played the central character Helen?

If you did, you may recall the story alternates between two parallel universes that define Helen's life depending on if she takes or misses a London train as two doors are about to close.

The final scene reveals a pivotal moment for viewers to reflect upon how Helen's decision in making or missing that train impacted upon both of her lives throughout the movie.

### **QANTAS FIRST CLUB LOUNGE**

Recently, I experienced a 'sliding doors' moment upon leaving the Sydney Qantas First Club Lounge to board an eight hour international flight to Singapore.

After descending the lounge escalator, I should have turned left, however I turned right. I found myself at gate 10 in front of a customs officer checking the documents of passengers who were flying onward to Los Angeles.

Once she assessed I was at the wrong gate, she smiled and pointed in the opposite direction saying my flight was boarding in about 15 minutes.

### **John Lennon's Widow**

As I turned around and started to walk towards gate 25, I looked up to see the unmistakable super star of pop culture, music and art, **Miss Yoko Ono**.

I had seen a television news story that Yoko was in Sydney for her art exhibition entitled 'War is Over'. I instantly recognised her as she walked towards gate 10 to board the Air Bus 380 flight from Sydney and 14 hours across the Pacific Ocean to Los Angeles.

Growing up in California, I had seen Yoko's picture during the 1970's once she and John Lennon became front page news. The next time I heard her name mentioned was on that fateful day of 8 December 1980 when John Lennon was murdered in front of his New York City apartment.

John Lennon's death was a global news story for months and years afterwards. Yoko's face and life story with John, (whom many believe was the most famous of the four Beatles) appeared regularly in TV updates and papers of the times.

### **Relaxed and Present**

What I first noticed was her relaxed stride as she walked with a Qantas First Class Lounge Manager who towered over Yoko. Dressed in a lovely blue suit, she was wearing her trade mark hat set in a charcoal grey mixed tweed pattern and trademark dark glasses.

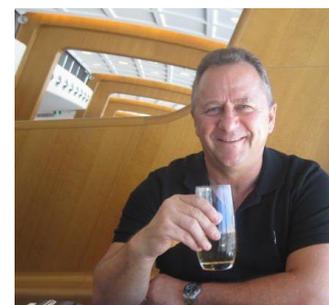
As Yoko and her Qantas chaperon walked towards me, I smiled from about 15 feet out as we were about to stride past each other. As if sent via sms, she glanced up from behind her glasses and winked as if to say, **'thank you for your kind smile today'**.

I looked behind me to see if anyone was there and realised that Yoko's wink was for me. It all happened in about eight seconds yet a personal experience to relish for a lifetime.

If I had made a left turn at the bottom of the escalator and walked to gate 25 instead of gate 10, I would have missed Yoko and this story would never have been written.

***When was the last time you made a wrong turn, yet it was the right one for the path and journey you were supposed to be on?***

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# ROB SALISBURY The Rolling Stones: Building a Lasting Legacy

The Rolling Stones recently celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a sold out live concert with 20,000 raving fans at London's O2 Arena.

Five decades after first appearing at London's Oxford Street Marquee Club as a start-up band, The Stones rocked their England fans with over two hours of high octane, blues infused music.

In 1962, few people could have foreseen what industry experts have now branded as *'the greatest rock and roll band of all time'*.



Combining the stage presence and vocals of lead singer Mick Jagger with veteran band members such as Brian Jones, Ronnie Wood, Bill Wyman, Mick Taylor, Keith Richards and percussionist Charlie Watt and others, this British band achieved legendary status with entry into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 1989.

Having produced 47 studio and live albums, 110 top singles and over 250 million in records and CD sales, they've survived wars, marriage breakups, drugs, infighting, band member and fan deaths and the 24/7 intrusion of the media and paparazzi.

What lessons from the Stones 50 year journey can help build your lasting legacy? In spite of critics, competition, life circumstances or the economy, what can you create or do with others to make 2014 an endearing year?

## Six Tips to Get More from 2014

**1. Reflect and Renew:** What did you achieve in 2013 that you are most proud of? Who inspired you as a role model or mentor to achieve more in business or to improve your life? How will you renew your spirit for a great 2014?

**2. Manage change - learn to adapt:** Psychologists agree that change in any of the following areas can create undue stress. Three or more changes at once can create depression or anxiety issues if not properly managed.

\*Moving to a new home or city \*Death of a spouse, family member, close friend, colleague or beloved pet \*Job loss or career change \*A serious health issue that involves a close relative, friend or self. \*A relationship change, divorce, separation or the start of an intense new relationship or as newlyweds in a first or second time marriage.

**3. What professional skills have you or your team developed?** An Australian colleague and his company recently gained national recognition and service awards for the excellence they have created with clients and in their industry. This has brought peer recognition, new clients and expanded opportunities to showcase their company talents.

**4. Limit requests of your time with community, social clubs or churches:** The constant yet limited resource at our discretion is time. Multiplying 24 hours by 365 days, we get 8760 hours to invest (or waste) in one year. 1% of that is about 88 hours or two 40 hour work weeks. Make wise choices with your most valuable asset. Learn to say *'thank you but no'* when asked of your time by some (yet not all) volunteer, non-profits or community related groups.

**5. Balance health, family, friends and work:** Look at more ways to get things off your **'To Do'** list. Hire experts to help you or outsource tasks to those with the expertise in areas you don't have the time or skill to do.

**6. What do you want to celebrate and be proud of when 2014 concludes?**

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Imagine you've just received a fabulous testimonial from a superbly happy client. What do you do with it? Add it to the testimonials page on your website? Put it in a 'happy clients' file? If you're anything like most business people you probably won't do anything with it, ever.

Research shows testimonials and endorsements can be between eight and ten times more powerful than traditional advertising, yet few businesses and individuals use them effectively to help position themselves as credible candidates or service providers.

Not only do testimonials lend serious credibility, they can also dramatically reduce the amount of effort and money you spend on advertising and promotion. So making testimonials work harder is essential to growing your business and credibility without spending a cent.

Make them work harder by using them in far more places, and many more ways, than a conventional 'testimonials' page on your website. Consider placing them in or on:

**Every page of your website** - Ensure there's at least one testimonial on each page of your website so no matter what page someone is on, they'll see what others are saying about you (especially if they fail to click on the 'Testimonials' page).

**Your testimonials page** - This almost goes without saying and is absolutely essential, but you may be surprised how infrequently testimonial pages are updated. Ensuring you have recent testimonials on your website will also help your search engine optimisation.

**The back of your business card** - Stop promoting your features and benefits, or worse, leaving your business card blank. Instead let a happy client explain why they think whoever you give your business card to should get in touch with you.

**Your email signature** - Add a short testimonial (perhaps changing it monthly) alongside your contact details to turn your email signature into a significantly more powerful promotional tool.

**Printed and digital newsletters** - Short extracts of feedback from two or three clients positioned effectively in a newsletter can enhance both the readability of the newsletter and any call-to-action responses.

**Fliers, brochures and advertisements** - Stop talking about yourself and let others speak for you! Ensure at least 30-40% of the space available is taken up by testimonials from happy clients.

**Proposals and pitch documents** - Again, back-up what you're saying about how marvellous *you* think you are by including relevant feedback from others at appropriate points throughout the document.

**Annual and other reports** - If you report regularly to a board or any kind of stakeholder group, include plenty of testimonials to demonstrate just how great you are and remind the people you're reporting to continue to support, recommend or fund you.

**Invoices and Estimates** - A single, powerful testimonial on an invoice or estimate is a powerful reminder of why the company or person about to pay the bill should engage or pay promptly without you having to spell it out directly.

**Posters for your wall** - Seeing a growing range of positive testimonials every day will be an encouragement to you to continue doing a really great job and also provide a sense of assurance to visitors to your workplace.

This isn't designed to be an exhaustive list but a prompt to help you think about where *you* might benefit from including or displaying testimonials and endorsements. Be creative! Ask yourself 'could a testimonial enhance this?' and if the answer is 'Yes' and you have permission to use it from the person who gave it to you, then add one in!

After all, it's the most powerful advertising you can have.



**Hannah Samuel CSP** speaks, writes and mentors worldwide on reputation, trust and integrity issues. She was President, National Speakers Association New Zealand 2009 to 2011, a Global Speakers Federation Representative 2008 to 2013 and five time NSANZ award winner including 'Speaker of the Year 2012'.

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# JÜRGEN SCHMECHEL First Principle for your success: FOCUS

Focus is the number one success factor in every business.

Throughout my career as a business strategist I have seen companies failing because they had no focus. I have seen fantastic businesses succeeding because of their laser beam focus.

If you look at the numbers it is obvious that focus is the key to success. We only have **168** hours per week. In those **168** hours we need to sleep, eat, exercise, spend time with our loved ones and live our busy lives. Every task and every project is frantically seeking attention from you.

Each distraction from your main business focus is slowing you down out of proportion to its importance. If you had a hundred hours a week for your business and you put all your effort and energy into your one major goal - you might achieve your outcome in a year.

On the other hand, if you now allocate only half the time (fifty hours) and spend the other half on another project you will not finish your first project in two years as you might expect (half the time allocated, double the time needed). Rather you will need at least three or five years to complete the project. In today's fast moving business world three or five years is too long. That is where businesses fail.

You need to ask yourself: "**Where is my major focus?**" and act upon it.

What is your major goal? What gets you out of bed each morning? What do you want to have accomplished in the next 365 days or in the next month? We all underestimate what we can achieve in a year's time, but overestimate what we could achieve within a week.

If you have a clear answer to these questions, then go for it - with all your heart. Avoid distractions and assemble a team that share the same goal and single-mindedness of focus. Single-mindedness of focus means that your thoughts, your concentration, your focus revolves only around one point.

Have a look at the picture on the top of this page. That tree stands on a rock. It looks like it is impossible to get enough nurturing soil at that place. Nevertheless the tree is growing, is strong and now splitting the rock on which it is sitting.



## Action steps to take in 2014

Create a vision board.

Get crystal clear on your focus.

Get enough sleep - stop watching television.

Manage distractions like email and phone calls by allotting time.

Create rituals to connect with your goals and to keep your focus laser beam tight.

**Ask yourself:** What are you gaining from not being focussed? Do you want to change?



**Jürgen Schmechel** is a qualified business analyst and internationally accredited Excel wizard, specialises in workflow and financial modelling. He uses nearly 30 years of experience, combined with his German precision and passion in helping others to empower business owners to achieve the growth and success they dream of.

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Understanding your brain's social structure can positively affect your team's 2014 corporate performance and output.

The stimulation of creative and innovative problem solving skills in a complex and chaotic workplace environment requires a multi-lens approach to facilitate and broaden solution capacities. An easy working model that can be used on a daily basis is as simple as identifying and unlocking barriers in the brain's neural pathways that form part of the brain's social landscape.

These barriers are also called 'states' or 'ego states' and support or inhibit workplace performance by creating a balance of function. The states may unconsciously inhibit or support an individual's life and work performance and it is helpful to identify and understand them particularly if goals and objectives are not being achieved. The states are aptly called inhibitive and supportive and knowing which state is dominant or executive at any given time is crucial.

Underperformance in the workplace can be challenging and confronting—unhealthy and unproductive outcomes effect the entire organisation. Maximising team performance through increased capability and solution capacity can prove highly beneficial and productive and lead to a happier and more motivated workforce.

Today's business environment is complex and chaotic. Issues and solutions can be multi-dimensional and benefit enormously from engaging in a perspective that stimulates knowledge, expertise, emotional and intellectual properties of staff. The successful performance of a team depends on the collective energy and synergy that propels improved communications, productivity, staff morale, internal conflict, staff absenteeism and staff turnover.

The advantage of reshaping or reframing the way your team interacts, problem solves and challenges complex issues can be as easy as helping them unlock or overcome barriers that may have developed within individual staff members mindset, within the organisation or the environmental culture.

Focussing your team's internal process allows team members to operate from their strongest and most suited executive cognitive state to achieve the team goal and identify the best person for a particular job. Difficulties within teams can originate in such basic differences as individuals own personal internalised philosophies, ideas, communications and other expectations, unresolved conflicts or resentments.

#### CASE STUDY

David was the senior manager of a large regional organisation. A very precise person, he laboured over the decision-making process. David's colleagues and team were frustrated over his management style. David continually asked staff to gather more information with any ideas or suggestions he received always put on hold. There was no delegation with productivity of the company severely affected.

After consultation, David's inhibiting and supportive ego states were revealed. His inhibitive state had roots in a '*fear of not wanting to make poor decisions*'. David however had a very strong supportive or '*risk-taking*' ego state which was dominant when he was rock climbing and wind surfing while outside of work. The dual sense of excitement and anxiety he felt when doing these activities focused his thinking and pushed him to succeed.

A discussion on the possibility of making the 'risk taking' state dominant or executive in the workplace empowered David. He soon realised he could make quicker and calculated decisions by using the strengths of his senior executive team.

Don't be like David and let your fears get in the way of achieving the success you want. Begin to unpack the many different parts (or states) in you.

Greater awareness leads to a better understanding of who you really are. If you find yourself in 2014 behaving from a state of '*doubt*', examine how you behave and ask yourself if there is a more positive, supportive or empowering state you could use to succeed in that situation.



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Many years ago when I was going through a really rough time, I read the phrase, “*you are where you are in life because of the choices you have made*”.

Obviously, when things aren't going well, the last piece of wisdom you want to hear is that it's somehow of your own making and so I did what many do, I said that wasn't the case ~ *my situation was different ...*

Move forward to now and I am a firm believer that where we are in our life is exactly where we asked to be because of the choices we make (or don't make) every single day.

Think about it ... do you have the financial situation you want in your life? Consider how that could have been different if you had made different choices ... Do you have the fitness level you want in your life? How have choices you've made brought you to the body you do have today? Do you have the relationships you want in your life?

*“Love is a choice you make from moment to moment.” Barbara De Angelis*

I'm not saying your choices are right or wrong ones....what I am saying is that your current life is a direct result of those choices and your actions in your past.

So, whether or not you agree with me, **let's just imagine for a moment that what you do today, the choices you make today, have a profound effect on your tomorrow...**

*“Leaders live by choice, not by accident.” Mark Gorman*

What is one bold, inspired action you can take today that you will remember fondly for years to come? **What can you do today that your future-self will thank you for?**

What is one thing you always wanted to do, but never made it a high-enough priority in your life to decide to actually *DO* it?

*“Using the power of decision gives you the capacity to get past any excuse to change any and every part of your life in an instant.” Anthony Robbins*

This day – today – matters! This moment *matters*... Are you going to read this page and do something you will be grateful for in days and months to come, or are you going to say that *your situation is different?*

**Every conscious action is a choice and you are where you are right now because of the choices you have made.**

*“Choose well. Your choice is brief, and yet endless.” Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*

Decide what you want and go for it with all your heart ... Make daily choices that take you closer to your goal ... There's an old saying, “**a year from now you'll wish you started today**”.

Stories abound of now-famous people who have overcome incredible obstacles because they decided not to quit, not to listen to the critics - they decided to make moment-by-moment choices that were in the direction of what they wanted in life ~ choices their future-self would thank them for ...

*“When you make a choice, you change the future.” Deepak Chopra*

So, will *your* future-self look back on today and be grateful for what you did today, the choices you made today and the actions you took *today*? The choice my friend, as always, is yours to make ...



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# IAN STEPHENS    If the Horse is dead ... it's Time to Dismount!

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You've likely heard the old saying, 'Don't flog a dead horse'.

For many people 2014 (The Year of the Horse) will be a repeat of the same patterns and the same results of 2013.

My advice; ***if the horse is dead, it's time to dismount.***

What are you going to do more of, better or differently in 2014? Most people return from the festive season sluggish. They don't realize that their thinking and actions in the next 30 days sets up one of three outcomes.

1. A spiral of positive energy and a year of manifesting.
2. A 'Ground Hog Day' year of staying in a comfort zone (*if you saw this 1993 movie starring Bill Murray, you get it*) or...
3. A downward out of control spiral which can go from bad to worse!

To achieve your desired outcomes for 2014, you need to ...

**1. Get real:** Take responsibility for the results. There is a sense of personal power attached to getting real and taking ownership of where you are. Whether you're happy with what you achieved in 2013 or not, you created it - **own it.**

**2. Understand the principles of 'Manifesting Mastery':** Everything must be created mentally before it can manifest physically. Here's the formula ...  $(V + F) + A + C = SVM$

(Visualizing + Feeling) + Action + Consistency = Sustainable 'Vibrational' Manifesting.

In summary, you must see it in your head, feel the feelings you will experience once you have achieved it and then take consistent ongoing action. And you must be consistent with the first two parts of the formula. Action done without doing the V & F work beforehand will yield less productive results.

Remember, there is a lag factor between doing the energy work (*the V + F*) and the results manifesting. You must consistently do the activity of visualizing and feeling like it has already been achieved (*the inputs*) and then appreciate there will be a lag before you seeing evidence of the results (*outputs*).

**3. Appreciate that goals without actions are just dreams.** Goals without actions are the equivalent of expecting outputs without inputs. Invest in the lead up to New Year's Eve gaining clarity on what our goals, dreams and aspirations are for the year ahead. Then invest in New Year's Day creating your Action Plans to get there.

You must get clear on your goals and have a very specific plan of activity (*inputs*) which will WHEN IMPLEMENTED create the desired results (*outputs*).

**4. Call to action:** Appreciate what's not working and dismount from that horse!

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**enRich**  
training & development  
partnering to amplify results

Have you ever gotten into a taxi and when the driver asks you "where do you want to go?" and you just say, "I don't know, but how about we just drive around for a while and see where we end up!" Without a plan for your financial future, you are doing just that, jumping in for the ride and hoping you end up at the right destination!

The funny thing with planning for our financial future is we do actually know what we need to do, we just don't do it. To lose some weight, we know we need to eat a balanced diet and exercise regularly. Yet we all know people who search the tabloid magazines for a quick fix, weight loss toned body while they sit on their couch watching television.

The first step in planning is an understanding of what you are spending now. Knowing how much you earn is the easy bit, knowing how much you spend on what is a bit harder. Most people live in denial as to the how much they actually spend. They don't want to quantify it because they know it will scare them!

**The following are some areas to save or lower expenses.**

- Buy cheaper, yet quality brands.
- Don't impulse shop or shop when hungry.
- Start, maintain and enjoy a vegetable garden
- Take away dinner once a week versus multiple times
- Make lunch instead of buying will save about \$2600 per year
- Buy a coffee machine and bulk coffee versus individual coffee's and save \$2000 per year



Budgeting isn't necessarily about stopping you from spending; it's about putting you in charge and understanding the consequences and benefits. Remember, the key is that you don't need to give up having things; you just need to adjust the frequency and perhaps the way in which you buy the items.

After quantifying the current expenses and determining where you could start saving, establish your short (1 to 3 years), medium (3 to 7 years) and long term (8 to 20 years) goals. Do this as an individual (and not as a couple if married). This ensures you are both on the same page and identified personal and mutual goals. In many cases, I have found couples goals are vastly different, which surprises them. Many people assume spouses have the same goals and timeframes as they do!

**The next step is to quantify the cost of your goals such as:**

- Retirement living expenses.
- Changing or maintaining vehicles
- Children's weddings and / or live in elderly relative funeral(s)
- Family holidays, spending money, food, tours and attractions can cost \$2,000 to \$50,000 each.
- Education, including excursions, sport and tutoring for children can cost \$2,000 to \$20,000 per year.

Now that you have a time frame and a cost, work it back to see how much you need to save now, for each goal, per week. With the focus now on the end game, it is easier to start saving, with the consequence of not saving, being that you will be further away from achieving those goals.

The secret to financial security is to know what you spend, establishing your goals and their associated costs. Then work backwards to know how much to save per week in order to achieve them and then actually saving for them. Don't just go along for the ride and hope it will all work out. At the end of your journey, you want to be happy knowing you have achieved what you wanted in life.



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Do you follow-up possible new clients after they request information?

Here's an easy way to keep the door open to an ongoing telephone relationship until the time is right for them to say 'yes'.

Have you ever experienced a possible new client shut the door to telephone follow-up with a brush-off like, 'I'll contact you when we're ready to go ahead.'

That's what I call the **Hollywood objection**, '*Don't call us, we'll call you.*' After auditioning, aspiring actors in Hollywood were often given this cliché response.

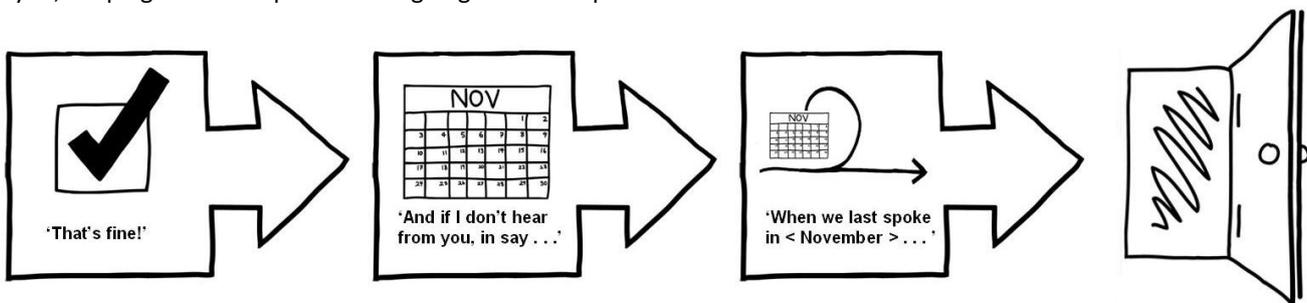
Use this 5-step method whenever they get a DCUWCU – don't call us, we'll call you – response, so you retain permission to stay in contact.

1. **Say 'That's fine.'**  
Your automatic reaction should be to agree with your client by saying, 'that's fine.'
2. **Ask permission:** 'And If I haven't heard from you in say 10 days, is it ok to call you then?'  
Start with '*and*'; never use '*but*' (which sounds oppositional and creates resistance).  
Judge the right timeframe; it might be one month or three months, whatever feels right.  
Nine out of ten clients will say *yes*, unless they absolutely have zero interest and tell you again, 'No, please don't call.'  
That's good to know. You can take them off your call-back list.
3. When you call back, remind them they gave you permission.

'When we last spoke in < November > you suggested I phone around this time regarding ...' Now when they hear from you, you are not interrupting them, but following their instructions. This is the elegance of *permission marketing*.

How you end sales calls determines whether the next time you contact your prospect they'll be happy to hear from you or whether they'll consider your call an interruption.

Selling today is about continuously asking your customer for *permission* to stay in contact, so they expect to hear from you, keeping the door open to an ongoing relationship.



**Action Summary**

1. Remember to end every phone call referring to the best time frame to contact again and wait for them to agree.
2. Make a note of the agreed call back date in client history and schedule the call back on your calendar.



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## JILL SWEATMAN **What to Look for when Hiring a Consultant**

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Here are some key considerations when hiring an expert consultant rather than a good consultant. These qualities can be critical and are often overlooked. Follow these simple tips and you will have a great experience in 2014.

**Do they ask the right questions?** Choreographing the right questions is both an art and a science. These questions will be refined from years of experience and sound judgement. The situation first thought to be the problem, seldom is. It is the duty of your consultant to delve into the chasm of complexity. They should be asking the tough questions. If they aren't, they are not doing their job.

**Are they a good example?** In fact, good is not good enough. An exemplary example is required. Know that in any situation, the consultant will behave in a way that is professional, respectful and retain confidences. Sometimes, just having a person around the organisation who is committed to high standards can make a subtle, yet significant, impact on others.

**Are they a committed communicator?** A consultant must be an excellent communicator – articulate, poised, yet able to mix in all company and have a sense of humour. Thoughtful and well spoken, they will be remembered, not just for what they say, but *how they made people feel*.

**Do they encourage involvement by all?** Every person affected by a problem must be invited to participate in some capacity. An expert consultant will respectfully insist on this. *To disregard one voice, is to welcome defeat on a platter.*

People support what they help to create. So allow each person the chance to participate and you will see many of your problems dilute. The skill lies in designing events to create involvement with follow up in a meaningful manner.

**Are they out there in the trenches?** Your consultant should plan to be with your people and experience situations, wherever possible, in whatever form that may take. Nothing beats credibility like someone willing to listen to the concerns of others and serve at the front line.

**Do they act as ambassador?** True, long standing loyalty is a rare attribute in business today. An ambassador is loyal to the organisation and the person engaging them. You want to know this person will uphold the highest standards of diplomacy; be gracious and empathic and still deliver attractive as well as unattractive news.

**Do they always tell it like it is?** Even if it stings, if an expert consultant sees something, regardless of sensitivity, they should call it to the appropriate stakeholder. Another person inside the organisation, on the payroll, may not. Why? Because of politics. An expert consultant, with the right amount of experience, can reveal the necessary elements with respect, dignity and integrity. They can often say what you may not want to.

**Do they advise how to maximise your investment?** An experienced consultant will be truthful in suggesting ways to create extra value with various options. They will tell you where to save money and where to avoid cutting corners. They are invested at a personal and professional level, deriving great satisfaction from the outcomes of a project, beyond any fee.

**Are they a student of life?** Your consultant will be of greater value if they are interested in a range of endeavours and engage in further education. You will want someone well versed at sitting in the learning seat, as well as being a talented educator themselves. Someone learning constantly, picking up on other perspectives, handling greater complexity and delivering solutions in more refined ways, will be one of your greatest assets.

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The law of gravity applies to everyone equally as it transcends boundaries and time.

A boy in a city who throws a ball in the morning will get the same result as a man who throws a ball in the evening. In both cases, the law of gravity and physics will cause the ball to fall to earth.

The '*Law of Gravity*' as discovered by Sir Issac Newton whom many to be the greatest physicist and mathematician in history is undisputable and fully explained in his 1657 published book, '*Principia*'.

The '*Law of Sowing and Reaping*' is just as real as the *Law of Gravity*'. It works the same way for everyone. Every act has a predictable consequence.

When we stand before a mirror and smile, our image will smile back to us. Similarly, if we sow tomatoes, we will reap tomatoes and not cucumbers. We will reap that which we have sown.

There are three universal principles in the law of sowing and reaping that we can apply in our lives. When we apply these principles correctly, we will get the results that we desire.

**Principle # 1: To harvest, we must first sow**

We may have passed by a plot of land where different types of vegetation and weeds grow. On another plot of land nearby, we find the land cultivated with rows of tomatoes. The owner of the first plot did not sow thus he does not have a harvest. On the other hand, the owner of the second plot of land prepared the soil and planted tomatoes in it. Three months later, he experiences a bountiful harvest of ripe tomatoes.

Similarly, we may want to be healthy and enjoy good relationships with people around us. These things don't happen automatically; we must put in effort yet so many are not willing to pay a price and choose to leave the results to luck.

**Principle # 2: To have the harvest we want, we must sow the right kind of seeds.**

A farmer must decide the kind of crop they want to harvest and choose the best seeds to plant. They know that quality seeds will result in good harvest and must prepare the soil in order that the seeds grow into healthy plants.

If we want to enjoy good health, there are a few things we need to do. We must give attention to the food we eat. Good nutrition plays an important role in helping us achieve good health. We must have an exercise routine to help us maintain a healthy lifestyle. Most importantly, we need enough sleep to optimise our daily performance.

Good relationships don't happen automatically either. It usually begins with us and requires effort. People around us are like our images in the mirror. If we are friendly, the image in the mirror appears friendly. If we are angry, the image appears angry. Therefore we must first do to others what we want others to do to us.

**Principle # 3: The harvest is always greater than the seeds planted**

This is nature's way of rewarding us for our efforts. If a farmer only gets back the same amount as planted, the return on efforts would be out of proportion to the worth or value. When we understand this, we will be motivated to do more good deeds both for ourselves and for those around us. The amounts we sow, determine the size of our harvest.

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A general misconception is that there is nothing new under the sun and no more new opportunities to exploit. Expressions such as: 'good jobs have all been taken'; 'I simply don't have the calibre'; 'I will get an idea as to what to do eventually'. The reality is, these are just excuses and nothing more.

Success is your birth right, yet you have to initiate the process. There is no such thing as the right moment. You need to unclog the creative potential that is inherent in you. This can occur if you apply certain mind tools that will unleash your creativity. Here's how:

**Applied Imagination:** The term was coined in the 1950's by Alex Osborn, who suggested that creativity stems from the mind's ability to view a situation in innovative ways. Imagination is the seed of creativity. When you apply this to a situation that is confronting you, ideas start to flow.

For instance, in 1810 canned food was discovered. However cans require a can opener. Subsequent inventors tried making a better can opener. Ermal Cleon Frazee decided to do some applied imagination to the situation. What if an opening tool was added to the can itself without the need for a can opener? This situation was resolved by pop-top aluminium cans in 1959.

**Convergent Thinking:** Creativity is not necessarily about thinking out of the box. Sometimes creativity involves convergent thinking that focuses on an existing problem by eliminating the unnecessary details and coming up with a workable solution.

Chester Carlson invented the photocopier in 1938 and his company became known as Xerox. The early photocopiers were expensive and unpopular. Using convergent thinking on how to get corporations to use the photocopier Xerox came up with a brilliant idea to rent rather than sell photocopiers thus leaving the maintenance and servicing contracts with Xerox.

**Divergent thinking:** Creativity is also about divergent thinking. This is when you are in a status quo position that isn't really desirable and you want to move to a more ideal situation. Divergent thinking allows you to look at new ideas and possible solutions to resolve recurrent issues.

Here you need to think out of the box and to achieve this you will have to know the direction in which you want to proceed and work towards it an objective and constructive way. Creative divergent thinking involves gathering as much data as possible and seeing how to use this data effectively to resolving the problem or finding an innovative solution.

An example: when timber is cut there is lots of sawdust being produced which is treated both as being a health hazard and waste. Can the sawdust be used for something else instead? With divergent creative thinking sawdust has found many other uses such as cat litter, chipboard and as a fuel.

**Bisociation:** Arthur Koestler mentioned this in his 1964 book 'The Act of Creation' as the ability to relate things that were previously unrelated.

For instance if you were to take a panther which is black and imagine it was pink you get the iconic pink panther. Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone, Guglielmo Marconi invented the radio. Although these two men never met, today most of us carry a device that combines these two inventions – the mobile phone.

During 2014, invest some time explore the inner realms of your wonderful brain to see how you can unclog your creative potential to be a tremendous asset to your firm and most importantly, to yourself.

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*In this article, Simon Tupman contends that tighter financial measures along with a dash of hope will not be enough to see businesses through the current slowdown. In this feature article he offers five insights to kick start your 2014.*

Many businesses and firms will be facing difficult challenges as they get into 2014 and beyond Chinese New Year. Based on my research, the main challenge is to improve cash flow yet many are reacting simply by cutting costs.

Yes cost control is necessary (*and beneficial in the short-term*), however it can be counter-productive as a long term option in the absence of more imaginative initiatives. Laying off staff, cutting marketing or training budgets is similar to trying to plug leaking holes in a sinking ship hoping it can be repaired when the major storm passes.

The fact is, some firms and many small to medium enterprises (SME's) will sink from sight yet their crew (*employees / workers*) will likely be rescued to sail another day. Perhaps it's time to consider redesigning the ships!

While the Global Financial Crises (GFC) and varied economies battled have battled on, it's been a grim few years for many, yet for others, the GFS and soft recessions have been catalysts for vastly needed change and improvements.

This presents a great opportunity for firms to consider what to do differently to survive and thrive rather than continue hoping a downturn will just pass so they can return to '*business as usual*' ...however **hoping is not a strategy**.

Technology, social media, volatile economics and skeptic consumers are shaping new ways to do business plus the influencing of the thinking of the next generation. This is why I am such an advocate for innovation, experimenting, and challenging old mindsets from 'get through' to 'break through'.

Here are five tips to kick-start 2014 as adapted from my bestselling book, '**Why Entrepreneurs Should Eat Bananas**'.

- 1. Face up to your reality:** Be honest about your current situation and be prepared to change methods if necessary.
- 2. Take the lead:** Some business models are not conducive for fostering leadership. However what is needed in many firms is for leaders to grasp the reins and drive new initiatives.
- 3. Involve your staff.** Let them know where the business is heading - tap into their ideas. Ensure they know the business's financial situation and plans. Start an internal competition for new and best ideas with an attractive prize as incentives
- 4. Involve your customers and your community.** You are in business to serve your customers and your community. What are their views and opinions about your business? Consider appointing an 'advisory board' comprising some of your leading customers, referrers or successful entrepreneurs in your area. Like a board of directors, its task is to offer strategic input on matters of governance, financial management service and funding if and when needed.
- 5. Invest in your future.** Be prepared to listen to ideas from young people. Many of the great entrepreneurs of today such as Zuckerberg (Facebook), Bezos (Amazon), and Page (Google) were under the age of 25 to 35 when they 'made it'. Train your team in new business, interpersonal, financial and technological skills so they are prepared for the future.

I like what futurist author Clem Sunter wrote '*it's better to be vaguely right, than completely wrong!*' Give it go ... do something ... because **Hoping is not a Strategy**

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Goal setting should not be associated with just New Year Resolutions but with our overall life desires in 2014 and beyond.

The foundation to self-motivation, goal setting is applicable throughout our entire life. Primarily, you need to identify the desires and dreams you want as a reality in the future. Begin by investing time to write them out as clearly as possible. This is the first step of goal setting and in fulfilling your burning desires, dreams, want and needs.

Now that your desires and dreams are written down, group or categorize them. Then, prioritize with the most important goal first.

Once your "top priority" desires and dreams have been identified, you must determine if you are willing to pay the price to make one, two or all of them a reality.

It is not about money when you choose to pay the price to make a dream a reality. It's about being realistic. Your willingness and the discipline of hard work and determination must be identified before any goal setting.

The price you have to pay may come in many forms. Your commitment may be in the form of money; change in habits; extra demand on your time and efforts; or additional education. Your goal may affect your family and other relationships. It may even impinge on your hobbies, sports or other activities. Are you really willing to sacrifice?

These are the demands you must identify before goal setting because if you are not willing to make the investment, you will not realize many if any of your desires or dreams. If you are not ready, it is best to avoid any goal setting and forego that New Year's resolution.

It is imperative to be truly honest with yourself and understand the consequences associated with making your dreams a reality. Proceed only when you are willing to "pay the price" and ultimately, achieve your goals.

The following guide will direct you to take your top priority dream and make it a, **S.M.A.R.T.** (*specific, measurable, action oriented, realistic and relevant with a timetable*) goal.

STATE THE GOAL: .....

DATE FOR COMPLETION: .....

OUTCOME: .....

*What will I see when I get there?* .....

*What sounds will I hear?* .....

*What will I feel?* .....

POSSIBLE OBSTACLES / CONTINGENCY PLANS: .....

SKILLS AND BEHAVIOUR REQUIRED: .....

PEOPLE, GROUPS OR RESOURCES REQUIRED: .....

ACTION PLAN/DATES: .....

METHODS OF MONITORING AND MEASURING PROGRESS: .....

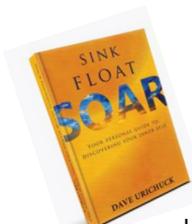
THE REWARD (*What's in it for me?*): .....

COMMITMENT: *I commit myself to accomplish this goal by the completion date by implementing each action outlined within the timeframes indicated.*

SIGNATURE: ..... TODAY'S DATE: .....

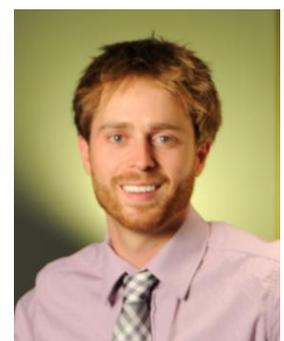
Finally, take massive action. Support your action with a healthy dose of **Discipline** and do what you said you would even if you don't want to.

The key is then to reward yourself for doing what you set out to do as any behaviour that gets recognized or rewarded, will be repeated often.



Dave Urichuck, ALB Toastmasters International, is an International Speaker and Author of Sink-Float-Soar. Dave guides people to understand how attitude, motivation and success work from the inside-out. He engages his audience and participants to take ownership and responsibility to better know themselves and clearly define their life desires in order to SOAR.

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In 2014, eradicate procrastination, before it destroys you.

You get more out of your day with an action-oriented, do-it-now attitude. When you complete the unpleasant or hard jobs first and act on the big tasks little bits at a time, you trim anxiety and stress while gaining self-respect and self-confidence.

After you exert this type of discipline long enough, you will establish a routine and create a new habit. Behavioural studies suggest that if you do something every day for 21 days, it becomes a habit. Be action oriented for the next 30 days and you will master procrastination.

Procrastination is habitually putting things off. It is tempting to make excuses. Procrastination can cause you to miss deadlines, leading to lost opportunities and income, lower productivity and wasted time. It will lower your motivation, heighten your stress and generate frustration and anger.

Take control of your life now! Reverse the procrastination habit by being as clever about completing things as you have been about putting them off. Don't expect to find time to achieve your goals. The only way to get time is to make time. Start by committing to a do-it-now mentality.

A do-it-now attitude makes you a self-starter -- a person who can recognize a need and take appropriate action without waiting to be told. As a self-starter, you will avoid the pressure; frustration and anxiety that comes from having others tell you what and how to do things.

You exercise your creativity in solving problems and doing work making you more productive. You'll take maximum advantage of every opportunity and your sense of timing sharpens, seldom miss something you want due to tardiness. Your services are singled out and preferred above others.

Here are some action-oriented techniques to apply each day:

- Determine your most productive time of the day and dedicate it to "ME" time. "ME" time is to do whatever you have to do to bring you closer to achieving your goals. The point is to dedicate the most productive time to the most important person in the world.
- Once you have set your goals and have prioritized actions, take your annual goals and break them down into months, weeks and days. Do the same with each day's activities.

**The first two letters of goal are GO. Now it is time to get going.**

- End each day by writing a prioritized to-do list for the next day. At the end of each week and month do the same for the next week and month. Get organized. Use a daily planner. You'll be better organized if you write down everything.
- Clear your mind of clutter. Solve problems while they are small. Whatever you do, do it once to the best of your ability, and move on. Question all tasks to make sure they are worthwhile. Do the worst or hardest jobs first.
- Be decisive and remove time wasters from your activities. When evening comes and your next day's to-do list is written, celebrate. Action that gets rewarded gets repeated.

An action-oriented person is proactive. When you are proactive, you have initiative. You can see a need, figure out how to best satisfy it, determine the appropriate time to take the right action and proceed. When you are proactive, you lead. When you lead, you take control of yourself and get what you want out of life.

**Bob Urichuck** CSP is a Canadian based International Professional Speaker, Trainer and the author of two best-selling books: **Disciplined for Life, You Are the Author of Your Future** and **Up Your Bottom Line**. Visit [www.BobU.com](http://www.BobU.com) for your free copy of "The New Economy of Buyers: Why Traditional and Consultative Selling Methods No Longer Work"



For the past 35 years I've worked with people all over the world who are struggling for balance in life.

Conventional solutions don't work. You need a fresh understanding of the problem that's almost an epidemic in order to solve it. In this brief article, I'd like to present that helicopter view.

The problem is not a lack of balance. The real problem comes from turning up at home exhausted, wounded or filled with anxiety. This is when you, your family or partner gets the raw end of your work deal. The problem could be incompetence in your work processes - own this and you are half way to the solution.

Very few people complain about time you spend doing what you love if you return 110% inspired, happy, healthy and loving. But if you front up at home and your family gets the raw end of the work deal, then you are abusing your home life and those in it. That's not sustainable or fair and good on them for complaining.

Here are a few ideas:

- If you come home from work with less energy than you went to work with in the morning, you could be in the stupid class of work process and need to seek changes.
- Never try to alleviate exhaustion in your work life by reducing your work load or your work hours, that's a real backward step into ignorance and complacency in the whole of your life, not just work.
- Use nature: there are hundreds of studies that show "nature deficit disorder" is causing massive intellectual and physical drain on busy people.

The solution is; to work outdoors more, hold outdoor meetings, get to the gym for exercise, set up offices with a view of a natural environment and bring the laws of nature into your office.

### Here's a brilliant piece:

*"Never again clutter your days or nights with so much "busi-ness" and unimportant things that you have no time to "be in love" and "live with love". This applies to play as well as work. A day merely survived, with money as the only reward, is no cause for celebration.*

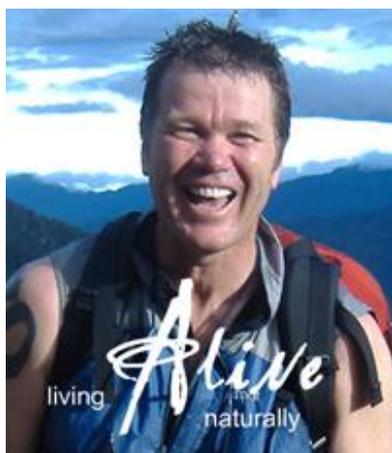
In its purified state, the human heart is the hologram of the seen and unseen worlds; it is the part that reflects the whole. The heart is the point at which the individual human being is closest to the Divine. The heart is the centre of our motivation and our knowing, possessing a depth and strength of will that the personality lacks.

When we say that the heart has an integrative power, we are not talking in abstract, metaphorical, or merely intellectual terms. The realisation and purification of the heart both opens a doorway to the infinite and also results in a restructuring of neural pathways, a refinement and reorganisation of our entire nervous system, which allows the fullest expression of our human possibilities.

We can so easily fall into the world of 'live to work, rather than work to live'. Time can rush by; we are so busy getting ready to enjoy life, that we are too tired to take advantage of it. To manage our life, for the benefit of love, we must master the power of will.

This, in another language, means discipline. No more busy work. No more hiding from love. Leave time, leave space to grow. *Now, Now! Not tomorrow!"*

**Anonymous**



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**A new route to personal success and organizational engagement**



Good people in the modern workplace work very long hours, but not, it seems, with high levels of job satisfaction. Business metrics reveal high employee turnover, high employee absenteeism and low employee satisfaction. Low employee engagement tells the real story.

In an international study of employee engagement, the Gallop Organization polled employee engagement levels in 10 modern economies around the world. (See Figure 1)

Why, after four decades of leadership development, organizational re-engineering, and book after book by high profile leaders and leadership development experts, does employee engagement remain at such a dismal level?

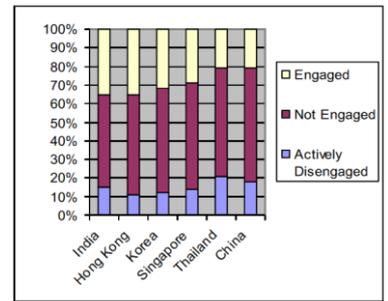


Figure 1: Employee Engagement Levels in Asia

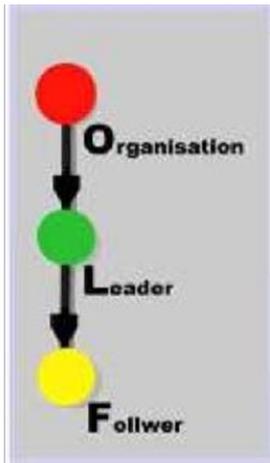


Figure 2: Traditional Relationships in Organizations—Linear and one way down.

Why are more than 60% to 80% of employees only partially engaged or actively disengaged? Why does generation Y balk at buying in? Why are the majority of individual contributors idle through the day?

Albert Einstein once said, “No problem can be solved from the same level of consciousness that created it.” We agree. We believe leadership technologies have reached saturation: It will take more than 'just good leadership' to create a breakthrough in workplace engagement levels. Let us start with how we think about relationships inside organizations.

Most of us see a linear, one-way relationship between the organization, leaders and followers. (See Figure 2) When an organization launches a new initiative, the leaders are called upon by the organization to implement the initiative through the ranks of followers: Leaders demand, followers comply. As tail-end-Charlie', is it surprising that follower's exhibit lack lustre commitment?

**Paradigm of the “Engaged Organization” – Relationships and Roles – Figure 3**

Breaking through the organizational engagement barrier requires us to adopt a new mental model for organizational relationships. This new mental model will be the engagement lens through which we view how people in roles and functions interact in the organizations. Like the Hubble telescope, when we look through this new lens, we see things previously outside our range of view. Let's take a look!

Suppose we started to re-think the workplace in terms of an interdependent, three-way relationship between the organization, leaders and its followers? Let us 'swing' the role of the follower up into relationship with the organization as shown in Figure 3. Here we see the follower as a partner in success alongside leaders and representatives of the organizations. In this utterly transformed role and relationship, individual contributors are no longer 'followers'.

We give this changed role a new name: **Active self-leaders.**

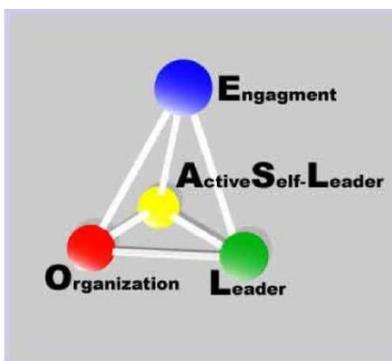


Figure 3: Active Self Leaders in a three-way relationship with the Organization and Leaders

As active self-leaders, followers now share responsibility equally for the success of leadership initiatives and organizational engagement. Active followers now work in reciprocating, interdependent relationships to their organization and to their leaders. They are called upon to exhibit the same high level of commitment, initiative and responsibility as leaders, but they work in support of leadership's key functions.

To organisational success, they now have a direct stake. In return, the value of each active self-leader is finally recognized in proportion to their contribution to business success. The autonomy, alignment and responsibility accorded active self-leaders in this mental model of organisational relationships naturally foster engagement. The contribution bar is higher but so are the opportunities to influence, to contribute and to be challenged.

Cresswell Walker works as an executive coach and leadership trainer across SE Asia and the Middle East. An international speaker, author and adventurer Cresswell's results rest upon an extraordinary educational background and first career as an award winning Professional Planner. [cress@cresswellwalker.com](mailto:cress@cresswellwalker.com) | [www.cresswellwalker.com](http://www.cresswellwalker.com)

# CRESSWELL WALKER Life is a Daring Adventure ... or nothing



So said Helen Keller and I was about to prove it!

Looking through the spinning propeller, I contemplated the 500 metre runway lined up ahead. I had built a private airplane, but was I was ready to fly it?

My check lists were complete, the engine was warmed up. After two years of building, there was nothing to do but push down upon the throttle and fly. I gripped the control stick in a sweaty right hand and rehearsed the take-off one last time in my head: Stick back, release brakes, full throttle, stick forward, tail up, steer straight until she lifts off ... Right?

I hope so.....it was time.....here goes!

I put the throttle to the max and barely had time to think *“Holy smokes, this thing accelerates”* and she took off. I hadn’t even had time to lift the tail before I lay pitched back in my seat with nothing to see over the nose but clear blue sky. I had never expected my harmless looking airplane to fly with such enthusiasm! Like an unlikely rider on the back of a homesick angel that day, I hung on tighter than I had ever hung onto anything before in my life. *“This is fantastic”*, I thought, *“a little scary, I admit, but I think I am going to like this!”*

There are many adventures we can seek out in our lives, but none serve to stretch and grow us like the ones that take us to our limits of our skill and courage. Building an airplane and flying it one of them. When we fly out to meet great challenges in our lives we find new courage and confidence. *“Now that I have done this, we discover, what else shall I try that I never before imaged was within my grasp?”*

The adventure changes us. We grow toward mastery. We become more of who we are. We find our gifts. One by one, we bring them into the world. We find fulfilment and happiness. Our quest for mastery never ends, but our gains along the way buoy us. The world becomes bigger and smaller at the same time. Now all things are possible, limited only by the time we have to stride alive in the magic kingdom.

But the question is: **How do we get started? How do we build the capacity to make the choice to go for it?** How do we make choices that make our lives “a daring adventure”, to take off for the sky with nothing but clear blue sky ahead?

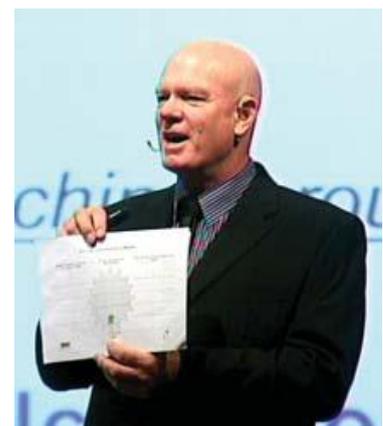
In what I call the “uncommon sense” ideas of the **7 Cs**, we learn to be:

1. **CAPTAIN** of our own lives,
2. With the **COURAGE** to choose
3. Our own **COURSE**,
4. And **COMPANIONS**,
5. With the **CAPACITY** to thrive,
6. In **CURIOSITY**
7. And **COMPASSION** for self and others

When we grow to embody these 7Cs, these values then define what we do, what choices we make day to day, what things we pay attention to, what part of ourselves we intentionally strengthen. We are able, at last, to make the choice to step into life as a daring adventure, a journey, a flight if it were to success and fulfilment.

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Cloud is everywhere today. Many people I meet wondering “What is Cloud?” – “Is Cloud for me?” “Should I be using Cloud and how will it help me or our business in 2014”

Whether you are a small business or a larger business you are probably using some Cloud, even if you do not realise it.

Almost every website is running in the Cloud – paradoxically this is done for security reasons by keeping the users of your website away from your critical business systems, you are protecting those business systems.

Cloud is simply a way of using other people’s computers rather than your own. It is a throwback to the early days of computing when people and schools rented time from local business’s mainframe computers - usually during the night.

So why would you use Cloud rather than your own computers? What are the benefits and are there any rain clouds or storm clouds to watch out for? So what does Cloud actually mean?

Cloud-based computing is technology that gives companies the ability to have their data managed or delivered over the web. When any type of data is taken into the Cloud companies no longer have to purchase expensive hardware and software to maintain. Instead of this, the computers are located in a data centre – the data centre is the sky.

They are managed by the data centre staff according to an agreement, not your IT team. To many people this is seen as a massive silver lining to Cloud. But there are still options, so decisions need to be made to get the best type of Cloud for you, while avoiding those storm clouds that are lurking on the horizon.

You can purchase just the use of an application which is running in the Cloud - no ownership or installation is required. Many email providers including Gmail are examples of this. Applications such as Xero, a small business accounting solution run entirely in the Cloud. This is public cloud. It is also possible to purchase managed servers which give you all of the functionality of an on premises server but the management is done for you. Or you can purchase entire computers, but keep them in a data centre.

Entire servers running in a data centre is private cloud and usually with this option you are still responsible for the maintenance, but you are now not reliant on your internet connection; all data centres will have top of the range internet connectivity. How much Cloud is right for you will vary with your particular situation.

The rain clouds are because the management has become centralised, you have less control over the applications and so features may appear and disappear without you being aware of the impact of these changes. You have become dependent on an external supplier.

The advantages of cloud are that the management of aspects of the hardware and perhaps the software is moved from your building to a central location and your staff to a dedicated team.

For smaller businesses, where the IT Management was done as an extra by someone whose main role was something entirely different, this can be a godsend. The cost is also more predictable as you commit to a payment rather than being subject to the whims of hardware failures which do seem to happen at the most inopportune moments.

In summary, the Rain Cloud is possible the loss of control and the Silver Lining is the predictable costs.

**Gill Walker** is well known Sydney based customer relationship management (CRM) guru who will ensure you are able to maximise on your customer attraction and development efforts. Gill can be contacted on **+61 2 8212 3480** or [gill@opsis.com.au](mailto:gill@opsis.com.au). To learn more on how she can help you and your business, visit [www.opsis.com.au](http://www.opsis.com.au) and [www.crmtraining.net.au](http://www.crmtraining.net.au)



When in business it is important to get the word out about your products or services?

People can't support your business if they don't know you exist and what you do, so it's important you have a strong online presence. If you don't know much about social media, don't worry. Most social media tools are easy to use.

Here are a few simple steps you can take to effectively launch your social media presence:

### 1. Create a social media strategy

This is actually much easier than it sounds. Start by deciding who in your company will be responsible for social media. Once you've determined who is involved make a list of which tools you'll want to use.

Although there are a lot of social media choices out there, in the beginning focus on the biggest players. Right now, Twitter and Facebook are most influential in social media and you'll want to have a blog presence as well.

As you become more adept at using social media, you can make adjustments to add or change tools you may like to use.

### 2. Start a blog

This is one of the most effective ways to create an online presence. You can start by introducing your company and products, give expert advice related to it, or editorialize about relevant news items.

A blog is a great way to connect with your customers in a meaningful way and make connections across your industry.

Post regularly - it doesn't have to be daily, but once or twice a week is good. Consider posting on the same days, so people following it know when to expect a new post. Create links to other blogs and credible sites and to other posts in your blog.

### 3. Utilize Facebook

Facebook is another great avenue to connect with your customers. Create a page for your customers to "like." If you are already on Facebook, you can send invitations for your page to everyone on your friends list and ask them to spread the word. Facebook is a good place to post shorter updates, advertise upcoming specials, product releases, promote contests, or set up little quizzes or polls. The key is to give your customers something fun with which they can interact.

### 4. Learn to use Twitter

There are around 40 million tweets daily on Twitter, so you definitely want to get in on the action. The feed is constantly updated and moves quickly, so make a point to post something several times a day. Since you are limited to 140 characters, your strategy will have to be a little different from Facebook. Post interesting quotes and facts related to your company and links to articles and blogs that might be of interest to your customers. You'll be surprised at how quickly you can gain hundreds, if not thousands of followers, especially if your content is good.

### 5. Join the conversation

Gaining a presence using popular social media tools is great, but also interact with others in your field. Start following blogs of other companies in your industry, especially your competitors. It's a great way to keep track of what they're doing and if you comment regularly, you can actually drive traffic back to your blog.

Using social media is an ongoing process. The most important thing to keep in mind is consistency. Establish a presence and update it regularly. There is no better way to promote your business than to have it be associated with positive and engaging content.

*Now go grab a pen and start writing.*

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A frequent speaker at business events, Pamela has had several articles published in the Singapore Straits Times. She has resided in Asia for over 23 years.

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I was once told by someone I respected that he believed people reach a maximum capacity in life and can't break through that barrier. A level of ability is achieved by a person when he or she is unable to neither improve nor move beyond.

Of course, he was referring to a person's capacity for work.

As children growing up, we continually learn and improve our skills academically, socially and financially. These skill sets are somewhat intertwined; as we learn more, we move in different social circles and become financially rewarded according to the changes and improvements we make in our lives.

There is often a bit of luck with life and created by the dynamics of our individual socio-economic choices we make. So at what point is the use-by-date of our improvement cycle?

I wondered if this was something that was pre-determined. That was the point my colleague was trying to convince me of. Somewhere in our DNA at a particular time in our life, do we reach a maximum level of our ability? Are we able to go beyond that point successfully?

The key word is successfully. Most people EXPECT to go past this level simply because we don't know that we have reached it until we actually FAIL. Even then, as individuals, is it the number of failures we accept and settle on that determine our place in life?

People do fail at many things, many times. It's a given that success is only arrived at because of failure. Take the obvious 'occupation' for success and failure, the sports person. Individual improvement of a sports person is measured by success. The number one ranked golfers in the world fail. He or she wasn't always number one, yet they served an apprenticeship in the lower ranks first and with it their fair share of losses or failures.

Yet my colleague's definition was that continual failure means a person has reached their true level of achievement in life and can go no further.

If a golfer has not progressed beyond a ranking of fifty six in the world for two years, is it safe then to assess that this player's ability has levelled out and no further improvement can be expected? Maybe, yet they often do keep playing.

Not everyone can be number one or top ranked, yet many keep playing. They might change their manager; change some equipment or their coach. They will often do anything (constructive or even superstitious) to get an improvement.

For two years they may have peaked at number fifty six in the world thus they might change some equipment or their mindset or attitude and with that, they progress to a world ranking of fifty.

Their ability has not changed. They are still the same athlete they were before the equipment or attitude change, but they are now a bit higher in world rankings.

Through education and experience we can improve our life skills. But at what point do we accept what we have as the be all and end all?

There is an old saying: *"if you continue to do what you've always done, you will continue to get the results that you've always got"*

So, do you think my colleague was right?



**Susan Winters:** Civil Marriage Celebrant, J.P. is 2012 to 2014 President (NSW & ACT) of the Association of Civil Marriage Celebrants in Australia. Susan organizes and conducts over 50 amazing weddings, anniversaries, birthdays, funerals and celebrations a year. Don't leave it to chance - ensure your next special occasion by emailing Susan at [info@susanwinterscelebrant.com.au](mailto:info@susanwinterscelebrant.com.au) or visiting [www.susanwinterscelebrant.com.au](http://www.susanwinterscelebrant.com.au)

Here are some useful hints and tips to consider when preparing your PowerPoint (PP) presentation in 2014.

First, try to ensure you save your PP in **.pptx** format. It's the most recent format when using either Office 2010 for Windows, or 2011 for Mac. As most computers will be running these versions, it's a safe way to ensure compatibility.

One major problem experienced by many users was videos. Prior to Office 2010/2011, whenever you attached a file, it was only a link and the video was never actually embedded into the PP. One of the new features of **.pptx** files is the ability to actually embed the video into your PP file, which means when you transfer it to another computer the video is already within the file.

Previous versions with the **.ppt** ending did **not** embed the videos. It was only a link to them. This was shown in a path that PP pointed to. Once you moved the file to another machine, the path changed and the link was no longer valid. The only way to make them work again was to re-embed the videos on the new machine. Most of the time people transfer their PP onto a flash drive and don't have their videos with them making their presentations incomplete. So ensure you use the latest versions and save as a **.pptx** file.

Many conferences have computers with operators at the back of the room. You are left driving your presentation using a wireless presenter. When attaching videos, bear this in mind and consider using the option "**play immediately**" as the "**play on click**" option will not work using a wireless presenter.

Videos can now come in a variety of formats. Ensure you have the rights to play the video as many can be copyright protected and will not work. The most compatible file extension of video is **.wmv** when using PP or **.mov** in Keynote. PowerPoint being a Microsoft product will naturally prefer using a Windows Media Player file, and **.wmv** is exactly that.

While **.avi** and **.mpeg** will work most of the time, you do run the risk of them not working as PP may not have all the latest codec's needed to decode the videos. Codecs are essentially what encode and decode videos. If you need to, you can use a programme called Format Factory on a Windows machine to convert your video from one format to another, and it's free to download. They now offer a Mac version too

Very often people create their presentations on a Mac and then play them on a Windows machine. Generally, this is not a problem so long as you use standard fonts. Once you start using fancy fonts available on a Mac, Windows will not recognise them and substitute what it thinks is the closest font. This will cause spacing issues and words will not fit in text boxes and other spacing issues. If you are using a Mac and want fancy fonts and effects, use Keynote and stick with using a Mac if possible.

Naming your presentation may seem trivial, but trust me when I say your operator in your room will thank you very much. Try to include as much as possible in your title that will help narrow down exactly what or where your presentation will be; for example: *1100 - 1130\_21<sup>st</sup> Mar\_107\_Zaranko\_Presentation\_Guidelines.pptx*.

This tells the time and date and month you will be speaking, followed by the room number, your surname and what your presentation is about. This will help ensure your presentation is loaded in the correct room, time, folder and you can be easily crossed off the list.

These are amongst the technical issues I've helped speakers resolve as an AV Operator/Technician at client events since 2004. I trust this helps you with your presentations that you may be asked to do in the future.

## Henry Zaranko Audio Visual Technician

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Motivating your Mind  
Inspiring your Spirit



*Wishing you a great 2014  
From all of our fellow e-book  
Co-authors and Writers*