That's Enterprising

March 2016 Volume 5, Issue 10

How I Turned a Deadly Plant Into a Thriving Business

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Message From the AIBEF President

Welcome to our first quarterly edition for 2016, and although we are already into March 2016, it's still not too late to wish a Happy New Year to our Institute members and the wider business community.

I hope that 2015 was fruitful and rewarding, and the year ahead offers many opportunities for growth and success.

As we look ahead, I want to take a brief moment to express my thanks for your support of the Institute in 2015, and look forward to your continued support in 2016.

We place a high degree of importance in moving forward to provide value for our members through a myriad of opportunities including advocacy, education, professional development and networking.

The AIBEF Committee will be working hard again this year to support our members and promote all businesses and enterprise facilitation activities within the wider community.

We are committed to continue our efforts to create a much stronger business climate for our members and also for the Institute.

Many new opportunities will be presented in this upcoming year that the Institute must focus on as the world continually changes around us.

To help ensure we are staying on the right track, we will re-visit our Charter and some of our key objectives:

1. To be the "Voice" for our Members and of Facilitators in general.

2. To provide value-added services to our membership.

3. To excel as a member-driven organization.

4. To have a National sphere of influence.

5. To optimise and diversify the Institute's communications to maximize Member experience, facilitate greater Member-to-Member connections and attract new Members

On a personal note, I look forward to serving our members and fellow Board members in a year filled with opportunity as we develop new partners, relationships, and build a strong community together.

We welcome your feedback and look forward to hearing from you during the year. We are here to serve you and focus on your needs, and we aspire to have an impact as an indispensable partner for your success and prosperity.

You, our members, are the foundation of the Institute and together we will continue to be "The Voice of Business and Enterprise Facilitators" in Australia.

Regards
Dennis Chiron MAIBEF
AIBEF National President

The Australasian Institute of Enterprise Facilitators (AIEF) was founded in 1997 as a result of the recommendations of the Industry Task Force on Leadership and Management Skills. In their report, entitled Enterprising Nation, the taskforce recommended that: *".... a comprehensive accreditation process be established for small business trainers, educators, counsellors, mentors and advisers so as to upgrade the quality of small business advice."*

The AIEF was largely the vision of Dr John Bailey who became the first President of the Association and now a Life Member.

The AIEF is the Peak Body for Business and Enterprise Facilitation and Facilitators. *(In 2015 we became the Australasian Institute of* ***Business*** *and Enterprise Facilitators).*

Our mission is to be the leader in fostering excellence, integrity and professionalism in our industry, and to establish and maintain the high standard of skills required for enterprise facilitation.

The AIBEF is an Incorporated Association with members drawn from many diverse industries within Australia and New Zealand.

What unites our members is the common theme that they are all involved (in some manner) in the facilitation of assisting individuals, groups and/or communities develop, start and/or grow business and enterprise initiatives.

Post-nominals for Members of the Australasian Institute of Business and Enterprise Facilitators are (MAIBEF) and Fellow (FAIBEF), and Associate - *both for individuals and also organisations* - is AIBEF (Assoc.)

HOW I TURNED A DEADLY PLANT INTO A THRIVING BUSINESS

Achenyo Idachaba Green entrepreneur
Achenyo Idachaba is the head of MitiMeth, a Nigeria-based company that makes handicrafts from aquatic weeds and other agro-waste. Full bio

Welcome to Bayeku, a riverine community in Ikorodu, Lagos -- a vivid representation of several riverine communities across Nigeria, communities whose waterways have been infested by an invasive aquatic weed; communities where economic livelihoods have been hampered: fishing, marine transportation and trading; communities where fish yields have diminished; communities where schoolchildren are unable to go to school for days, sometimes weeks, on end.

Who would have thought that this plant with round leaves, inflated stems, and showy, lavender flowers would cause such havoc in these communities.

The plant is known as **water hyacinth** and interestingly, in Nigeria, the plant is also known by other names, names associated with historical events, as well as myths. In some places, the plant is called Babangida. When you hear Babangida, you remember the military and military coups. And you think: fear, restraint.

And in the Igala-speaking part of Nigeria, the plant is known as A Kp'iye Kp'oma, And when you hear that, you think of death. It literally translates to "death to mother and child."

I personally had my encounter with this plant in the year 2009. It was shortly after I had relocated from the US to Nigeria. I'd quit my job in corporate America and decided to take this big leap of faith, a leap of faith that came out of a deep sense of conviction that there was a lot of work to do in Nigeria in the area of

sustainable development. And so here I was in the year 2009, actually, at the end of 2009, in Lagos on the Third Mainland Bridge.

And it was on this bridge that I first saw a number of fishing boats that had been hemmed in by dense mats of water hyacinth. It was then that I thought to myself, "These poor fisherfolk, how are they going to go about their daily activities with these restrictions."And then I thought, "There's got to be a better way." A win-win solution whereby the environment is taken care of by the weeds being cleared out of the way and then this being turned into an economic benefit for the communities whose lives are impacted the most by the infestation of the weed.

And so I did further research to find that one of the uses of the plant was for handicrafts. And I thought, "What a great idea." Personally, I love handicrafts, especially handicrafts that are woven around a story. And so I thought, "This could be easily deployed within the communities without the requirement of technical skills."

But, I'm a computer scientist by background and not someone in the creative arts. And so I began my quest to find out how I can learn how to weave.

And this quest took me to a community in Ibadan, where I lived, called Sabo. Sabo translates to "strangers' quarters." And the community is predominantly made up of people from the northern part of the country.

So I literally took my dried weeds in hand, there were several more of them, and went knocking from door to door to find out who could teach me how to weave these water hyacinth stems into ropes. And I was directed to the shed of Malam Yahaya.

The problem, though, is that Malam Yahaya doesn't speak English and neither did I speak Hausa. But some little kids came to the rescue and helped translate. And that began my journey of learning how to weave and transform these dried water hyacinth stems into long ropes.

With my long ropes in hand, I was now equipped to make products. And that was the beginning of partnerships. Working with rattan basket makers to come up with products.

So with this in hand, I felt confident that I would be able to take this knowledge back into the riverine communities and help them to transform their adversity into prosperity.

So taking these weeds and actually weaving them into products that can be sold. So we have pens, we have tableware, we have purses, we have tissue boxes. Thereby, helping the communities to see water hyacinth in a different light. Seeing water hyacinth as being valuable, being aesthetic, being durable, tough, resilient. Changing names, changing livelihoods.
☑

Something To Say?

Take it From One Who Knows

I enjoyed Anita Campbell's article "The Top 7 Mistakes Entrepreneurs Make With Mentors" *December 2015,* where she stated that her list were the top seven mistakes.

Although I don't really disagree with her regarding these mistakes, I do think that there are other errors that we need to be aware of when considering sourcing a business advisor; for example:

Not Being Specific About What You Need: If you are not sure what help you need, perhaps you aren't ready to take on a mentor.

Creating a Conflict: If you already have an advisor, and you are considering contracting to another one, it is prudent to inform your current facilitator of this.

Otherwise it can develop into a situation where you end up "playing one against the other"

Remember, You Are Building a Relationship: You need to realise from the outset that you are building a relationship -- not a transaction -- and take the time to be totally open and honest with your advisor from the outset.

Not Knowing How Many Questions to Ask: Find a happy medium between asking too many questions and not enough.

Assuming that the Relationship Will Follow a 'Gentle' Path: The path that you travel to gain success may be a rocky one; Don't assume that it's going to be all wine and roses.

Geoffrey Stevens
Luminus
Maroochydore, Qld.

Letters and Article contributions from AIBEF Members and readers are most welcome

Please send your letters to info@aief.org.au

Customer Loyalty: There's No Such a Thing

I submitted a letter last October with the above heading, and you printed it in your last issue - *December 2015* (thank you).

I was seeking your members' feedback, and indicated that I would be grateful for a response from any of your members who may see this a little different to me:

Unfortunately, I've had no response, which is a little disappointing and also surprising, considering the majority of your readers are probably business facilitators.

However, I am grateful that you included my "ramblings" in your column, thank you.

Darryl Taylor
The Men's Locker
Lane Cove NSW

Thanks for the Info

Just a note to thank you for the helpful information contained in your magazine. I'm a client of one of your members, who sends your magazine onto me. I find it easy to read and some of the ideas in the numerous articles are very useful and valuable.

Peter Halley
Solar For Life
Coffs Harbour, NSW

APEC
Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

APEC Accreditation and Training

The Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) program was developed by an international panel of experts. Its objective is to create a professional standard across APEC for the small business counselling industry. It was endorsed by APEC Small Business Ministers in 1997. It is recognised by Canada, Australia, Brunei, Darussalam, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Thailand and the USA.

In Australasia the program is delivered through a collaboration between Australia's APEC Accrediting Institute – TAFE Adelaide Small Business Training Centre and the Australasian Institute of Business and Enterprise Facilitators (AIBEF).

On completion of the program business counsellors (including facilitators, advisers and consultants), gain international recognition of their status throughout APEC countries and gain professional membership of AIBEF with nationally recognised professional status through use of the letters "MIBEF".

For details of APEC business counsellor certification process, training modules and workshop details please click on the links below:
APEC Accreditation and Training
APEC Accreditation Process
APEC Accreditation Training

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

DR. TIM BAKER
AIBEF (Assoc)

Dr. Tim Baker, is Managing Director of Winners At Work Pty Ltd. Tim is an international consultant, successful author, keynote speaker, master trainer, executive coach, university lecturer and skilful facilitator.

Tim was voted as one of the *50 Most Talented Training and Development Leaders* by the World HRD Congress in 2013. Last year he was nominated for *Thinkers 50*, which identifies the 50 most influential management thinkers in the world. He is author of seven books, including his latest: *The End of the Job Description* (Palgrave Macmillan). Tim is a specialist in organisational performance.

He has a successful track record in transforming organisational capability through change programs and leadership capability development. Organisational effectiveness and efficiency is Tim's forte. He is a disruptive thinker willing to challenge conventional HR practices and come up with practical, innovative solutions to real - world problems.

Tim has conducted over 2,430 seminars, workshops and keynote addresses to over 45,000 people in 11 countries across 21 industry groups.

JO-ANNE CHAPLIN
AIBEF (Assoc)

Business income tax returns take many forms. The applicable return is dependent on the Business Structure ie. Company, Trust, Partnership or Sole Trader. There are also different lodgement times applicable to each structure and size of business.

I'm an Accountant in public practice, following various positions in banking, manufacturing, retail & construction industries. My firm, Tax & Superannuation Professionals is based on Bribie Island, but I also visit Noosa Heads on a weekly basis.

We do all facets of accounting and taxation, but also focus on management structure, profitability and wealth creation for business owners and investors. Planning & monitoring of performance is an imperative activity so we actively review client trading performance regularly and develop action plans to ensure the business or investment portfolio is on track.

We also specialise in Self Managed Superannuation Funds as these entities have a place in the wealth creation strategy of business & investor clients. We can setup and generally advise, as well as provide all administration services at a reasonable cost. Our service is personalised service, and we encourage clients to stay in contact all year, not just at tax time.

GEOFF BUTLER
AIBEF (Assoc)

I have forty years of business experience in both the public and private sectors in system development, management and performance improvement.

With more than a decades experience working in business development, predominately in the SME arena, my passion has become changing businesses to allow lives to change.

Businesses are really quite easy to change. I believe my role is to make the improvement transition to your life.

Most business owners focus too much attention on the things that are going to depreciate anyway, and spend little or no time on the four true assets in their business that have the ability to grow.

These are the brand, intellectual property, database of contacts, and most importantly, the people.

I am a Life Member and Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management; an Accredited Practitioner with the Australian Institute of Training & Development; and a Member of the Australian College of Educators.

* Geoff is the Principal of Business Optimizers

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

ANDRAS (Andrew) CZASZAR
AIBEF (Assoc)

I am a Hungarian-born electrical engineer living in Brisbane, Australia.

I acquired my M.Sc. at the Budapest University of Technology in 1993. I earned my first job with E.ON Hungary, where I worked for over 9 years.

In 2004 I changed sea, and moved to Australia. I served in two engineering roles where the main focus was on power systems engineering and substation design.

In 2013 I acquired a Diploma in Business Coaching. My emphasis was on helping small and medium size engineering firms who stuck or faced with obstacles when wanted to take their business to the next level.

I am also a regular contributor to an online small business magazine.

My focus is now shifted to renewable energies: I advocate clean energy innovation and energy efficient solutions. As my personal contribution I am starting up a new venture that is going to install energy storage units.
www.aurope.com.au
andrew@aurope.com.au

BETTY ZSOLDOS
AIBEF (Assoc)

I have always been interested in the invisible part of the iceberg: those mechanisms that work our everyday actions, behaviors, communications...

Having been a breadwinner and a mother of 4, I've worked as an English teacher, a global educator, a personal development trainer and a coach for 25 years.

I have travelled a lot in and outside Europe, and have come across people from a wide variety of different background, beliefs, ideas, values, attitudes, abilities, pace, skills and intelligence, which had a huge impact on my way of thinking.

The professional history of mine, my husband's early death, the challenges of our four daughters' upbringing and my original curiosity drove me into passionate studies of various communicational and personal developmental methods on the following fields: psychology, NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming), System-thinking, Moving- and Dancing Therapy, Conflict Resolution, Mediation, Human Rights, Sustainability, Development Education, Coaching and Mentoring.

bettyzsoldos@gmail.com
www.diymindsurgery.com

PAUL GILLMORE
AIBEF (Assoc)

Paul is the founder and managing director of Southern Cross Financial Service that opened in August 2007. Extensive knowledge and experience in wealth creation and investments include strategies encompassing investments, superannuation strategies, retirement planning, gearing strategies including margin lending and investment lending. Inspiration, a 'can do' approach, tenacity and advocacy combine to make things work in the 'real' world' for clients.

Paul previously worked as a financial coach and counsellor for Wealth Coach Australia.

Paul worked as a mortgage broker specialising in investment lending for several years and prior to this, in real estate as a rural property consultant selling rural residential acreages and farms for 7 years.

This unique experience and skill set give Paul the capacity and qualifications to understand and advise on all asset classes.

His approach is personable and client focused creating a successful financial services practise that is built on referrals.
paul@sc-fs.com.au

Inventors & Inventions

Crash Test Dummy

Samuel W. Alderson (October 21, 1914 – February 11, 2005) was an inventor best known for his development of the crash test dummy, a device that, during the last half of the twentieth century, was widely used by automobile manufacturers to test the reliability of automobile seat belts and other safety protocols.

Alderson was born in Cleveland, Ohio and graduated from high school at the age of 15 and went on to intermittently study at Reed College, Caltech, Columbia and UC Berkeley. He frequently interrupted his education to help out with the family sheet-metal business. He completed his formal education at the University of California, Berkeley.

In 1952, he began his own company, Alderson Research Laboratories, and quickly won a contract to create an anthropometric dummy for use in testing aircraft ejection seats.

At about the same time, automobile manufacturers were being challenged to produce safer vehicles, and to do so without relying on live volunteers or human cadavers.

Alderson also worked for the U.S. military. During World War II, he helped develop an optical coating to improve the vision of submarine periscopes, and worked on depth charge and missile guidance technology

Canned Food

Nicolas Appert was the French inventor of airtight food preservation, and was known as the "father of canning".

Appert was a confectioner and chef in Paris from 1784 to 1795. In 1795, he began experimenting with ways to preserve foodstuffs, succeeding with soups, vegetables, juices, dairy products, jellies, jams, and syrups.

He placed the food in glass jars, sealed them with cork and sealing wax and placed them in boiling water. In 1795 the French military offered a cash prize of 12,000 francs for a new method to preserve food.

After some 14 or 15 years of experiment, Appert submitted his invention and won the prize in January 1810 on condition that he make the method public; the same year, Appert published *L'Art de conserver les substances animales et végétales* (or *The Art of Preserving Animal and Vegetable Substances*). This was the first cookbook of its kind on modern food preservation methods.

In honor of Appert, canning is sometimes called "appertisation". Appert's early attempts at food preservation by boiling involved cooking the food to a temperature far in excess of what is used in pasteurisation (70 °C (158 °F)), and can destroy some of the flavour of the preserved food.

First Defibrillator

Claude Beck (November 8, 1894 – October 14, 1971) was a pioneer American cardiac surgeon, famous for innovating various cardiac surgery techniques, and performing the first defibrillation in 1947. He was the first American professor of cardiovascular surgery, from 1952 through 1965. Nominee for the Nobel Prize in Medicine, 1952.

In the 1930s, Beck worked on the problem of how to restore circulation to the heart, by developing a technique to implant some pectoral muscle into the pericardium, which provided an additional source of circulation. The technique received great acclaim at the time, though was eventually replaced with more modern techniques.

He performed the first "Beck I" operation (cardiopericardiopexy) in 1935. The Beck II operation came about in the late 1940s, which created a vein graft between the aorta and coronary sinus.

In 1947, he performed the first successful defibrillation. He had been operating on a 14-year-old boy when the boy went into cardiac arrest. Beck applied the paddles of the defibrillator directly to the boy's heart, and successfully brought the heart out of fibrillation. The boy made a full recovery.

He retired in 1965, and died of a stroke in 1971.

Start Planning Now For 2016 and Grow Your Business

Marketing Resolutions for Business Growth in 2016 …. For ongoing success in 2016, Make Marketing a Habit.

With the new year just beginning, now is a great time to resolve to take your small business to bigger and better heights in 2016, and one of the best moves you can make is to focus on your marketing.

When business is booming, it's easy to put marketing on the back burner. Why focus attention on getting new customers when you already have all you can handle?

The reason is simple: when things slow down, you want to have new clients in the pipeline. Make marketing part of your habit. The most efficient way to do this is to create structures around your marketing efforts.

Here are some tips:

◊ **Make time for marketing:** In your calendar, schedule time each week for your marketing and sales activities. It could be an hour every other day, or a chunk of time on one day of the week. Don't make this time optional – honour this slice of your week as a time devoted to moving your business forward.

◊ **Marketing is a mindset:** You never know when an opportunity to help someone out with your services/products will arise. Always be prepared to speak enthusiastically about what your company does. Once you get used to this way of thinking, it's easy to communicate your company's value without being pushy.

◊ **Develop a marketing system:** Do what makes sense to you – you can create a simple spreadsheet, make notes in your planner, or sketch out activities on a large flipchart sheet on the wall. The point is to make an annual profile of your marketing activities including: networking events, trade shows, advertising deadlines, direct mailings, seminars, and so on. Schedule marketing and stick to it!

◊ **Ask for referrals**: Word-of-mouth is the most effective way to get new customers. Ask your current and former clients to pass your name and contact information on to their circle. When finishing a sales cycle with a customer, ask for referral recommendations. If you don't ask, people may not think to offer.

◊ **Contact past customers:** Make sure you keep in touch with your past customers. These are the people who know your services and who have enjoyed their benefits. Often, a simple call to check in with them will lead to new sales for your company. You can invite them out for coffee if you live nearby.

◊ **Don't delay:** Don't wait until you NEED to make a sale. Your mission is not to say, "I'm getting low on work right now." or "My sales are down." Build and reinforce your bond with a wide variety of people - customers, leads, referrers, vendors, and so on. Ultimately, people buy from people they trust and like. Often, work comes in simply because you happen to be in the picture at an opportune time. Or, it may be someone has an associate who is looking for a service or product you have to offer - who better to recommend than you?

Planning your marketing means developing a marketing strategy which is vital for any business, because without a strategy, your efforts to attract new customers are likely to be haphazard and inefficient.

The focus of your strategy should be making sure that your products and services meet customer needs and developing long-term and profitable relationships with those customers. To achieve this, you will need to create a flexible strategy that can respond to changes in customer perceptions and demand. It may also help you identify whole new markets that you can successfully target.

The purpose of your marketing strategy should be to identify and then communicate the benefits of your business offering to your target market.

Once you have created and implemented your 2016 strategy, monitor its effectiveness and make any adjustments required to maintain its success.

ACTION ITEM: This week, set aside time to dedicate to your marketing activities. Work on your annual calendar and call clients for referral suggestions. Make a commitment to your marketing and you'll find your business will grow as a result.

Why Company Culture is Essential for a Successful Business

This article from Washington State University explains just how important company culture is and the impact that it can have on employee happiness and attracting the top talent to the organisation.

Every company has it's own unique culture, made up of the working environment, the special ways that things are done and the people who make up the team.

The culture of a company can affect lots of aspects of the business, from talent attraction and the retention of existing staff, to the brand's reputation among the public and the industry.

The company culture plays a large role in your employees job satisfaction, as if the work environment doesn't match their personality and working style they could experience a clash of interests.

Therefore, for a business to build a workforce of staff who are motivated to achieve their best and are going to stay with the company long term, it's important that they hire people based on their culture fit.

A few examples of a really strong company culture:

- **Walt Disney Corporation** are one of the most widely known brands in the world and they have built a fantastic employer brand by getting their employees involved.

  The brand focuses on making dreams come true, so staff are trained to treat all of their guests like royalty.

- **SouthWest.com** focus on providing exceptional customers service and one of their employees volunteers at Ronald McDonald housing, making balloon animals for kids.

- **Zappos** pride themselves on the great customer service that they provide and their staff are well known for going the extra mile to help customers.

How does culture affect the hiring process?

- **Talent attraction** – College students were willing to receive 7% in starting pay, if they could work for a company who shares the same values as themselves.

- **Employee fit** – Employees who are hired based on their fit with the company culture are more likely to build stronger bonds with colleagues, contribute their ideas to the organisation and stay at the company for longer.

- **Employee retention** – 46% of new hires quit or are fired within 18 months. Some of the reasons are a differing preference of communication style, the way feedback is given and the amount of openness that is expected.

How does culture affect employee happiness?

- Companies with a strong culture have less staff turnover than those who don't.

- Happy employees can be as much as 31% more productive.

- Employees who are actively engaged in their company culture are more likely to receive a promotion and report high levels of job satisfaction and engagement.

How can your business create a great company culture?

- Acknowledge good work from your staff, as employees are more likely to continue putting in a high level of effort if they feel their work has meaning and is appreciated.

- Offering incentives to encourage employees can actually be counterproductive. Qualities that work as better motivation are autonomy, mastery and purpose.

Employee motivation can be improved by allowing employees to manage their own work, offering training opportunities and making them feel like their work matters to the business as a whole.
☑

In The Flow

Contributed By Agribusiness View

In case you've missed the Flow Hive story, here's a summary. In early 2015, Byron Bay father and son team Stuart and Cedar Anderson decided to crowdfund an invention they'd been working on for more than a decade — a revolutionary new frame for beehives that allows beekeepers to harvest honey without opening the hive and disturbing the bees. **Their goal was to raise $97,000 to enable the production of the Flow Hive. They raised $16.9 million.**

What made them choose crowdfunding rather than a traditional business loan?

"It was very difficult to figure out what the response would be," says Stuart. "It was brand new, a big innovation in beekeeping, really nothing quite like it in 150 years.

We had let a few commercial beekeepers into our secret — some were amazed; some were lukewarm; some said it would be good in other countries, but not here. We got varied responses, so we didn't know whether this was going to be picked up. Or whose house we would put up as collateral for a loan!"

But it wasn't just their uncertainty around the success of their product that made crowdfunding an appealing option.

"Crowdfunding was very attractive because not only does it potentially raise you the finances, but it also announces to the world that you've made this invention."

Stuart and Cedar were concerned

that as soon as their idea became public, people would copy it, so speed to market was really important. In fact, they considered it even more valuable than patents — they simply didn't think they could afford to start slowly.

Initially, they were thinking of going with Kickstarter as their crowdfunding platform, but Indiegogo made them a better offer and they liked the 24-hour support provided.

The temptation is to think their crowdfunding appeal 'just' went viral by itself. The truth is not quite that simple. Stuart points out that they put a lot of thought into how to approach it, and before they opened the appeal, they released a preview video.

Again, this was not your typical amateur YouTube affair — Stuart's stepdaughter is a filmmaker, and she and Cedar spent a lot of time finessing the video. But they certainly weren't expecting the response they got.

"It surprisingly did go viral, it had millions of views even before the crowdfunding started," says Stuart. "And that was the purpose of it, but it was more successful than we imagined. The fact that it went viral was news, separate to the actual content of it."

Dealing with the massive influx of funds turned out to be much more difficult than they had envisaged.

The companies that handle payments have stringent policies to protect consumers — which is fantastic for consumers, but can trip an unwary vendor. As the funds began to pour in, the huge amounts set off alarm bells, and the process to sort it out became, in Stuart's words, "an accountant's quagmire".

Right now, their focus is on fulfilling the 30,000 orders from more than 130 countries that have been placed to date.

To put that in context, when they started crowdfunding, they had moulds that could have produced 5000 to 6000 Flow Hive frames a year. Upscaling production has taken longer than predicted, but they're now producing at full scale to meet their deadline.

And the future? Stuart says they are looking forward to getting back to more of a 'business as usual' approach, which will include moving to work with commercial beekeepers as well as amateur beekeepers.

Interest from commercial beekeepers has been massive, but they've not yet had time to set up a professional beekeepers' arm of the business. ☑

Is Mentoring An Essential Leadership Skill?

"It is said that a mentor acts as a role model to the other person by demonstrating traits, skills and behaviours that the person being mentored can emulate." People Matters

So, what is Mentoring?
Mentoring is the pairing of an experienced or skilled person (mentor) with a person who would like to improve his or her skills (mentee).

The mentor acts as a role model and supports the mentee by sharing knowledge, resources and advice to help them improve their skills. Mentoring can happen in different ways. For example, it can be as simple as an employee showing another how to complete a particular task.

Or, it can be more involved where a client (for example: a business owner, or company) commits to long-term mentoring relationships.

There is strong argument that **mentoring is an essential leadership skill.** In addition to managing and motivating people, it's also important that you can help others learn, grow and become more effective in their business, jobs and life.

You can do this through developing a mentoring partnership, generally through a personal or professional network

Ann Rolfe of Mentoring Works who is an author, trainer and speaker with over thirty years experience in

adult learning and career development also believes it depends on who you ask.

"Employees thrive when leaders take a genuine interest in each individual, providing honest feedback, opportunities for development and supporting their growth.

These behaviours are synonymous with mentoring.

*Leaders who use mentoring skills are essential to employee engagement retaining and developing talent, and aligning and supporting employee's goals and performance,"*said Ann.

The main difference between leaders and mentors is the authority that the person has. A leader has a well-established authority over his followers while on the other hand, mentors commonly take more of a liberal approach by providing guidance and leave it to the other person to decide if he wants to practice it or not.

The Mind Tools Editorial Team believes: *"As a leader, you need to be able to nurture and develop your staff (or your clients). This is why mentoring is a key part of leadership."*

Leadership and mentoring go hand-in-hand. In fact, a person qualifies as a true leader only if he is a successful mentor.

If we look at any successful organizations, they create a culture where the acquisition, development, implementation, and transfer of skills and knowledge are highly valued implying that leaders must embrace mentoring for overall organizational growth.

Jayme Baumgardner, Senior Consultant with Corner Alliance said: *"I value mentoring as an essential function of our society, but also believe it is fundamentally a priority practice of any good leader—to be both a mentor and mentee. It reminds me and reinforces the importance of leadership as a two-way street and the role of leadership in fostering the growth of our next generation of leaders and to continually grow throughout one's career."*

Mentoring is an essential leadership skill. Being a mentor is more than being an advisor or a coach …. You are a Facilitator of learning and growth, and you are supporting personal development, enriched with knowledge and skills, for your clients.

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turnbullhill.com.au

Is Your Client Considering a Franchise?

smartlifenow.com

Is your client considering starting / buying a franchise? As you would know, there is a lot to it, and you would also know that your client, as a potential franchisee, will have certain expectations - in particular, that the franchise they are considering buying will be profitable and will retain its value.

To help your client increase their chances of meeting and surpassing these expectations, it's up to you to assist them to investigate before investing.

A lot of people who buy into a franchise are fulfilling a long-held dream to work for themselves. But many don't have much business experience and have often come straight from a job to you.

"You have to wear 100 hats in a franchise, whereas before when you were in your job you were probably wearing two or three," says Steve Bianchini, a former franchise owner who is now general manager of Mondo Direct, which helps find staff for franchise head offices.

"You have to be thinking about marketing, about sales, how you treat your people in your business, and also your customers, and the costs in the business. It goes on and on and on."

The franchise purchasing process is a step-by-step process. And, all the steps need to be taken slowly. But steadily.

Joel Libava (also known as the franchise king) suggests the following checklist is a good starter for every facilitator:

1. Determine Fit
The first thing you need to do-before you look at any franchise opportunities for your client, is to make sure they are the "right fit" for a franchise-type business.

2. Determine Skills
Take a hard look at their skillsets. What are they really good at? Are they a good manager? Are they good with numbers?

3. Talk With Their Family
The clients' family is involved in the business even if they're not *physically* involved. Try and get their input. Make sure they understand that there are going to be serious demands on their routines and life.

4. Do A Net Worth Statement
Before your client actually starts contacting franchisors it's best to know your client's financial worth. A net worth statement will lay everything out for you in black and white.

5. Do Research
Formally request information from the franchisors you're interested in learning more about. Once you're engaged with them, start asking questions about the opportunity.

Once you have a good understanding of their business, call existing franchisees and ask them how it is going for them.

6. Get Loan Information
Most of the people I've worked with over the years needed small business loans of some type to get their franchises up and running. Your client should be in a position to know their borrowing capacity exactly, before seeing you.

7. Legal
You should advise your client about the necessity to hire a franchise lawyer to look over the legal documents they will receive as a prospective franchise owner.

8. Visit To Head Office
If the franchisor is interested in talking further to your client, they'll get invited to head office for what's known as a "Discovery Day", - and you should be going along with your client. It's basically a meet and greet where you'll be able to meet the staff and they'll be able to meet you, face-to-face.

I always recommend going to a Discovery Day as long as you are serious about the franchise and are ready to move forward soon after your visit if things look promising.

9. Decision Day
The final step in the franchise purchasing process is the day your client makes their decision.

If you've carried out thorough research, and your client's skills are a good match, then your clients' decision shouldn't be difficult.

Using WordPress as a Content Management Software for Successful Online Business

Daniel Mattei: *Daniel Mattei (@mattedt) is a web Marketing Coordinator at Dynamic Search and a filmmaker and founder of Shotlight Productions.*

WordPress is not simply blogging software, as many people tend to think, the true power of WordPress is often underestimated. Other than providing a platform for blogging, WordPress is also a widely used content management software for many websites, including business owners.

Why use Wordpress?

As a content managing software, WordPress is a platform on which you can build and operate a website, custom designed to represent your business' brand, including having a unique URL. Many other content management software are available on the internet today; however, WordPress remains the number one choice for the following reasons.

- Web design is 100% customizable

You may only know WordPress as a blogging site due to the presence of WordPress branding on most free blog sites. However, paid websites can enjoy up to 100% custom design to suit the business brand. WordPress only acts as the engine but the body and operation of the vehicle is completely up to you.

- Easy to manage

WordPress is easy to use and equally easy to manage from any computer. The technology used in this CMS is very simple and allows for easy formatting. You can add new pages, blog posts, and images effortlessly. The CMS is also browser based, allowing you to log in from any computer connected to the internet when you want to manage the site.

- No need for FTP software or HTML editing

The WordPress CMS is completely self-contained, meaning you don't need any additional software when making changes to the website.

- A Search engine favourite

WordPress codes are very simple and easy to read for search engines. They practically love WordPress sites. Search engine optimization, including Meta tags, keywords, and descriptions for each post, making these sites very popular. Therefore, marketing your website through SEO is very effective.

- Multiple users

WordPress allows for multiple users with different levels of access based on the authorization of the administrator. This makes it easier to work as a team as everyone can access the website when in need to do various duties.

- Easy to grow and expand

It is easy to grow and expand your website when using this content management software without having to go back to the designing stage. The links to the added pages are automatically included in the assigned category of posts and pages. You can do all this in the admin area.

WordPress web design for business

With all the above reasons, it would be insane not to try out WordPress as a content management software for your business website. Many people today go scouting for products and services online before approaching a specific business. It is paramount to have an online extension of your company if you want to remain relevant in today's business environment.

Customers can find your location, information about your products and services, as well as your contact information on the website, and this increases your visibility.

Web design

With WordPress, you can design a website that effectively competes with other businesses in the same industry, while enjoying the added perks of using this CMS for better business.

You can use a web design service to create an advanced e-commerce website with integrated forums for membership on WordPress to meet your business goals.

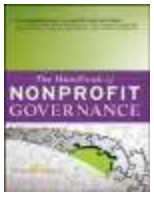
Web design professionals can custom build WordPress websites that are an extension of your business brand online. Some of the qualities of a good website design include:

- An ideal reflection of your business brand
- Easy to use on any device such as tabs, mobile phones, laptops and desktop computers
- Easy to update and maintain independently
- Consistent in search engines

A good website is more than just coding and content and this is why you should work with the best.

Challenges and Issues Facing Management and Boards of Not-For-Profit Enterprises

(Compiled by Dennis Chiron, Member of the AIBEF)



Not-for-profit (NFP) enterprises have a number of commonalities with for-profit companies, such as budgeting, planning, management, staffing. And yet, NFPs approach these activities from a totally different perspective.

Stanford Social Innovation Review has the view" " .... *After all, the term nonprofit is the antithesis of the goal of business. Nonprofits have different business goals, and have to tread carefully to know when to learn from business examples and when to follow their own paths".*

The challenges that almost every NFP in Australia faces includes the ongoing need for improved execution in five areas of fundamental concern: mission focus, funding, board governance, succession planning, and performance measurement.

I have personally witnessed (first-hand) an outstanding NFP totally collapse due to Board mis-management and incompetence. And whenever a well-performing NFP lose their way, usually one (or more) of these five perpetual issues lies at the root of the problem.

In addition, government funding cuts appear to be inevitable. As federal, state and local budget cuts loom, funding from these sources remains uncertain. Over the years, NFPs have seen steep cuts from government agencies, forcing them to rely more on the public sector for support.

Plus, we can't deny the fact that what might be "the flavour of the day" with government today, may well be "sour" tomorrow. …. The plain facts are that no NFP should rely on ongoing government favouritism and preference, and support.

Richard Male of Richard Male and Associates believes that one of the main factors of NFPs failure, is a **Lack of Leadership** – He says: "*This is key because nothing really happens without strong leadership. The non-profit sector is just now beginning to realize that regardless of who is funding our organizations the stakeholders are counting on the leaders of the organizations to execute the programs and agendas. We have done a poor job in developing strong, independent, courageous, and ethical leadership in our sector".*

Mr Male also states: *"**We are training managers, not leaders.** Leadership is the most talked about and least understood concept in our country. Most of the "leadership programs" that are available to non-profits are really just teaching people how to improve technical skills and set up systems rather than how to lead people and organizations".*

Another obvious issue is the fact that there has been a significant increase in NFP organizations, creating increased competition for their share of allotted monies from both public and private sources.

Great credibility but lacks recognition – NFPs comprise one of the most credible industries in Australia; the vast majority of people trust our sector. But, overall, we don't have a lot of power and we don't receive recognition when decisions are made. We need to market and promote the value of our sector and "position" our organizations as central elements of our communities.

Mission Matters Most. Leaders of a for-profit corporation can assert with ease that their mission is to maximize shareholder value. But NFP leaders lack such an inherent clarity of purpose, and therefore, it remains one of the greatest threat to NFP.

Innumerable external and internal stakeholders can lead to total Mission confusion. Many funders, clients and stakeholders can exert subtle but fierce pressure on the NFP to broaden their mission to accommodate a particular interest.

It's also not uncommon for many NFPs to have some mediocre members on the Board.

Stanford Social Innovation Review believes *"**A Better Board Will Make You Better**"* Members of an NFP board must engage directly and deeply in the work of their organization. Otherwise, board meetings will degenerate into rubber-stamp exercises that deprive NFPleaders of much-needed strategic guidance; board members, for their part, will feel that their time has not been well spent.

An equally important matter is board composition. An NFP Board needs to have a diverse composition of professional backgrounds, with representatives from the private sector and from various segments of the community landscape.

And let's face it; who amongst us hasn't encountered the board member with the 'hidden agenda'?

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The Sleep Factor

Setting the clock for performance

This article has been reproduced in part from "The Gaurdian" http://www.theguardian.com

Business analysts say the future of work is one of continuous disruption in an increasingly global, hyper-competitive and tech-enabled economy.

But whatever your job is right now – from managing director to ballet dancer - there is one disruption you will most likely already be intimately familiar with: the kind that happens to your sleep.

Waking after a bad night's sleep and struggling into work is a hidden productivity killer but one that experts say can be effectively treated for a more fulfilling and successful life at home and in the office.

Harvard Medical School professor David White, one of the world's foremost experts on disorders like obstructive sleep apnoea, says the science backs up what many instinctively know is true: our brain functions very differently in a sleep-deprived state.

Dr White, visiting Australia for an international conference on sleep last month, says while most of us need between seven and seven and a half hours sleep a night, as many 30% are getting less than six, according to a study by the US National Sleep Foundation.

"If you say seven hours per night is the cut-off for adequate sleep, you are probably looking at roughly 50 to 60 per cent of the population are getting that amount of sleep," he says. "The reason I think most people can get by with less than adequate sleep is that our brain can function OK in a sleep deprived state for short periods of time.
"You can focus on something hard for 10 or 15 seconds and then you can back off and that allows us to get by on inadequate sleep because you don't have to stay with it. If you're a truck driver or you're a neurosurgeon operating on somebody's brain, you have got to stay right on task for minutes to hours, it's very hard to do in a sleep-deprived state."

Just because many of us are able to function in our jobs on not enough sleep does not mean we should be doing so.

While it is difficult to quantify the costs to the economy, Australian advocates, the Sleep Health Foundation, recently estimated local businesses were being hit for more than $3 billion in lost productivity a year from absenteeism and early retirement alone.

For Dr White, the biggest risks for a population involve accidents – either at work or on the roads getting there, where studies have shown a seriously sleep-deprived driver may perform like someone well over the blood alcohol limit.

Dr White says sleep restriction studies have shown performance in the three spheres of attention, memory and executive function all deteriorate substantially when we have not slept enough.

"I think there is every reason to believe that people's performance at work deteriorates when they are sleep deprived. I think from a societal point of view, if everyone was sleeping seven to eight hours per night our performance and our satisfaction with our lives would likely be much better."

For a man who has built his own productive career on the subject of sleep, the most fascinating aspect of all is we do yet not know why we do it.

"Sleep has a fundamental function but we do not know what that function is," he says. "We do not know why people sleep. We know what happens when they don't sleep in terms of things like cognitive deterioration but we don't understand the fundamental function of sleep."

A popular theory is that of synaptic decompression, which holds that sleep is about taking the brain "offline" to effectively clear out nerve cell connections – or synapses - that build up during the course of each day.

"In all likelihood sleep serves a number of functions, not just one. However, synaptic decompression is probably one of the most important ones."

He says conditions like sleep apnoea, or even excess snoring, can disturb the whole family and upset the balance socially and productively from the home to the office.

So perhaps if you find yourself falling asleep in that meeting, consider whether it is really just business as usual or whether it is time to do something about getting a better night's sleep.
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Do You Overlook This In Your Business?

Burnout is a real risk for small business owners. *I have been a small business consultant for almost 30 years, and I have seen so many, many businesses fail or start to fail due primarily, to the owner suffering from burnout.*

Many people experience burnout at some point in their lives. Business owners and the self-employed are even more likely to fall prey to burnout because the buck stops with them.

If you are like most business owners, you probably do not plan for and schedule enough time to have fun. You may neglect your hobbies, your family, your friends, your pets, and – most of all – yourself. By now, you have most likely realized that if you do not make time for fun, the balance in your life will not happen on its own.

You need to make fun happen – it is not an optional part of our lives. **You need to make it happen.**

Planning time for fun means that you are planning time into your life to gain balance, to experience joy, and to avoid burnout. To do these things, you need to get away from the business and do some things you enjoy that re-energize you.

And here's the most disturbing thing about burnout: It's easy not to see it coming when you're doing something you're passionate about. … then Wham! .. all of a sudden it's all over you, and you are on your way to becoming simply another statistic.

Usually, the small business owner tends to endure the following:

- 10 / 14 hours a day
- Sometimes 7 days a week
- You can't get sick
- No holidays
- The buck stops with you
- You pay your staff "sickies" when they are off, but who pays you when you're sick?

Sometimes you only realise you're burnt out when you try to put the brakes on. But often, it's too late then.

The impact that burnout can have on productivity, families and healthcare systems is "immense", but unfortunately, there is very little research on burnout in entrepreneurs.

Business exit figures also don't shed much light on the experience. But it is highly likely that it could be the hidden issue behind a lot of business closures.

What is burnout exactly?

Burnout is a state of chronic stress that leads to:

- physical and emotional exhaustion
- cynicism and detachment
- feelings of ineffectiveness and lack of accomplishment

Some tell-tale signs of business burnout.

How do you know if you are "coming down" with business burnout and need to make changes?

Following are some of the more common symptoms of doing too much and not operating at peak performance:

1. **Lack of enthusiasm and motivation.** When you are feeling burned out, the optimism and enthusiasm you once felt are replaced with apathy. It's hard to get motivated when nothing seems to matter.

2. Exhaustion. If you are constantly feeling "flat" and tired (physically and mentally) chances are you're working too hard and need a break.

3. Lack of focus. Another way to tell when you are pushing beyond your limits is when you are simply unable to focus on one thing at a time. Often this will creep up at home as well.

4. Constantly Irritable. If you are on edge and overreacting to every little issue, it could be a sign that burnout is taking hold.

5. Physical illness. Common physical problems include headaches, digestion problems, back or neck pain, and even getting colds or the flu. These are all signs that your body is breaking down from the demands and stress that you are putting on it. Time to take a break.

Burnout isn't like the flu; it doesn't go away after a few weeks unless you make some changes in your life. And as hard as that may seem, making these changes is the smartest thing to do, because simply making a few little changes can make all the difference.

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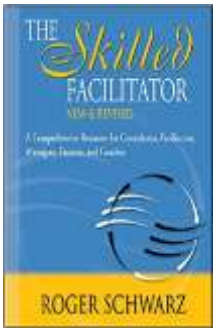
Look Inside

Business Book Review

The Skilled Facilitator:

by Roger Schwarz



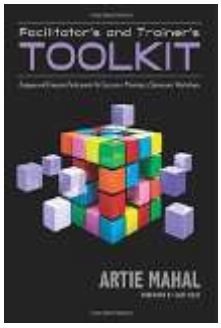
Today more than ever, groups play a critical role in the lives of effective organizations - empowering employees, generating needed change, and producing innovative solutions to complex problems. Skilled group facilitation is a resource such organizations cannot do without. In this book, Roger Schwarz draws on his own extensive facilitation experience and insight to bring together theory and practice, creating a comprehensive reference for consultants, peer facilitators, managers, leaders - anyone whose role is to guide groups toward realizing their creative and problem-solving potential.

When it was published in 1994, Roger Schwarz's *The Skilled Facilitator* earned widespread critical acclaim and became a landmark in the field. The book is a classic work for consultants, facilitators, managers, leaders, trainers, and coaches--anyone whose role is to facilitate and guide groups toward realizing their creative and problem-solving potential. This thoroughly revised edition provides the essential materials for anyone that works within the field of facilitation and includes simple but effective ground rules for group interaction.

The book provides essential materials for facilitators, including simple but effective ground rules for governing group interaction; word-for-word examples, drawn from the author's own cases, of what to say to a group - and when to say it - to keep it on track and moving toward its goal; proven techniques for starting meetings on the right foot - and ending them positively and decisively; practical methods for handling emotions - particularly negative emotions - when they arise in a group context; and a diagnostic approach for helping both facilitators and group members identify and solve problems that can undermine the group process.

The Skilled Facilitator provides a clearly defined set of basic principles to help facilitators develop sound, value-based responses to a wide range of unpredictable situations. It also includes advice on how to work with outside consultants and facilitate within one's own organization, along with a ground-breaking section on facilitative leadership.

Facilitor's and Trainer's Toolkit: *By Artie Mahal*



Master frameworks, techniques, and tools for conducting meetings, leading sessions and workshops, and transferring knowledge through education and training.

In addition to focusing on proven methods, this book contains many new and innovative ideas developed through decades of the author's experience.

Good facilitation is often the difference between a meeting that delivers outputs and actions, and one that delivers breakthrough solutions and results.

Artie Mahal, who is a master facilitator and trainer, has delivered an easy to read book that describes the science and art of effective facilitation. He offers insights, techniques, tools, and knowledge that anyone can use to improve their facilitation and training skills.

There are 12 incredibly informative chapters:

- Chapter 1, **Facilitation Framework**, classifies all facilitation types into four generic categories:
- Chapter 2, **Value Proposition**, leverages the Career Steps Framework
- Chapter 3, **Facilitation Process**, explains each phase of the facilitation process:
- Chapter 4, **Facilitation Leadership**, explores Napoleon Hills' eleven factors of leadership.
- Chapter 5, **Engagers and Energizers**
- Chapter 6, **Tools**
- Chapter 7, **Workshop Environment**, outlines facilitation-friendly principles
- Chapter 8, **Virtual Facilitation**, provides suitable alternatives to face-to-face facilitation
- Chapter 9, **Cross-Cultural Facilitation**
- Chapter 10, **Visual Facilitation**, introduces the power of Visuals and Graphics Recording as a tool
- Chapter 11, **Self-Development**, provides guidelines on how to develop your facilitation competency and track your progress.
- Chapter 12, **Tools Library**, outlines a step-by-step approach along with templates and examples where each of the 35 tools from Chapter 6 can be successfully leveraged.

Karen Williams

Are You An Exceptional Facilitator?

Bill Cole

In our March 2015 issue of "That's Enterprising", I wrote an article *"What Makes An Exceptional Facilitator – Do You Have What It Takes?"* which generated some interesting feedback from a few of our readers.

A great facilitator can be trained and developed, and some people naturally possess the skills to encourage others to perform at their best. Even when you know the talents and expertise you require, it is also all too easy to forget how to be a great facilitator.

If you recognise where you need to improve or develop yourself, go and take action today.

To be an effective facilitator, not only do you need to learn how to communicate well and help others to get results, you need to guide, motivate and inspire others to reach their full potential.

According to Karen Williams, a great facilitator is likely to have the following talents or qualities:

- A sound understanding of facilitating philosophies:
- The ability to communicate well
- Be an effective motivator
- Be committed towards results
- Have the ability to take your skills into any situation

Bill Cole believes: "*Whether you take a facilitating approach into a training environment, use your talents to facilitate a meeting, guide a client in establishing a new enterprise, assist them with developing business plans, feasibility studies, or financial forecasts, or help a group establish a co-operative, facilitating is a way of life, a technique that gets great results.*"

So, What makes for an excellent facilitator? What personal qualities do top facilitators possess that separate them from the good facilitator? Is it more the training or the inner qualities? Is it more facilitating technique or the artistry? Is it more facilitating knowledge or its application? Is it more natural talent for helping people or cultivated abilities? Is it insightful analysis of people or an abiding presence with them?

There probably is no one single attribute that all excellent facilitators possess. Top flight facilitators can be comprised of many stripes and can come from many places, but they all connect with their charges, they know how to make changes with them and they know how to get results. Bottom line, they get the work done.

This is Bill's personal list of what he likes to see in facilitators. Over his 15 years as a college educator he has trained many, many future teachers and facilitators, and he was master teacher to many of them. Bill says the major qualities he saw that distinguished the great from the very good were these three:

- They cared deeply about people.
- They had incredibly high personal standards and ambitions.
- They had a high level of self-knowledge.

Those three are at least a wonderful starting point. Now on to the other 15 attributes of top-notch facilitators. Top facilitators possess many of these:

1. Exquisite self awareness.
2. High emotional intelligence.
3. Broad vision with focus on important details.
4. Nuanced, crisp, superb communication.
5. Highest regard, caring and respect for clients.
6. Creative, innovative learner and developer of custom facilitating methodologies
7. Perceptive, intuitive, curious and inquiring.
8. Quick study with capacity for deep and wide learning.
9. Student of facilitating and other disciplines that support helping others.
10. Sincere interest in clients and desire to help.
11. Continuous learner of themselves and their experiences.
12. See facilitating as a two way interchange of energies and learnings.
13. Humble, open, nurturing and grateful to the world.
14. View facilitating as a calling, an art and a discipline.
15. Walking the talk and modelling a good life for their clients.

    Expert facilitators work on themselves unceasingly. They are open to new ideas and philosophies.

They study facilitation seriously and take facilitation seriously. They care about the person across from them.

That's what it's all about anyhow, isn't it? …… Helping people?

Dr Tim Baker
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Australians Are Misunderstood - Implications for the Workplace

Australians are the most misunderstood culture in the world. Anyone wanting to comprehend the Australian psyche would do well to reflect on the circumstances and conditions surrounding the first fleets of white settlers over 200 years ago.

For instance, most people from a distance would conclude that Australians are laissez-faire and dislike rules and regulations, are open, love champions and dislike the concept of work-based values.

In fact the opposite is generally true. These misconceptions have implications for the workplace.

Let's look at these four myths.

Myth1: Australians are laissez-faire

Most people - including many Australians themselves - would suggest that they are free and easy and shun rules and regulations. Yet, Australian society - including the workplace - is one of the most regulated societies of earth. Moreover, Australian's are very compliant with new rules and regulations. When regulations for wearing bicycle helmets were introduced - for example - Australians accepted this without question. It would be a rare to see and Australian riding a bike without a regulation helmet. Australia has some of the toughest regulations for smoking in the world and this has been accepted with little or no decent. I recently told an Asian colleague of mine that you can potentially sue a person is a bar for serving you too much alcohol; he laughed at me. Our early white settlers were faced with the harsh reality of penal colony laws and this has become part of DNA of modern Australia.

The workplace in Australia is highly regulated industrially and structurally. This means that we need to take into account of these regulatory environments when planning change.

Myth 2: Australians are open

There is a difference between being open and being friendly. Australians are universally regarded as friendly and are open to a point. But the openness is relatively superficial. The openness extends to harmless small talk but no further. Self-disclosure is not natural to Australians. It does not extend to matters such as relationships and fears and insecurities. Australians will shut down quickly if other cultures mistake friendliness for openness. This is a product of "mateship", or the need for survival in the early harsh penal colony. But the boundaries of trust soon prevent more intimate conversation, since everyone was on-guard to potentially sharing their weaknesses with others who were "in the same boat" in the literal sense.

Australians do not generally respond to what is often referred to as "touchy feely" learning experiences and favour the application of learning rather than the acquisition of knowledge.

Myth 3: Australian's love champions

Australians well-known sporting prowess would suggest that we love champions. Not true. Australians have a strong adherence to the "the tall poppy syndrome". And anyone who is seen to elevate their status above others in often chopped down to size quickly and ruthlessly. Australians celebrate wars that they have lost; think Gallipoli. They idolise rogues and criminals such as Ned Kelly. Most of the successful Australians we know are living abroad and find that they are more often revered in other cultures. Once again, the mindset of the early penal colony was "one in all in".

Workplace activities are best conducted in an egalitarian way, with shared and adaptive leadership.

Myth 4: Australian's dislike value-based leadership

Australia's most productive companies are so concerned about organisational values that they are willing to turn down highly qualified candidates if they don't "fit into the company culture".

According to research from *Australia's Most Productive Companies 2010 Report*, Australia's most productive companies base their recruitment processes around values rather than technical knowhow.

The researchers analysed financial data from more than 150 publicly-traded companies, grouped them by industry, and ranked them accordingly. They then took a closer look at the highest ranking organisations to determine the practices that enabled them to "out-produce" their peers. Values were the glue that lead to cohesion is the early settlements some 200 years ago and is still prevalent today.

This would suggest that leadership based on values recognition and application works well in this culture.

So the penal colony has influenced the way white Australian's think of themselves and others more then we probably realise. According to Hofstede's well-established research on culture, Australians are most like Norwegians and Canadians in their attitudes and mindsets. It is good to remind ourselves of this from time-to-time.

Dr Tim Baker is an international consultant, thought leader and successful author (www.winneratwork.com.au) Tim can be contacted at tim@winnersatwork.com.au

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Have you got rhythm or 2 left feet?

Whenever I work with a new company I always spend a day or 2 learning how they work.

What tools they use, how do they use them, how much of the tools do they use, how much do they do manually… What terms do they use… how the work flows…. What are the Operating Rhythms for the different positions…. THEN I adapt my program to address their needs and speak their language… so the solutions useful to them.

Whenever I do undertake this discovery day it always surprises me how many different ways people interpret the 'ideal day' for their position. In the land of sales, this has usually been worked out in detail: How many days out on the road, how many people need to be met with…. etc

And it's interesting that while on the surface they all seem to be doing what they are supposed to be doing… some characters get GREAT results, and make positive changes to the numbers… and others just seem to spin their wheels.

And when I look closer I generally find, they have no rhythm to their routine… or to their results.

So what are the ones getting results doing differently to the others?.... good question… one I immediately ask too.

Here's is what I see as the top 5 differences…

1. They know precisely what the first action is that needs to be taken to have a result 6… 10… 12 weeks down the track. If this first action is taken and taken often enough, the rest will look after itself.

2. They are able to measure if this action has been taken and they check these measures routinely. They do not rely on people saying they have done it. There is an action that needs to be taken eg a lead is referred, an appointment is made…

3. They hold steady. They know exactly what they are there for… what the goal is… They don't panic and change tack, change goal posts or add too many goal posts. They keep things really simple for their people so their people are clear on what 1 to 3 things they need to ALWAYs do. So they use tools like the Instant Profit Calculator to work out what their top goals are.

4. They communicate with purpose. Getting to the point quickly particularly with their key support people so those people can know what's going on and are able to offer lots of support.

5. They respect their own time and acknowledge that if they cannot do what they need to do in 40 hours a week or 50 hours a week… THEN they are not using their time well. So they question what they do. Batch what can wait, eliminate what they can and delegate what they can't.

Are you clear on what your top actions are?

The Instant Profit Calculator will help you achieve your goals and meet your deadlines easier by pinpointing exactly what you should be doing and what you should stop doing. This tool will point you in the direction of more time and money to enjoy life more. Download it and see instantly what it reveals to you.

Angie Spiteri is a highly sought after speaker, author and consultant. To connect with Angie visit www.timeequalsmoney.net.au

***Angie Spiteri, works with **time poor, tech challenged entrepreneurs** who need to **calm their administrative challenges and eliminate unnecessary chaos** so they can make more money with the limited time they have.*

☑

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Seven Challenges Successful People Overcome

It's truly fascinating how successful people approach problems. Where others see impenetrable barriers, they see challenges to embrace and obstacles to overcome.

Their confidence in the face of hardship is driven by the ability to let go of the negativity that holds so many otherwise sensible people back.

Maintaining the success mindset isn't easy. There are seven things, in particular, that tend to shatter it. These challenges drag people down because they appear to be barriers that cannot be overcome. Not so for successful people, as these seven challenges never hold them back.

1. Age

Age really is *just a number*. Successful people don't let their age define who they are and what they are capable of.

People feel compelled to tell you what you can and can't do at of your age. Don't listen to them. Successful people follow their heart and allow their passion, and not the body they're living into be their guide.

2. What Other People Think

When your sense of pleasure and satisfaction are derived from comparing yourself to others, you are no longer the master of your own destiny.

Successful people know that caring about what other people think is a waste of time and energy.

3. Toxic People

Successful people believe in a simple notion: you are the average of the five people you spend the most time with.

Great people help you to reach your full potential, toxic people drag you right down with them.

If you're unhappy with where you are in your life, just take a look around. More often than not, the people you've surrounded yourself with are the root of your problems.

4. Fear

Fear is nothing more than a lingering emotion that's fuelled by your imagination. It's the uncomfortable rush of adrenaline you get when you almost step in front of a bus. Fear is a choice. A friend of mine defines Fear as an acronym: a *False Expectation Appearing Real*. Successful people know this, so they flip fear on its head. They are addicted to the euphoric feeling they get from conquering their fears.

> *"The worst thing that can happen to you is allowing yourself to die inside while you're still alive."*

5. Negativity

Life won't always go the way you want it to, but you have the same 24 hours in the day as everyone else does. Successful people make their time count. Instead of complaining about how things could have been or should have been, they reflect on everything they have to be grateful for. Then they find the best solution available, tackle the problem, and move on.

When the negativity comes from someone else, successful people avoid it by setting limits and distancing themselves from it. Think of it this way:

> *"If the complainer were smoking, would you sit there all afternoon inhaling the second-hand smoke?"*

6. The Past or the Future

Like fear, the past and the future are products of your mind. No amount of guilt can change the past, and no amount of anxiety can change the future. Successful people know this, and they focus on living in the present moment.

To live in the moment, you must do two things:

1) *Accept your past; and*

2) *Accept the uncertainty of the future,* and don't place unnecessary expectations upon yourself.

As Mark Twain once said, *"Worrying is like paying a debt you don't owe."*

7. The State of the World

Keep your eyes on the news for any length of time and you'll see it's just one endless cycle of war, violent attacks, fragile economies, failing companies, and environmental disasters. It's easy to think the world is headed downhill fast.

And who knows? Maybe it is. But successful people don't worry about that because they don't get caught up in things they can't control.

…… Bringing It All Together

Your success is driven by your mindset. With discipline and focus, you can ensure that these seven obstacles never hold you back from reaching your full potential.

☑

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" … If You're the Smartest Person in Your Business, Your Business is in Trouble …"

Building your Master Mind Group

Having all the resources, learnings and a plan to implement is a complete waste of time if you as the Business Owner doesn't implement.

So how do you continue the momentum of implementing strategies after the hand-holding period of learning something new finishes?

The answer is to build your own Master Mind Group. The results can be amazing! We have since found out that this is the final piece of the puzzle for many of the Business Owners for a few reasons.

1. They had to prepare their businesses and gather & compile their data so it was presentable to the professional people they were intending to approach and invite to join the group. This was a time of reflection.

2. Many of the ideas they were implementing were new for the Business Owners, but Master Mind Group members, being experienced people in business, would have their own ideas about many of these strategies. It's likely they have implemented many of them themselves.

3. It was a way to change-up their game to a new level. They were clear that to get better results, they had to associate with people who were better at business!

Then of course, we have to give instructions and explain how to build a Master Mind Group. So here is a step-by-step process that can lead to a private mentoring group of peers that is a secret strategy many successful entrepreneurs implement in different forms.

There are 5 questions to consider …

1. What will the Master Mind Group look like when finished
2. What is the purpose of building a Master Mind Group
3. Who do you get involved and why would they be interested
4. What are the rules and etiquette of such a group
5. How can you open doors with your Master Mind Group

Several Clients have told me that they know that if they do not implement this step, their business growth will more than likely not grow far beyond where it is now. They have 'copped it on the chin' that if they truly want to play a bigger game, they will need to associate and play with more successful and experienced people in business.

Sit down in a quiet place and right a list of the ideal people you would love to have in your Master Mind group. Make a dot point list of what they could add to your group.

Also add a dot point list of what is in it for these people to be a part of your group. How can you benefit them in exchange for the help you will get from their participation? Remember, successful people are often very careful of their time, so consider this step carefully.
Whatever you do … "Follow through with whatever you promise!" This is project can be a double edged sword. Enormous benefits, or egg on your face. This positioning for you as the co-ordinator is a large part of the reason why the concept works so well. It's extreme accountability!
In summary, this final step helps most people in business immensely. As a reader of this publication, you are probably of a similar mind-set of our Clients and so you now have an opportunity.

You're welcome to experience a complimentary 30 minute review of your business that includes a copy of the well-known Profit Mechanics Diagnostic Questionnaire. You will get an easy to understand report that will help you see where profit may be leaking from your business and how to fix it.

Remember … Business is More Fun When There's Profit! ☑

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Automation Makes Business Easier

With technology developing at such a fast pace, it is no wonder that business processes are becoming more streamlined.

There are heaps of activities that even small businesses can automate to better manage their time. Imagine being able to set –and-forget a whole bunch of you daily, weekly and monthly tasks.

Facebook Posts

When you don't have the time to be on Facebook every day, why not schedule your posts? This is a great way to ensure your business 'looks active' on social media without actually being logged in all of the time. Spend 1 hour per week planning and scheduling your Facebook posts and set-and-forget. You can even schedule posts months in advance to mark things like Mother's Day, Father's Day, Halloween, Christmas, Valentines Day. What about scheduling customised birthday messages to your clients?

Regular Payments

Internet Banking provides so much flexibility. It also allows you to automate daily, weekly and monthly payments. Why not schedule payments that are the same each week, like wages or to your regular service providers. This will help you keep on top of your regular obligations without spending that same time repeating the process each and every time.

Email Newsletters

The biggest thing I personally implemented this year was my monthly newsletter to be automated. It talks to my website software and uses my blog posts to send out an automated newsletter when there is new content. Saves me hours of time trying to put together a newsletter at the last moment.

Calendar Alerts

Most calendar programs and apps allow you to create alarms or reminders. If there is something you need to tend to each day, week or month, schedule an alert to repeat itself when required. This is a great way to remind yourself of things like when Super and Bas payments are due, when to pay your phone bill or to remind you to follow up with clients .

Back ups & Anti Virus Scans

It is amazing how many businesses don't have automated backups in place. While it is still important to carry out manual backups on occasion, it is vital to have something automated in between major backups. An external hard drive with automated back up software or an off-site service is a great place to start. Also, scheduling your anti-virus software to scan at night or early morning is a great way to keep on top of your Internet security. Also, by having these scheduled when you or your staff are less likely to be in front on the computer, it won't interrupt what you are working on when it slows everything down.

Website Statistics

There are many programs that allow it but for this example, we use Google Analytics to report our website statistics. Google allows us to set-up an automated daily, weekly, monthly or annual report that we can automatically have emailed to us and to our relevant customer. This saves us and our customers from having to log in and manually check this data .

From website to social media

If you are at all into blogging, did you know that some website software will allow you to automatically add these blog articles to your social media channels for you?

You can now set it up so when you publish a blog article on your website, it automatically send the related graphic, link and small intro of your blog to your Facebook, LinkedIn and sometimes Twitter profile.

There are heaps of other automated processes that technology offers. This is just scratching the surface.

For further information, please feel free to email Karen ~ *The Webgirl.* ☑

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RetailRockstars
IN-STORE CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

The Value of Customer Engagement for Retailers

Amy is a self-confessed appliance nerd, customer experience advocate and author of the book, Retail Rockstar, the 5 game changing steps to becoming a highly profitable, memorable & locally famous retailer"to be released June 2015. She has over 18 years experience in the appliance and retail industry and a real passion for technology, marketing and experiential retailing.

It's all fine and dandy to say that you need customer engagement. We've all heard how fantastic it is to have "engaged customers". But what actually defines engaged and how can this impact sales or add value to my retail business?

I'm always a sucker for a good contrast, so let's start out with what a disengaged customer looks like. According to Gallup Research, they classify customers into 3 distinct groups: Actively Disengaged, Indifferent or Fully Engaged.

An **Actively Disengaged** customer is emotionally detached from your retail brand. They will readily switch retailers and if switching is difficult they may become bitterly antagonistic towards your brand. These are the people that go to Facebook to write a scathing review simply because your salesperson didn't approach them within 1.5 seconds after walking through the door.

Indifferent customers are emotionally and rationally neutral. They have a take-it-or-leave-it attitude towards a company's products or services. They are also the ones that will drive 40K's to save $15 on a cook-top that they are likely to have for 10 years.

Fully Engaged customers are emotionally attached and rationally loyal. They will go out of their way to locate their favourite retailer and won't accept substitutes.

They are true brand ambassadors, and they are a retailer's most valuable and profitable customers.

Engaged customers are your ideal customers. They aren't just satisfied with you as their preferred retailer or simply a loyal repeat customer. In fact, they aren't really just advocates for your business either. Engaged customers are all of the above and so much more.

In a 2014 Consumer Engagement Study, Rosetta Consulting conducted a very in-depth study on engagement across 83 brands, 13 industries and around 5,000 customers. They identified engagement using a predictive scoring mechanism.

Through their study they reported that engaged customers buy **90% more frequently** and are **5 times more likely** to indicate your brand as the **only brand they'd purchase** in the future. They also found that each year **Engaged customers spend 300% more** than Indifferent or Disengaged customers.

Just to make sure you've heard that…

- 90% more frequent purchases
- 300% spend vs. others each year
- 5x more likely to choose your brand in the future

As retailers it's easy to fall in love with analytics, technical jargon, slick sales training programs and the latest visual merchandising techniques. We know these things help our bottom line and have a small yet positive influence on sales, however I'd challenge you to re-read the "**What is Customer Engagement & how do we get it?**" post I wrote last week.

The very basis of Engagement is to focus on creating value for your customers – not "extracting" revenue.

If you are prone to extracting, then Customer Engagement will be a challenging endeavour, but certainly a very rewarding one for your retail business.

Next issue, I'll be sharing some of my top strategies for beefing up your Customer Engagement Strategies.

As always, if you have any comments or questions please feel free to post or catch me on LinkedIn.

Happy Retailing!

☑

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I am a qualified Accountant and I have celebrated my 20th anniversary as a Registered Tax Agent this year. During my time in Public Practice I have assisted clients to achieve business growth and prosperity. My earlier career included positions in banking, manufacturing, construction and retail. My particular interest is in promoting a culture of using local industries and business in order to build a strong community.

Benchmarking and the ATO

One of the methods used by the ATO to identify weaknesses in the tax system is the use of benchmarking. This is a series of economic indicators for several industries which include measurements for cost of good s sold, total expenses as a percentage of total sales and total labour costs as a percentage of sales.

The benchmarks are grouped into three turnover categories per industry. This gives a fairer picture of the expected trading activity relative to the size of the business.

Benchmarking has been used by larger businesses for many years using reports generated by management consulting firms. The data being based on financial data which has been prepared under mandatory accounting standards. This ensured the integrity of the comparative data. The ATO, however, have gleaned their benchmarks from its own data in tax returns. So, their use as a management tool is questionable.

Whilst many of my colleagues agree that the ATO's version of the benchmarks are a little fictional, they are being applied by the ATO in their audit activity.

Reports from industry sources say that many businesses are failing the ATO's benchmarking and are having their taxable income adjusted as a result of audit activity. The main driver of this is not so much that the

business is doing the wrong thing, but that the businesses concerned are not keeping enough records to be able to successfully dispute the tax office stance.

The ATO is prone to forgetting that the smaller businesses will always have to discount their products and services due to fierce competition. As well, they do not have the purchasing power of large businesses, and usually pay more for their inputs and labour. This immediately puts their business trading margins outside the ATO benchmarks.

The major defence against an ATO audit of this type is to have a clear and efficient recordkeeping system. From the source documents used for customers, through to supplier's invoices, payroll records and reconciled cashbooks. Showing the tax office that you have controlled business recordkeeping in place will go a long way to proving your case.

How do you implement this system?

It always a good idea to consult your accountant first to see if there is a particular software, or administration system they would prefer you use. The benefit of this is your advisor will be able to give you a more proactive service if they have input into your recordkeeping systems.

You need to have a system that works for you, is easy to maintain, and doesn't take you away from what you do to earn your living.

Using the new breeds of accounting software – particularly cloud software that allows upload of source documents is a good start.

Prepare a flow diagram to show how the paper trail flows through your business. Establish a place for each type of document or file.

Establish procedures for filing and make time to keep your cashbooks up to date.

If lack of time or lack of skills is an issue, think about outsourcing particular jobs. If looked at from a dollar value, you will see that this can be an effective means of keeping control, but also allowing you to get on with generating business.

In all honesty, you can probably earn many times the hourly rate you would pay an administration assistant.

If you would like more information on ATO benchmarking, or any other taxation related matter, then please contact us.

☑

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How to Avoid the Investment Bubble Trap

Here is a simple formula that you can use to check your next investment. It is the Capitalisation Rate Formula:

Cap Rate =
NET income
Cost or Price of Investment

Net income for a property investment is as though you paid cash and then deducted council rates, property management fees, property maintenance.

NB Lending costs such as interest, bank fees and depreciation are NOT taken into account in this formula. It does NOT consider vacancy rate either.

Take the rent (say $350pw) and subtract agent fees (8.8% incl GST), council rates (say$1500pa) and property maintenance (say $500pa) = $14,598.40 or about $14,600 divided by Price of $375,000 = 3.89%.
Rule of thumb is that property returns 2 to 4% on average.

However we cannot say that this is a good investment or better than something else unless we compare.

Accurate Information
Obviously we need accurate info to properly compare. Good resources can be realestate.com.au or domain.com.au. You can look for asking prices for properties but you can also research the rental returns which can be quite accurate. To obtain accurate sale prices, go to RPdata.com.au. When you are serious about purchasing you can purchase a report of the area statistics but often you can obtain data to greatly aid your research for free.
Further, you can compare agent management fees which can vary from around 7 to 9% .
Rule of thumb for property maintenance is 1% but clearly if it is a new property it could be less or if an older queenslander style, it could be more. By all means ask the real estate agent who often have a good idea about these things but please independently verify.

Paying too Much
You are now armed with a simple formula to not only compare investment properties but you can now determine how much to pay. For example when you ascertain the rental return such as $360 pw; and you know your return should be 2 to 4%, you can put these number into your formula to calculate the price range. Using mathematical wizardry, the formula becomes:

Price = NET Income
Required Return (%)
=15073 = **$376,825**
4%

We now know how much the property is worth via the capitalisation formula.
The lower we can purchase the property for, the better the return - which lasts for the entire time we hold the investment (commonly called 'buying well').

How to Avoid the Investment Bubble
As prices rise, the return (%) falls and vice versa. If a market is gaining in price rapidly (such as the Sydney property market), you will see the cap rate or percentage return for the investment fall. This is your indication that the market is 'overheating' and prudence would tell you not to overpay for the investment. So, you can wait or choose a different asset class which is not overpriced.

** The Cap Rate can be used for company shares too !

Emotions – Fear and Greed
The problem is that as markets grow quickly, we do not want to be left behind (fear of loss) so we all get onto the bandwagon - which produces even more momentum. So now we think that it's the best thing since sliced bread so we borrow more to get a bigger piece of the action (greed) and the Bubble grows . . .

Investment Decisions
Investment decisions should be made on the quality and strength of the investment and NOT whether we like the colour scheme or fear of loss etc.
Let the numbers guide you in all your investment decisions.

There are lots of questions raised in this article so if you would like more information or to talk some things over, simply contact me.
☑

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GREEN BUTTONS

The new fyear is now with us. Budgets have been set and everyone is trying to hit the ground running.

A few weeks ago a friend of mine asked if I would help her with the buying of a new car. I encouraged her to look at the value of her car on the web and get a feel for what it was worth. We duly set about looking at similar vehicles and established we had a range of between $10000 and $15000 if we sold it privately.

Saturday morning we set off. One salesman did a really competent job and asked if she was going to look around. She said she was and he recommended that she look around and then come back and he would see how much he could give her on the trade.

The second yard was as courteous as the first and took us for a test drive in the vehicle that she had admired. She liked it and asked for more details. He said he would get the assessor to look at her vehicle to get a trade-in value.

Within a few minutes he was back saying it was only worth $5000. He said he had rung three wholesalers. I think he was on speed dial!

Needless to say her disappointment was profound. On the Monday she went to another dealer and armed with hindsight she was able to strike a deal that saw the trade-in value go to $9000. She was happy and now she has the car she wanted.

People are not fools. People don't like

being told things that are insulting. People feel that their opinions count. None of these were given a consideration during the time we spent at the second car yard.

All that money spent on advertising and marketing and through lack of thought it cost them a sale. We all know (most of us anyway) that they are making cars cheaper and cheaper.

So we know that our precious vehicle that we have dutifully maintained is going to take a whack on the trade. But, to have it thrown in our faces is not the stuff of professional sales people.

Selling is about service and listening to the needs and wants of the buyer. It takes time to get people to part with their money these days.

We all have a green button on our foreheads and if pressed properly we respond positively to people who are courteous and are genuinely trying to help us.

Yet, on a daily basis we see people who are paid good salaries by hard working business owners to sell their wares and they respond by being indifferent or not taking the trouble to establish their needs and wants.

Are you and your staff trying to find green buttons? Most small business owners are under a lot of pressure and it takes a lot more to get customers to open their wallets. You simply cannot take a "take it or leave it" approach to selling these days. Yes there are market pockets that are doing well but in the main it is a troubling time.

When a sale has NOT been made go over the reasons as to why it failed. Are you closing the sale? Are you listening to their comments/objections?

Are you arraying other options to the prospect? There is a shoe salesman where I live who without doubt is a joy to watch in action.

He does not know I am watching but his approach is impeccable. He follows up. If he feels the shoe is too tight or too big he tells you so.

He is usually right. Look at other competent customer focussed businesses and see if you can get some ideas.

It really can work if you just look at what you might doing wrong.

☑

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HOLISTIC TREATMENTS IN BUSINESS - I.

Introduction to Systems Thinking

Be careful with this message. It contains information that might change your life.

Look at some photos of you. What is there?… And what is NOT there?… What is harsh, extreme, eye-catching?… What is hidden, what is covered?… What would it be like if they turned into a film? … And what if you could transform these two-dimensional pictures into 3D?…

If you connect the dots of your answers **you can realise the latent and dormant leitmotif that you might have been unaware of.**

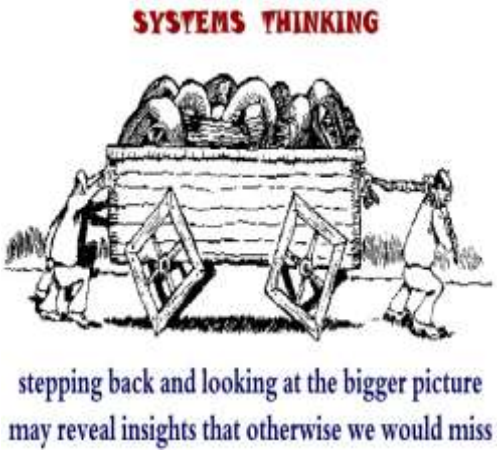
This is what has been writing the script of your life and business defining your successes as well as your failures.

You might attribute the good and bad luck to the ebb-and-flow of economic cycles, but admittedly, they derive from your mental, emotional, and behavioural models. *"If we continue to believe as we have always believed, we will continue to act as we have always acted. If we continue to act as we have always acted, we will continue to get what we have always gotten."* - says Marilyn Ferguson. So, now, let's see

where to go and what to change if we want to get something different.

We live in living systems. Living systems are utterly complex, and **if we don't know how systems work, we might be changing certain elements of it amateurishly, yet will not get the desired outcomes.**

You know the joke: The mechanic comes to repair a washing machine, and in a minute he can find out what to



do. With his hammer he bangs on a screw and charges $100. - "One hundred dollar for a one-minute work?" - he is asked. - "Yes, because I know where to look for the fault in the system, I unmistakably identify it, and I know how to fix it with the least effort to get a long-term, stabilised result.

You'll pay not for my physical effort but for my expertise."

So, when looking for changes **what we are looking for is the leverage point, where with the least effort and time we get our desired, long-term outcome.**

You do this when for example playing chess: you are constantly scanning the alterations on the chessboard to see where this leverage point is: where the main element (i.e. the king) can be trapped.

But first, when we speak about systems, we must clearly see what they are. In the society there are "education system", "justice system", etc.; in biology: "nervous system", "cardiovascular system", "digestive system", etc.; and in nature: "ecosystem".

So, **the "WHOLE" comprises systems, and systems comprises elements. Your business is also a "system", of which certain elements primarily defines the game of the chessboard, while other elements have not a lot of influence on it.** Undoubtedly, the more chess pieces (i.e. elements) are on the board, the more complex the game is.

Systems Thinking has developed into a science, of which one critical discovery points out an important feature; so-called: "tipping point". **Nothing lasts for ever: not even stable systems. Below the surface the patterns - the behaviour of the elements - keep repeated but their small changes can lead to the tipping point, that forms another completely different pattern.** This is like the moment water crystallises into a solid, the last drop that makes the glass overflow, or the last straw that breaks the camel's back.

We are looking for the leverage points and the tipping points in our systems to get different results.

Changes can take place at conscious and at subconscious level. The latter one can take time and pain, where we call the result: "Fate". Conscious changes requires responsibility, ownership, awareness, and taking the role of a Co-Creator.

(To be continued next issue)

You can still call me!

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DIY Mindsurgery for engineering businesses

Facilitating or Leading Your People as a Coach

Being a coach and a leader at the same time is challenging. Changing your hat requires high emotional intelligence and great flexibility.

After all, your team is responsible for their performance and this greatly determines the judgement of your enterprise and so your profit. You have to choose the best timing to apply your personal coaching arsenal.

Coaching is not for every situation but definitely it is, **when the team needs to bear their responsibility over a given situation**.
What can you do, how can you best facilitate the process using the unique coaching approach, instead of old school military commands? Let's examine what this means to you as a manager.
As a coach, you rather **play a facilitative role in the discussions**, where the team is looking for a solution or new ideas. You ask questions from team members to work on, rather than providing them the answers.
First you actively listen just then speak – meaning you show sincere interest in the speakers and their message.
You help them **stretching their goals and change their thinking**, so that they can step out of the box and find answers outside. You pass on tasks and delegate responsibilities to team members to assist their growth.
Forget about being the boss, and adopt a collegiate attitude – in exchange expect openness and superb ideas popping up.

Your role as a leader is not to control or outshine others, but to **draw out the full potential of your team** as a whole and let them perform. Many chiefs even when intellectually believe in this, their inner fear of losing control inhibits them from committing to coaching. But yes, evidences are out there to prove that coaching style can be beneficial, too.
What does it take to **apply the coaching approach?** First, you have to get results from your staff rather than knowing or doing yourself it all. This may be challenging for brilliant and experienced old hands – they need to find a good balance.
They may oscillate between the two styles without warning, thus leaving their team confused. They make it very clear through their words and body language the only answer they want to hear.
Others may say they are coaching but they really are mentoring, by offering their advice and best practice.
The key to use your coaching successfully is to **clearly signal what mode you are in**.

Discuss your role as a leader with your team, including when and how a coaching style can be effective. Let them know when you are facilitating. Listen to others before you say what you think – do not influence their response. Doing the opposite way makes them hard to contradict.
Develop your own coaching style. You can either coach a team or work with individuals. But learning about coaching and its tools is really the very first step.
While many books and articles are now available, learning from a professional is the best way. Then chose the tools best fit to your personal style. Pick the appropriate tool that suits for a given purpose and use it. Don't forget, coaching is never about you, it is all about the other.
General rules are:

⇒choose a time and shape the **environment**, where and when you can talk undisturbed.

⇒**Listen**, rather than talk.

⇒**Ask questions** and **give feedback**.

⇒**Encourage** the other. **Make the goal accessible** by dividing it into smaller steps.

⇒**Examine** the other's strengths and weaknesses related to the goal.

⇒And last but not least, **become their friend**. Not just fake it, make it from your heart. ☑

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AUTHENTIC *Foundations*

Lets Talk About Trust

If we want to improve our personal and professional relationships we need to have a conversation about trust.

Trust is an essential human value and without it we wouldn't survive as a species. We need trust in order to co-inhabit and to coordinate actions together. Trust is quite often taken for granted in our personal and professional relationships, it's an expectation that we can and should trust those we live and work with. That is, until trust is breached. An extreme outcome of a breach of trust is that we may begin to live as though '*people cannot be trusted'*.

Trust is an erosion of interaction that stems from the assessments we make about people and the actions they take and whether they are to our liking. Assessments are judgments or opinions we have about people, events and circumstances and the world based on our standards, preferences and prejudices. It is important to point out that our assessments are often vague, inaccurate conclusions and generalisations about a person or a situation.

We may not language the generalisations as a breach of trust but somehow something doesn't sit right with us and as a result our relationship is damaged.

We make broad statements such as; "Mike is a liar", "Sally is lazy", "Jo doesn't care", "Peter can't do the job" and so on. These generalisations fundamentally characterise a person

and are not are not a good foundation for a 'trust' relationship. Until we clearly identify what action or distinguishing feature of the situation we don't like, and why this is important to us, we put the relationship at risk. Wasted time is spent in constructing stories full of assessments. Our time would be much better spent in putting our assessments to the test so together we can repair and develop stronger relationships built on a foundation of trust rather than mistrust.

What do we need to keep the relationship on track, or repair what has been damaged and move toward a strong and trusting relationship? First we need to test our assessments e.g. what is the action (evidence) to support this assessment and what is the standard criteria upon which I am basing this assessment?

Secondly we need to look at what concerns of ours we are taking care of when making this assessment? To do this we take a look at the four elements of trust to paint a much clearer understanding of specifically what it is we don't trust:

Sincerity:
An assessment about whether the person is genuine in their actions and intentions. Has this person made an agreement through speaking that they are sincere about their intention to carry out an agreed action? 'Yes' means 'yes'. No hidden agenda.

Reliability:
An assessment about whether someone is reliable relates to time and standards. The commitment made to arriving or producing something on time according to my expectations and the agreed or implicit standards.

Competence:
An assessment of whether a person has the knowledge, experience and competence to accomplish the required task or take care of this particular concern I have.

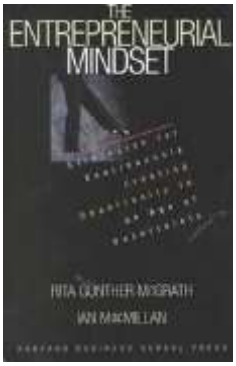
Involvement:
An assessment of how I think this person has listened and understood what is important to me. This standard applies to the level of emotional involvement we expect others to have in our interactions – does this person genuinely care?

Putting trust to the test is uncomfortable but it can overcome the barriers we experience in our personal and professional relationships because it is dedicated to strengthening relationships. Therefore trust requires that honest, authentic and sometimes difficult conversations are not avoided and things not left unsaid.

☑

About Rita McGrath

Rita Gunther McGrath *(born July 28, 1959 in New Haven, Connecticut) is an American strategic management scholar and professor of management at the Columbia Business School. She is known for her work on strategy, innovation and entrepreneurship, including the development of discovery-driven planning.*

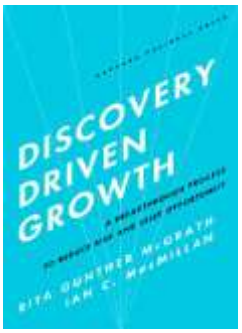


‘“Things move quickly in technology, which is why technology companies are fascinating to strategists the way fruit flies are for biologists — you can see an entire life cycle in a very short span of time.”. ’’ — **RITA MCGRATH**

Rita McGrath, a Professor at Columbia Business School, is regarded as one of the world’s top experts on strategy and innovation with particular emphasis on developing sound strategy in uncertain and volatile environments.

Her ideas are widely used by leading organizations throughout the world, who describe her thinking as sometimes provocative, but unfailingly stimulating. She fosters a fresh approach to strategy amongst those with whom she works.

Rita has been recognized as one of the Top 10 Most Influential Business Thinkers by Thinkers50 in 2015 and 2013.



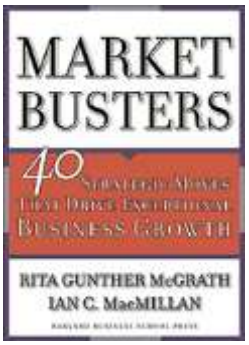
Thinkers50 presented Rita with the #1 award for Strategy, the Distinguished Achievement Award (2013).

She has also been inducted into the Strategic Management Society “Fellows” in recognition of her impact on the field.

An expert on strategy in uncertain and volatile environments, the Columbia Business School professor was also awarded this year’s Thinkers50 Strategy Award.

Her latest book, *The End of Competitive Advantage: How to keep your strategy moving as fast as your business* (2013) was shortlisted for this year’s Thinkers50 Book Award.

In high demand as a speaker and consultant, she’s also been recognized as one of the top 10 business school professors to follow on Twitter.



McGrath graduated Magna Cum Laude from Barnard College in 1981, and earned a Masters of Public Administration from the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University in 1982. In 1993 she completed her Ph.D. at The Wharton School (University of Pennsylvania) with the dissertation, entitled *Developing New Competence in Established Organizations* consistent with her longstanding interest in corporate ventures and innovation.

McGrath started her career working in government and the political arena and founded two entrepreneurial startups.

After her graduation in 1993 she joined Columbia as assistant professor of management, was promoted to associate professor of management in 1998, and recently became a full professor in the Faculty of Executive Education.

In 2014 she was elected Deputy Dean of the Strategic Management Society Fellows.

In 1999 McGrath received the "Best Paper" Academy Of Management Review, in 2001 the Maurice Holland "best paper" award from the Industrial Research Institute, and later the McKinsey 'best paper' award from the Strategic Management Society for McGrath and Nerkar, Real options reasoning and a new look at the R&D strategy of pharmaceutical firms.

In 2009 she was elected fellow of the Strategic Management Society, and in 2013 of the International Academy of Management.

In 2013 she also received the Thinkers50 Distinguished Achievement Award in Strategy. She was named one of the top 20 thinkers in 2011, and one of the top 10 thinkers in 2013 by the Thinkers50.

☑

Identify Your Niche and Retire Early

(Compiled by Dennis Chiron, Member of the AIBEF)

I have been working with business – *big and small* – for over 30 years now, and, undoubtedly, the most significant and common thing that I see them doing wrong is not identifying and developing a niche. Many of these business owners are really business savvy, incredibly passionate and many work long hours at the expense of an appropriate work / life balance.

So what is a niche? Wikipedia states: "*A **niche market** is the subset of the **market** on which a specific product is focused. The **market niche** defines as the product features aimed at satisfying specific **market** needs, as well as the price range, production quality and the demographics that is intended to impact. It is also a small **market** segment."* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/**Niche_market**

Niche marketing is a way for a business - new or existing business - to enter a market. It allows you to concentrate your time and resources narrowly to maximize your effectiveness in gaining a foothold in a market. Ideally, you will find an **unmet need or want** that currently exists in the market and fill it. This can be accomplished through careful market research including such techniques as consumer surveys.

Niche market products typically aren't affected by the price elasticity of demand, so they can be sold for a higher price without fear of lower prices from competitors. Just like the dog food example, your organic food isn't comparable to all the different kibbles on the market, so you don't have to worry about selling it at a competitive price.

Some examples of a Niche Market are:

- **Retail**: many retailers operate in a niche market, and specialise in Men's Wear or Women's or they might focus their niche marketing on Children only.
- **Consultant**: Many Business Consultants will specialise in certain areas or segments, and provide specialist advice in that specific area, often to a well-defined client segment.
- **Websites**: Niche marketing is commonplace on the Internet. You can easily find many specialist websites.
- **Real Estate:** A real estate firm might choose to work with young families, and focus their skills and knowledge on being specialists in this field; knowing all the best schools; safest neighbourhoods, etc.

Kim T. Gordon believes there are a few things we should know before we go after a niche market. "Most companies, whether big or small, direct their marketing to select niche audiences.

Even the country's largest manufacturers target carefully pinpointed market segments to maximize the effectiveness of their programs and often tackle different niches for each product group.

Hewlett-Packard, for example, markets all-in-one machines that print, fax and scan to segments of the home office market, while targeting larger businesses for higher-priced, single-function units."

Taking on a new niche can be a low-risk way to grow your business.

ProCoach believes that: "**Defining your target market allows you to spend your marketing budget and time more wisely."**

When you have a broad market, this is what happens. Your marketing budget gets spread too thin and your marketing material is too general. Overall, you end up making very little impact with your marketing message.

On the other hand, when you narrow down your target market, you can focus your marketing time and dollars like a laser towards those who need your product or services.

This will have a huge impact on the success of your business. Even though it might feel like you're excluding a ton of people, you will skyrocket your appeal within your market.

It's a fact that most small businesses are generally not niche marketers; they simply have a small share of a large segment (whereas niche marketers generally have a larger market share in a smaller segment).

However, it is important to understand that there is a **difference between your niche and your target market:**

Your target market is the specific group of people who are your specific customers, e.g. women working in the city, dog owners, restaurants, etc.

Your niche is the service you specialise in offering to your target market. It is the combination of target market and specific service that creates a niche market .

Identify your niche, service it correctly, and you will retire early.

Biz Tips

Direct Mail Success

Many successful businesses use direct mail to get new customers, thank existing customers, and bring old customers back into the fold. You can be part of this success too. But what you can't do is send out a sloppy letter; flyer; postcard; or catalogue.

Sending out a shoddy direct mail piece is like taking postage stamps and pushing them down the drain. Or, even worse, it's like giving the postage to your competitors.

Not an appealing scenario. But, lucky for you, you can avoid the trauma of a misguided mailing. Not only that, but you have the opportunity to make significantly more money than you spent on the mailing -- which is almost always your goal.

Postcards Can Be A Powerful Marketing Tool

Firstly, is the saving:- each postcard mailing costs you at least 10 cents less than a direct mail letter. Then, postcards don't require a letter opener or long fingernails to open.

Next, remember that postcards take away from the recipient the decision as to whether or not they should open the envelope. You've made that decision for them. People don't have to consider whether or not to read your mailing because postcards are so concise that they're an astonishingly quick read.

And let's not forget that postcards can be churned out by your computer easier than ever before. More inexpensively, too. Postcards are superb for saying thank you, reminding customers of their next appointment, and announcing a fantastic discount, a new product or a new service.

Postcards should be designed to be eye-catching amid a flurry of mail. Make certain that they highlight the name of your business. Use the same style of type that you use in other marketing materials. Aim for quick recognition and don't forget you can hand out postcards as well as mail them. Naturally, they should reflect your identity and your attitude.

Feedback Keeps You Focused

Ask your customers to rate your service on a regular basis. This can be done via a short questionnaire included with every product sold or mailed to key clients. Keep the questionnaire short so that it is not a burden for customers to complete, and make sure they know they can decline to participate. Always let customers know the purpose of the survey is to serve them better. If they fill out the survey and have no problems, it is a reminder of what good service you offer. If issues do arise, they can be addressed.

Stay Flexible

You must be flexible when it comes to your customers and clients. This means doing a project for a client in a pinch, having an early morning meeting even if you like to sleep in, and meeting on Saturday even if you usually reserve your weekends for yourself.

Flexibility can also mean getting information for your client, even though it may not be in your area of expertise. Say, for example, you're catering a wedding and your client needs information on Irish wedding customs. It's just as easy to make a call to your local library and fax the information to your client as it is to say "I don't know anything about that." Making that extra effort will pay off with a very satisfied customer.

Under Promise & Over Deliver

Make your customers believe they are important to you by always appearing to go the extra mile. Build a little cushion into a deadline and deliver early. Estimate that a job will cost more than you think, and bring it in lower.

Many small businesses make the mistake of reversing this maxim - over promising and under delivering. This is a true recipe for disaster. You may get the business, but your level of service will make it difficult to compete. If 24-hour turnaround is excellent service in your industry, don't promise it in 12 just because the customer requests it.

Concentrate On Great Service

The retailers that thrive in increasingly competitive markets are those that focus on service. Give free reign to your experienced, knowledgeable salespeople to convey their passion for your products, and encourage them to build relationships with your chosen customers. Be a wealth of information to customers, and advertise your experience by offering seminars or workshops. When feasible, offer to order hard-to-find items and sizes.

Competition? - - Never Panic

It's tempting to change your strategy frequently when faced with large store competition, but that can have disastrous consequences. Come up with a sound strategy and avoid altering your tactics at the first sign of problems. Be sure to retain a clear identity and constantly convey your unique competitive advantages to your customers.

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Australasian Institute of Business and Enterprise Facilitators

Is Your Business Advisor Qualified, Accredited, Experienced and Officially Recognised as an Expert in their Field?

WHO ARE BUSINESS OR ENTERPRISE FACILITATORS?

Virtually any professional, qualified person or organisation involved in assisting entrepreneurs, organisations, or communities improve their Skills; Knowledge; Business; Staff; and/or Life.

- Accountant
- Advisor
- Bookkeeper
- Coach
- Commercial Property Advisor
- Consultant
- Counsellor
- Dispute Resolution
- Financial Advisor
- H. R. Professional
- Industrial Psychologist
- Insurance
- Investment Advisor
- IT Consultant
- Lawyer
- Mentor
- Trainer
- Web Designer
- WHS Specialist

……. These are just a few of the qualified professionals and industries who, either directly or indirectly provide advice, facilitation and support to Australian Small and Medium business, organisations and communities.

www.aief.org.au
info@aief.org.au

ABN: 56 306 620 484

Ph: 1300 407 406
Mobile: +61 410 082 201

The business advice industry in Australia is self-regulated, and virtually anyone can call themselves a business or enterprise facilitator, advisor, coach, mentor or consultant.

"Business Facilitation and Coaching has copped its fair share of flak in recent years, primarily because the industry has a reputation for attracting spruikers and touts." *Denise McNabb Sydney Morning*

- All AIBEF members have **formally recognised credentials** (accreditation) that recognise their professional reputation and credibility as suitably accredited, skilled and ethical business and enterprise facilitator practitioners.
- AIBEF members are recognised through the use of the respected AIBEF **post-nominals** that convey member status as a professional to be trusted – someone to build a relationship with.
- AIBEF **membership includes many of the best respected enterprise facilitator professionals** involved with business and enterprise facilitation and related support services.
- The AIBEF represents the business and enterprise facilitator profession at **all levels of enterprise** – including private commercial businesses; not-for-profit organisations; government corporate entities and departments of state.

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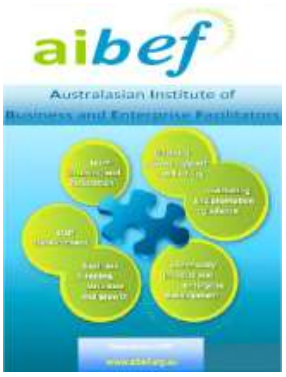
Look for the AIBEF Accreditation with your Advisor, and you know that you have an experienced Professional who is a qualified and recognised expert in their industry.

Meet Our Board Members



The Board Members of the AIBEF are all volunteers, and they all have a wide and diverse range of experience and backgrounds.

Their common ground is their belief in the Goals and Objectives of the AIBEF, and their passion for Business and Enterprise Facilitation and supporting both entrepreneurs and the 2.9 million Australian small and micro businesses.

First Name	Board Position
Dr. John Bailey	Board Member *(& Life Member)*
Geoff Carter	Public Officer
Dennis Chiron	President
Kerry Hallett	Board Member / Minute Secretary
Carol Hanlon	Board Member / Treasurer
Geoffrey Hawke	Board Member
John Hetherington	Board Member

Who can be a Member of the AIBEF?
YOU CAN!

(Your Name): Member of the Australasian Institute of Business and Enterprise Facilitators (MAIBEF)

Simply visit our website at www.aief.org.au
and go to Membership on the Menu

Have You Considered Becoming a Board Member of this Dynamic National Institute?

Want more information?

Please contact the AIBEF at info@aief.org.au

About the Institute

AIBEF Code of Conduct

All AIBEF members are obliged to maintain professional standards and ensure the legitimate interests of their clients are paramount. They must ensure that any conflicts of interests are avoided and confidentiality maintained. Members are required to adhere to the highest standards of facilitation, advice, referral, information provision, support and client care through undertaking ongoing professional development.

The Process of Becoming an AIBEF Accredited Facilitator

To be an accredited Member of AIBEF, simply submit your application to the AIBEF Secretariat.

The AIBEF Accreditation Committee then assesses your experience and qualifications and will advise you of the Institute's decision.

Often this decision is partly based on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) where the Committee takes into account the equivalent experience of the candidate. The new AIBEF Member is then provided with a certificate of Membership and is invited to have their name listed on the Institute's website, and can immediately use the post nominal *M.A.I.B.E.F.* after their name.

Whether it is a concern about business start-up or growth, a marketing issue, HR or financial issue, a member of the AIBEF can provide effective guidance and support to entrepreneurs, business owners, communities or organisations.

Benefits of Membership
Some benefits include:

Recognition of the professional qualifications of Member of the Institute of Business and Enterprise Facilitators (MAIBEF) and Fellow of the Institute of Business and Enterprise Facilitators (FAIBEF) in Australia and New Zealand.

The ability to use the post-nominals, MAIBEF and FAIBEF in promoting their activities and achieve:

- credibility/validation as an enterprise facilitator
- a premium for services
- client confidence and direct benefits to their business secure and regular employment/use as a business facilitator and enhanced market/business opportunities

Personal confidence and increasing business:

- through business support organisations including training providers and centres increasingly requiring counsellors/advisers to be professionally trained and experienced facilitators
- achieved through the formal recognition of practitioner skills
- by becoming preferred contractors.

The sharing of knowledge and skills and growth of new business through:

- peer networking and interchange of ideas with other Members and Fellows
- peer mentoring of other Members and potential Members
- enabling contacts (formal and informal) with peer organisations and alliances

Regular electronic Newsletters and communications that:

- disseminate news of major developments in the business support industry
- notify Members of relevant conferences and events
- keep Members up to date with current issues
- notify Members about opportunities in professional development

Development of business facilitation skills and knowledge through the provision of:

- notification of opportunities to participate in ongoing targeted and specific professional development
- access to professional development in recommended training courses
- the best and most up to date information on business and training/facilitation.

Representation to others (government and non-government) on Members behalf on issues affecting business facilitation.

A.I.B.E.F.
Established 20 Years

The Aims of the Institute

- To establish and uphold professional standards of competency, responsibility, objectivity and integrity in business or enterprise facilitation.
- To identify, promote or provide access to training to maintain professional standards for business enterprise facilitators.
- To provide all members with current information about relevant conferences, seminars, meetings and publications to maintain professional competence.
- To promote the AIEF's goals and objectives to the business and enterprise support industry to ensure maximum utilisation of Institute services and resources.
- To encompass all in the business support industry to uphold the AIEF's code of conduct and high professional standards.
- To encourage, undertake and support research into the art and science of enterprise facilitation and its impact on small business performance.
- To advise and inform government, industry and business on matters relating to the building of an enterprise culture in Australia and New Zealand.

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