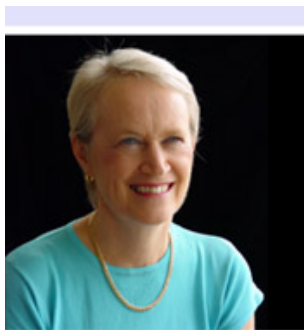




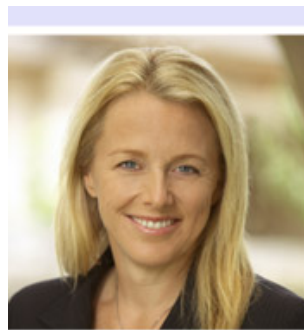
Xplore eBook

THRIVING THROUGH CHANGE

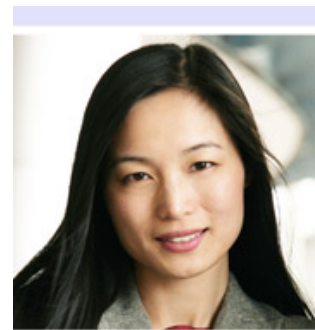
1. Creating Opportunities For Positive Outcomes In Tough Times
by Margie Hartley
2. The Importance Of Resiliency In Your Career
by Yu Dan Shi
3. Using Technology To Support Flexibility
by Marie O'Brien
4. When The Going Gets Tough... Diversity Really Matters!
by Diana Ryall
5. Living The Life You Want – Not The One You Fall Into
by Angelina Eynon
6. Your Guide To Work Life Balance
by Nicole McAuliffe



Diana Ryall



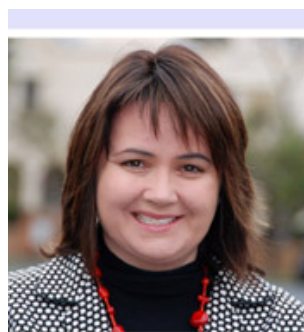
Margie Hartley



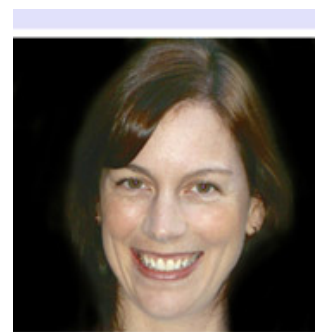
Yu Dan Shi



Marie O'Brien



Angelina Eynon



Nicole McAuliffe



eBook Series

Welcome

Welcome to our first Xplore eBook "Thriving through Change". There is no doubt that 2009 is a year of change and we believe that your personal resilience will allow you to ride the wave successfully.

Each of the six articles is written by one of the senior associates from Xplore. They have taken a perspective of change and written a short chapter on one perspective of the topic. You will find helpful hints and ideas for reflection.

We will value your comments on our first eBook and will plan our second to be published later in 2009.

If you would like to know more about Xplore for Success please go to www.xplore.net.au or contact our office at ebook@xplore.net.au

Regards,

Diana Ryall

Founder and Managing Director

Xplore for Success

diryall@xplore.net.au



eBook Series

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR POSITIVE OUTCOMES IN TOUGH TIMES

By **MARGIE HARTLEY**
Senior Associate, Xplore For Success



About The Author

MARGIE HARTLEY
Senior Associate, Xplore For Success

Margie Hartley is an executive coach and facilitator with specialist knowledge in self understanding, effective communication, presentation skills and career development. She has a multiplicity of experience and knowledge from a range of business fields.



You may have observed some interesting responses and reactions in your colleagues, friends, the media and our commercial and political leaders over the last six months to the current economic downturn. Has it been all Doom and Gloom? Overt Optimism? Head in the Sand?

You may also have observed your own response to these tougher times. Are you fearful? Are you optimistic? Are you unsure? How have you responded to tough times?

Research now proves that our reactions and responses to tough times whether personal or professional, global, or local, social or financial, are the moments that define our ability to create opportunities for positive outcomes.

What is a tough time?

It's likely that many of you reading this article that have experienced disrupting life circumstances or 'tough times'. Each of us will have our own unique definition of what a tough time is. A client recently told me he 'thrived under pressure'. I questioned his definition of pressure. Similarly with tough times the definition is that this will be difficult, not easy and it will always involve change where you will never be the same again. So consequently with change comes opportunities to create new responses, new habits, new strengths and self knowledge.

Our Unique Response To Tough Times?

Each of us has a personal psychological internal response to tough times and change.

Self understanding is an essential tool in coping. In his excellent work on resiliency (***The Resiliency Advantage 2007***) Al Siebert observes " Self knowledge enhances your resiliency because your way of being resilient must be your own self-created, unique version. Self knowledge comes from self-observation, experimenting and being receptive to feedback of all kinds."

Some powerful questions to ask yourself might be:

- What is my internal voice saying to me?
- How does this feel to me?
- What am I experiencing right now?

Observing ourselves, our responses and our feelings to events and circumstances gives us an opportunity to reflect and choose the way we will react to our environment and circumstances.

Again Siebert reflects "The observing place within you is where you develop conscious choices about how you will interact with the world you live in. Experiencing choices leads to feelings of freedom, independence and being in control of your life" (***Siebert ,The Resiliency Advantage pg 33***)

When tough times and change occurs people often feel their sense of control is affected. Studies on perceived control (***e.g. Gale & Batty, 2008***) show that

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www..xplore.net.au
.....



having a healthy sense of control over one's life, work and environment is important for both physical and psychological well-being. A low, or external, sense of control may result in feeling depressed, anxious and unable to cope

A client recently lost her well paid hard earned job in the finance industry. Her reality as stated by many recruiters was that she was unlikely to get another job with similar pay and conditions for at least two years. She has financial commitments. This was her tough time. Her initial goals and questions in our sessions were centred around the urgency of getting exactly the same job in the finance industry. Re-creating what she already had. Like many people faced with this dilemma she responded in a reactive and process driven way. She contacted the recruiters, polished up her resume and got to work on her network. After many negative responses to her job hunt she came to me to discuss her frustrations. We then spent time asking new, different and broader questions. How could she view this situation differently? What other solutions may there be to this situation? What possibilities or opportunities are there for other changes at this time of change? and importantly "What is the most important thing that I want in this situation?"

By observing herself she was able to reflect on her feelings and choose her response to her circumstances and her sense of control. I call this the ORCR prompt. (**Margie Hartley 2008**) OBSERVE REFLECT CHOOSE RESPOND.

As Siebert observes perceived control or the ability to choose our own unique response increases our ability to manage tough times.

Self understanding and choice is empowering.

How then to a positive outcome?

Once we have clearly observed ourselves and identified our unique response to the situations we are in we can then manage ourselves and our thinking. As Stephen Covey illustrates " Effective people aren't problem-minded; they're opportunity minded. They feed opportunities and solve problems. (**Stephen Covey Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.**)

So what are these ingredients we need to cultivate to create the control, self-understanding, self management and effectiveness to create positive outcomes from ALL opportunities?

Hope

Hope helps you bear suffering, illness and tough times. Hope allows people to imagine that their difficult life will be better in the future. Questions to ask yourself to become more hopeful.

When have I responded to a difficult situation well? When have I responded well in tough times?

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www..xplore.net.au
.....



By inspiring ourselves with examples of our resilient past we can use the past to create our future.

Optimism

Martin Seligman (***Learned Optimism 1991***) found that optimists are better able to deal with difficult situations through thinking and responding differently to pessimists. Pessimists will create negative framing of a situation and feel helpless and negative e.g. "This always happens to me..." "I'll never ever get over this situation" whereas optimists will accept the facts of adversity and counter them with action. Observe your thinking. Are you viewing this situation realistically and optimistically?

Positive Questioning

Practicing the Art of Positive Questioning is an important tool both in our internal and external communication. An optimistic and positive question may be "How could I view this situation differently?" or "How can I interact with this so that things turn out well for everyone?".

Aspiration and Vision

Closely tied to the concept of Hope is the concept of having an aspiration, intent or vision as a shared picture of the future is essential in managing tough times.

"The practice of shared vision involves the skills of unearthing shared 'pictures of the future' that foster genuine commitment and enrolment rather than compliance" (Senge 1990)

Ask yourself....What would I like to happen? How would I like people to perceive me in 5 years time?

Once this can be clearly defined then every action will lead to this path. Another client going through a relationship breakdown is managing her anger and potential reactivity by her vision of herself at her daughters wedding as tall, elegant and dignified. Her current responses to the tough times she is experiencing are all leading to that perception.

In the book, ***Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, Stephen Covey*** says "In developing our own self-awareness many of us discover ineffective scripts, deeply embedded habits that are totally unworthy of us, totally incongruent with the things we really value in life. We are response-able to use our imagination and creativity to write new ones that are more effective, more congruent with our deepest values and with the correct principles that gives our values meaning."

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www..xplore.net.au

.....



Participate

Hiding your head under the doona might feel like a good option in difficult times but research proves that those individuals that actively participate in activities including helping others and also seek out others for support create positive opportunities for themselves.

Energy

The way we manage our energy is integral to our ability to manage both tough and good times. How do you renew your personal energy supply? Schwartz and McCarthy (*Manage Your Energy Not Your Time HBR 2008*) discuss the benefits of energy renewal from a Physical, Emotional, Mental and Spiritual perspective. By checking in and managing the cycle of energy renewal and depletion we can better manage ourselves.

Strengths

Identifying our strengths and understanding how they are crucial to enabling us to be the best we can be is essential in the management of ourselves through difficult times. "Only when you operate from strengths can you achieve true excellence... One cannot build performance on weaknesses.... It takes far more energy to improve from incompetence to mediocrity than to improve from first - rate performance to excellence." Peter Drucker

So in conclusion I would suggest that each of us has the resources to manage and be our best even in tough times by utilising the ingredients we need to cultivate to create the control, self-understanding, self management and effectiveness to create positive outcomes from ALL opportunities?

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www..xplore.net.au
.....



eBook Series

THE IMPORTANCE OF RESILIENCY IN YOUR CAREER

By YU DAN SHI

Senior Associate, Xplore For Success



About The Author

YU DAN SHI

Senior Associate, Xplore For Success

Yu Dan is a highly accomplished leader, coach, trainer, and marketer. She has a strong academic background including MBA, Computer Science and Coaching. This background, combined with Yu Dan's 15-year corporate experience in both Australia and Asia, gives her an insightful and practical understanding of the issues faced by corporate executives and team members at all levels. She speaks both English and Mandarin fluently.



Why do some people suffer extreme adversity in their professional career and not stumble? And others never come out of the negative state of mind after some setbacks? Why is resiliency important to our career? And why it is especially more relevant than ever?

Resiliency in brief is the ability to bounce back from extraordinary hardship and adversity. It is a sign of strong willpower and positive attitude.

Looking back the history, you will find that many great men and women faced enormous obstacles in their life yet they overcame the challenges and became a better, wiser and stronger person. Nelson Mandela, Hellen Keller, Abraham Lincoln, all of these people encountered unbelievable hardship yet they were never resentful towards these dark moments in their lives, in quite contrary, they credit their adversity as the building blocks to their future success.

Greg Werner once said, "The road to your championship will not be a smooth, wide and easily travelled freeway. No, great accomplishments are never realized without first having to endure steep climbs, hard falls and sharp turns. The key to your success is perseverance and focus. Keep your focus on that which you desire to accomplish, your championship, and continually discover ways to, and ways not to, achieve your goals. Fall down and/or get knocked down 10 times and get back up 11..., and in so doing learn, grow and move closer to your championship."

The same principle applies to our professional life. The recent global economic crisis certainly has made many organisations and people feel vulnerable. This is when possessing quality such as resiliency will actually carry people through this difficult time.

Think back your own career, did you have setbacks? How did you deal with it? Did you feel angry and unfairly treated? Did you blame yourself or? Did you spend a great deal of time in analyzing the situation and were trapped in that negative state of mind for months or years? OR did you move on quickly and put all your energy in moving towards the new direction and your new goals? Most of us have a huge reluctance to change. We would like to preserve the status quo and stay within our comfort zone. But the world is changing fast. The current climate is the time when people who are successful move ahead because they grasp opportunities and are more adaptable to change.

Dr. Spencer Johnson wrote in his international best selling book "Who Moved My Cheese" that "The quicker you let go of your old cheese. The sooner you find new cheese."

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www..xplore.net.au
.....



Reading through many great books written by the world's best leaders, you will find that when they personally face setbacks in their career and personal life, one consistent quality they possess is the resiliency. Being resilient means being confident and have a faith in yourself and your ability to re-built and reach new goals again and again.

The resiliency topic is very close to my heart, as I personally had to overcome a few adversities and put resiliency into practice throughout my life. I was born in a remote village outside Shanghai, China. I had an under-privileged childhood but I cherish that memory very much as I would have never become the positive and grateful person I am today without those experiences. My condition was not as bad as what you have seen from the Slumdog Millionaire, but pretty harsh still. For instance, I never owned a toy in my entire childhood, and I had to study under an oil lamp until age of 7. My wonderful mother worked 16 hours a day every day and she only made A\$4 per month to raise a family of four.

My parents had to work very long hours, so from age of 3 or 4 years old, I had to become self-reliant, it is not unusual of me walking around and fetching things for myself in the public without adult supervision. I started Year 1 at age of 4 and would walk a long journey to and from school everyday by myself no matter how harsh the weather conditions were. Missing meals are just norm. In summer holidays, from age of 6, I would pack myself a bag and travel several hours on buses to go to visit my aunty in a different city on my own. Human beings can adapt to change very quickly if we have got no other choices left and if we have got no fear. Children are fearless. Human beings only become resistant to change if we start to become fearful or start to over-analyze the situations like the mice "Hem" and "Haw" in the "Who Moved My Cheese" book.

I was told early on by my parents that education and resiliency are the only two things I needed in order to have a better life outside my hometown. When I graduated from one of the top universities in China at 17 years of age, life became a lot more enjoyable. I was offered best jobs in best companies who paid me 6 times more than my parents combined wage, I started to lead a very comfortable lifestyle, I could have chosen to stay in that comfort zone forever. But I wanted to learn more about the world and other culture. So at 21, knowing nobody and with little money, I left a well-paid managerial job in Shanghai and moved to Australia to study my MBA degree. I worked several labour jobs to support myself and was elected as the International Student Representative upon graduation. Interestingly, the keynote speech I made at graduation ceremony was "Overcoming Adversity through Resiliency".

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www..xplore.net.au

.....



Like many overseas professionals, I faced great challenges with my initial job search in Australia. After graduating from my MBA degree, it took me a year to find a job, and I had to take a few steps back in my career and took on a telephone sales role at Dell in 1999 despite the fact I had already had four years management experience in China and two highly regarded degrees. However, I didn't feel resentful or unfairly treated. I stayed positive and resilient which eventually saw myself bridge the cultural gap and progressed rapidly in IT sector. In less than 2 years, Dell promoted me to the Head of a business unit for Asia Pacific. Since then, I held several senior executive and management positions within a few leading technology companies.

Looking back, I wasn't a natural sales person and didn't love the job, but I threw myself into the job with enthusiasm nevertheless and consistently became a top performer. I also constantly reminded myself all the positive things being a sales person like getting to know the customers and competitors first hand etc. I also shared my long-term career goal with my manager and my General Manager from Day 1. I proactively asked what development areas I needed to focus on and sought out mentor. I ended up working for a senior director voluntarily for 6 months and took on a year-long accent correction course. I didn't know when I would be given a more suitable role but I never once doubted myself.

Working as a company director while raising two young children was another challenge I faced in my career. Especially given the fact that I and my husband, who also worked in a full-time corporate role, had limited family support locally as all grandparents lived inter-city or overseas. I again used similar approach, I reinforced my career goal and my personal value, I proactively sought out mentors and any help I could find, I identified the areas I could no longer contribute due to family commitment but compensated it with the new skillsets I have acquired. Early this year, I gave up my lucrative corporate career to pursue my long-term passion in coaching. With an aim to assist individuals and organizations to reach their greatest potential, I since embarked on a very exciting and rewarding venture.

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www.xplore.net.au
.....

So how can you build up the quality of resilience?

1. Accept the reality and move on
2. Create a long-term vision and stay focused on working towards that
3. Be proactive – seek out mentor, coach, ask for advice, read great books
4. Believe in yourself even nobody else does, be self-reliant
5. Find a meaning in everything you do even in a job you dislike, look hard enough, you will always find something positive



eBook Series



6. Be open-minded and adaptable, let go of old beliefs
7. Surround yourself with positive and supportive people and network

The most important thing is to recognise that change is a way of life and start to learn to enjoy change, treat every change as an opportunity not an obstacle.

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www..xplore.net.au
.....



eBook Series

USING TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT FLEXIBILITY

By **MARIE O'BRIEN**

Senior Associate, Xplore For Success



About The Author

MARIE O'BRIEN

Senior Associate, Xplore For Success

Marie O'Brien has an exceptional career as a highly experienced and skilled organisational change consultant, facilitator and strategist. With over fifteen years experience in facilitation based organisational effectiveness programs in both the private and public sector Marie can be considered a true leader in her field.



Often when people think about flexible work practices their focus automatically moves to working part-time or in a job share arrangement. Sometimes we think about working remotely (usually meaning “from home”). Mostly when people think about the responsibility for the success of such an arrangement the onus is placed squarely on the shoulders of the “flexible” worker (with basic IT support to enable remote access and (hopefully) moral support from their direct Manager). Usually the “flexible” worker is doing the same work in the same team in the same way as it was done before that worker was given permission to work “flexibly” ... except reduced workload on a pro-rata basis and/or they will now be doing it at home instead of with their team mates in the office.

Web 2.0 Technology offers organisations that truly want to create flexible work environments the tools to step into a whole new realm of reality. You may already be familiar with some examples of Web 2.0 Tools in a social networking sense such as Wikis, Blogs, Podcasts and Discussion Boards. However as they mature, the tools have the potential to revolutionise the way teams work (maturity and development time in the world of Web 2.0 being very much like dog-years!).

Web 2.0 is all about using technology for collaboration. When we speak about applying it within enterprises it is referred to as Enterprise 2.0. It means we are no longer bound by word processing documents, spreadsheets and presentation documents created by individuals and stored on local document drives (that may or may never be known of/found by another member of the same team, let alone other parts of the organisation). It means that we no longer need to email every thought, comment, idea, update or directive to everyone in the team to ensure that everyone who might want/need to know has been advised.

But how does this help support flexibility?

By changing the paradigm of how we approach flexible work practices. For organisations to truly benefit from flexible work practices it cannot be simply about the odd individual working part-time or from home. It is, literally, the work practices that should become more flexible.

If this is done well, output and quality will increase regardless of what combination of hours or from what locations any of the team-members choose to work.

Following are some examples.

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www..xplore.net.au
.....



Case Study 1

A team of software developers implemented a Wiki. Their existing development processes involved various versions of development code and associated release notes continually passing between members of the team to be altered, changed, added to and updated prompting frequent face-to-face meetings to ensure all were on the same page - literally. In their new world of work the most current versions of code and associated release notes were put on the Wiki where any/all members of the development team could access and contribute - one version of each document updated by any team member in real time. Their project management software was also linked into the Wiki and all internal customers were given "read" access to the Wiki page so that they knew the exact stage at which the software development project was sitting. As long as a team member had access to a network enabled device/computer they could access and work on current project data immediately from anywhere - whether in response to a question at a meeting with senior management/internal clients or to update some code or release notes after a brainwave. And everyone else in the team could see what changes were made when and by whom because every version is archived by the Wiki in document history.

Case Study 2

In response to email overload and a couple of instances of miscommunication a Project Team Leader decided to link their project management tool onto a Blog Page and write a daily Project Status/Update Blog. Team members were also encouraged to add comments/feedback beneath each Daily Update/Blog if they had something of relevance to the rest of the team. All Project Team Members were then able to pop into the Project Blog page to get their daily update at the time of the day most suited to them and their role and scan through other Team comments to see if anybody had added anything that may impact their "part" of the project. Everyone was thus kept updated on relevant issues/developments continually, could provide immediate feedback to the rest of the team if/when a new issue arose and could do so from anywhere at any time of the day - as long as the team member had access to a network enabled device/computer. The weekly team meetings transformed into collaborative discussions about how to produce even better project results in more innovative ways rather than going around the table updating everyone on what each other had been up to during the week.

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www..xplore.net.au
.....



Case Study 3

A share market trading team had market information sent directly to their mobile phones via instant messaging so they had access to absolute current data wherever they were and whatever they were doing.

Case Study 4

With no set up other than registering on a website and no cost, a team of geographically remote consultants (each working from home offices) were able to have regular video conferences/online meetings to discuss their business development and client projects with each other. The free technology (open source) also enables them to share their computer screen with the other online meeting members so they are now also able to easily share new developments, innovations and techniques they each use in their training programs and workshops. They can even create a document together online if they wish.

So where do you start? The first step into this brave new world is actually a step back! To work out how to best utilise technology to drive flexibility you must forget about the technology and go to the drawing board... Each team moving down this path should answer at least the following questions:

Question 1: What is the purpose of your Team - what is it that your Team produces and why?

All too often we do things a certain way simply because that's how it's always been done. The new technology at your disposal would be wasted (or worse, maybe even counterproductive) if you simply try to use it to refine existing processes and systems. By refocusing on the output of your Team you and your team can redefine the way work is done.

In Case Study 1 above the purpose of the team was to create and deliver innovative software to continually improve the performance of their organisation's key product. Their clients were internal and it was imperative that projects were completed on time; in budget and that downline departments knew exactly what was happening so they could allocate & plan resources for production. Their purpose was not simply to write code!

Question 2: Ignoring current work practices, what kinds of things would be happening for your team to produce your absolute best output?

Don't fall into the trap of starting with the tools (e.g. wikis, blogs etc) and working out what you might do with them. Ignore the tools and start with behaviour - the teamwork. Simply accept that whatever behaviour you want to support, there will be a tool for you to use.

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www..xplore.net.au
.....



In Case Study 1 above the answers were probably something like: we would only ever have one official version of the development code and release notes; everyone could access and contribute to that one document from wherever they were; nobody would ever be given/work on an outdated version; all project related information could be found easily in one place whenever it was needed and always current - including internal downline/customers so they didn't continually interrupt/email us with information update requests; And while we're at it, why not let the internal customers download their own updated software versions rather than us having to copy it onto CDs and send it out with hardcopies of release notes ...etc!

Question 3: Once you have your new Teamwork picture painted then, and only then, can you look to the tools ... which Web 2.0 tools can you use to help make your new world of work happen?

Here is where the really good stuff can happen - the more daring and adventurous your picture the more likely you are to really innovate around the way you perform and get some great results. And never compromise on the tool/s you use - make sure the tool will work for you, don't work for it.

In Case Study 1 the tool that worked for them was a highly collaborative (great for development team collaboration, output and quality) and highly visible (great for downline customer information) wiki. The visionary project manager tested two other tools before finding the Wiki but neither matched his picture so he kept looking until he found one that did.

Web 2.0 Technology can provide great advances in creating a highly collaborative, interactive, accessible, transparent, very mobile and flexible workplace that focuses on output and delivery rather than time at the desk. However, remember the secret - the first step is to step back - back to the drawing board!

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www..xplore.net.au
.....



eBook Series

WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH... DIVERSITY REALLY MATTERS!

By **DIANA RYALL**
Director, Xplore For Success



About The Author

DIANA RYALL
Managing Director, Xplore For Success

Diana Ryall was Managing Director at Apple Computer Australia from 1997 to 2001. While holding this position, the company was recognised by Hewitt Associates as 'Employer of the Year'. Diana stepped down from that position at the end of 2001 to expand her involvement in those areas in which she is passionate: inspiring leadership, supportive workplace cultures and the success of women.



Take a minute to consider each of these statements:

- **Diverse teams are more innovative**
- **Diverse teams see challenges from more angles**
- **Diverse teams come up with a broader range of ideas**
- **Diverse teams develop better implementation plans**
- **Diverse teams see barriers earlier**

How do you feel about these statements? Do you believe them? Each of these statements is based on research of the importance of diversity not just gender diversity but diversity of style, learning patterns and thinking. If they are true how does your organisation rate on diversity? Do you have metrics that show how diverse your organisation is? In which sections of your organisation is diversity most apparent and at what level?

Perhaps you think at this time of global crisis diversity no longer matters.

Then consider the following questions?

- If you have recently restructured did you move to increase diversity in your team or reduce the diversity? Perhaps you don't know, it really wasn't part of the thinking by the group who formalised the restructure. At this time, diversity is easily lost as the senior managers select those they feel most comfortable with, rather than those who will challenge and embrace the necessary change.
- When you restructured you will likely state with confidence that you selected the 'best people for the role' but did you? Perhaps, you, like most people, selected those people who you know well, have worked with before, communicate using the same style and operate in a similar way.
- Does your leadership team align with your customer base? Are you sure that your clients needs, your business challenges and innovation will be fully addressed if your leadership team is not diverse in style, opinions and experience. So many boards in Australia are still totally male, caucasian and over well into middle-age or older.
- Does your board have different views and experience? Be confident that your board members get selected for the skills they bring to the table not that they are part of the network and just fit in.
- Are you confident that you have the best plans for the future for your organisation? Do the quieter voices in your organisation get heard?

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www.xplore.net.au
.....



We are all different so why is it that we naturally align ourselves with others who have similar views and values and does this matter at work?

Diversity within an organisational context is about companies promoting an environment that is supportive and inclusive to those who have differences in style, motivation and communication. Diversity can cover a range of areas including: gender (most frequently considered), cultural background (our Australian cultural mix has changed radically since the white Australia policy was overturned in 1973), disability, age as well as personal style.

The diversity dialogue is **not** about political correctness: it is about encouraging all of us to become more conscious of the filters through which we see each other and our world. It is about learning to see difference as a way of fostering and encouraging more interesting, diverse, creative and inclusive organisations – that will ultimately also be more adaptable and successful.

In her book, *The 4 Minute Sell*, Jane Elsea talks about the filters that are in place (usually unconsciously), when we first make contact with a person. Based on meeting someone face-to-face, she says that the nine most important things that we notice about a person are their: skin colour; gender; age; appearance; facial expressions; eye contact; movement; personal space and touch. Once we have categorised a person using these initial criteria, we add our own judgments and opinions based on our backgrounds, attitudes, values and beliefs. This process is something we complete in the first few seconds.

There are a number of social and workplace trends driving the need for greater diversity awareness and a greater need for organisations to be able to incorporate a range of diverse employees comfortably in their work culture:

- Ageing of the population;
- Globalisation of business;
- Growing diversity in our population generally;
- Diversity in our customer bases;
- More emphasis on work/life balance and
- More flexible ways of working by both men and women.

Each of these areas highlights a greater need for organisations to be able to attract and retain a broader range of people from a broader pool.

When we build rapport with others the values we hold most dear are the ones that make us feel comfortable in our relationships. These values are deep within us and affect how we evaluate others and our surroundings. However, they can also

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www..xplore.net.au
.....



mean that we stay within the boundaries in which we feel comfortable rather than challenging the status quo or looking for new ideas. When placed in a difficult situation, such as we are experiencing today this natural bias becomes even stronger.

Those who are bold and brave are most inclined to build networks with others who are bold and brave and yet it is important that these people also have strong networks with others who will bring a more analytical and considered approach. We can all point to the 'bold and brave' leader in organisations or in the political sphere and yet they won't necessarily be successful in the longer term.

In situations where leaders are successful you will normally find that they have developed relationships and skills with others who are more reserved and considered who pull them back from the brink before they charge ahead with too little consideration. They will also find those they trust to advise on culture and people issues that may otherwise be overlooked.

The leaders who are more reserved and considered are inclined to build networks with other who are of a similar nature and yet these people need others to provide that momentum and confidence to drive them forward. There are many 'quiet achievers' who have great ideas and insights that are never fostered and captured in the workplace today. These employees may be from a different cultural background, a different gender or just have a different perspective.

So what does this mean? The successes we seek in life and at work are best served with a range of diverse styles and thinking. This will require us to be more aware of cultural, racial and gender differences that often will slow the development of trust that is so important when different styles are in play.

Organisations need to take the time to build skills in their employees that make them more aware of differences in style and how to build bridges of communication, they need to build the knowledge base of these differences and employees need to be offered training to build an understanding and ability to use behaviours that facilitate diverse groups operating seamlessly. When we focus on these behaviours and skills diversity of gender and culture will be valued rather than seen as not fitting in.

How do you become more diversity aware?

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www..xplore.net.au
.....



1. Build your own awareness

Build this awareness both about yourself and others. It is easy to notice what you perceive to be other people's faults – but noticing your own biases and assumptions takes self-awareness and courage.

2. Build your knowledge and understanding

Broaden your knowledge of different styles and other cultures – especially those that are represented within your workplace and customer base. Be curious about how others think, how they are motivated and their goals. Ask questions that demonstrate your interest and willingness to learn (and not judge).

3. Practice and adapt new behaviours

Behaviour change takes practice – think of new sentences, mindsets, thoughts and skills that will help you to overcome your own biases.

4. Share your learnings with others

People learn through hearing other people's experiences. When you 'name' your own learning, it helps others to see what some of their own personal filters may be and how these impact their view of individuals and their world.

Individuals and organisations need to take the time to build skills and practice new behaviours that embrace difference and diversity. Our objective should be to understand that diversity creates opportunity, interest and innovation.

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www..xplore.net.au
.....



eBook Series

LIVING THE LIFE YOU WANT – NOT THE ONE YOU FALL INTO

By **ANGELINA EYNON**
Senior Associate, Xplore For Success



About The Author

ANGELINA EYNON
Senior Associate, Xplore For Success

Angelina Eynon is a facilitator and coach with nearly 20 years experience of working in blue chip corporations and professional service firms in both Australia & the United Kingdom. The majority of her career has been in change management and communications consulting in-house in financial services, and more recently in leading international management consultancies (Accenture and PA Consulting).



It's become very fashionable to call these 'changing times'. Having been in the workforce for over twenty years now (ouch!), I can't remember times that haven't been called 'changing ones'! Can you imagine proudly exclaiming: 'We live in stagnant times,'???

It would be naïve to suggest that life hasn't got faster – you'd have to have lived in a bubble for the last 20 years not to have recognised the impact of technology, (coming from one who still talks about her album collection!). There are many upsides to a faster life and surely we wouldn't have all jumped on board if there weren't. Of course there are downsides too with the most discussed one being how time poor many of us feel.

In my role as a facilitator and coach I meet a broad range of people, and one thing I am always curious about is how people come to be in their chosen field of work. The most common answer is: 'Oh, I kind of 'fell into' it,' – 'it' being their chosen profession. 'Falling into' our work is fine – in fact, it's often these 'by chance' situations that set us on the path of something that we enjoy. What isn't fine is when we are still doing something we've 'fallen into' 2, 5, 10 even 20 years down the track AND it's not even something that we enjoy or aligns with who we are and what we value. The longest I've heard so far is 20 years – that's 20 years of just tolerating 50 hours a week of life.

This makes me sad. I feel sad when people share with me that they have lost their way with their work, or they feel stuck in a rut, or simply don't enjoy what it is that they do. We've all felt this way at times or we know other people in these situations. Sometimes the unhappiness about work pervades other parts of our lives as well.

This is where vision and goals comes into play and why they are so important. Most importantly, it's about setting vision and goals that align with who you are and what is important to you in life.

Vision is the big picture. It keeps you on track. It gives you something to check back against, for example, 'I see myself at 40 years of age leading a balanced life, strong and financially independent'. So a good question is, 'Is what I'm doing today at 35 years old leading me in that direction?'

Goals are the subsets that sit beneath the vision, so continuing with the same example: What does balanced mean? Do I mean that I want to work five days or do I mean part time work and some other activities that take up other days? Or do I simply mean that I want to ensure I'm working, exercising and socialising – and in what measures? What does strong mean? If it's physically strong, does that mean I need specific health and fitness goals? For example, I will exercise for 30 minutes a minimum of three times per week. Or do I mean emotionally strong, which might be a goal of catching up with my closest girl friends at least once a fortnight. The financial goals might be around buying property or having a certain amount of money in a savings plan.

Goals are often treated as the small or large milestones that let us know that we have achieved something. Interestingly, much recent research into goal setting and attainment proves that goals are also very important for other reasons. In his book, *Happier*, Dr Tal Ben-Shahar, Positive Psychology lecturer at Harvard University, says people who set goals not only achieve greater levels of personal and professional success, they are also happier simply because they are striving toward something important to them. The process of knowing what you are going after gives you a clearer sense of direction, a higher sense of purposefulness and

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www..xplore.net.au
.....



something to benchmark your decisions and actions against. It helps you to enjoy today – rather than living in the dangerous thinking pattern of ‘things will be better when ...,’ *I lose weight, I get a new job, I have more money, choose your own ending!* There’s a lot of truth to the cliché about it being the journey not the destination that’s important.

Additional research by Kennon Sheldon shows that it’s not merely about having goals, it’s also about having goals that mean something to you. He says, “People seeking greater well-being would be advised to focus on the pursuit of a) goals involving growth, connection and contribution rather than goals involving money, beauty and popularity and, b) goals that are interesting and personally important rather than goals they felt forced or pressured to pursue.”*

How can you set visions/goals that are meaningful for you?

- The number one tip is to give yourself the time and space to think about and write down visions and goals. If it’s not written down, it’s not a commitment to yourself.
- Make sure the questions you ask yourself are good questions. What is important to me in all aspects of my life: family, work, ‘me’ time, learning/development, health, finances, where/how I live, friendships, etc? Name the categories that are important to you – now, at this point in time, (this may change with ages and stages). Write down for yourself what is important about each category for you. Work out what is negotiable and what is not. For example, I finish work by 3pm each day to pick my daughter up from school. This is a not negotiable for me. The trade off, I earn less money than I possibly would if I worked full time hours.
- Work out what motivates you. Think of how you’ve achieved things or strived for things that were important for you in the past. What did you do? How did you feel? What were the things that you did toward your goals that made you feel proud? A great way of doing this is to think about the strengths you used to achieve what you did. We all have our own unique combination of strengths that we apply to get through challenges.
- Make sure you have your goals at the right ‘chunk size’ – remember the saying about how you eat an elephant – one bite at a time. My preferred bite size may be different to yours so make sure the chunks are meaningful and motivating for you.
- Finally, if you’re asking ‘where will I find time to do this?’ you need new questions: what are the costs of NOT giving yourself the time to do this? How would it be if you had a clearer sense of direction? Felt more purposeful? Knew that the direction you were moving in aligned with you and what’s important for you to be able to live a great life.

**as quoted in Happier, Tal Ben-Shahar, 2007.*

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www..xplore.net.au
.....



eBook Series

YOUR GUIDE TO WORK LIFE BALANCE

By **NICOLE McAULIFFE**

Senior Associate, Xplore For Success



About The Author

NICOLE McAULIFFE

Senior Associate, Xplore For Success

Nicole is coach and facilitator with over twenty years experience in the corporate world working with a large logistics firm (National Rail Corporation), Telstra and some of Australia's largest financial services organizations (ANZ, AXA, NAB and Westpac). She has a highly successful track record in the areas of Change Management consulting (Accenture) and Career Coaching. Spending much of her career assisting professionals make the most of themselves and their people during times of transition.



The only constant today is change. With global competition, economic uncertainty, constant restructuring, changing culture and demographics just to name a few. Our world continues to accelerate in scientific and technological breakthroughs. Even the perception of world safety has changed due to terrorist events.

With all of these global changes, the nature of our workplace is changing as well. The workplace is even more competitive, we work longer and more varied hours. You need to be multi skilled. Security is something we don't have in the workplace, however we are increasingly accountable for everything we do and we also have an increased reliance on technology.

Lifestyles are changing as a result too. We eat more fast/packages foods, exercise at gyms rather than through our occupation, we bank on line, we are entertained with high tech gadgets. More women are in the workforce than ever before and more families will have no children.

What is the impact of all this change? As a result we have, less time for all our activities, great distraction, increased stress and it is much harder to maintain our balance. Our lives are imbalanced as a result.

Lets first have a look a what work life balances is?

Work-Life balance does not mean an equal balance. It is unrealistic to schedule an equal number of hours for each of your various work and personal activities is usually unrewarding and unrealistic. Your best individual work-life balance will vary over time, often on a daily basis. The right balance for you today will probably be different for you tomorrow or the next month or year. There is no perfect, one-size fits all, balance you should be striving for. The best work-life balance is different for each of us because we all have different priorities and different lives.

Characteristics of a balanced organisation

- Increased individual productivity, accountability and commitment
- Better teamwork and communication
- Improved morale
- Less negative organisational stress

Characteristics of a balanced individual

- More value and balance in your daily life
- Understanding of your best individual work life balance
- Increased productivity
- Improved relationships
- Reduced stress

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www..xplore.net.au
.....



There are obvious benefits for being balanced for both the organisation and the individual.

So the focus really is on YOU as balanced individuals lead to balanced organisations.

According to 'Managing Work Life Balance International' in their 2005 survey of Australian organisations they found:

- 9% have observed an increase in turnover due to long hours culture
- 77% believe the impact of work-life efforts is hindered by increased work demands overshadowing personal needs
- 35% have observed an increase in the average hours per week worked
- 28% indicated that had developed a work environment that fits in with their lifestyle demands

Only 28%!

So now that we have heard all the bad news, here is the good news. In the same research, they also found that those organisations that did have work life balance strategies and initiatives, showed significant improvements. Over 2005, they have found:

- Reduced turnover by an average of 3.6% compared with Best Practice Organisations
- Reduced absenteeism by an average of 3.8%
- Increased return rate from parental leave by an average of 21%; and
- Increased employee satisfaction by an average of 13%

So we can create balance and we can change all of this but it takes work at an individual level.

Below are the 7 key steps I believe are necessary to creating your own work life balance:

1. Create your 'wheel of balance'
2. Give yourself credit for the areas that are working well
3. Highlight areas requiring work
4. Set goals
5. Develop a plan
6. Take action
7. Seek support and feedback from others

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www..xplore.net.au
.....



eBook Series



As we work through these steps we can take you from being characteristically unbalanced:

- less flexible
- see problems as threats rather than challenges
- our energy is consumed by worry and self doubt and we are unable to work towards self improvement
- we withdraw from new ideas and change is viewed as a personal threat

To being balanced person:

- have more of themselves to give to their top priorities
- feel less stress and guilt about what they're not doing and more excited about the future
- have more fun and are more fun to be around
- appear to be more purposeful, and are more interested
- equip themselves so that they can experience a higher quality of life

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www..xplore.net.au
.....



eBook Series

About Xplore For Success

Xplore is about professionals, their workplace, self-awareness and ultimately about opening the doorway to personal success.

Today individuals face enormous career challenges. Xplore provides the opportunity to unleash the potential of each individual through a range of unique programs, relevant workshops and professional coaching developed specifically for today's workplace by some of Australia's most successful and experienced professionals.

These exceptional experiences deliver opportunities for individuals at all levels of professional development to build and expand their professional and personal skills. Each program covers a wide and specifically relevant range of topics that are able to recognise and acknowledge the essence of each individual's professional and personal development.

Xplore's leaders bring to these programs an outstanding chance to share their experiences and skills as well as facilitating the development of each participant's personal goals and vision.

Xplore offers a distinctive range of programs that challenge, motivate, inspire and educate professionals in the modern workplace.

Telephone:
02 9660 4526

Facsimile:
02 9660 9651

Email:
ebook@xplore.net.au

Website:
www.xplore.net.au
.....