

# Thinking Ahead

## Ideas and Insights from the First Step Member Community

[www.first-step-community.info](http://www.first-step-community.info)

7<sup>th</sup> March 2010



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7 March 2010

# Thinking Ahead

www.first-step-community.info

ANN ROLFE'S MENTORING WORKS BLOG

## Mentoring | Return on Investment

MAR 08, 2010 05:56P.M.

You may or may not have to put a dollar value on your mentoring strategy but you will need to identify some success indicators. Here are a few thought starters:

- Staff retention
- Return to work after maternity leave or injury
- Representation of target group in grade, roles, positions, locations
- Percentage of applications for internal jobs or promotions
- Number in the target group who won a position or promotion
- Number who participate in training, education or development opportunities
- Number of external (target group) applicants for jobs
- Benchmark comparison, industry average, other organisations

Some of these are easy to put a dollar value. For example, mentoring programs specifically designed to attract and retain graduates. Recruiting graduates is expensive and there is no ROI if you lose your new person within two years. Gen Y has been notoriously career-oriented and mobile. Some organisations, such as government agencies cannot pay big dollars to get or keep graduates, so mentoring is a cost-effective strategy attractive to the career development focus of this group.

Likewise, many organisations are not ready for the exodus of experience when baby-boomers retire. Being mentors can help keep them, engage them and increase their productivity while facilitating knowledge transfer.

You can probably find some figures within your organisation or industry regarding the replacement cost of staff. Obviously it varies depending on the role. But a ballpark estimate of around 2-3 times annual salary per

person could be a starting point. You can't ignore this kind of money. That's why one of our major banks was a trailblazer twenty years ago, with mentoring as part of a suit of programs for women on maternity leave. They realised that the cost of losing their talent and experience, long-term, was unacceptable and avoidable.

One way to evaluating ROI is to look at the cost of not having mentoring. Last year one of my clients launched a career-focused mentoring program. However, the GFC meant that the program coincided with a job freeze! Yet because of the mentoring, participants spent twelve months enthusiastic about their employer and confident about their future instead of succumbing to disenchantment. That's how mentoring works! [e](#)

LET'S GO THERE...

## There is no excuse for being a bully

MAR 07, 2010 09:35P.M.



Bullies are everywhere-on the road, at your workplace, in some people's homes even families. You may not be a bully but I bet once or more in your life you expressed a bully streak. You know, your anger got out of control and you took it out on another person. Yet likely you had a great social system of friends, family, teachers, work colleagues who helped you back in line. Maybe you even had unconditional love and worked through this aberrant behavior before it took hold and developed into a habit.

Some unfortunate ones in our society do not have this help. They are either so far gone or allowed to get away with the behavior that it is too late. Not too late to change, but likely too late to have quality relationships that help the bully repent, recover and return to being a decent human being. Or more likely, lacking in the resources and people dedicated to helping them turn around.

I write this post because I want to take the compassionate route. I want to understand and help rather than blame, judge and condemn. Why? Because I know that in each one of us is a part of our personality that wants to get our way. I need to be a bit tough to get your attention though. So bear with me.

Are you a bully?

Do you:

- aggressively fight to get your way at the expense of other people's needs?
- respond with anger when challenged by another?
- use your larger physical size to stand down others and get your way?
- intimate the threat of more physical or violent action?
- actually resort to violence?
- repeatedly offend despite reprimand and warnings from others?
- disregard or have no respect for authority?
- consider yourself outside of the rules?
- go behind people's backs to undermine them or get in their way?
- raise your voice, control the conversation, not listen or at least if you do pretend and then get on with only your point of view anyway?
- make veiled threats?
- respond to situations emotionally charged?
- set up situations so others look bad, you win and then take control?

If you answer 'yes' or 'maybe' to even just one of these comments then it is time to take a hard look at what is happening in your world before such behavior continues or gets out of hand. Why? Because exacerbated, you may just have an incident that you can't undo.

If you think no but you have had other people confront even tell you that

your behavior borders on or is bullying, then go back and seek help. Someone in your network cares enough to tell you, they may just care of enough to help you.

If you answer no, then I am thrilled that you have socially developed yourself and can function in our society and your community as a role model of non-bullying behavior.

But what if you said no but still know someone who would answer yes? What if you are a witness, observer or in regular contact? What if you are the victim of this bullying behavior?

Well two things:

1. Under no circumstances should anyone tolerate or accept bullying behavior.
2. If you are a witness, observer and do nothing, go along or support than your behavior is comparable in that it supports and encourages.

In aggregate, when a community stands by and observes, does nothing then we get a community tolerating bullying.



Ripples of the wrong kind of influence

Now take this language down a notch. Just observe some of the undercurrent of related behavior in our society. Is it ok for a parent on the sidelines of their kid's sporting event to yell abuse at a referee? No. What about other parents? No. What about the players on the field for the other team? Well maybe, some might say. I of course say no. Yet this is one example where you see socially sanctioned behavior that is tantamount to bullying.

What about the business meeting? You know, the heated discussion where the manager wants to get a plan through, budget allocated to their division, or plain simply wants everything their way. Not acceptable you might say? Yet it happens.

## Time for change

So why am I ranting today about this? Well for one reason. I am tired of society turning a blind eye to people who get away with bullying. I am tired of our children seeing role models on the sporting sidelines of belligerent loud parents. I am tired of meeting people in business who recount story after story of how they got out of their last job to escape the tyrant for whom they worked. It just can't keep going like this.

A second reason is that in today's socially networked world, bullying takes on a new level. We now can experience or act as bullies with the veiled protection of a computer interface. What is said on-line can be taken out of context and perceived as worse than what it means. So the risk of people being victimized is greater. The risk of people standing by and doing nothing is even greater.



Yet sometimes people do stand up. Sometimes the victims, the observers say enough is enough. It just takes one or maybe a collective few to voice their side of the story and the tables turn. I have heard amazingly brave stories to the tune of "It's either me or he goes" and the he that goes is the bully. I have also heard the opposite.

Yet here is where my compassionate heart steps in. How do we as a society, as companies, as communities, as fellow parents, friends and families help those who bully or have tendency to bully? How?


I don't have the answer. I would like to know if you have an idea, a thought, experience. I would like to start a conversation about this. Not to point fingers or shame a person but to help create a more relationship oriented, supportive and collaborative environment for all of us.

I also know that there are organizations, groups and people making a difference in the 'anti-bullying space' especially of recent with campaigns on anti cyber-bullying. I also am aware of schools instigating comprehensive no bullying policies and sporting groups running campaigns to quiet the sideline yelling.

So I encourage you to connect and help out where you can. Effectively if each person does something actively to stop this happening maybe we

can all stand tall and bring some decency back to relationships.

## One final word-mine

I have been a victim. I did not stand up to the bullies in my life at the time. I did not have the courage nor capacity. I wish I did. I so wish I did. I lived a long time as a victim and held myself back from many opportunities or directions requiring a more assertive demeanor. When I did need to get my way, as many of us do sometimes, I failed to negotiate or work things out. I either played the stubborn streak, rebelled or just got out of there. It was not until later in life that I got the right kind of support that helped me truly stand up for me. How did I do this? I got comfortable with me from the inside out. I stopped valuing myself based on what other people said or did. As my professional career moved more into the people helping profession I also could see a way of helping. I also found more and more that as a parent of two young children it is important for me to do my part to help make the world that they grow up in a better one. This blog post is not about my story so I will stop here. Yet please know that I speak from experience and I speak from the heart when I ask what can we do to help people so that they don't hurt others anymore. 

## SO WHAT'S NEXT?

# Fulfilling our promise

MAR 06, 2010 07:45P.M.

Achieving what we want requires much more of us than simply doing what we love.

If we are to believe some of the self development guru's, if we do what we love the money follows. I think this is way off the mark.

Steven Farber, Author of *The Radical Leap* and *Greater Than Yourself* says "Do what you love in the service of people who love what you do." Now this is on the money.

Doing what we love is just the first step to achieving what we want. Doing what we love in the service of people who love what we do is the key.

Here's 16 questions for you to ponder about doing what you love and doing this with people who love what you do.

Be remarkable

Ian

Founder Differencemakers Community

**Sign-up** here for a least one free resource per month and to get your complimentary copy of my ebook *Differencemakers - how doing good is great for business*.

doing today what others will only be thinking about tomorrow 

THOUGHT LEADERS BLOG

# Helicopters and vending machines

MAR 06, 2010 03:00A.M.


One of my favourite books is 'The Art of Looking Sideways' by Alan Fletcher. It's a book of ponderings and observations on design, vision and creativity. In it, Fletcher makes an observation of designers being like helicopters or vending machines.

It's a great analogy for thought leaders and here's why.

The Helicopters are people who look at a topic, project, or problem, from all different angles and perspectives. They hover over the terrain and survey the different areas, they fly in close and look at the detail and then fly further out to see the whole thing in its entirety. Helicopters hover about and see things from as many different angles and points of view as possible.

Then there are those who think like vending machines. These people have a range of creative solutions and ideas in place, which they can deliver. Clients and others put their money in the slot and out come standard off the shelf ideas - maybe disguised a little.

It's a great analogy - because when it comes to thought leadership it's important to be like helicopters. To see things from as many different angles as possible, to explore the terrain and be inquisitive, to really soak up the detail but also see and focus on the big picture. It's vital to have different viewpoints and perspectives and really investigate all the possibilities available. Otherwise you'll just spit out the same old standard ideas - perhaps wrapped a little differently.

So, the question are you going to be a vending machine or are you going to be a helicopter? And when it comes to inspiring others and helping them become helicopters as well are you building and investing in heliports? 

ANN ROLFE'S MENTORING WORKS BLOG

# Be An Employer Of Choice

MAR 05, 2010 05:11P.M.

People value career development and training and judge prospective employers on what they offer. Human Capital's 2009 Candidate Values Survey revealed that an increasing number rate career development and training even higher than remuneration!

The reality of the GFC continues to bite. So, organisations who want to attract and keep talented people need cost-effective strategies that will attract and keep them. Mentoring is a perfect fit that has demonstrated return on investment. For the last seven years one government agency has successfully paired its new graduate employees with mentors and points to strong retention as a result. A communication company links its high potential people to high-flying mentors in the parent company overseas. A major utility company introduced mentoring for trainees and apprentices. These and many other organisations realise that all of the effort of recruitment is wasted if you don't hang on to your talent!

If you want to be an employers of choice, mentoring works! 

GIHAN PERERA

# Connect your blog feeds to Twitter

MAR 05, 2010 05:00P.M.

Not everything that you tweet about is worthy of a blog post. After all, that's what made Twitter so popular, because you can type something brief and send it out to your mates, without composing a full blog post.

But look at it the other way around. It's probably true that everything you write in your blog is worthy of going out to your Twitter followers as well.

Use the free Twitterfeed service to automate this process:



You simply give it your blog address, and it will check for new posts regularly (you choose how regularly) and publish them to your Twitter feed. Of course, it can't fit the entire post into a tweet. Instead, it sends the post subject as the tweet, with a link to the full post on your blog. Exactly what you want.

This is one of the on-line services featured in my Gold Star Services mailing list. If you would like to learn of more services like this to help you be more productive, sign up to the mailing list here. [e](#)

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MATT HERN'S MONEY GUIDE

## Comparison of business structures

MAR 05, 2010 08:00A.M.

When you decide to establish a business it is first essential that you choose to operate within the appropriate business structure. Should you choose a company, discretionary trust (family trust), unit trust or a combination?

The answer will have a significant impact on the tax you pay and the protection of your assets.

For an overview of the two major structures watch this brief video by lawyer Brett Davies.

Also read the full article on LawCentral in issue 262 of their regular Bulletin (dated 4th May 2009). You will need to pay a small fee to become a platinum subscriber to read the full article. But that's a small price to pay compared to the tax you could save from what you learn.

Related posts:

1. Cheap laptops equal smart salary-packaging
  2. Checklist to ensure your SMSF deed is up to date
  3. Try to make your passion a business
- 

PETER WEBB'S "WISDOM CIRCLE"

## Positive Psychology!

MAR 05, 2010 12:57A.M.



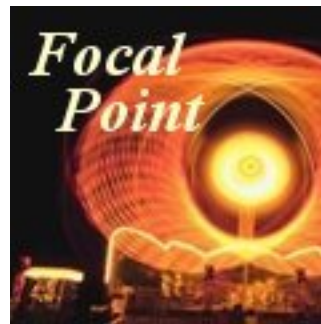
Here we are at the 2nd Australian Positive Psychology and Well-being Conference at Monash University, Caulfield, February 13, 2010. This is at the end of my workshop, "Wise decisions: How the psychology of wisdom can be applied to everyday life" where a small group of enthusiastic delegates followed a six-step process for making a wise decision when faced with a dilemma! [e](#)

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GIHAN PERERA

## On-Line Collaboration: The Principles

MAR 04, 2010 09:32P.M.



The Internet has made it far easier to collaborate with others - your clients, suppliers, colleagues and even competitors. Here's how to start thinking about creating effective collaborations.


MP3 File

Broadly, there are four groups of people we could collaborate with:

- Customers and clients: The people you work for.
- Suppliers: The people who work for you.
- Colleagues and team members: The people you work with.
- Competitors: The people you work “against”.

This is not just for on-line collaboration, of course; these people are equally valid collaboration partners in “real life”. It’s just that the Internet has made it easier to work with them.

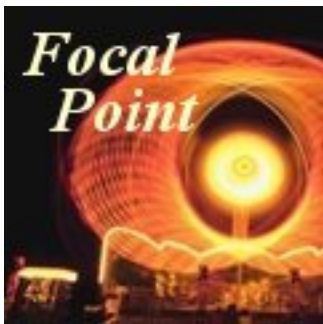
Guidelines for on-line collaboration:

- Use the cloud: Work on one shared document rather than multiple copies
- Show your face: Allow people to be human and show their personality
- Let go of perfection: Aim for “80% right, 100% complete” - i.e. It’s better to release a product that’s not perfect than to never release it at all.
- Work to a plan: Be clear about milestones, deliverables and deadlines.
- Set the ground rules: Be clear about rules and parameters for executing the plan.
- Think Global: Take into account the different locales inherent in collaborating with international partners - such as differences in language, time-zones, currency and customs. 

GIHAN PERERA

## On-Line Collaboration: The Tools

MAR 04, 2010 09:27P.M.



In our previous podcast we discussed the principles of on-line

collaboration. In this episode we look at some practical tools for making this work in practice.

MP3 File

Web sites we mentioned in the podcast:

Setting up the project:

- Creating the workspace: Ning, Wiggio, Twitter
- Forming the team: Outsource using Elance.com, Guru.com, Rent-a-coder.com
- Project planning: BasecampHQ.com

Scheduling meetings:

- Send around meeting invites using Outlook, Lotus Notes, etc.
- TimeBridge.com allows you to nominate up to 5 possible times for a meeting
- Tungle.me (and many others) allows you to show the team when you’re available for meetings

Conducting on-line meetings:

- Teleconferences, Skype
- Webinars: WebEx, Netmeeting, GoToMeeting, GoToWebinar

Informal discussions:


- Discussion forums are useful for asynchronous discussions (Ning provides this facility)
- Chat rooms are good for synchronous discussions (Ning provides this facility)
- Bubbl.us for collaborative mind mapping
- Wallwisher.com to create your own bulletin board - example:



#### Document sharing

- Google Docs: A web-based office productivity suite, i.e. a word-processor, presentation tool, spreadsheet etc.
- Wikis: Web sites for collaboratively editing a collection of interlinked web-pages (e.g. Wikipedia)
- Use a Wiki farm for hosted wikis
- Use Rapidshare or Dropbox for sharing big files

#### Document management:

- Help desks and issue trackers: Bugzilla, Trac
- Google Docs provides revision control 

#### NOTES FROM THE WORKPLACE GARDEN

## Potted plants matter too!

MAR 04, 2010 09:28A.M.

When I think of a potted plant one of the main advantages that comes to mind is portability. You can move them around to suit your needs, filling a gap temporarily and they are great in spaces where it is just not possible to plant anything in the ground. A lot of people see potted plants as a second rate alternative to a “real garden” but I believe they deserve just as much attention as plants in the garden. Sometimes they need more attention in order to stay healthy as they can’t rely on getting nutrients from the ground and their ability to retain water can be limited.

The workplace equivalent of potted plants are temporary staff.

We bring them in to fill spots in the team on a short term basis or when we just aren’t in a position to hire someone permanently. They can be highly adaptive people who add real value to the organisation even if they are only around for a short time.

However, we tend to treat them like second class citizens. I should know . . . I was one in a former life. Being left out of social functions, not having access to all the information I needed to do my job effectively and a lack of training are just a few of the issues I encountered. Some of my assignments were long term so we aren’t talking about feeling disengaged for just a few days or weeks.

With the rise in organisations implementing flexible staffing policies it looks like temps are here to stay. Plus, there are many people out there who need to or want to work this way because it suits their lifestyle. So what are you doing to ensure that your temporary staff don’t wither and die? Here are some questions to consider:

- Do you have an adequate induction program that suits their special needs?
- Are they made to feel like a real staff member or just a disposable commodity?
- Do they have access to all the relevant systems they need to do their job?
- Would their experience with you make them want to come back or refer other people to work for you?

SUE-MAREE

## Cope Strategies: Power Plays & Compliance Capers

MAR 03, 2010 11:51P.M.

How often do you run into communication situations you don’t like or want? People trying to push you around? Acting like they know it all? Judging? Criticizing? Shooting you down? Gossiping about you?

How often do you feel you can’t get through to people? You’re about to explode? You’re cut to the core? How often does it seem people don’t care?

And you say nothing because you don’t know what to say, or you say something you wish you hadn’t?

If you’d like to be able to handle situations like these without striking out, and without sucking it up... without dominating or submitting... without being an... ass... or a doormat... If you’d like to be able to handle yourself with class and style you can be proud of - and other people will admire...

Let’s explore what’s going on - What Hurts, and what we can do about it - What Works. Starting with What Hurts.

COPE STRATEGIES

When we're faced with a situation we don't like or want we need a way to deal with it. "Cope Strategies" help us cope with whatever it is that's happening that we don't like or want.

Broadly, they fall into 3 groups;

- \* Power Plays
- \* Compliance Capers, and
- \* Escapes.

Here's an introduction to the first two of these groups.

#### POWER PLAYS

Sometimes the way we cope with a situation we don't like or want is to manipulate/coerce/force others to do what we want using Power Plays.

Power Play: ['pou(-)r] |plā|  
tactic used to manipulate/coerce/force people to do what we want them to do, regardless of what they want (or would want if they knew the reality of the situation).

For example;

Discounting, Judging, Dictating, Manipulating, Diverting, Confusing, Avoiding, Excluding, Deceiving, Guilting, and Intimidating.

Power Plays amount to avoiding the reality of what's going on with others and manipulating/coercing/forcing them to do what we want. Which means we get what we want - at others expense.

EEK! Where might we be doing this? And where might others be using Power Plays to get us to do what they want?

#### COMPLIANCE CAPERS

Sometimes the way we cope with situations we don't like or want is to manipulate/coerce/force ourselves to do what others want using compliance capers;

Compliance Capers: [k m'plī ns] |'kāp r|  
tactic used to manipulate/coerce/force ourselves to do what we don't want to do, and accept what we don't want to accept.

For example;

Denying, Distorting, Displacing, Disowning, Deferring, and Over-adapting.

Compliance Capers amount to avoiding the reality of what's going on with us by manipulating/coercing/forcing ourselves to give up what we want; in favor of others and what they want. Which means others get what they want - at our expense.

EEK! Where might we be doing this? And where might others be using Compliance Capers to give up what they want in our favor?


If you're willing to share your experiences they're welcome here on the blog.

Details of each of these Power Plays and Compliance Capers in upcoming posts. If you'd like more information sooner the digital version of the book is available here now.

Read more about it here.

Jump to the order form here.

Until next time... Here's hoping we experience less of what hurts and more of what works!

Sue-maree 

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SO WHAT'S NEXT?

## Differencemakers Master-Class Tour - 12 cities, 7 countries

MAR 03, 2010 10:02P.M.

I am very excited to let you know that this year the master-class has been extended to a one day program and that I will be sharing the platform with Torchbearer member of differencemakers community and Innovator of the Year Alexander Blass, as well as a special guest speaker who is based in each of the 12 cities and 7 countries the master-class will be held in.

#### Our schedule is:

Dubai 21st June 2010  
Toronto 13th July  
Southbend 15th July  
Manchester 27th July  
Oxford 29th July  
Singapore 17th August  
Perth 19th August  
Melbourne 24th August  
Sydney 26th August  
Brisbane 31st August  
Auckland 2nd September  
Adelaide 7th September

Alexander and I are fully energized by our research into and design of this master-class and are raring to go. Our master-class will bring together three powerful forces of responsibility, sustainability, and innovation into one awesome force for good. Our aim is to mobilise the world to take the next essential steps in the evolution of the systems and structures that govern the world so that we no longer offer yesterdays solutions to todays challenges rather create tomorrow today.

Find out more about the tour here.

Be remarkable

Ian

Founder Differencemakers Community

**Sign-up** here for a least one free resource per month and to get your complimentary copy of my ebook *Differencemakers - how doing good is great for business*.

doing today what others will only be thinking about tomorrow 

GIHAN PERERA

## The importance of being able to update your own Web site

MAR 03, 2010 07:00P.M.

I can't emphasise enough the importance of being able to update your own Web site. Don't fall into the trap of thinking you can get by with Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and other social media tools. These tools are important - no doubt about it - but remember that after you make the connection with somebody, they will want to visit your Web site to find out exactly what you do. If that Web site is out of date - or even wrong - it destroys all credibility.

Peter Dhu recently attended my Build Your Web Site In Two Days Boot Camp, because he had an old, out-of-date site. After two days, he had rebuilt the site to be modern, fresh, and - most importantly - completely within his control.

Here's what he had to say:



"I must admit I was sceptical when I started, and a bit nervous about the technology. But I'm truly amazed at what I achieved in the 2 days. I had spent time gathering and writing material for the web site. But the amazing thing is that I can

now manipulate my new web site - the functionality is brilliant I'm thrilled that I can finally manipulate, edit and update my own website, independent of any third party or web designer. And if I can do it, then truly anyone can."

Peter Dhu 

GIHAN PERERA

## Thinking Ahead Journal: Matt Hern, Gihan Perera, Karen Schmidt, David Beard, Hugh Gyton, Ann Rolfe, Ian Berry, Glenn Cardwell, Anne Riches and others

MAR 03, 2010 05:00P.M.




Every week I collect the most recent blog posts from my clients and members - all leading thinkers about business and life - and assemble them into the Thinking Ahead journal.

Download the 28th February 2010 issue here.

What's in it:

- Matt Hern's Money Guide: The must read book for aspiring entrepreneurs
- So What's Next?: The Wisdom Manifesto by Umair Haque
- Gihan Perera: Is Avatar just the same as Pocahontas?
- Gihan Perera: Be the Centre of Your Tribe

- Notes from the workplace garden: After the storm
- Lifelong Fitness: Strength helps you remember
- Gihan Perera: Use Case Studies to Build Trust and Facilitate Sales
- Just a conversation™: Difficult Conversations
- Ann Rolfe's Mentoring Works Blog: Evaluating Mentoring Programs - Webinar
- So What's Next?: Doing what we are capable of - with thanks to Gandhi and Haque
- Gihan Perera: Val Jones' engaging presenting combining Pecha Kucha and limericks
- Glenn Cardwell: The obesity epidemic
- Glenn Cardwell: Juice Plus revisited
- The Almond Effect: CLUES Is lack of sleep making you a poor leader?
- Thought Leaders Blog: The Inaugural Thought Leaders Magazine
- Thought Leaders Blog: Inspired or Simply Surviving?
- Gihan Perera: Alicia Curtis presents the 2010 Australian Emerging Leaders Report
- Matt Church: Who is really stopping you from taking your business to the next level?
- Ross Clennett: Atlassian32 - the story (and lessons) so far
- Notes from the workplace garden: Preparing for the storm
- So What's Next?: When sustainability isn't sustainable and how it can be
- Just a conversation™: Building Trust - It's not about hugs 

MATT HERN'S MONEY GUIDE

## Store your Will safely in the Will Bank

MAR 03, 2010 04:43P.M.

When a lawyer drafts your Will for you it is common that they will store the original and you receive a copy. One downside of that is keeping track of the lawyer's current contact details. (I haven't heard from the lawyer who drafted our Wills 5 years ago.)

The Public Trustee in Western Australia provide a fantastic **free** service called the **WA Will Bank**. They store your Will in a "purpose-built, fire-proof vault, keeping it safe from loss, theft or damage".

This is a brilliant community service and I recommend it highly. When you store your copy of your Will at home just write on it that the original can be found at the WA Will Bank with the Public Trustee. Your family/friends with then easily be able to find it.

For interstate readers - I've browsed the websites of other state trustees but they don't appear to offer a similar Will Bank service. If however you know of such a service please let me and other readers know in the comment section below.

Related posts:

1. Housing affordability an urgent problem, but who's to blame?
2. Homecomings: the real reason to...
3. What is fee for service financial advice?

MATT HERN'S MONEY GUIDE

## Tragedy strikes around 20 percent of working families

MAR 03, 2010 12:56P.M.

Over one million working-age parents with dependents will be impacted by death, serious accident or illness.

Many people overlook personal insurance thinking tragedy will never happen to them. Then a friend or family experiences tragedy and they get a wake-up call.

The latest research released yesterday reveals that it can and probably will happen to you at some time during your working life.

Let this research be your wake-up call to review your health, wellbeing and safety nets.

Research by NATSEM for Lifewise revealed that based on 2008

statistics:

- 18 Australian families lose a working age parent **every day**.
- Every year 235,790 working age parents suffer a serious illness or injury
- Every year over 17,000 working age parents are forced to stop working, either permanently or for an extended period of time.

More than one in five families will be impacted by an insurable event in their working lives.

Yesterday I was given a DVD called “Living with Water” about water safety with children. It’s aimed at preventing the drowning deaths of children under age five – 300 of which have occurred since 2000. That’s just over 30 drowning deaths per year targeted by this significant, government funded initiative.

The death of a child is tragic and I agree with our focus on water safety. Yet consider the massive impact on children and families when family income is slashed by injury, illness or death. And take note that more families per day are affected by that than are affected by the drowning death of a young child.

### The financial impact



It should be no surprise that the basic levels of insurance you may automatically receive with your employer superannuation are nowhere near enough.

With typical levels of insurance cover the typical family with dependants will lose around half their income if tragedy strikes, according to the research by Lifewise/NATSEM.

### Could you and your family survive on half your income?

When you consider the true likelihood of an insurable event and the financial and lifestyle impact, the cost of insurance cover is very affordable protection for your family.

Contact me to discuss how much insurance cover you may need and how affordable it can be.

Related posts:

1. Life Saving Advice
2. She’ll be right mate – It won’t happen to me
3. Understanding Private Health Insurance

ROSS CLENNETT

## Getting past 60 seconds: tips for telephone prospecting

MAR 03, 2010 03:51A.M.

The golden flow of jobs that gushed through the doors of recruitment agencies for most of the 2000’s, had the impact of loosening the discipline and reducing the skills of telephone prospecting for many agency recruiters. The cost of this haphazard approach to telemarketing became very apparent when the impact of the GFC quickly turned off the tap of jobs coming in. What I have heard, and [e](#)

THOUGHT LEADERS BLOG

## Wrong, Wrong, Wrong!

MAR 02, 2010 09:05P.M.

Being a thought leader is a risky profession.

Playwright Louis Nowra, in a new essay (as reported in The Australian 1.3.10), takes aim at Germaine Greer, ferocious feminist and author of “The Female Eunuch” published in 1970. That’s 40 years ago. He complains that Germaine was wrong about women; wrong about their attitude to romance; about how they would wield power, and how they would organise things, if allowed to rule the world. And he gets really personal - she is now “a befuddled and exhausted old woman” who reminds him of his demented grandmother. And, he says, she is dull and has a coarse mind. Ouch! Nasty!

If so, so what? Germaine Greer was a pioneer thought leader. Like the rest of us, she didn’t have a crystal ball but she stuck her neck out to change the way others thought. You have to admit, it worked. Who in the early 1970’s would have believed that within a generation women would be Judges and Prime Ministers and would even run for President of the USA?

There is more than a bit of irony in Nowra’s criticism. Greer didn’t set out to be pretty or to be liked - that was the whole point; she encouraged women to achieve on their merits, rather than by seeking the approval of men.

Sometimes it takes an extreme opinion to shift perspectives. Women in the 1960’s were still expected to retire from work when they got married. Girls like me, educated through the 1970’s, were the first generation to

be taught that women could “have it all”. Germaine Greer put it into perspective; helped us understand the context of the world we were entering. In 1980, when we applied for jobs as lawyers, we all knew we would be asked “Do you intend to have children?” We knew that the correct answer was “Of course not!” Male lawyers assumed we were “filling in time” before having children, and told us it was in our best interests not to return to work afterwards. Reading Greer’s work helped us understand how recently and dramatically things had changed; and so put their reactions into context.

Greer did change people’s thinking. She made a difference. Women advanced in their careers. She didn’t fix all the problems and she predict the future. She urged women to give up their “friperies”. Nowra makes the point that women love shopping more than ever. Who on earth could have foreseen the rise of Paris Hilton? And anyway, is shopping inconsistent with career advancement? We didn’t burn our bras but we used our brains.

As thought leaders we should be judged on our ideas and the impact they have. We have to hope the criticism won’t get personal, but it might. We can’t predict the future; just focus on our intention to make a difference.





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MATT CHURCH

## Take No More

MAR 02, 2010 08:32P.M.

I have been looking at the idea of letting people help you. I feel that there are 3 levels of personal evolution when it comes to collaboration, delegation and relying on others. 1. Take 2. Push 3. Share Take is about being dependent and taking from others, it has a needy vibe and is obviously not ideal. In take, you draw from others unconsciously. Push is about being independent and winning from 

GIHAN PERERA

## Recording: Planning Your Web Site - Part 1 of 3

MAR 02, 2010 06:30P.M.

Yesterday we ran the first of my free three-part webinar series about planning your Web site.

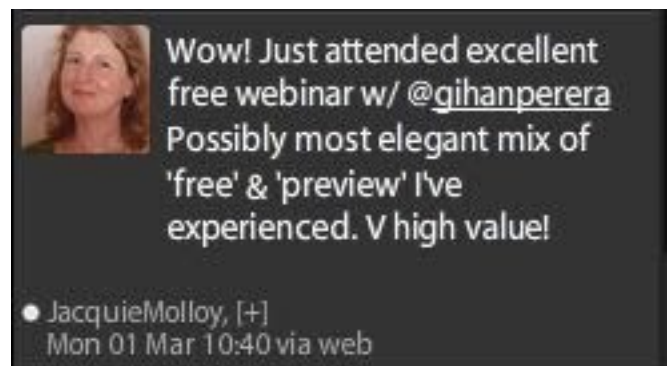
If you don’t have a Web site yet, this webinar series will help you plan for it. If you do have a Web site, these webinars will help you fine-tune it to make it more effective.

Session 1 (1st March): Understanding your site visitors

Session 2 (8th March): Leading them on the right path

Session 3 (15th March): Persuading them to buy (or take action)

Here’s what Jacquie Molloy had to say in a tweet immediately after the webinar:



If you missed this session, you can watch the recording here:

It’s not too late to register for the rest of the webinars, even if you haven’t done so yet. Register for the two remaining webinars here. 

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## SALES SUCCESS FORUM

## More Sales Lessons From Salespeople

MAR 02, 2010 04:56A.M.



Our SalesCoachCentral members' "My Sales Story" competition is generating some great stories with lessons for us all to learn from to help us win more new, repeat and referral sales.

Congratulations to our winners for this month who were Ross Clennett and Peter Donald.

### Here's the My Sales Story from Ross:

When I was a rookie temp accounting recruiter I took my Director on a prospect visit. It was to a well known freight company, near the Sydney airport, who I had found out were using a lot of accounting clerical temps.

The visit was with the GM of Finance. I prepared my sales structure and answers to predictable objections, hoping to impress my director. However once we were in his office the prospect proceeded to talk (complain, actually) non-stop for an hour about the office politics and his boss.

I barely got a chance to talk and as we had another meeting scheduled we had to leave promptly after an hour.

As we drove off I was rather flat about the meeting expecting my Director be criticise me for allowing the client to run the agenda. Surprisingly he thought the visit went very well. 'Why?' I asked. My Director replied "clearly he isn't being heard inside his own company and needed an outlet to express all his frustration and resentment. We were that outlet today. I bet he feels we understand him and what he has to deal with each day."

I have to say I was very dubious – I mean we hadn't even talked about

temps! However the next day I received a call from one of the GM's direct reports saying she had been told to call me about two temp jobs she needed filling! I filled both those jobs and that was the start of a \$100k plus net revenue per annum client.

That experience was a big lesson in understanding that until the prospect feels heard and understood all I was doing was 'pitching to deaf ears'.

**My Comment:** The old adage of 'no-one cares how much you know until they know how much you care' is probably a bit overdone these days, but the reality is too many salespeople still go in with a 'pitch' to a potential client and 'capability sell', rather than focusing first on what the client might like to achieve from the meeting, and/or what the client might like to talk about.

At the same time, there is an equally large number of salespeople who do not really focus on the client and choose to 'fluff' around with small talk, when what the client actually wants to do is find out more about the products and services that the salesperson can provide.

If we're truly client focused, we can work out fairly quickly how much talking and listening we need to do to create an environment where the client is comfortable and confident to make a wise buying decision.

### Here's the My Sales Story from Peter:

I was referred to a young couple by a principal of the firm. They were in a difficult financial position. Following the loss of his Dad his mother found it difficult to meet the home loan left behind ( no insurance ). She offered her son a 25% share in her home if he would take over the debt, which he did. He then married and together they bought an investment unit in 3 names using the equity in Mums house.

They also had some personal debt for cars etc. All this caused stress on the relationships to meet payments and rent. I was able to reorganise their structure after 3 home visits one of which I arranged they get Mum to attend on a weekend.

The end result was they reduced the no taxable debt quickly and allowed cash flow to relieve the stress. After another year of regular follow up they purchased a home using her mothers assistance. Late last year they had their first child. I also referred them to our Insurance advisor who arrange appropriate covers for both of them to protect their child.

So referral, follow up and further follow up resulted in a success story for all. We also now do their tax returns.

**My Comment:** I love the way Peter points out that the result was a 'success story for all'. Selling should never just be about the success of the sale. The most successful salespeople I encounter are those who's intention is to create value for their clients. Their focus is to look for opportunities where their products and services can help people solve problems, meet needs and satisfy wants.

When clients pick up on our intention as being that of genuinely wanting

to create value for them, trust is built and deeper emotional and intellectual connections are made.

More stories from members of SalesCoachCentral next month.

LET'S GO THERE...

## It's your dream so why would you let someone else squash it

MAR 01, 2010 10:44P.M.



We all have dreams. Big dreams and little dreams of a life where what we wish to achieve actually happens for real. You might call this setting goals. I don't. Dreams to me are what come from the gut, the essence of who we are inside. We have a yearning, almost an insatiable desire to satisfy such dreams.

I recently travelled to California to attend the San Francisco Writer's Conference where dreams were on tap. Every conversation opened with the phrase – "So what are you writing a book about?" The answer would either be a laugh, a serious statement or a practice of a pitch carefully crafted after attending one of the many sessions on this topic.

Yet underneath the words of each person, I sensed the heart of a writer, felt the energy of storytellers and saw the longing of expression in the eyes. These people were on a mission to calm the voice inside needing to be expressed.

For most it seems this voice can stay tamed and corralled into personal journals. Yet for many the words want to be birthed onto a page.

One of my most enjoyable experiences at the conference was meeting new people and getting to know their story. While I wanted to know about their book, more so I wanted to know why they wrote. Here are a couple of examples of people who stood out. (Of course I changed the names to protect their identity.)

### Joe Non-Fiction Writer

I met Joe several times. We seemed to cross paths in almost every session I attended. We were both on the nonfiction path trying to navigate our way through pitch feedback, agent selection and editor advice.

Joe initially strikes you as a quiet, soft spoken man of little words. Yet when you let him open up about his topic, out comes the passion, still tempered by his reticent demeanor. Joe had a full manuscript in his hand. He showed it to me and others like it was a work of art, a baby.



I frequently noticed Joe coming out of conversations flat and dejected. I felt for him. He was in unfamiliar territory. Like a child at his first day of school, Joe went from session to session hoping for a bit of support.

Then I thought I would chat with Joe. I sincerely wanted to know about his book. His heavy and weighted tome, was complicated, intellectual and thorough. It matched the expertise he had from his profession. I will not say what his day job is, but lets just say he is up there in the top five of most needed and respected professions (we would not be here if he didn't do his work). The ethics and integrity of his labor of love would far exceed many of us any day. If not, he would no longer be practicing.

What stood out to me was that this extremely professional qualified person could be reduced to a meek almost childlike timid man fearful and lacking in resilience. My sensitive heart went out to him.

So just before leaving I pulled him aside. We chatted a little about the experience. He was not smiling. I then shared with him some of my positive observations from seeing him at different times. My last comment was "Don't give up. This is your contribution and it has a right to be shared. The 'how' may be up in the air right now, but you are a man who stands for something worth speaking about. So don't give up." His face brightened, he even smiled. Then he responded "Thank You. I really needed to hear that. It means a lot to me as I was really losing faith."

Now I am not saying that I got him to have faith again. Not at all. What I am saying is that taking the time to encourage rather than discourage

restored his own sense of faith. Within him is a dream. Within him is a belief that what he is doing is worth telling. The story will come out. Whether it is a traditionally published book is another question.

Bob Fiction Writer



I met Bob once. Bob and I were both having a much needed quiet 'introvert' break over a coffee at Grace Cathedral (this was the closest place for me to get my Peet's coffee fix).

We were enjoying our coffee when we accidentally started a conversation (this happens with introverts). Somehow we figured that we each were attendees. Bob was in his early 60's, sprouting a good head of gray hair, and slow in his step. He spoke with consideration and economy, not a word without meaning. It was in the sharing of these words that I learned of his interests, hobbies and passion for writing. He had a manuscript, actually to him THE manuscript. His manuscript was long, very long. He was grappling with the feedback from agents and other experts – this one book should be two books.

Yet despite this dilemma he had accomplished something many of us could only dream of – his manuscript was finished. He is now on to the next phase, the more taxing one of editing, editing, editing and more editing. Well this challenge ahead also depends on how he chooses to publish. As I learned at the conference there is a spectrum for publishing – self to trade. The pros and cons of each are self evident to a writer. For Bob he really needs to decide where he wants to be on the spectrum. From there he may have to compromise – or as I see it collaborate with experienced professionals.



I asked him a question about the length of books he likes to read. No

surprise here, he likes long books. So he writes the way he likes to read. Whether his writing is commercial is of course for the experts to determine. Whether his pride can handle someone else working with him to change and refine his work is up to him. Ultimately though he has a mission plus a passion. He wants to tell a story and wants people to read it. It is up to him which route he travels. If his writing is not commercial he still has options. That is the beauty of publishing. So I left him with this thought in his mind. He is an unpublished writer who already has accomplished a great deal. His story is recorded. It is a new journey to discover how this story will get to others.

It is in this context I share my other observations. You may or may not be a writer. However I bet that you have a dream just like each of the people who attended this conference.

*Dreams take hard work to become reality*

The dream is the idea. It is the initiation of the process for creating in the real and material world. To translate this unformed state into form requires effort. The effort can be consistent or regular, there just has to be effort. For example, in the Olympics the common theme in winning athlete interviews is how much dedication and hard work they put in. Many of these athletes also had the dream to be what they are today – a medalist in the Olympics. Only a few truly dedicate themselves to the level required to be at the top. Either way effort will correlate to the outcome. When applied to a dream it makes the journey worthwhile, meaningful and, dare I say, fun.

*Writers are dreamers writing their way to being authors.*

*Wisdom comes from experience*

Gray hair does not mean expert. Experience does. Listening to the 'experts' I got a consistent sense that each person leveraged from a life of experience whether in publishing or elsewhere. Some were new to the game, yet still had lots of experience. From this first hand knowledge came tips, techniques and stories. Whether the information related to the audience was not an issue with the expert, but really up to the audience member taking in the shared learning.

*Writing is a wisdom journey.*

*Beneath every persona is a person just like you*

As in any industry there are a variety of personalities taking center stage. The SFWC was no different. From some people's perspective those with the extroverted personas jumped out and challenged people. I heard the subsequent grumblings in the hallways as evidence. Perhaps 'expert' honesty dashed the hopes and dreams of another would be idealist author. Speakers and panelists at writing conferences work in the industry for a living. It is not a passing hobby, shelved dream or back of the list idea. Publishing experts need to be 'on' at all times in a place like a writers conference. What may be a dream to some is a vocation to others.

*Writers live their vocation.*

Reality creeps through if you notice

I also got a glimpse on occasion of the reality of the expert's world. There was the person, massaging his head, clearly trying to push away a nagging headache. Yet he persevered through the delivery of his session. Another few shared genuine emotions in response to the stories and experiences offered by participants. A couple may have enjoyed the social hour more than necessary. There was the shy one, brilliant and insightful one to one and in small group, who recoiled at the thought of speaking in front of a group. There were many who called it like it is and tried to slice through the aura and rosiness of people's perceptions. Then there was my favorite speaker, sharing her humorous and heart rendering keynote, who demonstrated that values and soul survive above misfortune no matter how bad it gets.

*Writing professionals are real people too.*

Respect trumps popularity any day

Sessions packed out based on popularity of speaker, panel members, topic and genre. One might be tempted to think that if every writer was not on social media their days were numbered. Alternatively getting to place your posterior in a chair five feet away from your favorite agent may be as close as you come to getting their attention. The descriptions of sessions do a great job of enticing and sorting out attendees. Yet when the words came out of a speaker's mouth you could tell when a speaker or panellist really meant business. I quickly noticed the common sense, almost battle weary wisdom, projected from those who truly cared. They were not trying to win a beauty contest. The tone, body language and approach signalled to us all 'heed what I say, I've been there'.

*Giving back to the profession shows some heart.*

Have patience, patience and more patience

The journey to 'successful published author', however you define this

term, is not overnight. Stories abound of the attempts by would be authors to land the deal, get the agent, find the publisher of their dreams. Behind this search is the commitment to regular writing, daily 'work', re-crafting and reworking words into a refined piece of art. The time frame whether self-publishing or trade publishing is long, not short. You don't just say today I will write a book and 'whalla' you are published tomorrow. (Unless you are blogging.) So the one trait that I think stands all who wish to pursue their dreams seriously is PATIENCE. Develop, foster, nurture, respect and learn patience.

*Successful quality writers are patient.*

Perseverance, dedication, passion and focus are essential ingredients

A companion to patience is effort and commitment. The real author, agent, editor truly loves this work enough to dedicate hours, days, months and years to perfecting their craft. Writers want to write wherever and whenever they can. Agents take their role as defender of the author to heart. Editors keenly seek the next great work that will bring them joy and reward for the search. The road is long. There are no short cuts. Truly. If there are then these are the exception. Yet even with such 'apparent' overnight success stories there were many years prior of building the foundation from which to launch. Overall I noticed that truly successful people in the publishing industry stay because they not only want to but have to in order to satisfy their own passion.

*Many ingredients create writing success.*

Know why you do what you do

A writers conference of 'wanna be' authors is a great place to discover uncertainty. All eager and ready to dazzle an agent or editor with a pitch, many attendees soon realized that without clarity their message got lost (my hand up on this one!). The experienced sounding boards at the conference needed only minutes, perhaps seconds to get whether you were on or off track. If you were on track you savored the moment. If not, well then back to the notepad, computer, journal again. If you have not got clarity about your own mission, purpose, existence etc then how can anything you produce be right?

*Writers on purpose deliver.*

Learn from your peers

A conference of experts can lend itself to being a guru fest. People

attending may look to the speakers and other presenters as the only answer to their needs. However looking outward may not be just to whose on stage. Another direction is next to you. The consideration of others is more than networking, it's about partnering. Getting the most from peer learning though required active engagement. Initial strangers became writing groups, manuscript reviewers, pitch audiences. Every conversation became an opportunity to practice and get one step closer to authentic expression of your book idea.

*Writers who work with other writers progress.*

The ultimate lesson learned - Trust your self

When we go into events seeking information, knowledge and advice from experts we risk forgetting to listen to our self. As the eager attendee goes from session to session one's processing mode is switched to intake, absorb, immerse. Without the benefit of time or real breaks we may forget to reflect, process and integrate with our world-view.

Conferences are great places to stimulate your ideas and thoughts, yet can also shut down your own.

What was my experience?

I was not immune. Despite all my effort to listen to my inner voice I found it in battle with the words of others. From the outset I felt as if I was on the back foot trying to prove why my idea would fly. Alternatively it seemed then that I needed to impress the 'right' person to get somewhere. The pressure built up further as I got more into the experience of testing my book ideas (yes of course there are many) on people.

I describe my experience as a rollercoaster. One minute on a high as a speaker inspired me with a few real life stories of success. The next minute taken to frustration when the wording of my idea didn't fit the expert's world view.

Yet through all the intensity of information overload and constructive feedback a shift occurred. I shed a few layers of doubt. Not doubt about being an author. No, I shed doubt about being me.

The act of constantly speaking about your passion and dream forces you to clarify what you are on about. Each person you meet, each expert you consult, each speaker you listen to gives you a gift. The gift they give is the chance to refine your expression, be clearer and ground your self further in your own truth. This process is needed since a dream can be nebulous, unformed and forever changing when kept within.

Thank you

So in closing this blog post I send a huge thank you to each person I encountered on my conference journey. Every conversation, minute of feedback, spot of wisdom worked me until I got to an evolved place as a writer. I have a dream that is now becoming reality, at least in my world.

Let's go there...



THINKING CAPS

## The Lack of Service Systems (bring out the Wanker in me)

MAR 01, 2010 10:34P.M.



Right On Queue

Some times in life I don't scrub up too well, don't perform at my best and don't come across as a really nice bloke. In fact, sometimes I can appear to be a bit of a wanker.

Usually this happens in Post Offices and more specifically in queues at Post Offices. Take today for example, or last week, or perhaps in several days time.

The local Post Office has a stack of good people working for it. The staff are mostly friendly folk, usually helpful and often with smiles on their face (at least at the start of the day). There are also a couple of nice walls displaying different sized bags, boxes, envelopes and such things for purchase and there are even tubs full of things you can buy to entertain yourself whilst standing in the queue, everything from Videos to Stamp

### Sets to Fishing Rods.

All good except for a few minor points; firstly I am never too sure where I should line up. People sometimes stand in a single queue and then (several hours later) when they get near the serving bench they branch off to whichever server beckons them. Other times people queue in two lines or three and you need to play the Pick the Fastest Moving Line Game. A couple of times there have been so many lines that distinguishing between a line and a mob becomes more than an academic point.

Now I am not against mobs. A few years ago I was in the International Post Office in Beijing and I foolishly stood in what I thought was a line when in fact the line was a throng (a sub-set of a mob). In throngs you push, shove and somehow find your way into the best shouting position to become the next person served. In a queue you wait your turn and proceed in sequence. As soon as I figured out that the Beijing PO was a throng I joined the fray and enjoyed the game.

Now, back to today. To all intents and purposes the Melbourne suburban Post Office I go to looked as if it was operating in lines. The Algorithm seemed to be set and the gradual shuffle forward was starting to happen. However, then a chap not in line (let's call him: a. Ratbag b. Cunning or c. Just Plain Lucky) managed to get a Trainee to help him out and the Trainee went behind the counter and interrupted the server who then set about responding to the Ratbag and meeting his needs. Thus Ratbag had successfully jumped the queue, stumped the line, and raised my heckles, all in one move.

Some folk would simply stand and wait. Others would get slightly annoyed but realise in a life full of annoyance it is best to let some minor annoying things happen and then simply sigh. And some days I would be with them, I would calm my mind with deeply meditative thoughts, still my muscles with a relaxant, ease my spirit with a Green Tea and simply smile at all the other folk railing at the injustice.

But not today: today was a Camel of a day just looking for a piece of straw with which to break my back. Today was a culmination of too many recent flights on too many planes, too many airport queues and too many Ratbags who had slipped through to the Keeper in an Unsporting Game of Life's Cricket. Today was the day to make a stand and put my stamp on things.

I would love to say that my complaint and mini lecture on Systems Thinking Approaches to Customer Service was welcomed with a 'thank you', a gentle round of applause and a pay cheque for delivering on the spot Professional Development but alas 'no'. My complaint was greeted with a look of disdain, a volley of 'explain' and I was then told to 'not be so rude'.

Rude?

No raised voice, no pointed finger, no personal attack... just a mini lecture from a very big Soap Box.

Still, I guess Australians in general don't complain too much about lack of service and lack of systems. We often prefer to stand in silence or whinge after the event. However I did make my stand and state my case and I am proud to say that I am not the least bit concerned that any mail I now wish to post might end up in Timbuktu or the back of Bourke. No, I am more afraid than worried.

Still, any lack of service systems at my Post Office is usually forgiven because the folk who work at the PO are usually fine, friendly and far more patient than me. But it still bugs me that there are certain things that could be done which would help the staff from being on the receiving end of frustrated customers. William Edwards Deming, the founding Father of the Quality movement once said that 'In 90% of cases where there is error it can be attributed to a Systems Error rather than to the error of a single person. Yet we continue to blame the person.'

So, if my PO had a system for letting people know how they should queue (or a sign saying 'No Queues allowed – just throngs and mobs. The people who get closest and shout loudest will get served first') then the staff might not have so many frazzled customers. If Trainees are taught procedure rather than being left to discover it for themselves almost by accident then they might not be on the receiving end of complaints. And if every Post Office had an armed Security Guard looking for and shooting Ratbags trying to jump the queue then a lot of potential grief could be overcome. Unless of course the Postal Offices bring in a System where potential wankers are also shot on sight, then I think I might potentially be in some very big trouble.

Thinking Caps book is available from [www.glenncapelli.com](http://www.glenncapelli.com) 


THE TRUTH ABOUT TRUST

## Complaints when trust breaks down

MAR 01, 2010 08:45P.M.





The word clouds you create are entirely yours to use for any purpose, so use your imagination. For example, why not make up T-shirts of your word cloud for promotional purposes? 

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SALES SUCCESS FORUM

## Abundance And Success In Sales

MAR 01, 2010 02:01P.M.



This week's affirmation of intention is *I believe in abundance and strive for success. This week I will take time to reflect on and celebrate my successes.*

As I reflect on this week's affirmation of intention, I'm reminded of a parable my mum used to tell us about a beggar who spent his life sitting on an old box against an old building where he would with his head always facing the ground hold out his hand to passers by and ask for money.

One day a small child approached the beggar and asked him what was in the box that he sat on. The beggar replied that he had been sitting on the box for as long as he could remember, but had never thought to look inside it.

The small child told the beggar to look inside the box. The beggar did, and was amazed to find a fortune in gold coins and jewels. When he looked up again the child was gone.

### How close are you to success?

Sometimes we're so close to all that we need, that we don't see the potential.

Abundance thinking for salespeople I believe starts with the understanding that our success is certainly possible and believing that

with the right intention, there will be more than enough clients wanting to buy from us.....we've just got to be proactive about creating the right environment for us to connect.

My financial adviser has been a wonderful mentor for me in many ways. One particular piece of advice he has insisted on holding us accountable for is to celebrate our successes.

### Celebrate Your Successes

As a sales coach I pass this advice on to you. In sales we can become so focused on the next sales target, that we forget to celebrate the successes along the way.

If you're struggling to think of a recent success, perhaps you're operating out of a position of scarcity and not abundance. Perhaps you're operating out of a position of reactivity rather than proactivity. Perhaps you're operating out of a position of perfection rather than potential.

Just as I am practicing this week's affirmation, I recommend you do too – take time to reflect on and celebrate your successes, and while you're doing that, remember to reflect on and celebrate on the successes your clients are achieving from utilising the value you've created for them when they've bought from you.

You have all you need right now!

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NOTES FROM THE WORKPLACE GARDEN

## You aren't crazy if you talk to your plants

MAR 01, 2010 09:22A.M.

The Times published an article a while back that proves the Prince of Wales was right all along. Plants really do like it if you talk to them. What he did not know is that they prefer to hear a woman's voice. These are the conclusions of a month long study by the Royal Horticultural Society into the effect of the human voice on tomato plants. More than two decades after the Prince exposed himself to ridicule for saying it was "very important" to talk to plants and that "they respond", horticulturalists believe his hunch was correct. The guys at Mythbusters also agree. When they looked into this urban myth in 2004 the verdict was "plausible". Previous research has looked at the relationship between plants and music too. In 2007 Mi Jeong Jeong, a South Korean scientist, discovered that playing Beethoven's Moonlight sonata to rice plants led to faster growth and earlier blossom.

There used to be a time when senior managers believed there would be seen as crazy for talking to frontline staff and line managers believed the only way to make people productive was to have silence in the workplace. We now know that both these assumptions are wrong. Talking to people

is vital if senior management are going to stay in touch with what is really happening in the workplace. With the rise of younger, wired generations who need to keep their multi channel brains occupied to concentrate, playing music at work can actually increase productivity. The customers don't seem to mind most of the time anyway, as long as the music choice and volume control are appropriate.

Going back to the British researcher's findings on the power of female voices, you can draw some parallels with female leadership styles in the workplace. We have been talking for a while now about the feminisation of leadership and not just from the point of view of having more women as leaders but also of male leaders adopting a more humanistic approach. Seems that wasn't such a crazy idea either . . .

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# Regular Contributors

Gihan Perera	<a href="http://www.gihanperera.info">www.gihanperera.info</a>
Hugh Gyton	<a href="http://justaconversation-hugh.blogspot.com">justaconversation-hugh.blogspot.com</a>
Ian Berry	<a href="http://www.ianberry.au.com/ianberrysblog.html">www.ianberry.au.com/ianberrysblog.html</a>
Matt Church	<a href="http://www.thoughtleadersblog.com">www.thoughtleadersblog.com</a>
	<a href="http://www.mattchurchblog.com">www.mattchurchblog.com</a>
Glenn Capelli	<a href="http://glenncapelli.blogspot.com">glenncapelli.blogspot.com</a>
Glenn Cardwell	<a href="http://glenn-glenncardwell.blogspot.com">glenn-glenncardwell.blogspot.com</a>
Sharonne Phillips	<a href="http://sharonne-phillips.blogspot.com">sharonne-phillips.blogspot.com</a>
Anne Riches	<a href="http://anneriches.blogspot.com">anneriches.blogspot.com</a>
Matt Hern	<a href="http://financialfuturist.com">financialfuturist.com</a>
David Beard	<a href="http://lifelongfitness.net/blog">lifelongfitness.net/blog</a>
David Thomas	<a href="http://thinkglobalblog.blogspot.com">thinkglobalblog.blogspot.com</a>
Ross Clennett	<a href="http://rossclennett.blogspot.com">rossclennett.blogspot.com</a>
Jenn Shallvey	<a href="http://feeds.feedburner.com/LetsGoThere">feeds.feedburner.com/LetsGoThere</a>
Peter Webb	<a href="http://www.peterwebb.com.au">www.peterwebb.com.au</a>
Sue-maree McEneaney	<a href="http://hspotting.blogspot.com">hspotting.blogspot.com</a>
Helen Macdonald	<a href="http://helenmacblog.blogspot.com">helenmacblog.blogspot.com</a>
Steve Francis	<a href="http://www.stevefrancis.net.au">www.stevefrancis.net.au</a>
Ann Rolfe	<a href="http://mentoring-works.blogspot.com">mentoring-works.blogspot.com</a>
Michael Harrison	<a href="http://www.michaelharrison.com.au">www.michaelharrison.com.au</a>
Gary Ryan	<a href="http://garyryansblog.blogspot.com">garyryansblog.blogspot.com</a>
Vanessa Hall	<a href="http://thetruthabouttrust.blogspot.com">thetruthabouttrust.blogspot.com</a>
David Penglase	<a href="http://salessuccessforum.com.au">salessuccessforum.com.au</a>
Neil Mattingley	<a href="http://neilmattingley.com">neilmattingley.com</a>
Karen Schmidt	<a href="http://www.letsgrow.com.au">www.letsgrow.com.au</a>