

# IMPACT

*Your workforce development magazine*

**WHY LEADERS  
TELL STORIES**

**BIG BUSINESS AND  
INSTAGRAM**

**The science of  
decision making**

**The real cost of  
workplace  
bullying**

**the sharing economy**

**THE RISE OF  
FOLLOWERSHIP**

**SAFETY IN 2050**

**THE FUTURE  
WORKPLACE IS  
ALREADY HERE**

**Fashion, food,  
finance and more**

**Issue 4 May 2019  
Value - Priceless**

ISSUE NO 4 MAY 2019

# **LEADING** **from the front of** **the room**

## **Powerful Presenters** **are change makers**

## **Presenters are** **leaders**

Paula Smith CSP

[WWW.GITP.COM.AU](http://WWW.GITP.COM.AU)



# From the Editor of IMPACT

**2019 is the year of the sharing economy. We are busy sharing our expertise, our offices, our homes and even our staff.  
Are you taking advantage of the sharing economy?**

Welcome to this issue of IMPACT - Our workforce development magazine.

The way we view work is changing. Gone are the days of going to work, doing a job that you don't particularly like for a company you don't have any interest in. Employers are doing their best to become employers of choice and social enterprises and profit for purpose organisations are becoming the norm. Employees are choosing to work with organisations that have shared values, flexible work arrangements and a shared sense of purpose. Clients are becoming much more selective about who they do business with and collaborators are being much more careful about who they align their own brand with.

We spend such a high proportion of our lives at work, why wouldn't we want our careers and our business interests to be purpose-driven and aligned with what matters the most to us.

We are also enjoying the rise of the sharing economy. Individuals and organisations sharing resources to make them more accessible to everyone. From sharing a couch for that travelling guest to sharing your office space to cut costs. In this issue we find out more about how clever people are sharing their unique spaces and places all over Australia.

I hope you enjoy diving into topics such as workplace bullying, high performance, the science behind our decisions, what to do with customer feedback and why leaders should tell more stories and many more workplace challenges in this issue of IMPACT.

Our contributors live and work across the globe and we are always so grateful they take the time to share their insights with our readers. We believe we have something for everyone in each issue of IMPACT, we hope you think the same.

Our team at GITP and **IMPACT** magazine hope you enjoy all the amazing value in this issue. I hope you feel compelled to share IMPACT with others.

*Paula*

PAULA SMITH  
CEO OF THE GLOBAL INSTITUTE OF TRAINING AND PRESENTING  
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INTELLIGENCE ® AND LIFELONG LEARNER



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The art, science and power of  
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## Leveraging the sharing economy

SpacetoCo is leading the way , a Shark Tank story



## Barriers to exceptional performance

Deeper than just thinking



## Your winter personal brand audit

Crafting your winter brand message



## More super needed

A fighting chance for future generations

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# There's a bully in the business

By Julia Ewert



# The real cost of workplace bullying

Do you have a spare \$27,153.00? That's the average claim for a bullying case in Australia. Could your business be at risk of wasting this money?

Workplace bullying loses Australian businesses up to \$36bn per year.

Unfortunately I have walked this road. I have been bullied and I have had someone allege (wrongly) that I was bullying them.

I hear amongst my network of employment lawyers and senior managers about how often a staff member alleges bullying once they become embroiled in performance management. Or a manager is accused when simply attempting – with good intention - to improve someone's performance.

This was the case in my situation with a staff member I directly managed.

Whilst performance management processes across different companies may be subject to varying policies and procedures, they will all be governed by legislative requirements for handling performance and for termination due to poor performance.

So, how do employers and managers ensure that they are conducting respectful, orderly and legal performance management processes whilst maintaining good intentions towards a non-performing employee?

People are less likely to claim bullying against someone they like. So, as a competent manager (and as a decent human), it is important to show your team that you genuinely care about them and that you value their contribution, even if their performance is becoming poor.

## Workplace bullying loses Australian businesses up to \$36bn per year



The focus shouldn't be how to avoid a bullying claim, but instead be on how to have an engaged workforce whilst also improving or maintaining good mental health and wellness amongst staff.

## 6 steps to reduce your risk of workplace bullying when managing poor performance.

- 1. Show that you care** (be the boss you always wanted to have)  
Notice them. Simple, rather than grand gestures. Remember their partners and children's names, birthdays, work anniversaries and major life events or achievements. Enquire about special projects they are working on. Thank them (face to face, NOT over email) when they work back, come in early or for something over-and-above.
- 2. Meet with staff regularly** (where possible, face to face)  
Weekly, fortnightly, monthly, whatever works. Note: Performance doesn't become poor overnight. Competent and caring managers notice performance slipping immediately and act upon it accordingly, respectfully.
- 3. Meet/talk formally and informally**  
I alternate having one meeting to discuss performance (great, good or otherwise) and the other meeting (more informal) getting to know them, skills practice, training or coaching.

# Do you have a spare \$27,153.00? if not keep reading

## 4. Ask questions

Demonstrate you care about helping their performance lift. Do you understand what success looks like in your role? What can I do to help you? What do you need in order to succeed? How can we do this together?

## 5. Follow up and be genuinely helpful

I'm not suggesting to do the hard work for them, but if they are a good person, then lifting their performance is a better outcome than heading back to the recruiting board! Plus, it's part of a manager's duty to manage performance.

## 6. Take notes


It is important in case things go south. A simple outline of each conversation/meeting, agreed actions and follow up.

By handling performance-related matters correctly, you can significantly reduce your risk of bullying behaviour – which should be the focus - and therefore potential allegations or claims.



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BRILLIANT LEADERSHIP  
AND BETTER  
PERFORMING TEAMS**



A photograph of the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, taken from a low angle looking up at one of the towers. The bridge's orange-red steel structure is silhouetted against a bright, hazy sky at sunset or sunrise. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow. The bridge's suspension cables and the intricate lattice work of the tower are clearly visible. The water of the bay is visible at the bottom of the frame.

# **The pace and size of the tech ecosystem in San Francisco**

## **What we can learn**

**By  
Kate Kirwin  
Programs Coordinator  
Spacecubed**

# A few observations from Kate

I work for leading Perth coworking hub Spacecubed running a number of programs including Plus Eight accelerator program. That program invests a pool of \$400,000 into Perth startups, offers mentoring, office space and support in scaling tech startups. As a key part of the program we take the teams to San Francisco to understand the pace and size of the tech ecosystem in the Bay Area, attend conferences and events, network with investors, mentors, competitors and fellow founders, and to allow the teams time to make their own connections. I have travelled to San Francisco twice now and have a few observations to share.

## **The Bay Area is BIG, both in size and industry.**

Both in size of the industry, and geographically. Naively, Australians tend to refer to the area as “San Francisco” or “San Fran” (note, only Australians call it San Fran – its SF to the locals) as if it’s just one city. Google is headquartered in Mountain View which is about a 50 min drive from SF proper, Apple is in Cupertino, another 15 mins south, and Facebook in Menlo Park 10 mins to the east. There is a massive housing crisis in the city, with people commuting up to 2 hours from their home to work. It’s also mindboggling to see how large the tech campuses are. I got thoroughly lost at Google HQ – it legitimately is an entire city. An employee told me that as of a few years ago they had over 20,000 employees at the Mountain View campus, a number which is growing daily.

## **People work hard, but they are still very generous with their time**

In general, Australians are well liked in the Bay Area. Everyone I spoke to either was Australian, had been to Australia, or worked with an Australian. Time is a precious commodity, so make sure you do your homework, travel to the person you are meeting with, and always, always, have an ask.



## It's a relationship game

It's a big ecosystem, but every product manager knows every other product manager, and every CEO knows every other CEO. Don't be afraid to ask for a warm intro if there's someone in their network you want to meet.

#itneverhurtstoask

## SF has its fair share of problems

I heard a lot of rhetoric around how the face of tech in the Bay Area is young, white and male. Over 30 is considered old. Company culture is difficult to get right. Diversity and inclusion are hot topics. Homelessness is a huge problem, and the cost of living is very high. The venture capital model of grow at all costs leads to companies being valued at over a billion dollars, with no path to profitability. The recent Lyft IPO is a great example of this.

## Americans are much better at selling their successes than Australians

Our unconscious tall poppy syndrome is so noticeable in SF. Australians tend to be conservative in estimates, plus our market size is much smaller so, we are used to pitching with smaller numbers. US investors are assuming that you are exaggerating your successes, which can impact negatively on Australian startups.



## Despite all of that, SF really is the startup mecca

And it is an incredible place to soak up and observe. Where else can you do Silent Disco Beach Yoga with a perfect view of the Golden Gate Bridge? I'm so thankful to all the incredible people I got to meet while in the Bay Area and look forward to returning with a new batch of startups in the near future.



**Thank you Kate for sharing your SF journey with IMPACT.**



## **LEADERS TELL STORIES HERE'S WHY**

**THANKS TO NEUROSCIENCE WE HAVE LEARNED A LOT OVER  
THE PAST FEW YEARS ABOUT JUST HOW POWERFUL STORIES  
CAN BE.**

### *The power of story*

We now know which brain chemicals cause us to pay attention and which chemicals help us to connect with others. A great story releases a rush of brain chemicals like Cortisol (which helps you to handle stress), Dopamine – the brain's reward neurotransmitter and Oxytocin – The love, bonding and trust hormone.

The most fascinating research into stories uncovered that the same brain chemicals can be released when we think about doing something as when we are actually doing it. Have you ever dreamed that you were driving a fast sports car and woke up feeling excited and pumped? Those thoughts activated parts of the brain that would have been activated if you were really driving that car. Depending how great your imagination was of course at the time.

## *A little bit of WOW*

When the brain sees or hears a story, its neurons fire in the same patterns as the speaker's brain. This is known as neural coupling. "Mirror neurons" create coherence between a speaker's brain and the brains of audience members. Wow!

## *Storytelling is art, science and practice just like presenting.*

If you tell a story well, your audience will get lost in the storytelling moment and stories will synchronize the listener's brain with the storyteller's brain.

Can you get addicted to stories? Absolutely! Have you ever been distracted by constant thoughts of your favourite TV show, after a cliff-hanger the night before? I thought so. Telling stories isn't just for fun, we can use stories to learn, to persuade, to lead and to bond and we have been doing it for thousands of years. Long before power point, data dumps and workbooks took over our classrooms and conference platforms It's time to get back to sharing our stories.

## *Are you using stories to connect better with staff, customers, team members or in your presentations? Are you leading with stories?*

The best storytellers are passionate about the stories they share, they are clear about the purpose and the moral/message of the story they are sharing. They plan, craft and rehearse their stories to ensure they make an impact.

## *Signature stories*

Some keynote speakers have a signature story and their whole speaking career is based around that one story, others like myself have a catalogue of stories. A whole bunch of stories that can be called upon and used to emphasise a point, help others learn or to inspire an audience.



Stories can make us laugh, make us cry, make us pay attention and yes, they help us to learn.

When teaching the art of storytelling, the most common concern I get from the participants, is that they don't have any exciting stories to share.

## *We all have stories to share*

Stories do not have to be remarkable, stories do not have to be amazing. A story is about sharing an experience and some of the most unremarkable experiences have the most powerful lessons behind them.

Your stories are created every day. I bet that even today, just waking up and getting off to work could have a hidden story in it that could help others learn from your mistakes or experiences. Did you sleep through the alarm? Was there enough milk in the fridge for your morning coffee? Did you trip over the dog getting up out of bed or did you nearly drive through a red light because you were tired or distracted?

For each of these events, a compelling story could be crafted and embedded into one of your presentations, training courses or influential conversations today. What you may consider is your boring life, can provide fantastic content for a great story.

## *Your brand narrative*

Creating your brand story (narrative) for your business/organisation is also another skill that can make a huge difference to your marketing and client engagement. So, what are you waiting for?



**Paula Smith CSP**

**Your expert in Presentation Intelligence**

**Paula can help you and your team craft and deliver compelling stories for business impact**

# **Will Safety Professionals be Needed in 2050?**

I had the pleasure of debating with several OHS/WHS industry colleagues recently about 'The Future of Health and Safety'- and what a debate it WAS!

So, I thought I would share our collective insight around this somewhat controversial topic.

**DANI TAMATI**

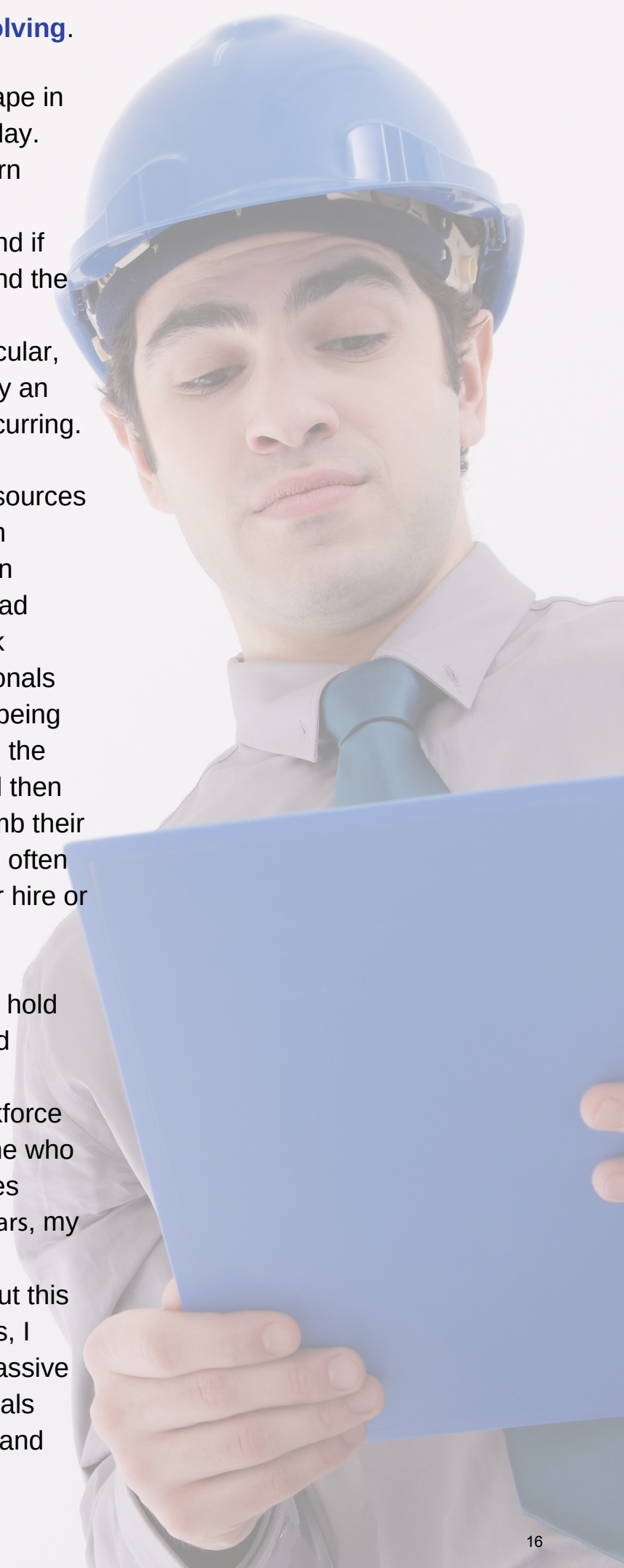


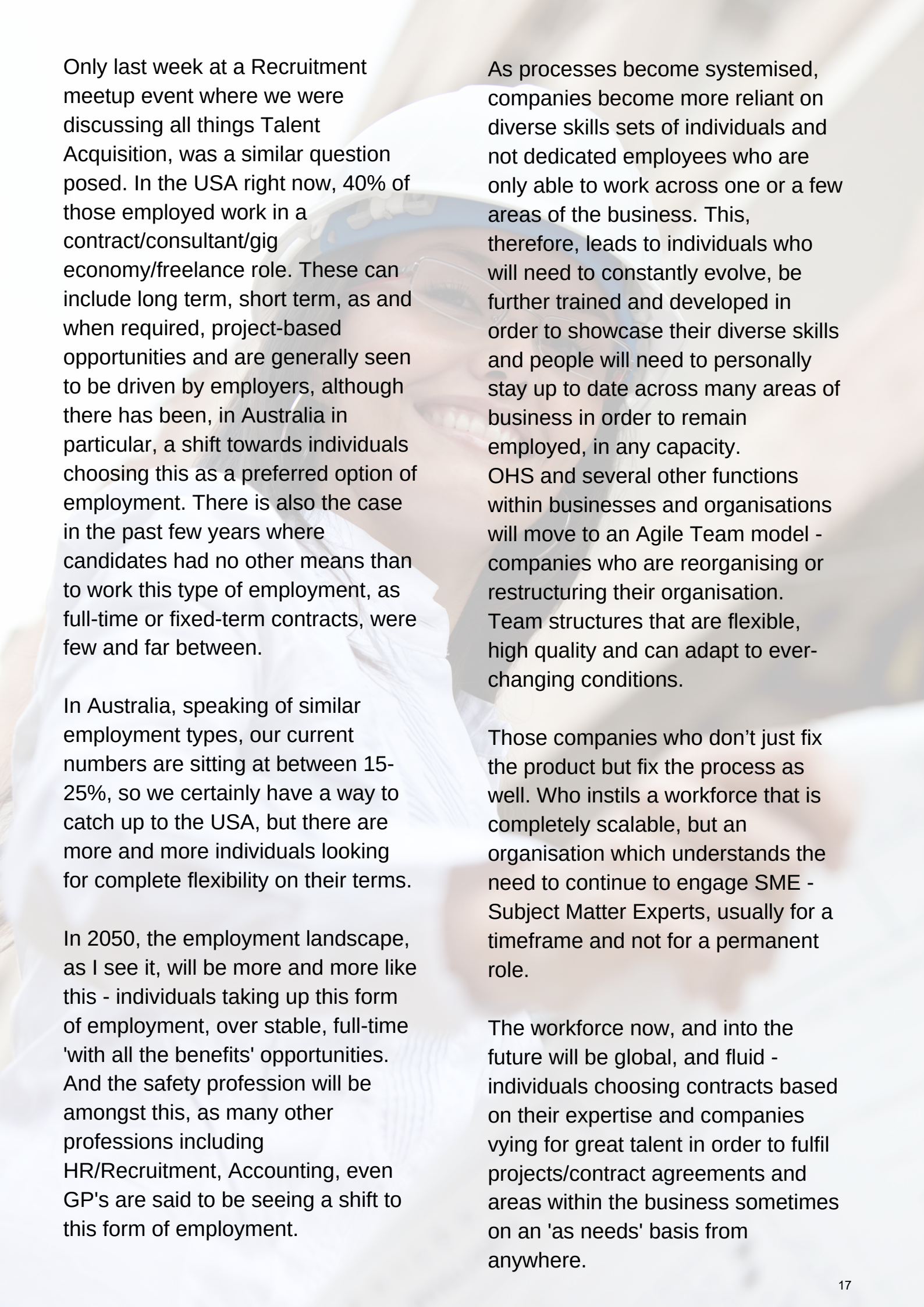
## The future of work is constantly evolving.

30 years ago, the employment landscape in Australia looked very different from today. Safety, wasn't a huge cause for concern especially for SME's and often a costly exercise only instigated when and if needed, and roles within OHS/WHS and the introduction of safety professionals to businesses and organisations, in particular, were often a 'nice to have' and possibly an afterthought to a negative situation occurring.

In recent years with the mining and resources sector's massive downturn, once again safety, although an integral discipline in organisations and businesses as we had come a long way, was 'put on the back burner'. More and more OHS professionals were and continue to find themselves being made redundant or losing contracts, in the past few years in WA in particular, and then have the arduous task of having to climb their way into a 'new norm' of employment - often contract, consulting, contingent, labour hire or freelance/gig opportunities.

With this in mind, what does the future hold for 2050. As a careers, recruitment and behaviours strategist who consistently reviews and researches trends in workforce planning and recruitment, and someone who has worked in the mining and resources industry in particular for the past 24 years, my day-to-day role includes speaking with numerous candidates and clients about this very topic. During these conversations, I have, as mentioned above, seen a massive shift in the number of OHS professionals required in companies/organisations, and there are several reasons as to why.





Only last week at a Recruitment meetup event where we were discussing all things Talent Acquisition, was a similar question posed. In the USA right now, 40% of those employed work in a contract/consultant/gig economy/freelance role. These can include long term, short term, as and when required, project-based opportunities and are generally seen to be driven by employers, although there has been, in Australia in particular, a shift towards individuals choosing this as a preferred option of employment. There is also the case in the past few years where candidates had no other means than to work this type of employment, as full-time or fixed-term contracts, were few and far between.


In Australia, speaking of similar employment types, our current numbers are sitting at between 15-25%, so we certainly have a way to catch up to the USA, but there are more and more individuals looking for complete flexibility on their terms.

In 2050, the employment landscape, as I see it, will be more and more like this - individuals taking up this form of employment, over stable, full-time 'with all the benefits' opportunities. And the safety profession will be amongst this, as many other professions including HR/Recruitment, Accounting, even GP's are said to be seeing a shift to this form of employment.

As processes become systemised, companies become more reliant on diverse skills sets of individuals and not dedicated employees who are only able to work across one or a few areas of the business. This, therefore, leads to individuals who will need to constantly evolve, be further trained and developed in order to showcase their diverse skills and people will need to personally stay up to date across many areas of business in order to remain employed, in any capacity. OHS and several other functions within businesses and organisations will move to an Agile Team model - companies who are reorganising or restructuring their organisation. Team structures that are flexible, high quality and can adapt to ever-changing conditions.

Those companies who don't just fix the product but fix the process as well. Who instils a workforce that is completely scalable, but an organisation which understands the need to continue to engage SME - Subject Matter Experts, usually for a timeframe and not for a permanent role.

The workforce now, and into the future will be global, and fluid - individuals choosing contracts based on their expertise and companies vying for great talent in order to fulfil projects/contract agreements and areas within the business sometimes on an 'as needs' basis from anywhere.

A person wearing a full-body yellow hazmat suit, including a hood and a respirator mask with a circular filter. They are standing in a room with a white wall and a door in the background. The person's arms are crossed.

So WHS does hold an integral component of any organisation no matter how large or small, however with technology and workforce planning trends changing, I am certain you will agree that professionals in this space will be 'few and far between' and that the function will be integrated, as it has been in recent years amongst further diverse skills required for individuals to perform their duties and responsibilities, and additional components of their day to day work task.

My advice to you, adapt to change, learn new skills, and enjoy the 'new norm' of employment opportunities in this sector

Dani Tamati – Founder & Principal of THE resources HUB, Resourceful Women and Director of emergeSAFE Pty Ltd Recruitment, Careers, Talent & Behaviours Strategist





# **USEFUL USES FOR CUSTOMER FEEDBACK**

**“YOUR FEEDBACK  
IS IMPORTANT TO  
US.**

**PLEASE COMPLETE  
THIS SHORT  
SURVEY.”**

**Chris Smoje  
Keynote Speaker and Service  
Harmoniser - Marking customer  
service the MAIN reason for  
business success.**

# So we're at the point that you receive feedback from customers

“Your feedback is important to us. Please complete this short survey.” I can't think of how many times I've seen or heard something similar to that. The number of 'listening posts' that are out there, formalised 'voice of customer' programs that are great in theory, but futile in practice.

Now I know there is a broad readership of this magazine, so I'd hate to exclude some readers and talk about programs and listening channels that may exclude some readers over others. So for the purpose of this article, I'd like to assume that everyone reading it, in their own organisation is receiving customer feedback in some form. Whether it be unsolicited or solicited feedback over email, or even posts and reviews on Google, Facebook, or TripAdvisor that gives you some form of feedback from your customers.

So we're at the point that you receive feedback from customers. Ask yourself, what do you do with that feedback? Physically, where do you put it? Do you have a process for actioning it? Who else reads it? There's a lot to consider. Often the idea of receiving customer feedback sounds great, until the feedback starts coming in and then there's a conundrum of what to actually do with it.

I believe that there are four separate and distinct uses for each piece of customer feedback that comes in. That's right - four! If you're reading this and are thinking this is giving me more work to do, then think again. You might not be as customer focused or committed to service excellence as you think. Organisations and leaders that are truly service focused not only embrace feedback but have a systematised way of dealing with it, which becomes the heart of the organisation.

It's important to also note at this point, that I'm referring to customer feedback both positive and negative, and to emphasise that believe it or not, true service differentiation is made in how we deal with positive feedback, compared to just the negative.

Here are the top four things you should do with a piece of customer feedback in order:

## Keep reading - Chris shares his top 4





## 1. Listen to Customers

How do you truly demonstrate that you are listening? It's taking the feedback and making it form part of the employee engagement experience. If it's positive feedback or a compliment, the manager should verbally read the feedback letter verbatim to all team members at a briefing or meeting. Sending it via email saying 'please read great feedback below' is not good enough. It should be rehearsed, and read with emotion as many times as possible so that the whole workforce (even those who are in non-customer facing/back of house areas can hear it).

The next thing to do is to respond to every single piece of customer feedback (other than copying and pasting "thanks for your feedback"). If someone takes the time to give good feedback then respond. Make it clear that you're thankful and appreciative of their time, otherwise they won't want to send you any feedback in the future again. Let the customer know that you've READ it to ALL staff at a meeting and briefing so they can see that you've actually listened and done something with it.



## 1. Insights from Customers

As you read through the feedback, try to read with a bit of empathy. Don't just look at the words that the customer is writing, try to internalise how they sound as if you were having a conversation with them face to face. It's often hard to convey emotion on an email, and more often than not, especially if it's negative feedback, customers can become keyboard warriors and say some nasty things, just to get it off their chests. As you read through the feedback start jotting down the deep and accurate insights that you're getting from the customer, so you know how you can make or suggest improvements to the organisation.

A single piece of feedback won't have enough information to make change, and often at the superficial level, the feedback can sometimes be contradictory with other feedback received.

When the feedback is positive actually keep looking at what the true positive action or behaviour is that has contributed to that positive feedback. For example, if the customer wrote "your staff are friendly..." try to understand what they specifically did to be friendly. It's much easier to brief your staff on what specifically to do so that they can repeat the behaviours. Likewise for negative feedback, "your staff are so rude..." try to find out what it was that they specifically did that came across rude to the customer.



### 3. Improving with Customers

This is where the feedback really needs to go both ways. Once you've demonstrated that you've listened and picked up some insights, you'll have a few more questions to ask which you may wish to involve the customer in. This doesn't mean making the customer own their feedback and force them onto an improvement journey with you. But it could mean, getting in touch with them to understand a bit more of how you or the organisation could improve.

This is where unsolicited feedback can start to turn around and become solicited feedback. By going back to the customer for more truly demonstrates that you are curious but also interested in their feedback and value it as part of your process of continuous improvement. Remember that solutions to a problem doesn't mean a problem is solved, therefore it's important to explore solutions and confirm whether their problem has actually been solved.



### 4. Planning for Customers

Your organisation has a new product line coming out, or perhaps is introducing a new service. You might be even upgrading your offices and reception area. So you begin to engage with experts. Marketing will look at the branding, operations will look at the service, and the architect may look over the plans for construction. It

is often at this time that customer feedback is completely forgotten.

Now is the time to dig up the feedback and ask whether there is anything that can be considered as part of the planning process of something new to our organisation. Have a specific meeting with all stakeholders and review feedback (positive or negative) specifically with the new change in mind to see how you can incorporate their feedback into the planning, and how you can let the customer know the impact that they have made on the future of your organisation. Especially if lots of time has passed, reconnecting with the customer will certainly be warmly welcomed.



# SPACETOCO IS LEVERAGING THE SHARING ECONOMY

**Daniel McCullen**  
Co-Founder and CEO at SpacetoCo



When our co-founder, Jeremy, had his wedding at his home in the Hills of Perth, many of the attendees asked if he would be able to make his home available for other people to wed and dance the night away. This got him thinking...

“What if people could share space like they do on Airbnb, but just on a short-term basis?”

We are now a couple of years into our journey and SpacetoCo is kicking goals left and right because the sharing economy is having a huge impact on how people exchange goods and services. When you think of the sharing economy, big global businesses like Uber and Airbnb come to mind for getting your next ride or finding your next holiday accommodation, but there are platforms all over the internet that will allow you to rent a dress (The Volte), get a job done (Task Rabbit), or find a babysitter (Kin).

This was the birth of the concept of SpacetoCo, the venue-sharing web application for finding the right space for you in the right location and at the right price. Our sharing economy website allows people to list space (like a tennis court, a hot desk, a wedding venue or board room) and is a user-friendly place to search, book and pay to use those venues.

You can even get your green waste or plastic collected to get both recycled into healthy compost or ink for school 3D printers (Kooda and Greenbatch).



# This also allows these businesses to scale quickly without actually owning the resources.

The key to these marketplace businesses is to effectively bring both sides of the market together at a rate that allows for growth that remains steady on each side. If one side grows too quickly, like for instance if demand outstrips supply, the platform will present the customer with a poor experience when they can't find what they are looking for and this problem can be serious enough to lead to the collapse of the business.

How is it that almost overnight, Uber was on everyone's phone around the world? This is possible because of the element of scalability. These sharing economy platforms cut to the heart of resourcefulness, utilising existing resources to connect people to goods and services.

This re-vitalisation saves the planet because both sides of the economy already exist and on the supply side, these resources are likely expensive assets that do not return on investment without help.

This also allows these businesses to scale quickly without actually owning the resources. It is the creation of an online community and a smooth user experience that solves a compelling problem and creates a great business model. These businesses are lean and cause disruption for traditional businesses.

For SpacetoCo, we have been helping owners with extra spaces that have likely been sitting latent (think the upstairs room that is full of boxes, or that desk in the office that never gets used) to activate the resource. This space likely has a cost to the owner of the venue, but it would sit in the 'too hard basket' to try to advertise and hire out on their own. What if they break something? How will I tell them about availability? How do I take payment?

These are the problems that SpacetoCo solve in our marketplace, and it is now clear that there is an appetite for this service if delivered well, as the site continues to grow on both sides of the equation.

At the end of the day, people are looking for something unique and different for their experiences. People are looking for something new and unique (and likely Instagrammable). As we danced the night away, under the pink sky of a private residence in the hills four years ago, I had no idea that today we would be helping venues all over Australia to be the next unique wedding location.



# NEUROSCIENCE AND DECISION-MAKING

WITH KAREN LIVEY



**We all make decisions, every day. There's speculation that we make 35,000 per day. No source has been cited, and therefore, no proof that we do. Even if we cut that back drastically, to say, 100 decisions per hour, that would calculate out to 1600 decisions per day. Are those good decisions?**

Needless to say, the definition of a decision is also a tad murky – it could be anything from what to wear this morning, should I have my coffee before work, to what is the best strategy to implement for our business.

Every decision we make, and I mean every single one, costs our brains energy and effort. Let's look at it this way. You're about to go on a journey, you fill up your car with fuel and start driving. If we get out onto the open road,



seldom vary our speed, our tank of fuel will last much more than if we are doing the same mileage in town with stop, start, accelerate. You will need to visit the petrol station much more often for all your town driving, and we know how much we enjoy that.

Think that every time you make a decision, you are doing the stop, start, accelerate and using fuel more quickly than if you are in a routine or operating on 'auto-pilot'.

What is the fuel for our brains? During the day it's all about oxygen and glucose. Obviously, oxygen is easy – just keep breathing. Deep breaths are sometimes called for. How about glucose? Yes, you can eat a chocolate or sweet, and then vroom, you're up there, ready for action. And, thump, back down again! It's a very short fix but can be useful sometimes.

Short-term working memory is limited. Research has shown that you can use four bits of information at any one time. If you can categorise the information, that is, 'chunk it', this increases your capacity. If it is unrelated bits of information, then there is a severe limitation on what is currently available to you to access to make 'informed' decisions.



Focused attention makes a big difference in being able to access different types of memory and 'collate' them into sensible ideas to solve problems and make decisions. This is an energy-hungry brain function, and it is recommended to get the best possible results, to take a quick brain break every 25 minutes or so. Think about those long meetings when nothing ever seems to get decided and recognise how it is the antithesis of brain-friendly for excellent outcomes.

Thinking you can multi-task is a myth. Basically, it's about 'task-switching' which may cost up to 40% of your productive time. And, to encode memory, you need to give it your undivided attention. Without this, you are likely to suffer from short-term memory failure – not a good look when trying to make important decisions.

If you are setting up a meeting to make important decisions, or you need to solve some tricky problems, you need to remember to make it as brain-friendly as possible.

Your brain increases its energy intake when having to make decisions;

- Short-term memory is limited, so categorisation of information is key;
- Take a quick brain break every 25 minutes;
- Give it your full attention and minimise all possible distractions.

BY KAREN LIVEY MBA - SPECIALISING IN THE  
NEUROSCIENCE OF LEADERSHIP

# BARRIERS TO EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE

Exceptional performance all starts with exceptional thinking. In fact it goes deeper than just thinking.

by Kathryn Orford  
Catalyst for Exceptional  
Performance in the  
Workplace

You have to believe  
on a deep cellular  
level that you're  
capable of producing  
exceptional results.



You're the script writer, the producer,  
the director and the lead character in the  
movie called  
"YOUR LIFE."

[www.kathrynorford.com](http://www.kathrynorford.com)

**The barriers to exceptional performance are:**

1. Your belief systems about what you believe you're capable of.
2. How you perceive failure.
3. Your environment

Let's focus on the first two because ultimately they're the only ones that you're in control of.

## **YOUR BELIEF SYSTEM AND PERCEPTION**

Every experience you've had, and the meaning you've given it has formed the foundation for what you believe you're capable of.

If for example you've attempted to achieve something outstanding in the past and fell short, how did you respond? What did you tell yourself? Did you beat yourself up and tell yourself you were hopeless, or worst still a failure? Or did you simply view it as a dress rehearsal, make some adjustments and set off again in pursuit of your outcome?

People that produce exceptional results know that failing is just a part of the process.

Think about it..... as a tiny baby you knew this. Otherwise you'd have never learnt to walk and talk. When you attempted those first few shaky steps and plopped down your inner critic didn't pipe up and say "I'm hopeless I might as well give up now!" As tiny babies we could do no wrong.

## NEGATIVE SELF TALK

Also, as a tiny baby you didn't have an inner critic. Unfortunately, that all changed around the age of two when you received your first negative feedback (probably about a behavior you were doing.) And you started to feel flawed.

Just as we learn to talk by repeating things, a small child will repeat the negative feedback at least 100 times in their head after their parent or caregiver has left the room. And that formed the foundation for your negative self-talk. And chances are by now it's had lots of practice?

**As an adult whatever you tell yourself and believe, is shaping your current reality.**

According to the Science Foundation, we have approximately 50,000 thoughts a day. 95% of those thoughts are repetitive and 80% are negative. So, is it any wonder you have a well-developed inner critic? The great news is you can take charge and change that for good!

I use the analogy that if you owned a multimillion-dollar property you wouldn't rent it out for \$50 a week, would you? Of course not, but that's exactly what you're doing when you allow your negative thoughts to run the show.

Your brain is powerful beyond your wildest dreams. And it believes what you tell it, so be VERY careful what you tell it.

The first step in eliminating negative thoughts is noticing them and interrupting the pattern.

**The great news is you can take charge and change that for good!**



Never allow a negative thought to reside in your mind for more than 5 seconds before interrupting the pattern by doing one or more of 4 points below. I suggest you give them all a go and see what works best for you. (I had a lot of success combining 3 and 4.)

1. Change the tone from critical to silly or sultry. It will have a totally different effect on you.
2. Turn down the volume. Or hit the mute button.
3. Drown it out by saying something like "out of here I don't need you anymore."
4. Add a positive to the end of a negative statement. I've come up with an acronym called a Y.U.I to help you do that. Just like doing a U turn in a car, adding a Y.U.I. to the end of a sentence will take your thought process in a different direction.

**Y = YET**  
**U = UP UNTIL NOW**  
**I = IN THE PAST**



## PLAYING THE COMPARE AND DESPAIR GAME

Comparing yourself to others and feeling less than will certainly stop you from creating exceptional results.

By all means aspire to being as brilliant as someone you look up to. But instead of playing what I call the “compare and despair game” start playing the “compare and dare to be the best version of you game” and you’ll be well on your way to producing exceptional results.

### An example:

- I can’t reach my sales target - YET. What does that pre-suppose? That you will if you persist.
- I always get passed over for the job promotion - UP UNTIL NOW. That pre-supposes things are about to change. As you say it stand tall and proud as if you’ve already achieved it, see yourself having already achieved it, and breath the way you’d breath if you’d already received the promotion.
- I always seem to fall short of achieving my goals- IN THE PAST. Put it in the past where it belongs. How often do your drag past failures into your current reality? Learn the lessons by all means, but never drag the negative emotions into your currently reality.



**Kathryn Orford**  
**Catalyst for Exceptional Performance in the Workplace**  
**California USA**



## 5 HABITS HOLDING YOU BACK AT WORK

There are many reasons why people miss out on promotions, career opportunities or even having their voice heard in a busy work environment.

I spoke with Lois Keay-Smith Director of Career Wisdom recently about habits that may be holding us back.

Lois is a career counsellor and career transition coach. Over the past 13 years she has worked with executives,

professional athletes and people experiencing redundancy, assisting them to achieve their career goals. Author of "Make Your Move: Career Dynamics for Changing Times", Lois is a regular presenter on career development and leadership and is a Fellow of Leadership Western Australia.

Lois explains 5 of the most common habits that hold you back at work.

## 1. Not voicing your interest

I have heard more times than I care to mention, from both leaders in organisations and people who would have liked to be considered for a promotion, that they simply didn't tell anyone! Whilst you may think that the workplace is a meritocracy, and promotions will be awarded on merit, it's



also the case that leaders need to know who is keen and willing to step forward. Waiting until your performance review to mention it may be too late. Get in early and voice your interest in other roles and opportunities and find out what you can do to position yourself as a great candidate.

## 2. You are a square peg in a round hole

Sometimes you are just in the wrong job. Perhaps you are a big picture, ideas person who has been given an intensely detailed role. Do your best but realise that it's really hard to shine in a role that isn't aligned to your interests, talents, values and personality. It takes a lot of energy just to turn up every day. Decide to make a move and take action. See a career practitioner to find out what type of work you'd like to pursue and then make a plan to move towards it.

## 3. Not investing in your own professional development

Unfortunately, some companies feel it is prudent to cut training funding in order to meet budget, which often proves later to be

a false economy. Regardless, it is also recommended that individuals set their own personal learning objectives. It may be additional formal qualifications, however, remember that there are many lower cost options of short courses, mentoring and coaching, MOOCs, edX, and online learning and development options to help you self-educate and remain current..

## 4. Not connecting and building your network

Sadly, this is one that happens when people gain work, get busy and then don't think too much about continuing to build their network. Having worked with many people who have experienced redundancy, those who have ignored developing their network find it harder and longer to re-establish themselves after a setback. Building connections outside the organisation can help with business development, help you to source future work opportunities for yourself and others, as well as potentially identifying talented individuals who may be able to join your company.

## 5. Complaining and criticising

People like to engage with others who are passionate and dedicated – so your attitude in the workplace is what counts. Getting despondent or disillusioned and constantly complaining will not make it easy to move ahead in your organisation. If your organisation is getting you down (or is off the charts on the toxicity scale!), it may be a sign to champion positive change - or start exploring other areas of interest and find an organisation that better fits with your values.



**Lois Keay-Smith M. Career Dev**  
Director of Career Wisdom



?

# THE RISE OF FOLLOWERSHIP

By Paula Smith



## **In Praise of Followers** - Robert Kelley stated in his Harvard Business Review article that effective followers are well-balanced and responsible adults who can succeed without strong leadership.

I have never really considered followership as a leadership theory. In fact, I have not really given followership the thought it has deserved. I have underestimated the power of followership and now realise that leadership is often upside down.

Without successful and dedicated followers, leaders will struggle to succeed.

Although followership is viewed as a more recent approach or theory, the concept has been around for many years across industries and organisations. For example, in associations or schools, where the board decides, on behalf of its followers, who will be the leader/CEO and together they shape the leadership direction.

With the rise of social currency and influencers, leaders cannot ignore the power of followership even in the most traditional organisations.

Unfortunately, many see followership as subservient to leadership, as a lesser role in organisational success.

However, without followers there would be no leaders. Without followership there would be no successful leadership.

In discussion with senior executives this week, they reflected on their past and current leadership roles.

Many felt like they were on a lone mission? A mission to get the job done!

A lone leadership mission is one fraught with danger.

The danger of losing followers. Their lay theory of followership had been one of 'followers do not have the skills to lead' Although this may be true, perhaps leadership is a choice and followership has its own set of quality attributes that need to be considered much more deeply when either employing people, choosing a team, delegating tasks and communicating, with your followers.

In fact, many do not consider followership as a leadership theory at all.

Will the next era of leadership be the rise and power of followership?

Who is really following who?

Some of the biggest social media influencers are already ahead of the game on this one.

## **Without successful and dedicated followers, leaders will struggle to succeed**

**Paula Smith**  
Specialising in powerful presenting and leadership communication.  
Keynote Speaker, Author, Master Trainer,  
Business Leadership Coach





Instagram



Instagram

Instagram

## Why Big Business is jumping on Instagram

Instagram is a visual platform with high engagement allowing business both big and small to form direct connections with customers. Engagement with brands on Instagram is ten-times higher than on Facebook and a whopping 84-times more than Twitter.

This makes Instagram a highly effective way for businesses to form a direct dialogue with their audience and receive feedback about their preferences in relation to the products and services on offer.

## IT'S PRIME REAL ESTATE

While to date Instagram has been prime real estate for small to medium business, big business is also seeing success. Clever big businesses wanting to connect more directly with their audience are implementing effective strategies to build trust and maintain front-of-mind brand awareness. Big business presence on Instagram seems to be more often about brand awareness than direct sales.



## Key advantages of Instagram for big business include:

- Allow customers behind the scenes glimpses – “humanising” their brand and making it relatable.
- Stay on top of consumer trends
- Connect more directly with customers
- Invite customers to contribute to the story
- Increase brand awareness, loyalty and authority
- Drive more web traffic
- Improve Search Engine rankings
- Ultimately, more sales.

Direct to consumer brands are the most popular on Instagram (60% of users discover products on Instagram) and now service based business and B2B marketers are starting to utilise it. Michael Field of Evitt Field Partners is working with a manufacturer using Instagram to target property developers and landscape architects. Bucking the norm, this is a B2B client using a largely B2C platform with excellent results.

## A local example

A local example, Telstra (23.8K followers) are being clever about their bio (the section under the account username used to describe the account owner and purpose) asking users to tag their photos with #Telstra for the chance to be shared on Telstra’s feed. This is known as “user-generated content”. For smaller brands with a similar target market, this could be an opportunity to get in front of Telstra’s 23.8k followers. Telstra’s content is a combination of, community/sport sponsorship, product promotion and Influencer marketing.

## A little food(porn)

When it comes to Instagram – Food(porn) is king providing great opportunities for the likes of @Coles supermarkets to reach their audience with an Instagram feed full of tasty looking recipes.

User-generated content (as per the Telstra example above), may be a riskier strategy here, highlighting the need for responsive reputation management. A simple search of #coles showed several photos of Coles-branded plastic shopping bags in the ocean and a video of a 20-something-birthday girl likely having overindulged vomiting into a Coles shopping bag. Interestingly – I couldn't find it again when I tried, suggesting Coles are all over the reputation management side of social media.

## Reputation Management

Reputation management is a key challenge for all businesses with a presence on social media. Not only is it “open” 24/7, it also allows many opportunities for users to comment (negatively) on the business's operations and content. It seems the bigger the following, the higher the risk.

## Hoops to jump through

A challenge more specific to big business is the approvals process for content where layers of brand, legal and compliance requirements can make it an onerous task. According to a NZ marketing agency owner Rachel Klaver of Identify Marketing, on her experience with a multinational Instagram client:

‘They were late to Instagram as, like many companies, the hoops from head office were just too complex for social media. Getting everything signed off was a nightmare. Now you can schedule; Instagram posts can be approved en masse and scheduled well in advance with the appropriate sign off’

## Targeting

But how does big business target ideal customers? The same way small and medium business does – by effective use of hashtag strategies, engagement and bloody good content.

The biggest advantage presumably of big business is budget - to create scroll-stopping content that can compete with the other 95 million daily posts and adequate resources to dedicate to advertising. According to Locowise, 75% of Instagram users take action, such as visiting a website, after looking at an Instagram advertising post, confirming that “pay-to-play” is an important element of social strategy. With larger budgets, reach, impressions and conversions (sales) can also be increased exponentially.

## 1 million for Arnie

Instagram has been around for a while and, as you may already know, is part of the Mark Zuckerberg stable. The fast-paced nature of social media means that Instagram (and Facebook) is already facing additional market share competition from “new kid on the block” TikTok. It will be interesting to see how this all plays out, particularly as businesses get more strategic with social media. But, if Arnold Schwarzenegger can hit 1m likes on TikTok making a shake with a brand name protein powder, you can only think it's a matter of time before businesses also focus their attention in that direction.



**Sonia Sweeny**  
Director of  
Sweet Digital  
Social Media  
Digital  
Marketing



# Personal brand audit

By Alba Gomez  
Personal Brand Coach

**You are unique. Make sure you spend time discovering what is unique about you and crafting a brand message that makes you feel proud to share it with the world. This will create a massive impact on the results you get in your life and business.**

# Have you done your winter personal brand audit?

We all have a personal brand. Whether you are in business for yourself, work in the corporate world or for any business.

Your personal brand is what people think of you when they hear your name. It is the adjectives they will use to describe you.

We live in a fast-paced world and are exposed to so many personal brands, so in order for you to be seen, you must stand out. By being visible you give people the opportunity to get to know you and understand what you have to offer.

Let's look at the top areas you can consider when auditing your brand:

## 1. Your brand essence:

Who are you? What makes you, you and unique? The first step to creating your personal brand is reconnecting with who you are and actually getting to know yourself completely. We all think we know who we are, but from my experience when I ask people to define themselves without the labels or roles they hold, most people fail to do so. Bob Proctors says 'Your self-image will determine the level of success you achieve in life', so no better way to start this process than by getting to know you at a deeper level.

## What is your true brand story?

## 2. Your presence:

Your presence is the energy you create when you walk into a room. It will determine if people like you or not and it will affect the results you get in life and business. Your presence and your body language do most of the 'talking' when you first meet someone. Over 55% of the impressions we make are created through our body language. When your body language is not aligned with your words, you run the risk of not getting your message across.

## 3. Powerful impressions:

Looking good is important. Not only because people will make assumptions about your capabilities and attention to detail based on what they see, but because there is a huge link between how you present yourself and how you see yourself. You want to be able to show on the 'outside' how capable and intelligent you are. Your image says a thousand words about you. Make sure you are sharing a true story about who you are. Also it is important that you leave people feeling elevated by their interactions with you.

## 4. Consistency:

Consistency is the key to earning people's respect and trust. It will allow people to recognize you. We buy from brands we like and trust. Trust is developed by aligning your message and impressions. First make sure you are clear on who you are and what you are about, then make sure you are consistently sharing it on social media, on your voicemail message, via email, etc. People must get the essence of who you are no matter how they are interacting with you.



# WHY AUSTRALIA NEEDS MORE SUPERANNUATION FUNDS

In a brief period since 1991, the year in which Superannuation Guarantee was first rolled out, Australia moved from a non-existent retirement framework to one that was ranked 2nd in the world in 2015 by the Melbourne Mercer Global Pensions index (MMGPI). Since then, due to changes in Asset tests for Age Pensions introduced in 2017 and an

increase in household debt, Australia's ranking has slipped to 4th during 2018 on the MMGPI index which is still something the nation should be proud of considering the MMGPI index ranks pension frameworks of 34 countries on Adequacy, Sustainability and Integrity of their pension systems.

**Promote and encourage a savings culture**

There are nearly 600,000 Self-Managed Superannuation Funds (SMSFs) in Australia with approximately 1,127,304 members. These SMSFs allow individuals a platform to invest and grow their retirement savings within a regulated framework, having complete control over their investment strategy, contributions and benefit payments. Although SMSF fund members constitute less than 5% of Australia's population, they account for \$726 billion of invested funds and about 27% of the total funds invested in superannuation. SMSFs, APRA, Industry & Constitutionally Protected Funds in total constitute over \$2.68 trillion in superannuation savings, which is nearly twice the 2018 GDP of \$1.68 trillion.

The Australian superannuation system is robust not merely due to the tax advantages it offers, but primarily because it encourages the population to save and become self-funded in retirement rather than relying on the government for age pension. This in turn eases the fiscal policy burden for the government to fund age pensions for an ever increasing ageing population. The Australian superannuation system could possibly see a large percentage of Australians becoming self-funded retirees with a significant shrinkage in age pension fiscal funding.

The Superannuation Legislation Amendment (Simplification) Act 2007 made it easy for Australians to understand superannuation, provided incentives to work and save and more importantly a flexible and easy framework for benefit payments on retirement. The superannuation seeds were planted largely by the simplification efforts of previous

forward thinking governments with the foresight to provide a better retirement platform for future generations. The seeds were watered, nurtured and with constant monitoring, have grown into a robust tree worth \$2.68 trillion in current superannuation savings.

Unfortunately, the tree is surrounded by short sighted politicians on both sides of government who have portrayed it as an investment vehicle for the rich and have gone to great lengths to even call it a tax saving scheme. Superannuation is a long term savings vehicle and should be nurtured with clear and concise long term directives rather than subjecting it to short sighted politically motivated goal post changes. Short term higher taxes on superannuation coupled with greater life expectancy and a rapidly ageing population will only result in an increased tax and debt burden for future generations. Current Labor proposals also include tinkering with the imputation system where every citizen will pay higher taxes on their superannuation investment income forcing superannuation funds to divest out of Australian equities and looking at other overseas global investments.

If we are to give a fighting chance to future generations, both sides of politics, like their predecessors, should promote and encourage a savings culture rather than increasing taxes and fiscal spending. There is no better framework to promote savings and self-dependence than superannuation.

**Naz Randeria**  
Managing Director  
Reliance Auditing Services



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# DON'T TAKE THE RISK WITH YOUR BIGGEST PURCHASE

WHY YOU SHOULD ALWAYS GET A BUILDING AND PEST INSPECTION WHEN PURCHASING YOUR NEXT PROPERTY

## WHY DO I NEED A BUILDING INSPECTION?

Purchasing a property will most likely be one the largest investments you will make during your lifetime. Whether you choose to purchase an existing house or a newly constructed property it can sometimes be a stressful process even when everything is going to plan.

Learning as much as possible about your new investment during the purchasing process just makes sense. The last thing you want is any nasty surprises when you finally move in or hand the property to a tenant. Eliminate the risk.

A property inspection enables you to make an informed and confident decision, it gives you the peace of mind you need to move forward with your purchase.



By Darren Smith  
Director of  
InspectionSmith  
Your trusted and qualified  
inspector for the past 10  
years

A pre-purchase inspection report will detail the physical state of the property identifying areas of concern, maintenance issues and legislative requirements that you may have overlooked when viewing the property yourself.

The five main areas of concern when purchasing a property are:

1. The structural integrity of the building (foundations, wall and roof structures)
2. Plumbing and electrical issues
3. Leaking showers
4. Legislative requirements (RCD's, smoke alarms and pool fencing)
5. Termites or termite damage to the building

For complete peace of mind, we recommend purchases order a combined pre-purchase building and a timber pest inspection. On most occasions, for convenience, the same qualified inspector can do these critical inspections on the same day.

Do you really need to book a building and pest inspection?

Savvy property investors would never consider purchasing a property without them.

# NUTRITION & EXERCISE STRATEGIES TO KEEP YOU AT WORK

by Sharon Gleeson



During the winter months we naturally want to hibernate – sleeping more and doing our best to stay warm and cosy. The cold season tends to ignite our cravings for more “comfort foods” and staying motivated to exercise or keep active becomes much harder! The key is to be aware of these natural patterns and create a plan of action to help you stay well, be less stressed and keep you at work this winter.

Why are Nutrition and Exercise so crucial? Making sure we get all the nutrients our body needs keeps our immune system strong and helps us fight off those winter bugs.

Maintaining a regular exercise routine throughout winter is important not only for our physical health, but also for our mental health as it gets the good endorphins going, helps lower stress levels and has been shown to fortify our immune defences. Without a healthy combination of good food and regular movement, work’s busyness can deplete our energy stores and leave us more vulnerable and susceptible to colds and viruses over winter.

So, let’s fight that with some key Nutrition & Exercise Strategies!



## Winter is coming



## Top Nutrition Strategies

Did you know that 75% of our immune system stems from our gut? If we're not looking after our gut health with the right foods, this will not only affect our immune system, but also has a significant impact on our mental health.

So why is it that the cold season tends to ignite our cravings for more carbs and comfort foods? After we consume these delicious treats, our serotonin levels rise (which is one of the hormones responsible for our mood and happiness), making our brain think we are happier. This cycle can continue to perpetuate and our carb cravings can continue to get stronger and stronger. Apart from the obvious downside, this can weaken our immune response for hours afterwards.

### ONE

Replace sugary, high carb foods with healthy, warming foods such as roasted root vegetables, casseroles, or soups packed with veggies – which can also make great leftovers for lunch.

### THREE

Eat seasonal fruits and vegetables which have more flavour and nutrients than non-seasonal. Seasonal eating means produce hasn't been processed, stored or transported long distances, all of which decrease the nutrient value. Consider supplementing with a Greens Balance as even if we are eating a healthy diet, we still need topping up

### FIVE

Include sources of iron and zinc such as spinach, kale and other green, leafy vegetables, red meats, chickpeas, lentils, beans and oysters all of which support our immune system

### TWO

Eat a protein-packed breakfast to keep your energy levels up throughout the day. A protein packed smoothie, poached eggs, or warming oats topped with nuts, seeds and seasonal fruits, such as apples or pears, can be a great slow-release breakfast.

### FOUR

Increase foods that boost your immune system; fruits and vegetables high in Vitamin C, such as sweet potatoes, tomatoes, red capsicum, citrus fruits and berries, mushrooms (full of naturally-occurring antibiotics), and cook with spices such as onions, garlic, ginger and coriander which are shown to improve immune function.

### SIX

Eat more soluble fibre which can be found in apples, pears, broccoli, oats and nuts which help protect our digestive systems which is critical to our immune system

# And those winter exercise tips

## ONE

If you have no desire to head outdoors for your workout, there are plenty of indoor options available, (yoga, swimming, Zumba, online workouts etc.) and now might be the perfect time to try something new.

## TWO

Invest in some exercise equipment such as a treadmill, exercise bike, cross-trainer or even something as simple as an exercise mat, a fit ball and some hand weights for indoor training.

## THREE

Try to stick to a weekly exercise plan so you don't put off your regular exercise activities. On Sunday night, write down your exercise schedule for the next seven days. Choose your exact workout routines, activities or exercises for each day and how long they will be – specific is terrific... and achievable!

## FOUR

Work out with a friend or have a winter “accountability” buddy to help you stick to your goals and stay motivated.



**Sharon Gleeson**  
Nutrition Coach, Presenter,  
Wellness Consultant



# SEXY SOUP?

By Kayleen Mercer

I was given the suggested article title of “Sexy Soup” and I have thought long and hard about how to define this. The only way I can think of soup as sexy is if it is served on a tray to me by Sam Heughan wearing a kilt. (If you have no idea who Sam Heughan is, I strongly recommend research – and you are welcome!!)

Soup is a wonderful option for a work lunch. It is comforting and nourishing. A soup can be made from few ingredients or everything in the fridge! You can use all the leftover bits and pieces you have which makes it economical and you can visit every continent with your taste buds (bar Antarctica – I don’t think Penguin Soup has much of a ring to it).

Like many of you, outside of work hours I am held to ransom by the varied food demands of the members of my household. From the youngest who finds mushrooms gross and the teenager who is a wannabe vegetarian (but chicken nuggets don’t count) to the husband who finds “exotic” ingredients like coriander to be too much for his delicate palate!

The joy of lunch is that it is one meal I make for me alone and I don’t need to please anyone else. I have decided that this article is going to be rebellious (and of course sexy). I have gone rogue and would like to share with you 3 soup recipes I love. In order to make it easier to find the sexy quota I will italicise these saucy passages for you and please imagine them being read to you by Nigella.

Mushroom soup is quick and easy and absolutely delicious. It freezes well as long as there is no cream in it. I personally do not add cream as I really enjoy the *sultry earthiness of the mushrooms*.

## MUSHROOM SOUP

400g mushrooms  
60g butter  
3 cloves garlic, crushed  
¼ cup plain flour

4 cups chicken stock  
1 cup cream (optional)  
salt & pepper, to tastet

Clean the mushrooms with damp paper towel. Chop the stems and caps coarsely. Melt the butter in a large pot, add the garlic and mushrooms and cook for 5 minutes.

Add the flour and stir for 1 minute. Stir in the chicken stock and simmer, covered, for 10 minutes.

Process the soup with a stab blender until smooth.

Optional – return the soup to the pot, add the cream and stir over low heat until soup is heated.

Season with salt and pepper.



This soup is more country heartiness and a romp in the hay. It contains **round and voluptuous onions, salty sassy bacon** and potatoes (struggling to make potatoes sexy sorry). It is another quick recipe but not suitable for freezing. This one is a like a big hug from Mum and very comforting.

## BACON, POTATO & ONION SOUP

4 bacon rashers, chopped  
30g butter  
3 medium onions, sliced  
2 tblspns plain flour  
1 litre vegetable or chicken stock

4 medium potatoes, chopped  
2 egg yolks  
300g carton lite sour cream  
1 tblspn chopped fresh parsley

Cook bacon in large saucepan until lightly browned, add butter and onions. Cook over low heat for about 5 minutes until onions are soft. Add flour, stir over medium heat for 1 minute. Remove from heat and gradually add the stock. Add the potatoes. Bring to the boil then reduce heat and simmer uncovered for 10 minutes or until potatoes are cooked. Gradually stir in the sour cream which has been combined with the egg yolks. Reheat without boiling. Stir in parsley just before serving.

My final soup has a lot of variations and is often referred to as a "flu fighter". This is a visit to Asia in a bowl. I use my thermomix for this soup so I have given you the thermie instructions as no doubt many of you use one too. It would not be difficult to convert to a non-thermomix recipe. The liquid part of the soup can be frozen. It is a more complicated soup but so very worth it!

## ASIAN CHICKEN SOUP

Fresh Coriander, leaves and roots  
1 lemon, zest & juice  
1 tsp dried ground tumeric  
2 garlic cloves  
2 spring onions  
3-5cm piece fresh ginger  
1 fresh red chilli (optional)  
2tb fresh parsley leaves  
2tbs coconut oil

2 chicken breasts, cut into cubes  
1 litre chicken stock  
3 tbs soy sauce  
30g mirin, optional  
100g baby kale or spinach leaves  
1 carrot julienned  
½ red capsicum julienned  
Udon noodles, cooked  
sea salt & pepper to taste

Place coriander leaves into TM bowl & chop for 3 secs/speed 7. Scrape out of bowl & set to one side. Place lemon zest, parsley, ginger, spring onions, tumeric, chilli, coriander roots & garlic into the TM bowl chop for 20 secs/speed 10. Add the coconut oil & cook for 2 mins varoma speed. Place the cubed chicken breast into the simmering basket inside the TM bowl. Cover the chicken with the stock. Set time 20 mins on 100 degrees speed 2. Ensure chicken is cooked through, & empty cooked chicken pieces into the broth into the TM bowl. Then add all remaining ingredients (except the vegetables and noodles). Don't forget the chopped coriander. Mix 10 secs reverse speed 1. Place vegetables and cooked noodles into soup bowl & pour the hot broth over, making sure to portion out the chicken cubes into the bowls.

For a portable lunch, keep the vegetables and noodles separate from the liquid until you are ready to eat. Heat the liquid and pour the **steaming aromatic soup over the crunchy vibrant vegetables and soft unctuous udon noodles. Enjoy the sensations of smell, taste and texture all in one bowl.**

Whilst these recipes may have ended up being a bit short on sexy I can assure you that they are all strong on taste.

Enjoy the rebellion!



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