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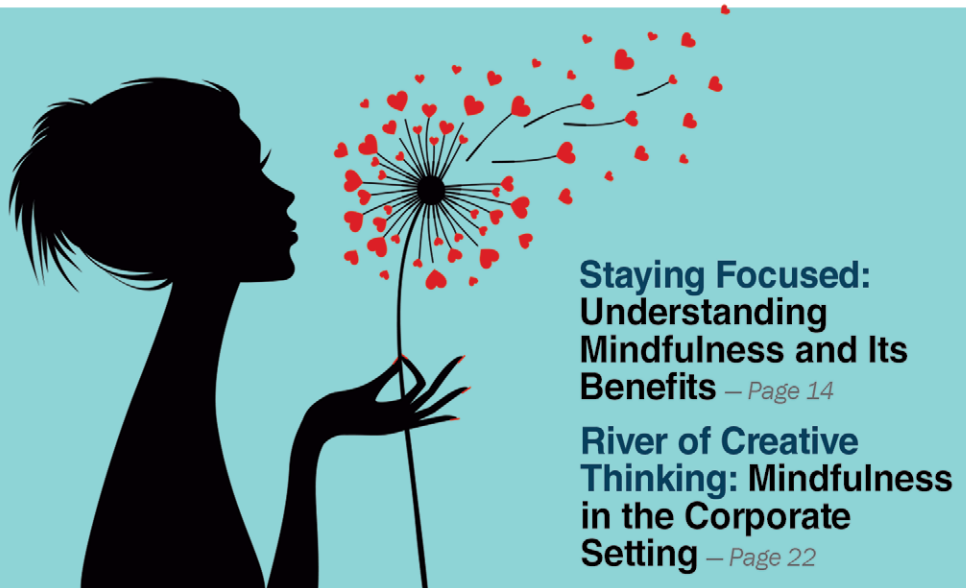
2017 | WINTER

Bringing Innovative Human Capital, Diversity and Inclusion to a Global Workforce

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## Mindfulness

Bringing the Science of Mindfulness into the Corporate World



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# **BUILDING ON A LEGACY OF INNOVATION GIVES MY WORK PURPOSE**

Innovation is fundamental to who we are and what we do. We crave meaningful results by developing clinical solutions that impact the quality of peoples' lives. We'll empower you to use your passion for science and technology to solve complex problems in an environment that stimulates, excites and rewards.

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# STAYING FOCUSED ON BUILDING A BETTER WORKPLACE

It seems like the world is in constant turmoil today, and the turmoil impacts people's lives in many ways. What affects people in their personal lives is not left at the front doors of the various workplaces. This is especially true since so many employees now work at home. Employees struggle to pay down debt, manage the cost of healthcare, master ever-changing technologies, deal with the stress of traveling in a violent world, and job security. This is just a short list of their worries.

Employers are also struggling. They struggle to build businesses that can find some kind of solid footing in a volatile business marketplace. It is difficult when there are so many risks like natural disasters disrupting operations without warning, disgruntled employees, and startups that now have easy entry into the marketplace. Employers must also worry about the impact of tax reform, drug use in the workplace, global hackers, a constant flow of new regulations, managing globalization, adapting products and services to stay ahead of the competition, finding talent with the appropriate skills, and many others. This is also just a short list of worries.

These descriptions may sound a bit grim, but they are also a reminder for employers to stay focused on what is important: people. It is truly all about people in such a volatile and dynamic marketplace. It is about people and their ability to bring new perspectives, innovation, and creativity, requiring an engaged and diverse workforce. Building a better workplace means having positive core values embraced by employees

across the organization and a culture of inclusion. For employers, it can be easy to get distracted with so many worries and to lose focus on what is really important: people.

Build a great workforce that is diverse, dedicated, and engaged in the purpose of the organization, and many of the worries will dissipate. For example, employees who embrace a core value of ethics and social responsibility will not steal an employer's data, will comply with regulations, and will treat customers with respect. Hire and retain talent with the right skills, and the company is better prepared to efficiently respond to and manage marketplace volatility and to take advantage of new opportunities. Numerous studies have proven that

developing a diverse workforce drives innovation and higher profits.

Building a better workforce is about people, and staying focused on people will drive the results that employers desire. There are several things to keep in mind. Demographics are rapidly changing...again. The workforce is more racially and ethnically diverse than it has ever been. For example, Pew Research predicts that by the year 2055, the U.S. will not have a single ethnic or racial majority. This fact, coupled with global competition for talent, has implications for employers. Developing a diverse and inclusive workforce now will set the company up for success far into the future.

In addition, older Millennials are entering management positions, and the oldest members of Gen Z are starting to enter the workforce. For the first time in history, the workforce will consist of at least four generations. This creates an amazing pool of people who can mingle ideas and perspectives, and take creative thinking to a new level. Each generation that arrives is more entrepreneurial, and employers who learn to leverage that individuality will be much more likely to succeed. There is also a global push to improve inclusion of women in leadership roles, and that will change workforce dynamics.

It is easy and understandable for employers to get distracted by the many issues and challenges they face today. However, take care of your people, and many of the other issues will take care of themselves. Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) are not buzzwords to be added to reports and marketing material. They are words of action. To build a better workplace, stay focused on inclusion, fairness, and equity first.



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**DiversityGlobal Magazine's** mission is to generate conversation in Thought Leadership among thinkers, CEOs, managers, and entrepreneurs about the coming sea changes in global corporate diversity that will transform how people innovate and lead. DiversityGlobal captures the creativity, excitement and opportunity created by rapid societal, economic and technological change and brings it home to thoughtful managers.

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## Global Study Highlights Economic Benefits of 'Cashless Cities'

### SAN FRANCISCO

Visa (NYSE: V) recently announced the results of an independent study, conducted by Roubini ThoughtLab and commissioned by Visa, that examined the economic impact of increasing the use of digital payments in major cities around the world. The study estimates that relying more on electronic payments, such as cards and mobile payments, could yield a net benefit of up to US\$470 billion per year across the 100 cities studied – roughly the equivalent to 3 percent of the average GDP for these cities.

"Cashless Cities: Realizing the Benefits of Digital Payments" study quantified the potential net benefits experienced by cities which move to an "achievable level of cashlessness" – defined as the entire population of a city moving to digital payment usage equal to the top 10 percent of users in that city today. The study does not look at eliminating cash. Rather, it seeks to quantify the potential benefits and costs of significantly increasing the use of digital payments.

"This study demonstrates the substantial upside for consumers, businesses and governments as cities move toward greater adoption of digital payments," said Ellen Richey, Visa's vice chairman and chief risk officer. "Societies that substitute digital payments for cash see benefits from greater economic growth, less crime, more jobs, higher wages and increased worker productivity."



## Billion-Dollar Projects Fuel Spike in Private Sector Infrastructure Investment

### SINGAPORE

Multi-billion dollar projects are fueling stronger private sector investment in infrastructure projects in developing countries, which increased by 24 percent from 2016 levels, reflecting US\$36.7 billion across 132 projects, according to a new World Bank Group report.

However, although the growth of larger-sized projects is contributing to improved figures for the first half of 2017, investment levels remain 15 percent lower than the half-year averages of the past five years, reports the Half Yearly Update of the Private Participation in Infrastructure (PPI) Database. Excluding the mega-projects, average project sizes increased from US\$156 million in 2016 to US\$171 million in 2017.

"Private sector investors are committing increased investment in infrastructure projects, and that is a welcome development given the tremendous need for more infrastructure in developing countries. The World Bank Group continues to encourage more private investment in infrastructure, which remains a small part of total infrastructure spending. Since 1990, the private sector has invested only US\$1.6 trillion overall in infrastructure projects in developing countries," said Cledan Mandri-Perrott, Head of the Infrastructure, PPPs, and Guarantees Group at the World Bank Hub for Infrastructure and Urban Development in Singapore and leader of the report team.



## Takeda Donates \$1 Million to Establish the Takeda Chair in Public Health at Asian University for Women

### OSAKA, JAPAN AND CHITTAGONG, BANGLADESH

Takeda Pharmaceutical Company Limited (TSE: 4502) (Takeda) and Asian University for Women (AUW) jointly announced the establishment of the "Takeda Chair in Public Health" as the first endowed chair at AUW.

With funding from Takeda, the Takeda Chair in Public Health will propel research and create opportunities for collaboration with scholars in public health. The Takeda Chair will also enable AUW to build upon its strengths to improve public health in developing and emerging countries, and to educate the next generation of leaders in Asia and the world. An endowed chair is the highest academic award that AUW can

bestow upon a faculty member.

Haruhiko Hirate, corporate officer of corporate communications and public affairs of Takeda commented, "It is our great pleasure to establish the Takeda Chair in Public Health as the first endowed chair at AUW, which provides high-quality university education to hundreds of women. It reflects our global CSR strategy: Prevention for health in developing countries, and promotion of diversity and inclusion everywhere."



## Local Employers Urged to Put Mental Health on Their Agenda

### LONDON, UK

In honor of the 25th World Mental Health Day, local London Assembly Member Joanne McCartney AM, asked on businesses to put mental health on their agenda. The theme of this year's awareness event, set by the World Federation for Mental Health, is workplace wellbeing. Ms McCartney urged employers to take action to "tackle the culture of silence that all too often surrounds mental illness."



**Joanne McCartney AM**  
Local London  
Assembly Member

To mark World Mental Health Day, the mental health campaign charity, Time to Change, is asking organisations to take extra steps to ensure employees experiencing mental illness are properly supported. McCartney said with local people spending a significant amount of their time in the workplace "it's a good place to start when it comes to talking about our mental wellbeing."

Earlier this year, the mayor of London launched his Thrive LDN campaign, a city-wide initiative designed to improve mental health by supporting Londoners, and especially young Londoners, to lead healthier, happier lives. Bringing together experts from public and private organizations, the campaign aims to eradicate mental health stigma and discrimination and to make London a zero-suicide city.

## Mental Health the Last Workplace Taboo: Stevenson Farmer Review

### MANCHESTER, UK

The publication of Thriving at Work, the Stevenson/Farmer review of mental health and employers, Equality and Human Rights Commission Chief Executive Rebecca Hilsenrath said:

"Mental health is the last workplace taboo and it must not be allowed to hold us back in our careers, from recruitment through to working environment and promotion," Hilsenrath said.

"We will use our legal powers to challenge discrimination in the workplace against people with mental health conditions. We welcome the call for increased transparency and accountability but it is not enough."

Hilsenrath offered several recommendations. "We recommend government reports annually on progress to close the disability employment gap with specific reference to mental health. In addition, the government should en-



sure that the right to request flexible working must start from day one in the job," she said.

"Employers should open up all jobs, regardless of seniority, to part-time and flexible working to support progression of people with mental health conditions, ensuring that everyone has an equal chance to use their skills and make their own contribution to society."

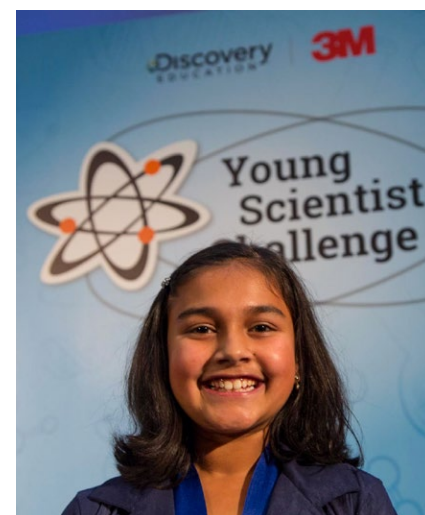
## STEM Scout Named America's Top Young Scientist

### ST. PAUL, MINN.

STEM Scout Gitanjali "Anjali" Rao was named the winner of the 2017 Discovery Education and 3M Young Scientist Challenge, making the world a better place in the process.

Rao's award-winning project, the Tethys, enables users to test for lead levels in water with greater ease and effectiveness than many existing testing processes. This tool, named after the Greek goddess of fresh water, has potentially life-saving implications for communities around the globe.

However, this is not Rao's first good turn in the world of STEM. We met this 11-year-old innovator back in February,



after her life-saving device for snake bites earned her the title of Middle Tennessee Council's STEM Scout of the Year. Flash forward to October, and she has already invented yet another way to save lives before the year has even ended (classic Anjali).



## Businesses Owned by Women and Minority Groups Are a Dynamic Component of the Canadian Economy

### OTTAWA

Despite the benefits of greater competitiveness, not enough Canadian businesses and government organizations are adopting supplier diversity practices that help women and minority-owned businesses

gain access to larger organizational supply chains, according to a new Conference Board of Canada report. Diverse supply chains can help companies reduce costs, enhance innovation and develop new markets.

"Unfortunately, the benefits of diverse supply chains are not widely known in Canada and many women or minority-owned businesses have difficulty gaining access to the supply chains of leading Canadian businesses and government organizations," says Ruth Wright, Director, Human Resources and Inclusive Talent Management Research, The Conference Board of Canada.



The value driven by inclusive employment practices is well understood by business. That diversity lens needs to be applied to all organizational processes so that inclusion becomes a mind set. Better access to the supply chains will create a win-win opportunity for both the supplier and the producer.

## Women in Management: Commission Moves Closer to its Target of at Least 40%

### BRUSSELS

The European Commission is steadily moving towards meeting the target set by President Jean-Claude Juncker of ensuring that, by the end of the current mandate, at least 40 percent of its middle and senior managers are women.

According to the latest data, female managers at all levels have reached a total of 36 percent on 1 November 2017, up from 30 percent at the beginning of the mandate.

The progress is even stronger at senior management level (Directors, Deputy Directors-General and Directors-General) where the share of women has increased to 35 percent from 27 percent on 1 November

2014. At middle management level (Heads of Unit), 37 percent of managers are women, compared to 31% when the Juncker Commission took office.

Commissioner Günther H. Oettinger, in charge of human resources and budget, said: "Gender-diverse management is more effective and achieves better results. The Commission owes the best to the EU citizens, which is why we have to lead by example. We are on the right path and we will continue making targeted efforts until our female colleagues are well represented at all management levels."

## Renewable Energy a Jobs Boom For Victoria

### VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA

The Andrews Labor Government is harnessing the power of renewable energy to drive down prices, attract billions of dollars of investment and create thousands of local jobs.

Premier Daniel Andrews recently joined Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio to announce the introduction of legislation for Victorian Renewable Energy Targets (VRET), the largest renewable energy auction in Australia and the awarding of contracts for two large-scale solar plants to power Melbourne's tram network.

Legislation to be introduced into the Parliament will set ambitious new renewable energy targets for Victoria of 25 percent by 2020 and 40 percent by 2025.

This is the first time such ambitious renewable energy targets have been enshrined in state legislation anywhere in Australia.

Importantly, the VRET will cut the average cost of power for Victorians by around \$30 a year for households, \$2,500 a year for medium businesses and \$140,000 a year for large companies, while driving a 16 percent reduction in Victoria's electricity sector greenhouse gas emissions by 2034-35.



# INCREASING MINORITY PARTICIPATION IN STEM THROUGH MENTORING

Igniting interest in STEM fields start in grade school. Introducing minority students to mentors from similar backgrounds can dispel myths and plant the STEM seed.

BY MALIBU KOTHARI



**P**ublic attention has been turned to the underrepresentation of minorities in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) occupations, even though global figures on diversity in STEM are difficult to find. Scientific American tried to gather data in 2014, finding then what is true now: Minorities, as defined by each country, are not pursuing STEM careers in numbers reflective of their representation in the various populations.

Most of the recent focus has been on encouraging women to pursue higher education degrees in STEM disciplines and breaking down barriers to employment and career progression. However, research conducted by academia, government agencies, and nonprofits have discovered that increasing the number of minorities and women in STEM higher education and the workforce begins with children in lower grades, and they need mentors.

Mentoring provides role models, bringing a scientist, engineer, technology professional or mathematician to life. Mentoring is especially effective when the mentor is a minority just like the students they encourage.

## Seeing is Believing

As minority faculty in institutions of higher education, employers, and groups began to delve into the issue of minority underrepresentation of colleges and universities, they realized that recruiting students into STEM programs is an end step in a process that should have begun when the students were in grade school.

Some students are drawn to STEM, but many more cannot envision themselves as scientists or engineers. STEM



**ROLE MODELS CAN ALSO ERASE THE STIGMA THAT OFTEN ACCOMPANIES STEM CAREERS. THE STIGMA IS THAT – EXCEPT FOR TECHNOLOGY JOBS – SCIENTISTS, ENGINEERS AND MATHEMATICIANS TEND TO HAVE SOMEWHAT BORING JOB RESPONSIBILITIES.**

professionals are mostly white males. Even women (of all colors) have long been underrepresented because they saw themselves as teachers and nurses, and not as NASA scientists or technology innovators.

Mentoring is a "seeing is believing" approach. That is the philosophy of Juan Gilbert, chairperson of the Computer and Information Science and Engineering Department at the University of Florida. He goes into elementary-school classrooms to talk about his work in computer science, purposely choosing topics that are fascinating to children. In one example, he talked about flying drones with brainwaves. He firmly believes that role models are powerful, making it easier for children to see themselves in positions like Gilbert's.

Role models can also erase the stigma that often accompanies STEM careers. The stigma is that – except for technology jobs – scientists, engineers and mathematicians tend to have somewhat boring job responsibilities. This is



far from the truth. Having role models who design unique bridges and buildings, develop innovative healthcare equipment, develop new algorithms for apps for the disabled, design new engineering strategies for environmental protection, develop new pharmaceuticals for diseases, and fly drones with their brains, can dispel the myth that STEM careers are uninspiring and "not cool."

### Tackling the Issues

The EU STEM Coalition was developed because Europe found it was not keeping pace with the demand for STEM skills for a couple of issues. One, graduates in STEM fields did not have the problem-solving and communication skills that employers needed. Also, students viewed STEM subjects as unappealing or too difficult.

The STEM Coalition addresses these problems in several ways. One is to foster children's interest in math and science. A suggested strategy is to build alliances between educators, government, employers, and other partners to determine the skills needed and to utilize professionals to inspire four-out-of-10 students to choose STEM studies. Another important group is the European Schoolnet, which is a nonprofit network of 31 European Ministries of Education focused on bringing innovation in teaching and learning to schools, teachers, Ministries of Education, researchers, and industry partners.

There is a need for 1 million new researchers by the year 2020, if Europe is to keep growing. As the innovative educational EDU-ARCTIC project points out, STEM is an acronym that brings together four disciplines that work in an integrative manner to bring about solutions to social and scientific challenges. One of the important changes the many organizations and projects like EDU-ARCTIC want to bring about is for students to stop viewing STEM careers as reserved for the intellectual elite.

### Mentoring Can Move the Dial to Progress

Mentoring plays an important role in the ability of Europe (and all other countries) to meet its labor skills needs. One of the teacher practices mentioned in the EDU-ARCTIC report that is critical to promoting student interest in STEM is for the teacher to be an inspiring leader and role model for students. The teacher should be enthusiastic and positive about what students are learning.

In selected national practices to encourage STEM, the EU inGenius strategic project is listed as one of the largest strategic projects in science education that is funded by the European Commission. The inGenius project addresses two challenges: the lack of interest in STEM subjects and future skills gaps. The innovative practices listed include meeting real-life STEM professionals and dealing with stereotypes. Mentoring by real-world



## MENTORING BY REAL-WORLD MINORITY STEM PROFESSIONALS CAN DEMONSTRATE TO MINORITY STUDENTS THAT THEY CAN DEVELOP INTERESTING CAREERS AND NOT BE HELD BACK BY STEREOTYPES.

minority STEM professionals can demonstrate to minority students that they can develop interesting careers and not be held back by stereotypes.

Initiatives to guide students into STEM subjects and eventually STEM careers increasingly rely on the participation of employers. BusinessEurope stresses that firms should provide the context for science studies by providing positive role models from STEM occupations in order to challenge negative perceptions of STEM careers. Greater participation of STEM professionals in the schools can help link learning and work. inGenius is an umbrella center for a variety of school and business partnership programs designed to increase interest in primary to upper secondary school-level students in STEM.

Mentoring is recognized as a critical strategy for encouraging all young students, including minorities, to take an interest in STEM subjects. Mentoring requires alliances and partnerships between employers and schools. It is quite possible that one of the reasons minority students have not taken as much interest in STEM studies as non-minority students is because the employer-school link has not been cultivated over the past two decades.

All the excellent projects building mentoring relationships will surely move the dial to progress. The future of Europe's economic success depends on it, and that is no exaggeration.



# HENRYKA BOCHNIARZ: EUROPE'S STRONG VOICE OF DIVERSITY

The dialogue on the inclusion of women in Polish and European Union organizations is louder and clearer today because of the decades-long contributions of Henryka Bochniarz. Her perspective and experiences offer lessons on where the dialogue should head next.

BY DEBRA JENKINS

**P**oland-born Henryka Bochniarz has been on the frontlines of diversity in Poland, the European Union, and the world for that matter. She is an extraordinary woman who has held government and private positions of distinction, founded the Polish Confederation Lewiatan, is a member of international organizations such as BusinessEurope and the European Commission's Enterprise and Industry Advisory Group, and a co-founder of the Congress of Women. Bochniarz was the president of Boeing for Europe for eight years and has even been a candidate for the President of Poland.

Despite these impressive credentials, she is quick to say that one of the highlights of her life has been the ability to advance the role of women in Poland and in Europe through her many roles as advocate for private business in Poland and influencer of government legislation throughout Europe.

## LEADER OF PEOPLE

Poland underwent a long process of liberating itself from the control of the Soviet Union as the People's Republic of Poland to eventually become the democratic Commonwealth of Poland. The years of war and turmoil culminated in a new popularly elected parliamentary government and president,



**Henryka Bochniarz**  
President & Head of Central & Eastern Europe Region  
Office for Warsaw, The Boeing Company



**"I am very much accustomed to sitting on boards as the only woman. I don't like that kind of monopoly. I think we should have more women everywhere."**

and a new membership in NATO in 1999 and in the European Union in 2004. It was a long journey, and one that has still not ended as the country continues to strengthen its economy amid constant turmoil in eastern Europe as the Baltic states deal with tensions among the countries due to aggressive behaviour of Russia.

That was a very brief explanation of Poland's transformation from a Communist-controlled country to one that freely elects its government and decides its own fate. It is the background to Bochniarz's remarkable achievements and her continuing effort to help women reach their goals as professional businesswomen and entrepreneurs.

During Poland's transformation to a truly independent country, women working in the private sector industries, like textiles and agriculture, lost their jobs be-



cause companies went bankrupt after losing Soviet Union markets. The women began organizing their own businesses, and today almost 30 percent of small companies are owned and managed by women. The bigger the company, the fewer women in managerial positions. Currently, women make up 20 percent of the positions on Supervisory Boards and 12 percent of the Management Boards.

Bochniarz knows the numbers because she is the Founder and CEO of Polish Confederation Lewiatan (nationwide confederation of employers). When Poland came out from under Communist control, privately owned businesses had little to no voice in the country because state-owned public organizations were large and powerful. Bochniarz wanted the private organizations to participate in the transformation of Poland's economy and government. Membership in BusinessEurope strengthened the organization's influence. The confederation cares about issues like inflation, the legislative process, social dialogue, education, and cultural issues.

"Seventy-percent of our legislation comes from the European Union," says Bochniarz, "and the rest is local legislation. We obtain information from the private sector businesses and inform governments."

### ISLANDS AMONG MEN

There are almost 5,000 member companies in Lewiatan, and they mostly represent the modern economy. In fact, the confederation represents 90 percent of Poland's companies in the IT, private media, communications, financial and insurance industries. All sizes of companies are represented, leading back to Bochniarz's perspective on the low percentages of women on boards.

"I am very much accustomed to sitting on boards as the only woman. I don't like that kind of monopoly. I think we should have more women everywhere. Fifty-two percent of Polish women are educated, so we don't understand why they are not better represented in business. In fact, they are also not that well-represented in politics. The women in top positions are just lonely islands among men. It is key for businesses to provide more services, be more efficient, and have better management, so we need more women in top positions. That's why I'm trying to convince men to fight for women," she said.

Bochniarz supports quotas because they speed up progress. "Otherwise it would take 50-60 years to achieve quality," she explained. "Quotas are a way of getting very diversified opinions, to create a compromise which is a natural way of achieving goals." Getting diversified perspectives among all groups of employees is important, including teachers who are 90 percent female.

Bochniarz also points out that many jobs once required strong men, but technology and robots are changing the nature of the work, tossing out stereotypes in many cases as to whether a man or a woman can manage a job.

"Why should a woman be prevented from working in a shipyard just because the positions have traditionally been held by men? The labor market is changing dramatically, and to meet new requirements, we must look at work with open minds," she said.

Changing perspectives is not easy, and needs to start with families and education. If male and female children are raised to believe that only men can do certain types of work, and educational and training opportunities support that perspective, nothing will change.

"To bring about change requires an economic investment and government policy changes, designed to change the social processes. It takes years to make such changes," she explained.

### YOU ARE NOT ALONE...

One of Bochniarz's endearing characteristics, and indubitably a major contributor to her success, is her forthright manner of speaking. At the 2017 Global Summit of Women, she was asked to describe what she sees as her leadership strengths.

"I don't believe in miracles. I don't think you can achieve something if you are chasing ghosts for a day or week. There is nothing left after that. The people stick with me because they know it works and life is changing. It is changing in Poland and changing outside. You have to have structure and people who trust you, and you have to have your plan and know how to give a mandate," she said.

Even if she is out of office for weeks, the confederation continues to operate smoothly because people work hard and make independent decisions.

"They know their mission. I have an active professional life, I am on many boards and involved with foundations," Bochniarz explains. "I don't want to be involved in all day-to-day activities because it would be impossible."

For Bochniarz, success means seeing positive results of her work but also meeting and working with different people. Success is found in people who trust her, want to work with her or for her organizations because they appreciate their added value.

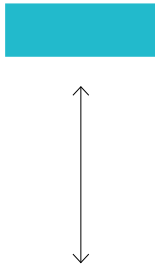
Be patient, she tells women who want to achieve their fullest potential but continue to experience glass ceiling that holds them back. It takes time to overcome the old-fashioned way of thinking that men are more qualified.

"Join organizations that can help you. They can show you that you are not alone and can convey energy and power," she said.

One such organization is Global Summit of Women which Bochniarz has been attending for many years. In 2016 she was awarded Poland's Women's Leadership Award and has served on numerous Global Summit committees over the years.

She believes that Global Summit is an excellent example of the organization that women should participate in because it shows that they are united, diversified, and able to network. It shows each and every one of them that she is not alone.

# STAYING FOCUSED: **UNDERSTANDING MINDFULNESS AND ITS BENEFITS**



MINDFULNESS IS NOW PRACTICED BY SOME OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST COMPANIES, BUT IT IS STILL VIEWED BY MORE AS AN ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY WITH LITTLE MEANING FOR THE WORKPLACE. WHAT IS MINDFULNESS, AND HOW DOES IT BENEFIT WORKERS?

BY LISA TRUMBULL







**T**ell people that mindfulness has its roots in Buddhism, and the term is filed away in many minds as yet another feel-good religion-based fad that has little application in the workplace. Yet, it is a practice that is taking root in the corporate world as awareness of its benefits to leadership and workers grows.

Understanding the fundamentals of mindfulness theory is the first step toward harnessing its advantages. As a philosophy and practice, mindfulness is applicable across personal and work lives as it raises the state of awareness without judgment of the moment, no matter what the moment might be. This leads to emotional regulation and has significant implications for reducing stress, judgment, and mental limitations that are self-inflicted.

## Mindfulness is a State of Being

Mindfulness is a psychological state of awareness and not a trait, says the American Psychological Association (APA). This is an important distinction because a state-of-awareness is moment-to-moment awareness of the immediate experience without judgment, while a trait is a particular characteristic a person possesses.

The October 2015 "Mindful Nation UK" report prepared by the Mindfulness All-Party Parliamentary Group (MAPPG) defines mindfulness as "paying attention to what's happening in the present moment in the mind, body and external environment, with an attitude of curiosity and kindness." It is non-judgmental awareness of thinking, feeling, and behavior patterns and developing the capacity to manage the patterns with greater skill, leading to more choices and greater capacity when responding to life's challenges.

In its earliest application in the 1970s, Jon Kabat-Zinn began teaching mindfulness to patients at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center in a course called Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction. The purpose of teaching patients mindfulness was to help them manage the stress and pain associated with medical conditions.

Today, mindfulness is used in the corporate setting to help employees at all levels better manage the incredible stress they experience in the modern business environment. Mindfulness is often confused with meditation, but meditation is just one activity used to cultivate mindfulness.

## Focused on the Present

It is the erroneous belief that mindfulness and meditation are equivalent that likely slowed its adoption by companies in the past. Mindfulness is not dogmatic or religion based, and it is not a spiritual practice. Mindfulness is a mental skill that is developed through practice. It can be a valuable management tool that helps employees manage stress, stay focused, and improve how employees work together.

A person who is mindful has a greater consciousness in the present. A person trains the mind to be more

**Today, mindfulness is used in the corporate setting to help employees at all levels better manage the incredible stress they experience in the modern business environment.**

aware and less judgmental or reactive to their thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations. Thoughts are not viewed as facts and are managed as mental events. This gives a person more ability to balance the deluge of information and competing demands that most people contend with today. The mind is able to purposely focus attention on the present and accept the moment without judgment.





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Because the mind is not allowed to be distracted or to succumb to preoccupation with success and self-esteem, worries about decision-making, regrets, and negative thoughts, the person practicing mindfulness is better able to form connections with others.

It makes sense in that people who are not focused on themselves, their situation and their emotions can focus on others. Being able to form better relationships and connections is an important trait because organizations must compete in a highly networked world.

## Workforce with Attention Deficit



Developing mindfulness in the workplace can deliver enormous benefits. One of the common themes across companies is increase stress levels among employees which leads to reduced productivity and increased health issues. Clearly, many of the traditional strategies, like time management workshops, may be helpful but are not addressing the root of the problem – increasing stress produced by the bombardment of information and continual change. Maintaining attention is difficult as people are besieged with text messages, emails, ringing cell phones, social media, information produced by workplace systems, co-workers asking questions, managers issuing instructions, and so on.

Multitasking sounds efficient, but in reality research from Harvard University showed that people shift their focus quickly from one task to another which likely means the employee is not delivering optimal results on either task. Frequent multitasking leads to developing the attention deficit trait which aggravates the problem and harms performance even further.

According to the collective research gathered by the APA, the transformational impacts of mindfulness include a decrease in rumination, stress reduction, working memory improvement, focused attention, less emotional reactivity, more cognitive flexibility, and greater relationship satisfaction. People who develop mindfulness have enhanced self-insight and intuition, and businesses benefit as their managers are much more likely to develop a higher emotional intelligence IQ.

## A Process and Not an Event

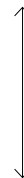
Developing mindfulness is a process. One or two workplace workshops or seminars do not suddenly make people mindful. The workshops can inform attendees as to what mindfulness is and how to develop it, but a manager (or any employee) who wants to improve performance through mindfulness has to make a commitment to rigorously practice it.

Practice begins with recognizing distractions and consciously choosing the event, person, or task that deserves attention, and then exclusively focusing on that one person or thing. It is more difficult than it sounds because the typical business environment is made up of distractions. When succumbing to distractions and trying to multitask, take a short mental break to realign focus. Force the mind to focus on one task and stay with that task before moving on to anything else. An app available at [www.potentialproject.com](http://www.potentialproject.com) may help people develop focused minds for better

organizational performance.

Freeing the mind of distractions and giving tasks full focus delivers another wonderful advantage: The mindful employee has greater opportunity to be innovative and creative. This is important to organizations because innovation is needed to remain competitive. Mindfulness improves physical health through stress reduction and improves mental health.

Cultivating mindfulness can pay big dividends for people and organizational performance. It gives new meaning to the statement, "It's all in your mind."



**Multitasking sounds efficient, but in reality research from Harvard University showed that people shift their focus quickly from one task to another which likely means the employee is not delivering optimal results on either task.**





## BRINGING THE SCIENCE OF MINDFULNESS INTO THE CORPORATE WORLD

Academics, scientists and medical researchers always seem to be coming up with new theories and practices, and one of the growing efforts is in the science of mindfulness. It makes sense because mindfulness concerns people's thought processes and was developed to help people deal with stress.

Its application in the workforce is not surprising given the World Health Organization has called workplace stress the "health epidemic of the 21st century." Stress leads to higher rates of injuries, lower rates of productivity, more mistakes, higher health costs and a host of other issues. Despite wellness programs, work-life balance programs and time management workshops, workplace stress continues to worsen.

Mindfulness is another approach to helping employees master their stress and lead healthier, happier lives in their personal and work lives. There is mounting scientific research documenting

THERE IS PLENTY OF SCIENCE-BASED RESEARCH SHOWING THAT MINDFULNESS IMPACTS THE BRAIN IN POSITIVE WAYS. CORPORATIONS IMPLEMENTING MINDFULNESS PROGRAMS ARE FINDING THAT THOSE IMPACTS BRING MANY BENEFITS TO EMPLOYEES.

BY BELINDA JONES

the benefits of mindfulness, and it deserves serious management consideration.

### PRESENT-CENTERED ATTENTION

The business world has gone through two major changes in the last decade: The Great Recession and advancing technology. These are two factors that caused major disruptions in business models, workplace design, job design, job assignments and job competition.

Viewed this way, it is no wonder that employer programs designed to reduce stress are being overwhelmed by other

## Mindfulness works by triggering changes in the brain and hormone production. These changes lead to more non-reactive and judgmental acceptance of experience.

factors. People are constantly distracted, subjected to constant flows of information, and trying to cope with the complexity of life. Their minds are constantly trying to focus attention but instead are more likely to be in a constant state of stress while trying to figure out what deserves focus from minute to minute. The result: People approach experiences or events with preconceived notions because it simply makes it easier to sort through everything and it is done in a poor attempt to reduce stress.

Mindfulness is not a fluffy, religious-based philosophy. It is the science of the brain and has relevance to organizational behavior. It did emerge from a Buddhist philosophy, but that is as close as it gets to religion.

The modern science-based mindfulness approach extracted from Buddhism is focused on present-centered attention and awareness and has been intently studied. A comprehensive analysis of 4,000 scientific papers on mindfulness, conducted by an interdisciplinary team and co-authored by two researchers associated with Case Western Reserve University and Pepperdine University ("Contemplating Mindfulness at Work (An Integrative Review)," found that mindfulness improves stability, control, and efficiency of attention. It helps people maintain their attention in the present, enabling them to maintain focus on listening and visual tasks. Mindfulness enhances relationships, making it relevant to leadership and teamwork.

### CHANGING THE BRAIN

Mindfulness works by triggering changes in the brain and hormone production. These changes lead to more non-reactive and judgmental acceptance of experience. As one specific type of meditation, researchers have used brain imaging tools to study changes in the brain while meditating. However, meditation has a broad goal, while mindfulness has a specific one concerning focused attention.

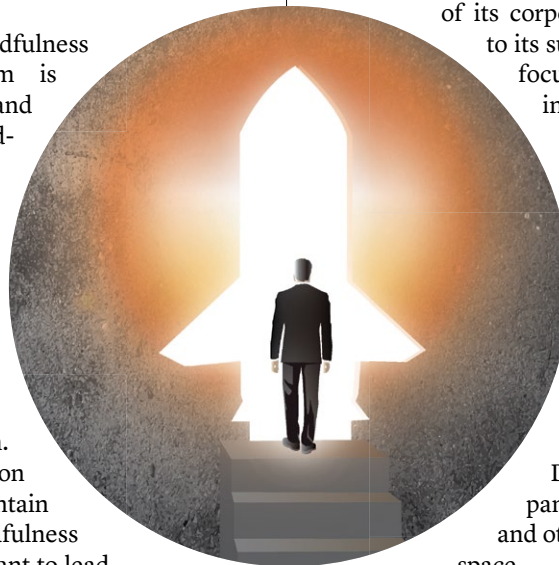
The hard science has shown that Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) training programs lead to increases in brain gray matter density in the area of the brain where memory processes and where learning, emotion regulation, perspective taking, and self-referential processing take place. Founded in 1979 by Jon Kabat-Zinn at the University of Massachusetts Centre for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care and Society, the MBSR program is credited with bringing mindfulness into the main-

stream by disassociating the religious aspect, studying mindfulness through a scientific lens, and applying it to real-world situations in the medical setting. There are now other types of training programs as well.

Brain imaging studies have shown changes in specific parts of the brain like the frontopolar cortex/BA 10, sensory cortices and insula, hippocampus, and so on. There is now a diverse set of studies that confirm the scientific findings, but there are also studies involving corporate employees.

For example, the Herbert Smith Freehills global law firm offered a mindfulness program in Australia. In one of its earliest programs, 200 employees completed the six-week program, and the company found a 12 percent increase in employee focus; a 10 percent increase in employee efficiency; a 14 percent decrease in multitasking; and a 10 percent increase in employee performance. After offering a dozen of the programs, the data indicates program participants experienced a 45 percent increase in focus, 35 percent increase in effectiveness, and a 35 percent decrease in stress. Mindfulness training is now at the core

of its corporate leadership training program due to its success in helping its employees develop focus and clarity as they deal with conflicting priorities, frequent interruptions, and an unceasing flow of information.



### FOCUSING IN AN 'ALWAYS ON' WORKPLACE

It is an "always on" work environment as employees across industries find the lines blurred between off and on work time due to technology. As a result, many major corporations have adopted mindfulness training, including Google, Aetna, General Mills, Dow Chemical, and others. Some companies have full-fledged training programs, and others offer meditation training and quiet space.

Mindfulness is a type of meditation, but the difference is that the mind is trained to focus on one thing at a time and to stay in the present. It helps stop the mind from wandering, going over the same thoughts over and over again, and struggling to sort through a massive amount of non-ending information. This reduces mental and physical stress.

It is not necessary to go through a training program, if a person is determined to master mindfulness. It is a matter of taking the time to force the mind to quietly focus and learning to bring the mind back to the present when it wanders.

However, employees – and their employers – benefit when companies offer support programs. An example is the Dow Chemical "Practicing Mindfulness for Positive Life Change" program, which offers employees tools like weekly emails, slide decks, web-based workshops, audio clips and in-class discussions. Companies like Dow Chemical and others must be receiving benefits, or they would not invest the resources to helping their employees develop mindfulness.



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# RIVER OF CREATIVE THINKING: MINDFULNESS IN THE CORPORATE SETTING

*MINDFULNESS IS OFTEN VIEWED AS YET ANOTHER ESOTERIC THEORY THAT HAS LITTLE PRACTICAL APPLICATION. THE TRUTH IS MINDFULNESS IS PROVEING TO BE A POWERFUL TOOL FOR PROMOTING INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY IN THE WORKPLACE.*

BY JOSEPH WARREN



One of the consequences of technology has been mental overload as cell phones constantly ding; emails demand answers; web Face Time meetings are held at any time; mobile phones turned work into a 24/7 proposition; and technologies require near constant attention in terms of upgrading, tweaking, and repair.

The typical employee mind is having enormous difficulty focusing on what is really important, leading to higher levels of stress and lower productivity. There are few opportunities for creative or innovative thinking due to the ongoing mental struggle to cope with the constant information flow.

Organizations are increasingly embracing mindfulness programs to help employees focus nonjudgmentally in the present, and that promotes creative thinking because the mental clutter is removed.

## MAKING ROOM FOR CREATIVE THINKING

In 2012, Intel was one of the early companies implementing a mindfulness program named Awake@Intel that is widely popular with employees. The program was customized to incorporate Intel values of innovation and creative thinking. Now a 10-week program, it puts employees on a path to utilize concepts such as mindfulness, relationship intelligence and intention. Once mastered through practice, employees know how to focus their thought processes on a single project without succumbing to distractions that fully occupy the mind.

The reason the Awake@Intel mindfulness is open to all

employees is due to its success from initiation. Mindfulness does reduce mental and physical stress, but for Intel it was important for employees to become better problem solvers. Each 90-minute session includes journaling thoughts and sharing problem-solving techniques. One employee shared an experience reflecting the benefits of mindfulness. A project team was multi-tasking, stretched thin and concerned about meeting a deadline. At a meeting, the ability to focus on a major project component, without getting distracted, led to a previously unimaginable solution. In the opinion of software engineer Anand Sharma, it was what was learned in Awake@Intel that led to the creative problem solving.

Mindfulness also improves relationships, which will further promote innovation as people focus on the moment and discussion, without judgment or bias, and experience higher levels of engagement. For Intel, mindfulness is about getting results through greater mental clarity, more insights and new ideas.

Google, one of the most innovative companies in the world, has also instituted an in-house mindfulness program. Its "Search Inside Yourself" program is all about developing emotional intelligence, focus, awareness, empathy and compassion. The program at Google was so popular that it is now offered through an independent nonprofit organization. One of its important benefits is teaching people how to deal with difficult

emotions which can get in the way of logical thought. It is nearly impossible to think creatively when stressed or anxious.

### **MINDFULNESS AND DIVERSITY & INCLUSION**

Innovation and creativity are created in different ways, and mindfulness can play a role. Numerous studies have proven many times over that companies that have developed a truly diverse and inclusive culture and workplace are more innovative and creative.

Patricia Thompson explained in "How Mindfulness Helped a Workplace Diversity Exercise" (Harvard Business Review, Jan. 16, 2017) how she used mindfulness to facilitate a training workshop for the diversity committee for a Fortune 500 company. Thompson is a corporate psychologist, a person of color, trained in mindfulness, and the committee was open to new ideas. The conditions were ideal for seeing if mindfulness could help people overcome their biases, emotions, and judgment in order to be more open to discussions on diversity.

Thompson discussed mindfulness with the group first, reviewing the concepts of staying engaged, coping strategies like deep breathing, having empathy for each group member, and being supportive even when uncomfortable topics were introduced. The result: An honest, productive group conversation about diversity. People of color openly discussed the challenges they face on a daily basis, and white males revealed they seldom discuss diversity and inclusion because they are worried they will inadvertently say something offensive or be judged poorly. By the end of the meeting, a lot of important discussion took place by creating an environment where people could better tolerate feeling discomfort.

Scientifically speaking, mindfulness reduces the activity in the area of the brain where emotional processing takes place.

### **RELATING TO THE WORLD IN A DIFFERENT WAY THROUGH MINDFULNESS**

Mindful people discover they relate to the world in a different manner. Creative thinking is referred to with terms like "thinking outside the box." But how does an employer encourage employees to think differently?

This has been a real challenge as people spend most of their day just trying to mentally cope with constant bombardment of information that defines life today. It is not a coincidence that tech giants like Google and Twitter offer mindfulness training and meditation classes. Employees are getting mentally dragged down and find themselves just trying to get through the day. This is certainly not conducive to generating innovation

## **SCIENTIFICALLY SPEAKING, MINDFULNESS REDUCES THE ACTIVITY IN THE AREA OF THE BRAIN WHERE EMOTIONAL PROCESSING TAKES PLACE.**

or creativity. They want more quality work time, more productive networking and collaboration, and the mental ability to solve problems. For a growing number of companies, mindfulness training is proving to be the tool that perfectly fits the needs of the workforce.

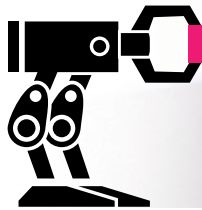
To learn more about the successful application of mindfulness, start with the book written by the man who first used it as a training tool: "Wherever You Go, There You Are" by Jon Kabat-Zinn. He has written several helpful books that take a deep dive into the power of mindfulness to help people live in the present through improved cognition.

There are also apps like Insight Timer and Headspace that Google uses and are likely well-tested as to their usefulness.

Every company of every size – especially those struggling to produce innovation – should explore mindfulness. At the least, take a hint from companies like Prentice Hall Publishing, Nike, Deutsche Bank, and McKinsey & Co. and consider creating quiet spaces where employees can meditate during work time. From these rooms flow the desired creative thinking that can be so elusive.



# MARITA CHENG PROVES GIRLS (AND WOMEN) CAN CODE AND BUILD ROBOTS



Marita Cheng  
Founder at  
Aubot (formerly  
2Mar Robotics)



*AS COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD TRY TO FIND WAYS TO MOTIVATE GIRLS TO ENTER STEM FIELDS, AUSTRALIA'S MARITA CHENG IS BUSY DEVELOPING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE PRODUCTS AND BUILDING ROBOTS. SHE IS INNOVATIVE, ENERGETIC AND PASSIONATE ABOUT TECHNOLOGY.*

BY **PETER SCOTT**

**W**ho could have predicted that a young girl who grew up in a relatively isolated area of Queensland, Australia would one day be named the "Young Australian of the Year" in 2012 for her entrepreneurship and technology skills?

Marita Cheng is a technology entrepreneur who proves that girls or young women can code, develop artificial intelligence products, create apps, and build robots, all of which significantly improve people's lives. She has developed products that assist the blind, disabled, elderly and everyone else interested in human-like communication over long distances.

Remarkably, the now 27-year-old has only just begun what will be a lifelong journey based in technology. She represents the youthful blend of technology know-how and the younger generation's focus on social responsibility, and it is with great anticipation that the world watches to see her next endeavors. Yes, she is really that intelligent, motivated, hardworking, and passionate about making life easier for those facing a variety of physical and communication challenges.

## JOINING THE ROBOTICS REVOLUTION

All the articles about the struggles educational institutions and governments face in convincing women to enter STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) fields make

one wonder how many Marita Chenges are out there.

Cheng first took an interest in technology when she discovered the Internet and the vast amount of information it holds. At a very young age, she realized the computer systems could be integrated with mechanical systems to make products in the physical world where everyone must live.

"I looked around and didn't see the mechanical systems powered by computer systems. I knew I wanted to be part of the robotics revolution. I thought, 'Robotics revolution, please don't take off without me because I want to be part of it,'" she says in her irresistible way.

Cheng's first thoughts of entrepreneurship developed while still in high school. Besides the Internet, magazine articles about young technology wizards like Steve Wozniak, Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, Larry Page and Sergey Brin inspired her. In those articles, she also found the inspiration to read about philosophy in order to develop a deep thinking about the world and the application of technology to the real world. It is the roots of her focus on developing robots that make life nicer, easier and simpler for millions of people.



## ENTREPRENEURSHIP PATH TO ROBOTICS

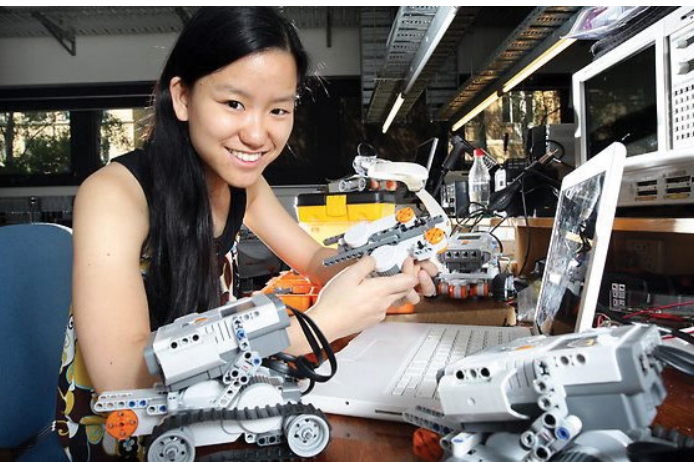
To put her inspiration to work, Cheng studied mechatronics engineering at the University of Melbourne in order to gain the practical knowledge as to how mechanics and technology fit together.

"I knew in high school I would one day have my own business, and I liked the idea of working hard and continually improving myself," she explained, with her first business a reminder service for patients taking prescription medications.

At 19 years old, she started her second business called Robogals Global, a student-run nonprofit which aims to get girls interested in engineering and technology. Supported through corporate sponsorship, Cheng initially convinced fellow university engineering students to go to schools and teach girls robotics. Robogals now has more than 30 chapters around the world.

She started Aipoly with Alberto Rizzoli and Simon Edwardsson. The Aipoly app helps blind people "see" objects through an image recognition algorithm combined with a smartphone. Hold the phone over an item, like a chair or food, and it names the item. She left that company to pursue robotics full-time.

After starting the robotic company Aubot, Cheng first developed a telepresence robot named Teleport. The robot enables people to transport themselves somewhere else and navigate through an office, home or other space, even meeting people along the way. It allows people with a disability to teleport into a workspace, elderly people to socialize, and children in hospitals to attend school. Aubot is currently working on Jeva, a robotic arm that attaches to wheelchairs or other items. She developed the idea after visiting the Australian Quadriplegic Association in Melbourne, and meeting with people at the Spinal Cord Injuries Association in Sydney and a variety of care organizations. The final product will be a robotic arm that opens doors, pours drinks, picks up phones, turns light switches on and off, picks items off shelves, and performs many other everyday activities.



## SURROUNDED BY INSPIRATION

How does she manage all this at such a young age?

"It is pretty lonely, so I try to surround myself with people who inspire me. The people on my team think big, do more, work harder, do better, and have a passion for technology and entrepreneurship," Cheng explained. She goes on to explain that she has learned that being a good leader means understanding that she does not have all the answers. She listens to people like the engineers and empowers people to do their tasks.

Of course, Marita is a risk taker to a certain degree. "Taking calculated risks means being smart about how much you are willing to lose and recognizing your skill level. I knew when I started Aubot that there were a lot of skills I needed to learn. I use caution when approaching a project when I still need to learn a skill," she said. She is always working on growing her business, solving problems, overcoming challenges and developing robots.

## GROWING CONFIDENCE IN STEM IN YOUNG GIRLS

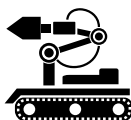
As countries try to figure out how to encourage young girls to take an interest in STEM careers, Cheng offers the following advice based on her experience and the experience of women on her team.

"Young girls should be encouraged to get started on a small project, and then another small project, and so on until confidence grows in their ability to do larger projects. It makes coding, math, science and robotics interesting," she said.

She believes if more money was put into schools to teach women coding that eventually technology will become a common skill like writing. Everyone will have a great tool in their tool kit for generating creativity. Her advice to entrepreneurs who want to go from idea to reality in a business is to start with the simplest iteration and move forward as quickly as possible while remembering the importance of measuring calculated risks.

"Start with something simple and always be learning. Once you start a business, you will know what skills you already have and what skills you need to learn when starting the next business," she said.

Set goals, Cheng says. It is the way to achieve the next big thing. She should know as she proves to the world that girls can not only code. They can start businesses that make the world more accommodating and a lot nicer place to live.



# NOT SO FAST!

## BUILDING THE SENIOR-LEVEL LEADERSHIP PIPELINE

It takes time to develop a successful C-suite and senior-level leadership pipeline. Candidates need development opportunities that reflect the business world as it is – globally competitive, diverse, and dynamic.

BY DONNA CHAN

Developing an executive and senior leadership pipeline is one of the most important strategies a business takes to ensure a successful future in a dynamic economy. While many organizations have leadership development programs, they are not doing an adequate job of successfully creating a leadership pipeline leading to the very top. They prepare high potentials to reach a level below the proverbial glass ceiling but stop short of developing future CEOs, C-suite executives or other senior leaders. The result: Companies are forced to search externally to quickly fill positions, even though studies show that internal candidates are more likely to succeed if given the right development opportunities.

Successful leadership programs are designed as a process that is aligned to the business mission, culture, and operating context, and prepares targeted individuals to utilize skills that enable them to lead the organization in a global and ever-changing business environment.

### GOING DEEP AND CONTEXTUAL

The rapid rise and Winter of CEOs and other executive-level positions is a favorite management consulting topic. The reasons top leaders fail range from lack of people skills to ethical lapses, but a top reason is lack of development within the context of the business strategy.

Korn Ferry conducted a global study

on leadership development and found that many companies do not have individuals who are prepared to assume senior leadership positions. When top positions need filling, 50 percent of organizations rely on external hires because they have not identified internal high potentials nor invested in contextual and experiential development of those individuals.

There are two main issues concerning development of top leaders. One is that generic programs fail to provide the contextual development that is so important to success. Contextual development addresses specific factors that influence business success like diversity, business culture, vision and mission, global operations, competition, multi-generational workforce, and so on. Second is that the programs do not go deep enough to find the internal high potentials or emerging leaders that will benefit from long-term development.

Effective leadership programs identify the people who exhibit leadership in their current positions and give them formal and informal development opportunities. One approach to identifying the emerging leaders is to develop managers who can recognize behaviors that signify potential leadership qualities of team members. The organizations that develop a learning culture in which succession management is in the company's DNA are more likely to identify people with the right capabilities and more likely to





## IDENTIFYING PEOPLE DEEP IN THE ORGANIZATION ALLOWS ENOUGH TIME TO OFFER THEM CRITICAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES. TRANSPARENCY THROUGH METRICS IS IMPORTANT TO KEEPING THE PROCESS ALIGNED WITH BUSINESS GOALS.

retain high potentials. This approach also provides a steady supply of metrics and feedback for analysis of potential.

### LOOKING INWARD FOR TOP LEADERS TO ENSURE THE FUTURE

Successful leadership succession programs are customized and structured to give people targeted experiential development opportunities, and they take time if organizations go deep to find high potentials. Developing internal candidates gives the business time to develop the specific type of leadership needed for organizational success, like the ability to adapt strategies in a dynamic market, to lead in a diverse operational environment or to make high-quality decisions.

Experiential assignments should be of high value to leadership development and the organization as well. Potential CEOs and other high-level leaders need opportunities to demonstrate how they manage in multiple settings and situations. Senior leadership development programs include setting high potentials up in high pressure situations such as investor dinners or putting them on critical project teams.

Moving people across functions may provide new perspectives and build on existing knowledge, but it does not prepare the person for assuming a position like CEO. Learning that comes with challenges and a variety of experiences that fill skills gaps. For example, a candidate may need strategic planning experience, so the employee is asked to develop and implement a strategic plan. A candidate who needs international experience attends important international business forums and leads the company into a new geographic market. A candidate who lacks collaboration skills or skills in the engagement of diverse peers could lead a cross-functional initiative that includes a team of diverse employees.

When a candidate gets close to the top, he or she can be mentored by a top leader; for example, a CEO mentors potential CEO candidates or an executive mentors potential replacements. Development activities address specific skills needed for top leadership roles. A senior leader candidate can make presentations to the board in order to gain their support for an initiative. Candidates can accompany executives on international trips to gain knowledge of global operations and the complexities that accompany such operations, from cultural differences to regulations.

### CHALLENGED TO SUCCEED

General Electric offers a case study in preparing a replacement for the CEO position. John Flannery was leading the GE healthcare unit at the time he was tapped.

Up to that point, Flannery had worked as a risk analyst of GE's new business purchases and then in a variety of finance-related jobs. In 2001, Jeff Immelt chose Flannery to head other units, such as GE Capital. In 2005, he led GE Capital's Asia Pacific region; in 2009, he was moved to India, a key emerging market for industrial operations. Immelt wanted to see what he could do globally. Upon returning to the U.S., Flannery assumed a variety of business development responsibilities, and in 2015 he led the \$10 billion acquisition of Alstom. Flannery also was involved in downsizing or eliminating GE's financial services business, proving he could manage change. Flannery was not one of the top candidate names when Immelt decided to leave as CEO, but his successes earned Immelt's support who then mentored him and ensured Flannery got the right experiences to become a viable candidate.

Identifying people deep in the organization allows enough time to offer them critical development opportunities. Transparency through metrics is important to keeping the process aligned with business goals. Once in line for executive and senior-level positions, the people in the pipeline should receive customized development opportunities to close skills gaps.

Cultivating and developing future leaders for the highest positions in the organization is a way to retain talent and improve competitiveness by ensuring people filling the positions understand the challenges of being a CEO, executive, or senior leader.



# DEVELOPING ROBUST COACHING PRACTICES AS A COMPETITIVE STRATEGY

Coaching individual select employees may benefit the chosen few, but what about everyone else? It is strategically smarter to develop a coaching culture so that the entire organization benefits.

BY INGRID JOHNSON

**W**hat makes a high performing leader who can inspire employees, get results in half the time it takes others, and is often the first to deliver innovative solutions? Leadership training is important, but a high performing leader is someone who is able to coach others to deliver their best performance.

Though formally coaching an individual has historically been used as a process for correcting certain behaviors, it delivers limited results. A coaching culture is one in which leaders and their employees develop the skills that coaching is intended to develop – the ability to identify and analyze a problem or issue, develop solutions supported by action plans, and make effective decisions that support organizational goals and objectives. People across the organization contribute, adopt a continuous learning perspective, and collaborate, all of which goes beyond problem solving.

First, leaders must be coached to understand the behaviors that drive a coaching culture, like encouraging people to fully participate in finding options to achieve high performance.

## RECOGNIZING A COACHING CULTURE

To best understand the difference between coaching leaders and coaching leaders who then develop a coaching culture, one needs to first recognize what defines a coaching culture.

An organization that develops a coaching culture has leaders who empower employees by working with them to identify challenges, develop options for solutions, set goals, develop action plans, and create accountability. The leader and the employee learn from each other because all employees see themselves as leaders who make a significant and measurable contribution to employer success.

This type of culture is much more suitable for the millennial generation of workers who want to know how their work matters and want the latitude to develop their full capabilities. A fully developed coaching culture places the organization at the top of the coaching progression model in which coaching is integrated into all interactions internally and externally.

The least developed coaching process engages coaches on a one-on-one basis. At the top of the progression model, the well-developed coaching culture is seen as giving the organization a competitive edge because it is results driven, promotes innovation, and improves employee engagement.

## ALL HANDS ON DECK

As organizations attempt to manage continuous change, they need everyone contributing their maximum capabilities. All employees should be learning, contributing, sharing, collaborating and giving their best performance. Isolating employees in their jobs and not encouraging them to be part of the change journey in an ever-changing business environment just does not make sense in today's business environment.

In a coaching culture, leaders, managers, and their staff engage each other and stakeholders to promote the highest organizational performance. It is a culture of shared values in which coaching is considered a key competency, and coaching behaviors encourage continuous team and individual development. It is a collective culture in which people are engaged to voluntarily contribute as a team member. In this kind of culture, people have a belief in lifelong learning and that collaboration can deliver the best that people offer.





**There is no one right way to develop a coaching culture. It is a journey. Most coaching consultants recommend developing a framework for transitioning to a coaching culture.**

### HOW IS THIS CULTURE DEVELOPED?

A coaching strategy needs to be developed first otherwise the approach is haphazard and likely to continue coaching to a few select leaders. Developing a strategic coaching approach means strategy is linked to the organization's mission and values, giving context for the culture. The strategy is linked to the policies on talent leadership and development.

Coaching is also linked to adapting to and managing continual change, a characteristic common to most businesses today. Another way of looking at this linkage is that coaching needs to promote the behaviors and decisions that fit business conditions. Change is a constant, and businesses regularly adapt their strategies to remain competitive. The coaching strategy must be part of the change process to keep continual learning and development relevant. This is perhaps one of the most difficult challenges to developing a coaching culture. Leaders are coached to manage change, and they in turn must apply the same principles.

### WEAVING COACHING INTO THE FABRIC OF EMPLOYEES' DECISION-MAKING

The best way to manage the challenges of instilling a coaching culture is by developing a community of practice and a group of employees committed to promoting it. In other words, there must be a formal and informal coaching structure. Coaching leaders and managers, and then expecting them to sustain the effort without organizational support, is not likely to produce desired results.

Organizationally supported coaching becomes part of the fabric of decision-making and operations as it helps to develop a resilient and agile workforce. It becomes a shared value. Leaders agree on the desired outcomes and how the coaching strategy will be kept aligned with organizational goals.

In the formal structure, measurement and accountability for meeting formal goals are implemented in leadership's performance evaluations systems. Producing metrics also ensures that learning and knowledge transfers remain relevant. In the informal structure, leaders and managers coach on a day-to-day basis and adapt as needed, becoming a self-sustaining process that creates value.

There is no one right way to develop a coaching culture. It is a journey. Most coaching consultants recommend developing a framework for transitioning to a coaching culture. The framework could begin with the development of senior executives, add a group of internal coaches from across the organization, develop frontline managers and supervisors with basic coaching skills, integrate coaching training into professional development programs, and integrate coaching into the general workforce. It is a step-by-step process that develops the right leadership mindset, drives coaching behaviors, and integrates coaching into daily operations in order to fully leverage its benefits.

The next generation of coaching is not reserved for C-suite executives. It is an organizational strategy for developing the mindset and behaviors of all employees. It is also an engagement strategy for an era in which research shows only a third of employees are fully engaged in their organizations.

Developing a coaching culture harnesses the collective power of innovation and the capabilities of talented employees, enabling the organization to better manage continuous change and to achieve future goals.



# RESPECTING PEOPLE AS HUMAN BEINGS DRIVES SIEMEN'S GLOBAL DIVERSITY

The principle of diversity and inclusion is different from country to country. The global company Siemens found the common link in respecting people as human beings, no matter what characteristics they possess.

BY **SIMONE SUMMERS**

**J**anina Kugel, chief Human Resources officer and member of the managing board of Siemens AG, has a full plate of responsibilities. She is responsible for the HR function world-wide; the chief diversity officer; and oversees employee health and safety. Kugel also is a member of the managing board of Siemens AG, a German conglomerate company.

Joining in 2001, she is a woman who has a global perspective having worked for Siemens in Germany, Beijing and Italy. Getting a chance to interview her at the 2017 Global Summit of Women was an opportunity to learn her evidence-based perspective on global diversity.

## People Viewed Through the Human Being Lens

The word "diversity" has different meanings in different countries. Compared to the U.S., diversity in Europe, China and Africa is a much broader concept.

"Diversity to us as a global company is diversity of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disabilities, culture, age, experience and international thinking," Kugel said.

The perspective is that Siemens primari-



**Janina Kugel**  
Chief Human Resources Officer  
and Member of the Managing Board of AG

ly looks at a person as a human being and the value that person brings to the company. A core principle is that everyone has equal opportunities and equal rights, but a company must also respect local legislation that promotes different standards compared to those of Siemens. The tricky balancing act is respecting local cultures without violating the company's principles of human rights and equality.

Siemens operates in 160 countries, and the complexity of adhering to the corporate diversity principle is challenging, to say the least. To meet the challenge requires every company decision-maker to respect and value employees as human beings. As the chief Human Resources officer, she drives the respect for human beings across management levels. As the chief diversity officer, she works to ensure people are given equal opportunities and addresses issues like conscious and unconscious bias. As the environmental health and safety officer, she strives to create a safe working environment for all employees, whether working in an office or a big power plant.

## Global Thinking with Local Adaptation

Approximately two-and-a-half years ago, a new HR strategy was developed for the talent management process that includes recruiting, onboarding, and all the other talent management processes. Instead of addressing the process on a country-by-country basis, Siemens developed global teams with members from different countries. This gives decision-makers the ability to learn from each other by being truly connected.

Kugel offers this example. "Brazil and India may not have a regional connection through similar demographics, but the managers representing these countries on global teams can share information about the differences of the workforces or the markets," she said. The Siemens broad strategy is to develop global thinking with local adaptation.

Understanding the global thinking with local adaptation strategy is key to understanding the success of Siemens' talent management process across so many cultures.



"Global HR requires setting company targets and strategies first. It becomes local when you want to reflect local society and legislation," Kugel said.

She goes on to explain that Siemens may have an overarching global target of bringing more women into the organization, but the local target is adapted to societal triggers, the laws and regulations, and culture. An example is South Africa where the diversity focus is black empowerment, while gender is a bigger issue in other countries that are more racially integrated.

Siemens must adapt to local diversity issues while adhering to its global strategies. It is a practical approach to managing a complex situation.

### Utilizing Technology to Make Better Decisions

Technology has played an important role in helping Siemens develop and execute its HR, diversity and safety strategies. Kugel has found that technology can often make better decisions than humans because it is unbiased. Technology can also support management decisions. Siemens measures progress through a variety of performance measurements, including a regularly administered engagement survey.

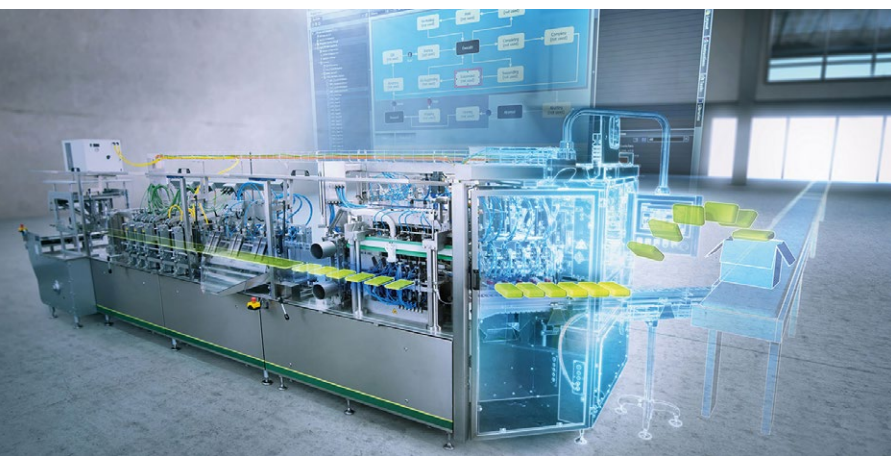
"I think technology and data is going to have an even bigger influence on HR than it does now. We are already testing artificial intelligence (AI) in partnership with other companies. AI can eventually be used to predict behaviors and for pre-recruiting," Kugel said. Though still on the drawing board, Siemens is already heavily depending on technology in its shared services and administrative processes, relying on big data, robots, and automation for efficiency.

Kugel's list of best practices to meet HR, diversity, and health and safety goals begins first with measuring progress. Measurements raise awareness of what a company would like to achieve and makes diversity a strategic imperative. The next best practice is addressing bias – conscious and unconscious.

"For example, we have female leadership programs because we need to teach women as much as men about interacting in different environments. Women sell themselves less than men," she said.

**"When you know people, you forget what they look like, where they came from, or any other differentiating characteristics. I don't focus on differences. I focus on people"**

*–Janina Kugel*



This is a truth frequently stated by women in leadership positions who understand the differences in the behaviors of men versus women in the corporate environment. Siemens' best practices include offering mentoring programs to foster the development of women, and the company has implemented most of the other common practices used today to foster diversity and inclusion.

### Forget What They Look Like

In an interesting exchange during the interview, Kugel was asked if she was the only person of color on the managing board. She was obviously surprised by the question, and that surprise demonstrates the different attitude between diverse people in the U.S. and those in other countries. Kugel does not see herself as a person of color. She sees herself, and everyone else, as human beings.

"When you know people, you forget what they look like, where they came from, or any other differentiating characteristics. I don't focus on differences. I focus on people," she said. This is such a refreshing perspective in a world that struggles to find a path of acceptance for all people.

Kugel mentioned that, when Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau introduced his cabinet in 2015, it was a diverse group of men and women. There were people with disabilities, people from different ethnic backgrounds, and people with different skin colors. When asked why he presented such a cabinet, his response was, "Because it's 2015."

For Kugel, this is the world everyone lives in and a company should always reflect the societies of the countries they operate in. "I believe there is no company in the world that has reached that stage. I think every corporation, if they are honest with themselves, will admit there are areas for improvement."

To reach this state, she believes in what she calls horizontal leadership, in which company managers embrace people throughout different layers of the organization. This approach does not depend on hierarchy but on what people bring to the table in terms of knowledge and experience.

"Most leaders have experience in companies with hierarchies, and that must change in order to lead younger generations. You cannot communicate with a millennial the same way you communicate with someone who is 60 years old," Kugel explained.

These are wise words from a woman who clearly understands the changing world. We would all do well to heed her advice.

# PERSONAL BRANDING: LEVERAGING DISABILITY AS A 'CAN DO'

*A PERSONAL BRAND IS A MARKETING TOOL THAT SENDS A MESSAGE ABOUT STRENGTHS AND VALUES. FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, IT ALSO DEFINES THEIR "CAN DO" ABILITIES.*

BY JEREMIAH PRINCE

**D**eveloping a personal brand is a journey in which a person defines their qualities, values, and abilities they apply in personal and work lives. For people with disabilities, the personal brand also sends a powerful "can do" statement. This is critically important to changing a culture that continues to look at people with disabilities in terms of limitations rather than capabilities.

A carefully cultivated personal brand changes that perspective by bundling together the personal skills, attributes, traits, values and other characteristics that make a person unique. It is an excellent marketing strategy for people with disabilities who are seeking employment or corporate contracts and must get past the invisible barrier of bias.

## DEFINING SELF

A strong personal brand serves the same purpose as a corporate brand in that it is designed to differentiate a person and to stand out from the competition. In the case of people with disabilities, the "competition" consists of people without disabilities and workplace bias.

Despite the focus on diversity and inclusion that so many companies claim, people with disabilities continue to struggle to overcome the perspective they are "not able," too limited, or too expensive to hire because of needed accommodations. Even some entrepreneurs with disabilities must contend with bias. Personal branding offers a powerful means of redefining self to deliver a convincing message of values and attributes to overcome the incorrect perceptions of others.

Developing a personal brand begins with defining self in a few sentences, focusing on positive attributes and creating a theme of ability. What values can the person deliver on a consistent basis? What does the disabled person have to offer personal



and business relationships? The personal brand may be a marketing tool, but it is not self-promotion. It is how a person relates to others.

A person with a disability wants an individual they are interacting with to see him or her as more capable and stronger because of the disability. This leverages disability as a characteristic that adds to the sum of the person's life experiences, rather than subtracting from abilities.

## WHAT DOES A PERSON STAND FOR?

When an employer or procurement professional meets a person with a disability, quite likely impressions are quickly formed. It is safe to say that most corporate individuals (and many other people) bring biases or preconceived ideas to interactions with people with disabilities. The recruiter decides in advance if the person will have too much trouble connecting with coworkers or will have too many medical issues.

Since people always form impressions, an individ-



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ual with a disability may have developed a reputation that is based on faulty impressions. For example, the job seeker has held only low-level positions because of employer bias but is highly capable of assuming a leadership role. The gap between the reputation, or how others have perceived a person, and reality can be closed with a solid personal brand.

In this case, the personal brand should be framed in terms of what the person is capable of accomplishing. What qualities does the person have that make him or her a leader who can deliver results? A positive personal brand conveys messages of strength like the ability to get things done, successfully develop and maintain relationships, overcome barriers to success, and motivate others. For people with disabilities, it means embracing the disability as an experience that has given the person certain qualities and competencies, like a higher level of emotional intelligence, a determination to succeed at whatever is attempted, and an ability to form relationships with people in general that are not built on biases. In a world where bias drives so many decisions, the personal branding becomes empowering.



### LIVING A PERSONAL BRAND

Living a personal brand means applying the values in every situation. For example, a person with disabilities may have faced biases that led to underemployment, but it is how the person handled the jobs that demon-

strates personal branding to potential employers, or if a supplier, to corporate customers.

Martin Luther King Jr. instinctively understood the power of personal branding, even if he did not specifically use the term. He said, "If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets even as a Michelangelo painted, or Beethoven composed music or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will pause to say, 'Here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well.'"

People with disabilities are understandably frustrated with the employment market. Their 2016 unemployment rate of 10.5 percent rate compared to the 4.6 percent rate for 2016 is proof that people with disabilities who are available for employment are having significant difficulties getting jobs. June 2017 U.S. labor force statistics proved again that people with disabilities continue to struggle for equality.

People with disabilities are more likely to be employed part-time and less likely to work in management and professional occupations. Overcoming this challenge will take a two-pronged approach. Employers must explore and overcome biases in the workforce, and people with disabilities need to develop a personal brand.

People strengthen their personal brand in many ways, including using social media as a means of expressing the values and to reframe self, if past biases have held back someone from fulfilling their promise.

Brands constantly evolve but always remain authentic. Living the brand means creating the desired impact on people, whether it is peers, coworkers, social media followers, or employers. It is not acting a part, which some people with disabilities do in the belief it makes them fit in better. For example, a person with a disability will try to hide the disability to overcome bias in the workplace or to be viewed as "normal" by others. Living a brand is about being natural, embracing the real self, and maintaining val-

ues in everything said and done.

It is true – developing a personal brand requires consistent effort. However, it is effort that will pave the way for the person with a disability and for people with disabilities who want equal opportunities.



# GROWING SUPPLIER CAPACITY THROUGH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

High performing suppliers need high performing leadership, and client organizations are helping them develop the right skills for success.

BY GERALD DONALD

**T**here are many examples of corporations investing in developing leadership skills at the organizational and supplier levels. Following are just three examples.

The LEAD Institute offers the "Honda Supplier Leadership Skills & Style Development Program," which offers participants focused training in work unit performance improvement; personal style and interpersonal skills; and leading and managing others.

Cummins developed a position with the title "Global Supplier Improvement Leader," and the job duties are dedicated to building supplier capabilities and strengthening perfor-

mance, continuous improvement, accountability, and leadership. The person holding the job must be able to coach and mentor suppliers, drive improvement through the supply chain, and support consensus among stakeholders.

The Georgia Tech Scheller College of Business offers a team-based "Supply Chain Leader Development Program" that is designed for high- to mid-level directors and managers in areas of global operations and supply chain. The five-day executive education program offers a blended learning experience via case studies, experiential activities, lectures, peer-to-peer, and team activities. The modules cover strategic thinking, operational excellence, and custom program options. Strategic thinking covers topics like developing an end-to-end supply chain leadership mindset, supply chain alignments, managing supply chain risks, and other relevant topics. Operational excellence includes managing inventory, logistics excellence, value creation, and managing non-financial and operational performance. Custom program options cover topics like strategic negotiation skills and corporate value creation.

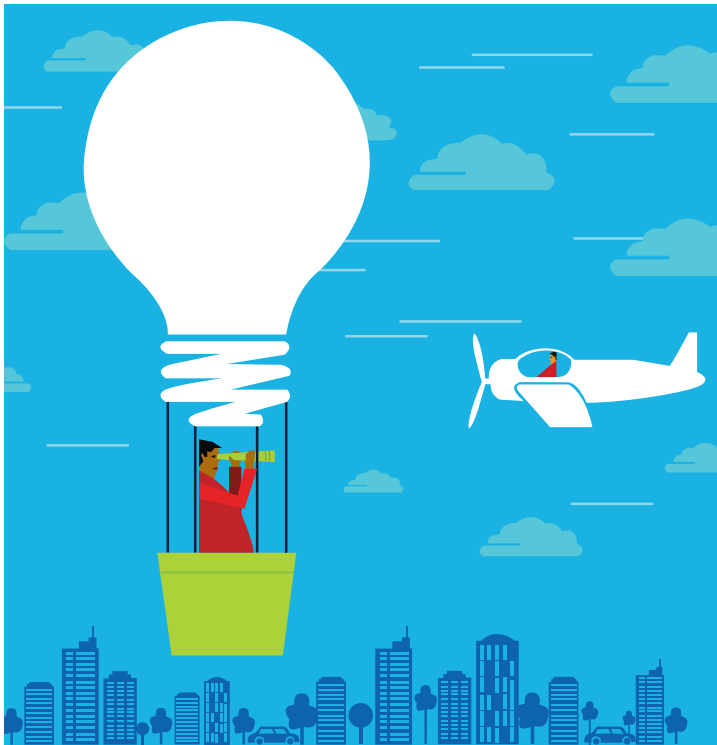
## BUILDING SUPPLIER CAPACITY BEGINS AT THE ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL

These three examples show the approaches companies are taking to develop capacity building suppliers. They are developing leadership in their organizational leaders and in their suppliers – leaders who can develop markets, achieve operational excellence, think strategically, allocate resources, drive accountability, deliver results, manage a volatile business environment, and build capacity.

Supplier leadership also requires the ability to work collaboratively. One of the characteristics of a high performance organization is leadership at every level of the organization. Corporations need leadership that can mobilize the organization as needed, including the supply chain, and suppliers need leaders who can build high-performance organizations.

Supply chains are more global and more complex than they have ever been before, located across multiple countries in which each has unique risks and the power to disrupt the upline supply chain. Corporate procurement and sourcing professionals depended mostly on price in the past to select suppliers, but today they need suppliers who can grow capacity, manage risks, and provide consistently excellent perfor-





**Corporations need leadership that can mobilize the organization as needed, including the supply chain, and suppliers need leaders who can build high-performance organizations.**

mance. They need to be partners who can generate value for their own companies and for corporate clients at the same time. Suppliers need high-quality leadership within their companies who can work with equally high-quality corporate supply chain leaders.

If organizational leaders and supplier leadership need the same qualities, it makes sense for corporations to invest in leadership training for key suppliers as well as corporate leaders. Many companies have developed their supply chains based on incremental cost savings and not on their ability to support organizational objectives or to create long-term values. Common issues among suppliers include failure to comply with regulatory standards, poor customer service, poorly designed products or services, and price volatility.

As supply chains grow to be more diverse and complex, they are also exposed to risks that are unpredictable – environmental, political, and economic. The specific kinds of risks depend on the location of the supplier, but every key supplier needs a risk management plan in place.

## **BUILDING SUPPLIER CAPABILITIES AND CAPACITY ON BUSINESS OBJECTIVES**

To minimize the risks of supply chain disruption and to get the greatest value, suppliers need to understand and evolve capabilities around business objectives. To effectively achieve objectives, leadership in the supply chain should be capable of running their companies toward this end. They should know how to manage cash flow, inventories, logistics, risks, sustainability, talent, technology (i.e. data analytics, cybersecurity, transparency, etc.), uncertainty, and scalability.

To build capacity, suppliers should know how to adapt to seasonal inventory requirements, expand production as the corporation grows, manage continuous improvement, and manage potential growth based on information supplied by their corporate customers.

Short-term tactical management approaches in the volatile global marketplace are going to leave suppliers and customers unable to meet objectives. Senior managers in critical supplier companies should have skills to develop and implement longer-term strategies for growth.

Investing in the leadership training in the supply chain is a natural next step in supplier relationship management and risk management.

As an example, Apple recognized the impact suppliers have on protecting everything of importance to success – from having the capacity to meet customer demands to preserving human rights. The company invests in developing the knowledge and skills suppliers need to act responsibly and be successful. As Apple raises its benchmarks, the collaborative training approach enables the company to successfully meet demand. The company regularly assesses the performance of suppliers to move them up the performance scale and provides the training tools, education, and support needed based on the assessments. The results of this approach have been impressive with the company building ecosystems of suppliers providing the continuous product improvements the company needs to maintain its competitive advantage and the capacity to deliver to the market on a timely basis.

## **LEADING ACROSS FUNCTIONS**

Investments in key and high-potential suppliers will lead to growing spend with the supplier. Leadership training at the supplier level should be cross-functional to be most effective. This is the reason the examples mentioned at the beginning of this discussion cover a range of leadership topics because that is what effective supplier leadership needs – to manage across its own functions to achieve desired performance. If unable to reach this state, corporate customers will end the relationship when the supplier does not produce as expected or needed.

Companies like Apple, Honda, Proctor & Gamble, Toyota, L'Oréal, Johnson & Johnson, and other multinationals have led the way in supplier leadership training. However, smaller companies with global supply chains have many of the same issues as the multinationals.

Developing strong leadership skills in key suppliers is not a new management fad. It is a competitive strategy for a complex volatile business environment.

# HOW 'SHIFT DISTURBERS' DRIVE WORKPLACE INNOVATION

BY SHANIQUA THOMAS

Key players – known as “shift disturbers” – drive change. By understanding their outlook and methods, it is possible to display more of their best traits in one’s own innovation practices.

Innovation in the workplace is something all companies claim to want. Yet being a fan of innovation and actually creating an environment where it happens are two very different things. For many firms, the difference comes down to how well key individual players known as “shift disturbers” are understood within the organization.

Shift disturbers are innovation champions with the skills and charisma to inspire others to follow in their footsteps. Understanding them – or even actively trying to become one – starts with an awareness of their creative confidence and competence, the key processes shift disturbers tend to use, and the way a shift disturber flows with (or against) existing organizational culture. Following are three key areas with practical examples given for real-world implementation.

## HOW CREATIVE COMPETENCE AND CONFIDENCE MAKE SHIFT DISTURBERS POSSIBLE

Shift disturbers shake up the status quo with their competence and creative confidence. While some argue that a certain business “moxie” is innate, most shift disturbers have deliberately cultivated their “let’s try it” mindset with self-help and self-empowerment resources. Their positive attitude is also backed by real competence – many are outstanding performers in their individual specialties, which gives them an extra edge as they seek to push boundaries.

In fact, it is this deep knowledge of their business niche that helps make their innovative power possible. They know how things work ... and where they don’t, they’re willing to put in the effort to read up on the work rules so that they can have a better view of how to break them.

This does not necessarily mean shift disturbers thrive on non-stop disruption. They have a healthy respect for systems that work and incremental improvements. But, they stand apart from other employees in that they are less afraid of failed experimentation and more resilient in the face of attempts at new processes that don’t work out.

How does this play out in a practical way? When top performers propose unique solutions to ongoing corporate issues, they are self-identifying as potential shift disturbers. Encouraging this innovation and allowing reasonable room for experimentation will help keep them engaged and keep the company as the primary beneficiary of their skills.

## WHICH TOOLS AND PROCESSES ARE FAVORED BY SHIFT DISTURBER TYPES?

Shift disturbers have a group of favored processes and tools that help them execute their ideas. While some are consistent with good corporate citizenship, others may be viewed as “anti-corporate” behaviors. Recognizing these processes and tools in play can help differentiate between up-and-coming innovators who need to be encouraged and straight up disruptors who need to be managed.

Positively viewed tools and processes of shift disturbers are research, collaboration, and team-building. Driven by a deep curiosity, shift disturbers enjoy going deep on key issues and building connections between ideas from seemingly unrelated areas. They like networking and collaboration with other “doers” in the organization, and they can use their enthusiasm and influence to build strong teams who can execute swiftly on new ideas, at times even creating new pathways through existing governance structures (and strictures).

However, at times their tendency to question existing protocols, work across divisions, and circumvent established management hierarchies could throw up red flags. In companies where a bias toward innovation is not a regular part of the corporate culture, this can feel extremely threatening.

In these cases, it is important for managers to look at the intention behind the actions and determine if there is an innovative drive in play or whether the employee in question is a poor fit for the







organization long-term. Are they seeking to make improvements, or is there some sort of a turf war going on? It is not always an easy call, but understanding the high need for variety and improvement of natural shift disturbers can help keep these players inside the organization while allowing management to separate out true disruptors.

### HOW DOES ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY AND CULTURE FIT INTO THE LIFE OF A SHIFT DISTURBER?

As shift disturbers execute their ideas, existing organizational strategy and culture will factor into their plans. Those seeking straight disruption create an impact not unlike a bull raging through a china shop. However, while innovative shift disturbers will certainly make waves, they are seeking the improvement of their home organization, not its annihilation, and it shows in their approach.

Most shift disturbers have a real awareness of the personal impacts their work will have on their teammates. They may explicitly articulate the cultural norms that they will be disrupting or present innovation plans that include a

**HOWEVER, WHILE INNOVATIVE SHIFT DISTURBERS WILL CERTAINLY MAKE WAVES, THEY ARE SEEKING THE IMPROVEMENT OF THEIR HOME ORGANIZATION, NOT ITS ANNIHILATION, AND IT SHOWS IN THEIR APPROACH.**

certain period of adaptation for workers used to a different system. As they look toward bringing their ideas to life, they will also include calculations around whether the current organization culture will act as a barrier or an accelerator for their vision or proposed change.

Managers and HR team may also see that shift disturbers make careful study of organizational strategies a central part of their lives. After all, it is difficult to change what is not well understood, and while shift disrupters can bounce back quickly from failures, they do like to see a certain amount of success from their efforts. As a result, their actions will be informed by an understanding of the current organizational strategy, even if they

acknowledge that the strategy is imperfect for their innovative purposes.

In practice, most smart shift disturbers use the organization culture and strategies as a springboard. Outside the organization, as independent entrepreneurs, they would be without support or funding for their proposals. Inside the organization, they can find practical support and encouragement for their innovative experiments.

As a result, the better they become at understanding and navigating the current corporate culture, the more likely they are to thrive. Supporting them can thus be as simple as helping them build deeper partnerships with key influencers or cultural leaders inside the organization.



# NEW ROLE FOR THE C-SUITE: CHIEF ACCESSIBILITY OFFICER

IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY FOR **VETERANS, SENIORS AND ALL PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES** MOVES BEYOND COMPLIANCE TO BECOME A CORE BUSINESS VALUE. **COORDINATING THE EFFORT IS A NEW C-SUITE MEMBER: CHIEF ACCESSIBILITY OFFICER.**

BY ROYSTON ARCH

**L**eading companies have a new executive in their c-suites. The chief accessibility officer is an executive position with far ranging responsibilities because the role is responsible for ensuring accessibility for people with disabilities, or other special needs, within the business and increasing accessibility for customers, suppliers, and anyone else who uses the products and services or will work with the company in some capacity. The chief accessibility officer's ultimate responsibilities: Making accessibility a core value, empowering every employee in the organization to meet career and personal goals, and making sure accessibility

is considered in everything the business does.

For veterans with disabilities, improved accessibility can equate to having more access to civilian jobs that fully utilize high-level skills developed in the military, having access to a support system, being included in the development of accessible products and services for people with disabilities, and finding increased opportunities as suppliers.

Some organizations are creating accessibility offices, depending on their size, but the purpose is always the same: Embed accessibility in a similar way that diversity is embedded in the organization.

## **MAKING ACCESSIBILITY A CORE VALUE AND PART OF THE BUSINESS MISSION DELIVERS ADVANTAGES TO THE ORGANIZATION BECAUSE THE PROCESS OF INCLUDING ACCESSIBILITY PRINCIPLES IN EVERYTHING THE COMPANY DOES WILL NATURALLY LEAD TO AN EXPANDED MARKET REACH.**

### **MOVING BEYOND COMPLIANCE**

Many companies have diversity and supplier diversity executives and other senior leadership positions, making the position of chief accessibility officer and an office of accessibility seem redundant at first glance.

Historically, the diversity function has been responsible for ensuring the company complies with government accessibility laws and eliminating conscious and unconscious bias in anything to do with Human Resources and the talent management process. Now businesses are increasingly creating a separate executive-level position and/or accessibility office. The reason is that it touches everything the organization does, from creating accessible workplaces to designing accessible products and services to complying with government laws and regulations.

Until the last few years, accessibility has focused mostly on meeting the Americans with Disabilities Act. That is just one responsibility.

IBM is a role model and leader in this new strategy. Frances West was appointed the IBM Chief Accessibility officer in 2014, and her role in this position demonstrates what it means to embed accessibility in an organization. She is responsible for shaping government policies, establishing IT accessibility standards, and developing human-centric technology and industry solutions. She ensures accessibility principles are included in product and services design and development to improve everyone's information consumption patterns. In an interview, West says accessibility is about personalization and technology is at the center of personalizing the user experience for all users.

The key words are "all users." All users include people with mental, physical and emotional disabilities and includes people of all ages. People with disabilities are driving accessibility as a core value for all users and a strategic imperative.

IBM is only one example of the organizational trend to address accessibility issues from the employee to customers to community members accessing company information sources. Making accessibility a core value and part of the business mission delivers advantages to the organization because the process of including accessibility principles in everything the company does will naturally lead to an expanded market reach.

### **MAKING ACCESSIBILITY A STRATEGIC GOAL**

Making accessibility a strategic goal may also lead to changes in the organizational structure in order to expand the effort.

For example, Microsoft appointed Jenny Lay-Flurrie

as its new chief accessibility officer in January 2016, and the outgoing CAO assumed a new role to lead accessibility efforts in the Microsoft's Windows and Devices Group. Lay-Flurrie brings her personal experience as a deaf person in a hearing world to the position, and she now considers her disability as a strength because it made her a problem solver. These and other personnel changes were designed to strategically expand Microsoft's engineering capabilities concerning building out accessibility features in products and services. Many other companies are creating CAOs because true inclusion requires a deep commitment to all people.

Veterans with disabilities are a group of people with all types of disabilities, and the business focus on accessibility will benefit them. However, this is a two-way street. Veterans with disabilities bring distinctive capabilities and knowledge to employers. Their disabilities are rated in four areas: Cognition, ambulation, hearing and vision. They offer a wealth of information, and millions have multiple disabilities.

Beyond fulfilling job duties, veterans with disabilities can make major contributions to R&D project teams and to efforts to drive employment outcomes for all people with disabilities. They offer perspectives based on personal experiences and can participate in outreach activities, product designs and testing.

A business that successfully develops in-house accommodations can take that information and use it to develop more accessible products and services. IBM's experience has been that the more they learn about accommodating special needs, the more feature-rich and intuitive their products become.

Accessibility also influences supplier diversity because it is integral to a truly diverse and inclusive business. Improving veterans with disabilities' accessibility to supplier portals, video conferencing, and other technology tools will enable entrepreneurial people with disabilities to access more opportunities.

The trend of creating chief accessibility officers is still in its nascent stage, but it offers exciting opportunities for all people with disabilities to become mainstream employees and consumers. Among the many advantages brought by large companies focused on accessibility is their global reach. These are the companies that offer hope and opportunities to people with disabilities around the world through example and their products and services. From any perspective, the creation of the position of chief accessibility officer in organizations is an exciting development.





**D**iversity on a global basis is an all-encompassing principle that embraces people, environments, governments, and economies, as well as cultures. As Western businesses continue to expand operations into global venues, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries are playing an increasingly important role as they work together to strengthen their economies, achieve stability, and attract foreign investors.

Understanding diversity from the ASEAN perspective is often challenging for Western countries, especially given that ASEAN has 10 different participating countries with 10 different cultures. While North America and European countries have solid initiatives and legislation promoting diversity, the ASEAN countries do not.

**ASEAN AND ITS FORUMS ARE IMPORTANT SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES INTERESTED IN TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITIES THE REGION PRESENTS.**

Before doing business in these countries, or before approaching the ASEAN organization, it is important for potential Western investors to understand the unique diversity landscape to successfully develop diverse and inclusive workplaces.

#### **RICHNESS OF CULTURES**

ASEAN is a political and economic organization dedicated to promoting economic growth in its region and 10 countries: Cambodia, Malaysia, Brunei, Myanmar, Indonesia, Singapore, Vietnam, Thailand, the Philippines, and Laos. ASEAN was founded in 1967, but in 1997 the ASEAN Plus Three forum was developed with the three additional countries being Japan, China, and South Korea. In 2005, the East Asia Summit formed and includes India, New Zealand, Australia, and the United States. ASEAN and its forums are important sources

of information and support for businesses interested in taking advantage of the opportunities the region presents.

In May 2017, the World Economic Forum on ASEAN hosted a variety of speakers and one of them was Tony Fernandes, the AirAsia CEO. He talked about "jobs, diversity and AI," saying "ASEAN's future must be driven by entrepreneurs," adding that technology will be the enabler for entrepreneurs. He went on to say that companies must exploit the diversity in the ASEAN region because "diversity is our strength." AirAsia has a CFO from Thailand, a communications head from Indonesia, and a marketing department that hired a very senior person from Cambodia.

Fernandes' message to the world is that it is the "richness of cultures" that defines ASEAN diversity. For North America and

Europe, the message could read that diversity is not necessarily the color of the skin or race. It is mostly based in cultures and economic status.

## HARMONIZING THE ASEAN WORKPLACE

For ASEAN women, culture and economic status are intertwined. A picture taken at the May 2017 forum shows 10 leaders, one from each ASEAN country, holding hands to show unity. Of the 10, one is a woman. Today, getting women into leadership positions is a growing focus among ASEAN's businesses, and this picture speaks a thousand words.

Diversity legislation is almost nonexistent in ASEAN, though some countries specifically protect women's labor rights. Companies interested in taking advantage of the tremendous economic opportunities in the region will find the focus of diversity is the inclusion of men and women from across the region, like the approach taken by AirAsia.

However, another term companies should be aware of is "harmonization" in the workplace. A harmonized workplace is one in which focus is placed on the group, rather than the individual. When harmony is achieved, people in the work group achieve a balance between the diverse cultures and perspectives and work as a team. To achieve harmony, employees with different backgrounds must be willing to embrace differences without bias.

Understanding what diversity means in the ASEAN countries is important to achieving that harmony. Many are addressing gender equality by offering gender-related benefits like flexible work schedules and daycare facilities. Beyond being the right thing to do, companies are working to address growing regional talent gaps, and including women has become a business imperative. However, as they continue to expand D&I initiatives, focus is primarily placed on the integration of national cultures within the workplace.

As Frédéric Gillant, vice president and managing director of Asia-Pacific, ShoreTel, told the HRMA Asia, "...across Asia-Pacific, the key is understanding the cultures and maximizing the opportunities this presents. By making sure you have a well-represented team, it drives a deeper understanding of the markets you operate in."

The hope is that women will find new opportunities in the labor force as awareness of diversity and inclusion grows.

## NO HATE, NO DRAMA

One of the issues is terminology, and that is influenced by culture. Some countries do not use the words "diversity and inclusion." They may use terms like "fair employment practices" or "equal opportunities."

The term diversity and inclusion is taking root though. The Malaysia New Straight Times reported in April 2017 that Malaysian companies are "on a par with Asia counterparts in workplace diversity." The top three focus areas were gender, age and minority ethnic groups. The article went on to say that having a diverse talent pool is the best recruitment and retention strategy because people are more likely to be attracted to the organization, and the organization can share successes.

In Myanmar, the diversity challenge concerns gender equality because cultural barriers prevent women from fully participating in

the workplace, even though they have legally enforceable labor rights. Women who get married often leave the job market.

In Thailand, diversity is valued in the workplace as people working together who come from different backgrounds. Thai employers who value diversity purposefully choose employees who are different from each other for teams, and encourage a "no hate, no drama" policy in which employees are willing to learn new things from each other without prejudice or discrimination.

Each of the other remaining ASEAN countries have their diversity challenges and different perspectives on diversity.

When multinationals hire people from across ASEAN, they develop culturally diverse workplaces. It takes emotionally intelligent leaders to make inclusiveness an organizational value and to form cohesiveness among people with culturally diverse backgrounds. Developing leaders with cultural knowledge brings understanding of different perspectives and enables them to be the link between all cultures.

ASEAN is now one of the economic powerhouses in the world. It experiences enviable sustained growth each quarter. Understanding the diversity of cultures is one step in taking advantage of tremendous opportunities for entering new markets with a growing middle class.

**TO ACHIEVE HARMONY, EMPLOYEES WITH DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS MUST BE WILLING TO EMBRACE DIFFERENCES WITHOUT BIAS.**



# STEPPING UP TO PROGRESS: ONLY EMPLOYERS CAN CLOSE DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT GAP

*PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES CONTINUE TO FACE DIFFICULT BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT DESPITE LAWS INTENDED TO PROMOTE PROGRESS. IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, ONLY EMPLOYERS CAN EASE LABOR MARKET ACCESS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.*

BY ANNA GONSALVES

A significant percentage of people with disabilities continue to face barriers to employment in European countries. This is despite country-based and European Union legislation prohibiting discrimination in the workplace and a sincere effort by various government agencies like the Justice and Consumers unit of the European Commission to keep employers informed and to raise public awareness.

The disability employment gap figures are considerably varied among the many European countries, but overall the gap is approximately 20 percent for people with disabilities. It is not just the employment gap that is an issue. People with disabilities who do get a job are often discriminated against in various, often subtle, ways.

Ordering an end to discrimination is one approach, but the reality is that only employers committed to equality can ease labor market access and give people with disabilities equal career opportunities.

## SOCIAL MODEL OF DISABILITY

There are plenty of directives and laws on the books concerning non-discrimination of people with disabilities. There is the UK Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) of 1995 (passed 20 years ago), the EU Employment Equality Directive (EED), the EU Equal Treatment Directive, and separate legislations in various European countries. The EU also ratified the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

Yet the statistics remain grim in many countries. The employment gap for the EU as a whole is 20 percent, but some

countries have much higher statistical gaps. The employment gap for Hungary and the Netherlands is 37 percent; Romania is 32 percent; Denmark, Bulgaria, Ireland and Slovakia are 31 percent; Poland and the Czech Republic are 30 percent; and on it goes. Some countries are doing much better than the average, like Finland and Latvia at 12 percent; France and Sweden at 10 percent; and Luxembourg at 2 percent. These statistics are provided by Eurostat and include working age people with disabilities.

The Employment Equality Directive's Article 5 makes it a duty for employers to provide reasonable accommodations for disabled people.

One of the first issues that has been addressed in numerous Court of Justice-EU cases is the definition of disability. Ironically, the confusion over how to define disability is an employment barrier in many cases because what one person calls a disability, the other person may not, unless a law specifically defines what constitutes a disability. Justice and consumers define "disabled people" based on the social model of disability in which people who have, or are perceived to have, an impairment are disabled by social structures and systems. Disability is not decided based on a medical report. The court, over many cases, has defined disability as "long-term physical, mental or psychological impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder the full and effective participation of the person concerned in professional life on an equal basis with other workers."

## SEEKING OUT THE TRUTH

Employers have a duty to provide reasonable accommodation, and this also ironically can become an employment barrier. Employers who falsely believe reasonable accommodations are always expensive and often disruptive are going to avoid hiring people with disabilities. The truth is that employers are

**IRONICALLY, THE CONFUSION OVER HOW TO DEFINE DISABILITY IS AN EMPLOYMENT BARRIER IN MANY CASES BECAUSE WHAT ONE PERSON CALLS A DISABILITY, THE OTHER PERSON MAY NOT, UNLESS A LAW SPECIFICALLY DEFINES WHAT CONSTITUTES A DISABILITY.**





only expected to provide, per the CRPD, "necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms."

The European Union Disability Strategy 2010-2020 review, which was published in February 2017, concluded that a challenging economic situation had slowed progress in the employment, education and social inclusion of people with disabilities. Also influencing the number of people with disabilities is an aging population, linking age and disability discrimination.

According to the report, access to the labor market was named as one of the main challenges for people with disabilities with an employment rate of 48.7 percent. Lack of equal opportunities in the labor market is the most frequently mentioned problem. With a projected 120 million people with disabilities in the EU by the year 2020, lack of equal employment opportunities will continue to be a serious concern. Many employers who say they are unable to find enough job candidates with the right skills are overlooking an entire talent pool of people who, with reasonable accommodations, could be excellent employees.

### **ROOTING OUT BIAS**

Though no one likes to believe he or she is biased against people with disabilities, employers continue to maintain effective barriers. When people with disabilities were surveyed during the review of the Disability Strategy, they mentioned areas where much improvement is needed, one of which was "awareness raising of disability and what it means to be disabled."

In the final analysis, lack of employment opportunities are mostly attributable to conscious and unconscious bias at this point. Only employers can provide equal employment opportunities, but bias of any kind serves as a strong and often impenetrable barrier.

Multinationals that enter Europe's markets will find many of the same issues concerning people with disabilities that exist in countries like the U.S. and Canada. The laws are in place. People with disabilities are looking for equal opportunities for jobs that pay a living wage.

The European Accessibility Act of 2014 improved the market for accessible products and services for people with disabilities by removing cross-border trading barriers. This means accessible products and services are more competitively priced and many barriers to accessing the open labor market are removed.

Needed now are employers willing to end discrimination in all their activities from recruiting to providing reasonable accommodations. More laws or more equipment will not close the disability employment gap. Only employers can.

# THE COMPETITIVE SECRET OF DYNAMIC LATVIA

Pssst ... Investors ... have you considered Latvia? The country may not make a big, fancy market splash, but it is a destination offering plenty of strategic foreign investment opportunities.



Ventspils city, Latvia

**N**ot all destinations that offer exceptional investment opportunities are in the limelight, and Latvia fits that description. It is a country in a position of geographic and strategic importance. This is a country that offers a market gateway to economically developed regions including the United States, European Union, Russia, and parts of Asia. A member of the European Union and Schengen, the World Trade Organization, and NATO, Latvia needs foreign investors to sustain continued economic growth.

This is all largely due to its small population. There are fewer than 2 million people at last count, but that has not stopped this dynamic country from achieving a high World Bank "Ease of Doing Business" 2017 rank of 14 out of 190 economies. It has three major ports, an international airport, free trade policies, an educated and skilled workforce, stable government, and foreign direct investment (FDI) opportunities across a range of industries, including science and technology.

## RESILIENT AND PROGRESSIVE

It is understandable if Latvia sounds too good to be true, but all the advantages it offers investors are real.

The country sits on the edge of Eastern Europe, between Lithuania and Estonia. The three countries together form the Baltic with a joint population of more than 6 million people. There is a small Latvia population, but this is a very progressive and resilient country. It gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991 and was severely impacted by the 2008 financial collapse leading to the Great Recession.

Since the recession, the country has spent nearly a decade improving the ease of doing business, strengthening its regulations to protect foreign in-

vestors, negotiating trade deals, and working on gaining entrance into organizations like the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development).

The U.S. State Department's "Investment Climate Statement" analysis names critical advantages that Latvia provides. Topping the list is the fact it is a regional hub – a link between the markets in the European Union and in Russia and eastern central Asia. There are three ice-free ports – Riga (the capital), Ventspils, and Liepaja. The ports have excellent linkage to a well-developed railroad, pipeline, and road system. The Riga International Airport continues to expand to accommodate more air traffic.

The workforce is multi-lingual, with approximately 70 percent of people under 40 years old able to speak English, German and Scandinavian languages. Many people speak Russian, as would be expected. However, the official national language is Latvian which is very similar to Lithuanian.

There are four large universities – Riga Technical University, Riga Stradins University, University of Latvia and Latvia University. The country has promoted the development of a modern workforce with skills the technology-driven world economy needs – engineering, physics, telecommunications, life sciences, electronics, logistics, etc.

BY WILLIAM BELL



Locally made vinegar



Automotive industry





Labor costs are low. The unemployment rate is significant at 9.4 percent, but it is comparable to the unemployment rate of 9.1 in the Euro Area.

## OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS INDUSTRIES

The corporate income tax rate is also low at 15 percent. The largest amount of FDI inflows come from European Union countries, and Latvia would like to expand FDIs from other countries like the U.S. The majority of FDIs in 2016 were in financial services, real estate operations, manufacturing and trade.

A number of international companies are already operating in Latvia, including Coca-Cola, Generex Biotechnology, Schneider Electric and Bucher Schoerling. The Latvian government sees great potential for foreign investments in woodworking, transport and storage, metalworking and mechanical engineering, information technology, green technology, life sciences, health care, and food processing. However, Latvia is particularly interested in promoting its technology industry, which is true for many economies.

This wide range of industries indicates Latvia is ready to welcome a variety of companies, and the government offers financial assistance in order to grow its market economy. For example, small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs) can get loans and semi-loans.

Setting up business in Latvia is an efficient process. Companies can choose from among five legal entities: Limited Liability Company, Individual Merchant (sole trader), Joint-Stock Company, Partnership, and Branch Office. The laws protect intellectual property rights, the right to own real estate, bilateral agreements on the promotion and protection of investments, and EU-driven trade and customers procedures.

Four special economic zones encourage foreign investments – Riga Free Port, Rezekne Special Economic Zone, Ventspils Free Port and Liepaja Special Economic Zone.

In 2016, the government passed a new startup law

that creates a flat monthly tax amount per employee for startups to help innovative companies manage payroll costs. The Foreign Investors' Council in Latvia (at [www.ficil.lv](http://www.ficil.lv)) is a good source of information.

## IMPORTS OR EXPORTS: WEALTH OF OPPORTUNITIES

Some companies will prefer to enter the Latvia market via import or export activities.

The top five export categories are wood; electrical; machinery and computers; vehicles; and beverages, alcoholic drinks, and vinegar. Right now the fastest growing export is electrical machinery and equipment.

The top imports bought from U.S. companies are electronic equipment, machinery, vehicles, mineral fuels and pharmaceuticals. The fastest growing imports from all countries are lead, wood pulp, aircraft and spacecraft, cereals, collector items and art, vegetable products, beverages, wood, gums and resins, and gems and precious metals.

The Investment and Development Agency of Latvia (LIAA at [www.liaa.gov.lv](http://www.liaa.gov.lv)), the Central Bank of Latvia ([www.bank.lv](http://www.bank.lv)), and the State Regional Development Agency ([www.vraa.gov.lv](http://www.vraa.gov.lv)) can provide information and guidance to foreign companies interested in pursuing business opportunities in Latvia.

The LIAA offers an investment opportunities database and a matchmaking service. This service enables potential investors to connect with Latvian companies that are interested in joint venture opportunities and a possible M&A (contact the investment project manager in the Investment Promotion Division).

Additionally, the Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry has seven regional offices in Latvia, and there is an American Chamber of Commerce in Latvia and a Latvian Chamber of Commerce in Fairfax, Va., in the U.S. With so many resources, any company looking for new opportunities can find plenty of assistance.

Latvia is a dynamic country that is quietly making a big splash in the global market.

In 2016, the government passed a new startup law that creates a flat monthly tax amount per employee for startups to help innovative companies manage payroll costs.



Wood ready to export



Riga port



# COMMUNICATION IS AT THE HEART OF DEVELOPING CHANGE MANAGEMENT LEADERS

Business leaders at all levels of the organization are expected to have change management skills. Yet, many organizations have not invested in developing the most important skill a change champion needs – being an effective change communicator.

BY DAVE DESOUZA

**T**he guru of management consulting Peter Drucker said, "The greatest danger in times of turbulence is not the turbulence – it is to act with yesterday's logic."

Turbulence defines today's business environment – constantly changing technology, talent gaps, globalization, disrupted supply chains, ease of market entry for new competitors, new generation of talent, and on and on it goes. In response, businesses that expect to remain competitive must have skilled leaders who know how to keep people inspired and capable through change and turbulence.

Skilled change champions empower employees to embrace change while increasing productivity and keeping the organization in alignment with its mission and values. Given the complexity of managing constant change, developing the needed leadership skills must be a deliberate strategy that empowers and equips managers throughout the organizations to keep employees inspired.

Change management leaders are high performing change communicators.

## THRIVING THROUGH CORPORATE CHANGE

Realistically speaking, most people are uncomfortable with change because it forces them

to leave the "way things have always been done" behind and embrace new approaches, strategies, policies and procedures, and business models.

An organization's people are its greatest asset, but they often fear change because it is human nature to do so – think of "fight or flight" response – and especially when people are worried about keeping their jobs, increasing productivity, mastering new skills, and adaptability. Change can take innumerable forms, impacting systems and structures, and employees depend on leadership to manage the transition in a way that reduces fear.

There are many reasons organizational change initiatives fail or an organization is unable to maintain its competitive status during periods of disruption. On the employee side of the equation, they include employee resistance, communication breakdowns, and lack of training. On the leadership side, it is factors like not recognizing what employees are feeling and fearing, failing to garner employee support, not communicating the vision to staff, getting bogged down in new policies and procedures, losing sight of the mission, and failing to advocate for change.

When leaders fail to man-

age change, employee trust is eroded, and from there it is inevitable that engagement and productivity will erode.

Leveraging change as a strategy for ongoing competitive success requires leadership able to champion change. Leaders who champion change are enthusiastic advocates for

change, developing organizational resiliency and becoming active contributors to change agendas.

Volatility in the business environment is viewed as an opportunity and a challenge to overcome and not a barrier to progress. It takes well developed emotional intelligence,



expertise in effective delegation, skillful communication, the ability to equip staff with the necessary capabilities and skills, and a steadfast supportive attitude.

It is a major leadership challenge to develop all the skills required for successful management, but at the heart of successful change management is effective communication.

### **TRANSFORMING FEAR TO COMMITMENT**

Change champions are not change agents. The word "champion" implies proactive advocacy for change, keeping the organization aligned to its mission. One of the main gaps in leadership skills is the ability to transform employee fear

into commitment to change. Effective change leaders stay focused in the most disruptive of environments and can communicate that focus to managers and employees.

Developing effective and engaging communication skills is a process in itself. It involves more than just telling

### **EFFECTIVE CHANGE LEADERS STAY FOCUSED IN THE MOST DISRUPTIVE OF ENVIRONMENTS AND CAN COMMUNICATE THAT FOCUS TO MANAGERS AND EMPLOYEES.**

people about change.

Leaders must listen to employees on the front lines – the people who convert disruption into productivity. They get buy-in from front-line managers and employees through two-way dialogue. They have well-developed emotional intelligence which enables them to keep managers inspired and to empathetically engage stakeholders on an intellectual and emotional basis.

Senior-level change leaders are advocates committed to the strategic vision and understand what does not work – racing ahead with change without considering people's feelings, not developing the right people, relying on budgets to guide behaviors, ignoring resistance, asking people to assume responsibilities they are not equipped to manage, and not addressing barriers created by the organizational culture.

The emphasis on developing leadership communication skills is purposeful. Leadership development approaches should be experiential so that managers learn through solving actual workplace problems – like communicating a change initiative in a non-threatening manner. Lower-level managers who are trained in change management need access to senior-level leadership who are willing to have open and honest dialogue.

The organization must also invest in training and resources for employees rather than expecting them to adapt without the right tools. This is one element in the process of empowering employees. High performing leaders measure progress and take frequent surveys, and develop transparent reporting processes so that employees know what is going right and wrong. They also promote collaboration among organizational manag-

ers across functions.

There is no better engagement process than giving people at all levels ownership of success.

### **CHANGING THE CONVERSATION**

Change management is challenging, but success is built up from a foundation of effective communication. Senior leaders on down can be good at strategizing, but without shared ownership within the organization and among stakeholders, strategies can fail.

One of the important steps an organization should take is preparing mid-level managers to assume higher-level and more complex responsibilities, becoming the links between employees and management and serving as role models for managing the impacts of change.

Investing in developing leaders who are change champions is important. Change management requires a special set of skills that are often not mastered when there is less disruption. The traditional hierarchal systems in which people remained in their jobs for years doing the same things are gone. Work is more like a habit in those circumstances, and there is no room for habit in a disruptive business environment. Leaders need employees who embrace and are committed to making change work.

Being able to hold engaging conversations is critical to managing change, and that includes asking the right questions to elicit solutions, helping employees understand how their new roles will enable them to better utilize their skills, and developing a two-way dialogue and feedback system. Change management is mostly about changing the conversation.





## IMPLEMENTING ENTERPRISE SOCIAL NETWORKING SYSTEMS THE RIGHT WAY

*COMPANIES ARE IMPLEMENTING CUSTOMIZED ENTERPRISE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS FOR EMPLOYEES. SUCCESSFUL SOCIAL NETWORKS GENERATE THE MOST COLLABORATIVE LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE, AND THE HIGHEST ENGAGEMENT LEVEL.*

BY JOSHUA FERDINAND

### Build

a social networking system for employees, stand back and watch them embrace it with enthusiasm. That is the ideal, but the best laid plans can go astray. A number of companies have learned that lesson and shared their mistakes and successes when developing an enterprise social media network for employees.

The successful networks in place today promote collaborative learning and knowledge, innovation, and engagement. Because employees see value in using the social network, they are motivated to use it to drive innovation, share ideas, advance their knowledge of the enterprise, increase productivity, and manage change.

Lessons learned from real-world cases are founded on two main principles: Social collaboration systems must have the full support of senior management, and the systems need to deliver value to employees. It sounds simple, but as companies like Cisco can attest, it is not simple because there are too many factors at play at a single time.

### OVERCOMING COMPLACENCY

Implementing enterprise social software is not as straightforward as it seems on the surface. When Cisco decided to move toward a social collaborative system, it was to create a centralized environment where global employees could share knowledge and learning. The challenges that the company had to overcome were technical and procedural as expected. However, there were also cultural challenges because people were used to working within their silos rather than across functions.

Change is difficult and people get complacent. Centralizing content made it more difficult for employees to understand how they could extract or add value to content when they were used to adding value within their functional or regional silos.

The first iteration was the Integrated Workforce Experience (IWE), integrated with the WebEx Social Platform, which offered a gateway to all information and resources related to the IT organization. The IWE



model's four main elements include: employee connectivity; groups organized around projects, jobs, technologies and interests; a single source of data and content that is easily sharable; and a personalized home page (My View) for accessing relevant people, news, communities, applications and events.

From there a systematic approach was taken to add new user communities within the enterprise. Since then, Cisco has advanced its collaboration system in many ways, including going mobile.

### PREPARE THE WAY WITH A VISION

Despite Cisco's lead position in the IT industry, the company experienced issues and challenges that led to lessons the company has shared so that other enterprises can smoothly move to social collaboration networking.

The first lesson is that there must be a clear vision and a clear strategy for execution. Cisco advises companies to not migrate to the collaborative system. They need to transition through effective communication and training that is ongoing as employee communities adopt and adapt. Implementing in stages is the best approach. First implementing with employee communities that will have the greatest impact sends a signal to the rest of the organization that this is an effective collaborative tool that can produce good results, such as advancing job knowledge and gaining access to training, corporate communications, and managers. To prevent people resistant to change from staying with legacy systems, the old systems were closed down. As is true for all initiatives, regularly measuring results to determine value added, identify challenges and maintain progress is another lesson learned.

Getting people to fully utilize enterprise social software requires recognizing the user experience and performance are closely linked. Employees expect

collaboration systems to work as well as Facebook or LinkedIn. They also expect them to support a variety of applications that include mobile, real-time analytics, communication, blogging, wikis, social networking, and video streaming and sharing.

Supporting a system that works seamlessly and is reliable, so that employees are willing to use it, requires adequate investments in the IT architecture, security system, and training. To prepare for advancing technology and growing usage, the IT infrastructure system needs flexibility so it can scale up and down. Infrastructure decision-makers must consider security, applications, storage, networking, and virtualization in order to develop a successful system. Careful vendor selection is critical.

### FINDING THE SOCIAL PATH

Cisco recently partnered with IBM to develop Collaboration Solutions, a cloud-based program with real-time communications. It includes the IBM Connections Cloud, which accelerates access to the right information and expertise for better decision-making, and Cisco Spark, which redefines real-time communications with team messaging, video conferencing, and touchscreen drawing. Eventually, cognitive capabilities will be added so that structured and unstructured data is analyzed.

These collaborative systems are changing how to and who can connect internally and externally. Cisco now has a variety of collaborative tools to support knowledge sharing and learning, including Career Engagement, which increases communication among peers, leadership, and experts; engages employees in business transformation; and democratizes learning and development.

Cisco, IBM, Adobe, Unisys, TELUS and Southwest use a model that the book "The Social Employee" argues for – the path to social business lies through the social employee. Organizations must learn to communicate internally first before they can do a good job of communicating externally. Internal communication maximized for best results is collaborative. However, a lack of vision and to a large extent patience can derail the effort to create a collaborative and learning culture which utilizes technology. Even Cisco employees needed time to adapt to a new collaborative system and training to understand how utilization benefits them personally and the organization as a whole.

### WHERE ARE THE LEADERS?

There is another reason why corporate social networks fail to reach the level of usage the company envisioned. Top managers do not participate.

If senior leadership does not see enough benefits to using the system, why should their employees? If top managers are not using the system, they are not listening to employees, are not interested in the innovative ideas that flow from collaboration, and send a message that engaging with employees is not important.

Leadership needs to communicate the vision of a knowledge and learning culture, and use the social networking tools to engage employees. The system does not have to work perfectly from day one. Improving it over time is part of the learning process.

**SUPPORTING A SYSTEM  
THAT WORKS SEAMLESSLY  
AND IS RELIABLE, SO THAT  
EMPLOYEES ARE WILLING  
TO USE IT, REQUIRES  
ADEQUATE INVESTMENTS  
IN THE IT ARCHITECTURE,  
SECURITY SYSTEM, AND  
TRAINING.**

# Glimpsing the Future of Television: **YouTube** Content Channels

▶ **YouTube TV** was recently introduced to the market, marking the next step in the journey toward Internet TV. Once a random collection of video content, it is now gelling into a major source of content channels. Experts wonder: What is the future of cable and satellite television?

BY KAREN WHITE



**F**irst there was broadcast TV, followed by cable and satellite TV, followed by streaming TV on the Internet. The newest addition is YouTube TV which is a streaming service, but its introduction represents a leap forward in the future of the entertainment industry.

In the past, YouTube offered recorded video content that anyone could post. It did not offer live television, and there were no bundles of channels to buy like those offered by major media companies such as AT&T and Charter Spectrum. With the introduction of live television and bundles of channels, the future of TV seems virtually sealed.

Consumers are increasingly moving away from cable and adopting Internet TV, and the addition of YouTube TV is a major leap forward in the move toward the next generation of presenting live television. YouTube is forward thinking and holds a glimpse into the future of satisfying entertainment options for millennials and younger generations.

## ▶ ENTER YOUTUBE TV

YouTube TV was introduced in February 2017 as a subscription service. Initially introduced in a limited number of markets, it will be rolled out into new markets over time. YouTube TV takes the online social media site into new territory. To date, YouTube has been a repository of video content that any person or business could post, but it did not offer live television. That changed with YouTube TV.

The subscription service offers major network news broadcasting and other shows. Subscribers pay a monthly fee for access to a bundle of channels. One of the nice features is that the shows can be watched on any device, including a mobile phone. YouTube TV also offers Cloud DVR, which enables viewers to record shows and save them in the cloud for up to nine months to watch at a later time. Up to six people can access the service, making it appealing to families. Channels offered include the familiar news channels – ABC, NBC, CBS and Fox – but there are a host of other popular channels that these companies own that will be included in the subscription service, like ESPN, USA, and SyFy, to name a few. In addition, paid subscribers will include access to original shows and movies.

YouTube TV is not the first Internet TV. Hulu and Sling TV are just two options that have been around a while. What YouTube TV does do is pressure the cable companies in various areas. For example, YouTube TV is a subscription service that can be cancelled without a termination fee, and there is no need to rent a cable box.

YouTube is attempting to be an entertainment industry disrupter which is Google's way of doing business – innovate and develop new business models. Google purchased YouTube in 2006, and the social media site has grown and consistently added new features. However, its most important contribution to the entertainment industry in the eyes of many is its influence on the democratization of content.

## ▶ GLOBAL COMMUNITIES OF IDEAS

When TED Talks began appearing on YouTube, the social media site gained new appreciation as a communication tool. TED is a nonprofit dedicated to spreading global ideas. TEDx Talks offers international speakers who present locally driven ideas and elevate them to a global stage – "ideas from communities around the globe." People around the world can watch global experts give speeches on a variety of topics, including leadership, global health, data, art, grief and technology.

YouTube invites amateurs and experts alike to create channels that can stay local or go global. To accommodate the channels that reach global communities, users can separate content into separate channels by language, maintain a single global channel with multiple language content, or



maintain one global channel with supporting local channels. Users can access Creator Academy to learn how to use built-in translation tools and to make content available around the world.

A simple idea of posting and sharing homemade videos online has grown into a personal and business marketing strategy. Proof that YouTube has earned its place as an entertainment disruptor is the fact that some of the mega-media corporations participate in the YouTube Partnership program. "YouTubers" or individuals continue to dominate video production, and that is an indication the full power of YouTube for businesses and entrepreneurs has yet to be realized.

With more than a billion global users, YouTube already reaches more millennials than cable networks. One reason is the ability to post personal videos, but the digital generation also does not want to be tied to a cable in order to find entertainment. They want mobile access or to sit in a coffee shop and watch a show on their laptop. They also want innovative programming. YouTube TV is already offering unique shows and much more is coming. Gen X and Gen Z are forcing the traditional media companies to recognize YouTube as a content creator with monetary value other than through advertising.

### **▶ INTERNET TV FOR DIGITAL GENERATIONS**

Though YouTube TV still has a long way to go to be a serious contender with Hulu, Netflix, AT&T and other major media companies, it is sending clear signals that Internet



**ONE OF YOUTUBE'S MAIN ADVANTAGES IS THAT PEOPLE CAN FIND ANYTHING OF INTEREST TO WATCH, WHETHER IT IS THE LATEST MAKEUP TRENDS, A TED LECTURE ON STEM OPPORTUNITIES, OR A MUSIC VIDEO.**

TV is the future.

It is also giving the entertainment industry notice that millennials and younger generations are the future customer base, and that base is not satisfied with cable TV. Cable TV continues to dominate, but one reason is the millions of baby boomers who prefer to stay with traditional cable options.

One of YouTube's main advantages is that people can find anything of interest to watch, whether it is the latest makeup trends, a TED lecture on STEM opportunities, or a music video. Is virtual reality in the future of YouTube? Probably so. Is co-viewing and social television in the future of YouTube? Most certainly.

The entertainment industry is on the cusp of real transformation and, once again, Google is leading the way with YouTube. The opportunities for innovative creators are unlimited, especially in the areas of diversity and global programming.



# TAKING A TRIP INTO THE COLORS OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Papua New Guinea's ecosystem is described as bio-diverse, endlessly green, and breathtakingly beautiful and colorful. It has everything eco-travelers could hope for.

BY PAMELA GRANT



Young performers in Papua New Guinea

**O**ff the coast of north Australia sits the world's second largest island, and the eastern half is the country of Papua New Guinea. With a population of 8 million people per the World Bank, the country boasts a remarkable linguistic diversity of 800 different languages.

Diversity defines most of this island. There is diverse flora and fauna, diverse geography, and diverse cultures. Some of the people still live in remote mountains and seldom interact with anyone outside their villages or tribes.

This is a spot for trekkers, bird watchers, divers, surfers, canoers, fishing lovers, and travelers looking for spots on the earth where they can be culturally immersed without the sound of traffic and hordes of visitors who make it impossible to enjoy the sights and sounds in so many popular destinations today. Lying entirely in the tropics, there are fertile lowlands and high mountains and everything in between.

Exploring this island is an experience unlike any other because of the colors found anywhere you look – at the plants, at the lush rainforest, at the painted faces of the indigenous people, at the blue

water ocean, and at the animal life which includes the rare great bird-of-paradise.

## ECO-TREASURES FOUND AROUND EVERY CURVE

Papua New Guinea is not to be confused with the countries of Equatorial Guinea, Guinea and Guinea-Bissau, which are in the West African region. Papua New Guinea is in the southwest Pacific and was settled more than 30,000 years ago. The first Europeans to visit were Portuguese explorers in 1512, followed by the Dutch. In 1920, the country was given to Australia and gained independence in September 1975. Today, it is a member of the British Commonwealth.

This small half of an island is culturally, biologically, and environmentally diverse. The 800 languages account for approximately a third of the world's indigenous languages. Visitors can usually get by linguistically speaking because most Papua New Guineans speak Tok Pisin (Pidgin).

Though remote, the island country has its development. The capital city of Port Moresby has highways, tall office buildings and luxury hotels, but it is mostly business travelers making use of the big

city fixtures. Ecotransporters are more interested in what Papua New Guinea has to offer outside the city.

Lying just south of the equator, there are four regions – the Highlands, Momase, Southern and New Guinea Islands. Luckily for ecotransporters, the country remains gloriously undeveloped in most regions. These regions hold volcanic mountains, tropical rainforest, the winding Karawari River, spectacular coral atolls and thunderous waterfalls.

## TAKE A LONG TREK OR TAKE A CANOE TRIP

Following is a sample of the splendors Papua New Guinea holds to tempt ecotransporters.

The Southern Region is where Port Moresby is located and holds Port Moresby Nature Park, a combined botanical and zoological park and garden dedicated to preserving local flora and fauna. There is also a wildlife sanctuary 14 miles outside the city, which is dedicated to breeding birds-of-paradise. Milne Bay is the place for an opportunity to spot any of the 269 birds of the 700 species living in Papua New Guinea.

In the Highlands Region, there are





Leatherback turtle



Greater bird-of-paradise



Canoe war ceremony of Asmat people



Coffee is a key export

coffee plantations, rugged mountains, steep valleys and diverse cultures. Found in this region is the Ramu River, Aure and Wahgi River systems. Birds-of-paradise in the wild are plentiful around Lake Kutubu, and true virgin rainforest filled with wildlife is found in the Wasi Winters Wildlife Management Area. Hardy hikers can take long walking treks, like from Pimaga to Geseg Village, and then go by canoe to a lodge at Tage Point. Lodges in the area can arrange guided tours, which is advisable. For a wilderness thrill, climb to the peak of Mt. Wilhelm or hike to Mt. Hagen.

In Momase, there are more mountains and lush rainforest that is filled with colorful orchards and even more colorful tropical birds. This region holds the Huon Gulf where divers can visit the coral reefs, ecologically threatened in so many other places around the world. When ready to reach for the sky again, trek to Mt. Tambu; go bushwalking around Lake Wanam; view leatherback turtles; or take a day trip to Kranket, Siar, and Samun Islands to enjoy snorkeling and swimming.

Found in the New Guinea Islands Region is the largest offshore islands in Papua New Guinea and part of the Bismarck Archipelago. Pomio offers caving. It is also filled with WWII historical sites,

like the Japanese Barge Tunnels and the Bitapaka War Cemetery. The New Britain Province is filled with volcanoes, some of them active.

### LIVING AN ANCIENT LIFE

In all of the regions, thriving traditional cultures are nurtured in villages scattered around the rugged terrain.

Asoro Mudmen will show visitors how villagers once used scary masks made of baked clay that fit like helmets to frighten their enemies, while in Tari, local Wigmen isolate themselves for long periods of time to grow hair which is ceremonially harvested and then used to make elaborate wigs worth a lot of money to Huli men.

In some areas, an ancient way of life has never changed. For example, tribal fighting is still ongoing in Enga Province, located in the Highlands Region. This is a good reminder that joining a guided tour is the safest way to explore remote areas.

The many festivals held throughout the year give visitors opportunities to enjoy tribal dances and to witness the elaborate traditional face and body painting. It is a rainbow of colors in paint, feathers, handmade jewelry, grass skirts and masks. It is common to come across elaborate rituals that mourn death, celebrate marriage, initiate tribe members or celebrate an occasion with special feasts. Always remember the tribal chiefs and elders hold traditional authority and should always be respected.

Stay in a remote lodge and immerse yourself in a land that time has forgotten. If you are a lucky visitor, you will get a big dose of flora and fauna color and opportunities to watch people weave fishing baskets just like they have for thousands of years.

How long can the island country maintain its traditional way of life? That is a very good question with no answer.



Port Moresby nature park



# HAMEGH IS THE ONLY WAY TO DESCRIBE ARMENIAN FOOD

Armenia's food culture spans 2,000 years, and many of the traditional preparation methods and recipes have remained intact. It is an opportunity to enjoy the same foods people sat down to eat through the years.

BY JOHN JACOBS



Kofta

**T**he quickest way to describe the Armenian food culture is to say it connects ancient history to the present. For more than 2,000 years, Armenians have been cooking over open fires and in underground ovens, using fresh herbs, an abundance of meat, and a variety of fruits and cereals. In this small mountainous republic are people adept at cooking recipes that serve up history and incredible flavor at the same time.

With an agricultural past connected to a small-scale agricultural present, Armenians love barbecued meats and vegetables; grains; pomegranates (the national food); and a variety of other fresh fruits, cereals, and sweets like baklava that melts in the mouth.



Khashlama

Unlike many food cultures, Armenians at home believe in serving all the courses at the same time, creating a table filled with tempting foods that make a person wonder how it is possible to enjoy so much good food in one meal. An Armenian food journey is a trip down a food lane that is never forgotten.

## Wonderful Variety of Spices, Fruits and Vegetables

Anyone lucky enough to enjoy Armenian food while in Armenia will hopefully also be lucky enough to enjoy a meal in a local home. The truth is that restaurants may not fully deliver the traditional dining experience because Armenian home cooking is a complex array of succulent meat or chicken entrees served with a delightful accompaniment of fruits and vegetables that offer an enormous variety of options.

The first thing to know about traditional recipes is that herbs and spices are used in generous quantities. Recipes frequently use cloves, cumin, cinnamon, cardamom, nutmeg, thyme, sage, rosemary and parsley. Garlic, either herb or spice, is also used.

Fruits include cherries, pomegranates, quince, lemons, plums, oranges, apricots, figs, pears, and apples. This is grape vine country so grapes are understandably popular.

Just as much in supply is a wonderful variety of vegetables that include tomatoes, cabbage, peas, carrots, eggplant, peppers, cucumbers and squash. There are nuts, too – almonds, hazelnuts and walnuts.

Put the meats or poultry together with rice or other grains, fruits, and vegetables, and the talented Armenian cook makes national and popular foods like mante, a grilled boat-shaped dumpling made with beef or lamb and served with sauces, and kofta, which is baked in an oven with lamb or turkey or made as meatballs if enjoying a more upscale chef-prepared version in a restaurant. Kofta was served during the days of the Ottoman Empire, one of the many recipes that have history as an ingredient.

In an unusual mix, meat may be served with pomegranate sauce. The pomegranate is a symbol of Armenia and is used to make sauces, juices, and dressings. Khashlama is a meat dish usually made with lamb and served with vegeta-





Yogurt soup



Barbecued beef



Vegetable tolma

bles. When serving company, guests may get a change to try aris, which is a wheat porridge made with chicken.

## Satisfying the Sweet Tooth and the Stomach

It would be remiss to not talk about desserts because Armenians have perfected a variety of them and enjoy them with pure delight. Gata, an Armenian pastry, is made with flour, nuts and baking soda. The baklava is simply one of the most delectable deserts a person can eat; it is a baked dough made with eggs, butter, cinnamon, cardamom, honey and walnuts.

There is sweet barley pudding, and a rich sugar-filled variety of tortes and cookies (t'khvatsk) are always available in bakeries.

There are stomach filling, body warming soups like khash made with cow or sheep's feet and vinegar, garlic, and lemons.



Tolma



Pomegranate sauce



Baklava

on juice, reflecting an agricultural culture in which nothing is wasted.

Culturally, khash is a dish often shared with friends and family in the morning. The soup simmers all night and is only prepared by men.

A lighter soup that is an Armenian tradition is a yogurt soup made with barley or farro (hulled wheat) and mint. Egg

yolks prevent the yogurt from curdling. The soup can be eaten cold or hot, depending on the season.

K'rchik is made by cooking wheat kernels and pickled cabbage together, while bohrsh (borsht) is beet root soup and bozbash is a summer vegetable soup.

## Slow Cooking in a Tonir

Armenians traditionally cooked meats over an open fire or in clay ovens called tonirs. The ovens were used to cook meats, vegetables, breads, soups and other dishes.

It is not surprising that barbecued beef, pork and lamb are favorite foods. Barbecue is called khorovat, and it is traditionally prepared by men. The meat is soaked in a marinade for many hours before it is slow-roasted in the tonir. During a visit to Armenia, wander down Proshyan Street (also called barbecue street) in Yerevan where the aroma of barbecuing meat fills the air, enticing people who are not even hungry. Armenians also barbecue, grill and steam fish like ishkham, which is a native lake trout.

Another popular food is tolma (also called dolma), which also has historical roots. Traditionally, an Armenian woman is expected to learn how to make tolma before getting married. It is usually made with minced beef or pork to which basil, herbs, oregano, and rice are added. The mixture is wrapped in grape leaves and served with a matsun and garlic white sauce. There are variations of tolma, like using cabbage leaves or a vegetable filling. This food item is so popular that a Tolma Festival is held each May during which chefs compete to make the most interesting and delicious recipe.

## The Verdict is In: Hamegh!

The verdict is in - Armenian food is healthy and interesting. Almost no fat is used in recipes, and the rich variety of vegetables and fruits only adds to its nutritious characteristic. From barbecued meats to sweet breads, the Armenian cuisine is a delightful mix of ingredients that are always tempting and never dull.

Many of the dishes are quite complex to make, but that is something Armenian cooks and chefs have mastered with great skill. Whatever is eaten, the verdict is sure to be Hamegh (delicious)!



## 2017 WIN CONFERENCE INVITES GLOBAL WOMEN TO CREATE A THRIVING FUTURE

Sometimes inspiration is hard to come by in a volatile world and especially for global women who must overcome enormous barriers in order to succeed in a predominantly male oriented global business environment. CEO and Founder of WIN (Women's International Networking), Kristin Engvig, is changing that picture through a variety of global forums held throughout the year that are capped with the annual WINConference. Held in Oslo, Norway, September 26-29, 2017, the WIN Conference is a celebration of women of 90 different nationalities who are seeking empowerment, inspiration, inclusiveness, success, and a voice in the world.

The 2017 conference theme says it all: Creating a Thriving Future: With grounded optimism, gracious innovation and tender humanity. It is attended by women entrepreneurs, business professionals, artists, NGO leaders, and homemakers looking for a path to fulfill their passion in their own creative way. This is a unique conference in that it addressed the many topics typical of business conferences, but is also proudly woman focused. Conference workshops addressed topics like positive influence, mental modes, developing a personal vision, going on a journey, well-being, happiness, and other topics. There were also plenty of traditional business topics, including the future of work, women on boards, entrepreneurship, work-life balance, personal brand development, leadership, and technology and innovation.

The WINConference brought together powerful men and women speakers from across industries and countries. Too many to mention by name, the impressive set of speakers came from South Africa, Norway, India, the USA, Africa, Italy, Australia, and numerous other countries. There were many networking opportunities, including one in which attendees formed circles to discuss their challenges and get input from diverse people. Binding everything together is the pursuit of empowerment and authenticity. The 2017 WINConference was the 20th annual event, and there is no doubt that the 2018 WIN Conferences will be even more spectacular.





# CONFERENCE BOARD'S "THE BETTER WORKPLACE CONFERENCE 2017": FOCUS ON WELLNESS

**T**he Better Workplace Conference 2017, held in Toronto on October 24-26, focused on "better wellness, better leaders, and better experience." This conference is now on the Conference Board's annual schedule because of its popularity and ability to attract a wide range of thought leaders and industry experts who bring actionable information to their speeches, panel discussions, and networking groups.

The three streams of focus – wellness, leadership, experience – gave attendees options they could choose based on their greatest knowledge and networking needs. Featured speakers were top leaders in business, government, and nonprofits. They include Jennifer Richardson from the Royal Canadian Mint; Carlos Davidovich from Optimum Talent; Karia Thorpe from the Mental Health Commission of Canada; Angela Slobodian from the Ottawa Police Service; and Allan Kehler who is an author, speaker, and college instructor.



Panel leaders came from a broad range of industries and represented various people-oriented management areas. The 'workplace wellness' stream was the foundational conference stream and addressed issues like the use of apps and wearables in the workplace, stress, and safety. Panel members presented the latest research on sleep and fatigue, and innovations in addressing mental health, and covered other relevant topics. The 'better leaders' stream addressed coaching and mentoring, leadership in the digital workplace, building belonging, and leading with transparency and empathy. The third stream of 'better experience' focused on topics like the employee experience, building great cultures, and constant feedback.

Periodically throughout the conference the attendees gathered together to do some serious networking. There were sponsored spotlight sessions, exhibitors, and many opportunities to talk to corporate experts about specific organizational challenges. This is an important conference, and planning for the October 10-11, 2018 event to be held in Vancouver, B.C. is already in the works. To stay on top of the trends and continue networking, mark your calendars now.



## ICELAND BECOMES FIRST COUNTRY TO LEGALIZE EQUAL PAY

### Iceland

A new law making it illegal to pay men more than women has taken effect in Iceland. The legislation, which came into force on Monday, the first day of 2018, makes Iceland the first country in the world to legalise equal pay between men and women.

Under the new rules, companies and government agencies employing at least 25 people will have to obtain government certification of their equal-pay policies. Those that fail to prove pay parity will face fines.

"The legislation is basically a mechanism that companies and organisations ... evaluate every job that's being done, and then they get a certification after they confirm the process if they are paying men and women equally," said Dagny Osk Aradóttir Pind, a board member of the Icelandic Women's Rights Association.

"It's a mechanism to ensure women and men are being paid equally," she told. "We have had legislation saying that pay should be equal for men and women for decades now but we still have a pay gap."

Iceland, an island country in the North Atlantic Ocean that is home to approximately 323,000

people, has a strong economy, based on tourism and fisheries.

For the past nine years, it has been ranked by the World Economic Forum (WEF) as the world's most gender-equal country.

The Global Gender Gap Report uses markers such as economic opportunity, political empowerment, and health and survival to gauge the state of gender equality in a country. Since the reports began in 2006, Iceland has closed around 10 percent of its total gender gap, making it one of the fastest-improving countries in the world.

The new legislation was supported by Iceland's centre-right government, as

well as the opposition, in a parliament where nearly 50 percent of all members are women.

"I think that now people are starting to realise that this is a systematic problem that we have to tackle with new methods," said Aradóttir Pind.

"Women have been talking about this for decades and I really feel that we have managed to raise awareness, and we have managed to get to the point that people realise that the legislation we have had in place is not working, and we need to do something more," she added.

The Icelandic government plans to completely eradicate the wage gap by 2020.

### Gender Inequality Worldwide

According to the latest WEF report, the top five best performers in the global gender gap are Iceland, Norway, Finland, Rwanda and Sweden.

Yemen, on the other hand, is currently the lowest-ranked of the 144 countries measured in the report.

The war-torn country has been low-performing in terms of economic participation and opportunity for several years.

Fifty-two countries fell below the global average in 2017, including China, Liberia and the United Arab Emirates, while 60 saw their overall gender gap decrease.

Hungary was the only European country to be ranked lower than the global average, having scored poorly on political empowerment.



## HARD DATA REVEAL TRUTH OF TECH DIVERSITY GAP

### Chicago

A groundbreaking new analytical framework developed by Black Tech Mecca measures key factors determining the efficacy of the tech sector's diversity efforts. The Black Tech Ecosystem Framework combines measurable data about how Black people are currently engaging in key tech areas and establishes metrics for assessing the state of the Black tech

community. BTM is using these metrics to assess tech communities' progress over time.

Chicago is the first city where the BTE Framework has been applied and was chosen because of the obstacles and assets it brings to the tech diversity gap equation. Created in collaboration with the Voorhees Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago, the BTE Framework compiles data showing the number of Blacks working in technology fields and documents the actual outcomes of attempts to close the digital divide. This data is the true measurement of real racial diversity in the tech community.

BTM's latest report, "Unleashing Chicago's Black Tech Ecosystem: Assessing Defining, and Growing Chicago's BTE," presents findings from the Chicago application.

"We are working with Chicago educators, government officials, and business leaders to strengthen the efficacy of their efforts to create a more inclusive tech ecosystem," says BTM CEO Fabian Elliott. "Gathering the right data is critical to designing the right interventions to close the tech diversity gap. We commend those in Chicago who are joining us to ensure a fair, equitable and, ultimately, more prosperous tech economy."

## MEN BECOME BASTIONS OF DIVERSITY AND GENDER INCLUSION IN COMPANIES

### India

**A**t Accenture India, select male employees are the bastions of diversity and inclusion (D&I). Carefully handpicked from the pool of middle management and senior leaders, these employees are sensitized to become advocates of diversity. A host of companies including Genpact, Pega Systems and Pepsico are now putting the focus on male employees in the organisation to lead, advocate and handhold women as they progress in their careers.

"D&I shouldn't be a zero-sum game. Men in the organisation need to be part of the process and when a man stands up and talks about diversity, it sends a strong message. Empowering women is not just a for women, by women initiative," said Dhanya Rajeswaran, director - HR, Accenture India. She adds that many thousand men are part of this journey at Accenture India. Among their various roles, they are expected to mentor and sponsor female employees who are identified for future growth. "There is difference between mentoring and sponsoring. Mentoring is acting as sounding board and providing career guidance. Sponsoring is being much more hands on - identifying which assignments play to her strength, making such opportunities available and playing an active role in shaping her career," said Rajeswaran.



At IT product company Pegasystems, Woman@Pega is a key initiative of the company. The company prides itself with having 57% women at the senior level. Krishnamurthy SV, senior director, industry applications, Pegasystems says makes their D&I goal easier by adopting a top down approach to replicate this success at all levels. "We have realised that this ratio is broadly the same at the entry level too. It is the mid management level where there is leakage and hence we put a lot of focus there," he said. As part of their Womentoring initiative, female employees are aligned to a mentor based on their needs. "It could be people management or picking up a new technology - a mapping is done so we find the right fit for the mentor and employee. 60% of our mentors are men," said Krishnamurthy.



## LOCAL EMPLOYERS URGED TO PUT MENTAL HEALTH ON THEIR AGENDA

### London, UK

**O**n the Occasion of the 25th World Mental Health Day, Local London Assembly Member, Joanne McCartney AM, is calling on businesses to put mental health on their agenda. The theme of this year's awareness event, set by the World Federation for Mental Health, is workplace wellbeing. Ms McCartney urged employers to take action to "tackle the culture of silence that all too often surrounds mental illness."

To mark World Mental Health Day, the mental health campaign charity, Time to Change, is asking organisations to take extra steps to ensure employees experiencing mental illness are properly supported. Ms McCartney said with local people spending a significant amount of their time in the workplace "it's a good place to start when it comes to talking about our mental wellbeing."

Earlier this year the Mayor of London launched his Thrive LDN campaign, a city-wide initiative designed to improve mental health by supporting Londoners, and especially young Londoners, to lead healthier, happier lives. Bringing together experts from public and private organisations, the campaign aims to eradicate mental health stigma and discrimination and to make London a zero-suicide city.

Local London Assembly Member, Joanne McCartney AM, said:

"Although there have been positive strides forward in recent years, there is still a long way to go in the fight for equality between mental health and physical health.

"With a significant proportion of our lives spent in the workplace it is a good place to start when it comes to talking about our mental wellbeing.

"I hope local employers will seize the opportunity World Mental Health Day provides to tackle the culture of silence that all too often still surrounds mental illness."

## SBA ANNOUNCES VETERANS BUSINESS OUTREACH CENTER FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

### Washington

**P**ivate organizations, colleges and universities, private sector firms, nonprofit organizations and state, local or tribal governmental agencies are eligible to apply for funding from the U.S. Small Business Administration to provide training and counseling to aspiring and existing veteran small business owners as a Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC).

The grant awardees will be providing training to service members and military spouses through the Boots to Business entrepreneurship training program, which is part of the Transition Assistance Program.

Those organizations selected to receive the funding will provide training, mentoring and SBA resource navigation to veterans, active duty service members, Reserve, National Guard and military spouses interested in starting or growing a small business.

Each award is made for a base project period of 12 months,



with four 12-month option periods.

“SBA’s VBOCs are the boots on the ground when it comes to serving existing and prospective veteran entrepreneurs,” said Barb Carson, Associate Administrator, SBA Office of Veterans Business Development. “Every entrepreneurship journey is different, and each VBOC brings something unique to the table. We’re excited to see this diversity represented in the upcoming applicant pool.”

## CANADA’S CLIMATE ACTION IS WORKING, REPORT TO UNITED NATIONS CONFIRMS

### Ottawa, ON

**C**anada is making strong progress toward meeting its 2030 climate target, according to a year-end report submitted to the United Nations. Meeting our climate commitments and investing in clean growth are central to the Government of Canada’s plan to create good jobs, support communities, and make our economy stronger.

One year after launching Canada’s first clean-growth and climate action plan in partnership with provinces and territories, the Government of Canada is adopting policies and making investments that reduce carbon pollution, help Canadians save money and energy, and support businesses and industry to compete in a low-carbon economy. Canada is also working with partners around the world to maintain global momentum on climate action and seize opportunities in the global transition to clean energy.

Canada submitted an extensive report to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which details the strong progress Canada is making toward its 2030 greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal. Canada is required to report on progress toward meeting its climate commitments every two years. Since the last report, Canada has taken significant steps to reduce carbon pollution and invest in clean solutions, both at home and abroad.

These actions include

- adopting the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change with provinces and territories
- announcing a nationwide approach for pricing carbon pollution
- committing to accelerate the phase-out of traditional coal-fired electricity by 2030 and launching the international Powering Past Coal Alliance in partnership with the United Kingdom
- committing a historic level of federal investment in areas such as green infrastructure, transit, and innovation as well as proposed funding to make buildings and industrial sectors more energy efficient
- developing regulations to reduce methane emissions from the oil and gas sector by 40 to 45 percent, by 2025
- adopting new vehicle emission standards
- developing a clean fuel standard to reduce emissions from fuels used in transportation, buildings, and industry
- committing more than \$2.5 billion to help developing countries combat climate change

The Government of Canada is committed to ensuring that Canada’s Indigenous Peoples are partners in Canada’s transition to a low-carbon economy, and it will continue working with national Indigenous organizations to advance broader clean-growth and climate change priorities.

Addressing climate change represents a significant economic opportunity. Countries that move forward with strong, practical climate action will be best placed to compete in the clean-growth century.





## FACING RUGGED TERRAIN, GOLFERS AND ENTREPRENEURS MAKE DIFFICULT CHOICES

The story of the 117th U.S. Open at Erin Hills began with rugged terrain and a man's dream of bringing professional golf to Wisconsin. As true entrepreneurs understand, converting dreams into reality can be an arduous journey.

BY VINCENT PANE

**E**rin Hills is the fruition of one man's determination to bring U.S. championship golf to Wisconsin. Bob Lang was 72 years old, wealthy as a result of building a successful greeting card and calendar publishing company, and making successful real estate investments. That fortune dwindled after buying a former cattle farm and building a golf course on it.

It was not just any golf course though. The rugged landscape made an improbable spot for a

golf course, and even if the course was built, the U.S.G.A. was unlikely to agree to holding the U.S. Open at a new public golf course in a location nowhere near ... well ... much of anything.

As an entrepreneur, Lang experienced the typical travails of an entrepreneur with a dream – doubt, a need for capital, risks that could collapse the entire effort, and public criticism.

### WHEN A PASSIONATE IDEA BECOMES AN OBSESSION

What makes an entrepreneur an entrepreneur? It seems like a simple question, but in reality it is a very complex one.

Lang obtained more than one loan, invested in building and then expanding the course to attract professional golf tournaments, and overpaid for all the houses a golfer could see from the course so he could tear them down or move them. He had to sell the course because he overextended himself financially. Andy and Carlene Ziegler – well known in Wisconsin as the co-founders of Artisan Partners Holdings, a global investment management firm – purchased the golf course. The course sold for \$10 million, and Lang had invested \$26 million. Lang was insolvent. The day the course sold, the U.S.G.A. voted to hold the 2017 U.S. Open at Erin Hills.

This is a sad story of an entrepreneur who lost everything because of a stubborn dream. He had sold his successful printing company and his commercial real estate holding company, and gone deep in debt. He ended up with no golf course. What is particularly interesting about this story is that Lang admits he let a passionate idea become an obsession, and that his ideas tended to outgrow his finances.

However, Lang did not see an empty cow field when he first started this venture. He saw a beautiful and challenging golf course. Interestingly, it would be reasonable to assume he was an avid golfer, but he was not. The first grain of an idea arose out of a desire to build a local 9-hole golf course for his more than 300 employees.

### THE STORY NOW CONTINUES

Lang is a true entrepreneur. He made some poor decisions, over the objections of people like the architects of the golf course, but the dream of holding the U.S. Open never faded. Sure, he wishes he still owned Erin Hills. He had put it in trust for his three children. Sure, he should not have risked his fortune to the point of losing it all.

However, the new course is working its magic. For example, Steve Stricker from Wisconsin was denied a spot in the U.S. Open because the U.S.G.A. denied his request for a special exemption. So he promptly went out and won a 36-hole sectional qualifier. Stricker has earned a reputation as a Wisconser who works hard and never gives up, even when in a career slump. Playing in the first U.S. Open held in Wisconsin was important to him and to his supporters.

The story of the golf course built in an improbable place on rugged terrain leads to the question: What makes an entrepreneur an entrepreneur? Is it a willingness to take unreasonable risks or to ignore what seems like sound advice from people in the entrepreneur's network in order to keep a dream alive? Is it simple perseverance?

After all, Howard Schultz, CEO of Starbucks, said, "Risk more than others think is safe. Dream more than others think is practical." Sounds a bit like Lang took this advice.

### BALANCING DREAMS AND REALITY

Being an entrepreneur is challenging because it requires a willingness to assume some level of risk. It is when something becomes an obsession that consumes everything else, like relationships and finances, that entrepreneurship fails.

Entrepreneurs frequently obsess with success, working hard to start and build a business. Lang would take his tractor to the cow pasture and clear brush for several hours a day on weekends. While doing so, he dreamed of what the land would become and the sought after tournament. Entrepreneurs can easily get themselves into trouble by focusing only on the dream and not the realities of things like cash flow. Lack of capital is one of the main reasons startups fail.

Entrepreneurs are described as creative, self-starters, determined, open-minded, and confident. However, these qualities are not enough. A Gallup survey of 1,000 entrepreneurs in 2014



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found that successful entrepreneurs also make decisions based on the potential to turn a profit, are knowledge-seekers, and have good instincts concerning risk-taking (read the full discussion in the book "Entrepreneurial Strengthsfinder" by Jim Clifton and Sangeeta Eharadwaj Badal).

Lang let an obsession overcome his good business sense. He squelched the instincts and ignored the advice of people who understood the financial fiasco Lang was creating.

### REMAIN GROUNDED IN SOLID BUSINESS PRINCIPLES

What makes the Lang story particularly interesting and ironic is that the 2017 U.S. Open was very successful, but there would be no rugged terrain golf course if not for one man's obsession.

Balancing the dream with reality is probably the toughest challenge every entrepreneur faces, but it is one of the most important ones to overcome. Unless the entrepreneur remains grounded in the realities of running a business, the course may get too tough to play.

There are lots of good business ideas that never see daylight because dreamers were not entrepreneurs, and plenty of great businesses that fail because entrepreneurs let the dreams become blinders to the rugged terrain.





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