

The Symes Report

Right on Target

Edition #2, July 2017

**A BRAVE NEW
WORLD:
An exciting
FUTURE FOR
Business ... P10**

SOCIAL IMPACT

Your success may depend on it p46

Are you ready to make

THE SWITCH? p38

MENTAL TOUGHNESS

Two women's inspiring insights p32

BE HEARD

Presenting with purpose p42

THE SOCIAL BRAIN

Keys to effective communication p28

SYMES GROUP
CREATIVE INNOVATION

The Symes Report

The Symes Report is the business magazine produced by Symes Group. The purpose of the publication is to celebrate the work which we do and the individuals we meet in sessions who have an interesting story and embody what we stand for.

It is also a platform for Symes Group to present thought leadership around current philosophy in communication, leadership and work trends.

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About Symes Group

At Symes Group we believe in eliminating social challenges as the key to business success.

Founded in 2009, we are leaders of the imagination race by transforming organisations to be diverse, creative and superhuman all of which are essential ingredients in a thriving utopian world.

Symes Group has an extensive range of solutions that are then customised to create a whole answer to future-proofing the organisation to thrive in the current climate that demands corporate social initiatives, diversity, creativity, super human skills and innovation.

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"To thrive is to inspire,
to inspire is to care.
This is business with heart."

Jessica SYMES

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Letter from the publisher

SAY WHAT?

I arrived back at work today to find the copy of The Symes Report waiting for me. Well done! Thank you for thinking to send it to me. I can imagine that you are feeling justifiably proud of your production.

Dr Leoni Degenhardt
Emeritus Dean,
AIS Leadership Centre,
The Association of Independent
Schools of New South Wales

The magazine looks fantastic. I like the approach of mixing up methods of content consumption across the blog, magazine, and video channels.

Anthony Johnson
Practice Lead
GroupTech, Westpac Group

One thing I love about my team at Symes Group is that even when they produce excellent work, every time they do something a second or third time it gets better and better. I couldn't have been more thrilled with Edition #1 of The Symes Report.

And yet Edition #2 has taken things to another level! The timing is perfect because Symes Group itself has been evolving and changing as you will read

from my article: The death of leadership training – How I am changing my business in response to the evolving world. On page 20.

Congratulations to the team, this is an excellent read and completely in tune with the world around us and its ever-changing landscape.

Thank you to our collaborators and contributors for enriching our pages and words, we are forever grateful!



Barbara Harvey (left) and Jessica Symes.

AAP

PIC/

Letter from the editor

I'm going out with a bang! Before I head off for maternity leave I thought I would make an early delivery – of The Symes Report Edition #2. After the success of our first edition and the great response from our readers I have been encouraged to reach out more to our great clients and collaborators

and have some real treats for you. Prepare to be inspired by individuals switching careers, partaking in endurance bike rides, and saving lives on North Bondi Beach. You can also enjoy cutting edge thought leadership from some of the most internationally recognised business leaders in the world including Arianna

Huffington, Daniel Goleman and Jimmy Wales, founder of Wikipedia. And we're also talking about some big topics – gender and diversity, gender targets and the future of work. So, you will need relaxed focus for this one! Sit back, take some time and enjoy!

Thank you to our contributors



Sarah McCullough



Professor Ian Williamson



Kate Young



Anthony Johnson



Pearl Tan



Majella Knobel



Lucy Schott



Danielle Fryday



Monique Heinke

Contents

Brave new world

The future of work is a hot topic in the business world but much of the focus is on fear. Jessica Symes has a different outlook.....p10

The way we work

Symes Group share some thoughts around creating an autonomous, creative and diverse workforce equipped for the future ahead.....p14

The end as we know it

Leadership training of the 90s is dead. Symes Group is leading the way in reshaping and transforming professional development.....p20

New leader of today

The superhuman skills needed to stay relevant in the future are no longer soft skills but the hard skills of human behaviour. Requirements for leadership are vastly different as we move into a brave new world.....p18

Social brain

Daniel Goleman reveals new research and insights into the social brain and its value in the modern workplace.....p28

Mindfulness: Precursor to change

Mindfulness founded on ancient Buddhist philosophy is taking the business world by storm – for the best of reasons.....p24

Mentally tough

Majella Knobel is seriously tough. She joined colleague and friend Mark on a tandem bike for the Tour De Cure Cancer. Lucy Schott works in people and culture during the week – we find out why she spends her spare time saving lives.....p32

Presenting with purpose

Anthony Johnson is an AFL club captain outside of work. To motivate his team he has worked on the art of the half-time pep talk. Pearl Tan shares her experience presenting at TedXHaymarket in Sydney.....p42

The switch

Trying to figure out what you want to be when you grow up can be challenging enough, but what happens when you realise it's not forever? Do you want to try something else? We interview two women who have switched careers and love the results.....p38

Social impact the key to relevancy

Professor Ian Williamson shares the big secret to future success of organisations – social impact...p46

Girls' world

Educating girls is paramount to alleviating poverty in the developing world. Find out how a small group of committed, talented and passionate women are playing their part in global social impact.....p52

Right on target

Are they working? Are they necessary? Symes Group weighs in on the argument around gender targets.....p56

Young leaders of today

Kate Young is carving a career for herself that is impressive and shows great promise. On the way she supports and elevates young graduates joining the workforce, particularly young women.....p60

Women in the c-suite

Studies have revealed that while emphasis on having more women on boards in ASX companies has increased, representation in C-suite roles have not. Aspiring CIO Sarah McCullough wants to be part of the new statistics.....p62



Social impact with Ian Williamson, p46



Presenting with purpose, p44

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Wonder women



Symes Group's event for International Women's Day this year.

World
Business
Forum



SYDNEY

30 May
31 2018

The Star, Sydney

human

IFICATION

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Sir Ken Robinson Creativity
Rachel Botsman Digital Transformation
Daniel Lamarre Innovation
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Kelly Peters Marketing
Stew Friedman Leadership
Chris McChesney Strategy

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Now and always.**

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brave and resilient as the people that work for them.

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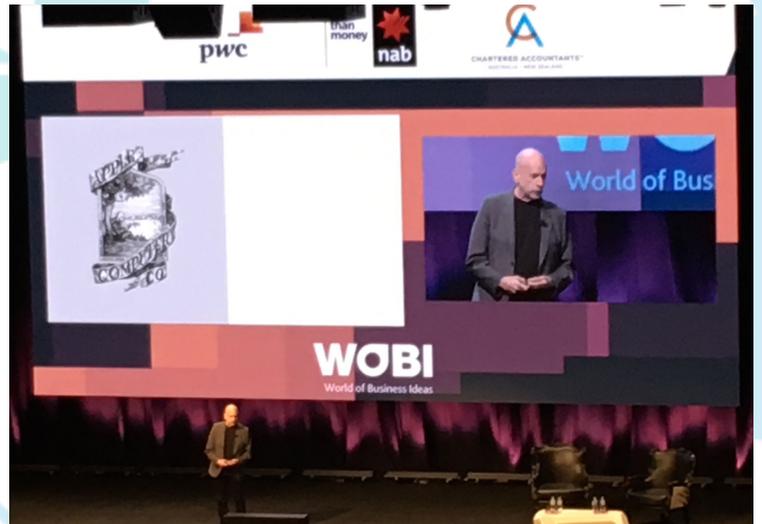
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"Every era of change looks like the most challenging and most disruptive, we've talked about this for decades."

Professor Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Harvard Business School

Jessica Symes, CEO/founder of Symes Group (left) and Barbara Harvey, principal consultant.



*Above left: Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Harvard Business School professor
Above: Ken Segall, Former ad agency creative director at Apple
Left – we are amused: Symes Group's Jessica Symes (left) and Pearl Tan.*

Rock stars of business

Symes Group partnered with and attended the World Business Forum 2017 and emerged a little starstruck

"Fearlessness is not the absence of fear. It's the mastery of fear. It's about getting up one more time than we fall down."

Arianna Huffington

*Founder of The Huffington Post,
Founder and CEO of Thrive Global*

WOBI



The future of work, innovation and disruption were just some of the incredible topics discussed at the World Business Forum. Held in Sydney earlier this year, it was like a rock concert for business innovation fans Jessica

Symes, Barbara Harvey and Pearl Tan of Symes Group. Ken Segall, formerly of Apple, impressed with his insights on the importance of simplicity, while Harvard's Rosabeth Moss Kanter covered the challenges of strategy.

You can read more about world expert on emotional and social intelligence Daniel Goleman on p28 of this issue and Melbourne Business School's Professor Ian Williamson made a huge impact. Find out why on p46.



A brave new world

Change seems to be a hot topic in the business world in 2017. Much of the focus is on fear – fear that most of the jobs will be gone, fear that industries will disappear and even on a greater scale, fear of the future of the human race.

Jessica Symes has a different outlook on what's ahead ...

The future of work is a topic widely discussed and debated throughout the world. In 2016 Mark Zuckerberg announced there were three things that he was focused on moving forward: Artificial intelligence, augmented reality, and virtual reality. The leaders of Silicon Valley are following suit – the robots are coming. What does that mean? A string of articles, thought leadership and documentaries are emerging about the future of work and what anthropologist David Graeber refers to as the death of

useless jobs. Our clients are concerned: Which jobs are safe? Which industries will remain? How can we future-proof our careers? We have a different perspective at Symes Group. We are excited and embrace a future of technology of artificial intelligence as potentially creating a brave new world. Futurist Rutger Bergman argues we need to rethink what work is. He supports the notion of a universal basic income for all: "... not because robots will take over

all the purposeful jobs, but because a basic income would give everybody the chance to do work that is meaningful." He goes further: "I believe in a future where jobs are for robots and life is for people." Symes Group are fans of Bergman's philosophy and Barbara Harvey sat down with Jessica Symes to find out her thoughts on the future of work and what businesses need to be doing to stay relevant in the years ahead.



BH: Why is everyone talking about the future right now?

JS: In less than a century our average IQ has increased by 24 points – known as the Flynn effect. Our capabilities as students, workers and leaders have catapulted beyond what we could achieve prior to the industrial revolution.

The leaders of our business world are thinking about and focusing on worlds beyond today or tomorrow – beyond earth as we know it.

Richard Branson wants to go to the moon, Elon Musk to Mars, Bill Gates suggests that artificial intelligence should be top of college students' agendas and Stephen Hawking predicts we only have 1000 years left on this planet – then adjusted that figure to 100.

There's a fear that something big is going to happen, that "I might not have a job soon", there's the threat of artificial intelligence – and to some extent the threat is real.

It certainly is if we keep doing what we did 50 years ago, or just jazz things up with new ways of doing the same old things – working agile, sitting on bean bags and having walking meetings. The speed of change is mind-boggling. It can't be fought, resisted or stopped. And the potential that technology has to disrupt, detonate and reinvent

industries is so great that it's possible that the future business landscape will look nothing like today's.

Being future-focused is vital. If organisations are too inwardly focused, and continue in the old way, there is a real risk they will become redundant. But the better focus of our energy, time and thoughts is not on fear or the threat of artificial intelligence, but the potential it brings.

The potential we have to do better than we did before, in protecting the environment, in our relations with each other and in our ability to work with purpose and joy.

BH: What does the future look like?

JS: I join the many individuals in the world who see the future as exciting, positive and holding enormous potential for the human race.

As Bergman says: "Jobs are for robots and life is for people."

The hangover from the industrial revolution is still with us.

It seems ludicrous to me that for the most part we are all bundling into cars and trains at 7am to get to work at the same time, creating gridlock and chaos every day – all to mill out of offices after 5pm and return the next day for more of the same.

We spend the best parts of our day inside, we see our children at night and on weekends. We are

over-scheduled, overworked and yet what are we actually doing?

What are we achieving?

Time is no longer the currency of work and we no longer need to be tied to desks from 9am-5pm.

There are so many industries that could re-think the way their people work – the benefits would go beyond the individual worker and the organisation.

In the future I envisage people are excited to go to work, the mundane work will be taken over by artificial intelligence and instead we will be left to solve problems, challenge the status quo and to dream.

Continued next page.

"Jobs are for robots and life is for people."

Futurist

Rutger Bergman



shake

*"Corporate
Australia is losing
entrepreneurial
individuals to the
start-up world
and this is
dangerous."
Jessica Symes*

your foundations

BH: What is the biggest threat to big business?

JS: Procedures and a lack of autonomy. At Symes Group we are surprised by the cumbersome procedures in organisations. Organisations often need procedures to eliminate procedures.

Disruptive companies, big and small, are seducing entrepreneurial spirited workers away from traditional industries and organisations, because they can offer freedom, autonomy, excitement and meaning.

Corporate Australia is losing entrepreneurial individuals to the start-up world and this is dangerous.

It's no secret, start ups are winning the technology race. The term disruption is so apt – look at Netflix's impact on the video stores, Amazon on the book stores, Uber on taxis. And there's more coming – insurance, banking, law. No one is safe.

At Symes Group we are huge fans of the start-up model and as a small company writing its own rules, we refer to ourselves as a start up too. I see two ways start-ups are a threat to big business.

Disruption as an operating model.

The start-up operating model is of disruption.

It's one of turning challenges and problems into opportunities, questioning the status quo, cross pollinating industries, breaking

tradition and rules. The start-up model asks: Why are we satisfied with five large companies running the internet? The model says "Let's try something different, see if it works and lets not worry too much if it doesn't work."

That's what Hans-Juergen Schmidtke, Facebook's director of engineering did when he suggested to Mark Zuckerberg in 2014 that they create their own mode of transporting communication which would disrupt the US telecom market.

After two years they single-handedly disrupted a US\$350-billion industry. An industry that no doubt was trying to be innovative and to future-proof itself. But it didn't see that coming.

The model of disruption is not orchestrated or formulated. It's a result of passion, necessity, creativity and innovation.

Asking new questions, looking at problems differently, trying things out, moving fast, removing hierarchy, and removing rules and regulations are all essential to the disruption model. But at its heart, driving the disruption, is passion, focus, and goals.

This means entrepreneurs and teams of start-ups will work twice as hard with greater productivity, effort and gusto than any employee. Which is of course the greatest threat – human potential.

Poaching entrepreneurial talent.

Start-ups tend to have few rules, restrictions and organisational procedures. Start-ups attract individuals who are rebelling against the establishment, rules and restrictions and old ways of doing things.

This is especially prevalent with women after maternity leave. Some women with extremely high powered and successful careers are hesitant to try and combine that career with their new role as a mother and start to ask what else can they do?

The annual Mumpreneur awards celebrate women who have answered that question. In 2016 the winners of the Mumpreneur of the year were two women in their 30s who left high paying, significant corporate jobs to start their own business. Their motivation? They didn't feel the corporate world could accommodate their needs as parents.

Obviously this is a great loss to big business, many of these Mumpreneurs are capable of coming up with big profitable ideas and having the guts and energy to see it through. Big business is losing great people. As organisations slowly wake up to the news that diversity is the key to innovation, and autonomy is the key to productivity, I predict we will see a huge overhaul of procedures in organisations, which will be of great benefit to individuals and to society as a

Jessica can deliver a keynote at your organisation on the future of work

Book at info@symesgroup.com.au





The way we work

Sir Richard Branson has predicted that big business is in trouble. Why? Because there are too many rules, too many standards and there cannot be innovation when there's governance in the way. So what is the answer? How can you remove the rules without creating anarchy? Symes Group shares some thoughts around creating an autonomous, creative and diverse workforce, equipped for the future ahead.

Keys to an autonomous, creative and diverse workforce ...

At Symes Group the way we work has allowed the company to skyrocket because it fosters creativity, divergent thinking and people working to their sweet spots.

This is an exciting time to be in business and transformation is a thrilling space to be in – particularly the pursuit of a future that will see all of us contributing with meaning, purpose and passion.

But the work culture needs to

adjust. What is now required is a culture that will foster total autonomy, freedom and space to think, create and cross-pollinate.

Diversity, compassion, intuition, curiosity, positivity, creativity and collaboration are essential for organisations to thrive and will require an overhaul of business as usual.

– Jessica Symes
CEO/founder Symes Group

Organisation rules of the future

- No rules/hierarchy
- No policies and procedures
- Foster a coaching culture
- No meetings – information-sharing only
- No set days of work
- Creation time: For no reason
- Creation time: For a specific reason
- Everyone is a consultant

"For creativity there has to be randomness and variety. Everyone arriving at work and leaving at the same time removes randomness and spontaneity variety."

Jessica Symes
Symes Group
CEO/Founder

"Innovation is not just reserved for so-called creatives or leaders – it is for everyone. Those working on the front-line, day-to-day, or dealing with the products or services first-hand, are often best placed to make improvements and come up with solutions."

Sir Richard Branson
Virgin Group founder

Symes utopian work framework

Focus on social issues

Professor Ian Williamson of the Melbourne School of Business made the case at the World Business Forum 2017 that for businesses to stay relevant, create new customer bases and identify untapped talent pools they must focus on social issues. By doing this, organisations can serve society and be profitable along the way.

Create a design-your-life model ...

Managers and leaders are holding their staff back by limiting what they do. Forget "flexibility", part-time roles, full-time roles and set hours. Autonomy is the number one key to motivation, to creativity and to productivity. When staff don't have ownership and they are not asked to contribute their own unique skills and gifts, they tend to switch off and revert to whingeing about dirty cups in the office kitchen. Modern individuals thrive on choice, let individuals live the life they want to live. Let them choose when they want to work and where. This will open up the workforce and allow those who are restricted by the standard work framework a way in.

Have employees as consultants

It's time to stop thinking of staff as employees, but rather as consultants, who are providing their expertise. The framework for an individual's work should be deliverable and project based. Time is not the currency of work anymore. Give people the opportunity to contribute, to think, to come up with solutions. Have faith. The consultants know the answers. Get rid of meetings while you're there too!

What do they want? Ask

So many organisations in Australia are having conversations that were popular 20 years ago. How can we transform our performance management program? How do we deal with low engagement scores? Everyone in business tends to focus on the problems. Let's forget about the problems and ask a different question. "Are you happy at work?" Lean in with appreciative inquiry to find out the answer, stay away from annual surveys or questionnaires.

Hire for diversity or risk irrelevancy

Hiring for diversity is no longer a feel-good or compliance requirement. If organisations don't become more diverse it will be a case of survival of the fittest. Diversity is imperative to creativity and creativity is imperative to innovation.

Foster a coaching culture

Leadership has come a long way since the 1980s but it needs to go further. To thrive in the age of disruption, a culture of coaching needs to be present at all levels, leadership or no leadership. A coaching culture is one in which there is a belief that the individual has the answers within themselves to thrive – they don't need help or to be given a hand to lift up. They need to be asked the right questions.

Cross pollinate

Host a cross-pollination day, invite your competition, encourage individuals from different industries, people with diverse backgrounds. Host creation time sessions – one specific and one random. The 2016 IBM annual report predicts that cross pollination will ensure the survival of organisations.

Celebrate individuals, not company culture

Organisations need to spend less time focusing on recruiting for company fit. Sometimes the black sheep are the great hires. When Brad Bird was directing animated feature film *The Incredibles*, he asked the HR department for the black sheep, the misfits, the individuals who didn't fit in with Pixar culture. The film went on to win an Oscar for best animation film and was a huge critical and financial success.

Symes Group can help your organisation
change the way it works...

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CEO and Founder of Symes Group, Jessica Symes will be the chair person for day one of the Women In Technology Conference, Australia on August 3rd and 4th.

We are delighted to offer Symes Group clients and Symes Report readers a special discount on tickets.

Head to:

<https://www.australianwomenintech.com> to book yours.



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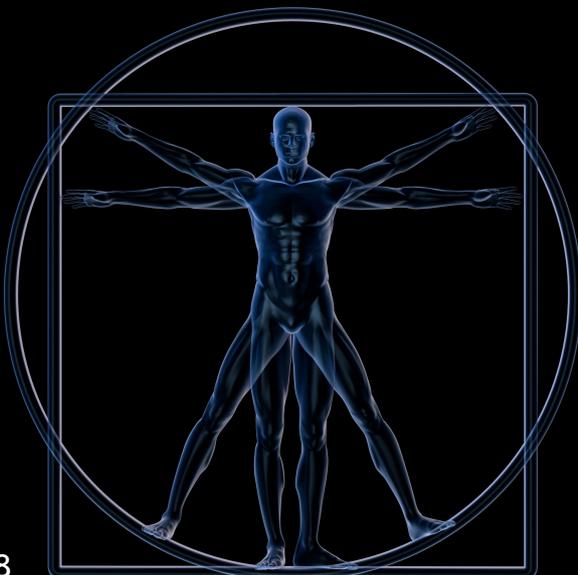
The leader of today

A recent study by the IBM Institute for Business Values, conducted on more than 800 chief executive officers across more than 70 countries, investigated the most sought after leadership behaviours of Torchbearer CEOs – those leading the way in this turbulent "age of disruption". Symes Group's coaching initiatives and practical immersions are a means of developing these behaviours.

The ability to cultivate and manage relationships was a defining feature of the Torchbearer CEOs. They understand that along with the emergence of business ecosystems, innovation and success are grounded in the capacity to operate collectively (IBM Institute for Business Values, Redefining Competition: Insights from the Global C-suite Study - The CEO Perspective, 2015).

At Symes Group, we enable individuals to develop the hard skills of human behaviour such as mental toughness, compassion, mindfulness, focus, emotional regulation, empathy, perspective taking, curiosity, and collaboration. Symes Group also focuses on an understanding of the importance of personal resources – resulting in positive, productive, and purposeful collaborative

behaviours. Symes Group's superhuman arm is the gym of personal skills. This is an active practice, requiring effort, skill and knowledge. Our dedicated programs, interventions, and coaching initiatives ensure our clients are ahead of the game when it comes to what their people are capable of, what they passionately want to contribute and ultimately, what they deliver.



Symes Group's

‘superhuman’ arm is the gym of personal skills.

This is an active practice, requiring effort, skill and knowledge.

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CREATIVE INNOVATION

EMPATHY

PURPOSE

AGILITY

CURIOSITY

AUTHENTICITY



MENTAL
TOUGHNESS

EMOTIONAL
REGULATION

MORAL
CLARITY

SELF
AWARENESS

PERSPECTIVE

Leadership training



No more teachers ... no more books ...

Jessica Symes has spent 10 years building a leadership consultancy, but change is in the air. Jessica shares a personal account of how Symes Group is transforming its own industry.

... is this the end?

Disruption, reinvention, adapting to change. These are terms thrown around in modern business and I have never understood their meaning as much as in 2017. Anyone following my entrepreneurial journey may have noticed some changes, some large and some subtle. I'd like to share with you what has been happening with Symes Group, where I am taking the organisation and what was the process that propelled the changes. But before I do, any good story about change and the future needs to start at the beginning. It's almost 10 years since I started my own business, 10 years since I traipsed around Crows Nest, Sydney with Mum Liz and one-year-old son Samuel in the pram stuffing flyers for North Shore Drama and Symes Consulting under office doors, in letterboxes and unopened coffee shops. This was before I had uncovered my passion for supporting women in leadership, before I had uncovered what my purpose in life was and well before I felt that it was all going to work. At this stage I was in survival mode, I needed people in my

drama classes and I needed them fast. Leap forward nine years in and what a different position I found myself to be in. Now with a thriving leadership consultancy, a busy acting school, and a woman in leadership movement that was starting to gain serious momentum – plus a great venue to hold it all. To the outside world I had made it. And of course I had. I was doing what lots of people dream about – running my own consultancy firm – I was no longer a volunteer in my own organisation (which often entrepreneurs are), and most importantly I had staff – passionate, talented and qualified staff who had the skills and capability to take my place in training and sessions. It was all a dream come true. And yet I had sensed for a long time that what I had to offer our clients was beyond what they were asking for. I was frustrated by the training model – putting 15-16 people in a room and teaching principles and methods of effective leadership. Continued next page

"...learning theory from a slide show in a training room was the last way any form of behaviour change could take place."

Jessica Symes



As far as I was concerned, any behaviour change model involving a fluorescently lit training room with tables and chairs and a power point should be eradicated. And more than that – the concept of group training was limiting too. My philosophy had always been to champion authenticity, to find out peoples' super powers and leverage those rather than build on layers of what a leader should be. Time and time again this was new

information to our participants, particularly the women. It was the small pockets of individual coaching that created the a-ha! moment for each one. Because as we know everyone is different, everyone is on a different leadership path and it goes without saying that the super human skills of individuals are diverse. One person may be extremely empathetic but lacking in assertiveness, while another

might be highly skilled in emotional regulation but need support in mental toughness. I could see from what was resonating in our sessions, keynotes and workshops – individuals didn't need to be taught how to be leaders. There was no one-size-fits-all leader – and learning theory from a slide show in a training room was the last way any form of behaviour change could take place.

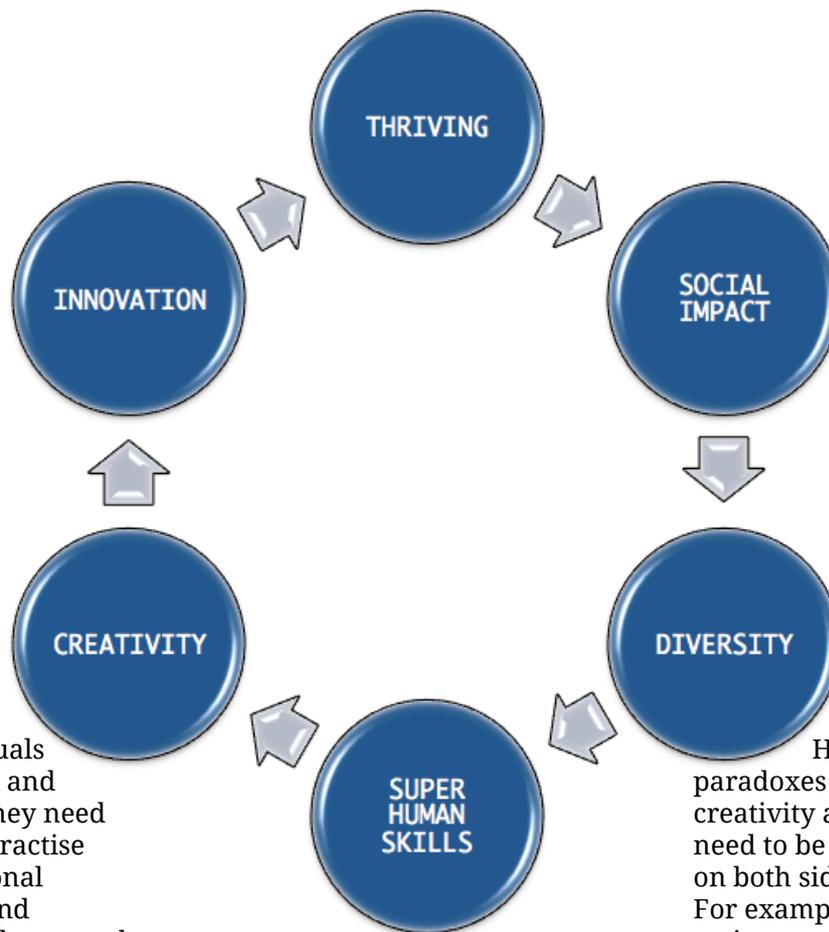
Coaching is the future of leadership
development.

Jessica SYMES

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The Symes Group

Transformation Strategy Model



In order for individuals to survive in today's and tomorrow's world they need to learn, hone and practise the skills of exceptional human behaviour and creativity and to embrace and champion diversity.

And as my thoughts started to come together about the future, a possible utopia, and the technology race, I realised something:

Leadership training as it was traditionally known was dead. One-day leadership workshops would not even make a dent in creating the superhuman workforce I believe is essential for business survival.

This was a tricky moment. I had spent 10 years building a leadership consultancy. I had travelled all over the world delivering sessions and keynotes under the framework of leadership training. I had more than 200 program booklets sitting in my office that said that's what we did we did. I had two books yet to write on the topic. And in one moment it hit me. Leadership training was over.

I knew that the way forward was through two mediums:

- Individual evidence-based coaching interventions
 - Immersive experiences for the practice of newly developed skills
- So in one swoop in March this year I closed North Shore Drama, moved out of our commercial premises to leave space for whatever it was that was coming, redesigned the website, dropped the old copy, threw out the sales booklets sitting in my lounge room and took a deep breath. I like to move fast.

Of course it is obvious now. Coaching is the way of the future. Daniel Goleman, who presented at the World Business Forum in Sydney this year, says the key skills required of a leader in today's workplace are those of a coach.

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, an expert in creativity and professor of psychology argues that the key traits of a creative leader are paradoxical.

He proposes 10 key paradoxes that are associated with creativity and that individuals need to be able to be comfortable on both sides of the paradox. For example humility and pride, serious and play.

It goes without saying that every individual will default more to one side of the paradox and will require coaching in flexing to the other side and in also valuing both sides too.

Coaching, when evidence based and delivered by a credible, qualified coach who allows for focused reflection, analysis and goal setting is the key to personal leadership development.

Individuals can then attend immersive cross industry events to hone and develop the skills required to reach their full potential.

This might be attending Symes Group's interactive empathy room, or our "brilliant ideas" brainstorming session at Cockatoo Island and so forth.

It's only fitting that the process of transformation that Symes Group has gone through in the past few months is what we are now supporting our clients through. 23-

Mindfulness: Precursor for change

The practice of mindfulness has its roots in Buddhist meditation but has now taken the business world by storm.

Barbara Harvey explains.

Silicon Valley has witnessed a mindfulness movement in recent years.

Symes Group are enormous supporters of the power of mindfulness – both in living a fulfilling life and as the foundation for positive culture change in organisations.

The art of mindfulness can prepare the new leaders of today to inspire, motivate and take care of their people.

At its heart is the concept of self responsibility – individuals take responsibility for their thoughts

and actions.

There are three ways Symes Group offers support to individuals and organisations in cultivating mindfulness.

The first is through focus, which requires the deliberate practice of meditation.

The second is self-awareness – through specific activities and the cognitive awareness of how we are communicating.

Finally, re-framing relates to questioning the perspective of situations – like practicing gratitude for something that might

have been taken for granted.

Studies have revealed the practice of active mindfulness is the foundation of an ethical work culture.

As we sail into uncharted waters regarding the impact of technology on privacy, security and social issues, strong ethical leadership will be essential.

Now more than ever organisations need to embed mindfulness practices into all modes of work.



Symes Group's

3 Steps to achieving Mindfulness



FOCUS

Deliberate Practice:

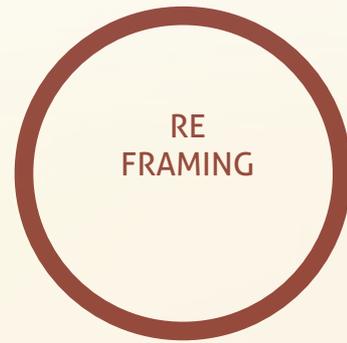
Meditation



SELF AWARENESS

Deliberate Practice:

Being present-senses



RE FRAMING

Deliberate Practice:

Perspective e.g gratitude

The Impact of Mindfulness on Organisations

Emotional Regulation

Ability To Observe

Adaptability

Reframing

Increased Optimism

Increased Empath

Ability

Stress

Focus

Perspective Taking

Reduction Increased

Resilience

Reduction In Personal

Confidence

Collaboration

Distress

Increased Curiosity

Agility In Complexity

Self Awareness



Mindfulness: Precursor for change Jessica Symes

60-minute interactive keynote

- Creating a collaborative and innovative culture
- Mindfulness practical activities
- Collective Mindfulness for organisational change



The social brain

Daniel Goleman is the world expert on emotional and social intelligence. Based on a lifetime of work, worldwide studies across different academic fields, he knows a thing or two about the subject. Barbara Harvey reflects on Daniel's presentation from the World Business Forum in June 2017.

The social brain refers to the way the brain responds when interacting with another human being.

When individuals are communicating verbally or non-verbally, the two brains send emotional signals back and forth. Edward Hallowell, world renowned psychologist and author of *Driven to Distraction* refers to this process as "the human moment" "an authentic psychological encounter that can happen only when two people share the same physical space." The human moment has two prerequisites: People's physical presence and their emotional and intellectual attention.

The concept of a social brain has huge implications in the leadership space.

It's always been known that how you say things is as important as what you say and that people's ability to understand the impact their words and actions have on others determines how successful they are as a communicator and influencer. Now there's neuro-

science behind it.

Daniel Goleman argues that at a time when we are becoming more reliant on technology, removing ourselves from physical interactions by working remotely or at home, more than ever we need to understand the power of the social brain. And as we move into a world where automation will usurp many jobs, human skills such as empathy will be the most important to have in the modern human world.

So where to start? Goleman presents that in order for social communication to flourish, each individual in the communication exchange must be at "full mutual attention." This means without distraction or judgment. And the key to producing this state of being is the art and practice of mindfulness.

Secondly, the key to developing full mutual attention is via empathy. Through empathy we understand, we connect and we feel and express concern. Thirdly as leaders the skills required to lead the modern

"When the social brain is flourishing in a team setting so workforce require enormous can creativity, fun, trust and ultimately productivity"

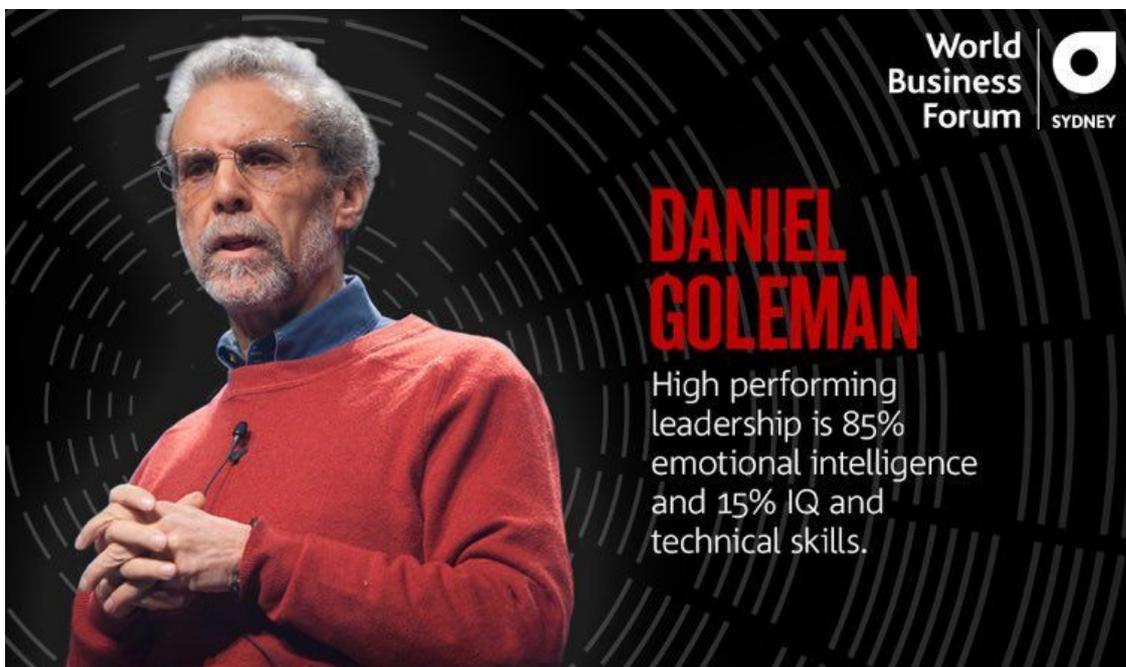
Daniel Goleman
Emotional intelligence expert

amounts of emotional and social intelligence and are not dissimilar to those of a coach.

Goleman says there are three keys to successful communication interactions for a leader.

- Accepting a person for who they are and seeing their potential
- Listening carefully to their needs
- Giving directives but allowing people to get on with things themselves

Goleman goes further to explain that when the social brain is flourishing in a team setting so can creativity, fun, trust and ultimately productivity.



Symes Group can help
improve individual and
team
emotional and social
intelligence...



The Emotional Competence Inventory
authored by Daniel Goleman is the
preferred Emotional Intelligence tool used
by Symes Group



Facet 5 is the preferred personality tool used
by Symes Group



The Keys to: Building Emotional Intelligence:

1. **MOTIVATION**- Do I really want to build it?
2. **SUPPORT**- Enlist a coach/peer
3. **ASSESSMENT**- Use a measurement tool
4. **LEARNING PLAN**- It requires a plan/strategy
5. **PRACTICE**- It is an active practice

"The act of compassion begins with full attention, just as rapport does. You have to really see the person. If you see the person, then naturally, empathy arises. If you tune into the other person, you feel with them. If empathy arises, and if that person is in dire need, then empathic concern can come."

--Daniel Goleman, PhD

Author of "Emotional Intelligence" and "Social Intelligence"



Mental toughness

Mental toughness is a key skill required in the workforce today. Symes Group encountered two incredibly inspiring women in our work recently who exude mental toughness, Majella Knobel and Lucy Schott. Barbara Harvey interviewed them both to find out more...



Majella Knobel is seriously tough. She joined friend and colleague Mike Ryan for the grueling 328km bike trail over three days starting in Panania to Bowral to Wollongong back to Sydney raising thousands of dollars for charity on the way.

Challenges ... accepted

Losing her eyesight at the age of 22, has not stopped Majella from – well – anything! Symes Group met Majella at Westpac in 2016 delivering Symes Group's signature program Presenting with Impact. It was a remarkable experience for us as Majella's perception and ability to engage with the audience was extraordinary. An intuitive, warm and ambitious woman, Majella talked to Barbara Harvey.

BH: Tell me about yourself.

MK: I grew up on a rural property, 30 minutes north of Albury. My childhood was great, living on the land. However my health wasn't. My teenage years saw me in and out of hospitals due to numerous autoimmune diseases, especially lupus which impacted on my kidneys. To boot, I am a type 1 diabetic, I have had a kidney transplant and I have had a heart attack (after which I was told I had two years to live) that was 16 years ago. Amidst all my health challenges at 22 I started to lose my eyesight, by 25 had completely lost all sight. I am an IT project/release manager

in the digital mobile space. In addition to my day role I get to work with numerous projects across business units for the Westpac Group about the importance of ensuring our products and services are more accessible for our customers.

BH: What do you like to do outside of work?

MK: As many of us know we spend lots of time inside at our desks or in meetings so when it comes to outside I want to get out and do stuff. Outside work my day includes visiting the gym five times a week, walking home from work two nights a week. Weekends include getting out and walking, cycling on my tandem catching up with friends, weekends away visiting family or heading a few hours out of Sydney just to get away from the busyness of Sydney.

BH: How important is physical fitness to you?

MK: Physical fitness is very important to me. Growing up on land in rural NSW, running around and riding horses on the

property was what our weekends were filled with. After leaving my parents' property in my mid 20s I moved to Melbourne to attend university. Exercise became even more important for not only physical and mental well-being but an escape from the stresses of essay writing and exam studying. I feel like my day is missing something if I don't exercise.



**RIDING TO
CURE
CANCER**

"We all experience situations in life which can either put a smile or frown on our faces and therefore for me mental toughness often gets me through some of these situations."

Majella Knobl



BH: Tell us about the bike charity ride you participated in lately?

MK: In March, I, together with my front rider, Mike Ryan and 99 of our colleagues had the amazing opportunity to do a Tour de Cure ride to raise funds for pioneering cancer research, support and prevention projects. We were each placed in pelotons depending on experience and fitness. Our peloton rode 328km over three days starting in Panania to Bowral to Wollongong back to Sydney. What an awesome experience and to do it on a tandem (well that was not only awesome but extremely tough). It is interesting as many people think if there are two riders it is much easier. This might be true riding down hills outside a peloton but not so when you are riding up hills with a gradient of 12per cent and the hills go for ages. I had numerous people ask what was the highlight of the ride and it was completing day one – wet weather most of the day (rain and more rain) 1600m of climbing and 117km of riding. I had never ridden in such weather, climbed so high and

ridden so far in one day. There were times when I was questioning myself as to why I was doing this. It was about my family and friends who have suffered with cancer or looking after someone going through treatment.

BH: What role does mental toughness play in your day to day life?

MK: Every day my mental toughness is challenged. Once I step outside my front door I have to not only be focused on what I am doing, what is going on around me but also the conversations I have or comments thrown my way. We all experience situations in life which can either put a smile or frown on our faces and therefore for me mental toughness often gets me through some of these situations.

BH: Majella, what does mental toughness mean to you?

MK: Living life. Mental toughness is embedded in nearly everything I do. For me mental toughness is pulling on my resilience and therefore confidence to be successful in all aspects of my life

including my career, physical activity and life in general.

BH: Majella how do you stay mentally tough when completing a sporting challenge?

MK: Focusing on the end goal and the feelings of accomplishment and achievement once you cross the finish line or complete an event. There is not much that beats those feelings. During an event you may want to quit or keep asking yourself "why am I doing this?" – but at the end of the day the majority of us don't want to fail in anything we do, including sporting challenges.

And for me, I am never doing a sporting event solo – every event I have a guide who has given up their time to do the event with me, so there is no way I am going to quit.

**Majella and Mark
have raised
15000
for Tour De Cure**

Symes Group met Lucy Schott at the She Leads International Women's Day event this year. Her tenacity, compassion and intellect were so impressive that we weren't surprised to discover that outside of work she spends her time saving lives as a vice captain of patrols at North Bondi Surf Life Saving Club and as a crew member of the rescue boat team. Lucy gave us her insights on mental toughness.

BH: Tell me about your career journey.

LS: My career has taken me from a small rural primary school in Thailand, a public school in Sydney, training groups of teachers in the Department of Education, working as an eLearning developer at Macquarie University to my current role as an organisational capability specialist at Domain Group.

I coordinate the national onboarding program – ensuring that new starters have a positive experience within their first six months with us. I also design online learning materials to help support our sales teams develop their product knowledge at a time and place that suits them.

BH: What drew you to surf life saving and what does it involve?

LS: I became a surf lifesaver three years ago to conquer my fears. I was afraid of the ocean and waves, having almost drowned as a child in the surf. Another reason was to learn how to conduct CPR. Someone in my immediate family died and was not given CPR effectively, for which I was a witness.

This memory has always stayed in my mind and I wanted to learn what to do in case I ever had to do this again. Now that I have conquered my fears and run towards big waves rather than away from them, being a surf lifesaver is one of the most rewarding experiences I have ever had. I am honoured to be able to contribute and serve society.

Now I teach others how to do CPR and give first aid. I am now a vice captain of two patrols at North Bondi Surf Life Saving Club. Last year, my patrol won the National Rescue of the month, having rescued a group of approximately 15 swimmers in rough conditions. For this we were awarded the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia Personal Sigil Medal.

Continued next page

Contributing to society 'an honour'



"Now that I have conquered my fears and run towards big waves rather than away from them, being a surf lifesaver is one of the most rewarding experiences I have ever had"

Lucy Schott



Above: Lucy in action on the water
 Right: Lucy's patrol was awarded the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia Personal Sigil Medal in 2016.

BH: How does your work in surf lifesaving impact on your day job at Domain?

LS: I have always valued working towards a higher purpose, helping to support people. Being a lifesaver gives me confidence in who I am and my values and I would like to think that this translates at work. I enjoy helping others around the office, in the same way that I do on the beach.

I like to be able to use my skills as a lifesaver at work, as a fire warden and first aid officer, two responsibilities which may seem trivial for some but I take seriously. I think being a lifesaver also helps you remain calm during stressful work situations and maintain perspective on the bigger picture of things.

BH: What does mental toughness mean to you?

LS: Mental toughness for me is all about resilience and self confidence. It is about knowing who you are in the face of adversity and being able to challenge yourself and others to step up and do what is necessary to complete the task and beat the odds. But it's also important to consider that mental toughness is not just about fighting and resisting, but remaining calm, balanced and being a positive example to others in the face of challenging situations.

BH: What advice do you have for individuals in challenging situations?

LS: Life is all about perspective. Challenging situations occur on a daily basis whether that be missing the bus, having a difficult conversation at work or a fight with your partner. But it is all about the way you view the situation. I believe everything happens for a reason and any challenging situation is here for us to learn something. This is something I always try to remember. It is also important to remember who you are and what you believe in.

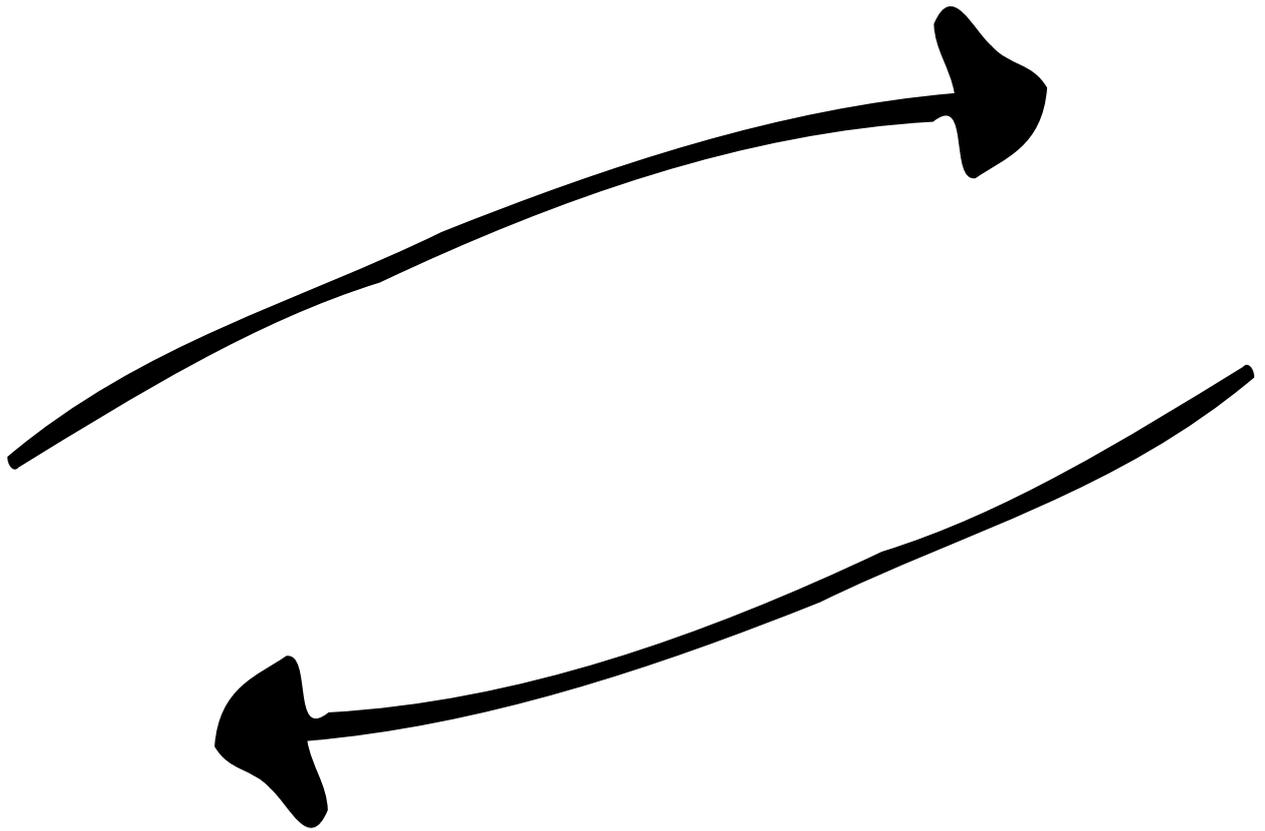
"You might have more talent than me,
you might be smarter than me,
but if we get on a treadmill together,
there are two things.
You're getting off first or, I'm going to
die. It's really that simple."

Will Smith

Try the Symes Group organisational
Mental Toughness Challenge:
Where mental moughness is:

Measured
Developed
Learned

SYMES  **GROUP**
CREATIVE INNOVATION



The switch

Trying to figure out what you want to be when you grow up can be challenging enough, but what happens when you realise it's not forever? That you want to try something else? Barbara Harvey talks to two women who have switched careers and are loving the results.



Danielle Fryday shares with us how she found her “why.” Symes Group have known Danielle for many years through her work in learning and development. It's been captivating observing Danielle shift animal conservation from a hobby to her career focus. Danielle told us about that shift and her path to get there.

BH: Where did your career start? And how did you get into that field of work?

DF: I started as a graduate in a recruitment firm after completing a bachelor of business administration degree, majoring in HR and psychology. I was aiming to move into an HR generalist role, however the training we undertook sparked my interest in the learning and development (L&D) space, and I decided that I wanted to become an L&D professional to enable and support the development of others.

BH: What is your role and why are you planning a switch?

DF: I am currently an L&D manager in a global law firm, having now worked in corporate L&D for more than nine years. It has been a very fulfilling career, and I have been fortunate to work part-time for some of those years to volunteer my time to support animal conservation organisations – a cause very close to my heart. Over the last five years, my passion for animal conservation has continued to strengthen, and I have reached the point where I want to make it my full-time career, not just my volunteer role on the side.

BH: Does this new role/industry

give you more purpose and if so why?

DF: I believe moving into the not-for-profit sector and working to support a cause that means so much to me will absolutely give me more purpose.

I really feel that uncovering my strong passion for animal conservation has helped me realise my “why”, and I feel so strongly in my heart that this is my way to leave the world in a better state than I found it in for future generations.

BH: How did you go about making the switch?

DF: I am at the start of my transition, but am very excited about where it will take me. I am currently undertaking a graduate certificate in conservation biology to strengthen my knowledge of the sector, and am seeking job opportunities in relevant organisations where I can bring my skills and experience in project management, stakeholder management, communication, presentation and facilitating skills to be of value in the animal conservation sector. I'm also working on building my network with established conservation professionals.

Danielle's advice for making the switch

If you feel it in your heart, go for it!

If you know deep down that it's the right move for you, be brave, follow your heart, embrace the journey and be open to wherever it may lead.





It's not often you get to meet an Olympian, so when we met Monique Heinke when Jessica Symes was delivering her keynote, Exam preparation: The sprint and the marathon, we were intrigued. Two tough fields, an elite sport and medicine. How does Monique do it and what advice does she have for Symes Report readers?

BH: How did you get involved in rowing and where did that take you?

MH: I started rowing in my final year of my undergraduate science degree. A friend suggested I should try rowing as I am tall (1.9m), so decided to give it a go before leaving university. Initially I rowed at club level, aspiring to race at the National Championships. As I continued to improve and got faster, my goals changed and I set my sights on being selected for the Australian Rowing team to race at the world championships and

eventually the Olympic Games. I made my first national team in 1999 and competed at the Sydney and Athens Olympics in 2004 in the women's quad sculls and eight respectively.

BH: When did you decide to switch to medicine and why?

MH: By 2004, I had decided I would retire from rowing. There were a number of reasons: I was getting older and wasn't sure I wanted to keep competing at that level for another four years; I was married and being away from home three or more months each

year was tough; and I felt it was time to move on and develop new skills and knowledge. In addition, I knew I needed to do something to focus my attention and energies on once I'd retired from rowing. I had become interested in medicine during my science degree when I had studied some medical subjects and found them very interesting. So I sat GAMSAT (entrance test for postgraduate medicine) in the lead-up to selection trials for the Athens Olympics, and gained a place at Sydney University.

Monique's advice for making the switch



- *Work out where you want to be in one, five and 10 years.*
- *Gather as much information as possible about the new field.*
- *Talk to people working in the new area or who have made the switch.*
- *Find out what steps you need to do to achieve the switch – for example more study, courses or experience.*
- *Enjoy the process. It will be tough at times, but remember the bigger goal.*

BH: What was involved in making that switch?

MH: I talked to friends and colleagues from previous workplaces about switching to medicine, including studying and working in medicine, being a mature aged student/junior doctor and working in medicine as a mum (I'd had my first child by the time I started my medical degree). The application process involved an exam as well as an interview. This was followed by four years of studying at university, then two to three years of work as a junior doctor.

The study and learning continues. I am now a fourth-year registrar in radiation oncology at Liverpool Hospital and will be sitting more (and my final) exams in 2018.

BH: Does this new role/industry give you more purpose and if so why?

MH: My new path gives me a different purpose. Rowing was very much goal driven for myself and my crew. Working as a doctor,

is less about my goals and achievements (although these are still important to get through the rigorous training program), but is more about providing the best care for my patients.

I try to think of my patients each as a whole person, taking into account their individual circumstances in order to give the best care for them. In addition, there are many skills I developed as a rower that are applicable to working as a doctor – teamwork, dedication, and communication to name but a few.

BH: Why oncology?

MH: I am currently training to be a radiation oncologist. I became interested in this specialty during my resident year and contacted a number of the departments in Sydney and met with radiation oncologists and spent time in clinics.

The radiation oncologists I met were inspiring people with an interest in clinical practice as well as teaching and research to

improve patient care and outcomes. Radiation oncology is a great mix of clinical work, technology and opportunities for research. Oncology is a challenging specialty, but being able to help people and their families through such a trying time is rewarding.

"There are many skills I developed as a rower that are applicable to working as a doctor – teamwork, dedication, and communication."

Monique Heinke

Exam Preparation: The Sprint and The Marathon

With Jessica Symes

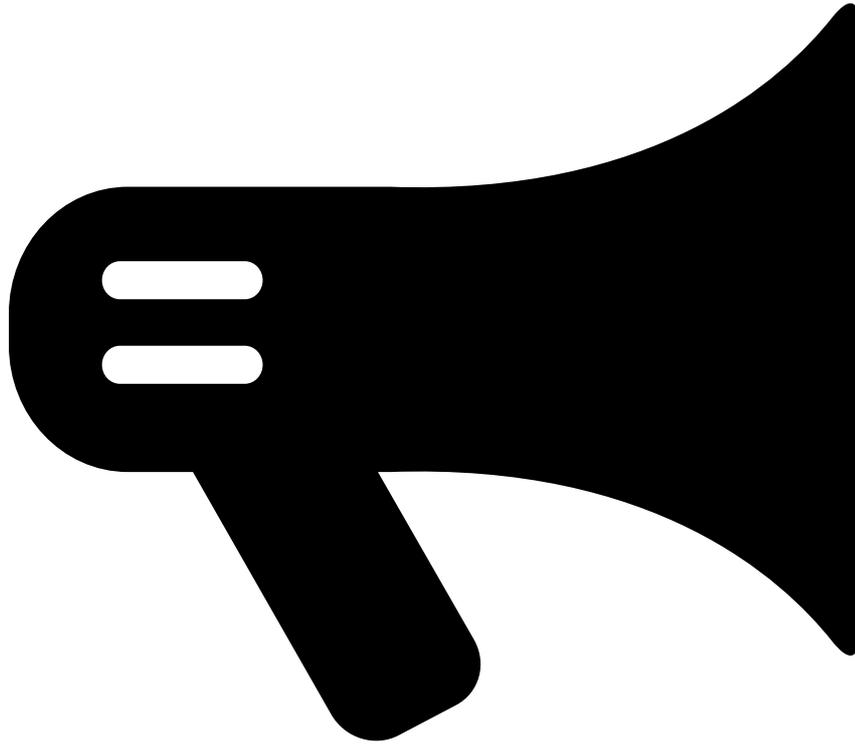
60 minute Keynote

Science of Stress

Mental Toughness

Your Action Plan: Case Study

SYMES  **GROUP**
CREATIVE INNOVATION



Presenting with purpose

Being authentic is the cornerstone for the Symes Group teaching philosophy in order to help individuals develop and leverage their unique speaking style. Westpac's Anthony Johnson and Symes Group's Pearl Tan have both had some big moments recently that called for all their knowledge and skills around presenting.

Perfecting the half-time pep talk

Anthony Johnson was selected as one of Westpac GroupTech's Future Young Leaders of 2016. Symes Group met Anthony during a Presenting with Impact course at Westpac. Barbara Harvey finds out more about how his on-field passion impacts his work and the role of Presenting with Impact in perfecting his pre-game speech.

BH: Describe your experience as an attendee of Symes Group's Presenting with Impact?

AJ: Presenting with Impact helped to positively reinforce my methods of communication. Presenting with Impact challenged us with important questions on what we stood for, how others would describe us, and who we are when others aren't watching. I feel that presenting with authenticity is one of the most important (and sometimes hard to find!) elements to successful audience engagement.

BH: Did you find the tools/ techniques useful and have you used them since?

AJ: Presenting with Impact's topics were relevant not only to my work, but also my extracurricular interests. Activities around speaking dynamics, advice on managing nerves, and understanding audience types all have helped me in professional and personal situations over the past year.

BH: Describe your interest outside of work?

AJ: I currently play Australian rules football at North Shore in the Sydney AFL competition. I regularly play at full back in our reserves and have been part of the side's leadership group for the past couple of years.

BH: Why are you involved with this activity?

AJ: Playing any team sport is a great way to stay healthy and active, meet others, and socialise. I have enjoyed becoming part of the community at North Shore. Additionally, I grew up in the US and did not have the opportunity to play this sport when going through school. I have appreciated the chance to play the game and the challenge associated with learning new skills and styles of game-play.

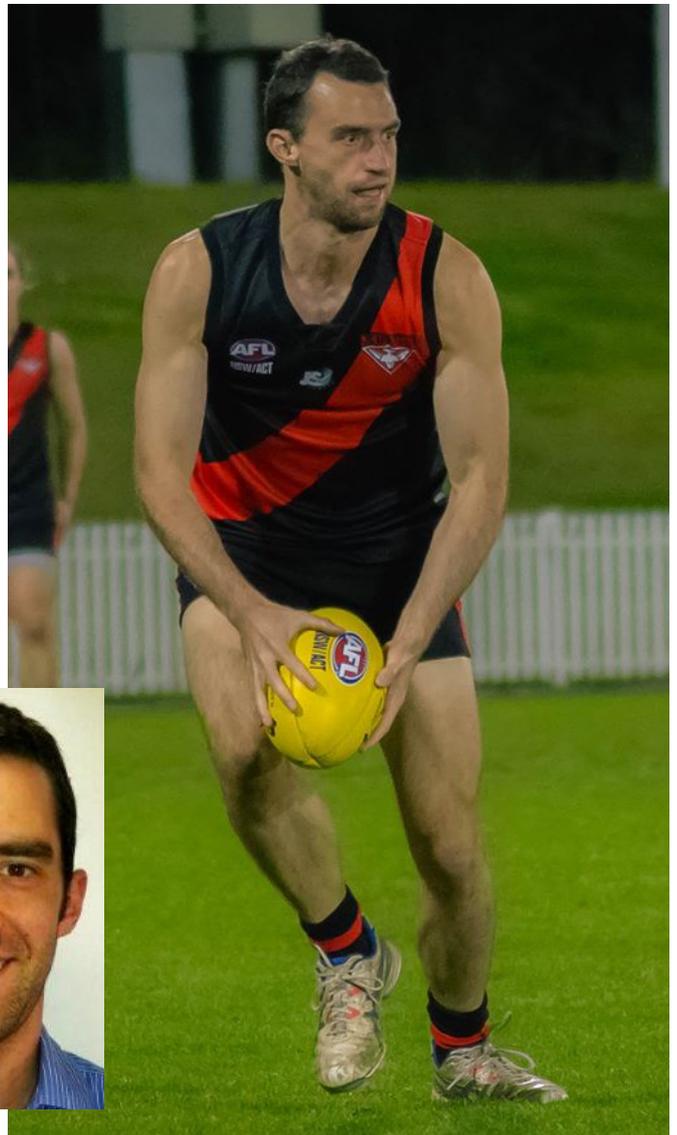
BH: What is your involvement in this pursuit?

AJ: Our reserves side is one of seven at the club. We're based out of Gore Hill Oval, St Leonards (in front of Royal North Shore Hospital). We train twice a week and play on the weekend. As with any club (especially one of our size) there's plenty to do off-field as well, such as helping out on game days or getting involved in the many social events. It is sometimes my responsibility to

give pre-game speeches as part of my role in the team's leadership group, and thankfully they have been well received. I like to believe my emphasis on authenticity (supported by the Presenting with Impact course) has helped with this.

BH: Does it enrich your work?

AJ: I certainly believe so. It's a reminder that the most rewarding feelings come from attacking that which is the most challenging. Winning easily is good, but the sense of accomplishment from winning a hard fought, close game against a strong opponent is exponentially better. The same perspective applies at work – a lot of things which are really worth doing are also the most challenging. With football being a team sport, it's also a great opportunity to put some of those communication and influencing skills to use in a fresh environment.



BH: How did you prepare for the talk?

PT: I rehearsed a fair bit. My voice teacher in drama school, Betty Williams, always drummed into us – learn the thoughts not the words. I found this helpful. I learned the structure of the piece then finessed over time.

BH: How did you feel in the lead-up? How did you manage the nerves?

PT: I was so nervous. I've never been that nervous before. In the weeks leading up to the talk, every time it would cross my mind I would get a nervous pang. On the day, I used tricks I had learned at drama school to warm up my voice and my body and shake out the nerves, literally. When I stood on stage, I took a moment to take a breath before launching into it, but I was so nervous I got lost a couple of times, but no one would know this but me – and now anyone reading this!

BH: How did you feel you went?

PT: I think it went well. I had an overwhelmingly positive response to the talk. When I sat down after finishing the presentation, I started rattling off in my head all of the things I could have done better. However, I soon realised that everything I thought I missed was not actually missed at all, and that the audience received my messages loud and clear. One of the things that worked was getting advice from my colleague and fellow Presenting with Impact facilitator Barbara Harvey at Symes Group. Barbara encouraged me to be more theatrical and turn it into a performance. This helped to unlock me into a more comfortable and authentic space .

Leveraging what I'm comfortable with – performing – allowed me to cut through and engage the audience.

BH: What advice would you have for others delivering a high stakes talk?

PT: Know the material through and through, to the point that it's almost impossible to get lost.

Find a way to do it in your style and know your natural habits when you get nervous so that you can counteract them. I race ahead and speak extraordinarily quickly when I'm nervous, but knowing this allows me to take my time – and it ends up being still at quite a pace, but one the audience can keep up with. Lastly, practice, practice, practice.

44

When the stakes are high – be prepared

Pearl Tan is an actor, director, producer, writer and one of the lead facilitators of Symes Group's signature programs Presenting Authentically with Impact. Recently she was asked to present Diversity Reimagined at Ted X. She talked to Barabara Harvey about what she learned.



Pearl's top five presenting tips

- **Welcome your nerves as a friend who is there to help you shine**
- **Find a way to expel nervous energy that is comfortable/natural**
- **Don't forget to breathe**
- **When preparing, learn the thoughts, not the words**
- **When preparing, focus on what your audience needs**

Wonder women



"We are now at an age where women are in a better position than ever in terms of gender equality, leadership and opportunity. Of course there is still inequality and there's still much work to be done, but we have come along way. So the future I envisage is one where women are thriving, have choices, and are championed."

Jessica Symes



Pictures from recent Symes Group women's events.

The power of social impact

Professor Ian Williamson is a man of principal and action. As the Professor of Leadership and Director of the Asia Pacific Social Impact Centre at Melbourne Business School, he has focused on issues like indigenous economic development, creating pathways for mental health issues, investment instruments to financially support social impact initiatives, the evolution of CSR and the creation of new social enterprises. Ian spoke at this year's World Business Forum in Sydney and Barbara Harvey asked him for his insights into innovation, diversity and working across global teams.



Dr Ian Williamson reveals the landscape of the future

“Diversity and innovation go hand in hand.”

Ian Williamson



What are you passionate about in your work at the moment?

My passion centers on developing innovative solutions to intractable social issues.

For the last eight years I have served as the director of the Asia Pacific Social Impact Centre at the Melbourne Business School. The centre was founded to position the business school as a vehicle to solve intractable social issues by conducting world-class research that forms the basis for innovative community interventions.

In your opinion what is the value of diversity to organisations?

Diversity and innovation go hand in hand. In particular, organisations seeking radical innovation must develop a strategy for attracting, retaining and developing diverse workforces.

What advice do you have for managers and teams working across different countries?

In order to have an effective multinational workforce, organisations must be willing to create practices that tailor to employee's needs.

For example, in a recent research article my co-authors and I examined the impact of work-life support practices on employees' delivery of effective customer service across a sample of companies operating across 27 countries.

We found that the impact of work-life support practices was greater in those countries with a strong gender egalitarianism culture, such as you find in many Scandinavian cultures. However, the impact of work-life support practices was limited in countries with a low gender egalitarian norm, such as in many Gulf countries. The point is that one size does not fit all and organisations must take the time to learn what types of practices fit

local norms and also be willing to incur the costs associated with tailoring their human resource practices across different regions.

What do you think the role of creativity is in leadership?

Creativity is a key first step in the innovation process. However, more important than leaders being creative is leaders creating an environment that supports the trial and error process required for creativity to occur within their workforce. Leaders should encourage employees to generate multiple options to problems, create a process for employees to play devil's advocate about ideas presented to the group and institutionalise a process of reflection among employees. These are all actions that stimulate and support creative behaviour.

"If you can do more things for more people, you create more value."

Ian Williamson

*Professor of leadership at the
Melbourne Business School*



WOB

World
Business
Forum |  SYDNEY

Professor Ian Williamson has spent the past 10 years studying innovation in organisations. Based on this research he believes there are three key human capital issues organisations must address to have a thriving innovation culture.

• DIVERSITY

First, the firm must create an environment that supports diversity. We know that a big driver of innovation is the accumulation of diverse expertise and experiences. This allows organisations to consider issues from multiple perspectives and provides a wider range of resources to act on insights.

• SOCIAL CAPITAL

Second, firms must manage the social capital in their organisations. By this I mean firms should spend time thinking about the pattern of interactions that occur within and outside the firm. Our research shows that the social networks of a firm's employees play an important role in shaping new ideas and harnessing these ideas for new services, products and processes.

• FLEXIBILITY

Firms must then create an environment that supports flexibility. If an organisation wants innovation it must create an environment that encourages and supports employees behaving in different ways. Flexibility in how people work, when they work, and how they decide on which work to do is critical.

In Professor Williamson's presentation at the World Business Forum 2017 in Sydney, he made a compelling case for diversity as a key business strategy. Professor Williamson explained to the audience which was filled with senior leaders of the Australian business world that the following groups are under-utilised in the workforce.

- Migrants
- Older workers
- Indigenous people
- Young people
- People living with mental illness
- Women
- Individuals with disabilities

He argued that those organisations and industries which will provide a pathway for the under-represented to enter or re-enter the workforce will be the ones that will survive and thrive in the modern world.

And he challenged organisations to ask how they can serve and meet the needs of the community in which they reside if they don't reflect the diversity of that community.



"Organisational success at implementing competitive actions is shaped by 3 factors - awareness, motivation, capability."

Ian Williamson

Professor of leadership at the Melbourne Business School

WOBI

World
Business
Forum



"There are business opportunities and synergies to be exploited in better integrating social challenges at the core of innovation activities. Social challenges have a strong mobilising effect, which would allow gathering of competences and resources, beyond sectors and disciplines boundaries."

– Fostering Innovation to Address Social Challenges, OECD Innovation Strategy

Highlight for Symes Group

Professor Ian Williamson's presentation at the World Business Forum was the highlight of the conference for Symes Group. His views on staying relevant were radical but once he made his case they were remarkably logical. He said social challenges and having social impact was the key

to relevancy – that corporate social responsibility was no longer an add-on or even must-do element for organisations but was key. By answering society's toughest questions about social problems, the environment, health and community, organisations could determine

how they could best serve their community and forge their products/business/industry around that focus. Professor Williamson claimed that success would be determined by an organisation's willingness and ability to address social issues. challenges.

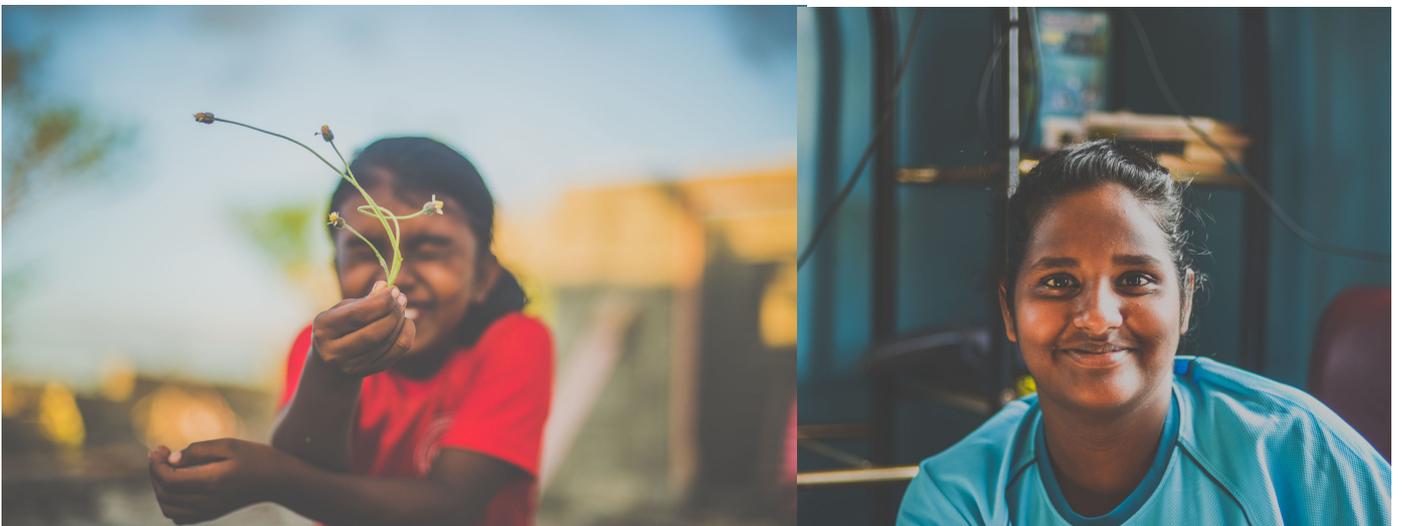


According to Professor Williamson, the two questions organisations should be asking are:

- What are the social issues faced by the community our organisation serves?
- What opportunities might be created if our organisation addressed those issues?

A girl and her world...

Educating girls is paramount to alleviating poverty in the developing worlds. A Girl & her world co-founder Jane Kennedy attended Symes Group's International Womens' Day event to speak about her journey, her work and quest to enlist more support. Symes Group is a supporter for a Girl & her world and is inspired by the women behind it. Barbara Harvey finds out how a small group of committed, talented and passionate women are playing their part in global social impact.







Jane Kennedy with Urmila

BH: How did a girl & her world begin?

JK: It started in response to the need of a friend who was trying to figure out how to get her teenage girl to high school five years ago. We talked about the barriers to girls getting to school and staying there in rural Fiji and what we could do to help overcome these barriers. Global research shows that educating girls unlocks all sorts of great outcomes and breaks poverty cycles. That's what pulls me into this work. It's not a handout. It can be transformative. We have seen girls finish school – the first females in their families ever to do so – many of them with outstanding grades that go on to win them scholarships to university. We also provide income-generating projects for the girls' mums, enabling them to become financially self-sufficient and in time, take back their daughters' education expenses with dignity.

BH: How do you manage the challenge of working across both countries?

JK: The answer is always local when working overseas. We are continually guided by our coordinator, Urmila, and her knowledge and experience of the local context and the right ways to proceed. We raise the funds and write the policies and procedures

(two of us work in the international development field) and create a supportive community and raise awareness. Urmila and the local team do the real work. We don't come with a set of assumptions or with our capes and trumpets hoping to save the day. Local people always know the solutions to their own problems and inevitably outside solutions can mess things up. We have ideas and we know Fiji and how other organisations work there, but we have learned to listen and learn and respond.

BH: What have been the highlights so far for the organisation? And what have been some of the harder moments?

JK: The highlights for us are always the stories of change at the grass roots but also the willingness and generosity of people at home in supporting the work. We were blown away by the way people gave after the cyclone this year. Our community in Fiji was significantly affected and many still remain without adequate housing. Many were badly injured.

We have been able to rebuild Urmila's home and support other families to get back on their feet. In the days that followed the cyclone when help had not yet reached them, we were able to send money to people a few

hours away who purchased food, water, medicines, first aid supplies and torches for some of the families we work with who were sheltering in evacuation centres.

We were also able to mobilise volunteers to go and assess our families quickly and even attracted a gorgeous English photographer who was travelling in New Zealand, she traveled over and captured some beautiful images. These connections are always very humbling.

We had our hearts in our throats for days after the cyclone not knowing how people were, this was a distressing time and brought home that our Fiji community is home for us on so many levels, we are family now.





"We don't come with a set of assumptions or with our capes and trumpets hoping to save the day. Local people always know the solutions to their own problems"

**Jane Kennedy
Co-Founder,
a Girl & her world**



A Girl & her world co-Founder Jane Kennedy with Symes Group CEO/founder Jessica Symes

BH: What keeps you motivated and committed?

JK: The stories of change. The women and girls who show us their resilience against breathtaking odds. The joy and gratitude that comes from the families. The grit and commitment and determination of Urmila and her super supportive family who have been through so much this year. None of this would be possible without them.

BH: How can people support a Girl and her world?

JK: Get to know us and see what resonates! Some people are generous monthly givers, others support us at Christmas time, others offer skills, talent and time, others like Rotary invite us to speak and sell raffle tickets for us. School students do presentations on educating girls and then hold cake stalls. We always ask people how they would most enjoy getting involved as that's what always brings the best out of them and serves both our Fiji community and our supporters.

a Girl & her world needs corporate support, expertise, marketing, funds, logistics ... you name it. Please contact Symes Group or a Girl & her world to find out more

Right on target

**Are they working? Are they necessary?
Symes Group weighs in on the argument around gender targets.
by Barbara Harvey**



Worldwide, women stand to lose more jobs via automation than men, according to a recent study by the World Economic Forum (The Future of Jobs Employment, Skills and Workforce Strategy for the Fourth Industrial Revolution study).

The industries and roles with the largest representation of women – office and administrative roles, manufacturing and production – will be the hardest hit.

For every 4 million jobs lost by men, 1.4 million will be gained, however women will face 3 million job losses but only 0.55 million gains.

That's a displacement rate of more than five jobs lost per one job gained.

More than ever the notion of keeping women in the workforce and supporting women in leadership objectives is a hot topic.

But it's no longer a feel-good or compliance issue.

It is now common knowledge that diversity is key to innovation, to ensuring organisations are future ready – and women are an essential piece of the diversity pie.

Yet despite this, studies are revealing that Australian organisations are suffering gender fatigue and are arguing that the statistics of women in leadership are not changing as significantly as expected, despite the investment.

A report by accounting firm KPMG shows that the area where there is least movement of women in leadership is in the step from middle management to senior/executive management.

In our experience at Symes Group this is often due to the restrictions of work on offer at that level.

Women who are highly skilled and educated with executive leadership capability are being offered the opportunities but not taking them.

Symes Group anecdotal evidence collected from hundreds of women in middle management suggests that for many women there is a perception that the step into an executive leadership role will have a negative impact on their wellbeing and out of work needs like care of children or elderly parents.

So where does that leave us?

According to the Future of Jobs survey, organisations confirm that the two greatest contributors to shifts in gender equality in leadership are

- Adjustments for work/life balance and
- Setting gender targets.

Key benefits of gender diversity

Companies with females on their boards have achieved higher revenue growth, profitability and shareholder returns than those without, the KPMG Enterprise's 2017 ASX 300+ Report revealed.

Appointing women to company boards helps avoid scandals, fraud and corruption, according to research conducted by MSCI Inc.

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Thoughts on gender targets



Ian Williamson, professor of leadership at the Melbourne Business School

In just about every aspect of business, organisations use goals and targets to drive outcomes. Early in my professional career I was told by my manager that “those things that get measured get done.”

I think the same is true when it comes to diversity.

It is natural for individuals to consistently gravitate towards people to whom they are similar. To change this behaviour almost always requires some form of overt goal.

I think the key is for organisations to provide a clear explanation for why they would have explicit targets so as to enhance the perceived fairness of the process. I also think transparency in the process is key.

Over time, as individuals' behaviours change (they use different recruitment sources, they develop more inclusive management practices, interpersonal comfort increases) it is likely that the targets will no longer be noticed because the organisation will develop a culture that supports diversity. However, like any other aspect of the organisation, monitoring diversity should remain part of an organisation's routines.



Sarah McCullough, Business Applications Manager, Pacific National

I know there is a lot of literature for and against gender targets – and whilst I know they are not the silver bullet to this complex problem I am supportive of the idea.

People who argue against gender targets cite that they destroy meritocracy – which I can also see.

On the proviso that targets are used in conjunction with other strategies for change which target the root cause of the issue, I can see the value in such targets.

Any mechanism that helps women into leadership roles is a positive one in my opinion – provided it's positioned correctly and everyone understands the “why”.

Additionally, it's critical that targets are not the only thing the organisation is doing to address the gender divide – they need to tackle the issue holistically with programs that target the fabric of the organisation.

In my opinion, having more women in key roles could only enrich our industry, bringing more diversity in thinking, differences in EQ and life experience.

I also am hopeful that as more women take on senior leadership roles and we work towards equality in the workplace, gender targets will become redundant.



**Kate Young
Graduate manager, GroupTech Westpac Group**

I think having targets for all forms of diversity is an excellent way to keep these conversations front of mind. I personally feel very fortunate to work for a company who are passionately committed to giving women great opportunities at all stages of their career and investing in them to get there. Achieving gender targets is a complex and slow-moving journey, but having them and discussing them openly is a lot more effective than just sweeping the issue under the rug.

“I think having targets for all forms of diversity is an excellent way to keep these conversations front of mind”

Kate Young



Jessica Symes, CEO/founder, Symes Group

We must accept that business in this country was built and set up by men at a time when women were not allowed to work or vote.

The legacy is still around us and not that much time has passed. Without addressing that, the legacy plays a part in unconscious bias, natural selection for recruitment, policies and procedures, paths to leadership and so on. And to say that legacy does not influence women's position in the workforce is ignorant. I am not at all saying that there aren't fantastically aware intelligent individuals in organisations. I am not saying that people are sexist or archaic. What I believe is that the legacy is too strong for individuals to overcome it yet without making clear deliberate choices towards gender equality.

"Women's low participation in the workforce and leadership roles is a business issue – costing women, companies and ultimately entire economies. More deliberate efforts will be needed by governments and businesses to ensure that the full talent pool of women is educated, recruited and promoted. The moral case for gender equality has, in the most part, been won. The business and economic case is also increasingly understood. The Fourth Industrial Revolution now presents an unprecedented opportunity to place women's equal participation in the workplace at the heart of preparations for the shifts to come."

Saadia Zahidi

Head of employment and gender initiatives, World Economic Forum executive committee member

**Symes Group helps organisations
set, meet and exceed gender targets**





Young leaders of today

Kate Young, manager of the graduate and intern programs at GroupTech Westpac is carving an impressive career for herself that shows great promise. On the way she supports and elevates young graduates joining the workforce, particularly young women.

By Barbara Harvey

"My journey to become a leader has been shaped by working with great leaders at all points of my career."

Kate Young
Manager, graduate and
intern programs



BH: Kate, how did you come across Symes Group?

KY: I first came across Symes Group as part of a program for Young Leaders that I am on at Westpac. Since then, I've had the opportunity to attend a number of sessions and workshops with Jess, Barbara and Pearl, and I really value how committed they are to helping women tap into all aspects of their own potential.

BH: What has been your leadership journey?

KY: My journey to become a leader has been shaped by working with great leaders at all points of my career. I've been fortunate enough to have worked alongside people I admire, respect and can learn from in all the roles I've had – good and bad.

I started my career in public relations and communications and when I was very junior. My leadership style was adapted from observing the qualities in my team's leaders that I admired. To this day, I still credit one of these people for teaching me everything I know! A few years later I made a career side-step into Westpac as an executive assistant. In this capacity I had the opportunity to support a number of senior people in the bank, which gave me an insight into leadership from an executive's view.

BH: What are you most proud of in your career?

KY: I started out in a career that I thought would suit me, but ended up being the completely wrong

industry for me! Going to work was mentally and emotionally challenging when I was doing something that didn't fit me – even though I had great colleagues and friends around me in these roles. Getting myself out of this situation and into a company and career I genuinely love was a pretty big milestone when I look back on it. My career just sort of took off from there – which I suppose is no coincidence when you are happy going to work.

I'm such a big advocate for changing things if they're not right for you; and that this is entirely possible with a little persistence.

BH: Where do you see yourself in five years?

KY: I'm not someone who typically career-plans, but when I joined Westpac I always had the goal of being here for at least 10 years in the back of my mind. Three years in and I've had four different roles so who knows where I will be in another five years.

I'm a very structured person in all other aspects of my life but when it comes to my career, I'm excited by the fact I have no idea what opportunities are going to open up.

BH: What are your interests or passions outside of work?

KY: I'm big into fitness, health and nutrition so I spend a lot of my spare time being active and eating. At the start of 2017 I committed to ticking off 50 of Sydney's best breakfast spots. I'm only 16-in so I have some catching up to do!

BH: What do you think are the biggest challenges for young female graduates entering the workforce for the first time?

KY: Often the biggest challenges for anyone starting out in their career is just getting a foot in the door. I know it hit me in the face a few times, but I do believe that the rejection has been just as important in my own journey as the successes I've had (admittedly I couldn't see it at the time). I've worked in environments that have been largely female, and also those which are male-centric, and each has its challenges. Finding confidence and understanding your own worth can be a struggle for young women, which is why it's so important to make use of the networks around you.

BH: What is your advice for graduates?

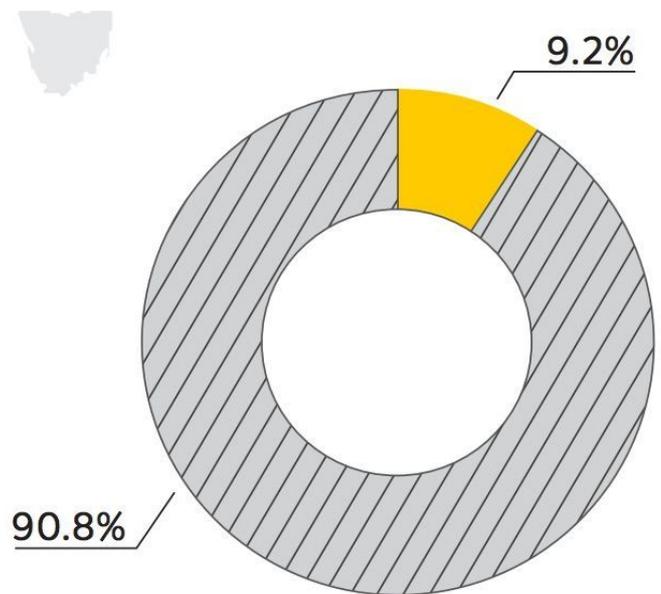
KY: I always tell my graduates that your brand is your number one asset. Being easy to work with will never fail you, and going outside the realms of your job responsibilities will pay dividends. I think it's also important to just let the process happen – we live in a world where we have access to everything we want immediately, but sometimes just letting time take care of things is the only way to go. Lastly, you don't have to be running a team of 100 to be a leader, even the most junior person in an organisation can create leadership opportunities for themselves.



Women in the c-suite

Studies have revealed that while emphasis has been on increased representation of women on boards in ASX companies, increased representation in c-suite roles have not. Sarah McCullough, aspiring chief information officer, wants to be part of a new statistic. Barbara Harvey finds out more

ASX 500 executive key management personnel by gender (%)



Source: <https://www.wgea.gov.au/lead/setting-gender-targets>

BH: How did your career in IT begin?

SM: I started my IT career as a side gig whilst teaching scuba diving in Sydney harbour. I really loved scuba diving but found the cold winter dives too much, so I got an office job temping in IT. Within a few months of hard work and building up relationships, I worked my way up to being the IT supervisor and shortly after that the IT manager.

In 2008 my partner and I decided to do the traditional Aussie thing and packed up our lives to hit London on a working holiday. I was lucky enough to snag a job at a small investment bank as their head of IT and worked for a great chief financial officer whilst there, who taught me that you don't need to be an extrovert to be a great leader.

BH: You were nominated for the Telstra Women's Business Awards businesswoman of the year, can you describe your leadership progression?

SM: Upon moving back to Newcastle I took up an IT role in Pacific National – which is a great Aussie company providing hundreds of jobs in regional areas. I have been lucky enough to progress quickly within PN, and its parent company Asciano, after doing a variety of roles including service delivery, program delivery, customer experience, innovation and now applications

management. I credit this in part to a stack of hard work, but also to great peers and a very supportive CIO who was open to adding diverse skills into IT and actively promoted women.

Lastly, in 2012 I finished my MBA in computing which gave me some great tools and taught me a lot about leadership.

BH: What are your career aspirations?

SM: In five years I hope to be in a fulfilling and challenging role that I love, ideally in a coastal or regional location.

I see the next step as a CIO role – and am actively working towards that with great determination! Being a CIO for me would mean I've broadened my IT experience and business acumen enough to be trusted with the top job – and I would see it as an honour to represent IT for an organisation.

BH: How unique is it to be a female CIO and why are there not many female CIOs?

SM: I don't come across many female IT CIOs, in fact I can name only a handful of them in our industry at the top.

I think this is partially due to the fact there are fewer females in C-suite roles but also because CIOs commonly originate from technical backgrounds such as engineering or infrastructure – of which fewer females choose or are encouraged to study.

Whilst programs like FITT are

doing fantastic work encouraging girls to study STEM programs, we still have some catching up to do. Another factor is that women may be less likely to put up their hand for roles.

I recently learned a great lesson when taking over the applications portfolio for the organisation I work for – just because I haven't done a similar role before or don't have the technical depth doesn't mean I can't take on a role, learn on the way and apply my other skills to be successful.

The other factor could be gender discrimination or similarity bias – with most CIOs normally being placed by the CEO, CFO or board, who are predominately male in most countries.

BH: What in your opinion will it take to change the balance of female leadership in IT?

SM: A few simple things could go a long way to turn the tide.

More women in junior IT roles would help the promotion of women to senior roles. Flexible working conditions that support family life would help – to make it easier to juggle any senior role with other commitments. These would help but probably the most powerful would be more senior leaders mentoring and encouraging and promoting women into senior roles, like my previous boss who is an active supporter of diversity and women.

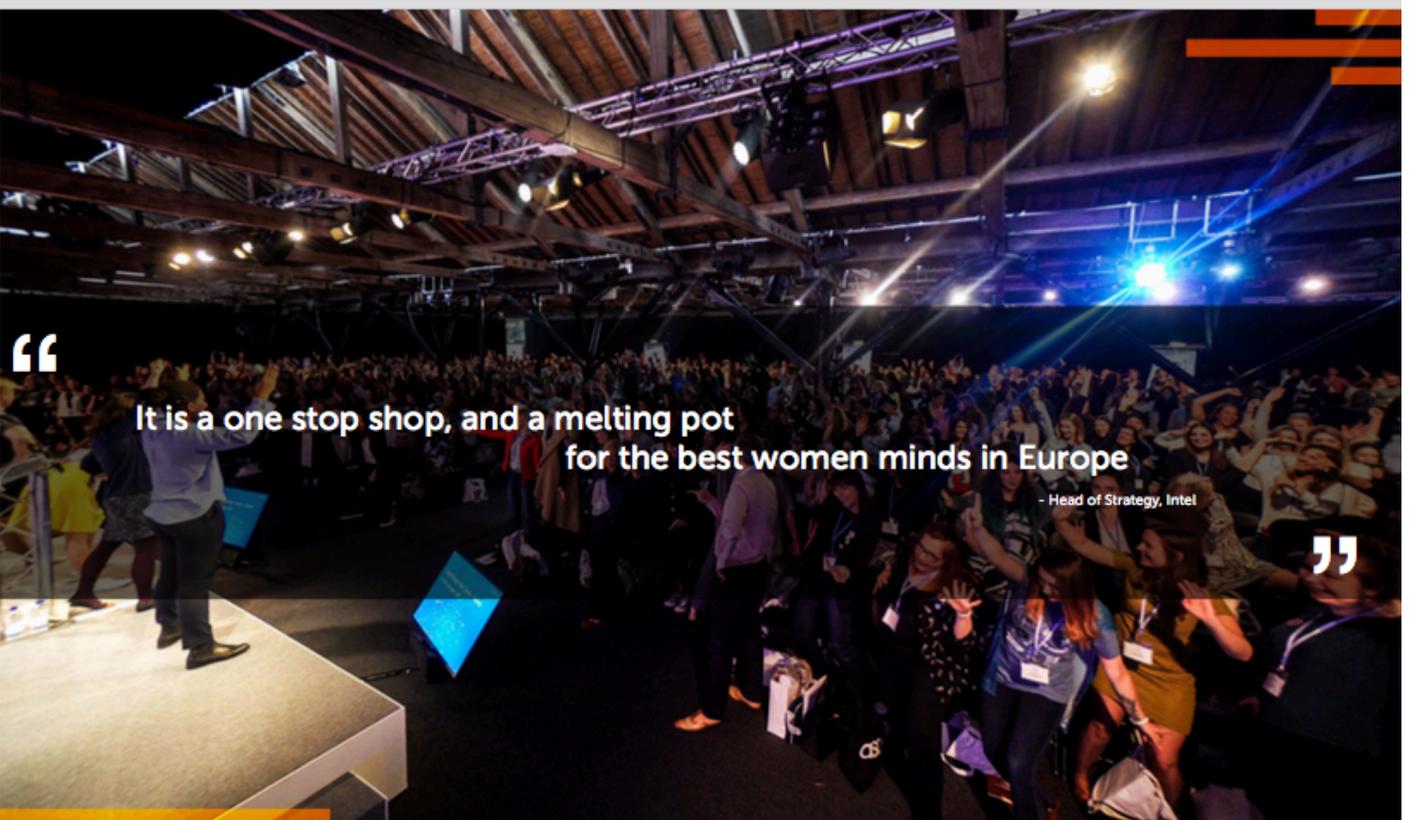


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for the best women minds in Europe

- Head of Strategy, Intel

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