

WHAT REALLY MATTERS
FOR YOUNG
PROFESSIONALS!

HOW TO MASTER 15 PRACTICES TO
ACCELERATE YOUR CAREER

GARY RYAN

What Really Matters For Young Professionals!

Copyright © 2010 Gary Ryan

Cover design by Turnbull Web & Graphic Design

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

The information, views, opinions and visuals expressed in this publication are solely those of the author(s) and do not reflect those of the publisher. The publisher disclaims any liabilities or responsibilities whatsoever for any damages, libel or liabilities arising directly or indirectly from the contents of this publication.

A copy of this publication can be found in the National Library of Australia.

ISBN: 978-1-921681-72-1 (pbk.)

Published by Book Pal

www.bookpal.com.au

“Wow! This book is jam packed with useful and practical strategies for young professionals wanting to take the next step up in their careers. In a time where young professionals are constantly asking for more mentoring and training, this book is the perfect do-it-yourself manual to improve your employability.”

**Alicia Curtis, professional speaker and creator of
www.ygenclub.com**

“What Really Matters for Young Professionals is a timely, easy to read and extremely practical book full of tips and strategies for young people. Gary Ryan has compiled a must-read blueprint for anyone under 30 who is looking to truly accelerate their career in this competitive age.”

**Michael McQueen, professional speaker and author of
*The ‘New’ Rules of Engagement***

“This book is the definitive tool for young professionals with loads of expert knowledge who need to quickly develop high-level employability skills. It can also be used by managers and HR professionals for induction of their graduate recruits, or young at heart professionals willing to adjust to the contemporary workplace. If you want to succeed in the 21st century as a high-performing individual I recommend you read this book.”

Renata Bernarde, Relationship Manager and Career Counselor

“Gary Ryan has written a book which caters for those of us who are lifelong learners and hungry for self improvement. Gary has a straightforward philosophy, intermingled with stories from his own life and theoretical underpinnings, that we are ultimately responsible to demonstrate leadership traits, irrespective of the positions we hold in our careers and with our families.”

Gavin Sharp, Organisational Psychologist

Practice No. 11: How To Effectively Communicate Important Messages

Who Should Read This Book?

Congratulations! If you are in the first ten years of your career then you already have an advantage over your career competitors because you are reading this book. You are just over 100 pages away from commencing a journey that *will* enhance your employability which, in turn, *will* increase the speed at which your career progresses. However, this book does come with a catch. The 15 practices shared within the following pages of this book are not just for reading. They are for *doing*.

Since 2002, I have been providing development services for Young Professionals. While technology and our world have changed over that time, a number of core concepts and practices have remained important for career advancement. This book collates 15 of the most important practices that you can use to enhance your employability over the first ten years of your career.

Think about what an increased speed of career advancement means for you. Think about the financial independence, the greater control over your time, the capacity to live more of the lifestyle that you desire. If you really want those things, then read this book *and* ‘practice’ this book.

Malcolm Gladwell, author of *Outliers*, has suggested that successful people have spent 10,000 hours of practice mastering their talents. The secret for these people is that they have sought out and found many, many opportunities to practice. They seek out ways to learn and develop. They don’t sit back and wait for opportunities to come to them. In fact, they *create* opportunities to practice, just like you can.

A *huge* benefit of this book is that each of the 15 practices include step by step instructions for you to quickly master them.

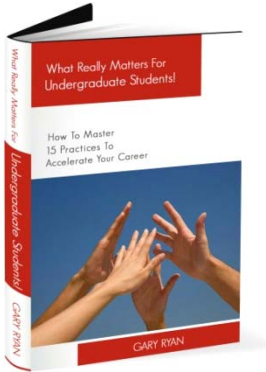
My intention is to help you to make the best of your early years in employment. This book, along with our Online Learning

programs, is one way to ensure that you leverage your development so that you create the career(s) that you desire. For information regarding our e-learning programs, please visit www.orgsthatmatter.com.

Each chapter is relatively short and contains explicit strategies and advice with regard to answering the question, "How do I...?". You can read the book from start to finish or 'jump' around from one chapter to another. If one chapter has an explicit relationship with another chapter, the other chapter is clearly identified for you.

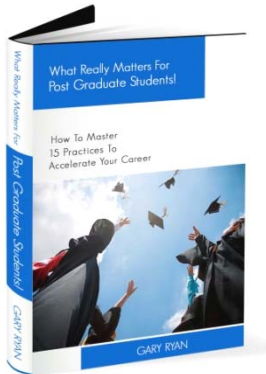
The sooner you start to adopt and practice the concepts outlined in this book, the sooner you will enhance your capacity to create the career that you desire. So, I encourage you to start now; don't delay your development for one second longer!

This book is part of a series of books that also includes:



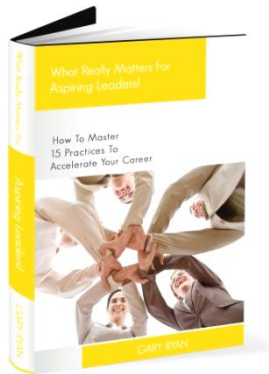
Coming soon

What Really Matters For Undergraduate Students! How to master 15 practices to accelerate your career



Coming soon

What Really Matters For Post-Graduate Students! How to master 15 practices to accelerate your career



Coming soon

What Really Matters for Aspiring Leaders! How to master 15 practices to accelerate your career

The Organisations That Matter Learning Network

The Organisations That Matter Learning Network contains all the information you need to accelerate your career, including access to a wide range of free and for purchase resources. Join The Organisations That Matter Learning Network now at www.otmllearningnetwork.com – it's free to join!

Thank You

Thank you for purchasing this book. I know that you will receive a lot of value from it.

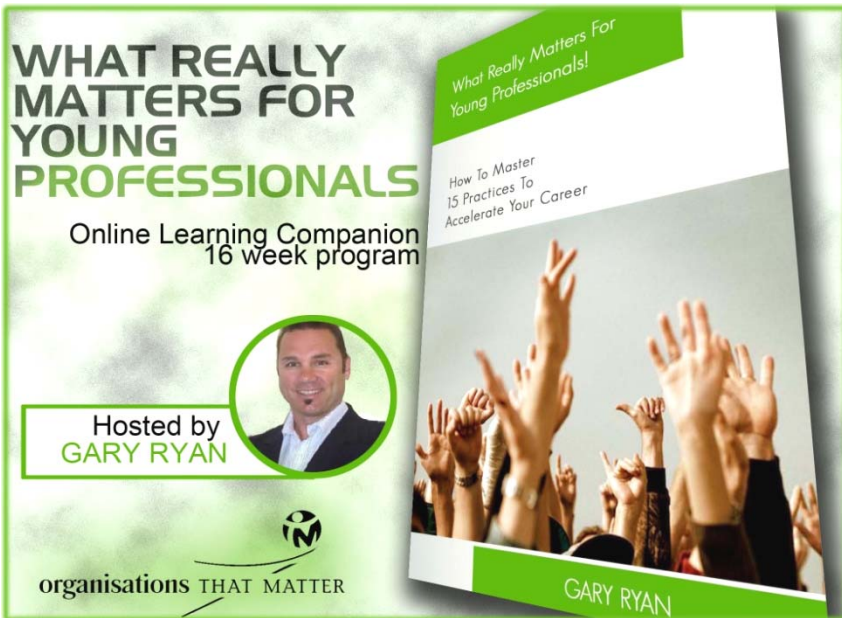
I am eager to hear from you regarding the benefits that you have received from practising this book, what you think could be improved and what strategies you believe were missing and should be included in the next edition.

Also, don't forget to check out our Online Learning Program at www.orgsthatmatter.com/online-courses - it is designed to help you to master the practices outlined in this book!

I can be contacted directly at gary@orgsthatmatter.com.

Enjoy!

Gary Ryan



Practice No. 11: How To Effectively Communicate Important Messages

What Really Matters for Young Professionals Checklist

Tick the box if the statement applies to you.

- I have recorded a current story for each of the ten core employability skills
- I have identified my core personal values and am clear about how I display them when at work
- I have clear examples of how I have used my organisation's values to guide my work
- I understand how my thinking affects what I see and how I behave at work
- I have a clear approach to leadership that I have adopted and use whenever opportunities arise
- I have an approach that I use to develop groundrules for the teams in which I work
- I treat my organisation's community spaces with respect at all times
- I understand 'Systems Thinking' and apply it in my role
- I understand how 'Structure Drives Behaviour' and have modified structures to create the behaviours that I desire
- I have a structured process that I use to slow myself down from 'jumping to conclusions'
- I know how to use multiple communication channels to communicate important messages effectively

Practice No. 11: How To Effectively Communicate Important Messages

- I have current mentors whose wisdom I regularly access
- I have a deliberate approach to service excellence that informs my work
- I understand 'Servant Leadership' and practice it every day
- I have a structured approach to my time management practices

Results

Add up your ticks. See below for your results.

Score	Interpretation
0 - 5	<p>At this point in time you have a low understanding of your employability skills. You are also unable to leverage your experience to ensure that you create opportunities for yourself.</p> <p>What to do now? Read this book and put into practice the <i>What to do now</i> sections at the end of each chapter. This will enable you to quickly enhance your understanding of employability skills and will enhance your capacity to accelerate your career.</p>
6 - 10	<p>At this point in time you have a moderate understanding of your employability skills. You have some capacity to leverage your experience, but you are not leveraging it to your full capacity.</p> <p>What to do now? Read this book starting with the chapters that address your employability skills gaps. Commence practicing the steps in the <i>What to do now</i> sections and you will quickly enhance your capacity to accelerate your career.</p>

11 - 15	<p>At this point in time you have a well developed understanding of your employability skills. You have a high level of capacity to leverage your experience and you are seeking to 'go to the next level' in your career.</p> <p>What to do now? Read this book focussing on the practices that you have not yet fully mastered. Commence practicing the steps in the <i>What to do now</i> sections and you will quickly enhance your capacity to accelerate your career.</p>
---------	---

Acknowledgements

This major project has taken just under eight months to complete. Like any project there are a number of very special people who have contributed to its creation, so I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge them.

Firstly my wife Michelle. Not only do you inspire me every day with your dedication to our children, but you also support me with your precious time and input. Thank you for the many nights when I requested that you stay awake that little bit longer so that you could read a chapter and provide me with feedback. Without any question this book would not exist if it weren't for your support, feedback and suggestions. I love you and it's nice to be able to have that phrase in print for you!

Next, my four children, Liam, Sienna, Callum and Aiden. As the pages of this book highlight, you catalyse my thinking and help me to make sense of this wonderful world in which we live. Thank you for being yourselves, unique as each of you are.

Thanks to the following people who gave freely of their time to provide the 'brutally honest' feedback that I requested on my draft manuscripts. It really was humbling to have you all choose to give some of your precious time so that you could help me to make this book a reality. Thank you. You are; Kathy Papafotiou, Tania Rann, David Ure, Frank Catalano, Kane Johnson, Allan Preiss, Cecilia Chan, Belinda Boo, Troy Simmonds, Lloyd England, Sean Brush, Jim Poussard and Gihan Perera.

A word of appreciation to the members of The Organisations That Matter Learning Network who provided feedback on the cover designs. Thank you.

Thank you to Debra Kruske regarding your idea for the cover designs and Aaron Turnbull from Turnbull Web & Graphic Design

who created the cover. Thanks to Sandra Kerr who provided the professional editing service for me (a huge task!).

Finally, a huge thank you to my business partner, Andrew O'Brien. Our journey together since 1994 has been amazing and my life has been enhanced through your guidance, example and friendship. Thanks too to Sue O'Brien who never ceases to amaze me with her energy, focus and capacity to achieve.

I am confident that the time and effort of everybody involved has enabled me to create a worthwhile product. I hope that you are as proud of your contribution as I am.

PRACTICE No. 12:

RECRUIT MENTORS

In this chapter you will learn about why mentors are important and how to find them.

This chapter addresses concepts and strategies that relate to the following employability skills:

- ✓ *Learning*
- ✓ *Self-management & personal vision*
- ✓ *Initiative & enterprise*

Irrespective of our age, having access to wisdom is extraordinarily important. Dee Hock, CEO Emeritus of VISA International, suggests that the ratio of information to wisdom has plummeted over recent decades. For the majority of human civilisation we organised ourselves into small communities where the 'wise people' were well known to everyone in the community and people had access to those wise people. In today's Information Age we have vastly more access to information, however, many of us do not have anywhere near the same access to wisdom to help us to navigate our way through the information that we have available to us.

Mentors can help to improve the information to wisdom ratio. They can be people who have a specific focus (such as career) through to a whole of life focus. Mentors challenge and ask lots of questions. It is not their role to 'give you the answer'. Rather, mentors listen and challenge you to understand what it is that you want. They enable you to truly discover your own answers.

While the majority of mentors will involve a personal relationship, you may also have some mentors who may not know you very well. Depending how you wish to define a mentor, your mentor may even come from a book. For example, Nelson Mandela's "A Long Walk to Freedom" has consistently provided me with inspiration and opportunities to reflect, especially when I

have had difficult times. I've read the book three times from cover to cover, and I expect I will read it many more times throughout my life. One of the most useful aspects of the book for me is that Nelson is brutally honest about the various mental models that he had at different stages of his development - and he was prepared to adopt new ones when he discovered that his mental models were no longer useful.

If it is okay for Nelson Mandela to change his mental models from time to time, then it must be okay for me to do it!

Mentors help you to access wisdom



Another aspect of mentoring that is often overlooked is the 'grandparent syndrome'. This is a phenomenon where people who are two or more generations older have an innate desire to share wisdom with younger people. In fact, grandparents often share wisdom with their grandchildren that they have not even shared with their own children.

The same phenomenon can occur in mentoring relationships. I share this with you because you may believe that some of the more experienced and wise people in your organisation may not wish to mentor you. My experience is quite the contrary. Our clients have often reported that when they have sought people to become mentors they have often had more mentors apply than they have mentees to provide to them. So, if you identify with older and wiser members of your organisation, approach them to mentor you. Most often you will be pleasantly surprised by their response.

Of course, mentors aren't just older people. There are many young people who are also wise. Also It is recommended that you do not restrict yourself to a single mentor. Having a couple of mentors at any one time is quite normal. Especially if they also include mentors of the style of Nelson Mandela as I have described above.

How to find mentors

Potential mentors are all around you. They may be relatives, friends, colleagues or more experienced people at work. You may know them socially through existing networks (professional, educational, sporting) or they may exist within your organisation. No matter how you go about finding your mentors, it is worth thinking about the characteristics that you are seeking. Here are a few questions to help you in your search.

1. What specific experience, if any, do I wish my mentor to possess?
2. How accessible do I wish my mentor to be? Is face to face necessary or is a virtual relationship possible?
3. What wisdom am I seeking?
4. Am I open to having more than one mentor? Maybe a mentor from your family (such as a grandparent or other family elder) may provide a different set of wisdom to a mentor provided through your organisation.

There are several ways to find mentors. These include (but are not limited to):

1. Check with your supervisor if your organisation has a formal mentoring program. If it does, find out how you can become involved in it.
2. Discover more about your extended family. Maybe someone within your own family already possesses the wisdom (or at least some of it) that you are seeking.
3. Consider your existing networks. Who do you know who might be a suitable mentor?

Once you have identified potential mentors the next step is to approach them. Many people will react very positively to your approach, as mentoring provides an opportunity to 'give a little back'.

What to do now



1. I encourage you to take action and to proactively seek mentors, both of the face to face variety and some of the more abstract ones such as Nelson Mandela's via his book, as I have described.
2. Use the steps outlined above to find your mentors and start accessing their wisdom as soon as possible.

ABOUT GARY RYAN



Gary Ryan is a consultant, author and speaker who helps organisations, organisational leaders, graduate employees, graduate students and undergraduate students to be the very best that they can be. He is passionate about helping organisations to matter to their people, their stakeholders and customers, their community, and their environment.

Through helping employers align what they say with what they do, as well as helping current and future employees do likewise, Gary believes that he really can help organisations matter.

Holding several degrees including a Bachelor of Education in Physical Education (1994), a Graduate Diploma in Human Resource Management (2002) and a Master of Management (2004), Gary is currently completing a Doctor of Business Administration program at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia. The more educated that he has become, the greater the gap between theory and practice he has observed. One of his reasons for founding Organisations That Matter, with Dr Andrew O'Brien, was to close this gap. The intention of this book is to do likewise.

Married with four children, Gary also runs marathons to maintain his health and fitness.

ABOUT ORGANISATIONS THAT MATTER

Organisations That Matter specialises in helping organisations matter - to their people within the organisation, to the people the organisation serves, and the people within the broader community within which the organisation exists.

To achieve this, Organisations That Matter serves:

- ✓ Businesses and Community Organisations
- ✓ Universities and Schools
- ✓ Executives
- ✓ Young Professionals
- ✓ Students

Our major services include:

- ✓ Strategic Advice
- ✓ Facilitation
- ✓ What Really Matters
- ✓ Desired Futures
- ✓ Consulting
- ✓ Mentoring
- ✓ Development Programs
- ✓ Learning and Change Reviews
- ✓ Behaviour and Performance Materials
- ✓ Keynote Speeches
- ✓ Conference Packages
- ✓ Theme Weaving
- ✓ Membership

Please email info@orgsthatmatter.com or visit:
www.orgsthatmatter.com for more information.

ONLINE LEARNING COMPANION

Are you concerned that you will read this book but not 'do' this book? If so, a 16 week Online Learning Companion program is available (You can choose to complete the 16 part program over a shorter timeframe if 16 weeks is too long for you). Once a week for 16 weeks you will receive an email that will enable you to focus upon and master each of the 15 practices outlined in this book.

Simply register for our *What Really Matters for Young Professionals* Online Learning Companion program at:
www.orgsthatmatter/online-courses.

You will discover that for less than the equivalent of three coffees per week you will enhance your capacity to master the 15 practices outlined in these pages. This will ensure that you accelerate your career in the direction that you want it to go!

WHAT REALLY MATTERS FOR YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

Online Learning Companion
16 week program

Hosted by
GARY RYAN

organisations THAT MATTER

What Really Matters for Young Professionals!
How To Master 15 Practices To Accelerate Your Career

GARY RYAN