OTM ACADEMY
ENABLING INDIVIDUALS, TEAMS AND ORGANISATIONS TO MATTER

What Really Matters!
Volume 4, Number 1, 2012

By
Gary Ryan

What Really Matters! Volume 4, Number 1, 2012 – is a compilation of selected articles from The OTM Academy from January 1st 2012 until April 30th 2012.
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Ebooks provide a special function that traditional books cannot provide. The links in this ebook are 'live', so if you read the ebook while online, you can immediately access the reference material.

Who should read this ebook?

This ebook is for senior and developing leaders who share the view the high performance is achieved through enabling people to utilise the full talents. This ebook represents articles from the first third of 2012 from the OTM Academy. Specifically, young professionals, new formal leaders and experienced leaders who wish to improve their leadership skills will benefit most from the contents of this ebook.

To join the OTM Academy please follow this link.

Thank You!

Thank you to all our members of the OTM Academy. We hope that you will receive great value from this collection of articles compiled from the first third of 2012.

Please respect our copyright. This means that if you have received this ebook you are free to share it, providing you do not change it in any way.

Keep learning!

Gary Ryan

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What promises are on your corporate website?
By Gary Ryan

Recently when working with people in the areas of management development and/or service excellence, I have been surprised by how many employees know very little about what is on their company website.

Upon discovering this issue I then ask the staff members if they have ever had situations where clients have referred to something that they had read or viewed on their website that the staff member didn't know about.

Nearly everyone has said that they had experienced such a situation.

When I then ask who they believe is responsible for ensuring that they (the employees) know what is on the website, they reply, "Senior Management" or "The Marketing Department".

Very few people say, "Me!".

In reality it is a two way street. Senior managers and marketers should communicate with staff regarding what is being communicated via the corporate website. Staff should also take personal responsibility for knowing what is being communicated. In this way the Market - Communication Gap can be minimised or eliminated.

What is your experience of this issue?

Please feel free to comment on this article.

Does clutter detract from the quality of your service?
By Gary Ryan

Clutter creates stress and creates a sense of disorganisation. What systems do you have in place to keep both front-of-house and back-of-house areas free from clutter?

If you 'sweep your mess under a carpet' rather than clean it properly, your back-of-house systems and processes will eventually let your front-of-house operations down.

Would you be comfortable letting the public see your back of house operation? If not, why not?

What could you do about this situation?

Research Participant

Our back of house operations had always been a shambles. But we seemed to keep getting away with it. Until one day we didn't. And the company nearly went broke because of it. Luckily we survived and we cleaned our act up. Literally!

Why not use this article as a catalyst for [Conversations That Matter®](#) within your organisation.

[Please feel free to comment on this article.](#)

Explaining the OTM Service Strategy®
By Gary Ryan
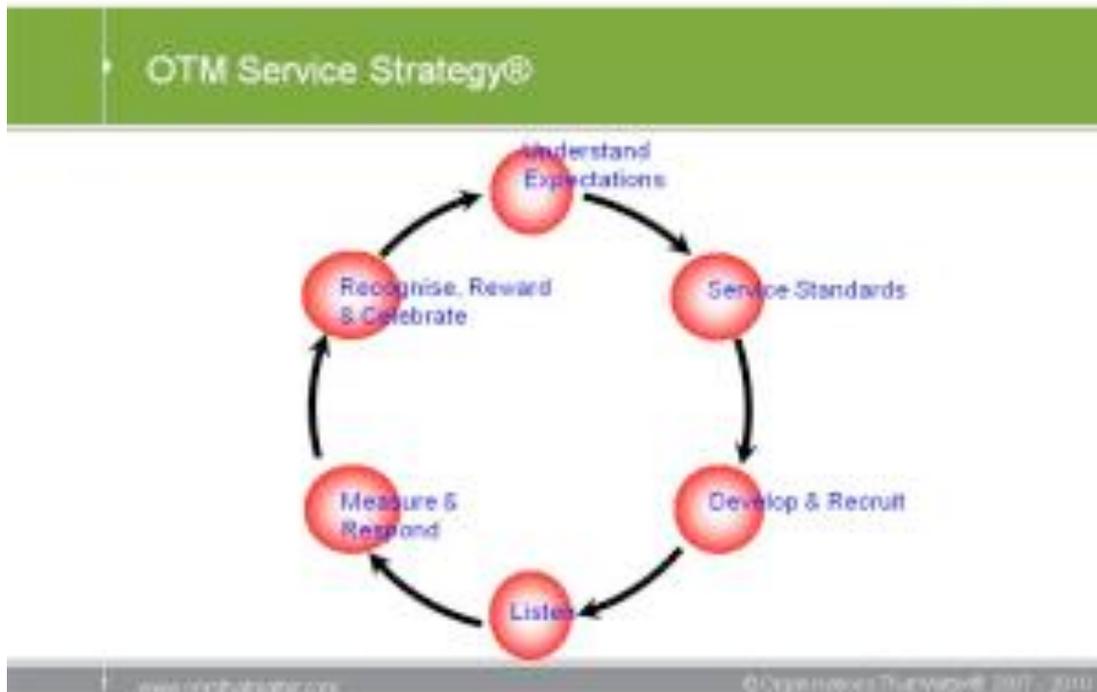
Access the Slideshare Presentation (2mins 30 secs) that quickly explains the OTM Service Strategy® here:

[Explaining the OTM Service Strategy®](#)

View more webinars from [Organisations That Matter](#)

The great opportunity - What used to work well, doesn't anymore
By Ian Berry

I find the following words of Eric Hoffer staggeringly insightful:

"In times of change learners inherit the earth; while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists."

Many political, religious, education and business leaders are trying to live in a world that no longer exists.

How about you?

Once upon a time I could send one email to my databases in several cities and countries and fill a medium sized room for one of my seminars. Recently I have had to almost beg to get people to come and so I invented something else.

Once the baker delivered our bread to the kitchen table via an unlocked back door. Today most of us have to waste time finding a car park and then rub shoulders with stressed people we have never met, in a bland supermarket, all to buy stale bread.

Once I played in the playground free as a bird. Today I need a diploma in occupational health and safety, qualifications in security, and perhaps a lawyer, in order to take my Grandson to the local park.

What use to work well, often doesn't anymore.

I don't despair though. We are living in times of great opportunity.

I read much of what Thomas Friedman writes and his article 'Something's Happening Here' published in the New York Times on October 11th really caught my eye. Please read it yourself here.

Thomas writes about his views on two big perspectives of our time - one that says today is the time of "The Great Disruption." The other that says today is all part of "The Big Shift."

I think like most things in life it isn't either/or. It's both/and.

I am of the view that my Grandchildren will look back on this period of history as a great renaissance partly because our children and our grandchildren are creating a new world! The last great renaissance followed a period known for good reason as 'The Dark Ages".

Today it is fair to say we have a lot of intellectual and other darkness. You only have to turn on your computer or the nightly news to know that. Yet at the same time there is much that is pioneering, breathtaking and truly innovative.

On the 8th December 1980 I was in a car with three colleagues driving from Los Angeles to Newport Beach when the announcement came over the radio that John Lennon had been murdered. I remember it as though it was yesterday and have used the word 'imagine' and Lennon's song to inspire many things in my life.
In 2008 I was fortunate to visit Florence and see Michelangelo's statue of David up close and personal.

I stood for 2 hours without moving, my breath continually taken away by the magnificence of the statue. I wondered at what magnificent imagination Michelangelo must have had, indeed all of the great renaissance artists and thinkers.

These were defining moments in my life, one dark, one full of light. I carry the lessons of both these moments with me into every single day. I imagine each morning and then focus on bringing my art to the world.

We live in times of both disruption and shifts.

When I was a teenager my report cards often carried the words "Ian is a disruptive influence". I haven't stopped! I seek daily to be a disruptive influence as I carry out my mission to partner with people to break free from the status quo when same no longer serves. At the same time my hearts desire is to help people to make shifts and accelerate turning possibility into reality.

How about you? Are you a disruptive influence for good?

My wish for you in 2012 is that you will to do your bit to rid yourself of the darkness of the status quo that stains all of our lives. I wish that you will embrace the shifts you need to make to become more of who you are capable of becoming, that one-of-a-kind that each of us is.

We live in times of unprecedented opportunity. What used to work well, often doesn't anymore. We cannot change the past. We can learn from our past and ensure that we do not let the darker side of our history repeat itself.

Be the difference you want to see in the world.

Ian

PS

For the sixth consecutive year I am pleased to have again provided an article along with 37 other personal and professional development experts for Gihan Perera's Expect More ebook.

Please download Expect More from 2012 with my compliments here.

PSS

Resources that rock your world. Initially available in Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney.

Find out more about change champions circles here.

Please feel free to comment on this article.

Ending the disease of short termism
By Ian Berry

Richard Branson sees inexperience as an advantage because of the freedom that it brings from the constraints of experience or being well established.

In fact, Branson shares that so long as you have a focus, e.g. creating a new music experience for music lovers through Virgin Records, then your inexperience can most definitely be an advantage.

You can read the full (and short) article here.

What are your experiences of the advantages of being inexperienced?

Please feel free to ask questions and/or to make a comment on this article.

How to use illustrations to create Conversations That Matter®
By Gary Ryan

Creating Conversations That Matter® is a key skill for organisational leaders. Amidst forecasting, attending to meetings and writing reports, the development of this skill is often neglected. Think about it, how do you stimulate Conversations That Matter® with your peers, direct reports and your leaders? How do you stimulate them with your key stakeholders and clients?

Conversations That Matter® are conversations where people are able to speak from the heart, speak their truth (whatever it may be) in a safe environment where there will not be negative consequences for speaking their mind. This does not mean that people lose responsibility for what they say. Rather, their responsibility increases as respect is a core requirement for a conversation that matters to be conducted.

So how might a leader create a conversation that matters, especially when there may be a level of distrust present amongst team members?

One way is to use illustrations to catalyse your conversations. For these conversations to be successful, the leader must be prepared to do the following five practices:

1. Be prepared to 'listen to understand' to what is being said, rather than listening to defend/justify
2. Guarantee that no negative consequences will result to people as a result of the conversation
3. Listen more than speak - a good rule of thumb to follow is to speak 30% and to listen 70% of the time
4. Be prepared to ask open questions (see The Art of Skilful Questions)
5. Judge the quality of the conversation by the level of truth that is present in the conversation (see the video Transparency - How leaders create a culture of candor)

If you are able to follow the five practices above, then determine the focus of your conversation, then select an image that you could use and give it a go. As an example a great friend of mine Jock MacNeish has been creating such illustrations for the best part of his life. Over time Jock has created many illustrations for the 0 to 10 Relationship Management body of knowledge. As a Licensed Elite Trainer Facilitators in 0 to10 Relationship Management, I am able

to use Jock's illustrations.

The 0 to 10 Relationship Management Culture Survey illustrations are very powerful catalysts for enabling people to have a conversation that matters. If you were interested to know what your team members thought about the level of autonomy that they had in their jobs, you could place the illustration below on the table and ask them to mark on the scale where they believe the level currently sits.

When people place their finger on the scale that they believe represents their view, simply say, "Thank you for your honesty. What examples do you have that would help me to understand what this score means to you?"

Their answers will be powerful and enable you to identify what you should keep doing, start doing and stop doing. If, of course, you have tried this technique and no-one in your team spoke up, then you may have your answer anyway!

On the other hand if you've never tried this technique before please give it a go. Either print the illustration from this article or select a different onee for your team and create a conversation that matters. Please let us know how you go!

Finally, if you like this concept but aren't sure what illustration to use, please provide a brief description of your issue in the comments box and I'll help you find an appropriate illustration.

As a leader a significant part of your success is driven by your capacity to create and stimulate conversations that matter. Is this a skill that you possess?

What are you currently doing to develop it?

Once you have read the article please feel free to post a comment.

Usefulness is more important than complete accuracy - Why you should use the What Makes People Tick profiling tool
By Gary Ryan

There are many personality profiling tools. Myer-Briggs (MBTI), DISC, OPQ and Wave are a number of the more commonly used approaches. Technically they are hard to separate although the Wave (to which I am licensed) is able to provide evidence that it is superior to the rest.

From a personal development perspective I advocate the use of any one of the abovementioned tools. I strongly encourage that they be used with support from experts.

Where I don't advocate the use of these tools is with teams.

I don't say this because I think the tools are poor - rather they are too complex for most people to make them useful from an ongoing perspective.

When I conduct team development programs I ask the participants if they have ever completed any personality profile assessments. A large percentage of people indicate that they have completed assessments, but their memory of what the results meant is limited.

"I did the MBTI and I think I was an extravert..." is as much detail as most people can muster.

When I ask how the tool was used to improve the performance of a team people struggle to provide clear examples. However they add, "...but I thought it was really interesting and learnt a few things about myself."

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The issue here is that we need to use team profiling tools that are memorable and useful. It is for this reason that I use the What Makes People Tick Personality Profile tool. I'll be the first to admit that the science behind the tool is nowhere near the sophistication of a DISC or the OPQ. What is important is that the tool is easy to remember and therefore apply. You don't have to be an expert on the tool to be able to apply its lessons within your team.

This is a significant problem I find with a lot of the other tools. You virtually have to be an expert in them to be able to apply them in a team setting.

Most people are too busy being experts in their own fields and simply don't have the mental 'space' to become an expert ion personality profiling tools.

A case in point. When recently facilitating a team development program, the youngest person in the room (a 26 year old) was able to provide a detailed description of the What Makes People Tick approach. He was able to accurately remember and describe the four personality types as well as how they were used to help improve team performance. This person was not university qualified yet he knew more about the practical application of techniques to manage personality differences that the vast majority of university graduates with whom I have worked.

This was despite it being a full two years since he had worked with the team where he had been exposed to the tool.

No one else was able to provide any examples regarding the practical application of the tools they had used.

What Makes People Tick uses only two sets of dimensions from which a person's profile is derived. They are:

1   Introversion/extraversion
2   People focus/task focus

The combination of these dimensions result in a people having a combination of four preferred 'windows' through which they make sense of the world. These four windows are:

1   Introversion/people focus
2   Extraversion/people focus
3   Introversion/task focus
4   Extraversion/task focus

The memorability aspect of this tool derives from the descriptions that Des Hunt, the creator of the profile then added to each of the above windows.

They are:
1   Dove
2   Peacock
3   Owl
4   Eagle

The majority of people are able to describe some of the key behavioural characteristics of these birds without being an expert on the tool. They are able to do this because of the differences that the images of the birds demonstrate. When the characteristics are applied to humans people have a lot of fun but are also able to make sense of how the personality differences can generate unhealthy conflict within a team. Conflict that is often hard to 'pinpoint' yet makes complete sense when the 'bird' profiles are discovered.

More importantly people are able to quickly identify strategies for managing the differences.

For examples, 'Peacocks' are ideas people who like to follow their gut instincts. Owls, on the other hand are conservative and like data to support decisions. It's not hard to imagine how such differences in preferences could generate problems.

Armed with this knowledge the Peacock could engage another Owl to do some research for them to find some facts to support their idea. Armed with the facts the Peacock could then present the idea to the Owl. Similarly the Owl can choose to be more forgiving of the Peacock. They might also choose to do their own research on how often the Peacock's ideas have been useful. Upon discovering a high percentage the Owl could use this data to support the Peacock in going with their intuition. The simplicity of the tool enhances its functionality.

What tools have you used and how useful have they been from the perspective of helping to improve team performance?

Please feel free to comment on this article.

Avoid the dis-empowerment traps
By Ian Berry

I think this is priceless:

"Owners of capital will stimulate the working class to buy more and more expensive goods, houses and technology, pushing them to take more and more expensive credit, until their debt becomes unbearable. The unpaid debt will lead to bankruptcy of banks, which will have to be nationalised, and the State will have to take the road which will eventually lead to communism. " (Das Kapital, 1867)

My thanks to Paul Lange who twitted about this and Ann Andrews who unearthed this quote.

Reminds me of a sign I saw on a office wall a decade ago.

Someone said that the definition of **stupidity** is

"Expecting a different result by continuing to do the same old thing"

Someone else said that the definition of idiocy is

Doing something different and still getting the same result."

Stupidity and idiocy are the great dis-empowerment traps.

Ensure you don't get caught in either in 2012.

Ian

No BS differencemaker

I partner with people passionate about change who provide professional services, who want to break free from the status quo.

You can download this insight and two more here.

A 'Safety Moment' for holiday seasons
By Gary Ryan

Recently when facilitating an OTM Strategic Conversation® for the Programmed Group, Group CEO Chris Sutherland spoke about the importance of behaving safely at home. To emphasise his point he spoke about a friend of his who drove a BMW 7 series car.

As you can imagine the BMW possessed every safety feature known to mankind. His 18 year old son was instead driving around in a twenty plus year old car that had minimal safety features.

Unfortunately the son was involved in a car accident that took his life. Chris shared that his friend had spoken with him about the fact that between he and his son, it was his son that should have been driving around in a car with the safety features of the BMW, not himself.

Statistically his son was far more likely to be involved in a serious car accident because of his lack of driving experience. Such a thought had never entered their minds.

Chris' story highlights the importance of having a look around your home and having a 'Safety Moment' for and with your family and friends. For those of you in Australia you will be aware of the recent accident suffered by 65 year old celebrity Molly Meldrum. When putting up some decorations for an upcoming Xmas party he fell off the top of a ladder and then fell down a flight of stairs seriously injuring his head. Our thoughts are with him as he continues to his long journey of recovery.

'Safety Moments' are conversations that are conducted in organisations that take safety seriously.

Australian government reports indicate that the majority of injuries occur at home or during leisure activities. Even my own father in law lost an eye as a result of a fall at home caused by tripping over the cord from his vacuum.

In preparation for each holiday season I encourage you to have a 'Safety Moment' at home and to have a look around for opportunities to improve safety - you never know you just might save someone you love from a serious injury or even death.

Please feel free to comment on this article.

OTM Plan for Personal ® Program

Experience a facilitated program that enables you to identify the future that you want to create.

Discover how your desired future can include having discovered the answers to the many questions that you have, and developing a clear and focused plan to answer those questions.

> *"Excellent content delivered in an excellent way. It was an enjoyable course that delivered well targeted content. As a person that has trouble putting plans into action it has been very helpful. Thanks very much Gary!"*
> Tom Sherburn, National Australia Bank

> *One of those actions was for the **Executive Team** to develop **Individual Plans for Personal Success**, and to share and relate those plans to the desired future for our division within our organisation. Developing an **OTM Plan for Personal Success**® was an inspiring experience with Andrew and Gary guiding myself and the rest of the Executive Team through the process. Sharing our plans with each other catalysed conversations that were powerful and enabled us to develop a deeper understanding of each other. Prior to the program I had felt that we already had a deep understanding of each other, completing the **OTM Plan for Personal Success**® program enabled our relationships to go to another level.*
> Geraldine Storton, Vice President, Global Program Management
> Hospira, USA

Stop thinking like a chicken if you are an eagle
By Ian Berry

Soar like an Eagle

A man found an eagle's egg and put it in a nest of a barnyard hen. The eaglet hatched with the brood of chicks and grew up with them.

All his life, the eagle did what the barnyard chicks did, thinking he was a barnyard chicken. He scratched the earth for worms and insects. He clucked and cackled. And he would thrash his wings and fly a few feet into the air.

Years passed, and the eagle grew very old. One day, he saw a magnificent bird above him in the cloudless sky. It glided in graceful majesty among the powerful wind currents, with scarcely a beat of its wings.

The old eagle looked up in awe. "Who's that?" he asked. "That's the eagle, the king of birds," said his neighbour.

"He belongs to the sky. We belong to the earth. We're chickens."

So the eagle lived and died a chicken, for that's what he thought he was.
Anthony de Mello

20 sparkenations [here](#) to help you ensure 2012 is your best year yet!

Be the difference you want to see in the world.
Ian

[No BS Mentoring](#) It takes you further than you've ever imagined.

[Please feel free to add a comment to this article.](#)

The challenge of 'Truth to Power' for leaders
By Gary Ryan

While traveling around Australia working with senior and developing leaders in a corporate development program, I have been asking the following question:

"How easy is it for employees to deliver potentially unpleasant messages to more senior people in organisations?"

Their reply has been effectively unanimous.

"It's very difficult!"

"Why?" I have asked.

Reasons have varied but have included:

1 Fear of negative consequences to themselves should the message not be accepted
2 Fear of being perceived as a 'negative person' by senior managers which could negatively affect career opportunities
3 Past experiences within the same or previous companies where such messengers were treated poorly
4 Fear of being required to provide a solution for the issue

The core message is that people are reluctant to provide potentially negative messages to more senior managers.

I have then asked,"So let's flip this issue around. From the perspective of your roles as leaders, do you see this reluctance to provide messages to senior managers as an issue for you?"

Once again I have received a unanimous response.

"Absolutely!"

"Okay. What can you do about this challenge?"

The conversations have been remarkable. Participants have recognised the real and genuine challenge for many employees to provide potentially 'negative' feedback to senior staff.

The issue, known as 'Truth to Power' relies on senior staff to be aware of how their reaction to 'negative' messages can have an exponential affect on whether or not employees continue to provide them. This requires the senior managers to have an acute awareness of this challenge and to to err on the side of being more supportive of people bringing forward messages rather than less supportive (or worse being defensive).

Interestingly the leaders involved in the discussions I have shared above have been honest about the fact that for many of them they naturally have a defensive response to such issues when they are raised, yet recognise the damaging affect being defensive can have on future messages being presented.

The leaders have shared that it is important to acknowledge the issue and even if it is already known, to thank the employee for having the courage to raise the issue. They have also suggested that leaders need to 'close the loop' in terms of providing feedback to the employee about what has happened with their issue, particularly if the leaders initial response was to 'look into it'.

It is totally understandable for people to have concerns regarding providing negative feedback to senior leaders. Yet high performing teams and high performing organisations need to manage the Truth to Power challenge if they wish to reach their potential.

What are your experiences of 'Truth to Power' in the workplace and how have you managed this challenge from a leadership perspective?

Please feel free to comment on this article.

Government grants enhance the affordability of culture change programs
By Gary Ryan

A combination of state and federal government schemes designed to enhance the formal qualifications of Australians have the added bonus of providing the resources for corporate culture change programs.

The challenge is that many leaders aren't aware of the opportunity they have available to them and therefore don't fully leverage the culture change opportunity.

As a facilitator of such programs I help senior leaders recognise that the real benefit of the programs for companies are the conversations about their business that the course material catalyses.

In simple terms, the course material and the courses themselves create the space for staff to talk about their organisation in a safe way. In other words, they have the opportunity to have Conversations That Matter®.

In every session that I have facilitated staff have learned something about their business that they did not previously know. Often this knowledge was considered by others in the room to be "known by everyone". Yet it quickly becomes obvious that not everyone did know.

For example one organisation with whom I have been working has a bonus system in place that rewards staff for submitting ideas via their intranet that, if adopted and they produce measurable business improvements a bonus is paid to the employee. A lot of the mid-level managers in the program didn't know that the system existed.

If it wasn't for the program and the opportunity to talk about organisational systems designed to enhance idea generation, the conversation that resulted in the knowledge sharing would not have occurred. This type of conversation occurs in every session.

The opportunity to overlay the program with a specific culture change focus is both available and logical. Why not use government funding to pay for a program that enables real conversations about the organisation to be conducted that are influenced by theory! In addition, the program provides employees with a nationally recognised qualification.

In fact, it is my experience that corporate programs offer the greatest opportunity for theory to be understood and applied because the program creates the space for colleagues to apply theory to the practical operation of their business. In many cases the theory can then be applied in real time.   When properly understood and facilitated such opportunities can provide enormous benefits for everyone.

Please feel free to contact me if you are interested in how such a program can benefit your organisation and employees.

Please feel free to comment on this article.

In business, some thing are just 'plain wrong'!
By Gary Ryan

It turns out that something far more profound than my birth occurred in 1968.

My wife and I recently viewed a film called, Made in Dagenham. The film tells the story about 187 female machinists who went on a three week strike at the Ford factory in Dagenham, England. Initially the women were outraged that they had been classified under a wage review as 'unskilled', and became more indignant when they became acutely aware of the difference in classification and wages between themselves and men doing exactly the same work.

What I found fascinating about the film and my subsequent research was that the women, led by Eileen Pullan were not skilled negotiators. They had to defend their actions within the union movement itself (largely run by men) the factory (which employed nearly 40,000 men) and their community. Their strike quickly shut down the entire Dagenham operation 'laying off' thousands and thousands of workers.

They stuck to their principles because the behaviour of management, while generally accepted at the time, was just plain wrong. The same level of work should receive the same level of pay irrespective of gender.

Despite the enormous pressure to return to work (including from some of the women's husbands who had been laid off) the women stuck to their principles and only returned once a guarantee for equal pay had been established and brokered by Barbara Castle, then the Secretary of State for Employment and Productivity. At the time the Secretary's direct intervention with the women was a breach of normal protocols.

As a result of the strike the Equal Pay Act was passed in 1970, leading the way for equal pay for women throughout the Western World.

The story and its impact highlighted for me that some business practices and/or behaviours of management are just plain wrong and need to be treated as such. The courage of the Dagenham women highlights how a single minded approach to 'righting wrongs' even in the most lopsided of 'fights' can and does result in positive change.

It would be inaccurate of me to suggest that equal pay for women is now a non issue. Quite simply it isn't. But the Dagenham Strike started the ball rolling in a positive direction.

I recommend watching the movie, not just from an entertainment perspective but from a historical one as well.

Finally, what 'wrongs' need to be 'righted' in your organisation?

Please feel free to comment on this article.

A structure for creating 'Meetings That Matter'!
By Gary Ryan

Ron Ashkenas, author of *The Boundaryless Organization* reports that most managers believe that the majority of meetings are inefficient. Despite 'knowing' how to conduct effective meetings they continue to practice ineffective ones.

Ashkenas offers three reasons for this behaviour:

1. Meetings offer the opportunity for social interaction
2. Meetings are a practical way of keeping everyone in the loop
3. Meeting can represent a certain level of status having been attained

He provides the basic tenets of an efficient meeting to be:

"Be clear about what you want to accomplish; invite the right people; send out pre-reading in advance; have an agenda and follow it with discipline; send out notes with key decisions and action steps."

From my experience one of the problems with the prescribed successful meeting process is that people are too busy to do the required pre-reading. In fact, most managers have reported to me that they don't have the time to pre-read the prescribed agenda. This is something they do on the way to the meeting or when they first get there.

Managers have also reported to me that they don't focus on the content of the meeting "…until I am there.", especially when they are travelling from one meeting to the next.

In this context it seems near impossible to create efficient meetings. Thankfully there is a way, but it will take some of you some time to get used to the 'instant formality' that the process creates.

Step 1: Provide an opportunity for staff to 'check in' at the start of the meeting (keep it short)
Efficient meetings require all present to be 'present' during the meeting. Wandering minds don't aid efficiency. The purpose of the 'check in' is to allow team members to psychologically separate from what was going on before the meeting to focusing on the meeting that is happening 'now'.

A 'check in' can be a single word where everyone is asked to share how

they are at that moment through to just those feeling the need to share a recent experience that may be on their mind (e.g. I nearly had a car accident on the way here).

Step 2: Clarify the purpose of the meeting
Even if this is a regular meeting, remind people why it still matters. If the meeting no longer matters then you shouldn't be wasting your time conducting it!

Step 3: Collectively set the agenda
Publicly create the agenda. A whiteboard is perfect for this task (remember there is power in the whiteboard marker, so while you are teaching people this method it is best to be the 'scribe')
Accept all suggestions from all team members. Then select the most important items that need to be addressed today. It is okay to use your positional authority as necessary when completing this task.

Literally place numbers beside each item as you prioritise them.

Next allocate approximate time slots for each agenda item that you have agreed to talk about.
These time slots do not need to be equal - they need to be relevant to the importance of the agenda item and how long (in the available time) you have to discuss the item.

Step 4: Set a time keeper
A team member will need to take on the role of time keeper. It is amazing how often the simple statement that we have used our available time on an item results in the discussion ending. Please note that this role can (and probably should) move around the team members from one meeting to the next.

Step 5: Make a record of the meeting
Create meeting notes that highlight the agreed agenda and any actions that result from each item. Share the meeting notes in a timely fashion. Keep the notes as short as possible; they need to make sense but they don't need to be *War and Peace.*

Step 6: Reflect on the meeting skills displayed throughout the meeting
This step spends a few minutes providing the opportunity to team members to talk about their thoughts about how well meeting skills were displayed by the team members. Comments such as, "Joan asked a lot of powerful questions today. Especially when she asked me about the

most powerful benefits for the organisation that my suggestion would provide. It really made me stop and think more clearly about why this project matters." provide an example of what might be said during the reflection.

That's it. Like anything new this six step approach will feel strange at first, but you will get used to it.

Please feel free to ask questions about any of the six steps outlined above.

Please note that this article was catalysed by a recent conversation with one of my Executive Coaching clients. Thanks Elise!

Making a difference - Four extraordinary women and the power of purpose
By Gary Ryan

What's the acronym for 'make a difference'?

M.A.D.

That's exactly what scores of people said to Michelle, Nicky, Maureen and Jan when they told people they were going to do the 100km Oxfam Trailwalker event in Melbourne, Australia to raise much needed funds for the important work that Oxfam does around the globe.

From left: Jan, Nicky, Maureen and Michelle

At the time of posting this article Team Make a Difference (M.A.D.) had raised over $11,000 - a remarkable effort in a time when raising money has become very difficult due to challenging economic circumstances for many people.

It is important to recognise differencemakers because they set the example for how 'ordinary' can become 'extraordinary'. In this case I think it is fair to say that our four differencemakers above were already extraordinary before the event, but having finished the walk they are even more extraordinary than ever.

When I talk about extraordinary let's look at some highlights from each of our differencemakers.

Michelle, my wife is the mother of five children ranging from 12 years old to 20 months old. Need I say more!

Nicky is equally as extraordinary being a mother of three young boys ranging from seven through to 23 months old.

Jan is a mother of a five year old and someone who has saved countless wildlife from death in her role as a wildlife volunteer, personally caring for injured and sick wildlife until they recover and are able to be returned to their habitats.

Maureen is the veteran of the group being 60 years old and this year completed her third Oxfam Trailwalker - completing one is an extraordinary effort let alone having now completed three!

What is also wonderful about this story is that Michelle, Jan, Maureen and Nicky are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to extra-ordinary people. The sea of support led by Harry Lowe was something to behold. Each person volunteered one of the greatest gifts that anyone can give another person, cause or both: their time!

In this context I believe that it is important to recognise each person because, quite simply, Team Make a Difference could not have raised their funds nor finished the walk without the support of their team.

I understand that you see lists of names all the time. However I urge you to look at each name and recognise that there is a human being behind that name - a human being that subscribed to a purpose bigger than themselves and in the small and large ways contributed to making a positive difference.

Team Make a Difference support crew

Harry Lowe, Christine Sellar, Loreto Ryan, Heather Cecil, Mark Cecil, Merrell Harris, Julie Davenport, Liam Ryan, Sienna Ryan, Callum Ryan, Aiden Ryan, Darcy Ryan, Jonathan McKeown, Anthony McKeown, Hugh Mckeown, James McKeown, Karen Lowe, Lehala Manoel, Mark Mattrow, Gemma Mattrow, Evelyn Devitt, Rosey Cullinan, Geri Burns and Mark Burns.

In addition to these special people recognition must also go to everyone who donated to Oxfam, attended the fundraising event and/or simply spread the word about what was happening.

I have been involved in the Oxfam Trailwalker event before, but this time was extra special. Without a doubt the bigger picture that Team Make a Difference was striving to support was truly engaged by all team members and their support crew. While simple in words the purpose of making a positive difference for the less fortunate in the world through participating in the Oxfam Trailwalker event proved itself to be extaordinarily powerful.

And shared purpose is extremely powerful.

Originally the team had aimed to raise $5,000 but this total was surpassed by a single fundraising event that itself raised $6,300.

Jan, Maureen, Nicky and Michelle thank you for being extraordinary and in being so enabled so many more of us to be extraordinary too.

Donations are still open so please feel free to donate to Oxfam here.

Leadership - It's more complex than ever!
By Gary Ryan

Google the word, "leadership". How many hits did you get?

507,000,000 was my number. That's a lot of hits. It is also a lot of thinking and theories on the topic.

Maybe too many.

When I facilitate leadership programs (including corporate and co-curricular programs at universities for both undergraduate and postgraduate students) very few people are clear about their approach to leadership. While folk are able to list books and thoughts on the topic, most people haven't worked out what guides their approach to leadership.

For example, what is your approach to leadership? What theories do you do your best to apply? What models underpin your approach because you find them useful? What quotes do you find helpful?

How are you consciously putting these theories and models into practice?

The challenge with so much thinking on the topic of leadership is that it has become confusing. For this reason I strongly recommend that **you** take charge and develop your own approach to leadership.

If quotes, theories and models work for you, then use them. Keep using them until you discover something more useful, and then replace them. This approach, of course suggests that you should never stop assessing and re-assessing your approach to leadership. Or even more simply, never stop learning.

What is your approach to leadership?

How would you describe it to someone else?

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- University Student Group Work For Success and much more

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A webinar is an online seminar. Providing you have access to a computer and the internet, webinars are a simple, easy and cost effective way to access critical information for your personal & professional development.

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What Really Matters For Young Professionals!

Are you taking full advantage of your first years of employment?

Are you consciously developing yourself and taking full advantage of the opportunities presented to you?

Are you fully aware of the opportunities that you have to accelerate your career?

If you answered "No" to anyone of these three questions then we can help you to master 15 practices that will accelerate your career.

"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 heard professionals willing to adjust to the contemporary workplace. If you want to succeed in the 21th century as a high-performing individual I recommend you read this book."

Renata Bernarde
Relationship Manager and Career Counselor

Online Checklist

Take the [Online Checklist](#) for the 15 practices that are explained in the book, What Really Matters For Young Professionals! Your results will help to quickly identify how you can use the book to accelerate your career!

This product is for both Young Professionals and/or their employers

[What Really Matters For Young Professionals! How To Master 15 Practices To Accelerate Your Career](#) is a resource that will help Young Professionals (people in the workforce with between five to ten years experience) to accelerate the speed of their career progress.

While Young Professionals are unlikely to suffer the high unemployment rates of previous generations in countries like Australia, this is not the situation in many countries throughout the world.

In the USA and the UK Young Professionals are having significant challenges finding employment. For those who are employed, even in Australia achieving promotions are a challenge because of the high competition for these opportunities. This is why continuous practical development is essential for career progression.

What Really Matters For Young Professionals! is both a resource for Young Professionals and their employers. The book and Online Course create a space for practical development to occur.
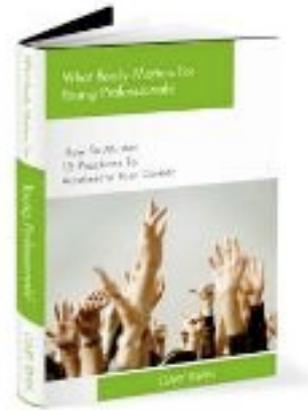
In these challenging economic times employers can provide the course to their Young Professionals. Alternatively, Young Professionals can invest in their own development. At less than the cost of three coffees per week over 16 weeks, the investment for becoming a high performer is minimal.

If you are an employer and would like to discuss how the book and Online Course can be packaged for your employees, please email Gary@orgsthatmatter.com .

"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
www.ygenclub.com

Out now! and available from $4.97 for the ebook and Amazon Kindle version.

About Gary Ryan

Gary Ryan is a Founding Director and owner of [Organisations That Matter](#), a boutique management consulting firm that assists individuals, teams and organisations to achieve high performance through aligning people, strategy, systems and processes.

Why? When alignment is achieved organisations behave in ways that matter to the people working in them, the people the organisations serve and the broader community. Ultimately alignment matters if the organisation wishes to achieve its financial, social and environmental outcomes.

Utilising his diverse skills, experience and training, Gary helps organisations, leaders and team members achieve maximum performance as a professional management consultant and a dynamic facilitator and presenter. Key to Gary's success is his passion to influence behavioural change that aligns what individuals say with what they actually do.

Gary is committed to helping organisations to really matter to their people; to their stakeholders and customers; to their community and to their environment.

With over 18 years executive management and facilitation experience, Gary has had broad exposure to the private sector, government bodies, elite sporting and educational environments. In this capacity, Gary has designed and facilitated the NAB Future Leaders Program and the NAB Mentor Program, the Leadership Development Program at AFL club Richmond, whilst performing as Keynote Speaker at the NAB TEDx TALKS and Monash University Postgraduate orientation program since 2008.

Gary Ryan is a **Certified What Makes People Tick® Facilitator**, a **Licensed Wave Assessor** and has served as a **Senior Assessor for the Customer Service Institute of Australia** with considerable expertise in developing service excellence. Gary is also a **Licensed 0-10 Relationship Management® Elite Trainer Facilitator**, enabling him to assist organisations optimise performance through improved internal and external relationship management.

Gary is the Author of **What Really Matters For Young Professionals! How to Master 15 Practices to Accelerate Your Career** and has also written a series of e-books, **What Really Matters** available **here**.

Gary has studied extensively, initially attaining a Bachelor of Education, and a Graduate Diploma in Human Resource Management, holds a Master of Management from Monash University in Melbourne, Australia.

Gary's areas of specialty cover service excellence development, assessment and facilitation, program design and development, and relationship management development and facilitation.

Personally, Gary Ryan is happily married and a proud father of five children. He is dedicated to maintaining a healthy lifestyle and is currently in training to run his twelfth marathon.

Contact Gary at info@orgsthatmatter.com or join him on LinkedIn.